

Pink, Blue and Purple

A Lesson Plan from Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum

Fostering responsibility by respecting young people's rights to honest sexuality education.

NSES ALIGNMENT:

GI.2.CC.1 – Define gender, gender identity, and gender-role stereotypes

GI.2.CC.2 – Discuss the range of ways people express their gender and how gender-role stereotypes may limit behavior

TIME: 30 Minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Two identical greeting cards for a new baby, one that is clearly intended for a cisgender boy, and the other for a cisgender girl

OR

- Printout of the gender stereotype boy and girl greeting cards
- Four signs, either printed out or handwritten, with the four vocabulary words as indicated in "Advance Preparation"
- Sheets of flipchart paper with Venn diagram pre-written on it as described in the Advance Preparation section
- Enough sets of activities cut up and placed in envelopes for half the class, plus one for the teacher
- Masking tape
- Markers

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

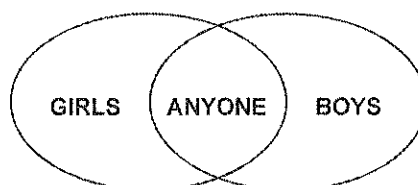
1. Define gender, gender identity and gender role stereotypes [Knowledge]
2. Name at least two things they've been taught about gender role stereotypes, and how those things may limit people of all genders [Knowledge]

LESSON RATIONALE:

This lesson for lower elementary students provides the foundational concept of gender so that students can then understand gender identity and gender role stereotypes. Helping students reflect on things like colors, toys and careers, this lesson teaches students that gender should not be a limiting factor in being who you are and living authentically.

ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- Prepare enough sheets of flipchart paper for half the students in your class. Each sheet should have a large Venn diagram on it. The left circle should have the heading, "Girls," the right circle, "Boys," and the center area "Anyone"



- Purchase two new-baby greeting cards, one of which is very stereotypically gendered for a boy baby and one for a girl baby. If finding/purchasing these cards is inconvenient, just use the accompanying graphics.
- Print out or draw the four vocabulary signs: Gender, Identity, Role and Stereotype
- Print out and cut up the activity sheet (provided), and place an entire set in an envelope. Make enough sets for half the class, plus one set for yourself

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PROCEDURE:

STEP 1:

Tell the class that you have a friend who just had a baby. You want to send your friend a card to say congratulations, but you can't decide between two cards and need their help.

Hold up the two greeting cards and ask, **"Which one do you think I should send?"** [Students will likely ask whether the baby is a girl or a boy]. Ask, **"If it were a girl baby, which card would you tell me to send?"** [They will indicate the pink card] **"And if it were a boy baby, which would you tell me to send?"** [They will indicate the blue card].

Ask, "Why should I send this card to a boy baby and this one to a girl baby?"

Possible responses may include:

- "Because that one has boy things on it, and that one has girl things on it"
- "Blue is for boys and pink is for girls"
- "I like that one better, and I'm a [boy/girl]"

Explain that, **"All of what we just talked about – like deciding what colors or toys people can play with is part of something called 'gender.' That's what we're going to be talking about today."**

Put the sign with the word "Gender" up on the board (or write it if using a white board). Ask students to repeat the word with you. Say something like, **"When we referred to a 'boy' baby or a 'girl' baby, we were talking about what gender the baby is."**

Ask, **"How do you know what gender you are?"** Responses will vary, but may include:

- "My family told me"
- "I know because of my body parts"
- "I just know it"

If a student says something like, "I just know it" or "I feel that way on the inside," explain that knowing what gender you are is called **"gender identity."** Put the sign that reads "gender identity" up (or write the phrase) on the board. Ask students to repeat it with you.

Point out that the word "Identity" begins with an "I." Say something like, **"Identity starts with an I. That's how you can remember it. 'I' feel, 'I' know. Gender identity is that feeling of knowing your gender. You might feel like you are a boy, you might feel like you are a girl. You might feel like you're a boy even if you have body parts that some people might tell you are 'girl' parts. You might feel like you're a girl even if you have body parts that some people might tell you are 'boy' parts. And you might not feel like you're a boy or a girl, but you're a little bit of both. No matter how you feel, you're perfectly normal!"**

Explain that you're going to do an activity to talk about this more.

(7 minutes)

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STEP 2:

Break the class into pairs. As they are getting into pairs, draw a Venn diagram on the board like the one they are about to get. Once they are in their pairs, distribute the flipchart sheets with the Venn diagrams on them. Explain that they are going to each get an envelope with some pictures in it. Tell them they are to decide whether what's in the picture is something that only boys should play with, only girls should play with or that anyone can play with. Explain that they should put the picture in that section of their flipchart sheet.

Answer any questions, then distribute the envelopes. Move around the room to help students stay on track.

(12 minutes)

STEP 3:

After about eight minutes, or whenever students seem to be done, ask for their attention. Using your Venn diagram at the front of the room, go through your own set, showing each one and asking them where they put them. For each response, say, "**Actually, anyone can play with a _____,**" and tape it in the center.

Once all of the examples are in the center, say something like, "**Pretty much anything can be done by anyone, no matter what gender they are. But we're still told that only boys should play with certain things, and only girls can play with certain things. Why do you think that is?**"

After a few responses, say something like, "**Telling someone they can only play with or do certain things because of who they are is called a 'stereotype.' When they're told they can only play with or do certain things based on their gender, it's called a 'gender stereotype.'**" Ask students to repeat both terms with you.

Ask, "**Have any of you ever been told you're not supposed to do or play with something because of your gender? If so, how did it make you feel?**"

If not, how do you think someone who really wants to do something but is told they can't because of their gender might feel?"

After a few responses, say something like, "**Sometimes, when a boy does something that's not on the 'boy' list, or when a girl does something that's not on the 'girl' list, they'll get teased or even bullied. For example, a boy who cries in front of his friends or likes to play dress-up, or a girl who likes to climb or play with rockets.**" Explain that it is never okay to tease or bully someone else – and it's never okay for someone to tease or bully you. If that were to happen, whether it's about gender or about something else, it's really important to tell a teacher or another trusted adult.

Say something like, "**No matter your gender, you can play with any of these toys. You can wear whatever clothes you want, or have long or short hair. Be who you are, and enjoy playing with whatever toys you enjoy playing with!**"

Teacher Resource: Activities

INSTRUCTIONS: Make enough copies of this sheet for half the class. Cut out each activity along the dotted lines, and place each complete set into a separate envelope. Make enough sets for half the students to have one, plus one set for yourself.

