

**Topic: International Women's Day**

**Let's get started...** who are the women in your life? Who are the women that you talk to, live with, work with, write to? Describe one or more of them.

**Story:** International Women's Day, March 8<sup>th</sup>, began with women campaigning for social change - better working conditions, better pay and voting rights. It was first celebrated in the early 1900's. Today, some nations observe the day by giving flowers or candy to women. In other nations, it is an occasion for political action, marches, and campaigns for women's rights, or for celebrating social progress.



In Iraq.

A woman named Shahd Attar, a business manager at Cisco, spoke about International Women's Day last year. She said: "To some people, International Women's Day is a message of progress or hope. To me, it's a message of appreciation. There's a lot of (good) female role models out there, and they are the results of positive reinforcing messages that have been sent out to them, because of days like International Women's Day."



**In pairs for 5-10 minutes, talk about this:**

A "positive reinforcing message" can be words or actions that say:

I like who you are.

You have done well (in the past.)

You are doing well (right now.)

You will do well (in the future.)

Do you think "positive reinforcing messages" change people? If so, how? If not, why not?

**Share your partner's answers with the group.**



**Prepare a message for a woman you know.** Begin with this sentence: "I appreciate you because . . ."

**Prepare a message for a man you know.** Begin with this sentence: "I appreciate you because . . ."

Or you may prepare different kinds of messages. Practice saying your messages with a partner. Write them down, if you wish.

**Discussion Questions - talk in pairs or small groups, sometimes changing partners:**

Do you and your friends and family celebrate International Women's Day? Explain.

**A question for the men:** "What do you think is most important to the women you know?"

**A question for the women:** "What is most important to you?"

**A question for everyone:** "What is most important for women around the world?"



Who are some important women in your life that you don't see very often? Where do they live? Do you talk on the phone or write to them? Why are they important to you? When will you see them again? What will you do or talk about?

In your native country, do men and women have different roles in society? Explain.

In your native country, are laws different for men and women? Explain.

What do men and women agree on? What do they disagree on?

**Role Models** - role models are people you learn from, by watching them:

Do you know any **bad role models** (bad examples)?

Famous people . . . Friends or family . . . Others . . .

Do you sometimes follow their examples? Explain.

Do you know any **good role models** (good examples)?

Famous people . . . Friends or family . . . Others . . .

Do you sometimes follow their examples? Explain.

Are you a **role model** to someone? Explain.

Do you think that society favors men over women or women over men? Explain and give examples. Do you think your home country's society should change? Do you think American society should change? If so, how? If not, why not?

**New vocabulary:** occasion, political action, message, "out there," progress, hope, appreciation, campaign(ing), social change, social progress, appreciate, "positive reinforcing messages", role model, famous, favors

**Keep talking about it this week:** Ask women in your life "What is most important to you?"

Write down their answers and be ready to share with the group in the next Talk Time.

**Hear:** Shadh Attar and other women on video at <http://www.internationalwomensday.com/>