
Gender Roles: Tools for Empowerment or Chains of Conformity?



Fannie Lou Hamer, a leader of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, speaks before the Credentials Committee of the Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, August 22, 1964. (AP Photo/stf) Source: <http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/sayitplain/flhamer.html>

Supporting Questions

1. How is power traditionally connected to gender?
2. In what ways have women challenged traditional gender roles?
3. How are expectations around gender evolving for women?

Gender Roles Inquiry

Compelling Question	Do gender roles empower or limit the agency of women?
Standards and Practices	<p>USH.25A. Explain actions taken by people to expand economic opportunities and political rights for racial, ethnic, gender, and religious groups in American society.</p> <p>USH.25C. Explain how the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, gender, and religious groups shape American culture.</p> <p>USH.28B. Analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology through sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing and contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations, making predictions, drawing inferences, and drawing conclusions.</p>
Staging the Compelling Question	Participate in a class discussion on the differences between “boy” and “girl” children’s toys after viewing a video.

Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
How is power traditionally connected to gender?	In what ways have women challenged traditional gender roles?	How are expectations around gender evolving for women?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
Complete a primary source jigsaw graphic organizer for the four sources provided in small groups.	Write an ACES draft paragraph that describes how individual women have challenged gender roles.	Write an evidence-based claim and counterclaim that describe how gender expectations are changing for women.
Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources
<p>Source A: “The Two Sexes”</p> <p>Source B: “The Emergence of ‘Women’s’ Sphere”</p> <p>Source C: “Home Washing Machine & Wringer”</p> <p>Source D: “Power Dressing”</p>	<p>Source A: “Answer by the Poet...”</p> <p>Source B: “Fannie Lou Hamer’s Powerful Testimony”</p> <p>Source C: “Alicia Garza on the Beauty and Burden of Black Lives Matter”</p>	<p>Source A: “Testimonios”</p> <p>Source B: “Latino Attitudes about Women and Society”</p> <p>Source C: “I’ve Long Feared Being Labeled ‘An Angry Black Woman’”</p> <p>Source D: “Power Dressing”</p>

Summative Performance Task	ARGUMENT Do gender roles empower or limit the agency of women? Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that answers the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from sources while acknowledging competing views.
	EXTENSION Create a graphic illustration or series of illustrations depicting a specific way that gender expectations can empower or limit the choices and actions of female students.
Taking Informed Action	<p>UNDERSTAND Research a school policy or rule (e.g., dress code enforcement, discipline practices, cell phone use) that may disproportionately affect female students.</p> <p>ASSESS Evaluate the extent to which the school policy affects female students differently than male students.</p> <p>ACT Write a letter or email to a school administrator or give a speech/presentation to the school board that explains the ways in which the school policy may be harmful to female students.</p>

Staging the Compelling Question

Compelling Question	Do gender roles empower or limit the agency of women?
Featured Sources	Source A: "Girl Toys vs Boy Toys: The Experiment," (16 August 2017). <i>BBC Stories</i> . Accessed from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWu44AqF0il&t=15s
Possible Discussion Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were your initial thoughts or reactions to the video? Did anything surprise you? • How do you think toy choices might influence children's perceptions of gender roles? • What stereotypes about boys and girls did you notice in the video? How do these stereotypes affect children's play and development? • Do you think the division of toys into "boy toys" and "girl toys" is harmful or helpful? Why? • How might the toys children play with affect their interests and future career aspirations?
Discussion Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think-Pair-Share • QSSSA • Turn and Talk • Snowball Discussion • Power Ball

Supporting Question 1

Supporting Question	How is power traditionally connected to gender?
Formative Performance Task	Complete a primary source jigsaw graphic organizer for the four sources provided in small groups.
Featured Sources	<p>Source A: "'The Two Sexes,' <i>Godey's Lady's Book</i>, vol. 1, No. 300, p. 276," 1830. Hathi Trust. Accessed from: "The Two Sexes" - Women & the American Story (nyhistory.org)</p> <p>Source B: "The Emergence of 'Women's Sphere.'" <i>The Rise of American Industry</i>, (excerpts). Accessed from: https://www.ushistory.org/us/25e.asp</p> <p>Source C: "Home Washing Machine & Wringer," ca. 1869. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. Accessed from: Home Improvements - Women & the American Story (nyhistory.org)</p> <p>OPTIC's Document: Home Washing Machine OPTIC Image.docx</p> <p>Source D: "Power Dressing" Yves Saint Laurent, Le Rive Gauche perfume ad, 1983. Accessed from Power Dressing - Women & the American Story (nyhistory.org)</p> <p>Note: Women & the American Story provide suggested activities and questions that can be utilized to support students in analyzing the images. There is also background information about why "power dressing" became popular in the 1970's and 1980's.</p>

Supporting Question 2

Supporting Question	In what ways have women challenged traditional gender roles?
Formative Performance Task	Write an ACES draft paragraph that describes how individual women have challenged gender roles.
Featured Sources	<p>Source A: de la Cruz, Sor Juana Ines. 1691. "Answer by the Poet to the Most illustrious Sister Filotea de la Cruz," Translated by William Little, 2008. (excerpts) Answer by the Poet to the Most illustrious Sister Filotea de la Cruz.docx</p>
	<p>Source B: "Fannie Lou Hamer's Powerful Testimony," Freedom Summer. Accessed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07PwNVCZCcY</p>
	<p>Source C: Hunt, Elle. "Alicia Garza on the Beauty and the Burden of Black Lives Matter." <i>The Guardian</i>, February 2nd, 2016. (excerpts) Accessed at: https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/sep/02/alicia-garza-on-the-beauty-and-the-burden-of-black-lives-matter</p>
	<p>Source D: "The Role of Women – Traditional Knowledge," BentArrowYEG. Accessed at: The Role of Women - Traditional Knowledge (youtube.com)</p>
	<p>Suggested Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic Organizer (teacher created) • Thinking Maps • Library of Congress Primary Source Analysis Tool: Primary Source Analysis Tool (loc.gov)

Screenshot from video:



Supporting Question 3

Supporting Question	How are expectations around gender evolving for women?
Formative Performance Task	Write an evidence-based claim and counterclaim that describes how gender expectations are changing for women.
Featured Sources	<p>Source A: Peña, C. (15 December 2015). "Testimonios of Mexican Immigrant Daughters," Video Production USA. Biographical Documentary (video). Accessed from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZEoHW9HERw.</p>
	<p>Source B: Halpin, J. and Teixeira, R. (9 July 2010). "Latino Attitudes about Women and Society." Center for American Progress. Report. (excerpts). Accessed from: https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/reports/2010/07/09/8152/latino-attitudes-about-women-and-society/</p>
	<p>Source C: Xunis, B. (1 March 2020). "I've Long Feared Being Labeled an 'Angry Black Woman.'" <i>The Lily</i>. Accessed from: https://www.thelily.com/ive-long-feared-being-labeled-an-angry-black-woman-now-im-earning-to-be-true-to-my-emotions/</p>
	<p>Suggested Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Analysis Organizer: Video Analysis Graphic Organizer.docx • Gallery Walk (chunk Source B by titled paragraphs and charts) • Class Discussion (multiple strategies to choose from)

Summative Performance Task

Compelling Question	Do gender roles empower or limit the agency of women?
Formative Performance Task	Construct an argument that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from contemporary sources while acknowledging competing views.

Taking Informed Action

Action Question	Do gender roles empower or limit the agency of women?
Civic Theme	FAIRNESS: Students address questions around equity, justice, and fairness.
Action Task	Write a letter or email to a school administrator or give a speech/presentation to the school board that explains the ways in which the school policy may be harmful to female students.

Appendix A

Paragraph Template

Topic Sentence/Claim (1-2 sentence evidence-based statement that answers the question)
Fact/Piece of Evidence/Reference to Source #1:
<i>This source is significant because... Furthermore/In addition...</i>
Fact/Piece of Evidence/Reference to Source #2:
<i>This source is significant because... Furthermore/In addition...</i>
Fact/Piece of Evidence/Reference to Source #3:
<i>This source is significant because... Furthermore/In addition...</i>
Summarizing Sentence
<i>All of these sources show that/support (connection to claim/topic sentence) ...</i>

Appendix B

Paragraph Template

Do Gender Roles Empower or Limit Women?

Individual Thesis Statement:

Individual Evidence:

Individual Explanation of Reasoning:

Summary Sentence: As a result...