



## SIMPLE WAYS TO INCORPORATE LGBTQ AND GENDER INCLUSIVE MATERIAL ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

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### LANGUAGE ARTS

Using literature is one of the easiest ways to incorporate inclusive material into your classroom. On the Welcoming Schools website you can find extensive bibliographies with books on family diversity, picture books that go beyond traditional gender roles and books that highlight ways to handle bullying and name-calling. Many of the books work well with individual curriculum units.



Consider using these books as part of your reading program. Use some for read-alouds and have others available for students' individual reading. These books can lead to rich class discussions about families, about respecting differences and about understanding differences. Even picture books, although at an early reading level, can be used with older students as a focal point for discussion.

The books in the bibliographies make excellent sources for writing topics to use in your Writer's Workshops. Have students write about their own families, and then expand the topic to include writing about families different from their own. Students could discuss or write about their aspirations for the future after reading an inspiring biography. Depending on the age group, they could write poems, personal short essays, or fiction stories.

When you provide names for biography projects, make sure to include some accomplished women or men who succeeded in some non-traditional fields, such as Mae Jemison, the astronaut or Bill T. Jones, the dancer. (See the Welcoming Schools' lesson plan on biographies for more ideas.)

Use everyday problems all the students face for writing prompts, such as:

- I can be an ally to my classmates when I ...
- I can help create a caring classroom by ...
- I was a bystander (saw someone bullied) once and I ...
- I was bullied and I felt ...

### SOCIAL STUDIES

In your classroom's social studies books include ones about famous lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) people, such as Alice Walker or Harvey Milk. Also include men and women who have excelled in non-traditional realms, such as the dancers Rudolf Nureyev and Alvin Ailey; Rachel Carson, the scientist; or Bessie Coleman, the first African-American woman pilot.

You can also help your students explore more than just the lives of a few famous LGBTQ people. When you are talking about discrimination or stereotypes, include LGBTQ people. When you talk about the civil rights movement, include Bayard Rustin, a key strategist for Martin Luther King Jr. You can also include significant moments in LGBTQ civil rights, such as the Stonewall riots in 1969 in New York City or the election of Harvey Milk as the first openly gay politician.

If you post articles on bulletin boards about current events, include articles with LGBTQ content or that highlight LGBTQ people in the news or in history.

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## **MATH**

Read through your word problems and be sure that you reflect all kinds of families and not just families with a “Mom and Dad.” Examples can be as simple as: “Joshua and his moms went apple picking. Joshua picked 27 apples and his moms picked 42 apples. How many apples did they have all together?” Or: “Keisha went to the grocery store with her dads. Their bill was \$54.67. Keisha’s parents gave the cashier \$60.00. How much change did her dads get back?”

## **SPECIAL SUBJECT AREAS: MUSIC, ART, PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND LIBRARY**

Encourage the teachers of these special subjects to participate in discussions with colleagues about providing safe, inclusive learning environments for all children. Make resources available to these teachers. Special subject teachers see all the students in a school and can be important in providing continuity to this work.

### **MUSIC AND ART**

Encourage all children’s artistic or musical abilities. Be prepared for teachable moments, such as when one student says to another, “Oh, pink is a girl’s color, why are you using that?” or “Chorus is for girls.” Read your students books that challenge traditional gender roles in the arts, such as *The Art Lesson* by Tomie dePaola or *Dance* by Bill T. Jones. Point out the contributions LGBTQ artists and musicians have made. Highlight famous LGBTQ dancers or musicians such as Leonard Bernstein or Katherine Lee Bates, author of “America the Beautiful.” Include artists, such as Leonardo daVinci, pop artist Andy Warhol or photographer Annie Leibovitz.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provide opportunities for both boys and girls to participate in all activities. Don’t let comments such as “You throw like a girl” or “A boy is a sissy if he likes to dance” slide. Be prepared with responses for these comments. Initiate discussions to break down gender stereotypes or discuss gender limitations. Provide an inclusive classroom environment by talking about physical differences and abilities. Make sure to offer all children chances to do activities such as moving equipment and helping to clean up after activities.

### **LIBRARY**

Books provide an important mirror for children to see themselves reflected in the world around them. At the same time they provide a window into the lives of others and expand students’ personal experiences. Diversify the books available in your library. Include books with different kinds of families and with cultural, racial, economic and ethnic diversity. Also include books that show a wide range of activities, emotions and achievements for boys and girls. Create displays of books in the library that feature different kinds of families.

### **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)**

These sessions are a wonderful time to include children’s experiences with LGBTQ issues. When you teach about name-calling, ask if they have heard the word “gay” used as an insult. Talk about what it really means, and then teach them how to use their words to stop such name-calling. Teach them how to be allies for everyone. When you talk about stereotypes include stereotypes about LGBTQ people and gender stereotypes.

