

# Gender in Language Education



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# Objectives of Webinar

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- To define gender inequality and reflect on subconscious gender bias and its impacts
- To explore gender bias in education and language teaching material
- To assess gender bias in language and identify gender neutral alternatives
- To share some practical classroom teaching ideas and resources focused on promoting gender equality



# Poll: What is your approach to gender in language education?

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- a) I regularly promote gender equality as part of my work.
- b) I don't often promote gender equality, but I think about it for my work.
- c) I don't usually think about gender as part of my work.



# Definition: Gender inequality

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- allowing or restricting people different opportunities due to perceived differences based on issues of gender
- restrictions usually apply to women, but anyone can experience gender-based discrimination based on biases and stereotypes

**Source:** Parziale, A. (2018). Gender inequality and discrimination. In R. Kolb (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of business ethics and society* (Vol. 1, pp. 1553-1557). SAGE Publications, Inc., <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483381503.n511>



# SDG 5

By 2030... Achieve gender equality and empower all girls and women.

# SDG 4

## Target 4.5

By 2030...  
Eliminate gender  
disparities in  
education.



# Finger Survey: Where do you stand on gender issues?

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You will see some statements about gender.

If you.....

- ....agree: lift 0 fingers
- ....half-agree: lift 1 finger
- ....disagree: lift 2 fingers



# Finger Survey: Your position on gender

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<b>Agree:</b>	<b>0 fingers</b>
<b>Half agree:</b>	<b>1 finger</b>
<b>Disagree:</b>	<b>2 fingers</b>

1. Sex and gender are the same thing.
2. Boys are often better in mathematics and science than girls are.
3. Nowadays women and men with similar jobs earn equal pay.
4. As women's rights have increased, men seem to have less status and position in society.
5. When making decisions, men tend to be more rational while women tend to be more emotional.



# How many fingers are you holding up?

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**Let us know in the chat box!**

## **0-3 fingers:**

You are at the start of your exploration of gender inequality. This webinar will provide a good foundation.



## **4-7 fingers:**

You are well into your journey of exploring gender topics. This webinar will propel you forward on the journey.



## **8-10 fingers:**

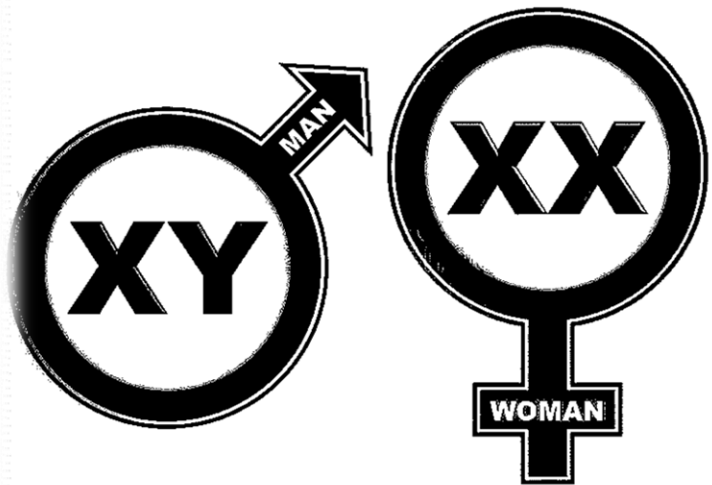
You are a champion of gender equality! Keep exploring and spread the word. Remember, we all have subconscious biases.





# Sex

- Biological differences determined by nature
- Not easily changeable



# Gender

- Socially constructed identities, roles and symbols
- Changes over time and varies between communities



**BOYS  
BATHROOM**



**GIRLS  
BATHROOM**

# Other takeaways from the finger survey

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- Gender gaps in Maths and Sciences are shaped not by natural ability but by gender norms, biases and stereotypes. \*
- Women earn 23 percent less than men for doing similar work. \*\*
- Men do not lose their status as women's rights increase.
- Perceptions of gendered personality traits (rational men vs. emotional women) are socially constructed.

\* **Source:** <https://www.unicef.org/globalinsight/stories/mapping-gender-equality-stem-school-work>

\*\* **Source:** <https://www.un.org/en/observances/equal-pay-day>



# Quiz: Gender inequality by the numbers

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Share your answers in the chat box!

1. How much time do women spend on unpaid housework and care work compared to men?

A) Women spend 2 times as many hours as men.

B) Women spend 2.5 times as many hours.

C) Women spend 5 times as many hours.



# Gender inequality by the numbers

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2. What is the share of women in parliaments around the world?

A) 48 percent

B) 34 percent

C) 26 percent



# Gender inequality by the numbers

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3. What percent of women have been victims of physical/sexual violence by a husband or partner?

A) 15 percent

B) 20 percent

C) 25 percent



(The number is likely much higher due to underreporting)

# Gender inequality by the numbers

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4. How much more common are child brides compared to child grooms?

A) Double (2 times more common)

B) Triple ( 3 times more common)

C) Six times more common 

(19% of girls are forced to marry compared to 3% of boys)

# Gender in (Language) Education

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## Target 4.5

By 2030... Eliminate gender disparities in education.

### According to NEP 2020:

“While the Indian education system has made steady progress towards bridging gender and social category gaps in all levels of school education, **large disparities still remain.**”

\*Source: NEP (2020) [https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/nep//NEP\\_2020.pdf](https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/nep//NEP_2020.pdf)

The classroom is still part of the problem.  
We can make it part of the solution.

# An experiment on gender perceptions was carried out in the UK:

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A group of children aged 5-7 were asked to draw pictures and create identities for:

- a surgeon
- a pilot
- a fire fighter

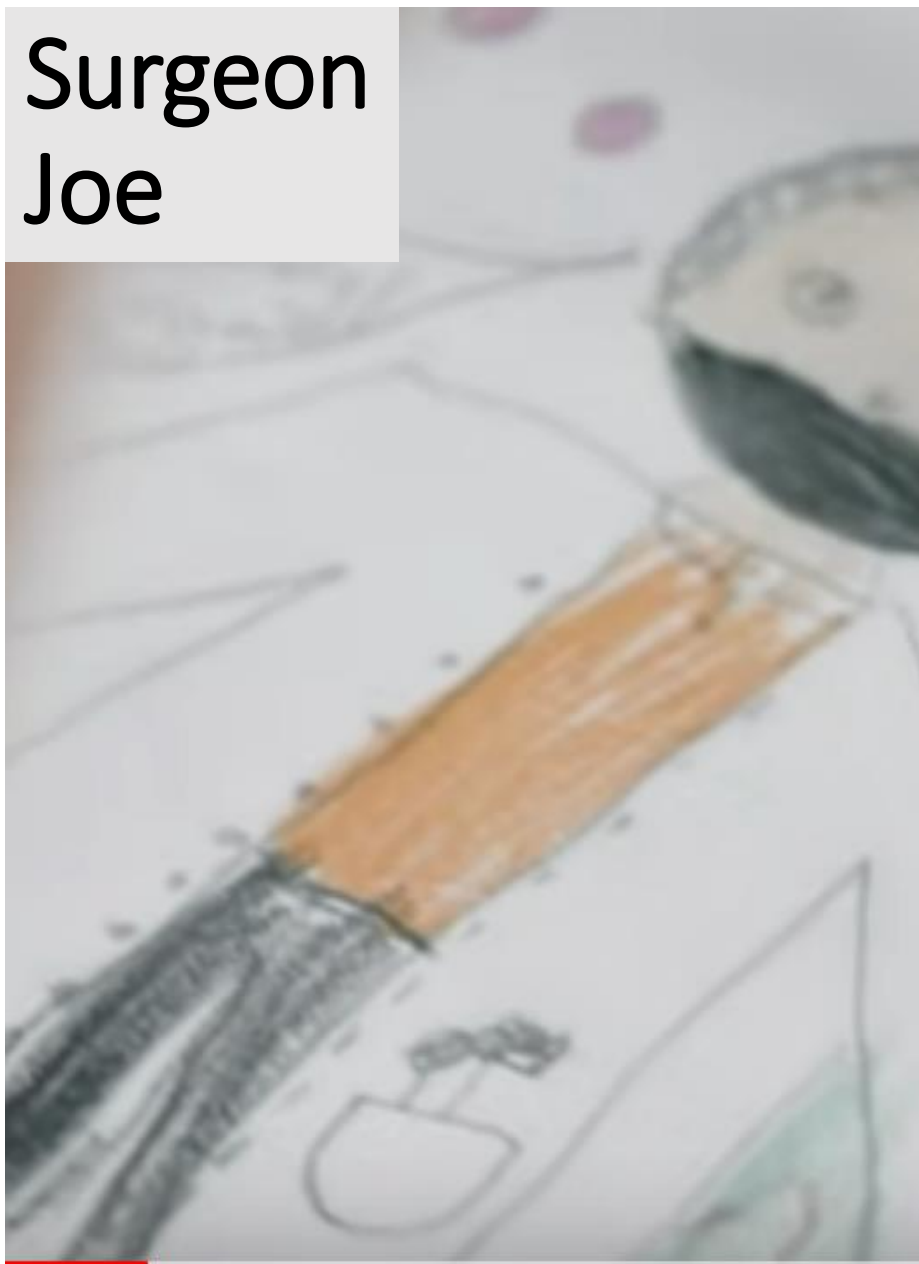
Here is what the typical student drew:

Link to video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qv8VZVP5csA>





Surgeon  
Joe



Pilot  
Tom



Firefighter  
Matt



# The children drew 66 pictures:

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How many do you think they drew as....

women?



men ?



**Share your ideas  
in the chat box!**

The children then had some visitors.





Surgeon  
Tansin



Firefighter  
Lucy



Pilot  
Lauren



# So what? This reflects the reality children see.

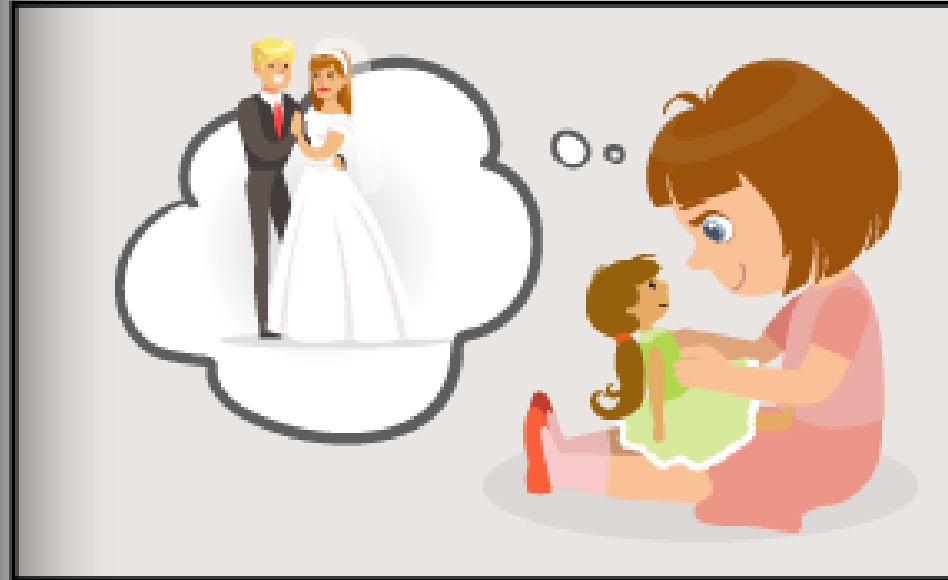
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- Children from age 6 often decide which jobs they can and cannot do later in life.
- This decision is based on gender and other social stereotypes they have about which people do certain jobs.

**Source:** Higher Education Policy Institute (2021) <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2021/12/14/new-research-on-the-stereotypes-formed-at-a-young-age-their-long-term-impacts-and-what-can-be-done-to-tackle-them-successfully/>

## Where do these stereotypes come from?





# Gender Representation in English Textbooks

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What percent of characters in Indian English textbooks published by NCERT\* are female?

??%

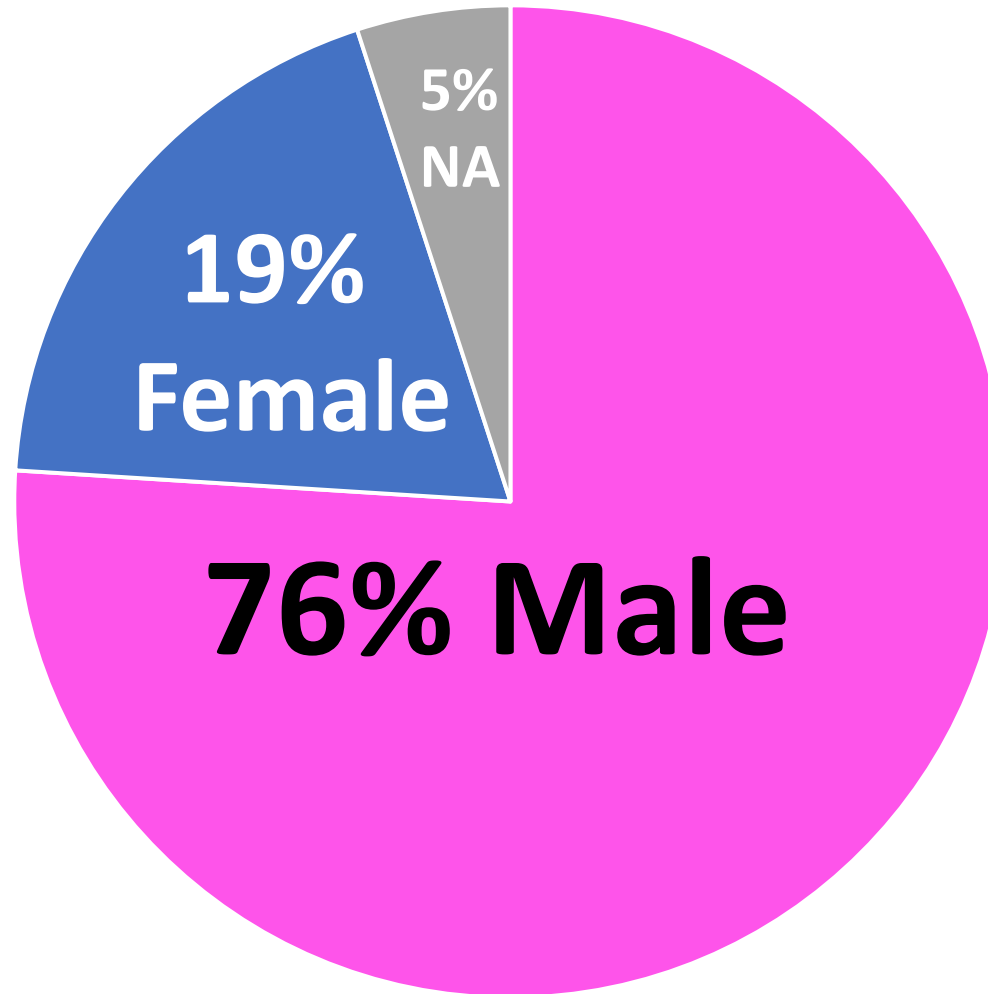
Share your ideas  
in the chat box!

\*NCERT = National Council for Educational Research and Training (India)

**Source:** Bose, P., & Gao, X. (2022). Cultural Representations in Indian English Language Teaching Textbooks. SAGE Open, 12(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221082102>

# Gender Representation in NCERT English Textbooks

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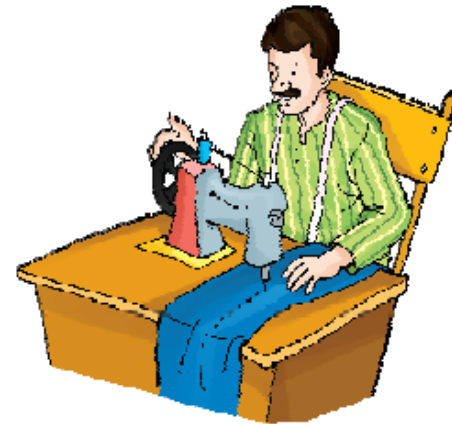
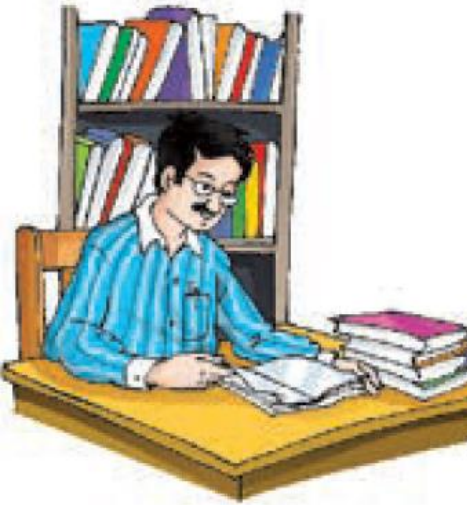


# Gender Representation in Marigold Textbooks

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- You are going to see ten images of people doing jobs.
- You have ten seconds to study the picture and identify the jobs you see.



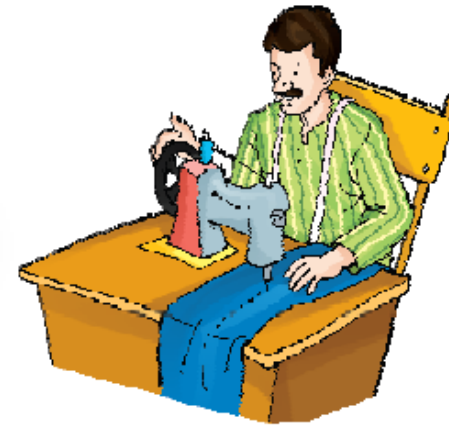
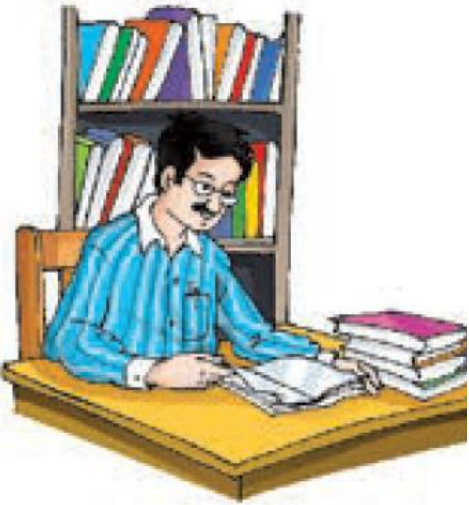


# How many jobs were represented by women? Which ones?

Share your ideas in the chat box!

- Pilot
- Driver
- Police officer
- Dentist/Dental Surgeon
- Teacher
- Letter carrier
- Librarian
- Musician
- Tailor
- Nurse





# National Council for Educational Research and Training



जेंडर अध्ययन विभाग  
Department of Gender Studies



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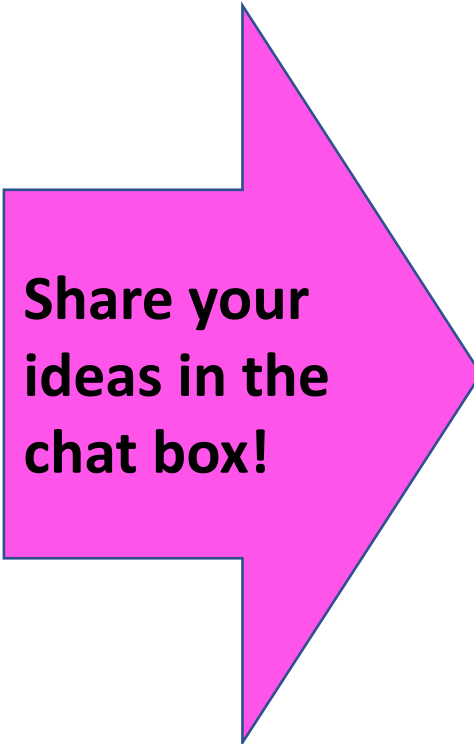
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# This is the gender-biased term:

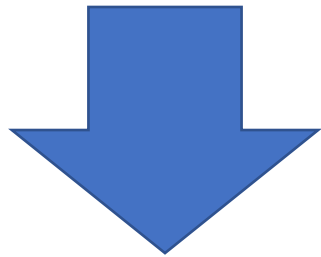
# What is the gender-inclusive term?



# How to neutralise gender biased pronouns?

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An entrepreneur is someone who works for ~~himself~~.



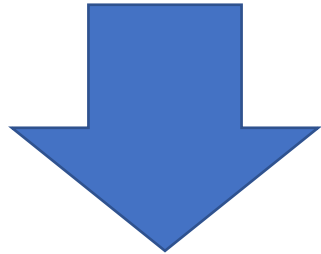
Entrepreneurs are people who work for themselves.

- pluralise the subject and change to a plural pronoun

# How to neutralise gender biased pronouns?

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The CEO is the highest-ranking employee in any organisation. **He** reports to the Board of Directors.



The CEO is the highest-ranking employee in any organisation. **They** report to the Board of Directors

- *They/them...* are often used as singular gender-neutral pronouns.



# What we say to students matters.

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Why might teachers avoid saying these to students?

- “What a pretty girl.”
- “You’re a strong boy, aren’t you?”
- “Don’t cry like a girl!”

**Share your ideas  
in the chat box!**

What teachers should say to all students:

- Well done, excellent.
- Good job!
- Are you okay? What’s wrong?



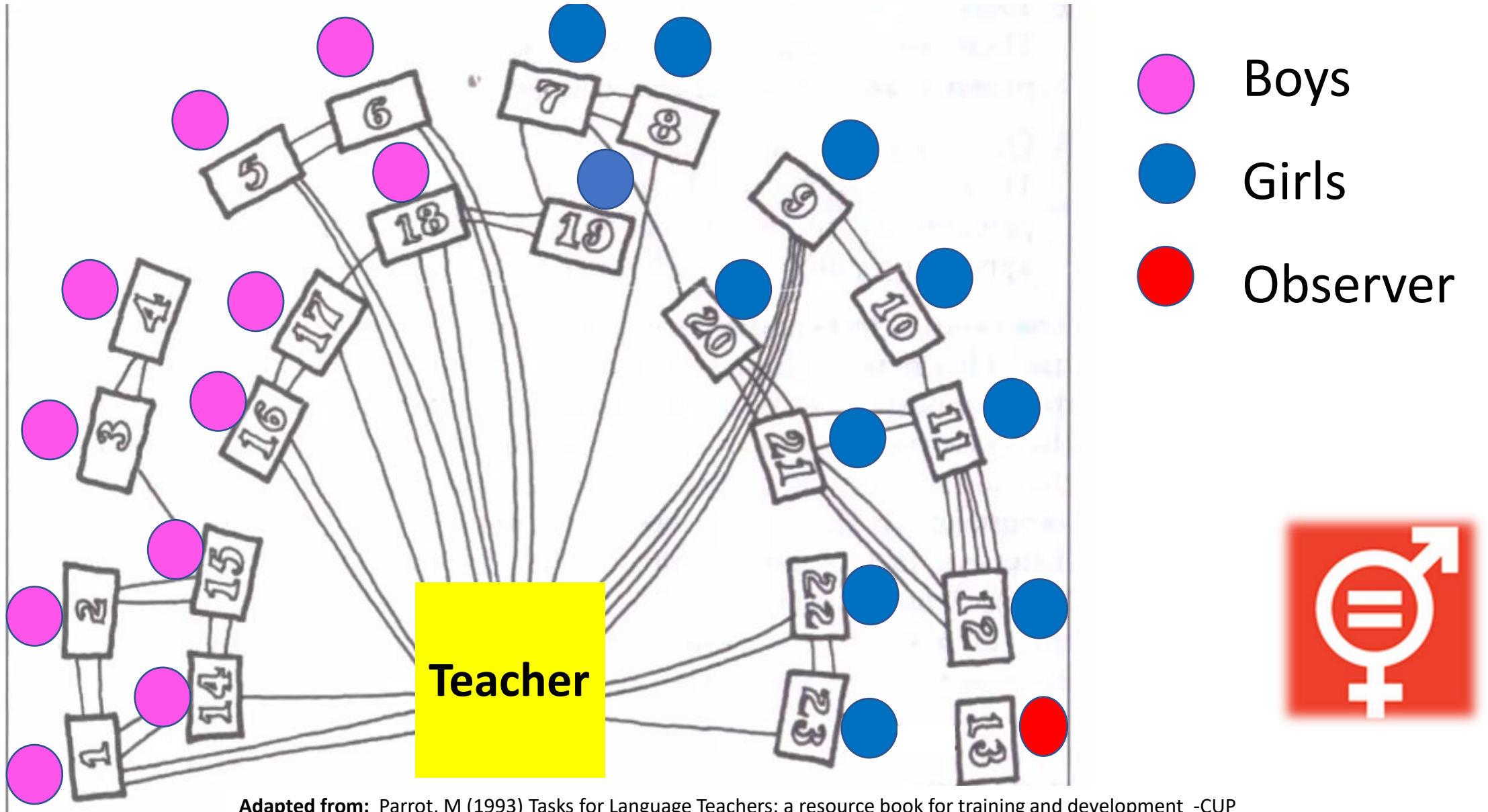
# Other ideas from NCERT for gender inclusion

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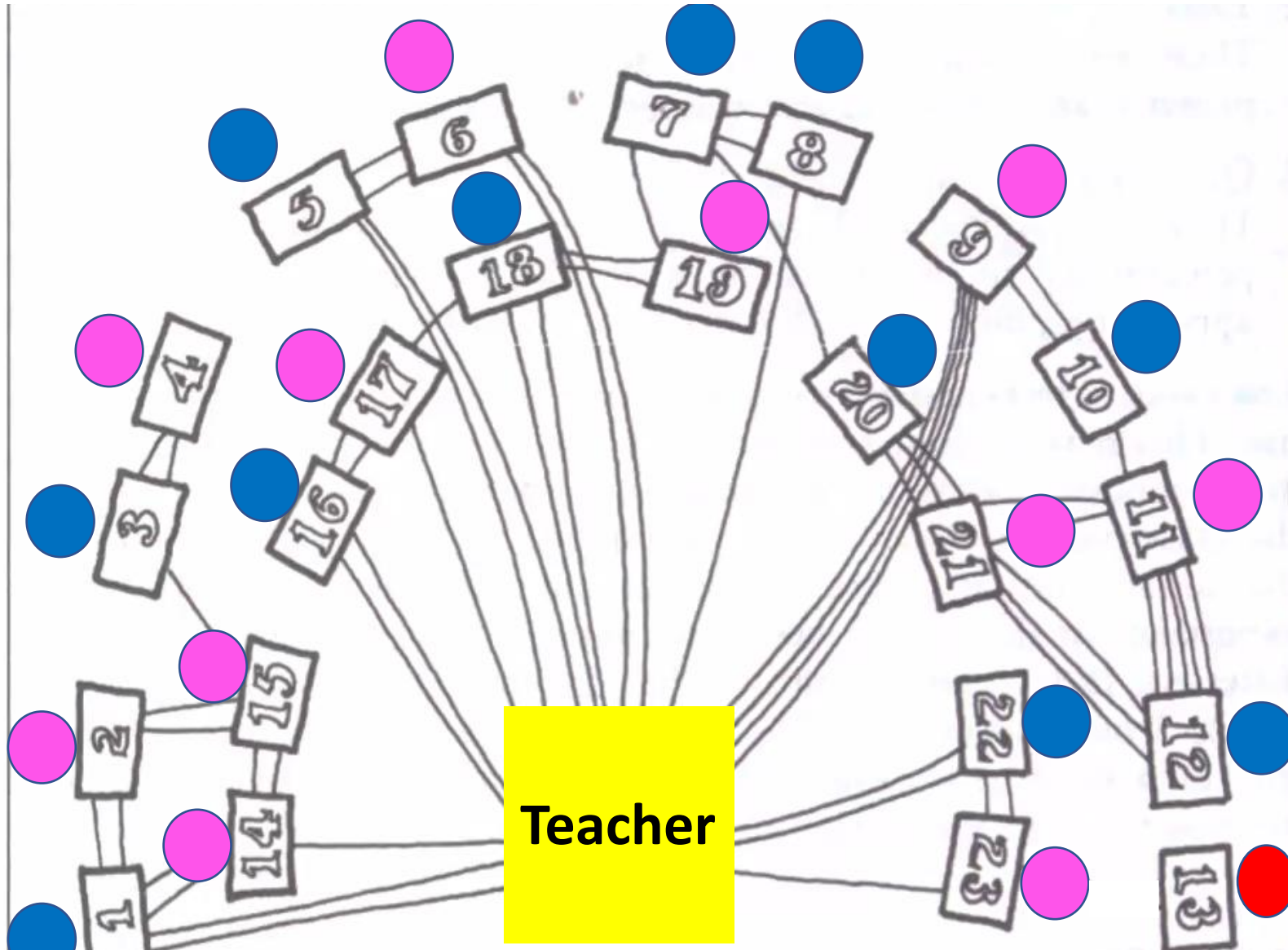
- Tell stories with proactive females as leaders, heroes and agents of change
- Ensure gender inclusive role plays (e.g. girls can play the CEO, firefighter, superhero etc.)
- Ensure girls have leadership and organizational roles equally to boys
- Ensure equal participation between boys and girls



# Tracking (unequal) participation



# Tracking (unequal) participation



- Boys
- Girls
- Observer



**Equality** can be defined in different ways:



**Achieve** gender equality and  
**empower** all women and girls.

# EQUALITY



Teachers often interpret equality like this.

But this type of equality is not always inclusive.



# EQUITY

Therefore, we need to start thinking about equity.



## EQUALITY



<https://www.ywcautah.org/>

Everyone gets the same.

## EQUITY



Everyone gets what they need to have **equal opportunity**.



# Equality or equity?

Share your ideas  
in the chat box!

**1** is the long-term goal of fairness for all genders.

**2** means providing extra support to those who need it.

**3** measures help achieve gender **4**.



# Equality or equity?

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Equality is the long-term goal of fairness for all genders.

Equity means providing extra support to those who need it.

Equity measures help achieve gender equality.

Let's see some examples of equity in language teaching.



# English class at a women's college in Andhra Pradesh

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The students, working in groups, were asked to brainstorm the following question:

**What is a hero?**



What is a hero?

Ans: He should have courage

He should have a good character.

He should be an example to others.

He should have good attitude.

# What is a HERO?

Ans: For a girl it's always her 'DAD'  
a Hero. We feel "a person who is  
Inspiring & Impactful with Good character  
& traits, who is more magnanimous.  
Lastly it's him & his deeds  
makes him a (HE)RO".

## Hero :-

- \* An individual who makes an effort to subside one's negativity impacting on their life both physically and mentally.
- \* He who is admired for his social effort

Hero is an important role in  
everyone's life, a man who  
gives motivation and also

supporting. A Hero is a warrior  
who secures our life.

# The principle of equity was applied to this lesson:

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- The students were asked to tell their group about a woman who they look up to as a **shero**.
- At the beginning of each class, one student makes a short presentation about her shero.
- This simple exercise gives students a more inclusive idea about who can be a role model.





# THE WORLD'S LARGEST LESSON INDIA

LESSON PLAN:  
AN INTRODUCTION TO GENDER EQUALITY



## Chakra The Invincible and Mighty Girl in the Great Switcheroo

- Lesson plan on gender equality
- Video and comic book

Resource: <https://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/WLL-India-Gender-Equality.pdf>

Video: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/4112678/video/180170695>



GET UP HERE  
AT ONCE,  
LEELA! YOU  
STILL HAVE  
CHORES  
TO DO!

BUT MOM, I  
WANTED TO  
PLAY FOR  
A BIT--

CHORES  
COME FIRST!  
GET UP HERE  
NOW!





UHH... MOM?  
I THINK I NEED  
SOME HELP...

LEELA!



TeachingEnglish lesson

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# SDG 5: Taking liberties



# Who has these rights in your community? Who does not? Why?

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1. Being able to give your opinion openly
2. Being able to choose if, when and who to marry
3. Being free from violence and discrimination
4. Being able to go out where you want to
5. Being able to choose your career



# Breaking News English

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- [Woman to catch up with men's pay in 200 years](#)
  - [Girls do 160 million more hours of chores than boys](#)
  - [Cheaper rail tickets for Germany's women](#)
  - [Hollywood women fight sexual harassment](#)
  - [Rwanda - world's first women-led country](#)
- Bank of lessons on current events around the world including gender issues
  - Skills and vocabulary focus
  - Different levels
  - Includes audio







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Image © Mat Wright

**Gender equality  
in language  
education**



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**#GlobalGenderEquality**

**Free course**



# A final thought...

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“I am uncompromising in the matter of Women’s rights... I should treat the daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality.”

Mahatma Gandhi 17<sup>th</sup> October 1929



# Gender in Language Education



## Thank you

**Thomas Kral**

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