

Celebrate the International Day of the Girl by reading and discussing the Stand Up for Girls Mission Statement in class:

Two thirds of all the world's illiterate people are women. On September 22, we will stand up for girls and their right to go to school and to learn to read and write. Let us join together to advocate for a transformative new era in girls' education.

Every girl has the right to a quality education that will ensure she has a lifelong way to protect herself, advocate for herself, learn what she wants to know and be who she wants to be. Every girl has the right to read and write words that will change her, and to write and tell stories to change the world.

Discussion Questions:

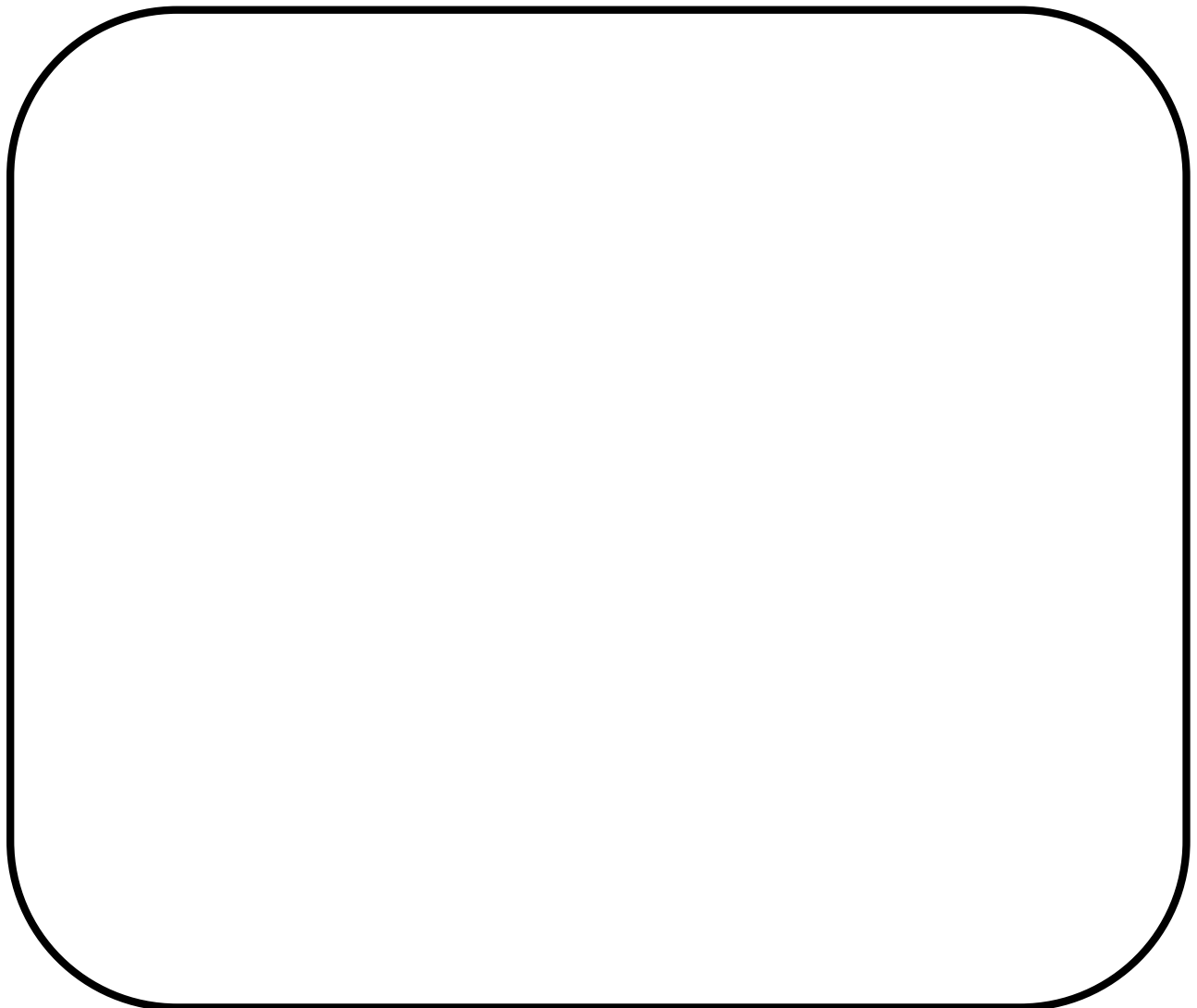
1. Why is it important to stand up for girls today? Why is it important that girls everywhere are able to read?
2. How does it make you feel to know that you are standing up for girls with thousands of other children around the world today?
3. If you could change anything about the world for the better, what would you change?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Stand Up for Girls Drawing Activity: *What does an educated girl look like?*

Draw a picture of an educated and empowered girl.

- What does a girl with an education look like, feel like, sound like?
- How is she different from a girl who is not educated?
- Add descriptive words in addition to your drawing if you would like.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Stand for Girls Poem Activity: *Stand Up For Girls Acrostic*

- Think of words or phrases about girls' education that begin with the letters below.
- Write one word or phrase for each letter.

Here is an example:

G – Gift to the World

I – Intelligent

R – Reaching High

L – Loves to Learn

S _____

T _____

A _____

N _____

D _____

U _____

P _____

F _____

O _____

R _____

G _____

I _____

R _____

L _____

S _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Stand for Girls Pledge Activity: *Write a Pledge to Improve the World*

Write a pledge about your commitment to make this world a better place for girls.

- It can be as short as one sentence, or as long as one page.
- Think about actions that one person can take to ensure that girls get the nurture, love, and resources they need to thrive around the world.

Global Facts About Girls, Literacy, and Education

- Out of 774 million people who are illiterate in the world, two thirds are women. A staggering 511 million women cannot read or write, and we believe this to be a low estimate.
- In 2009, around 35 million girls were out of school. (World Bank)
- In some parts of the world only one girl in ten will complete primary school. (results.org)
- In sub-Saharan Africa, girls have less than a 50% chance of finishing primary school. In some Asian countries, girls also struggle enormously, for example 41% of girls in Pakistan and 30% in India fail to finish primary school. (results.org)
- In Malawi, there is only a 30% transition rate to secondary school for girls. The reasons for this are: early marriage, domestic responsibilities, pregnancy, disproportionate responsibilities in caring for sick family members, school policies that forbid re-admission after pregnancy, inadequate boarding and sanitary facilities for girls, risk of sexual harassment and violence from male students and teachers; gender-insensitive curricula, and few female teachers who can serve as role models. (Gender Needs Assessment for Blantyre City, Malawi)
- Almost half of the girls out of school live in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2008, 17 million girls in sub-Saharan Africa were out of school. (World Bank)
- In 1999, 9.5 million girls in South East Asia were out of school. (World Bank)
- A 35-year study in Guatemala found a link between the number of years girls spent in school and the timing of childbearing. For each additional year a young woman spent in school, the age at which she had her first child was delayed approximately 6 to 10 months. (World Bank)
- A child born to a mother who can read is 50% more likely to survive past the age of 5 than a child born to an illiterate woman. (UNESCO)
- The poorest women and those with minimal education are the least likely to have skilled assistance during birth or to have pre-natal care. Additionally, they are also those with inadequate postnatal care, increasing infant and maternal mortality rates. (Gender Needs Assessment for Blantyre City, Malawi)
- In Indonesia, child vaccination rates are 19% when mothers have no education. This figure increases to 68% when mothers have at least secondary school education. (UNESCO)
- A literate and educated girl is three times less likely to acquire AIDS, she will earn at least 25% more income, and she will produce a smaller, healthier family. (UNESCO)
- Women in 32 countries who remained in school after primary school were five times more likely to know basic facts about HIV than illiterate women. A study in Zambia finds that HIV spreads twice as fast among uneducated girls. (Vandemoortele and Delamonica, "Education Vaccine Against HIV/AIDS")
- "Literate women are more aware about diseases and their treatment; with better capability to deal with sickness, and they in turn would begin to send their girl child to school, breaking the pattern of social gender discrimination, a strong barrier to girl's education." –President Pratibha Patil, current president of India (and the first female to hold office)
- Girls often have to drop out of school to be married. The best means of protecting girls from early marriage is to keep them in school. (Global Campaign for Education)
- Systematic exclusion of women from access to schooling and the labor force translates into a less educated workforce, inefficient allocation of labor, lost productivity, and consequently diminished progress of economic development. (World Bank)