

CELEBRATIONS

onestopenglish

International Women's Day

Worksheet

1. Women of the world

a. Write the name of a well-known female for each category.

politician	_____	artist	_____
business leader	_____	designer	_____
scientist	_____	writer	_____
musician	_____	activist	_____
actor	_____	social media influencer	_____

b. Work in pairs. Compare and discuss your lists.

2. Key words and expressions

Read the article about International Women's Day quickly. Find the keywords in context and match them to the definitions below.

bias	bunting	challenge	discrimination	empowerment	enabled
gender	movement	perceptions	rallies	suffragettes	vocational

1. when people are given the ability or opportunity to do something _____
2. question whether something is true, accurate, or legal _____
3. an attitude that you have that makes you treat someone unfairly or differently from the way you treat others

4. a particular way of understanding or thinking about something _____
5. roles and characteristics historically divided into male and female but now referring to many identities

6. public meetings that people attend to support or protest against someone or something _____
7. a type of course that teaches the skills necessary for a particular job _____
8. unfair treatment of someone because of their religion, race, or other personal features _____
9. a group of people who share the same aim and work together to achieve it _____
10. women who took part in public protests to give women the right to vote in the early 1900s _____
11. the act of giving someone more control over their life or more power to do something _____
12. a line of small flags on a string, used for decorating buildings and streets for special occasions

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International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated globally on 8 March each year.

Each year IWD focuses on a particular campaign theme. The theme for International Women's Day 2020 is #EachforEqual because "an equal world is an enabled world." The official IWD website¹ tells us that "Individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions – all day, every day," and that "we can actively choose to challenge stereotypes, fight bias, broaden perceptions, improve situations and celebrate women's achievements". We are further asked to remember that, "each one of us can help create a gender equal world."

IWD celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women everywhere. It came into being well over a century ago, with the first official IWD gathering on 8 March, 1911 in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland, where more than one million women and men attended rallies. In addition to the right to vote and to hold public office, they demanded women's rights to work, to vocational training and to an end to discrimination on the job. It was implemented as a continuation of the movement started by the Socialist Party of America, suffragettes and other campaigners for women's equality.

The United Nations began celebrating International Women's Day in 1975. The empowerment of women continues to be a central feature of the UN's efforts to address social, economic and political challenges across the globe.

In 2019, Berlin, the capital of Germany, made International Women's Day a public holiday for the very first time.

These days, in addition to the huge variety of professionally organised International Women's Day events such as concerts and conferences, many local groups run their own. Organisers of IWD events, be they schools, hospitals, libraries, or community groups, can order packs containing posters, selfie signs, balloons, stickers, ribbons, bunting, pens, wristbands, and the like, to help them advertise and decorate their events and tell the world why they are coming together and making the effort to celebrate women.

Regardless of their size, the aim of IWD events both large and small is to raise awareness, celebrate achievement and to bring about change that will lead to a more gender-equal world.

Let's all be #EachforEqual.

Note: International Men's Day is celebrated separately on 19 November each year.

¹Source: www.internationalwomensday.com

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3. Comprehension check

Are these statements true or false according to the text? Correct any that are false.

1. The celebration of International Women's Day is more than 100 years old.
2. The first large IWD gatherings were held at the beginning of the twentieth century in different European countries on the same day.
3. Men were not allowed or encouraged to attend the first IWD rallies.
4. The United Nations officially recognised IWD in the year 1911.
5. People who want to run an IWD event need to ask permission from the Socialist Party of America.

4. 10 pledges for International Women's Day

a. Read the pledges (a–g) below, then write another 3 pledges of your own.

- a. I'll mentor a woman and help her build her networks. _____
- b. I'll speak up for women amongst family and friends. _____
- c. I'll listen more openly to everyone, of all genders. _____
- d. I'll reflect on how fair and equal my actions and comments are. _____
- e. I'll value women's contributions and achievements more. _____
- f. I'll be aware of bias and question assumptions I make about women. _____
- g. I'll notice and question when women are not present or equal. _____
- h. I'll _____ _____
- i. I'll _____ _____
- j. I'll _____ _____

b. In pairs, rank all the pledges above 1–10 (1 = most important) according to how important they are to you.

c. Work in groups. Compare and contrast your lists of 10 pledges and the order of importance you have put them in.

5. Discussion

Complete the task for yourself, then discuss your answers.

Which of the women you noted in Exercise 1 – or other women from history – would you most like to meet to:

- ask questions? _____
- have tea with? _____
- spend a day with? _____
- say thank you to? _____
- (other reason, please state) _____

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6. Writing

Write a paragraph about a woman you respect, admire or look up to. State why this woman is a good role model. The person you write about does not have to be famous. She may be someone from your family or from another area of your life.

I **admire / respect / look up to** (delete as necessary) _____ (name) because ...