

Understanding Sexual Orientation: How I Feel, What I Do and Who I Am

Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Sexuality
Education Curriculum

What is Sexual Orientation?

The gender(s) of the people to whom we are attracted, physically and romantically.

What is Sexual Orientation?

- Can include more than one gender.
- Includes love: you can know your orientation with necessarily doing something sexual with another person.



What Names Do We Have?

- Gay
- Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Heterosexual
- Homosexual
- Straight
- Pansexual
- Queer
- Yellow Flag Language
- Red Flag?
- Other names?
 - LGBTQI+

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Sexual orientation has three parts to it...

- Orientation - who we are attracted to.
- Behavior - how we behave sexually.
- Identity - what we call ourselves.

In Most Cases, These “Match”

- If I’m attracted only to people of a different sex. (*Orientation*)
- Chances are I’ll only be sexual with people of a different sex. (*Behavior*)
- Chances are I’ll call myself “straight” or “heterosexual.” (*Identity*)

But when they don't match...

- Identity “wins.”
- People have the right to call themselves whatever they wish – even if it may not make sense to others.

Example One

- 11th grade girl
- Has only been in relationships with other girls since the 8th grade
- Always identified as lesbian
- Just met and fell in love with a guy who she's really attracted to and now they're in a relationship.
- She says she doesn't find other guys attractive, but still finds girls really attractive.

How Does She Identify?

It's a trick question!

You have to ask her.

- Her *orientation* is
 - mostly girls, one guy.
- Her current *behavior* is
 - only one guy.
- Her *identity*:
 - whatever she decides it is.

She might call herself...

- Lesbian – since she's still mostly attracted to other girls and is not attracted to other guys.
- Bisexual – since she's with this one guy and still attracted to other girls.
- Queer – since the labels might not fit for her.
- *Something else altogether.*

Example Two

- 9th grade guy.
- Has only ever been attracted to and made out with girls (he's never had any kind of sex).
- Just met and fell in love with another guy, and now they're in a relationship.
- They also date other people; both of them are only dating guys.

How Does He Identify?

It's the same trick question!

You have to ask him.

- His *orientation* is
 - currently guys, even though he has only been with girls in the past.
- His current *behavior* is
 - with one guy, as well as other guys.
- His *identity*:
 - whatever he decides it is.

He *might* call himself...

- Gay – since he is only dating guys.
- Bisexual – since he's been with girls and may still find them attractive, even though he's only dating guys.
- Queer – since the labels might not fit for him.
- *Something else altogether.*

Bottom Line

- It is every person's *RIGHT* to identify however they wish.
- Others need to *RESPECT* who that person is, even if that person's identity doesn't make sense to them.

The Arrowhead Way

- Be Appropriate
- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible

Bottom Line

- No matter who you are attracted to or sexual with, you have a *responsibility* to both you and your partner to practice safer sex in order to stay healthy.

Student Worksheet: Gender Scripts

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: From the time we are born, we are told how we are supposed to act, dress and speak based on the sex we are assigned at birth – just as if we had been given a script and asked to follow it throughout our lives. In the space below, please provide examples of some of the messages you or people close to you have received about how we are supposed to behave based on whether someone is assigned “male” or “female” at birth.

ASSIGNED FEMALE

ASSIGNED MALE

Understanding Gender

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mean?

- *Typical answer...*

- **“It’s whether you are a boy or a girl.”**

How does someone determine whether you are a boy or a girl?

- *Typical answer...*

- **It's how you were born."**

When you're born how do they know what your gender is?

- *Typical answer...*

- **“By looking at the baby’s genitals.”**

Understanding Gender

- When you look at the baby's genitals and see either a penis or a vulva (labia, clitoris, urethra, and opening to the vagina) all you're seeing is their body parts.
- Based on what we see, we assign a name to describe that baby – we say, “it's a boy” or “it's a girl.”
- This is called a person's *biological sex*.

Understanding Gender

- **Some people are born with external genitals that do not match their internal organs.**
- **For example, someone who has a vulva (labia, clitoris, urethra, and opening to the vagina) but no uterus.**

UNDERSTANDING GENDER

All this has to do with biology:

- our body parts
 - our chromosomes
 - our hormones
 - *This makes up our biological sex.*
-
- If our body parts are different than our internal organs, then we are intersex, sometimes called DSD(differences of sexual development).
 - A way of referring to someone whose sexual body parts developed differently from most people.
 - [What is Intersex? SLIDES](#)

“

**Gender is different
and far more complex
than biological sex.**

Understanding Gender

- If you were to look in the mirror and see your body parts, what you see in the mirror - what we just discussed - is part of your *biological sex*.
- If you were to close your eyes, how you see yourself based on those body parts is your gender identity.

Understanding Gender

- In most cases how people *feel* when they close their eyes matches what they see in the mirror.
- This is called being “cisgender.”
- More commonly just called “male” & “female.”

Understanding Gender

- For some people, what they *see* in the mirror and how they *feel* on the inside are different.
- This is called being “transgender.”

Understanding Gender

- Gender is society's set of expectations, standards, and characteristics about how men and women are supposed to act.

UNDERSTANDING GENDER

- **Regardless of our gender identity, we are get lots of messages about what is okay to say, do or wear based on who we are.**

Understanding Gender

- Gender Scripts Assignment:
 - In class = paper
 - Absent = Canvas
 - *GENDER SCRIPTS WORKSHEET*
- Read the instructions and complete the worksheet.
- Be prepared to share your thoughts.
- *Add question to your worksheet - next slide*

What happens when someone does not follow or fit the scripts?

- Consider this question and write your response on your sheet.
- Share with your seatmate.
- Share with class.

UNDERSTANDING GENDER

- **Student Worksheet: Gender Scripts**
- **Groups of 3-5**
- **Read the instructions and work together to complete the worksheet.**
- **Please be prepared to share your thoughts.**
- **GENDER SCRIPTS WORKSHEET (PAGE 6).**

The Arrowhead Way

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- Be Respectful
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