

Gender Lesson

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This lesson was created in particular for those teachers who have gender nonconforming children in their classrooms. However, it is my belief that this curriculum is needed in ALL classrooms, to change society's stereotypes, reduce stigmatization of children, decrease bullying, and increase acceptance of each other.

This lesson is to be presented at the very beginning of the school year to set standards of expectations for behavior, and can be reviewed as needed throughout the school year. It should be appropriate for grades K-5; please modify as needed. Role plays are included at the end of the lesson for comprehension reinforcement. Give the child the scenario and have them attempt the correct response first; give suggestions as needed. Lastly, please hang the attached rules in your classroom as a reminder of the acceptance that is expected.

For a very long time, people have been separating things into what girls like and what boys like. A lot of people think these things are very different, and call them "boy things" and "girl things". Have YOU noticed that?

What are some things some people might say are "girl things" or "boy things"? What might some people say are "girl toys" and "boy toys"?

The truth is, all children get to pick what they like, and everyone likes different things. Repeat after me: There is no such thing as a "boy thing" or a "girl thing". Some kids are boys who like things that other people think are for girls. Some kids are girls who like things that other people think are for boys. It can hurt their feelings if you or someone else says something to them about it, or acts like there are *rules* about how someone should be. That would be like saying only girls can eat ice cream, and only boys can eat jelly beans!! That would just be SILLY! Sweets and treats are to be enjoyed by everyone, just like most things in life. ☺

Are there certain colors that some people think only girls like and colors that only boys like? Most people think girls like pink and purple, which is ok, but it's silly to think that ONLY girls like pink and purple! There are plenty of boys out there who like pink and purple, too. Lots of people think only boys can like blue! Girls can like blue, too. All the colors of the rainbow are for everyone, and it's fun that we all get to pick our favorite. You don't want anyone telling YOU what your favorite color should be, do you??

Some people also have very strong ideas about how boys and girls should look and dress. Is it ok for some girls to have short hair, and some boys to have long hair? Of course it is! How someone chooses to dress is up to them, too. Some girls wear skirts and dresses, and some girls wear shorts and pants. Some boys wear shorts

and pants, and some boys wear skirts and dresses. This may surprise some people, but it certainly isn't wrong.

How someone dresses and wears their hair is a part of their "style". Everyone's style is different! What if everyone were to dress and look exactly alike? BOR-ING! The next time you see someone who wears their hair a little different than you expected or is wearing something that surprises you, be kind and say, "I like your style".

How wonderful would it be to have a classroom (or a WORLD) where kids just get to like what they like? Are you ready to help create a world like that?

One of the most important things to remember is to be KIND to one another. Ask yourself how you would feel if you were the other person. Be sure to avoid saying anything that would hurt someone else's feelings. If you can see another kid likes something, don't tell them why they shouldn't. Remind yourself, "different people like different things", "it's OK to be different", and "I am accepting of others".

If you hear someone telling another kid there are rules about how to play, how to be, or how to dress, stand up for them! Remember, you are helping create a world that is more accepting. Nicely tell the other person what you have learned from this lesson. You can say something like this:

"That's their style, and I like it."

"Anyone can play with anything."

"Everyone is different. Different people like different things."

"Please don't tease my friend. I like him/her just the way he/she is."

Remember:

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A "BOY THING" OR A "GIRL THING"!

All toys are for all children.

Colors are for everyone.

People are different, and everyone likes different things.

Everyone gets to pick how they wear their hair.

Everyone gets to pick the way they dress.

Everyone gets to pick their own style.

Role Plays:

Act out the RIGHT way to handle the following situations:

You are playing house, and a girl wants to be the dad.

You hear someone teasing a boy about wearing a skirt.

A group of boys playing soccer tells a girl, "You can't play! No girls allowed!"

You're having a tea party and a boy wants to join in.

You see a girl getting teased for having short hair.

You see a boy wearing a pink backpack.



In Our Classroom...

We are kind to each other.

All toys are for all children.

Colors are for everyone.

Everyone gets to pick their own style.

Being different is OK.

We stand up for others.

