

Australian women are doing 50% more housework than men. It's creating 'volcanic levels of resentment'

Level 3: Advanced

Article summary: This article looks at how women in Australia often do the majority of unpaid domestic work and the various reasons that this happens as well as possible ways to address the problem.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Writing, Speaking

Language focus: Comparisons with nouns and adjectives

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

8. o
9. e
10. j
11. n
12. c
13. b
14. g
15. d

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:

1. gender norms
2. flexible work
3. domestic
4. unpaid labour
5. resentment
6. division
7. discrimination
8. subsequent
9. persists
10. erupted
11. chores
12. mental load
13. realm
14. burden
15. expectations

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to let students examine who in their family typically does the housework and whether these are typical roles for where they live as well as how these roles may have changed over the years. Ask students to list out who does what in their house by using the example chores. Later, they will look at a longer list of chores so only use the examples for now. End by having students explore how typical the roles are and whether the roles have changed and should change. Encourage them to examine why these differences might be problematic.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do this task individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. As an extension activity, ask students to highlight the key words in the article.

Key:

1. h
2. a
3. m
4. k
5. f
6. l
7. i

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. If possible, encourage students to add more explanatory information when they answer, e.g. in item 1, they may say, 'Men spent 12.8 hours per week on housework in 2002, and this number hadn't changed 20 years later.'

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Key:

Suggested answers:

1. 12.8
2. two hours fewer
3. technology and outsourcing
4. family expectations, the structure of our labour markets, care systems, schools, workplace practices and policy settings
5. 22 per cent
6. health and wellbeing
7. They are at home all the time so they start doing all the domestic chores.
8. Fathers are involved closely in childcare in subsequent years.
9. good flexible work
10. It's the responsibility of men to do more at home.

- b. Ask students to summarise the article by mentioning the steps that Australia should take to improve the situation for women.

Key:

Suggested answers:

The steps mentioned in the article are:

- Investment into paid parental leave and childcare systems
- More good flexible work with training and career opportunities
- Accelerated change
- Change in all aspects of society
- Men taking responsibility

4. Key language

- a. This activity helps students see how expressions of comparison such as *more*, *less* and *same* as are used with both adjectives and nouns. As an extension activity, ask students to look at the verbs used with these examples. The verbs *feel* and *be* are used with adjectives, and the verbs *have* and *do* are used with nouns. Ask students to think of further examples. Typically, *be* and *become* are used with adjectives as well as sense verbs like *appear*, *feel*, *look*, *seem*, *smell*, *sound* and *taste*. A much wider range of verbs are used with nouns.

Key:

1. A
2. A
3. N
4. N
5. A
6. N
7. A
8. N

- b. Students complete the sentences using the verbs and phrases they have just studied.

Key:

1. as
2. feeling
3. have
4. the same
5. are / were
6. doing

- c. Students write three sentences using *have*, *do* and *be* with expressions for comparison. Invite students to challenge themselves and get creative as they write their own sentences. Save some time for students to share examples of their work.

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible.

6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to plot out the number of hours that different male and female members of their families spend doing chores. The list of chores is extensive but certainly not definitive so ask students to add further examples. Encourage them to look at which tasks are typically male tasks, and which are typically female tasks as well as how long those tasks take. Also, ask students to compare how this changes according to the age of the family members. It is important to consider how much, if at all, the balance of domestic work changes across generations.

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- b. Students then write a report on their findings. Encourage students to talk about both the differences between genders as well as across generations. This will enable them to use expressions of comparisons. Ask students to explain what they think the significance of these differences might be and how to correct for any potential problems. Encourage students to look at the example phrases they can include when writing about their ideas.