



**Student  
Wellbeing Hub**

# Respect, gender and power

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Lesson plan for years 7 and 8





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## Respect, gender and power

### Lesson plan

The following teaching sequence has been adapted from the Tasmanian Department of Education's [Respectful Relationships Teaching and Learning Package](#) with the aim of supporting understandings of how influences such as the media and individual cultures might impact on attitudes to gender roles, respect and power.

It has been adapted to include questions which support a culturally responsive curriculum and some additional links for both students and teachers that extend understandings of how cultural and linguistic stereotypes play out in the media and other links related to stereotyping of males and female.

It is designed for use with students in Years 7 and 8.

### Before you start



The topics in this lesson plan require sensitivity. Some students may experience a disjunct between what is expected of males and females in public spaces, such as at school, and in private spaces, such as at home.

Download and view the presentation [Culturally responsive teaching \[pptx, 13.3mb\]](#). It's designed to help teachers to think about how to respond to a range of perspectives.

### Culturally responsive curriculum: considerations

1. The phrase “today’s society” implies that there is a common view or set of experiences of the society we live in. (See the question ‘How do we expect a male/female to behave in today’s society?’) What are the dominant values in the community that your students live in?
2. What do students think are the dominant values/stereotypes that exist in their community? How would their contexts be similar to or different from each others context or from yours? How would you find out more about the cultures of the students in your classroom and how gender roles are viewed within that culture?



## Additional preparation for this topic



Facilitating a discussion about masculinity can make some males feel defensive. They may feel misunderstood or unfairly labelled. The context for this work is to create an environment with more space for boys to express themselves and where they are less likely to experience violence perpetuated by other males. Using statistics about community attitudes can be helpful to establish context here. The driver underlying facilitation of this topic might include the theme: “**You can choose** what sort of men you want to be.”

If you feel things might become personal, use techniques such as [protective interrupting](#) or encourage students to talk in general or third person terms eg:

- Some people might ... and this could cause a person to feel ...
- At some schools ...
- There have been times when ...

### **Relevant statistics:**

[The National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey](#)





## Australian curriculum links

### Health and Physical Education

- Investigate the impact of transition and change on identities ([ACPPS070](#))

### English

- Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts ([ACELT1619](#))
- Explore the ways that ideas and viewpoints in literary texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts may reflect or challenge the values of individuals and groups ([ACELT1626](#))

### Media Arts

- Develop media representations to show familiar or shared social and cultural values and beliefs, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples ([ACAMAM067](#))





## Activities

### Activity 1: Exploring the concept

This activity provides an opportunity for students to express and discuss their opinions on a number of common gender stereotypes in a safe and supportive environment. The emphasis should be on exploring the reasons behind the choices that students make, rather than judging the choices that are made. To maintain a safe environment, students should feel assured that the activity is about building knowledge, not being criticised for their view.

#### Step 1

#### Designate

Designate three areas in the classroom - Agree, Disagree and Unsure.

#### Step 2

#### Move

Students are to move to the area that best represents their opinion on each of the following statements:

- It is better for a girl to be a “tomboy” than for a boy to be a “sissy”.
- Some jobs are more appropriate for females than males.
- It is worse for a girl to swear than it is for a boy.
- It is acceptable for a boy to cry in public.
- Girls should not play contact sport.
- Girls are more concerned with appearances than boys.
- Housework is the responsibility of the females in the house.
- Men should have better paying jobs than women.
- Men should decide the rules of the family.

#### Step 3

#### Question

Question students about WHY they chose their position. Allow students to change positions after hearing others' thoughts.





## Step 4

### Brainstorm

Brainstorm students' interpretations of what it means to be male/masculine and female/ feminine in society. Discuss whether being male is the same as being masculine and being female is the same as being feminine.

## Step 5

### Divide into small groups

Divide students into small groups. Allocate each group one set of the following questions to discuss.

- How do we expect a male to behave in today's society? What is the role of the man in the family, at work, in sport, in a relationship, in social situations?
- How do we expect a female to behave in today's society? What is the role of the woman in the family, at work, in sport, in a relationship, in social situations?

## Step 6

### Group Discuss

Pair groups so that one group discussed males and the other discussed females and ask them to share their discussions. Identify similarities and differences in responses.

## Step 7

### Conclude

As a class discuss:

- Who decides the right way for a male or female to look or behave?
- How can gender stereotypes be limiting?
- How can stereotypes impact on relationships?
- What happens to the people who do not fit into a gender stereotype?
- If people do not fit the stereotype, does it make them any less male or female? Why or why not?





## Activity 2: Putting it into practice



*Pre-lesson preparation: locate excerpts from popular TV shows such as Home and Away, Neighbours, The Simpsons, Degrassi High, Modern Family or Big Bang Theory that highlight different relationships. You can often find short clips from licensed programs on video sharing sites such as YouTube.*

### Check for understanding

#### Step 1

#### Explain

Explain that they will be analysing footage from popular TV shows to identify all of the examples of gender stereotypes that underpin the relationships in the show e.g. the jobs different characters do (at work and in the home), the appearance of the characters, the roles of adults with children etc. Draw a particular focus towards the role of the males and females in relationships.

#### Step

#### Discuss

Discuss the following questions:

- Were there any examples of behaviours that were opposite to the traditional gender stereotypes? Why do television shows and movies often portray males and females in a stereotypical way?
- Did the footage include examples of characters playing roles that were not stereotypical? Identify these behaviours.
- Were these characters conveyed in a positive or negative way? How? Why?

#### Step 3

#### Brainstorm

Brainstorm other movie or TV characters that do not conform to gender based stereotypes. Discuss the proportion of nonconforming to conforming characters. Explore the messages that these stereotypes give to young people about gender roles, identities, capabilities etc. See links below that include videos by actors from minority cultures in Australia discussing the types of roles that they are offered.





## Step 4

### Perform

Ask students to re-script and perform one of the stereotypical scenes to remove the stereotypes.

Criteria for success: What to look for?

Can students:

- identify stereotypes in popular media?
- understand the impact of stereotypes on people's identities?
- describe the impact that expectations linked to stereotypes can have on relationships and wellbeing?





## Additional resources: Concepts of masculinity

What stimulus materials could you use to challenge existing thinking of students about men and women? The following links may be useful.

### For students



- [Word clouds for boy's and girl's toys on Men and Masculinities](#)
- [Girl toys vs boy toys: The experiment - BBC Stories](#)
- [Gender in America](#)
- [Gender roles and stereotypes](#)
- [The Mask You Live In – Trailer \(note that this video references suicide\)](#)
- [Miss Representation Trailer](#)

#### *Media stereotypes:*

- [Asian female 25-35 Actors - Minority Box](#)
- ["African" Female 20-30 Actors - Minority Box](#)
- [Indian Male 25-35 Actors - Minority Box](#)

### For teachers

- [Identity and Cultural Diversity](#)
- [The Man Box](#)
- [The Many Ways Society Makes a Man](#)
- [Chapter 3. The Invisible Background: Cultural Expectations for Masculine Identity Building](#)
- [Cultural diversity in the classroom](#)
- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and communities](#)
- [Resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders](#)
- ['Becoming' a possible threat: masculinity, culture and questioning among unaccompanied young men in Sweden](#)
- [How Toy Ad Vocabulary Reinforces Gender Stereotypes | The Achilles Effect](#)



- [Attitudes towards violence against women and gender equality among people from non-English speaking countries Findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey \(NCAS\)](#)

