

Generation Next Teacher Package

RAISE THE BAR

In 2015, a girls basketball team was formed in Iceland by Brynjar Karl Sigurðsson, a coach who was experienced, unconventional, and constantly raising the bar. Early on, they set their goals high. They would always compete with the best team, and with that ambition, they were victorious competing in both girls and boys tournaments. That is, until they were no longer allowed to compete with the boys. RAISE THE BAR is a story of eight 13-year-old girls who wanted to change the paradigm of women's basketball in Iceland, no matter the cost.



Discussion Topics:

1. How do you feel about boys and girls competing against each other? Should there be any issues with this? Why or why not?
2. Discuss the coach. Was he a positive or negative influence on the girls? Do you believe the parents reacted justifiably to the situation at hand?
3. How might this experience for the girls be a metaphor for life? Are there larger life lessons than that of playing basketball?
4. How were the girls and the coach demonstrative of bravery and courage?
5. Discuss the coach's approach to anxiety and how he supported a girl on the team through her panic attacks? Was he too tough? Did his methods work for her? Why or why not?
6. Discuss the quote: "no one hurt (you) unless (you) let them." True? False? Explain.
7. In Germany, the practice is to let boys and girls play together as a way to learn to respect one another. How is our society similar or different? How do you feel about this approach?
8. How does the coach turn stress into an asset? What are some techniques you can employ to turn stressful situations into positive life lessons?
9. What is the role of "trash talking" in the film? Why does the coach employ this method in his training practices?
10. Discuss the coach's firing. Was this action justified? Why or why not?

Example Lesson Plans:

<https://www.common sense media.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdfs/6-8-unit-2-genderstereotypesonline.pdf>

<https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Gender-Stereotype-Lesson-GLSEN.pdf>

1. **Essential Question:** What are gender stereotypes, and how can they shape our experiences?

Possible Ideas

- Have students conduct a scavenger hunt using multimedia, magazines, internet access. Have them construct a collage or presentation on the gender stereotypes they find. Discuss findings as a class.
- Define gender stereotypes as a class or in partners and discuss how this impacts people's identities both online and offline.
- Using research techniques and sources available, have students compare and contrast gender stereotypes in the past and today. Draw conclusions on whether things have improved, stayed the same or merely changed in another way.
- Have students construct their own online avatar that does not reinforce stereotypes. Have each student explain how they put their avatar together and how it refrains from gender stereotyping.
- Have students investigate notable women in history and identify what 'gender norms' they broke through or whether they had to suffer through said 'norms' to get where they wanted to be.

<https://www.cliohistory.org/click/classroom/body-health/girls-sports/>

2. **Essential Question (s):** How do stereotypes influence our perceptions of sports?

Possible Ideas

1. Have students bring to class pictures of women sports stars who inspire them.
2. After they have shared their pictures with the class, introduce the students to Title IX.
3. Introduce the students to Title IX by reading to them the [Click section on Title IX](#):

"The words 'Title IX' have become practically synonymous with women's sports, but the original law said nothing about athletics. Instead it was designed to address general patterns of discrimination and inequality in education, such as quotas that limited women's enrollment in professional schools or the practice of automatically expelling students if they became pregnant. Pretty soon it dawned on many people that the area in education

where disparities in treatment for women were the most extreme was the field of sports.

As bureaucrats in Washington tried to figure out how to implement the law (a process that took most of the 1970s), those with a vested interest in the sports status quo (especially football coaches) made it sound like the world would end if women shared the sports dollar on a par with men. But sports activists had the law on their side, and they put it to good use. [As they have now seen in the film clip about the 1976 Yale women's crew protest.]

Indeed, the 1970s proved a breakthrough decade for women in sports. In one frequently cited figure, high school sports participation rates for girls rose from one in 27 in 1971 to one in three by 1979. Not all that progress can be attributed specifically to Title IX, but the amendment definitely acted as an important spur. In addition to expanded opportunities for team sports on the high school and collegiate level, individual women's sports also enjoyed broader public support, spurred by the tennis and running booms of the 1970s, followed by the popularity of aerobics in the 1980s. Being female now increasingly included being physically fit and active."