

1 Warmer

a. Discuss these questions with a partner. Then share your ideas.

1. Do men and women do the same kinds of jobs in your community? Why do you think that is?
2. Is there gender equality in your work place? Explain.

Gender: the roles, behaviours, activities, and characteristics that a particular society considers appropriate for men and women

Gender equality: a situation in which rights and opportunities are the same for people of all genders

b. Read the article. Take notes of the ideas you consider interesting.

Women at work: a constant struggle for gender equality

by Engeli Haupt

- 1 More women are now working in roles traditionally done by men, including physically difficult jobs like building, working on ships, and driving trains. These women are inspiring examples for others, encouraging all women to try new things.
- 2 More women have jobs in government, law and sports organizations, but men are still leaders in these areas. In 2021, only 24 per cent of parliament seats were occupied by women. Even in areas that include many women, such as health, men have more important senior positions. Men are often considered to be better at arguing their point of view than women and this contributes to the problem.
- 3 Work activities can also be unfairly organized around men's lives. For example, women around the world spend three times as many hours as men doing unpaid work around the house or helping to care for children. This usually means they can't attend early morning meetings and evening social activities away from the office.
- 4 The COVID pandemic made things even less equal for the genders. Many men were able to work even more in peace at home, while women were not so lucky. In 2020, 54 million women left or lost their jobs. This was because many women worked in service jobs, most affected by lockdowns, and many others had to take care of their children.
- 5 But the problem does not stop there. Women are studying hard to get good qualifications, but they are still in a worse position than men. Women who get the same jobs as men don't get paid the same.

Around the world, women earn 20 per cent less than men. The US applied a few changes, but things have not improved since 2015.

- 6 Iceland and Sweden have the best opportunities for women, while Poland has made the biggest improvements over the last year. India and China would benefit a lot from giving women more opportunities to work; women can make more money for their countries' economies.
- 7 There has been a positive change in how we look at gender at work, but companies and leaders have a lot of work to do. Teachers and parents should encourage girls to study subjects such as mathematics and science to help them get jobs in these areas. The government needs to help make changes in society that will improve salary differences. UK laws say that companies must tell the public how much their employees earn (according to gender), but not everyone shares these numbers.
- 8 Across the world, men and women should have the same opportunities to develop in more senior roles. These opportunities allow women to lead others and share their knowledge and skills. If companies make these positive changes, it will be possible to solve the differences between genders, but the facts suggest that we are many years away from gender equality at work.

Parliament: an official elected group of people in some countries who meet to make the laws of the country and discuss national issues

2 Reading comprehension

a. Are these statements True (T) or False (F) according to the article? Correct the false ones.

1. More women than men are working on ships.
2. More than 75 per cent of people in parliament are men.
3. Women occupy the most senior roles in areas that include their gender, including health and sports.
4. Now that men spend most of their time with their children, women can attend more evening social activities with their colleagues.
5. Working from home allows more women to find new jobs.
6. Globally, women earn twenty per cent less than their male colleagues.
7. Iceland and Poland offer the best opportunities for women.
8. Teachers and parents should encourage girls to study science and mathematics.
9. Some companies don't share their gender pay information, even if the law says they must.
10. Many countries in the world have finally achieved gender equality at work.

3 Vocabulary practice

a. Complete the sentences with the correct word.

encourage improvement inspiring opportunities qualifications senior traditionally unfairly

1. In many cultures, boys _____ wear blue, and girls wear pink.
2. She gave a very _____ talk about how she became a famous biologist.
3. Teachers and parents should _____ girls to use their voices.
4. Only _____ managers were allowed to go to the meeting.
5. Sarah was treated _____ at work because she had to leave early to pick up her daughter.
6. They have the same teaching _____, but she has more experience working as a high-school teacher.
7. Equality is about giving all people the same _____ at home, work, and school.
8. There has been a big _____ in their reading skills since they started reading together every day.

4 Grammar practice

a. Choose the correct verb to complete the sentences from the article.

1. Many women can't **attend** / **to attend** early morning meetings and evening social activities away from the office.
2. Many men were able **work** / **to work** even more in peace at home, while women were not so lucky.
3. During the pandemic period, many women had **take** / **to take** care of their children.
4. Women can **make** / **to make** more money for their countries' economies.
5. Lots still has **be** / **to be** done.
6. Teachers and parents should **encourage** / **to encourage** girls to study subjects such as mathematics and science.
7. The government needs **help** / **to help** to make changes in society that will help solve the pay problem.
8. UK laws say that companies must **tell** / **to tell** the public how much their employees earn.
9. Across the world, men and women should **have** / **to have** the same opportunities to develop in more senior roles.

b. Reorder the words to form comparative sentences.

1. more time / Women / spend / unpaid work / doing

2. than women / Men / higher salaries / earn

3. Women / Men / senior positions / more important / than / have

4. lower roles / are / than men / Many women / still in

5. their point of view / arguing / often better at / are / than / women / Men

5 Communicative practice

a. Choose one area of gender inequality at work that you want to focus on. Research or make notes of the differences between men and women at work. Support your ideas with data or any other type of information.

- salary
- work benefits
- senior / leadership roles
- Your own idea: _____

b. You are the Human Resources manager in a company. You are pitching some change initiatives to improve gender equality at work. Prepare a short presentation explaining the benefits of these ideas. Use the information you prepared in Activity 5a.

c. Discuss the questions with a partner using the expressions below.

- What are some of the most important differences that men and women experience at work in the area you chose?
- Do you think your company/country has inequality issues in that area? Why do you think so?
- Why do you think some people still support ideas of inequality?
- What are the possible strategies to give everyone the same opportunities?

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| Useful language: <i>According to a recent report, women ... than men.</i> <i>We believe that women/the company should...The company/management needs to ...</i> | <i>I think that (women/men) ...</i> <i>In my opinion ... is a problem because ...</i> <i>I believe that (women/men/companies) should/need to ...</i> |
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