

A

## Extinguish the Fire on Discrimination

**Title:** A concerned fire fighter

**Audience:** The International Association of fire fighters. They are a union for thousands of fire fighters across the world.

**Background:** The audience is in debate to see if women should meet the same physical requirements as men.

**Context:** This speech will be read in a conference.

B

Many women experienced growing equality during the twentieth century in education, work, marriage, and in public life. But as soon as women started entering the workforce, companies would hire women either as means to better their reputation in the eyes of society, or governments, women's rights groups, even minority groups would impose quotas telling companies that a certain percentage of their workforce must be women or other visible minorities. <sup>raise voice</sup> I feel this is wrong. A company should hire <sup>emphasize</sup> whoever is best fit to do the job.

Women should have to meet the same physical requirements as men do for careers such as <sup>count on fingers</sup> police work, fire fighting, military jobs, or any other job that requires physical labor. Please note that I believe in gender equality, and I believe that if a woman can do the job and meet the same requirements as men, then they should get the job.

According to a Wisconsin fire fighter, <sup>raise voice</sup> women only need to meet fifty percent of the physical requirements as men do in order to pass whatever tests to become a fire fighter. What if a woman gets put in a situation where she needs to use <sup>emphasize</sup> strength in order to pull a three hundred pound male out of a burning building. She is putting herself and the victim in jeopardy of losing their lives. This also goes towards police work, military jobs, or any other jobs that require physical labor.

My uncle who is a <sup>emphasize</sup> first class officer in the St. Louis Fire and rescue team told me that since women started becoming fire fighters they had to drop many physical requirements for women because they couldn't do them. For example men had to

## LOW LEVEL 2

C

point at  
audience  
back of hands  
face audience  
slam fist on  
"die"  
count on  
fingers the  
exercises  
listed

run one mile in one minute thirty seconds. But none of the women could do this so they dropped it. Also men had to do tests such as wear their uniform with their mask, but the visor was painted so they couldn't see out of it, and they went into a building and a two hundred and fifty pound male was lying on the ground and they had to find him and drag him out of the building. Women have to do the same thing, but instead of dragging the body out of the building they just have to touch him. "Do you really want to trust your life in the hands of someone who doesn't know how to pull a body out of the building? It all comes down to this. "Do you want to live when your life is in jeopardy? Or do you want to die?"

Gender discrimination is even in high school classes. In gym class each student has to do what is called fitness testing. Where you either have to run a certain distance in a certain amount of time, jump a specific length, do push ups and sit ups, and even test your flexibility. The more you can do, or the longer you can do these tests the better grade you get. Males, for example, have to do forty-four push-ups, and seventy-three sit-ups to get a level four. Females only have to do twenty-four push-ups and forty-nine sit-ups for a level four. If both males and females are competing for the same mark, then they should both have to meet the same physical requirements to earn the grade.

Women should have to meet the same requirements as men to earn roles of any job that require physical labor. If men cannot meet the requirements, then they shouldn't get the job either. Whoever does the job best should get the job. Whether it is a male or a female.

D

### Bibliography

[www.wfsi.org/Bbarch4.html](http://www.wfsi.org/Bbarch4.html)

██████████, Personal Interview.  
24 May 2002.

Canadian Fitness testing Sheets

## Teacher's Notes

### Knowledge/Understanding

- The student demonstrates limited understanding of the facts surrounding the chosen issue. The student includes a number of relevant facts (e.g., “women only need to meet fifty percent of the physical requirements as men do ...”), but does not demonstrate understanding of some important aspects of the issue (e.g., that certain physical demands of the job, such as the ability to manoeuvre in confined spaces, may be more easily met by women).

### Thinking/Inquiry

- The student supports the perspective taken using ideas of some relevance to the purpose and audience. The student states the general principle that men and women should be treated equally (e.g., “if a woman can do the job and meet the same requirements as men, then they should get the job”). The student also correctly suggests that treatment is not equal where a woman only needs to meet fifty per cent of the physical requirements. The student supplies two relevant examples to support the claim that men and women are tested differently. However, the student also weakens the speech by introducing material that is irrelevant to the purpose and audience (e.g., about the unequal number of push-ups required of males and females in a gym class).

### Communication

- The student organizes information and ideas with some appropriateness. The speech has a clear structure, with an introduction, body, and conclusion. However, the topic identified in the opening statements (i.e., why women have experienced “growing equality during the twentieth century”) is broader than the real topic of the speech (i.e., the lack of equity in physical requirements for men and women in jobs requiring physical strength), which is not introduced until paragraph 2.
- The student uses language and a voice that are somewhat appropriate. Although the tone is serious and emphatic, it is also somewhat disparaging towards women, who make up part of the audience (e.g., “Do you really

want to trust your life in the hands of someone who doesn't know how to pull a body out of the building?”). As well, the student does not consistently maintain the voice of “A concerned fire fighter” addressing his peers (e.g., the speaker cites information provided by “My uncle”, and refers to high school gym classes).

### Application

- The student uses oral presentation techniques with some effectiveness. Some use is made both of rhetorical questions (e.g., “or do you want to die?”) and of vivid anecdotes about the tests undergone by firefighters.
- The student builds in speaker notes with some effectiveness. Although the direction they provide is precise, they tend to be repetitious, focusing on volume and gesture (e.g., “raise voice”, “count on fingers”).
- The student predicts a somewhat realistic and effective resolution. The proposed resolution (e.g., provided all applicants are judged by the same criteria, “Whoever does the job best should get the job”) is consistent with the argument in the body of the speech, but is a statement of opinion more than a strategy for resolving the issue.

### Comments

This work is representative of a low level-2 performance. The student demonstrates some degree of achievement of the expectations in the Thinking/Inquiry, Communication, and Application categories of knowledge and skills. However, in the Knowledge/Understanding category, the student demonstrates a limited degree of achievement – i.e., achievement that is more characteristic of level 1.

The result is a speech of uneven quality. Parts of the speech are persuasive, particularly when the student discusses the principle of hiring the best person for a job. The context, speaker, and audience are clearly defined, but the focus of the speech is inconsistent. The student does not clearly distinguish among the topics of women's equality, reverse gender discrimination, and the need for fixed physical criteria for hiring firefighters.

**LOW LEVEL 2**

**Next Steps**

In order to improve his or her performance, the student should:

- decide on a clear focus for the speech and state it directly in the introduction;
- develop a consistent persona for the speaker, namely, that of a firefighter;
- recognize that the selected audience will be composed of men and women firefighters;
- limit examples to those directly related to the topic and of interest to the audience;
- provide more variety in the speaker notes;
- proofread work to eliminate errors in spelling and grammar.