

The International Day of the Girl — Teaching Guide

About the Book

The International Day of the Girl encourages children to recognize their own potential to make change, providing both a perfect lesson in social justice and a celebration of girl power.

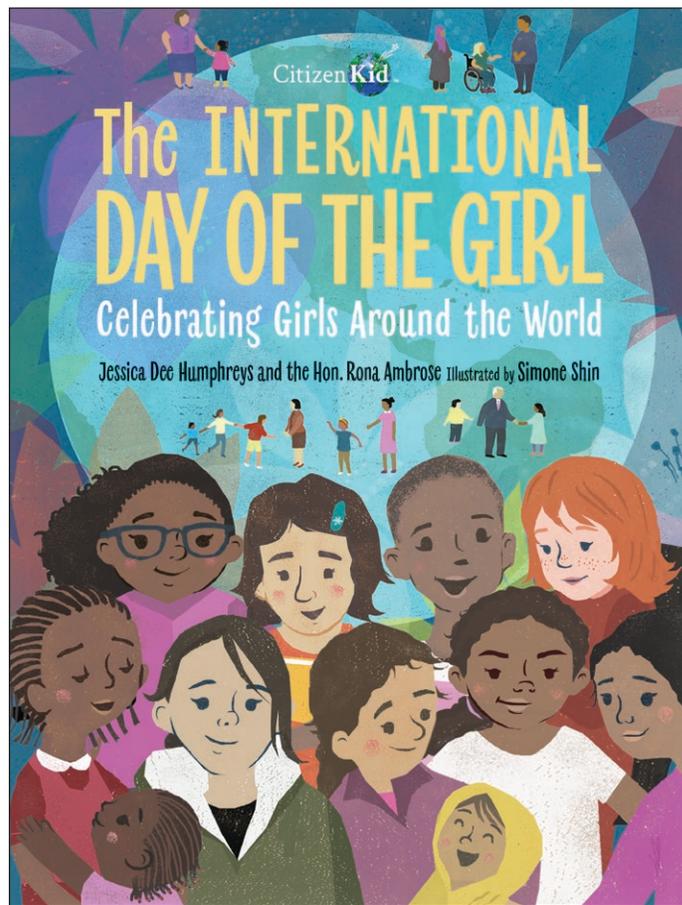
The United Nations designated October 11th as the International Day of the Girl, a day to increase awareness of problems that affect girls — and only girls — around the world and to encourage progress toward gender equality. Nine stories inspired by the real-life experiences of girls from all over the globe bring to light the importance of this day.

The International Day of the Girl is a useful reference for the United Nations' 5th goal in their 17 Sustainable Development Goals to Transform Our World, which intend to “promote prosperity while protecting the planet.” Goal 5 is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

About the Authors

JESSICA DEE HUMPHREYS specializes in international humanitarian and children's issues. Her work has appeared in publications such as the *New York Times*, *Maclean's*, *Canada's History* magazine, the *National Post* and the *Globe and Mail*. She has a master's degree in English literature from Queen's University, and she began her career at the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

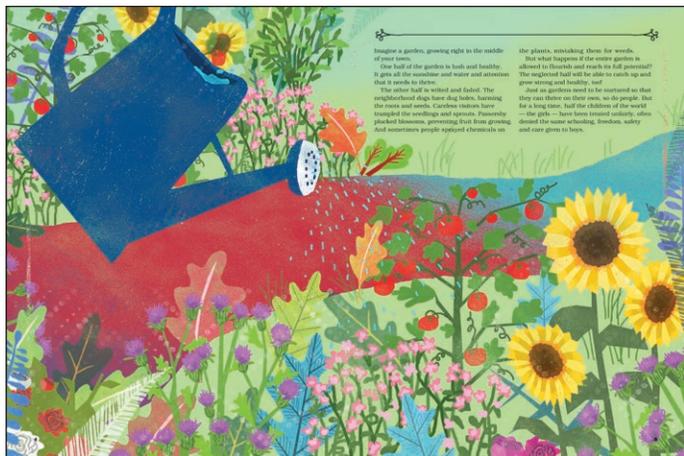
THE HON. RONA AMBROSE is the former Leader of Canada's Official Opposition, and a passionate advocate for women and girls around the world. She led the global movement to create the International Day of the Girl at the United Nations, and believes that if we teach girls their rights at a young age, they will be more likely to exercise them as they grow up. This belief motivated her to co-author *The International Day of the Girl*.



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About the Illustrator

SIMONE SHIN is an award-winning illustrator and a graduate of Boston University and the Art Center College of Design. Simone currently lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.



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Outline of Activities

Activity One: Group and Choral Read

Activity Two: Map the Stories

Activity Three: Telling My Story

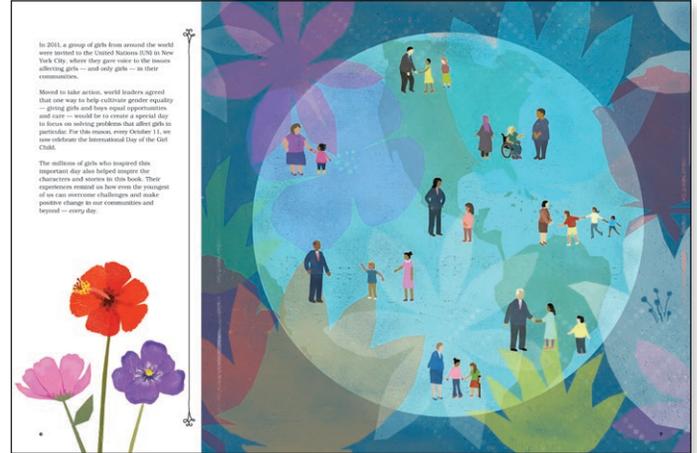
Activity One: Group and Choral Read Whole Group

If your group of students includes readers, conduct a choral reading of *The International Day of the Girl*. Begin by reading aloud the title page and the introductory pages (pp. 5–7) to the group. Then, starting with the spread on pages 8–9, go around the room and ask one student to read the story and another to read the sidebar.

If your group is too young for that, read the entire book aloud to them, calling out important moments as described below.

- Flora:** Practice pronouncing the word capoeira as explained in the book. Engage students in a discussion of why training in self-defense might help girls like Flora.
- Hana:** Define the word “literate” for the group and explain that its opposite — “illiterate” — describes people who never had the chance to learn to read. Ask students to tell you the title of their favorite book and to talk briefly about how they would feel if they couldn’t read, or if they never had the opportunity to learn to read.
- Abuya:** Allow for some silliness in this conversation when you ask students to explain why it’s embarrassing not to have a private bathroom. Explain that an outhouse is simply an outdoor toilet with walls, a little bit like portable toilets they may have seen near playgrounds or construction sites. Remind students that in addition to offering privacy, outhouses and indoor washrooms help reduce the transmission of some diseases.
- Liliya:** Ask students to talk about some of their digital experiences. Do they play any games that could have applications to real life? Let their imaginations roam with this question, as some games don’t seem to teach real-life skills at first. Ask them to describe what they do online or in game settings, and see if you can help them draw the connections. For students who don’t play online or digital games, ask them to think about board games or card games they play, and how those might apply to the real world, too.
- Sokanon:** Public speaking is HARD. Even teachers feel nervous about talking in front of groups of children and parents. Ask students to describe a time they had to speak to a group and how they felt. Do they agree that Sokanon is brave?
- Mallika:** Ask if your students have ever felt that a custom or ritual was unfair. Maybe their older sibling gets first pick when there’s something to share. Engage with them about how they might talk to their families about how this makes them feel.
- Keeya:** Ask students to raise their hands if they’ve ever been to a wedding. Would they describe the people getting married as children or adults? What do they think about Keeya’s hope not to get married when she’s still a kid?
- Zarah:** Engage students in a conversation about laughter. Have they ever laughed during a difficult time and found it made them feel better? Do they think laughter can help us find solutions to difficult problems?
- Aster:** Aster notices that science is often shown to be “for boys.” Is anything else gendered in that way? Ask students if they ever thought a toy or a TV show wasn’t for them because the gender shown on the toy box or in the TV show is different from their own.

Finish by reading from the spread on pages 26–27 and reviewing the timeline on pages 28–29.



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Activity Two: Map the Stories Small Groups

Divide students into three small groups. Assign each group a region of the world. Ask them to review the pages in the book where their region is discussed and then to find the countries on a map.

Africa

- Kenya (p. 13)
- Nigeria (p. 21)

The Americas

- Brazil (p. 9)
- Canada (p. 17)
- United States (p. 25)

Asia and Eurasia

- Afghanistan (p. 10)
- India (p. 18)
- Syria (p. 22)
- Russia (p. 14)



Bring the whole class back together and ask each group to point to their countries on the map. Make a star, place a pushpin, or click to highlight each country on the map.

Explain that girls all over the world are working hard to change their circumstances. Ask each group to describe the challenges girls face in the countries they found on the map.

Activity Three: Telling My Story Individual Work

Ask students to reflect on the nine stories about girls around the world. Now ask them to think about their own lives. Students should now be given time to write a story or draw a picture that reveals something about their personal lives and experiences.

They can write about a challenge they faced, an obstacle they overcame, or a difficult time they experienced. Students can also write or draw about a happy time — a time they worked hard for something and got it.

You may want to check in with individual students during this activity and see if they're struggling to think of a story to tell or a picture to draw. Ask them some of the questions below to get them started:

- Have you ever done something you didn't think you could do at first? What was it?
- Describe an argument you had with a sibling, cousin or friend.
- Have you ever stood up for something or someone else? Has someone else ever stood up for you? What happened?
- Have you ever built anything with your own hands? Or in a digital universe? What was it?
- Do you practice a sport or a martial art? Describe it to someone who has never heard of that sport.
- Write about (or draw) a time you made someone laugh.

Once everyone has completed their story or drawing, bring the group back together and ask those who are comfortable to share. Stories should be read aloud to the group, and drawings should be shown and described in some detail. Remind students about how Sokanon taught us that public speaking is hard! They are all very brave for sharing.

