



IMPROVING GENDER BALANCE

Introduction to gender stereotypes

Objectives

After this lesson, students should:

- Understand the concept of gender stereotyping
- Be able to give examples of how stereotypes may affect behaviour and attitudes

Resources needed

- Paper, coloured pens
- *Introduction to Gender stereotypes* worksheet (at least one per group)
- *Introduction to Gender stereotypes* slides
- Internet access (for YouTube)

Suggested structure and timings

10 mins

Boy/girl word association



Divide the class into groups of three or four. Provide each group with two pieces of paper and a selection of coloured pens. Ask them to write down words that they associate with boys on one piece of paper, and words they associate with girls on the other.

After five minutes, ask students to look at their lists and identify which words are positive, negative and neutral. Discuss in groups.



- Does one of your pieces of paper have more positive or negative words than the other?
- Look at the sheet of paper that represents your gender. Are the words an accurate representation of you?

15 mins

Worksheet



Give out the worksheet. Ask them to complete the true or false quiz individually. Once completed, share answers and discuss as a class. They should then move on to discuss the questions at the bottom of the worksheet in their groups. Link back to the word association activity where appropriate.

20 mins

Video



Show the class the Like a Girl video (three mins)

Lead a class discussion or ask students to discuss in their groups. Possible questions might include:



- What was the difference between the response of the younger girls and the older girls? Why do you think there is a difference?
- What do you think you would have done if you were in the video?
- Is “like a girl” something that you have heard people use in a negative way?
- What does “like a girl” mean to you? Think about girls you know and about what you think it means in general.



In small groups, ask students to work out four additional scenes that they would like to be included in a Like a Girl or Like a Boy video.

Additional guidance

The worksheet asks students to decide if six statements about gender stereotypes are true or false. This is intended to highlight that it's often impossible to say whether these types of generalisations are actually true or false, and they certainly won't be true for all men or all women despite a lot of people believing that they are true. Links to further information on each statement is below.

Men aren't as good at multitasking as women

Too few studies have been carried out to draw any firm conclusions.

Further information:

- BBC News: Women 'better at multitasking' than men

Women are more emotional than men

There seems to be no difference in the experience of emotion between men and women. However, different societal expectations mean that women are probably more likely to express their emotions when compared to men.

Further information:

- Sex Differences in Emotion: Expression, Experience and Psychology, Journal of Personality and Psychology, 1998, Volume 74, No 3, 686–703

Men are better drivers than women

This depends on which statistics you look at. For example:

- Passing test first time: 44% of women, 48% of men
- Involved in a crash: 44% of women, 57% of men

Further information:

- The Daily Mail: Sorry chaps, women are better drivers , May 2015

Women talk more than men

On average, both men and women speak the same number of words per day (around 1,600 words per day)

Further information:

- Study finds no difference in the amount men and women talk, June 2014, Julie Huynh

Men are more competitive than women

Comparisons between western and worldwide cultures suggest that there is no biological basis for competitive drive, and that differences between the sexes are merely social biases reflecting the fact that young girls and boys are socialised differently.

Further information:

- Gneezy, Leonard, List, Gender differences in competition, Journal of The Econometric Society, September 2009

Girls like pink and boys like blue

- Regardless of gender, babies and toddlers are attracted to primary colours such as red and blue
- Adult men and women both choose blue as their favourite colour

Further information:

- BBC Future: The Pink vs Blue gender myth