

Dowry: Lesson Plan

Topic	
<p>Dowry is the practice where a bride’s family gives money, gifts, or property to the groom’s family. Its origins date back to Babylonian, Greek and Roman times. While it flourished in Europe and then came to America, dowry eventually died out in these regions. However, the practice is still popular in South Asia, the Middle East, and the UK, despite the fact that countries in these areas have passed laws to ban or restrict it. Dowry unfairly places a value on a woman’s life, leads to dowry violence, disadvantages disabled women, and endangers young girls. It also promotes patriarchal values. However, dowry often goes unspoken about because it largely affects women in 3rd world countries.</p>	
Possible subjects/classes	Time needed
Social Studies World History Politics	30-40 min
Video link:	
https://academy4sc.org/topic/dowry-the-price-of-being-a-woman/	
Objective: <i>What will students know/be able to do at the end of class?</i>	
<p>Students will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define dowry. ● Identify places where dowry once existed and where it currently does. ● Explain how dowry is harmful to women. 	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
Bride price, Child marriages, Patriarchy	
Materials Needed	
Paper and pencils, Worksheet.	
Before you watch	

Think-pair-share: Ask students what wedding customs their communities practice or ones they may have heard of.

While you watch

1. What is dowry?
2. Where is it practiced today?
3. What are the negative consequences of dowry?

After you watch/discussion questions

1. Dowry is rarely a topic of political or civic discourse. Why do you think this may be so?
2. Can you name any other practices related to weddings and marriage you think unfairly affect women?
3. Do you think eliminating dowry will effectively help create greater gender equality? Why or why not?

Activity Ideas

- Write a Letter: Dowry is not a commonly talked about issue. Write a letter to your representative explaining why they should take action against dowry practices and speak up against them.
- Make a Flyer: Make an informative flyer explaining what dowry is, where it still exists, and the consequences it has for women.

Sources/places to learn more

1. "9 Reasons Why Dowries Are Horrible for Women." *Global Citizen*, www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/8-reasons-dowries-are-bad-for-women/.
2. Pulitzer Center. "The Dowry System in India: Is the Trend Changing?" *Pulitzer Center*, 19 June 2019, pulitzercenter.org/projects/dowry-system-india-trend-changing.
3. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Dowry." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 29 May 2019, www.britannica.com/topic/dowry.