



Presbyterian  
World Service  
& Development



# School's In!

## Objectives

- Teach children about unequal access to education across the globe
- Teach children about the importance of education as a way out of poverty
- Teach children about gender as a barrier to education and the importance of treating everyone fairly
- Teach children about PWS&D's education projects
- Teach children about the importance of sharing our gifts and encourage children to take part in the Sunday School Challenge, *Opening Classroom Doors*

## Materials

- *Closed Doors* printable game board
- *A Girl's Life* printable game board
- Dice
- Place markers
- World map or globe (optional)
- *Making Learning Fun* PowerPoint presentation
- Bible
- Sunday School Challenge flyer

## Recommended grade level

Grade 4 – 6

*Note: Activities could also be useful for older students*

## TEACHER TIP

Blue diamonds (◆) provide sample answers to questions asked throughout the resource.

All materials are available for download at [WeRespond.ca/schools-in](http://WeRespond.ca/schools-in).

## Background Information for Educators

### About PWS&D

Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) is the international development, relief and refugee sponsorship agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. PWS&D responds with programs in food security, health, livelihoods, human rights, emergency relief and refugee sponsorship to ease the pain of want and build more sustainable futures.

### About PWS&D's Education Programs

No matter where they live in the world, children have big dreams. However, many children in developing countries never have the chance to go to school because families can't afford to pay for school fees and supplies, schools are not available, teachers are not trained, or children must work long hours to help support their families.

Education offers children a way out of poverty and the chance to build a brighter future. Working with partners around the world, PWS&D is helping vulnerable children and marginalized adults access the education they need to have new opportunities for the future.

PWS&D's education programs are opening classroom doors to vulnerable children and adults by engaging communities about the importance of education, training teachers, providing school supplies and play facilities, and providing support with school fees.

### About This Resource

*School's In* contains five educational activities that can be done in one session or divided among a few classes. Each activity can run between 10-15 minutes. Instructors should feel free to omit, add or rearrange activities to best suit their curriculum and time constraints. It is recommended to begin with Lesson 1: Closed Doors and end with Lesson 5: Sharing Our Gifts Through the Sunday School Challenge.





# Closed Doors

## Lesson 1

### Objective

- Teach children about unequal access to education across the globe

### Materials

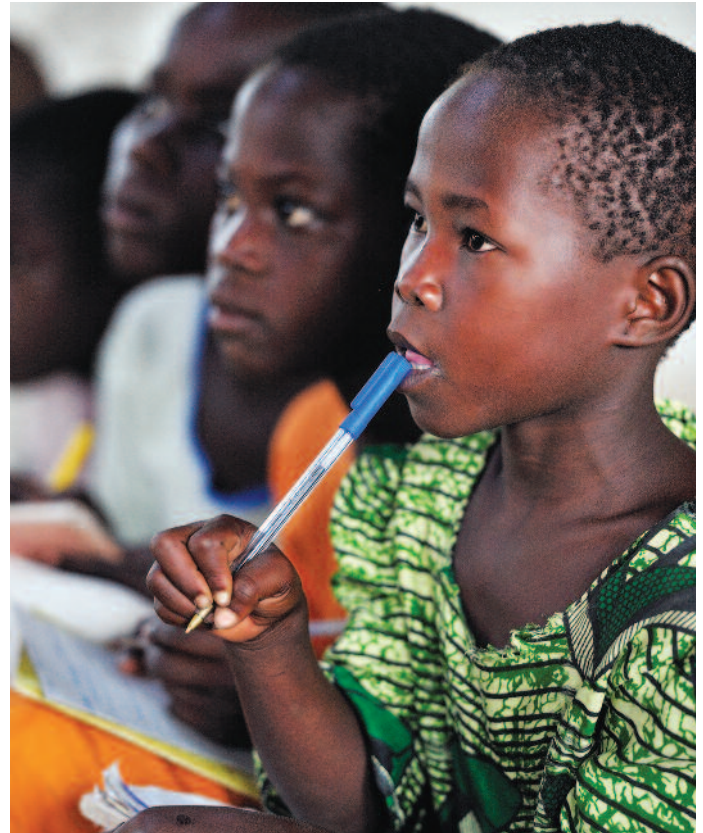
- *Closed Doors* printable game board (available at [WeRespond.ca/schools-in](http://WeRespond.ca/schools-in))
- Dice for each pair/group
- Place markers (stones, coins, any small thing will do!)

### Opening Discussion

- Do you go to school? Do you enjoy it? What do you like about going to school?

About one in five children, teens and youth around the world do not have the opportunity to go to school. That's 264 million children! Canada's entire population is only 37 million people. That's a lot of kids who can't go to school.

- Why might some children not be able to go to school?
  - ◆ **Poverty:** Some parents can't afford school fees and supplies or may need their children to stay home to help earn money for the family.
  - ◆ **Conflict or disaster:** This disrupts normal life. Sometimes people must leave home and there aren't always schools available to them.
  - ◆ **Sickness:** You can't go to school when you're sick! Also, if a family member is sick, children might have to stay home to help take care of them or earn money to afford medicine and food.
  - ◆ **No safe schoolrooms:** A good school needs to be in a safe building, with furniture and toilets, and sometimes that's difficult to come by.
  - ◆ **Cultural norms:** In some countries, school hasn't been a normal part of life.
  - ◆ **Gender inequality:** In some countries, it is believed that only boys need an education, not girls.
  - ◆ **Remote living:** If you live in a rural community, the closest school might be in a place that is too far away to travel to.



## Activity: Closed Doors

The *Closed Doors* board game will help students understand the reasons behind and impacts of barriers many children encounter in pursuing their education.

Divide the children into groups of two or three students. Have them roll a dice to see who goes first. Be sure to read the squares carefully, as some will set you back and some will help you forward!

Allow the children to play the game for at least 5-10 minutes. Not everyone will “finish” the game. If they do finish, encourage them to try again—every play is different!

## Post-Activity Discussion

- What did you notice about this game? What made the game hard to complete? What helped? What felt unfair?
- Did you finish the game? How many tries did it take?
- What sorts of things would affect whether or not you could go to school here in Canada? Are the reasons the same as those discussed, or different?





# The Gift that Keeps on Giving

## Lesson 2

### Objectives

- Teach children about the importance of education as a way out of poverty
- Teach children about PWS&D's education projects

### Materials

- Globe or map to highlight Guatemala

### Activity

Lead the discussion suggested below, followed by a reading of Maria's story—an example of PWS&D's project helping marginalized children in Guatemala gain access to education.

### Opening Discussion

- In Canada, children are required to attend school. Why do you think this is?
- What sorts of things do you learn in school that are important for life?
  - ◆ reading, writing, using computers, basic math, etc.
- Do you have ideas of what career you'd like as an adult? What kind of schooling is important for that?
- Education is one of the most important ways to help people escape poverty. Why do you think that might be?
  - ◆ Education increases opportunities to find a job and earn a good living.
  - ◆ When people have an education and therefore a job, they are better able to care for themselves and their families, contribute to their communities and make good decisions for the future.
  - ◆ Education can reduce conflict by giving people the tools to share knowledge, skills and values important for peaceful and inclusive communities.
  - ◆ Parents who go to school are more likely to send their children to school, which continues the positive cycle.

### Maria's Story

*Show students where Guatemala and Guatemala City are on a map.*

In the middle of Guatemala City, there is a large garbage dump. Lots of people who have nowhere else to live and no other job opportunities move to this dump to find work, where they sort trash and recycling to



sell in order to support their families. For these people's children, the dump may seem like the only future they have, even if they dream of going to school to become doctors, business owners and teachers.

Thanks to support from PWS&D, there is a school nearby, called Francisco Coll School. This school gets help from PWS&D to provide nutritious snacks, school supplies, uniforms, and scholarships for children. With all this support, Francisco Coll gives kids who wouldn't normally be able to attend school a chance for a brighter future. With an education, these children can see their futures outside of the dump and go after the jobs they dream of achieving.

Maria is one young student whose life was changed because of the opportunity to attend the Francisco Coll School.

Read Maria's letter aloud or pass it along to have students take turns reading the letter out loud.

## Closing Discussion

- PWS&D helps provide snacks, school supplies, uniforms and scholarships for children in Guatemala. Why are these things important?
  - ◆ Snacks are important because children can't learn when they're hungry. They also may only have the one nutritious meal per day.
  - ◆ School supplies and uniforms can be expensive when you don't have a lot of money. By helping the school provide these necessities, it ensures that more children can attend school even if they don't have the money.
  - ◆ Scholarships help people get an education after elementary and secondary school, just like here in Canada. These scholarships can be life-changing for people who otherwise would not be able to afford higher education.
  - ◆ How does Maria's story show that education is a "life-long gift"? How might you imagine her life if she couldn't go to school? How about now that she can?

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*Dear friends,*

*Hi, my name is Maria Herrera. I am writing to thank you for your support for my studies over the years.*

*My mom doesn't have a steady job and she is a single mother. But with your help, it is possible for me to continue going to school. One day, I might be able to go to university and graduate. God willing, one day I will be a professional like a doctor or a teacher myself.*

*I ask God every day that you have good health and blessings in your lives and that you continue to be able to help more kids achieve their dreams and goals like me. I appreciate you very much even though I don't know you in person.*

*From,  
Maria*

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# It's a Girl's Life

## Lesson 3

### Objective

- Teach children about gender as a barrier to education and the importance of treating everyone fairly

### Materials

- Printable *A Girl's Life* gameboard (available at [WeRespond.ca/schools-in](http://WeRespond.ca/schools-in))
- One die per student
- One place maker per student (stones, coins, any small thing will do!)

### Discussion

- Do both boys and girls attend your school? If not, are there other schools that do have both boys and girls?
- In some countries around the world like Afghanistan, girls don't often go to school at all. Why do you think that might be?
  - ◆ Communities believe that girls need to stay home and do chores to help their families.
  - ◆ Girls might get married very young.
  - ◆ Families think a girl's primary role should be as a mother and therefore girls don't need to go to school and get a job.
- What do you think happens to girls who can't go to school?
  - ◆ They get married very young.
  - ◆ They have children early, which is harmful to the health of both mother and child.
  - ◆ They are unable to find jobs, which might make it more difficult to take care of themselves and feed their children.
- Does this seem fair? What would you do if girls were not allowed in school in Canada?





## Activity: A Girl's Life

A Girl's Life is a simple flow-chart game that will help students understand some of the barriers to education that many girls face in countries around the world, including Afghanistan.

How the game works:

- Give each student a copy of the game, a die and a marker.
- Explain that for the purpose of this game, everyone must imagine they are a girl student in Afghanistan.
- To roll a "yes" you must roll an odd number. To roll a "no" you must roll an even number.
- Pay attention—not every "yes" is good or "no" is bad!

Give students at least 5-10 minutes to play this game. Encourage them to keep trying when they end the game, as time permits. Every game played will be different and reveal more about the barriers to education for girls.

## Post-Activity Discussion

- What sort of things made it so you couldn't go to school in the game? What felt like an obvious reason preventing someone from going to school? What was surprising?
- How many tries did it take you to get further in the game? Was it frustrating to end up unable to graduate?
- What difference was there between graduating elementary school and graduating high school?
- What factors might also impact whether or not a girl could go to school here in Canada, if any? Here in Canada, what helps to ensure that everyone gets to go to school, regardless of gender?

### TEACHER TOOL

Some students might be frustrated when the game ends quickly. Remind students that what they are feeling might mirror disappointment experienced by so many girls who face obstacles to education.

### TEACHER TIP: GIRLS' WASHROOM

Separate bathrooms for girls are vital for safety, comfort and hygiene, especially once students reach menstruation. Lack of access to private toilets and sanitary products cause many girls to drop out of school.

### TEACHER TIP: BULLYING IN SCHOOL

In Afghanistan, cultural and social norms sometimes place greater value on boys than girls. Some teachers may tolerate boys' mistreatment of girls in the classroom. Bullying, intimidation and other abuse may cause girls to drop out.





# Teachers Make a Difference

## Lesson 4

### Objective

- Teach children about PWS&D's education projects

### Materials

- Globe or map to highlight Afghanistan
- *Making Learning Fun* PowerPoint presentation (available at [WeRespond.ca/schools-in](http://WeRespond.ca/schools-in))

### Opening Discussion

- Describe your favourite teacher at school. Explain why they are your favourite teacher and how they have made a difference in your life.
- Talk about the qualities of a good teacher (for example: listens to students, makes learning fun, gives exciting assignments, allows group work, etc.)

Read the story *Making Learning Fun* to illustrate how PWS&D is helping students succeed in school by helping teachers be the best teachers they can be.

### Making Learning Fun

**(display photo 1)** Mr. Tullah is a grade three teacher at a girl's school in Afghanistan.

**Ask the students:** *Who can find Afghanistan on the map or globe?*

Mr. Tullah used to give his lessons by lecturing or reading aloud. But he soon realized that this style of teaching wasn't working well. Whenever he gave his lessons, his students would start getting bored and fidgeting at their desks. Because the students weren't learning well, they couldn't recite the letters of the alphabet or spell—things they should have been able to do by grade three. As the year progressed, fewer and fewer students came to class.



### TEACHER TOOL

Find three display photos to accompany the story by downloading and showing the PowerPoint presentation "Making Learning Fun: Photos."

This can be found at [WeRespond.ca/schools-in](http://WeRespond.ca/schools-in).

Mr. Tullah knew he had to do something different.

**Ask the students:** *Why do you think the kids in Mr. Tullah's class were bored? What would you recommend Mr. Tullah do instead?*

**(display photo 2)** PWS&D's partners in Afghanistan were giving a workshop to help teachers improve the way they teach in school. Mr. Tullah attended this training and learned how to give his lessons in a way that made students learn better and feel excited about their education. Mr. Tullah learned to start each day with morning discussions, encourage group work and use games to teach his lessons.



**(display photo 3)** Teaching in this way completely transformed his classroom! Now, Mr. Tullah's students are staying in class all year and have more easily learned to read and write, among other important skills. Mr. Tullah has also noticed that his students feel more confident voicing their ideas and opinions.

This dedicated teacher knows that his students are well on their way to discovering their passions and building a brighter future.

## Post-Story Discussion

- Why do you think it is important to have great teachers?
- Here in Canada, most people have to get a University degree to become a teacher, and then might need to continue their education to keep learning new things. Why do you think it is important for teachers to also keep learning?





# Sharing our Gifts through the Sunday School Challenge

## Lesson 5

### Objective

- Use examples from the Bible to teach children about the importance of sharing our gifts and introduce the Sunday School Challenge—Opening Classroom Doors

### Materials

- Bible
- Sunday School Challenge flyer
- Collection plate

### Activity

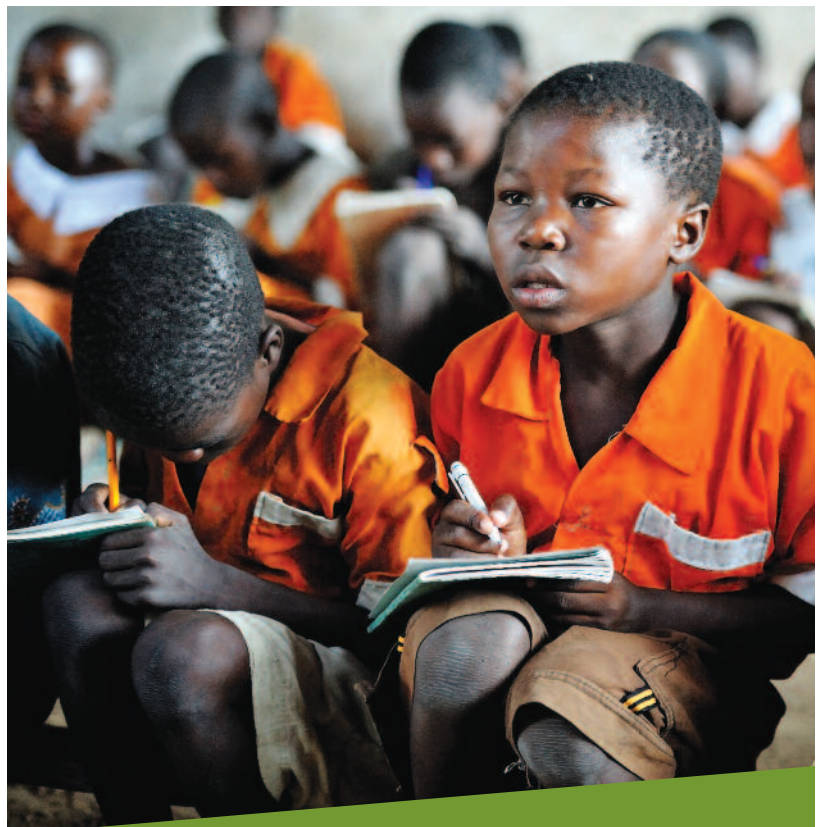
The Bible talks a lot about sharing—clothes, food, money, even our homes. We know that living in Canada is a privilege, and that puts us in a good position to share with others around the world.

### 1 John 3:18

*Read out loud or ask a volunteer to read.*

### Discussion

- What do you think this Bible passage means? How does it relate to sharing?
  - ◆ Actions are an important way to show love. One of those actions is sharing.
- It's easier to think about how we can share physical items like clothes and food, but how can we share something like education?
  - ◆ Using our own education to work toward a better world where all children can go to school.
  - ◆ Using our voices to tell our communities and our governments that they also need to work toward a world where everyone can go to school.
  - ◆ Donations to PWS&D can help more children go to school.





## Introducing the Sunday School Challenge – Opening Classroom Doors

One of the ways our church is helping people in need is through Presbyterian World Service & Development.

PWS&D is the part of our church that is working in different countries around the world to help people get the things they need—such as food, clean water, health care and education. When our church collects money for PWS&D, we help children around the world get a good education, which helps them throughout their lives.

*Show the Sunday School Challenge flyer.*

Your participation in the Sunday School Challenge will help open classroom doors in vulnerable communities across the globe, providing children with opportunities to get an education so they can fulfill their aspirations and transform their lives.

\$350 helps a child receive a full year of education— brightening their prospects for the future. Any size gift will bring us closer to achieving this important goal!

*Pass around a collection plate.*

## Closing Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for creating us as learners.

Thank you for all the teachers and school administrators around the world who work hard to help students have an education and develop their potential.

Help us remember that school is a gift, and that we are fortunate to live somewhere where education is available to us.

Help us to be generous with others and to support a world where every child can get an education.

Amen.