



CHOOSING A WORLD FREE FROM FEMALE GENITAL CUTTING

Learning activities for KS3/4 learners

(with accompanying guidance for educators)



Activity 1 MAKING CONNECTIONS

Overview

This activity encourages learners to make connections between people and places using images, including those from the [Aissata's True Story](#) animation. The key learning intentions are:

1. to introduce the topic of female genital cutting (FGC) to learners;
2. to actively engage learners' curiosity and creative thinking using images as a stimulus;
3. to support critical questioning about FGC, building from learners' existing knowledge and understanding;
4. to develop learners' confidence to discuss FGC and the issues it raises for them and for those affected.

Activity 1

Making Connections



PPT



Information

This activity introduces a sensitive and perhaps controversial issue to young people. It is important to consider what this means for your learners and for your role as the educator before commencing with the activity. More detailed notes relating to these issues are included in the 'Guide' document that forms part of the wider resource and you are encouraged to read this before starting the individual activities. A reminder of some key points to consider in relation to this activity:

Sensitivity issues:

- Do you have learners who may be directly exposed to (or at risk from) the issues covered in this activity/resource?
- How will you help ALL learners to engage in this and avoid it being seen as a 'female' issue?

Facilitation issues (see '[A short guide to facilitating learning](#)' for more):

- How will you create an environment that supports dialogue and enquiry?
- What will your role be as the educator? How will you support the learning?

Safety issues (see '[Safe Spaces for caring and critical learning](#)' for more):

- How will you make sure learners feel secure to talk about the issue?
- Are there limits to what can be discussed and why are these there?
- Are you aware of safeguarding procedures should they be needed?

Process (part 1)

1. Share with learners that this activity will introduce them to a sensitive, and what some might call 'controversial' issue. *[Note: there is no need to explain what the issue is at this stage]*

Take some time to co-create a safe space for the learning if you do not already have such a space established with this group of learners. If you already have such a space (due to covering similar issues) then remind them of its existence.

[Note: if you are not familiar with creating safe spaces then please refer to the guide '[Safe Spaces for caring and critical learning](#)' that forms part of this resource.]

2. Explain to learners that they will be working in small groups of 3-4 and will be given an image to investigate. Their task is to generate as many questions as they can about their image. It might be worth clarifying to learners that:
 - this is not about right or wrong;
 - they can engage with the image in whatever way they wish;
 - they should record all of their questions (we are looking for lots of questions at this stage).
3. Give each group of learners one of the images *[these can be printed as A5 images from pages 4 to 5 of this activity]* stuck into the centre of an A3 sheet of paper. *[Note: there are only 4 images, so with larger groups, more than one group may be reviewing the same image].*
4. Allow around ten minutes for groups to investigate their image and generate questions - writing them on the A3 paper around their image.
5. Once groups have formed their questions, ask them to join with another group (making sure they did not have the same image) and discuss the following:
 - a. How are our questions similar or different?
 - b. Can you think of what might link the images?*[Note: these two questions are on slide 1 of the Activity PowerPoint].*
6. Next, bring all of the learners together and show slide 2 of the Activity PowerPoint that shows the four different images they have been investigating. Ask learners:
 - a. How did you find doing this activity?
 - b. What connections did you make between the images?
 - c. What do we know from these images? What do we think we know? What questions do we need answers for?

Keep a record of responses for questions b. and c. on the whiteboard or flipchart.

Process (part 2)

1. If time has elapsed between part 1 and this session, then briefly remind learners (or ask them to remind each other) of what was previously covered, and explain that this session will return to those images.
2. Organise the room so that learners are in a circle and can see one another.

Time out



If learners are not familiar with working in a circle like this it is a good idea to take time out to ease them into this. Here are some ideas:

- Use a beanbag, kooshball or similar item that can be passed between learners (this acts as a talking token).

Explain to learners that they will need this to contribute and should not speak until they have it.

If they wish to contribute then they should place their hand (palm upwards) on their lap to indicate they are ready to receive the token.
- Allow learners to 'check-in' to the circle by passing the token around the circle and responding to a simple (comfortable) question such as 'what makes you happy?' or 'what is your favourite food?'
- If learners are 'clustered' in your circle then you may wish to use an activity to mix them up a little. A simple one is 'change places' where learners have to get up and move to another chair in response to a series of given statements such as 'change places if you have brown eyes' or 'change places if your birthday is in the winter.' Doing this a few times should mix the circle up sufficiently.

3. Place the four images in the centre of the circle and if the topic of the images (female genital cutting or FGC) did not emerge during part 1, then inform learners that they relate to an important human rights issue. Ask learners if they are aware of the issue being raised or what they think it might be.

Responses may include circumcision, female circumcision, female genital mutilation (FGM) or female genital cutting (FGC).

[Note: keep a note of any language/terms used by learners at this stage. The language used to discuss this issue is varied and it is important to think about this. The 'Getting to Grips' key data and information sheet that forms part of this resource does this in more detail and is referred to elsewhere in the activities.]

4. If learners do not identify the issue from the images then introduce that they are all related to **female genital cutting (FGC)** and invite any responses from learners as to their current knowledge and understanding of this as an issue.
5. Thank learners for the ideas they have shared in steps 3 and 4 above and then share the following definition with them [available on PowerPoint slide 3] from the National Health Service in England:

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there's no medical reason for this to be done. It's also known as "female circumcision" or "cutting".

6. Inform learners that they are going to be considering this issue in more detail, but that because it is a sensitive issue we should take a few minutes to think about how we should do this. Begin by asking:

"How can we look after each other whilst we are working on this today?"

"What do we need from one another?"

[Note: If further support is needed you could suggest a set of emotional needs such as – respect, friendship, kindness, encouragement, understanding, space to think, etc. and ask each person to select the one most important to them.]

Record responses as the basis for a whole class learning agreement.

7. Keep learners in the circle but this time divide them into eight groups. Give each group one of the four information cards (so you will need 2 sets) and ask them to discuss the information in their groups.

What questions from part 1 have been answered?

Which questions still remain?

Are there any new ones?

8. Bring everyone back into the circle. Ask for feedback from the groups and facilitate a dialogue. Ask for a volunteer begin the feedback and pass them the talking token (see page 2). Once they have spoken, ask them to choose who will speak next from those who volunteer to add something to the dialogue.

Encourage pupils to think about fairness and inclusion by asking them to choose from different groups and to choose people they have not spoken to much in the day.

[Note: remember you have the ideas from step 6 above to use if needed to support learners to have these more challenging conversations.]

9. Encourage learners to collectively (as a group) summarise what they have learnt and understood about FGC over the course of these activities. This could include factual information and terminology, but may also include feelings and emotional responses (which should be encouraged within a safe space).
10. End the session with a positive check out such as: "tell the person next to you what you are looking forward to doing later or over the weekend". There is no need to hear back from pupils. Use this as a chance for them to move on from the discussion before they leave the room.



Image from Positive Negatives animation



Image from Positive Negatives animation



Image courtesy of DfID



Image still from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKnq0xjzcvA>



This image shows a group of women and men campaigning against female genital cutting (FGC) in northern Senegal.

"In 2008, to the admiration of global health observers, more than 5,000 communities in Senegal publicly declared that they were abandoning female genital mutilation (FGM), an age-old practice in that West African country. Since then, awareness has grown and a critical mass has been building, spreading through the very ties of family and ethnicity that used to entrench it. Thousands of villages have joined the movement, including more than 2,000 communities last year".

FGC was banned in Senegal in 1999 and carries a prison sentence of up to 5 years for those who carry out the practice.

Source: <https://allafrica.com/stories/201711280464.html>



This image is a still taken from a short animation. The animation tells the story of Aissata, a woman from Senegal and her experience of female genital cutting (FGC) and how it impacted her life. The animation highlights the global spread of FGC, including its practice in the UK.

This image shows people from within the community, campaigning about FGC in northern Senegal in 2018. FGC became illegal in Senegal in 1999 but still continues. In 2010/11 it was estimated that approximately 26 per cent of women aged 15-49 have undergone FGC in Senegal.

Source: [https://www.28toomany.org/static/media/uploads/Country%20Research%20and%20Resources/Senegal/senegal_country_profile_v2_\(august_2018\).pdf](https://www.28toomany.org/static/media/uploads/Country%20Research%20and%20Resources/Senegal/senegal_country_profile_v2_(august_2018).pdf)



UK pledges £50m to help end FGM across Africa by 2030

'I will not let anyone touch my granddaughters': Nakhal Almadina Altayev Mohammed Almansour, 63, an anti-FGM campaigner in Wad al Baseer, in Sudan's El Gezira state.

Photograph: Courtesy of DfID

The British government is to invest £50m in an attempt to end female genital mutilation (FGM) by 2030. The money...will go to grassroots programmes working to stop the practice across Africa, where it is most prevalent. Penny Mordaunt, international development secretary, said the investment was also key to ending FGM in the UK. The Department for International Development said almost a third of the money (£15m) will be allocated to Sudan, where an estimated 87 per cent of women and girls aged 15 to 49 have undergone FGM.

Brendan Wynne, from Donor Direct Action, which runs an End FGM fund, said: *"Such additional funding is incredibly welcome but this time around we have to make sure that it actually reaches those women on the frontlines who are working so hard and so successfully to help end FGM. We should not tell them how to do this, but rather get behind them and support their leadership. They know what they are doing and should be trusted."*



Sarian Kamara is originally from Sierra Leone and now lives in London. She is an activist, community advocate and campaigner who speaks out about the negative and harmful effects of female genital cutting (FGC). Sarian went through the procedure as a teenager - it affected her physically and emotionally.

In this image she is speaking at a conference in Norway about her experiences. Sarian is an energetic and inspirational person who works with communities in the UK as well as in Sierra Leone to raise awareness of FGC and encourage dialogue. She also works closely with the police across London and nationally to educate, support and engage communities and professionals.