GIRLS IN EDUCATION
Child-led learning resource
We’ll practise some critical-thinking skills which are important for understanding and discussing the news.

ABOUT

This activity helps you to think about girls and education around the world.

This resource links to these UN Sustainable Development Goals

You will be able to explore interesting questions like:
• Why is education important?
• Why can’t some girls go to school?
• What might happen if girls got the same educational opportunities as boys?

You can give this a go on your own, but if there’s someone at home who can join you, why not work together? You could also connect with someone by telephone or video.

Ready? Let’s go!
1. Order these things from “most important to me” to “least important to me”.

2. Now imagine you have never been to school. Would these things be “a little harder”, “a lot harder” or “impossible” for you? Sort them into three groups.

3. What would your life be like without education? What would your future be like?
Even in 2021 girls around the world still receive less education than boys. Read the facts and share what you think about each one by choosing the emoji that best shows how you feel. Don’t forget to give reasons for your opinions!

- **1/3** of girls aged 10-19 from the poorest families around the world have never been to school.

- **12 million** girls are forced to leave school to get married each year. That’s nearly one every three seconds.

- Globally, 75% of girls complete lower secondary school. In poorer countries, this number drops to around **33%**.

- Girls are **4X** less likely to attend school than boys from the same background.

- Girls are **1.5X** more likely to be excluded from primary school than boys.
Although the situation is improving, in 2020 before the covid-19 pandemic, 130 million girls were not attending school.

Imagine being told you can’t go to school because...

- “It’s a waste of money to send a girl to school!”
- “It’s not safe!”
- “Your mother and grandmother didn’t go!”
- “You have to get married instead!”
- “Only boys need an education!”
- “You need to help around the house!”

Put each reason on this scale and explain your decision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>I don’t have a strong reaction to this</th>
<th>I have a strong reaction to this</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>“It’s a waste of money to send a girl to school!”</td>
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Which is the most acceptable reason for a girl not going to school? Which is the least acceptable?

Which of these would be the hardest/easiest to argue against? Why?
CHANGING OPINIONS

These three characters all disagree with girls’ education:

- **A parent** from a poor country
- **A politician** from a country where traditionally girls don’t go to school
- **A girl** from a country where traditionally girls don’t go to school

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**Choose one and put yourself in their shoes.**

1. Why might this person disagree with girls receiving an education?
2. Can you change their mind? Read the information on the next page and write a speech to persuade them that girls should go to school. Which of the facts would you use to convince each character? Why?
CHANGING OPINIONS

Women who went to **primary school** can earn up to **19%** more money than those who didn’t.

On average, women who are uneducated earn **50%** less than women who went to **secondary school**.

In countries where it is less common for girls to go to school, infant deaths could be **50%** lower if all girls received at least 12 years of education.

Some experts believe that if every girl could go to secondary school, it would **end child marriage**.

In countries where boys and girls receive an equal education, it is common for girls to perform better than boys. For example in the UK girls are **14%** more likely than boys to pass exams in English and maths.

Some countries lose more than **$1 billion** a year by not educating girls to the same level as boys.

**CHALLENGE**: How might a boy at secondary school in the UK feel about these facts? How would a boy from a country where it’s normal for girls not to go to school feel about them?
MALALA’S STORY

In 2008 Malala Yousafzai from Pakistan was banned from school for being a girl. She protested against this. In 2012 she was shot on her way home from school...but she survived. She now lives in the UK and campaigns for girls’ education all over the world.

Choose one of the speech bubbles. Draw a picture to go with it that helps to show what Malala means.

Why is it important to speak up about something, even if the issue does not affect you?

“Let us pick up our books and our pens, they are the most powerful weapons.”

“I raise up my voice – not so I can shout but so that those without a voice can be heard...we cannot succeed when half of us are held back.”

Read more of Malala’s story: malala.org/malalas-story

CHALLENGE: What would you like to say about girls’ education? How else could you share your opinion?

“Let us pick up our books and our pens, they are the most powerful weapons.”

“I raise up my voice – not so I can shout but so that those without a voice can be heard...we cannot succeed when half of us are held back.”
REFLECTION

What key vocabulary should we use when talking about this issue?

What perspectives do we need to see the whole picture?

What might happen if people stop fighting for gender equality in education?

If we had the power to do anything, what could we do to make things fairer for girls in education?
SUPER-REFLECTION

- Not all girls are affected in the same way. Can you explain why?
- How might gender equality in education help to create gender equality in other areas?
- Will the pandemic make the situation better or worse? Why?

NOW...

**Do some research**
Find out how gender equality has changed in the past 100 years

**Have a discussion**
Talk to someone else about the issues covered in these activities

**Become the teacher!**
See if you can go through these activities again, as the teacher, with somebody else in your household

**CHALLENGE:** Write 100 words about why you think it’s important to think about gender equality in education. You can ask an adult to share this with us on Twitter @Econ_Foundation