

Career Girls: Importance of Women Behind the Camera

Lesson Topic:

Importance of Women Behind the Camera

Lesson Objective:

Students will be able to explain the importance of having women and girls in the film-making industry and provide examples of actions they can take to shift the current gender imbalance.

Warm-up Activity:

1. Ask students to think about their favorite movies. Go around the room and have each student share one movie that they love. As students share with the class, keep a list on a piece of chart paper. Duplicative answers are okay but need only be written one time.
2. Allow students access to books, magazines, and/or the internet to research the movie that they selected and find the name of the director.
3. Have each student share the name of the director of their favorite movie. Write these names next to each movie on the chart paper.
4. Ask students if they notice anything interesting about the list. Have them briefly discuss with a partner.
5. Tell students that they will be revisiting this list after the video.

View the Video: "Importance of Women Behind the Camera"

1. Preview the video before sharing it with your students [3:07].
2. Tell students they will be watching the video titled, "Importance of Women Behind the Camera".

3. Explain that the video presents role models talking about the role of women and girls in filmmaking.
4. View the video together and invite students to formulate questions or comments about the concepts discussed in the video and to be prepared to discuss these after viewing the video.

Video Follow-up:

1. Ask students to offer their questions, comments, reactions and responses to the video.
2. Review the chart paper from the warm-up activity. Ensure that students notice that most or all of the directors they listed are men. Share that of the top-grossing films from 2007-2018, only 4.3% of the directors were women.¹
3. Work with the students to discuss the following questions, if they were not already discussed during Step 1.
 - Why is it so important to have women and girls behind the camera?
 - How do you feel after watching the movie and reviewing our warm-up activity chart? Why?
4. Divide students into small groups. Give each group a blank sheet of paper and a writing utensil. Ask each group to brainstorm ideas of things they could do to help change the gender imbalance in the film-industry. (e.g., "Learn more about female writers, directors, and cinematographers," or "Work to become a writer/director/film editor/etc.") Groups should write their ideas on paper and be prepared to share with the class.
5. Allow each group to share their ideas with the class. Students should be prompted to discuss each idea and how it might increase the number of women and girls in the film industry or support women and girls currently working in the industry.

¹ <https://womenandhollywood.com/resources/statistics/2018-statistics>

Extension Activities:

1. Use the “Related Questions to Explore” as discussion springboards or writing prompts to help students further explore the importance of shifting the gender imbalance in the film-industry.
2. Have each student select one idea from the group discussion in the Video Follow-up section to implement. (e.g., “Research and watch films by woman cinematographers,” or “Write a letter of support to a female director.”)
3. Use research methods such as books, magazines, and the internet to discover other industries with gender or racial imbalances. Ask students to research the industries that they are most interested in for their future careers.

Related Questions to Explore:

- Why do you think there are more men and boys in the film industry than women and girls? Do you think there are other industries with the same problem?
- Other than the careers of the role models, what other careers are in the film making industry? Where could you go to find more information about film industry careers?
- It’s important to never give up when faced with an obstacle. We learned that the negative opinion of other people can be an obstacle. What kind of negative things might people say about women or girls in the film industry? Why are these negative things incorrect?

- What differences might there be in a story written by a man and a story written by a woman? Why is it important to have both types of stories be shown in movies and on TV?
- What challenges might women and girls face to entering the film industry? Brainstorm possible methods to overcome these challenges.
- Do you think it will be easier or harder for females to enter the film industry in the future? Explain your answer.

Ideas for Future Lessons/Activities Related to Women and Girls in Filmmaking:

1. Literature-Based Learning: Biographies and Autobiographies about Women in Film
2. Conducting and Recording Interviews with Real Life Inspiring Women in the Film Industry
3. Taking a Stand: Creating Stories, Films, Plays, or Podcasts Written by Girls
4. Women and Girls in Cinema: Focusing on Female Contributions to the Film Industry
5. Understanding Historical Context: Investigating the Causes of Male Dominated Industries
6. Activism in Action: Educating Others about Gender and Race Imbalances in the Work Force