

Instructional Samples – Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

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What is A Family?

(based on content from [*the Gender Spectrum: What Educators Need to Know*](#))

Rationale: This lesson explores the diverse types of families that exist in society. The interactive activity teaches students that all families are special, express love, and support their family members in similar ways to other families and are of equal importance and value within society.

Grade/subject(s): K-1/Physical and Health Education (This lesson can also be used to support K/1 Social Studies)

Big Ideas: Learning about ourselves and others helps us develop a positive attitude and caring behaviours, which helps us build healthy relationships

Competencies:

- Develop and demonstrate respectful behaviour when participating in activities with others
- Identify caring behaviours among classmates and within families

Content:

- Caring behaviours in groups and families

Core Competencies:

- Communication – Acquire, interpret and present information (includes inquiries)
- Creative Thinking – Generating ideas
- Critical Thinking – Analyze and critique
- Personal and Cultural Identity – Relationships and cultural contexts
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Self-determination
- Social Responsibility – Valuing Diversity

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity

Teaching Strategies and Questions

Ask students "Who's in a family?" Record their ideas on chart paper along with key words and picture symbols (i.e. people's heads) so that non-readers can tell who is who. Be careful not to draw girls and boys in gender stereotypical ways (i.e. stick figures with skirts or pants) or using gendered colours (i.e. pink and blue).

Prior to reading stories about families, ask students to listen and watch for the different kinds of families they see within the books. Read the story "Who's in A Family?" by Robert Skutch, "All Families are Special" by Norma Simon, "Families" by Shelly Rotner and Sheila Reynolds or "The Family Book" by Todd Parr.

After reading, show students a chart with different kinds of families on it:

- Adoptive
- Foster Parents
- Blended Families
- Couples without Children
- Extended Families
- Same Ethnicity Families
- Multi-Ethnic Families
- Opposite Gender Parents
- Same Gender Parents
- Single Parent

Ask students to take turns using a pointer and being "the teacher" to point out where their own family may fit. Some students may identify with multiple categories, which can reinforce that identity includes several different parts of who we are. Help those who might be challenged to identify their own family. (Make sure you know the families of all students well before you teach this lesson).

Return to your chart throughout the unit to re-teach the names of the different kinds of families.

Possible Extensions

If you would like to teach acceptance of same gender families use the following book: "ABC-A Family Alphabet Book" by Bobbie Combs. Prior to reading, brainstorm all the activities your students do with their own parents and guardians on a T-chart. Add picture symbols to the words you scribe on the chart.

- Read the story and ask students to watch for other activities that families do together.
- After reading, add additional ideas to the chart from the story based upon student responses.
- Ask students to imagine/pretend they had two moms or two dads. If that were so, what would they get double of? (positive/fun things). Create a class book modelled after "The Mommy Book" or "The Daddy Book" by Todd Parr. Each student makes one page using the following frame:
 - o "Two Moms means double the _____."
 - o "Two Dads means double the _____."
- They may pick their ideas from the chart you created together. You may need to scribe words in the blanks for Kindergarten students. Grade Ones can scribe from your ideas on the chart. All students can draw the picture themselves. Ask them to have two moms or dads in their picture. Reinforce that we are using our imaginations to pretend what it would be like to have two Moms or Dads.

Assessment

- Use the final page of "Who's in a Family?" which depicts all the families (without words) and ask students individually to point to different kinds of families as you verbally prompt them with questions i.e. Can you find the single parent family? Can you point to the same gender family? Where is the opposite gender family?

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- Use formative assessment strategies to have students brainstorm how families are the same and differ using a T-Chart and scribing their ideas within small groups or as a class

Book Titles

Rotner, Shelly, and Sheila M. Kelly. *Families*. 2015. 32p. Holiday House, (9780823430536). K/1.

- A beautiful diversity of family life is depicted through simple text and photographs.

Schiffer, Miriam B. *Stella Brings the Family*. Written by Miriam Schiffer; illus. by Holly Clifton-Brown. 2015. 36p. Chronicle, (9781452111902). 3-7 yrs.

- It's Mother's Day, and everyone is making invitations for their mothers to come to the school celebration. But Stella has two dads and no mom to invite...What should she do?

Newman, Leslea. *Donovan's Big Day*. Illustrated by Mike Dutton. Tricycle Press. 2011. 32p. (978-1582463322). Pre-K-2.

- It's a very BIG day for young Donovan—get ready, get dressed in his best with a bow tie and be the ring bearer when Mommy and Mama get married!

Newman, Leslea. *Daddy, Papa, and Me*. Il. Carol Thompson. 2008 (Dec.). unpaginated. Tricycle Press/Ten Speed, (9781582462622). Gr. Pre-K., and *Mommy, Mama, and Me*. Il. Carol Thompson. 2008 (Dec.). unpaginated. Tricycle Press/Ten Speed, (9781582462639). Gr. Pre-K.

- Same-sex parents use loving family activities to teach and play with their child in these board books.

Parr, Todd. *The Family Book*. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers. 2011. 32p. (978-0316070409) Gr. Pre-2.

- The Family Book celebrates the love we feel for our families and all the different varieties they come in

Full lesson plan available in: [The Gender Spectrum: What Educators Need to Know](#) (page 30)

Blow the Whistle on Name-Calling

(based on content from [GLSEN](#))

Rationale: This lesson encourages students to consider what a caring and respectful environment looks like and what the consequences of name-calling can be. It helps students develop a strategy for group self-monitoring of name-calling in the Physical Education class that can be transferred across the school environment.

Grade/subject(s): K-1/Physical and Health Education

Big Ideas: Learning about ourselves and others helps us develop a positive attitude and caring behaviours, which helps us build healthy relationships

Competencies:

- Develop and demonstrate respectful behaviour when participating in activities with others
- Identify caring behaviours among classmates and within families

Content:

- Caring behaviours in groups and families

Core Competencies:

- Communication – Acquire, interpret and present information (includes inquiries)
- Creative Thinking – Generating ideas
- Critical Thinking – Analyze and critique
- Personal and Cultural Identity – Relationships and cultural contexts
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Self-determination
- Social Responsibility – Valuing Diversity

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)

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- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity

Teaching Strategies and Questions

Ask students to think, pair and share in response to the following questions:

- Why do people sometimes call others mean names that hurt?
- How does it feel to be called mean names that hurt?
- Would you want to be around someone who uses mean names that hurt?

After students have had some time to discuss each, have them silently think of mean names that hurt. Provide some examples. Do not have students share these names out loud.

Have students write a mean name that they have been called or heard someone else called on a small piece of paper and put papers in a "Penalty Box." "Lock" it up. These names will stay in the penalty box during physical education class and recess time for the school year. No one will call anyone else mean names. They are all locked in the penalty box.

Have all students blow an imaginary referee whistle and say - "Tweet! Name-Calling is not ok here." Encourage everyone to help everyone else remember that name-calling is not ok here by "Tweeting" when they hear it.

Ask students to learn everyone's name in class. Have students stand/sit in a circle. Pass a ball around the circle so that everyone tosses the ball to the person on their right until the ball goes all the way around. Tell students that when they catch the ball, they should say their name before tossing it to the next person. Ask everyone to remember as many names as they can. For a second round, have students pass the ball to anyone in the circle, but they must say that person's name before they toss them the ball. Everyone must catch the ball before anyone can catch it a second time. Time how long it takes for the group to pass the ball to everyone in the circle and say the name of the person they are passing the ball to. Repeat to try to beat their time.

Possible Extensions

- The self-monitoring activity on name-calling can be extended to recess and other lessons outside of Physical Education

Assessment

- Students will describe the effects of name-calling
- Students will be able to use the names of classmates
- Students will identify Safe Sports Space Rules
- Students will commit themselves to stopping name-calling in physical education class

Book Titles

Hoffman, Sarah and Hoffman, Ian. *Jacob's New Dress*. 2014. 32p. Albert Whitman & Company, (978-0807563731) Gr. K-3

- This heartwarming story speaks to the unique challenges faced by boys who don't identify with traditional gender roles.

Meddaugh, Susan. *Martha Walks the Dog*. 2003. 32p. HMH Books for Young Readers, (978-0618380053) Gr. K-3

- Martha meets Bob, a 'bad dog', and learns that others respond best to kindness

O'Neill, Alexis. *The Recess Queen*. 2002. 32p. Scholastic Press, (978-0439206372) Gr. K-3

- With her irrepressible spirit, the new girl at school dethrones the reigning recess bully by becoming her friend

Choi, Yangsook. *The Name Jar*. 2003. 40p. Dragonfly, (978-0440417996) Gr. K-3

- Having just moved to America from Korea, Unhei wants to choose a new American name to fit in. Encouraged by her new friends, Unhei chooses her own Korean name and helps everyone pronounce it

Seskin Steve and Shamblin, Allen. *Don't Laugh at Me*. 2002. 32p. Tricycle, (978-1582460581) Gr. K-3

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- Filled with inspiration and celebration, Don't Laugh at Me is the anthem for a new bully-free world

Full lesson plan available from [GLSEN](#).

Fairy Tales and Gender Roles

(based on content from [*the Gender Spectrum: What Educators Need to Know*](#))

Rationale: Fairy Tales are a wonderful genre to explore how gender has been portrayed historically and in current times. Traditional fairy tales and fractured ones (modern day ones with a twist) allow primary students to think critically about how men and women are portrayed and compare these portrayals to their own families and communities. This instructional sample allows students to explore relationship dynamics, and factors that influence self-identity, through a gender-based lens.

Grade/subject(s): 2/Physical and Health Education

Big Ideas: Our physical, emotional, and mental health are interconnected

Competencies:

- Identify and describe characteristics of positive relationships
- Identify and apply strategies that promote mental well-being
- Identify personal skills, interests, and preferences and describe how they influence self-identity

Content:

- Factors that influence self-identity

Core Competencies:

- Communication – Acquire, interpret and present information (includes inquiries)
- Creative Thinking – Generating ideas
- Critical Thinking – Analyze and critique
- Personal and Cultural Identity – Relationships and cultural contexts
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Self-determination
- Social Responsibility – Valuing Diversity

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)

- Learning is embedded in memory, history and story
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity

Teaching Strategies and Questions:

Read a traditional (gendered) fairy tale (see list below for examples), and ask students what they notice about how the princesses and princes are being portrayed in the story. You might ask some open-ended questions like the following:

- How are princesses usually portrayed at the start of a story? (i.e. Cinderella, Rapunzel)
- Is the princess waiting around for something or someone to come to her rescue or make her happy? If so, whom?
- Towards the end of the story, what makes the princess happy? Why do you think that might be?

Next, read a non-traditional fairy tale (see list below for examples), and ask students questions such as:

- In your world (i.e. modern times), which princesses and princes are more realistic characters? Why do you think that? Who does each princess or prince remind you of in real life?
- Can a prince or princess be single, live with or be married to someone of the same gender and live happily ever after? Why or why not? Do you know anyone who is happily single, lives with or is married to someone of the same gender?
- How might a princess or prince be treated by others in the kingdom if they don't look or act like they are expected to by many of the other princesses or princes?

You might hold a secret ballot on a particular question to have students record their thoughts without being influenced by peer pressure or gender bias. You can then discuss the results of the ballot and why someone might believe that one fairy tale character may be more representative of girls in today's times.

Here are some stories you might want to compare and contrast with students.

Traditional Fairy Tales (Gendered)

- *Cinderella*
- *Capable*
- *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*
- *The Ugly Duckling*
- *Rapunzel*
- *The Princess and the Pea*

Non-traditional Fairy Tales

- *Prince Cinders*
- *Snow White in New York*
- *King and King*
- *The Sissy Duckling*
- *Princess Smarty Pants*
- *The Paper Bag Princess*

Possible Extensions:

Introduce students to the concept of *sexism* – the belief that male gender identities and masculine gender expressions are superior to female and/or feminine ones.

Then read stories together and use any of the following strategies:

- Pick a traditional fairy tale and read it aloud. Ask students to stop you when they see or hear a sexist incident in the story. Students call out “Stop!” when they want you to cease reading. They must then identify the sexist incident before you can proceed with the story.
- Have students take a traditional fairy tale and work together in small groups to write a new ending for it. Ask them to create one where the princess and prince live in a more realistic, independent manner.
- Use the book, *King and King*, to prompt student thinking about marriage equality. Ask students if two princes or princesses can get married or not. Read the story and then debrief student reactions to the book. Ask students: What did you notice in this fairy tale that was unexpected? How did you react to the part of the story where the two princes got married? Why? What messages have you heard about who can or cannot marry?

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- Ask students to write their own non-traditional fairy tale where the prince or princess is portrayed in a non-gender specific role. Tell them you are looking for non-sexist behaviour in at least one character.
- Brainstorm with the class or in small groups what a non-sexist or non-gender binary monarchy would look like. How would it be ruled? What would the laws be to prevent the bullying of queens or kings who weren't like some of the others?
- Have students make a T-chart of "Kingdoms vs. Genderless Monarchies". Ask them to compare and contrast this with how a typical monarchy is organized and ruled.
- Have students create written, visual or mixed media "Royal Decrees" on how they should treat each other in your classroom so that no one is bullied and can be true to themselves.

Assessment:

- Can students define sexism in their own words?
- Can students describe some simple negative effects of sexism?
- Are students able to identify one way in which sexism is portrayed in traditional fairy tales?
- Use formative assessment strategies to determine if students understand how monarchs are bound by tradition and societal expectations to live in a gender binary manner.
- Ask students to identify what events within their non-traditional Fairytales helped free the characters from their kingdom's expectations. Have them hypothesize how they might feel if they were that character before and after the event which granted them more personal freedom. Draw parallels to people lives within your school or community.

Full lesson plan available in: [The Gender Spectrum: What Educators Need to Know](#) (page 33)

Book Titles:

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Bone, Jeffrey and Lisa Bone. Not Every Princess. 32p. Magination Press. (978-1433816475). Grades Pre-K-3.

- Anyone can be a princess, a pirate, a mermaid, or a superhero. Demonstrated through rhyming text and whimsical illustrations, whatever you can imagine, you can become

Cheryl Kilodavis and Suzanne DeSimone. My Princess Boy. 36p. Aladdin. (9781442429888). Age 4-8.

- Inspired by the author's son, and by her own initial struggles to understand, this is a heart-warming book about unconditional love and one remarkable family

We're All Different Alike

(based on content from [GLSEN](#))

Grade/subject(s): 2/Physical and Health Education

Big Ideas: Having good communication skills and managing our emotions enables us to develop and maintain healthy relationships

Competencies:

- Develop and demonstrate respectful behaviour when participating in activities with others
- Identify personal skills, interests, and preferences and describe how they influence self-identity

Content:

- Nature and consequences of bullying
- Factors that influence self-identity

Core Competencies:

- Communication – Acquire, interpret and present information (includes inquiries)
- Creative Thinking – Generating ideas
- Critical Thinking – Analyze and critique
- Personal and Cultural Identity – Relationships and cultural contexts
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Self-determination
- Social Responsibility – Valuing Diversity

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity

Rationale: This lesson is designed to provide students the opportunity to feel united with their peers by both their similarities and their differences. It will create a forum in which students can talk about why name-calling often occurs when an individual or group is deemed different, and how this targeting can be reframed into something positive.

Teaching Strategies and Questions:

Session 1

Play the game *Make A Group* with the class:

- This game is about making groups of people based on something you have in common with those people. Clear a space in the room so that everyone can stand up and spread out then ask everyone to think about an answer to a question
- Once they have thought of your answer, ask them to quickly find other people in the room who have an answer to the question that is the same or similar to theirs
- Raise your hand at intervals to indicate it is time to listen to the next question and make new groups.

Suggested *Make A Group* questions below:

- What did you have for breakfast (lunch, dinner last night, etc.) today? Make a group with people who had the same thing for breakfast that you did.
- How many pets (cats, dogs, fish, etc.) do you have? Make a group with people who have the same number of pets that you do.
- What color are your eyes (hair, etc.)? Make a group with people who have the same color eyes that you do.
- How many people are there in your family (living in your house, sharing a room with you, etc.)? Make a group with people who have the same number of people in their family that you do.

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- How do you feel about swimming (reading books, dancing, biking, etc.)? Make a group with people who feel the same way about swimming that you do.

If you can, close this portion of the lesson on a question that results in students being somewhat evenly divided into groups, and ask the groups to form small circles and sit down on the floor for the next part of the lesson.

When students are seated in the last group they formed during the game engage in a Pass the Brainstorm activity:

- Each student is given a piece of paper and a pencil, and when you say “go” they will write down one idea for a positive name for the group they are in e.g. a group of students who all like broccoli could be “The Broccoli Busters” or “Team Green”
- After 30 seconds, signal to the students that it’s time for them to pass their paper to the right. Ask them to look at what the person before them wrote, think of a new positive group name, and write it underneath theirs. Repeat a few more times

When the brainstorming is done, give the groups a few minutes to read all the ideas they have collected out loud to each other and to choose one favourite name. Ask each group to share their name with the class, and then briefly discuss the following questions:

- How did it feel to come up with a positive group name with your peers based on a similarity you all share?
- Why do you think people use names this way? Session 2

Repeat the instructions from the previous session to the students for a second round of Pass the Brainstorm, except this time ask them to think about ideas for names that someone might use as a Put-down to their group. Ask students to agree not to use the put-down names outside the context of this portion of the activity. When a few passes have taken place, ask students to circulate the papers to all students in the group to read and reflect on in silence. None of the put-downs will be read aloud during this section of the activity.

Pose the following questions to the class, and engage in a brief discussion of students' ideas:

- How did it feel to read the list of Put-down group names that your group brainstormed?
- Why do you think people use names this way?
- How did the two rounds of Pass the Brainstorm feel different from one another?

Execute the Jigsaw method of regrouping students by handing out one color-coded index card/object to each student that indicates which new group they will be a part of. Attempt to have each new group contain only one or two students from each of the old groups. Once the Jigsaw is complete and everyone is seated with a new group, pose the following questions and ask students to engage in a small-group discussion in which each student has the chance to share an experience with the group:

- Can you remember a time when you were called a name for being different from others around you?
- How did it feel?
- What did you do?

Give groups approximately 2 minutes per group member to share their experiences, and then draw the class back together and ask students to share any connections they see between the various stories their classmates told.

Possible Extensions

- This lesson can be extended by engaging students in an activity called Step Into the Circle, which asks students to self-identify around various questions (for example, "Step into the circle if you were born outside of the United States"), but does not involve forming groups. The activity is best done in silence, and students are encouraged only to self-identify when they feel comfortable.

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- Depending on the questions chosen, Step Into the Circle has the potential to bring up stronger feelings about differences and self-identification than Make A Group, and should be followed up with group discussion or a personal free-writing assignment
- Students can be encouraged to think about what was different about taking the risk of stepping into the circle versus making a group, and what they learned about themselves and their classmates during the activity

Assessment

- Students will be able to identify similarities they have with their peers that they might not have known about

Students will be able to describe how it feels to be part of a group of similar peers.
- Students will be able to identify the difference between names used to unify a group of similar individuals and names used to single out or denigrate a group of similar individuals
- Students will be able to reflect on times when they were singled out for being different and how that felt
- Students will be able to perform in and respond to role-plays about name-calling and differences

Book Titles

Parr, Todd. *It's Okay To Be Different*. 2009. 32p. Little Brown Books for Young Readers, (978- 0316043472) Pre K-2

- *It's Okay to Be Different* cleverly delivers the important messages of acceptance, understanding, and confidence in an accessible, child-friendly format

Her Majesty Queen Rania of Jordan Al Abdullah. *The Sandwich Swap*. 2010. 32p. Disney-Hyperion, (978-1423124849) Pre K-2

- The smallest things can pull us apart-until we learn that friendship is far more powerful than difference

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Choi, Yangsook. *The Name Jar*. 2003. 40p. Dragonfly, (978-0440417996) Gr K-3

- Having just moved to America from Korea, Unhei wants to choose a new American name to fit in. Encouraged by her new friends, Unhei chooses her own Korean name and helps everyone pronounce it

Pinkwater, Daniel. *The Big Orange Splot*. 1993. 32p. Scholastic, (978-0590445108) Gr K-3

- When Mr. Plumbeans' house is splashed with bright orange paint, he decides a multi-colored house would be a nice change

Bunting, Eve. *One Green Apple*. 2006. 32p. Clarion Books, (978-0618434770) Gr 1-3

- Farah connects with other students and begins to feel that she belongs, even though she doesn't speak their language

Dr. Seuss. *Sneetches and Other Stories*. 1961. 72p. Random House Books, (978-0394800899) Gr K-3

- This delightful book contains four tales with deliciously subtle takes on how silly it is to be silly

Full lesson plan available from [GLSEN](#).

Gender Identity, Media & Stereotyping

(based on content from [*the Gender Spectrum: What Educators Need to Know*](#), and input from Yukon Government Departments of Health and Social Services and Education)

Rationale: Research indicates that comprehensive sexual health education helps prevent violence and sexual abuse, and helps postpone high-risk early sexual behaviours, by giving youth sexual health skills, knowledge and information from an early age.

Grade/subject(s): 4/Physical and Health Education

Big Ideas:

- Understanding ourselves and the various aspects of health helps us develop a balanced lifestyle.
- Personal choices and social and environmental factors influence our health and well-being.

Competencies:

- Describe and assess strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying
- Describe factors that positively influence mental well-being and self-identity

Content:

- Factors that influence self-identity, including body image and social media
- Physical, emotional, and social changes that occur during puberty, including those involving sexuality and sexual identity

Core Competencies:

- Communication – Acquire, interpret and present information (includes inquiries)
- Creative Thinking – Developing ideas
- Critical Thinking – Analyze and critique
- Personal and Cultural Identity – Personal values and choices

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- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Self-determination
- Social Responsibility – Valuing Diversity

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)
- Learning is embedded in memory, history and story
- Learning requires exploration of one’s identity

Ground Rules:

Prior to engaging in the learning activities, consider setting some “ground rules” to help everyone to feel safe in class, ask questions, and express their opinions without fear for being ridiculed or laughed at. Examples include:

- There is no such thing as a stupid question. "Any question is a good question."
- Listen to and respect others' right to express their opinion.
- No put downs (including of one's self)
- No negative statements or comments, looks, groaning, or making gestures
- It is OK to pass.

Gender Identity:

Key Concepts:

- Difference between a person’s sex and their gender identity
- Understanding of gender roles for males and females
- People do not have to change what they like or what they do because something seems “boyish” or “girly”

Learning Activity: Male and Female

- Use the “Gender Unicorn” to discuss the differences between biological sex, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. Note that each of these represent spectrums, versus binary constructs.
- Present students with pictures of babies in diapers or animals. Next, present students with pictures of “gendered” children (e.g. girl in dress, boy in suit).

Ask students how they can tell the biological sex of a new baby or animal. Ask students how they can tell what gender someone is.

Learning Activity: Gender Roles

- A gender role is the way a person behaves, or the way society says a person should behave, as either a male or a female.
- Present students with pictures of girls and boys from different cultures.

Sample questions for students:

- What are some of the things that we learn from our cultures about differences between genders and gender roles?
- What are some things that our cultures tell us girls should do? What are things that our cultures tell us girls should not do? What are some things that our cultures tell us boys should do? What are things that our cultures tell us boys should not do?
- Are these true for you? Do you feel pressure to be different than you are? Why and/or why not?
- Ask students to reflect on their thoughts in writing.
- Unlike a person's biological sex, which is pretty much fixed, a person's gender identity (how you think about yourself) and gender expression (how you demonstrate your gender [based on traditional gender roles] through the ways you act, dress, behave and interact) is largely up to the individual.

Learning Activity: Imagining Gender Change

- Discuss different gender identities beyond the traditional concepts of male and female (see page 4 of The Gender Spectrum).
- Sample questions for students include:
 - What gender are you? How do you know that? Do you think you can change from one gender to another?
 - What are your favourite games and activities? Can anyone play these games and activities?
- Society plays a very important role in how we behave and in our decisions about what behavior is okay for every gender. Sometimes having to behave a certain way because of other peoples' expectations can be hard.

Learning Activity: Reflections

- Ask students to reflect on gender identity and gender roles

Media and Stereotyping:

Learning Activity: Stereotyping in Popular Stories

- Have students read stories that depict stereotypical (e.g. Cinderella, Rapunzel) and non-stereotypical (e.g. Paper Bag Princess, Prince Cinders) depictions of popular character roles such as princesses, princes, and villains.
- Ask students to draw or paint a picture of a stereotypical prince, princess or villain standing beside a non-stereotypical version of the same character.
- The key thing to remember is that a prince can still be a prince, but what makes him unique is what makes him interesting. Perhaps he is a prince who really wants to be a shoemaker, or maybe he has a secret fear of spiders. Just like the characters in media and stories, we are happiest when we celebrate what makes us unique, not when we try to be a two-dimensional version of what someone might say is a "boy," or a "girl," or a "9-year old" and so on.

Book Titles

Gruska, Denis. *Only Boy in Ballet Class*. 2007. 32p. Gibbs Smith, (978-1423602200) K-4

- Tucker loves ballet—even though some people don't understand his passion for dancing

Hall, Michael. *Red: A Crayon's Story*. 2015. 40p. Greenwillow, (978-0062252074) K-4

- A blue crayon mistakenly labeled as "red" suffers an identity crisis

Herthel, Jessica and Jennings, Jazz. *I am Jazz*. 2014. 32p. Dial Books, (978-0803741072) K-4

- From the time she was two years old, Jazz knew that she had a girl's brain in a boy's body

Barber, Barbara. *Allie's Basketball Dream*. 2002. 32p. Lee and Low, (978-1880000724) K-4

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- Perfect for anyone who has experienced the ups and downs of practicing and playing hard, Allie's Basketball Dream is a spirited tribute to perseverance

Kay, Verla. *Rough Tough Charley*. 2007. 32p. Tricycle Press. (978-1582461847) Gr 3-5

- One of the most respected stagecoach drivers in the old West, Charley also kept one of the biggest secrets anyone could keep – she was a woman

We're All Different Alike

(based on content from [GLSEN](#))

Grade/subject(s): 4-5/Physical and Health Education

Big Ideas:

- Developing healthy relationships helps us feel connected, supported, and valued
- Understanding ourselves and the various aspects of health helps us develop a balanced lifestyle
- Personal choices and social and environmental factors influence our health and well-being

Competencies:

- Describe and assess strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying
- Describe factors that positively influence mental well-being and self-identity

Content:

- Factors that influence self-identity, including body image and social media
- Physical, emotional, and social changes that occur during puberty, including those involving sexuality and sexual identity
- Strategies for responding to bullying, discrimination, and violence

Core Competencies:

- Communication – Acquire, interpret and present information (includes inquiries)
- Creative Thinking – Developing ideas
- Critical Thinking – Analyze and critique
- Personal and Cultural Identity – Personal values and choices
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Self-determination
- Social Responsibility – Valuing Diversity

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

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- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity

Rationale: This lesson is designed to provide students the opportunity to feel united with their peers by both their similarities and their differences. It will create a forum in which students can talk about why name-calling often occurs when an individual or group is deemed different, how this targeting can be reframed into something positive, and how those around can help resolve the situation.

Teaching Strategies and Questions:

Challenge students to generate a role-play about being called names for being different that they will practice and then perform for the class. The role-play should tell the story of someone who was called a name or bullied for being different, how it felt, how those nearby acted as active witnesses (active witnessing means those nearby are active in helping the targeted person, get help for the targeted person and/or support the targeted person) and how the situation was resolved. The scenario students choose to act out can be based on one student's experience, on a combination of a number of students' experiences, or can be entirely made up by the group.

To support the development of the group role-plays, encourage students to assign various jobs within the group that will help keep everyone on track towards preparing the skit. Not every student needs to act in the role-play, but every student must play an active role in the development of the skit. For example, students can participate as a timekeeper, a director, a narrator, or an actor.

When students have had adequate time to plan and rehearse, draw the class back together to watch the performances, then lead a follow-up discussion using some or all of the following questions:

- How did the students being called names in the role-plays deal with being teased?

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- What kinds of differences were the students being bullied for in the role-plays?
- Why do you think people call names or put people down because of differences?
- What different strategies did those involved and those watching use to improve or resolve the situation?
- What was it like working in groups today with people that were both similar to and different from you?
- How do our differences shape the world around us and help us to contribute?

Possible Extensions

- As a follow-up to this activity, students can write a “review” of one or more of the role-plays that they saw classmates perform at the end of the lesson
- Students can write both a brief summary of one or more of the stories the role-plays illustrated, as well as describe what they saw as the strong points of the skit.
- Students can develop alternate endings to the situations performed in the role-plays, illustrating how the characters might have acted/ reacted differently to the name-calling and teasing taking place.

Assessment

- Students will be able to describe how it feels to be part of a group of similar peers
- Students will be able to identify the difference between names used to unify a group of similar individuals and names used to single out or denigrate a group of similar individuals
- Students will be able to reflect on times when they were singled out for being different and how that felt
- Students will be able to perform in and respond to role-plays about name-calling and differences

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- Students will be able to describe several strategies for resolving instances of name-calling

Book Titles

Howe, James. *Pinky and Rex and the Bully*. 1996. 48p. Simon Spotlight, (978-0689808340) Gr 3-5

- When a bully calls him a sissy because he likes pink and plays with girls, Pinky has second thoughts about who he is and how he fits in

Polacco, Patricia. *Mr. Lincoln's Way*. 2001. 48p. Philomel Books, (978-0399237546) Gr 3-5

- Everyone thinks Eugene, the school bully, is trouble "with a capital T." Everyone but Mr. Lincoln, that is, "the coolest principal in the whole world," who is determined to reach the boy after he's caught calling an African-American first-grader a racist name

Full lesson plan available at [GLSEN](#).

Beauty is Skin Deep

(based on content from [GLSEN](#))

Grade/subject(s): 6-7/Physical and Health Education

Big Ideas: Learning about similarities and differences in individuals and groups influences community health

Competencies:

- Describe and assess strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying
- Explore the impact of transition and change on identities

Content:

- Influences on individual identity, including sexual identity, gender, values, and beliefs
- Influences of physical, emotional, and social changes on identities and relationships

Core Competencies:

- Communication – Acquire, interpret and present information (includes inquiries)
- Creative Thinking – Developing ideas
- Critical Thinking – Analyze and critique
- Personal and Cultural Identity – Personal values and choices
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Self-determination
- Social Responsibility – Valuing Diversity

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity

Rationale: Students will reflect on the ways in which they have experienced or participated in name-calling based on physical appearance, and the ways in which expectations about appearance in our society influence us. They will learn about media literacy and examine media images for “attractiveness messages” that consciously and unconsciously influence our attitudes and behavior toward others.

Teaching Strategies and Questions

Post the following questions on the board or read them aloud. Ask students to silently reflect on them:

- Have you ever been on the receiving end of a cruel comment about your physical appearance?
- Have others let you know, in some way, that you’re not good looking enough?
- Do you find clothes shopping unpleasant because of fears about how others will judge you?
- Have you ever skipped an activity to avoid comments about your appearance?
- Do you think often about dieting because of comments about your weight?
- Have you considered changing your hair or other aspects of your appearance to look better to others?
- Have you ever made cruel comments to others about their appearance?

Point out that, unfortunately, most of us would answer yes to at least one of the questions above. Ask students why they think it is that we are so quick to judge others by their appearance and without getting to know them. Challenge students to articulate how we get our ideas about what others are “supposed” to look like in our society.

If it has not already come up, point out to students that one way in which we get our ideas about what is attractive is through the media. Share the following statistics with the group:

- A study of over 4,000 television commercials revealed that 1 out of every 3 to 4 commercials sends some sort of “attractiveness message,” telling viewers

what is or is not attractive. The average teenager sees over 5,000 “attractiveness messages” each year.

- One study found that teens who watch soaps and TV shows that emphasize the ideal body type report a higher sense of body dissatisfaction than other teens. This was also true for girls who watched music videos
- Another study found that identification with television stars (for girls and boys), models (for girls) and athletes (for boys), is related to their unhappiness with their bodies.
- In a study of fifth graders, 10-year-old girls and boys told researchers they were unhappy with their own bodies after watching a music video by Britney Spears or a clip from the TV show, Friends
- A psychological study in 1995 found that three minutes spent looking at models in a fashion magazine caused 70% of women to feel depressed, guilty and shameful
- Ask students to respond to these statistics and to comment on the extent to which they think they are affected by “attractiveness messages” they receive on a daily basis.

Tell students that one way to resist some of the media’s false messages about appearance—and their effect on our self-esteem and behavior toward others—is to become media literate. This means thinking about the values behind media images, raising critical questions about them, and being aware of who created them and for what purpose. Tell students that they will be practicing media literacy by selecting up to three media representations to study (in class or as homework). Students can select magazines, websites, TV shows or commercials, movies or music videos that are popular with their peers. Give each student a copy of the chart, Media Investigation: Physical Appearance and Attractiveness, which they can use to take notes as they research.

For each item that they study, have students write and discuss their answers to one or more of the following questions:

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1. Who created the magazine (or show, video, movie, etc.) and for what purpose?
2. How many and what type of “attractiveness messages” were communicated? (These can be verbal, types of people or characters, gestures or expressions, types of clothing, etc.)
3. Do these messages reflect real life and real people in your community?
4. What are the values or beliefs behind these messages? Do you agree with them?
5. What techniques are being used to get you to buy into the messages?
6. How might these messages affect your own or others’ attitudes about physical appearance?
7. What important images or messages have been left out?

Suggest to students that expressions like “beauty is only skin deep” and “don’t judge a book by its cover” seem to be empty clichés in our culture today. Ask them if they agree and whether or not they believe that most people reflect such values in their behavior toward others. Challenge students to think about concrete ways that they can change the culture in their own class or school around this issue. Ask what can they do to get beyond appearance as a dominant force in the way they relate to one another. List their ideas on a sheet of chart paper so that they can be discussed and followed up on at a later time.

Possible Extensions:

- Tell students that girls around the country are putting this way of thinking to action each year on Turn Beauty Inside Out Day, which encourages people to submit essays about girls in their lives who are beautiful inside and out (see <http://www.newmoon.org>). The handout, Turn Beauty Inside Out Day Winning Essays, includes some of the 2003 entries, which you can share with your students
- Ask students to write an essay about someone “beautiful” in their lives (emphasize that it doesn’t have to be a girl). When students have completed

their essays, ask for a few volunteers to share their pieces with the class and to receive feedback from their peers

Extend this activity by revisiting the ideas brainstormed earlier about ways to get beyond appearance, and by making plans to put one or more of these ideas into action.

Assessment

- Students will be able to explain how conscious and unconscious expectations regarding appearance impact us in negative ways
- Students will be able to think critically about “attractiveness messages” in the media
- Students will be able to identify specific actions they can take to move beyond appearance as a dominant force in their social lives

Book Titles

Brashich, Audrey. *All Made Up: A Girl's Guide to Seeing Through Celebrity Hype and Seeing Real Beauty*. 2006. 160p. Walker Children's, (978-0802777447) Gr 6-12

- An in-depth, informative, and eye-opening look at the effect the media and pop culture has on young women's self images

Rissman, Rebecca. *Asking Questions About Body Image in Advertising*. 2015. 32p. Cherry Lake Publishing, (978-1633624863) Gr 4-8

- Helps readers discern the messages, both overt and implied, that tell consumers to change the way they look to help them change the way they feel

Douglas, Anne and Douglas, Julie. *Body Talk: The Straight Facts on Fitness, Nutrition & Feeling Great About Yourself*. 2006. 64p. Maple Tree, (978-1897066614) Gr 4-8

- Award-winning author Ann Douglas and her daughter Julie provide girls with funny, frank information on eating disorders, fad diets and more

Full lesson plan is available from [GLSEN](#).

Understanding Different Identities

Developed by Steve Mulligan, ARC Foundation

Grade/subject(s): 6-7/Physical and Health Education

Big Ideas: Learning about similarities and differences in individuals and groups influences community health

Competencies:

- Describe and assess strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying
- Explore the impact of transition and change on identities

Content:

- Influences on individual identity, including sexual identity, gender, values, and beliefs
- Influences of physical, emotional, and social changes on identities and relationships

Core Competencies:

- Communication – Connect and engage with others (to share and develop ideas)
- Communication – Acquire, interpret and present information (includes inquiries)
- Creative Thinking – Developing ideas
- Critical Thinking – Analyze and critique
- Critical Thinking – Question and investigate
- Personal and Cultural Identity – Relationships and cultural contexts
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Self-determination
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Well-being
- Social Responsibility – Valuing Diversity
- Social Responsibility – Building relationships

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

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- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity

Rationale: Students will learn about people whose identities were or are considered different because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. They will consider the challenges and discrimination that people faced and continue to face because of differences in sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as some of their accomplishments. They will consider the climate in their school for people who may be or may simply be perceived as different because of their sexual orientation or gender identity and will develop ideas and strategies for increasing understanding, inclusion and safety.

Vocabulary:

- **Diversity:** Many differences
- **Gay:** A term to describe people of the same sex who have feelings for one another in a romantic way. The term is usually used to describe men
- **Gender Identity:** A person's inner sense of being male, female, both or neither. One's gender identity may continue to evolve over time.
- **Lesbian:** Women who have feelings for one another in a romantic way
- **Respect:** To be considerate of other persons
- **Homophobia:** The fear or hatred of people who are gay or lesbian
- **Discrimination:** An action that treats people unfairly. Denying equal treatment to individuals of groups of people
- **Prejudice:** A negative belief about all people within a given group
- **Coming Out:** The process of understanding one's sexual orientation, accepting it, acting on it and telling others

- **Sexual Orientation:** An identity based on whether someone is attracted to a person of a different sex, the same sex or both sexes. Everyone has a sexual orientation
- **Transgender:** A person whose gender identity and/or expression are not aligned with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Teaching Strategies and Questions

Session 1: Sexual Orientation (based on content from the San Francisco Unified School District)

Part One – Brainstorm Different Types of Prejudice

- Have students work with a partner or small group. With their partners, ask students to define prejudice and to assemble a list of different kinds of prejudice that people may encounter (Give examples, such as *based on the color of your skin or the language you speak*). Have them write the list down on a piece of paper. Remind the students of the definition of prejudice.
- Next, ask the students to share their lists. Write a compiled list on butcher paper or on the board.
- Ask students if they know of any leaders or people who worked to counter prejudice.

Introduction: Explain to students that we will be discussing the story of Harvey Milk. Harvey Milk was on the San Francisco Board of supervisors (city council). He was also gay. Define gay (See Vocabulary). Explain that Harvey Milk was the first openly gay elected official in the United States and he experienced prejudice for his sexual orientation. Define the term prejudice (See Vocabulary).

The students will have an opportunity to discuss the book. Let the students know they will be reading the book, *The Harvey Milk Story Finally*, the class will have an opportunity to write a letter about prejudice.

Ground rules: Introduce or review classroom rules in order to create a safe place for students to discuss the book. Students in the class may have same sex parents or

know people who are gay or lesbian. Consider using the ground rules listed below:
Respect other people in the class:

- No put downs
- One person speaks at a time
- Everyone has the “right to pass” if s/he doesn’t want to talk
- Everyone will have a chance to speak

Part Two – Reading/Discussion “The Harvey Milk Story”

Introduce the book, *The Harvey Milk Story*. Show the students the cover of the book, read the title, and ask students to predict who Harvey Milk was. If the book is unavailable, a biography can be found at [Milk Foundation.org](http://MilkFoundation.org)

- Briefly review the brainstorm list of prejudices with the class. (Inform the students that as the book is read, they will look for similarities and differences to the other types of prejudice listed in the class brainstorming session).
- Read the story.

Discussion Questions (after reading)

1. When Harvey Milk was growing up he was afraid to tell his friends and family he was gay. Discuss with students what Harvey feared would happen to him if people found out that he was gay. Why might someone want to “come out” about his or her sexual orientation?
2. Have you ever kept silent or seen someone else keep silent, fearing a negative response from friends or family? Why might someone respond in a negative way? Have you ever responded negatively?
3. Ask students how “coming out” might be the same or different for young gay people today. Is it any different today than it was when Harvey Milk was young?
4. When Harvey Milk was a young man, many people were the subject of prejudice and mistreatment. Gays and lesbians were routinely fired from their jobs and evicted from their homes. Do current Canadian laws protect people from this type of discrimination? How?

5. What might you do if you are with friends or classmates who are calling someone “gay” in a mean way?
6. In times of prejudice, people often feel angry, yet Harvey Milk often spoke about the importance of hope. Do you feel that anger or hope is a more powerful way to create change.
7. Do you think that an openly gay or lesbian politician would face prejudice in your community? Do you know of any openly gay or lesbian politicians in Canada?
8. Who could you talk to if you had questions or concerns about your sexual orientation? Remind students that talking to someone, so they can feel good about their identity is part of being healthy.

Part Three: Writing about Prejudice

- Inform students that they will write a paragraph about their experiences with prejudice and thoughts on how they could address it.
- Explain to students that they may, or have already, experienced, learned about, or witnessed different kinds of prejudice in their neighbourhoods, school, or community. Ask, “What would you do to confront the prejudice?”
- What groups of people experience prejudice? Why do you think this happens?
- To assist students, review the definition of gay, prejudice and other key words from the vocabulary.

Keep the list visible for the students so they may copy key words to help write their paragraph.

- Review the book and summarize the story.

Session 2: Gender Identity (based on content from the Vancouver School Board)

Part One – Introduction:

- Ask students what the word gender means. What about gender identity?

- Explain to students that gender identity refers to a person's inner sense of being male, female, both or neither. One's gender identity may continue to evolve over time.
- Use a rainbow to bridge the understanding that gender is a spectrum and that a person's gender identity may fall anywhere in the gender rainbow. Ask students what the rainbow would be like if there was only one or two colours. You can also use the image of a gender spectrum like the one presented on "The Genderbread Person" or "The Gender Unicorn" to explain the differences between sexual orientation, biological sex and gender identity.

Ground rules: Review classroom rules in order to create a safe place for students to discuss the book. Students in the class may be questioning their gender identity or know people who are transgender. Consider using the ground rules listed below:

Respect other people in the class:

- No put downs
 - One person speaks at a time
- Everyone has the "right to pass" if they don't want to talk
Everyone will have a chance to speak

Explain that we are going to read a story about a transgender child named, Jazz Jennings. Jazz was called a boy when she was born but she knows that she is a girl and everyone knows she is a girl. If the book is unavailable, you can find a short video, "Story of Jazz: A Transgender Child" on Youtube.

Part Two - Reading/Discussion "I Am Jazz":

1. How do you think Jazz felt when her family and school didn't understand that she was a girl?
2. What are some of the things that made Jazz feel happy/unhappy?
3. What are some of the ways that you are different and the same as your friends?
4. What are your favourite things to do? Does your school or community have certain expectations based on gender?

5. If someone like Jazz went to our school, what are some of the ways that we could help that person feel included and happy to be here?
6. What is a pronoun and what are the different pronouns people use for themselves? (“he, him, his”, “she, her, hers” as well as gender neutral pronouns, “they, them, theirs”)
7. What pronoun would you use for Jazz? If you were meeting someone and you weren’t sure what pronouns to use, what could you do? Remind students that everyone gets to say what their gender is and which pronouns they prefer.
8. Who could you talk to if you had questions or concerns about your gender identity? Remind students that talking to someone so they can feel good about their identity is part of being healthy.

Possible Extensions:

- Ask students to write a letter to nominate someone who has fought against prejudice and or discrimination in the world to have a postage stamp created to celebrate their accomplishments. Have students then design the stamp that they would submit with their letter.
- Ask students to create a timeline showing important events in the development of LGBTQ rights in Canada.

Assessment

- Students will be able to explain prejudice and discrimination
- Students will be able to explain the differences between sexual orientation, biological sex and gender identity.
- Students will be able to identify specific actions they can take to make their school and/or community safer for people who are different because of their real or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Book Titles

Herthel, Jessica and Jennings, Jazz. *I am Jazz*. 2014. 32p. Dial Books, (978-0803741072) K- 4

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- From the time she was two years old, Jazz knew that she had a girl's brain in a boy's body

Kay, Verla. *Rough Tough Charley*. 2007. 32p. Tricycle Press. (978-1582461847) Gr 3-5

- One of the most respected stagecoach drivers in the old West, Charley also kept one of the biggest secrets anyone could keep – she was a woman

Krakow, Kari. *The Harvey Milk Story*. 2002. 32p. Two Lives Publishing, (978-0967446837) Gr 3-7

- The story of Harvey Milk, the first openly gay elected city official in the United States of America

Skelton, Wallace J. *Transphobia: Deal with It and Be a Gender Transcender*. 2015. 32p. Lorimer, (978-1459407664) Gr 6 - 9

- Offers information, quizzes, comics and true-to-life scenarios to help kids better understand gender identity and determine what they can do to identify and counter transphobia in their schools, homes and communities

Gino, Alex. *George*. 2015. 208p. Scholastic, (978-0545812542) Gr. 6-9

- George wants to play Charlotte in her fourth-grade class's production of *Charlotte's Web*, but her teacher won't let her, because George is a boy

• Brugman, Allysa. *Alex as Well*. 2015. 224p. Henry Holt and Co., (978-1627790147) Gr 6 – 10

- Alex As Well is a brilliantly told story of exploring gender and sexuality, navigating friendships, and finding a place to belong

School Climate Map

(based on content from [*the Gender Spectrum: What Educators Need to Know*](#))

Overview: In this activity, students will create a map of their high school that evaluates how safe and welcoming its spaces are for trans, two-spirit and gender expansive students. Students will consider how gender identity and expression is influenced by societal expectations. They will also explain and support personal responses to a text.

Grade/subject(s): 8/Physical and Health Education

Big Ideas: Advocating for the health and well-being of others connects us to our community.

Competencies:

- Propose strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying
- Propose strategies for developing and maintaining healthy relationships
- Create strategies for promoting the health and well-being of the school and community
- Explore and describe the impact of transition and change on identities

Content:

- Consequences of bullying, stereotyping, and discrimination
- Influences of physical, emotional, and social changes on identities and relationships

Core Competencies:

- Communication – Connect and engage with others (to share and develop ideas)
- Creative Thinking – Generating ideas
- Critical Thinking – Develop and Design
- Personal and Cultural Identity – Relationships and Cultural Contexts
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Well-being

- Social Responsibility – Valuing Diversity

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

Learning Activities:

Invite students to work in small groups to create a map of their school (if you have a photocopy of a school map, you could also just provide one to each group). It is not important for the map to be architecturally accurate—ask them to choose which spaces will be important to represent, such as the library, hallways, cafeteria, washrooms, guidance office, gym, locker rooms, and sports fields. Perhaps they could label one classroom to represent all classrooms in the school.

Ask the students to mark the spaces in the school with the following colour code:

- Green: This is a safe and welcoming space trans, two-spirit and gender expansive students
- Yellow: Trans, two-spirit and gender expansive students should use caution in this space
- Red: This space is unsafe and hostile to trans, two-spirit and gender expansive students

The group should come to a consensus about how to categorize each space.

Encourage them to be thoughtful about how they categorize each space by giving detailed reasons and examples for their decisions.

Have students present their maps to the class, explaining their logic for their decisions.

Once all of the groups have presented, ask students to identify patterns across all of the maps. What do they notice? Does anything stand out or surprise them?

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Challenge the groups to create an action plan for improving the school climate for trans, two-spirit and gender expansive students. What concrete steps can students take to make a difference? Facilitate a class discussion based on the groups' ideas.

Book Titles

Skelton, Wallace J. *Transphobia: Deal with It and Be a Gender Transcender*. 2015. 32p. Lorimer, \$24.95 (978-1459407664) Gr 6 - 9

- Offers information, quizzes, comics and true-to-life scenarios to help kids better understand gender identity and determine what they can do to identify and counter transphobia in their schools, homes and communities

Full lesson plan available in: [The Gender Spectrum: What Educators Need to Know](#) (page 45)

Learning About Labels

(based on content from [GLSEN](#))

Grade/subject(s): 8–9/Physical and Health Education

Big Ideas: Advocating for the health and well-being of others connects us to our community.

Competencies:

- Propose strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying
- Propose strategies for developing and maintaining healthy relationships
- Create strategies for promoting the health and well-being of the school and community
- Explore and describe the impact of transition and change on identities

Content:

- Consequences of bullying, stereotyping, and discrimination
- Influences of physical, emotional, and social changes on identities and relationships
- Analyse strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying
- Explore and describe factors that shape personal identities, including social and cultural factors

Core Competencies:

- Communication – Connect and engage with others (to share and develop ideas)
- Creative Thinking – Generating ideas
- Critical Thinking – Develop and Design
- Personal and Cultural Identity – Relationships and Cultural Contexts
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Well-being
- Social Responsibility – Valuing Diversity

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity

Rationale: In this lesson students will explore the negative consequences of applying labels on people based on stereotypes. They will explore and analyse the relationship between labels and stereotypes and will consider what it means to look beyond labels and see people in a holistic way.

Teaching Strategies and Questions:

Before conducting this activity, make up a series of labels for students using the index cards and the labels Bully, Geek, Nerd, Air-Head and Emo (or other labels you see in your school). These are the labels students will explore during the activity.

Activity: Begin by leading the students in a brief discussion about the affects of labels using the following questions:

- What are labels? Are they good or bad?
- What happens when we generalize based on labels, and use stereotypes. (i.e. nerds, who are often very smart, are always bad at sports)
- How does it make you feel when you are given a label you don't like?
- How does it make you feel when people react differently to you because of a label that has been placed on you?

Let the students know they will be doing a role-play during this activity, and ask them to remain respectful, and to refrain from using any offensive language during this activity.

Ask the class for five volunteers. Give each of the volunteers a label and tape it to their foreheads in such a way that they do not know what their label is. Include one blank label. Ask the rest of the class to remain silent while the volunteers participate. Ask the five volunteers to now engage in a brief conversation about a relevant topic

(such as the importance of a healthy lunch, school uniforms or a topic related to their studies. Ask the volunteers to respond to the other volunteers as their label, to show how engagement with each other differs by our labels and the stereotypes attached. Let the volunteers act this out for few minutes. Then ask them to guess what their own labels were, based on how the other volunteers engaged with them. Ask them how they felt to “wear” their label.

After students have role-played with labels, let them watch the 2011 Creative Expression Contest Winner video about labeling students. Let them know that this is a student made video and they should watch the video in silence, and process their own thoughts around labeling and name-calling.

After students have watched the video, lead them in a discussion using these questions:

- What did you notice about the way the volunteers interacted with each other? How do you think the labels affected the conversation?
- What did you learn from the video?
- Do you see labeling and this kind of resulting treatment of those labeled in our school?
- How does it make you feel when someone acts differently to you, based on stereotypes associated with a label that may have been placed upon you?
- How can we change this in our school?
- Can we all agree to be models for the school, and lose our preconceptions about people based on labels?

Assessment

- Students will explain the relationship between labels and stereotypes
- Students will describe what it means to see people as “whole”
- Students will agree to abstain from labeling one another

Full lesson plan is available from [GLSEN](#).