



## National Black Lives Matter at School Week

### What is Transgender, and How Can I Be an Ally?

By Tracy Castro-Gill

Grade: 4-5

Theme: Trans and Queer Affirming

Day: Wednesday

#### Content standards:

Washington Health Education Content Standard : Identify how friends and family can influence ideas regarding gender roles, identity and expression, and demonstrate ways to show respect for all people. (H4-5.Se5.4)

#### Knowledge: students will **know** that...

*Gender Identity is the strong feeling inside that we are male, female, or somewhere in between.*

*Gender Expression is how a person presents to the world (hair style, what they wear, etc). When a person is able to express their gender in a way that makes sense to them, they are able to be who they are and feel happy.*

#### Skills: students will be **able** to...

*Define transgender and explore an example of gender diversity.*

*Understand the importance of accepting differences.*

*Discuss the negative impacts of bullying and how to be an ally.*

#### Essential Questions: to guide the lesson discussions –

Why is it important to accept people the way they want to be accepted?

Why is it my responsibility to be an ally, and how can I do that?

Preparation: This lesson plan will be more effective if there have been lessons for Monday and Tuesday's theme which offer background knowledge on racial discrimination and oppression. Explain to the students that everybody has many different parts that make up their whole person/identity. Race is

one characteristic, and today we will focus on gender, and how transgender people have unique experiences. We will also brainstorm ideas on how we can best support them by being allies.

1. Warm up activity: Have the students discuss the following prompt:

“What makes a person a boy or a girl?” The teacher should explain that the answers should include physical characteristics, hobbies, preferences (in clothes, sports, school subjects), feelings, thoughts, etc.

Share out with a few students providing their answers. The teacher should record them on the board in T-chart form with using “boy” and “girl” on the right and left sides of the T-chart.

Explain that the students have just defined what our society calls gender, and most people are assigned to either the boy side or the girl side based on these characteristics.

Ask the students if anyone disagrees with what’s on the T-chart. If students find that some characteristics could be for both genders, write those on the line of the T-Chart in a different color.

Explain that gender isn’t always so easy to identify. A person may look like what society says a girl should look like, but inside, that person feels like a boy, or like no gender at all, and this is what we call Transgender. (10 minutes)

2. Vocabulary activity: Explain that, because this topic is often over looked, students must familiarize themselves with some terms before they can learn more about transgender identities.

Distribute sticky notes and a double-sided vocabulary inference sheets to each team. Show the slides for each vocabulary word. Give the students 1 minute to write their own inference of the word based on the images on the slide on one sticky note. Though there may be multiple words or phrases on each slide, they should be inferring the definition of the word at the top of each slide in large, bold font.

At the end of the minute, each student posts their note on the corners of the team sheet. They must then deliberate on which is the best definition, OR create a combined definition based on the individual input. In order to keep the discussion and decision making short, students should be limited to 2 minutes for this portion. They should write the agreed upon definition in the center of the team sheet (or move the sticky note that they voted as best).

Do a quick share out of one or two groups, then check with the whole group on agreement with a thumbs up or thumbs down. If there is significant disagreement, a short conversation should be had for clarification. (10 minutes)

3. Watch “Raising Ryland.” (13 minutes)

4. Small group discussion: Break class into groups of three or four and assign each group a prompt. Have the students discuss and record their answers. Each group will choose a representative to share out their answers. (17 minutes)
1. “Why did Ryland’s mom say it was painful for Ryland to see himself as a girl? How did Ryland behave when his parents forced him to wear dresses and bows?”
  2. “What two characteristic does Ryland have that will make school challenging for him? How might those characteristics make it harder for Ryland to make friends in school?”
  3. “How might a person who is Black and transgender have different struggles than a transgender person like Ryland? Why is it important to recognize a person’s racial identity and gender identity at the same time?”
  4. “Why do transgender students need allies? What actions did Ryland’s mom and teacher take to be an ally for Ryland?”
  5. “Why do transgender students need allies? What can we do to be allies to our Transgender classmates?”

**Text / Materials:**

**Power Point**

**Vocabulary Inference Team Sheet**

**Sticky Notes**

**Raising Ryland Video**

<https://www.cnn.com/videos/us/2015/03/17/digital-shorts-parenting-transgender-child-orig.cnn/video/playlists/digital-short-films-t1-for-specials-page/>

**Group note taking sheets with prompts**

**Notes:**