

GENDER EQUALITY

Unit 1



1 Critical cartoons

A Building knowledge

Work with a partner or in small groups. Discuss the questions below.

- 1 Has a woman been the leader of your country or of a major company in your country?
- 2 What jobs are commonly done by women in your country? How about men? Why?
- 3 What is the message of the cartoon?
- 4 Do you think opportunities for women are equal to those for men in your country? Why or why not?



Media link

Erin Brockovich is a movie about a single mother (played by Julia Roberts) who while working as a legal assistant tries to bring down a California power company accused of polluting a city's water supply.

For online resources and videos, go to www.cambridgeinfocus.org

2 Core vocabulary



A Scanning and skimming

- 1 Find and underline the keywords in the text. Try to guess their meanings.

Keywords

authority discrimination distribution dominant ethical
 justification motive scenario traditionally unstable



The Iron Lady



- What would happen if more women were in positions of power? Would governments be any different if women had the authority to start wars, set economic policy, and run countries? In 1979, Margaret Thatcher took power in the United Kingdom. She belonged to a political party that was traditionally run by white males. Many of its party members believed that women belonged in the kitchen and not in the government. Thatcher overcame discrimination in her own political party to become its first female leader. She then went on to become Britain's first female prime minister and was a dominant political force in the 1980s.
- Her first major test came in 1982, when the Argentinian military attacked some small islands claimed by both countries. These were the Falkland Islands, known as the Malvinas in Argentina. Though Argentina had many motives for the attack, it is possible that it thought a woman would be less likely to go to war. Its generals felt that the most likely scenario was for Thatcher to go to the United Nations. They were wrong. The prime minister sent the British military to retake the island and it defeated the Argentinean forces.
- Two years later, Thatcher began some of the most controversial policies in British history. When she took power, Britain's economy was unstable and there were many problems. Some industries needed support from the government because they were losing money. But she thought that taxing rich people and giving the money to other people was like stealing and not ethical. She did not support the government's role in income distribution. This led to her fighting many battles with the labor unions. She closed or sold many of the weaker companies. Her justification was that support for dying industries hurt the country's economic growth. Naturally, this resulted in the loss of many jobs. Although the economy finally began to improve, many British working people grew to hate the "Iron Lady," as she became known.
- So was Margaret Thatcher's government different because she was a woman? If she is a good example of a female politician, it seems true to say that a politician's actions are influenced more by his or her beliefs than being male or female.

- 2 Read the titles below. Which would also be a good title for the text? Circle A, B, or C.

- A Britain's First Female Prime Minister
 B Margaret Thatcher and the Unions
 C Margaret Thatcher's Economic Policies



B Words in context: definitions

- 1 Look at the definitions of the three keywords below. Find the definition that matches how each word is used in the text on page 2.

- distribution**
- 1 the process of giving things out to people, or spreading or supplying something
 - 2 the way in which people or things are spread out in a place
- unstable**
- 1 describes someone who suffers from sudden and extreme changes of mental state
 - 2 not firm and therefore not strong, safe, or likely to last
- authority**
- 1 an expert on a subject
 - 2 a group of people with official responsibility for a particular area of activity
 - 3 moral or legal right or ability to control

- 2 Make your own sentences using the keywords and compare them with a partner. Which meanings does your partner use?

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

C Vocabulary building: etymology Example: *justification*

Words with *just* or *ju*

judge jury justice justification unjust

etymology

the origin and history of a word or words, or the study of word origins

- 1 Use the words in the box to complete the sentences below.

- 1 Maria tried to _____ her poor performance in the tennis tournament by blaming her new coach.
- 2 There was no _____ for his rude behavior.
- 3 Many people consider that Nelson Mandela's imprisonment was _____.
- 4 Thurgood Marshall was the first African-American Supreme Court _____.
- 5 A _____ can have as few as six or as many as 12 members.

- 2 Work with a partner. What do you think *just/ju* means? Write your guess below. Then check your answer with another partner.

I think just/ju means _____.

D Discussion dictation



- 1 Listen and write down the questions. Then discuss them in small groups.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

- 2 Form new groups and compare your answers.

3 Reading skills



A Pre-reading questions

- 1 Why are there so few women in positions of power in the world? Suggest two reasons.
- 2 Which of the following countries do you think has the largest proportion of female company directors: the United States, Germany, or Norway?

B Reading

Read the text and check your answers to the pre-reading questions above. Then highlight an interesting idea in each paragraph.



What If Women Ruled the World?



In most countries, women are poorly represented in positions of leadership and authority. In government, for example, there are relatively few women and only one country, Rwanda, has had a majority of females in the national parliament. Developed countries are often far down on the scale of female representation in government. Of 188 countries, Britain ranks 58th, with 23 percent, and the United States 79th, with 18 percent. In Asia, South Korea comes 87th, with 16 percent, and Japan 122nd, with only 8 percent female representation.

Women's representation in corporate boardrooms is no better: men are again dominant. In the United States, only 12 percent of board members are women. In Europe, this is often lower: in Germany, 11 percent, Britain, 9 percent, and in Italy, 4 percent. South Korea's figure is 2 percent and Japan's 1 percent. Only in Norway does the number exceed 30 percent.

The relatively high figures for Rwanda and Norway can be explained by the fact that in these countries, there are laws that require a minimum percentage of women in government and business. On the face of it, the justification for laws such as these is fairness, but are there any other reasons to encourage greater participation of women in positions of power? There are five reasons for the answer to this question being a clear yes.

First, when choosing the best people for government, management, or any other field, it makes sense to have the widest possible choice. The United States and China win most Olympic medals largely because they can recruit from the largest populations. Since women make up half the population, it makes sense to draw on their talents to the same degree as those of men.

Second, the background and experience of women mean that they have insights that are often lacking in men. As the primary caregivers to children and the

elderly, they are traditionally more likely to push for improvement in the areas of social welfare and education. Similarly, as more frequent victims of discrimination than men, women tend to be more sympathetic to minorities and the oppressed. As mothers and grandmothers, women usually take a long-term view and consider the welfare of future generations. With climate change threatening an unstable future, this long-term view is exactly what is needed in leadership.

Third, women are often more likely than men to have peace as a motive. Mothers, who make a huge investment in their children, are less willing to send those children to war. Figures show that as many as 175 million people died in wars and revolutions in the twentieth century. Would this number be as shockingly high if women had held more positions of political power?

Fourth, women have a stronger tendency than men to avoid risk and pursue compromise. The financial crisis of 2008 was largely due to risk taking on the part of male financial managers. Had the world's fourth-largest investment bank been Lehman Sisters instead of Lehman Brothers, would we have experienced the same scenario?

Finally, women are often superior managers to men. As the main caregivers and managers of family affairs, women have to be highly organized. They are natural multitaskers. These skills are exactly what are required to successfully manage a company or public policy.

For all these reasons, it is time that the distribution of power in the world shifted in favor of women to better reflect their numbers in the population. This is the right thing to do, not just for ethical reasons, but also because it will result in a better world for all.

C Understanding the text

Read the questions below and circle the correct answers according to the text.

- GIST** What is this text mainly about?
 A Women and discrimination
 B Women and power
 C Women and politics
- MAIN IDEA** Which of the following statements best describes the main idea of the text?
 A Women face discrimination in all areas of life.
 B It is a fact that women are more capable than men in all areas.
 C There are several good reasons for giving women more power.
- DETAILS** There are more female company board members in Norway because . . .
 A Norwegian law requires a certain proportion of women.
 B Norway has more educated women than other European countries.
 C Norwegian women are powerful.
- DETAILS** If more women were in power, there would be fewer wars because . . .
 A women are better managers than men.
 B women are more interested in education and welfare than men.
 C women as mothers do not want their children to be killed.

D Paraphrasing

The statements below paraphrase the author's points of view. In each case, identify the paragraph that best matches the statement.

paraphrasing

stating something spoken or written in a shorter and simpler form

- As mothers and daughters, women often have a greater understanding of welfare issues. _____
- Women's experience in household management makes them better candidates for leadership in government and business. _____
- Wealthy countries have surprisingly few women in executive positions in business. _____
- To find the best people possible, candidates should be selected on merit. _____
- Men take more unnecessary risks than women and therefore women make better leaders. _____
- Wealthy countries have surprisingly few women in government. Fairness is only one reason women should be more represented in society. _____
- Women as leaders are less likely to engage in conflicts. _____

E Making inferences

Which one of the following statements by Margaret Thatcher would the author of the text most strongly agree with? Circle the correct answer. Then compare your answers with a partner.

- "The battle for women's rights has been largely won."
- "Any woman who understands the problems of running a home will be nearer to understanding the problems of running a country."
- "In politics, if you want anything said, ask a man. If you want anything done, ask a woman."
- "I've got a woman's ability to stick to a job and get on with it when everyone else walks off and leaves it."

Going beyond the text

Work with a partner or in small groups. Ask and answer the questions below.

- Look back at the ideas you highlighted. Are they the same? What are the differences?
- The author describes improvements in some areas of life if more women occupied positions of power. What other things would be different if women had more power?
- Are there any roles or types of job that should be performed only by women or only by men?

4 Researching a topic

A Information gathering

The Global Gender Gap Index is an indicator of the level of gender equality in a country. The index goes from 0 to 1. A score of 1 means women and men are equal. Work with a partner. One is Student A; one is Student B. Student A: use the chart below. Student B: use the chart on page 98. Ask your partner for the missing information and complete the chart.

Global Gender Gap Index (total of 136 countries)					
Rank	Country	Score	Rank	Country	Score
34	Argentina	0.72	3	Norway	0.84
62	Brazil	0.69	135	Pakistan	0.55
	Canada		5		0.78
69	China	0.69	127	Saudi Arabia	0.59
2	Finland	0.84	58	Singapore	
1		0.87	111	South Korea	0.64
	India	0.66	4	Sweden	0.81
98	Indonesia	0.66	66	Tanzania	0.69
6	Ireland	0.78	65		0.69
	Japan			Turkey	
16	Lesotho	0.75	109	United Arab Emirates	0.64
102	Malaysia	0.65	18		0.74
	Mexico		23	United States	0.74
121	Nepal	0.61	136		0.51

Source: World Economic Forum

B Interpreting and reporting results

1 Work in small groups. Discuss the questions below.

- 1 What trends in the data can you identify?
- 2 What unexpected data did you find? Give reasons for your answers.
- 3 Do you think it is possible for a country to achieve a score of 1? Give reasons.
- 4 The Global Gender Gap Index considers four areas: economic participation, education, health, and politics. Which do you think is most important? Why?

2 Share your group's ideas with the class.

There is a clear correlation between . . . and . . .

In our view, it would only be possible to . . . if . . .

We were really surprised that . . . because . . .

One possible reason for this is . . .

5 Critical thinking

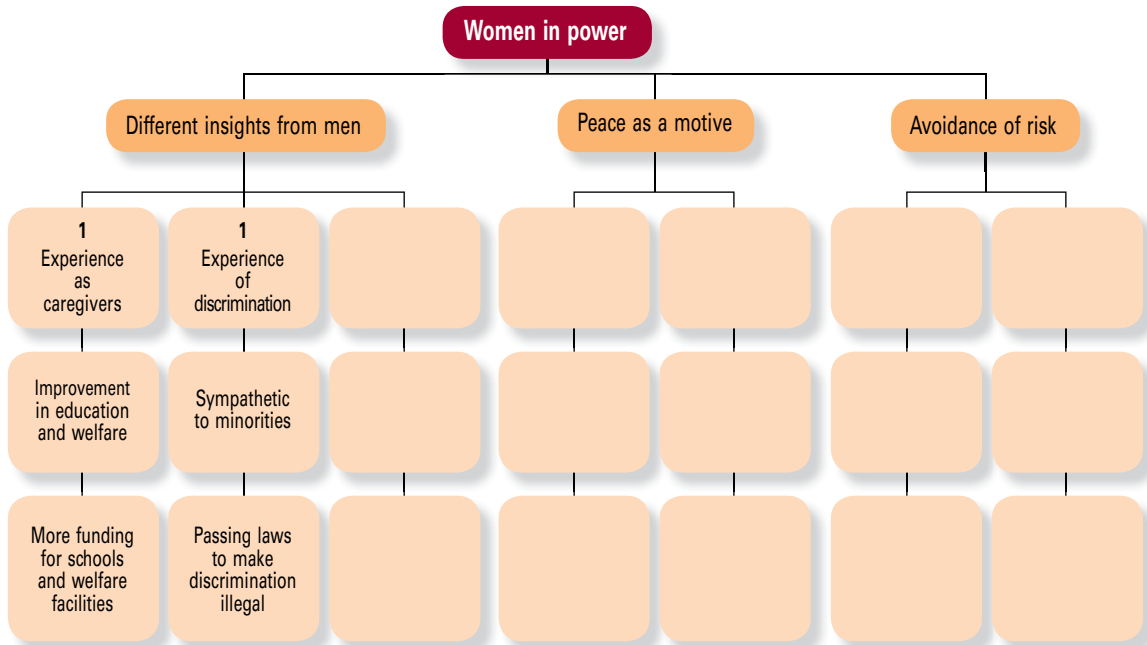
A Fact or assumption?

Below is part of a speech by a senior female politician. Work with a partner and decide if her promises are based on facts (F) or assumptions (A).

- 1 First, I promise to make two years of university education free for everyone. Our investment in education for our young people today is an investment in a rich future tomorrow. _____
- 2 Second, I promise to reduce the size of the armed forces. The Cold War is over, and we have no obligation to become the world's police force. _____
- 3 Finally, I promise to manage the national budget efficiently. As a mother and household manager, I am an expert on budgets. _____

B Mind map

Work in small groups. Below is a mind map showing the possible consequences of women having more power. Add your own ideas to the mind map. Add boxes as necessary. You may want to refer back to the text on page 4.



C Writing

topic sentence

A sentence that explains the main idea or ideas of a paragraph. It is often the first sentence of the paragraph.

The mind map has notes for three topic sentences:

- 1 Women often have different insights from men.
- 2 Women are more likely than men to have peace as a motive.
- 3 Women have a stronger tendency than men to avoid risk.

Each of these parts might correspond to a paragraph in a short essay on women in power. Choose one topic sentence from your completed mind map and write an outline for a paragraph. An example is shown below.

Topic sentence	<i>Women often have different or better insights than men.</i>
Main point 1	<i>One reason for women's different insights is that they often have experience as caregivers.</i>
Detail	<i>This can lead to improvement in education and welfare.</i>
Example	<i>An example of this improvement is more funding for schools and welfare facilities.</i>

UNIT 1

D Discussion

Norway is a progressive country when it comes to gender equality. Norway also has these two laws:

- 1** Forty percent of the directors of public companies in Norway must be women.
 - 2** Women can be drafted into the Norwegian military in the same way as men.
- 1** A new government wants to pass similar laws in your country. Work in small groups. Group A: think of reasons to support the proposed laws. Group B: think of reasons to oppose the proposed laws. Choose A or B. Use the chart to help you organize your ideas.

Proposed new law	Things to consider	
	In favor	Against
1 Forty percent of the directors of public companies must be women.	Economy Effect on company staff Fairness Gender equality Talent pool	Government control Expense Fairness Implementation issues Selection made on gender versus talent
2 Women can be drafted into the military and fight in the same way as men.	Fairness Equality Talent pool	Gender differences Effect on military Effect on men and cost

- 2** Form new groups. Students from Group A should join students from Group B. Share your ideas. Ask follow-up questions and explain your reasoning.

We think the most important thing to consider is . . .

A factor that we must think carefully about is . . .

One positive/negative effect of this new law would be . . .

We believe there are two main reasons for supporting this law. One is . . .

Listening Tip

Remember to listen carefully to what the other person says. If you only think about what you are going to say, you will miss the important parts of a discussion. We learn by listening to the other side of the argument. It's also important to show the speaker you are listening. Make eye contact and provide regular feedback to show you understand, for example by nodding or using short expressions, such as *I see* or *uh-huh*.

- 3** Who has the strongest arguments? Vote on each proposal as a class. Would the proposals succeed or fail in becoming law?

Quotable Quotes

Final thoughts . . .

We've begun to raise daughters more like sons . . . but few have the courage to raise our sons more like our daughters.

Gloria Steinem
 American journalist and social activist

- 1** Explain the quote in your own words. Does it need courage to do what Gloria Steinem suggests?
- 2** What are some ways girls and boys are raised differently in your country?
- 3** Should parents raise girls and boys differently? Why or why not?

