

## Mothering Earth

### About this activity

This activity, aimed at high level students, uses a text to expose students to global gender issues, climate change and the role of women in the fight against poverty, gender issues, climate change and equality in the tourism industry.

#### Stage 1: Lead-in

Introduce the topic of how different job sectors have been impacted by COVID-19. Ask the class if they think female workers have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in the same way as male workers. Ask the learners to discuss these questions:

- Which industries are female dominated and which are male dominated?
- Have any industries changed in recent years, to be more mixed in gender? Why?
- Which industries were negatively affected the most during and after the lockdown during the pandemic?
- Which gender do you think, encountered the most negative impact from covid 19? Why?

Elicit the goals of activism and the particular challenges faced by female activists.

#### Stage 2: Pre-teach Vocabulary

Get the learners to match the word to the definitions using this worksheet.

**Climate Vocabulary**

Match each word in the word bank to the given definitions below.

weather	climate	global climate	climate change
glacier	global warming	greenhouse gases	
carbon footprint	fossil fuels	carbon dioxide	
	nitrous oxide		

- The weather in a smaller area \_\_\_\_\_
- The average weather condition in a large area \_\_\_\_\_
- The climate of the entire planet \_\_\_\_\_
- Any changes to the overall climate of the earth over several years \_\_\_\_\_
- The temperature of the entire planet \_\_\_\_\_
- Gases that trap heat in the earth's atmosphere \_\_\_\_\_
- The amount of carbon dioxide produced due to human energy use \_\_\_\_\_
- Fuel formed in the earth by plant or animal remains \_\_\_\_\_
- A large body of ice that very slowly flows down a slope \_\_\_\_\_
- A greenhouse gas released into the atmosphere from farms that apply large amounts of nitrogen-based fertilizers to help crops grow. \_\_\_\_\_
- A greenhouse gas release into the earth's atmosphere that contributes to global warming \_\_\_\_\_

Put the learners in pairs to check their answers, then go through any difficult words with the whole class.

**Stage 3: Reading  
for Gist**

Show the learners the text and ask them to read and decide the purpose of the text. Learners choose if the text is meant to:

- a) Inform
- b) Entertain
- c) Persuade

Text:

Read and answer the questions below.

**Mothering Earth**

Holly Tuppen explores how travel can support one of the world's greatest climate crisis mitigation tools: empowering women.

1 - Back in 2020, the independent climate research organization Project Drawdown listed empowering women and girls in developing countries as the second of 76 solutions for curbing global warming. The project estimates that providing girls' education and family planning could decrease carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 68.9 gigatons by 2050.

2 - It makes perfect sense when you consider the ripple effect of access to education, family planning and birth control, as slower population growth relieves stress on ecosystems and reduces emissions. The report also found that women in rural areas are more likely to farm sustainably, cultivating a greater variety of crops that support biodiversity and are resilient to climate change.

3 - Alessandra Alonso, managing director of Women in Travel, an organisation that both trains and supports disadvantaged women to fill multiple roles in the hospitality industry, explains: "Women, globally, not only sit at the heart of communities but are educators. They teach children about the impact of the climate crisis and the importance of respecting our planet. It is impossible to divorce female empowerment and inclusion from sustainable development."

4 - Financing women through our travel choices is even more critical as destinations recover from the economic after-effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. As Zina Bencheikh, managing director of EMEA for Intrepid, explains: "The pandemic disproportionately impacted women working in travel because many of them work in informal roles and have no access to government support." When you consider the role that travel can play in making a positive impact, seeking experiences that empower women is an excellent place to start. As with all responsible tourism, rather look for empowerment and long-term thinking rather than handouts.

5 - Social enterprise tour operator Eternal Landscapes Mongolia is a beautiful example of what is possible. Having spotted how difficult it is for women to get on the 'circuit' of guides that dominate tours in Mongolia, Eternal Landscapes runs a free training programme for Mongolian women seeking work in tourism. Whether joining the training to find economic independence, learn new skills or gain confidence, Eternal Landscapes is proud to say that all its guides are female. These keen recruits also help shape itineraries, ensuring that they support the needs (including those of women) of local communities in the long term.

6 - Large travel businesses are showing leadership too. Through its non-profit partner, Planeterra, G Adventures invests in community projects, including several involved in gender equality. In one of its most popular destinations, Peru, trips support a Women's Weaving Cooperative owned by local women. Tour operators invite guests to meet and support female makers, producers and entrepreneurs.

7 - Much is also being done across Africa to empower women to shatter the chains of patriarchal stereotypes in African travel. Recognising that women are under-represented in the scores of expedition leaders ascending Mount Kilimanjaro, tour operator Exodus Travels has set up the Mountain Lioness Scholarship, which enables 10 women to graduate as mountain guides each year. Working life is usually dominated by men in Tanzania, particularly in rural areas and in the tourism sector. By becoming Africa's first all-women-run safari camp, the Serengeti-set Dunia not only provides an opportunity to the 23 Tanzanian women it employs but challenges the wider industry at large. The Zeitz Foundation launched East Africa's first All-Women Anti-poaching Ranger Academy at Segera Conservancy in Kenya and have to date trained 27 female rangers.

8 - The need for an increase in girls' education on the continent is also being highlighted. Some 83% of women in rural Morocco are illiterate. Most never had access to schooling, which is why Education for All, run by Intrepid Travel, arranges safe boarding and nutritional meals for girls to attend school beyond their primary years. So far, fifty of its students have enrolled in further education.

9 - Inhabit Hotels in Europe works with Women in Travel to offer disadvantaged female jobseekers a four-week placement and mentoring, an invaluable opportunity for refugees, immigrants or single mothers struggling to find work. While over in Sri Lanka, on the wild, coastal edge of Yala National Park, housekeeper Thushari Priyangika is enjoying her new role at the green-minded hotel Jetwing Yala. "This job means the world to me, as my husband lost his job during the pandemic. Now I am the sole breadwinner," she explained. Thushari's job is part of Jetwing's new drive to provide roles for middle-aged women eager to pursue new careers post-pandemic and post-childrearing. So far, the hotel group, which operates throughout Sri Lanka, has provided training and employment to twenty women. It's one step among many heading in the right direction.

10 - The positive influence empowered women can have on travel; climate change and the world economy at large cannot be denied. Those who recognise their impact and utilise it could be the saving grace of a planet in danger of destroying itself with pollution, prejudice and irresponsibility.

Adapted from [www.wanderlustmagazine.com](http://www.wanderlustmagazine.com). (AUGUST 2022)

**GLOSSARY:**

*emissions* – the production of large amounts of gas, in this case carbon dioxide which harms the planet.

*Biodiversity* – the variety of animals, plants and microorganisms found in one area.

*Itineraries* – the outline of the places and activities to be visited along the journey.

**Stage 4: Reading  
for Detail**

Get the learners to read the text again and answer the questions about it. When they finish, they check their answers in pairs. Then do feedback with the whole class.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Refer to paragraph 1.

Briefly explain what Project Drawdown's research indicates about the role of women in the fight against global warming.

2. Refer to paragraph 2.

In your own words explain how the 'ripple effect of access to education, family planning and birth control' (par. 2, lines 5-6) can have on the population.

3. Refer to paragraph 3.

Discuss Alonso's argument about the role of women in communities and globally.

4. Refer to paragraph 4.

Why, according to the writer, is supporting women through our travel choices more critical as destinations recover from the pandemic? Do you agree with the writer's belief that empowerment rather than handouts is responsible tourism. Substantiate your answer with reference to the text as a whole.

5. Refer to paragraph 5.

Describe the possible impact of Eternal Landscapes offering free training programmes for Mongolian women seeking work in tourism.

6. Refer to paragraph 7.

Comment on the effectiveness of the imagery in "to empower women to shatter the chains of patriarchal stereotypes in African travel." (par. 7, lines 33-34)

7. Account for the writer's inclusion of statistics regarding illiteracy in paragraph 8.

8. The writer claims that empowering of women working in travel is 'one step in the right direction' (par. 9, lines 57-58) in the fight against poverty and climate change. Do you think her claim is valid? Justify your answer fully.

9. Comment on the appropriateness of the title of the text, 'Mothering Earth'.

10. Evaluate the writer's use of tone and diction in paragraph 10 to create an effective conclusion to the text.

	<p>Ask the learners to read the text again and complete the table about the activists. Fast finishers can move on to question 3 and 4. Conduct feedback on the answers and ask the learners which activist they think is the most impressive.</p>
<b>Stage 5: Post-reading</b>	<p>Get the learners to study the image below and discuss these two questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain how the graphics and text used help reinforce the slogan 'WOMEN DELIVER'</li><li>• Comment on whether TEXT B reinforces or contradicts the message of the text 'Mothering Earth'.</li></ul>

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