

Improving Japan's Economic Status by Giving Women Choices
KKC Fellowship Lesson Plan

Subjects: Geography, Economics, Women's & Gender Studies

Grade level: 9, 10, 11, 12

Time: 1-90 minute block, or 2-45 minute periods

Objectives:

- ❖ Students will identify primary factors impacting Japan's economy.
- ❖ Students will analyze women's role in helping improve Japan's economy.
- ❖ Students will compare and contrast the opportunities and challenges women face in the workforce in Japan and the US.

Materials:

- Computer & projector--Instructor
- Google presentation: [How to Improve Japan's Economy: Give Women Choices](#)
- Handouts
 - [Guided notes](#)
 - [The Economist Women in the Workforce Video Questions](#)
 - [The Economist Article: Japanese women and work--Holding back half the nation](#)
 - [Nonfiction Text Graphic Organizer](#)
- Index cards

Special note: During this lesson, it is incredibly important to remember that there is no "woman's" experience. There are countless experiences that women have which may or may not be similar to one another's. Generalizing women's lives as being the same or assuming that all women have the same needs is counterproductive to women's advancement in any society; however, finding shared patterns of experience can help achieve growth for women.

Description of activities within the lesson:

- Think-Ink-Link
 - After giving the students a prompt or set of questions, allow them time to think about the questions WITHOUT writing. After a specified time, students should write their response. When directed, students should share their responses with a peer. It is best to set a visible timer for all three portions of this activity.
- Yes/No/Why?
 - Students are presented with a statement. They must decide whether they agree or disagree with that statement and write a response that begins with either "yes" or "no". The response should restate the prompt, and include a "because statement" to explain the student's rationale. You can specify the number of sentences you expect your students to write in response to the prompt.

Opening Set Bellringer--Think-Ink-Link (Total time 10 minutes)

Allow students at least 30 seconds to think quietly about the questions without writing and 5 minutes to write. Then students should find a partner to discuss their responses, followed by a class discussion about the student's reflections.

- In any society, what measures need to be in place to make it possible for women to work outside of the home?
- Historically, what has caused fear or concern about women working outside the home in the US? Do you think other countries have had similar fears?

Lecture Presentation (Total time 30 minutes including video)

Use the [guided notes](#) to help students follow along as you present the lecture based on the Google Slides presentation: [How to Improve Japan's Economy: Give Women Choices](#).

- Hand out the five questions: [The Economist Women in the Workforce Video Questions](#) to students to complete during the video embedded in the presentation.

Silent reading & graphic organizer completion (Total time 30 minutes)

Students should read [The Economist Article: Japanese women and work--Holding back half the nation](#) (one word was edited to make it more suitable for a high school audience) and complete the [Nonfiction Text Graphic Organizer](#)

- After students complete the graphic organizer they should be given time to discuss with a partner or the entire class about what they found most thought provoking from the article.
- Address any questions students may have after reading the article.

Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Assign students to be in groups of 3-5 students and designate one of them to be the "scribe". The scribe should record responses for the group based on the following questions.

- What is the biggest challenge Japanese women face in trying to participate in the workforce?
- Do you think that the Japanese government's efforts to include women in the workforce will be effective?
- What needs to change in Japanese culture for women to have a better work-life balance?
- What could Japan's government & employers do to better meet women's needs?
- Do you think the US could learn anything from Japan regarding women in the workforce? Do we still share similar problems or have we overcome them?

Whether or not the responses are collected, writing them down ensures a more thorough and thoughtful conversation.

Exit Ticket-Yes/No/Why (Total time 5 minutes)

Students should read the statement on the presentation and identify whether they agree or disagree with the statement. On the index card provided, they should write "Yes, I agree that..." or "No, I do not agree that..." followed by a "because statement" to explain their rationale.

- Students should hand in their note card prior to leaving class for the day
- Use the responses to gauge any necessary follow-up questions or discussions for the next class period.

Extension Assignment (Total time 5 minutes)

Explain the following assignment to students before the end of the period:

Interview a woman in a career field that you might be interested in pursuing in your future or a female family member. You should ask the following questions, but are not limited to only these questions:

- Did she face gender-specific challenges at any point in her career?
- Did she feel supported as a woman in the workplace by her employer and family?
- If she is a parent, how did she personally balance her family and career?
- Does she believe employers and/or the government could do more to help women have careers in the US?

Write two paragraphs comparing and contrasting what you learned from your interview with the experiences you learned about for women in Japan. Turn in on a separate sheet of paper.