

Activity Name: The 7 Biraddali Sisters
SDG: 5 Gender Equality

Aims

- To develop critical thinking.
- To develop individual and group work.
- To value different cultures, respecting differences and detecting similarities with the own culture.
- To raise awareness on gender inequalities.

Language focus

- To understand the structure and characteristics of a specific kind of text.
- To extract the general ideas of a text or sentence.
- To formulate hypotheses about content and context, structure of text and communicative intention.
- To express past and present actions.
- To use the specific vocabulary in literary and communicative contexts (gender equality vocabulary, for example).
- To describe the characters of a narration.
- To develop strategies for oral interaction.

Creative focus

- To exploit imagination and creativity while interpreting and creating stories.

Level: A2+

Age: 11–14

Time: 75 minutes

Preparation

- Activities should be preceded by previous units where the students have understood present and past verb tenses. They also need to be familiar with adjectives of description and comprehend how a literary text is structured.

- Print Annex 1 cards.
- Print and cut the different paragraphs in Annex 2.
- Variety of materials for collage, graffiti and drawing designs.

Procedure

- As in this story there are no descriptions, we will start with a pre-reading activity asking students to imagine the seven sisters. They will have to name each of them (bearing in mind that they are mythological creatures) and describe physical and psychological traits using 4 or 5 adjectives. They can also draw them. Some descriptions will be shared in class.
- Second, students will be given 15 minutes to read the story individually. The teacher will go around the class to control the students' progress and to answer any question they may have, avoiding translation and encouraging them to understand unfamiliar words by the context. Once they have finished, in pairs or groups of three, students will answer the following questions orally:
 - Are the Biraddali sisters described as you had imagined before reading the story? How similar are they? How different are they?
 - What would you prefer: to have wings and be able to fly or to be able to change your form and transform yourself into other species? Why?
 - What is your opinion about the sister who lost her wings? Can you relate it to gender equality?
 - Have you ever heard about any other myth?

Ideally, students should dedicate 5 minutes to the first two questions and devote 10 to the last ones.

- In a post-reading and dynamic activity, students will be given 18 cards (Annex 1) divided into three colours; green being 'subjects', yellow being 'verbs' and blue 'complements'. They will work in groups of four people. They will place the cards on the table and match them (green-yellow-blue) to make sentences summarising the story. They have 3 minutes to build as many sentences as possible. When time is up, the group with more correct sentences will win.
- In a final project, the text is divided into 10 excerpts (Annex 2). Students will be divided into 10 groups randomly. The teacher will assign one excerpt to each group. Students will creatively transform

the written text and illustrate it in a visual way (graffiti, collage...) trying to be creative and keeping the plot in mind. All the groups will present their work and put it into a final mural on gender equality that can be hung in the classroom.

Follow-up

- Parallel to autonomous learning activities, students will be also encouraged to take an active and participative role in the class, producing as much output as possible and relating contents to their environment. Discussion and extrapolations to their daily lives in terms of gender equality will be the centre of each activity, where speaking skills for formulating hypotheses and describing are to be assessed.

Additional resources

The 7 Biraddali Sisters

PRE-READING

Do you know what a Biraddali is?

A Biraddali is usually translated as «angel» or «skymaiden». They are female winged beings who sometimes use a rainbow bridge to visit earth from their home in the sky.

1. The story is about 7 Biraddali sisters. As there is no description for them, you need to describe all of them as you think they are. Provide a physical and psychological description, using 4 or 5 adjectives, you can even draw them. Also give them a mythological name. Then, share it with your partners.

BIRADDALI 1:

BIRADDALI 2:

BIRADDALI 3:

BIRADDALI 4:

BIRADDALI 5:

BIRADDALI 6:

BIRADDALI 7:

READING

2. Read the following story about the Biraddali sisters from Philippines and answer the questions.

1. Everyone thinks the biraddali are myths on earth, we're just too careful to let ourselves be seen. Except for one occasion, one time when one of us let our guard down. You see, us seven sisters take the rainbow down to earth to remove our silver wings and relax and bathe in the fresh mountain springs.
2. One day, a human saw our wings on the ground and threatened to make us his wives. We eldest six sisters were wise enough to keep our wings close and when he got close, we put on our wings and flew back to the heavens. But the youngest sister kept her wings further away and the man stole them from her.
3. A biraddali will not back down. The youngest sister changed into a snake at first, slithering away, but the man was a hunter and trapped the snake in a cage.
4. The youngest then changed into a scorpion and hid amongst the forest floor, but the man's vision was great, so he saw her scuttling away.
5. The youngest then changed into a centipede, going up the tree branches to escape his advances, but the man was quick, he stopped the centipede at a branch. Finally, the youngest had no choice, without her wings the biraddali's power was fading.
6. The youngest acquiesced to being the man's wife, and she stayed with him, waiting for the day she could get her silver wings and fly back on the rainbow towards the heavens. We elder sisters would not let the youngest remain on earth with the man.
7. We did not want to risk getting captured by the man themselves, and each one of us was scared of getting our wings clipped, so we carried our whispers on the winds, hoping that one would reach our trapped sister.
8. We whispered of the forest and of the trees, telling her that the man buried her silver wings under a tree beside the river. We whispered of freedom and hope. We whispered that we missed her.
9. And one day, we were heard. The youngest sister escaped the man's house while he was away and dashed towards the forest. Never had there been a swifter biraddali, and never had any angel knew what freedom had meant.
10. Everyone will think the biraddali are myths, for we know the cruelty that man can possess. Our wings will never be taken from us. Never again will one of us know the fear of being shackled to the earth. Never again will the rest know the misery of knowing that we are not complete. We will remain alive in the myths of men and in the beauty of the rainbow. For now, and forever.

REMEMBER

A myth is a traditional story that involves gods, heroes, fairies, monsters, or spirits and explains a practice or some natural phenomenon.

- Are the Biraddali sisters described as you had imagine before reading the story? How are they similar? How are they different?
- What would you prefer: to have wings and be able to fly or to be able to change your form and transform yourself into other species? Why?
- Do you know any other myth that you have heard before?

3. Now you have to make groups of four people. Take all the flashcards and put them on the table. As you can see their colour is different. The green ones are subjects, the yellow ones verbs, and the blue ones complements. You have to construct sentences with them. The sentences will summarise the story. Order them according to how the story occurs. Be fast, you only have five minutes!

4. As you can see, this story is divided into 10 paragraphs. In 10 different groups, you have to illustrate this story. Make it visual! Each group will design, draw and paint a paragraph to create a final painting mural. You can use any material you like. Try to be creative, the plot of the story should be clear.