### Emma Watson's Speech at the U.N.

**Emma Watson**

Emma Watson is a British actress and model born in 1990, who is best known for her 10-year role as Hermione Granger in the eight Harry Potter movies. Watson is one of several women in the arts who have leveraged (fare leva) their high profile status to bring women's rights issues to the public eye. The list includes Jennifer Lawrence, Patricia Arquette, Rose McGowan, Annie Lennox, Beyonce, Carmen Maura, Taylor Swift, Lena Dunham, Katy Perry, Kelly Clarkson, Lady Gaga, and Shailene Woodley, although some have refused to self-identify as "feminists."

In 2014, Watson was named a U.N. Women [Goodwill Ambassador](http://www.unwomen.org/en/partnerships/goodwill-ambassadors) by the United Nations. Her role is to serve as an advocate for U.N. Women's gender equality campaign known as ***HeForShe.***

**1.Read the first part of Watson's speech and answer the questions.**

'I **was appointed** as Goodwill Ambassador for UN Women six months ago. And, the more I spoke about feminism, the more I realized that fighting for women’s rights has too often become synonymous with man-hating. If there is one thing I know for certain, it is that this has to stop.

**For the record**, feminism by definition is the belief that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities. It is the theory of political, economic and social equality of the sexes.

I started **questioning** gender-based **assumptions** a long time ago. When I was 8, I was confused for being called **bossy** because I wanted to direct the plays that we would put on for our parents, but the boys were not. When at 14, I started to be **sexualized** by certain elements of the media. When at 15, my girlfriends started **dropping out of** sports teams because they didn’t want to appear **muscly**. When at 18, my male friends were unable to express their feelings.

I decided that I was a feminist, and this seemed uncomplicated to me. But my recent research has shown me that feminism has become an unpopular word. Women are choosing not to identify as feminists. Apparently, I’m among the **ranks** of women whose expressions are seen as too strong, too aggressive, isolating, and anti-men. Unattractive, even.

Why has the word become such an uncomfortable one? I am from Britain, and I think it is right I am paid the same as my male **counterparts**. I think it is right that I should be able to make decisions about my own body. I think it is right that women be involved **on my behalf** in the **policies** and decisions that will **affect** my life. I think it is right that socially, I am **afforded** the same respect as men.

But sadly, I can say that there is no one country in the world where all women can expect to see these rights. No country in the world can yet say that they achieved gender equality'.

**2. Read the text again and translate the following words into Italian**

to be appointed

for the record

to question

assumption

bossy

sexualize

drop out of

muscly

rank

counterpart

involve

on my behalf

policy

affect

afford

**3. Answer the questions.**

1. In Watson's view what is the fight for women's rights associated with?

2. How does she feel towards this assumption?

3. When did she begin to reflect on gender-based assumptions?

4. Why are women afraid of being identified as feminists?

5. Which rights does Watson think should be granted to women?

6. Do British women have the rights she mentions?

**4. Express your opinion about the first part of the text.**

1. What do you think about Watson's words?
2. Do you share her same feelings about the worlds feminism and feminist?
3. After her explanation of the word 'feminism', would you mind being called a feminist?

**5. Read the second part of Watson's speech and say if the following sentences are true or false.**

**Underline sentences in the text to give reason of your choice.**

These rights, I consider to be human rights, but I am one of the lucky ones.

My life is a sheer privilege because my parents didn’t love me less because I was born a daughter. My school did not limit me because I was a girl. My mentors didn't assume that I would go less far because I might give birth to a child one day. These influences were the gender equality ambassadors that made me who I am today. They may not know it, but they are the inadvertent feminists that are changing the world today. We need more of those.

And if you still hate the word, it is not the word that is important. It’s the idea and the ambition behind it, because not all women have received the same rights I have. In fact, statistically, very few have.

In 1997, Hillary Clinton made a famous speech in Beijing about women’s rights. Sadly, many of the things that she wanted to change are still true today. But what stood out for me the most was that less than thirty percent of the audience were male. How can we effect change in the world when only half of it is invited or feel welcome to participate in the conversation?

Men, I would like to take this opportunity to extend your formal invitation. Gender equality is your issue, too. Because to date, I’ve seen my father’s role as a parent being valued less by society, despite my need of his presence as a child, as much as my mother’s. I’ve seen young men suffering from mental illness, unable to ask for help for fear it would make them less of a man. In fact, in the UK, suicide is the biggest killer of men between 20 to 49, eclipsing road accidents, cancer and coronary heart disease. I’ve seen men made fragile and insecure by a distorted sense of what constitutes male success. Men don’t have the benefits of equality, either.

We don’t often talk about men being imprisoned by gender stereotypes, but I can see that they are, and that when they are free, things will change for women as a natural consequence. If men don’t have to be aggressive in order to be accepted, women won’t feel compelled to be submissive. If men don’t have to control, women won’t have to be controlled.

Both men and women should feel free to be sensitive. Both men and women should feel free to be strong. It is time that we all perceive gender on a spectrum, instead of two sets of opposing ideals. If we stop defining each other by what we are not, and start defining ourselves by who we are, we can all be freer, and this is what HeForShe is about. It’s about freedom.

1. Her parents wanted to have a boy \_\_\_\_\_\_
2. The people she grow up with made her take the decision to become a feminist. \_\_\_\_\_
3. It's essential not to hate the word 'feminist' to fight for gender equality . \_\_\_\_\_
4. Hillary Clinton's audience in 1997 was composed by more men than women \_\_\_
5. Gender equality does not concern only women but also men. \_\_\_\_\_\_
6. Father's role is considered as important as mother's role by the society \_\_\_\_\_
7. It is easier for men than for women to ask for help if they feel ill, insecure of fragile. \_\_\_\_
8. Gender stereotypes imprison men as much as women. \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Express your opinion about the second part of the text.**

What do you think about Watson's invitation to men? Try to relate it to your personal experience.