

YEAR 3-4: LESSON 3

CHALLENGING GENDER STEREOTYPES AND SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY

A curriculum designed by The Children's Society, Lifting Limits, and Equimundo as part of the Global Boyhood Initiative's Beyond Gender Stereotypes Programme



**Beyond Gender
Stereotypes**

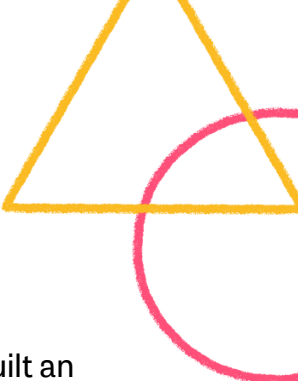
a curriculum by

**GLOBAL
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CONTEXT

This lesson is the third of three lessons for pupils in lower key stage 2. Having now built an understanding of gender stereotypes, pupils learn when these could be challenged and how to do so appropriately, considering examples they come across in the playground, at school or home. They also learn about the influence of gender stereotypes on choosing friends and the importance of including people of the same or different gender to them, within their friendship groups.

Statutory Relationships and Health Education – Primary (DfE)

Respectful relationships:

- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.

Caring friendships:

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.

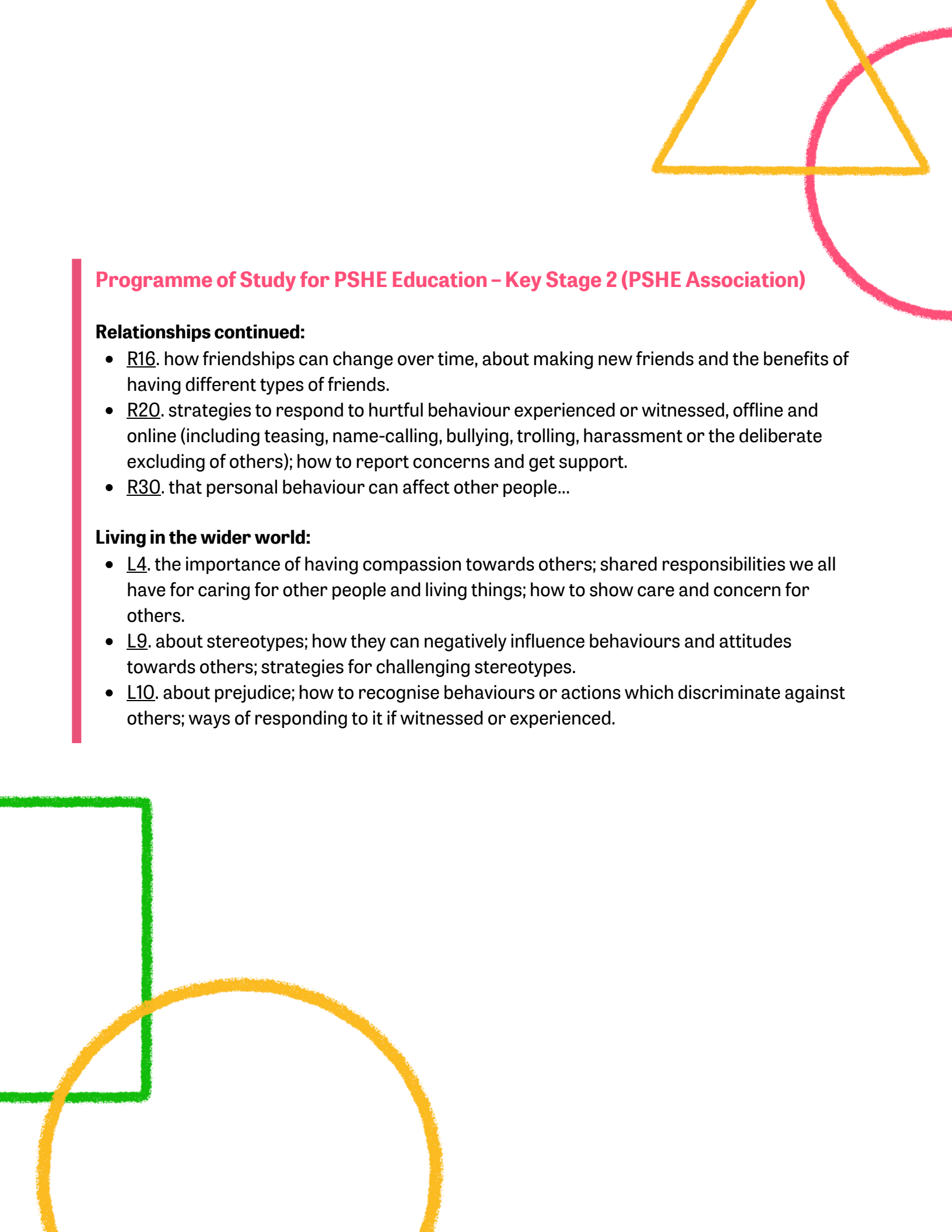
Programme of Study for PSHE Education – Key Stage 2 (PSHE Association)

Health and wellbeing:

- H18. about everyday things that affect feelings and the importance of expressing feelings.

Relationships:

- R10. about the importance of friendships; strategies for building positive friendships; how positive friendships support wellbeing.
- R11. what constitutes a positive healthy friendship (e.g. mutual respect, trust, truthfulness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, sharing interests and experiences, support with problems and difficulties); that the same principles apply to online friendships as to face-to-face relationships.
- R14. that healthy friendships make people feel included; recognise when others may feel lonely or excluded; strategies for how to include them.



Programme of Study for PSHE Education – Key Stage 2 (PSHE Association)

Relationships continued:

- R16. how friendships can change over time, about making new friends and the benefits of having different types of friends.
- R20. strategies to respond to hurtful behaviour experienced or witnessed, offline and online (including teasing, name-calling, bullying, trolling, harassment or the deliberate excluding of others); how to report concerns and get support.
- R30. that personal behaviour can affect other people...

Living in the wider world:

- L4. the importance of having compassion towards others; shared responsibilities we all have for caring for other people and living things; how to show care and concern for others.
- L9. about stereotypes; how they can negatively influence behaviours and attitudes towards others; strategies for challenging stereotypes.
- L10. about prejudice; how to recognise behaviours or actions which discriminate against others; ways of responding to it if witnessed or experienced.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Pupils learn how to challenge gender stereotypes in friendships and play.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Pupils will be able to:

- identify the qualities of friendship.
- explain what they can do to challenge gender stereotypes.
- give examples of how to change words and phrases so they are not gender stereotyped.

RESOURCES

1. PowerPoint: Year 3/4 - Lesson 3
2. Newspapers or large sheets of flipchart paper
- 3. Resource 1: Friendship qualities cards**
- 4. Resource 2: Friendship qualities diagram (enlarged)**
- 5. Resource 3: Playground scenarios**
6. Paper/exercise books, pens/pencils

POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND KEY VOCABULARY

Before teaching this lesson, ensure that you have set a positive learning environment. Please read the Teacher Guidance document, which explains how to do this effectively and includes a glossary with explanations of key terms which may be referred to during the lesson.



LESSON SUMMARY

Activity	Description	Timing
1. Introduction	Ground rules reminder / Shrinking iceberg game • Remind pupils of ground rules. • Pupils participate in a team challenge and discuss how well they worked together.	5 minutes
2. Main Activity 1	Friendship zone of relevance • Pupils rank statements about what is most important in a friendship, then discuss gender and the qualities of friendship.	20 minutes
3. Main Activity 2	Sentence starters • Pupils complete sentences to explain their thinking and learning about gender, friendship and mixed gender friendships.	5 minutes
4. Main Activity 3	Stereotyped statements • Pupils discuss how to challenge statements, overheard in a playground, that are not gender inclusive.	15 minutes
5. Plenary	Signpost support / My head, heart, hands • Signpost pupils to further support. Pupils complete a head, heart, hands activity to reflect on their learning.	15 minutes
Total		60 minutes

LESSON PLAN

Introduction (5 minutes)

Ground rules reminder / Shrinking iceberg game

Remind pupils of the class agreement about respectful behaviour for approaching the subject matter and positive ways of working together.

Organise pupils into groups (if possible, of mixed gender) with about five pupils in each group. Put several sheets of newspaper on the floor by each group and ask pupils to stand on the newspapered area.

Explain that the paper represents an iceberg that is melting, and then reduce the newspaper area by a quarter or a third by folding it. The teams have to try to fit everyone back on the paper. The objective is to see which full team can stay on the iceberg the longest.

Ask the pupils to discuss how well they worked as a team / friendship group together. What helped them to work well together?

Main Activity 1 (20 minutes)

Friendship zone of relevance

Working in small groups (three or four pupils in each group), ask pupils to organise statements about what makes a good friend on a zone of relevance diagram. This can be done as a card-sort, using [Resource 1: Friendship qualities cards](#) (there is one blank card for pupils to add their own idea) or pupils can write their ideas on [Resource 2: Friendship qualities diagram](#).

They put the most important qualities in the central section, the important qualities in the middle section, and the not important qualities on the outer section of the diagram.

After they have had time to organise the statements, compare the groups' responses. Ask pupils if they found any statements more difficult to place, and say why.

Note where they placed the cards on gender, and ask them to explain their thinking. After hearing the other groups' responses, ask the pupils if they want to move any of the cards. If yes, ask which and why?

If pupils suggest that wearing the same clothes, being from the same place, or having the same religion is very important for a friendship, acknowledge this by saying that for some people it can be important to have friends with whom they have these specific things in common, but reinforce that none of them is essential for being good friends. Good friends could have other things in common instead. Reiterate that it is important not to leave people out just because they don't look like you or have the same religion, and, it can be fun and interesting to have friends who are in some ways different from you.*

**Being from the same place may be interpreted in different ways by the pupils. This could mean from the same local area or wider location; it could mean where they were born or where their family are from; it could reflect class or social background, ethnicity or cultural background. Allow pupils to interpret this phrasing as they wish, but ask them about what they think it means and how this could affect a friendship.*

As a class, discuss friendship and gender. Possible questions include:

- Why are friendships important? - What do friendships give us?
- How do people choose their friends? – Does gender matter?
- Can people of different genders sit together, work together, play sport together, be friends?
- What happens if children have friends of a different gender?
- Imagine that someone was a girl and they thought ‘I can’t be friends with a boy’ - Why might they think that?
- Imagine that someone was a boy and they thought ‘I can’t be friends with a girl’ – Why might they think that?
- Why might it be important to have friends of different genders?

Depending on the class context, and your school community, you may also want to add a question that is more inclusive of non-binary children, such as: “For children who do not want to be called boys or girls, who might they want to be friends with and why?” Before doing so, please refer to national guidance and school policies.

This activity can also be done with pupils discussing some of the questions in groups, and then taking feedback as a whole class.

Try to allow pupils to share their views openly and encourage them to explain their thinking by prompting them further if need be.

Draw out from the discussion:

- Friendships should be based on the individual person, and not solely on a person’s gender.
 - Gender stereotypes (and stereotypes in general) can lead people to think they should only have friends who are the same or similar to themselves.
 - Gender stereotypes can influence and limit how people behave towards each other in friendships.
 - It is important not to limit friendships to people of the same gender as ourselves because it could mean missing out on some great friendships.
 - All children, whatever their gender, can have the qualities of good friends, such as being kind and caring, talking with and listening to each other, or having fun together.
 - The class may have mixed friendship groups, or not. If they do, acknowledge this and celebrate what a great mixed class they are.
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Main Activity 2 (5 Minutes)

Friendship sentence starters

Pupils complete one of the sentence starters below to sum up their thinking and learning from the discussion about gender and friendships:

- It does not matter what gender they are; a good friend is someone who...
- It is ok to have friends of different genders because...
- What is important in a friendship, is not what gender someone is, but...

This can be a written activity, with pupils recording their ideas on paper, in journals or exercise books, or it can be a spoken activity with pupils sharing in pairs.

Main Activity 3 (15 Minutes)

Stereotyped statements

Explain that in the next activity, pupils will explore some statements overheard in a playground. They are going to analyse why they are not appropriate and re-write them to be more inclusive for all children, whatever their gender.

With pupils organised into small groups (three or four pupils in each group) give out statements from [Resource 3: Playground scenarios](#).

You could give each group a different scenario, or you may choose some statements for the whole class to focus on, with each group discussing the same examples.

Choose examples that best suit the needs of your class context and school community. All children are likely to be influenced by binary thinking about gender and gender stereotypes, so these scenarios should be relatable for all pupils, whatever their gender. On the other hand, teachers should be mindful that any scenario that refers to 'boys' or 'girls' may leave some non-binary children feeling that they do not fit. Scenario J is specifically written to include non-binary or gender-questioning children. You must ensure you are working within your school policies and guidelines if including this scenario.

Pupils discuss:

- What is the problem with what is being said?
- What is the gender stereotype in this situation?
- How could this situation be made more inclusive for all children, whatever their gender?
- How easy or difficult would this be?

After pupils have had time to discuss the questions, ask them to feedback:

- The problem with what is being said, *e.g. leaving a person/group of people out of a play situation; claiming space for only one group of people; assuming only certain genders have certain characteristics; not allowing*

people of different genders to share their feelings.

- What could help make the situation more inclusive, *e.g. say that it's not ok to say this and explain why; correct the statement by re-phrasing it in a more caring or positive way (give some examples); talk to a teacher/other trusted adult about the situation.*

Draw out that the statements are serious because they leave someone out (exclude someone), are nasty to someone because of their looks or behaviour, or assume something about a person/group of people because of their gender (stereotyping) which can be considered to be bullying. So it is important for others to point out that these are not ok.

Discuss some different ways to manage the situations, encouraging the pupils to practice writing and saying the phrases differently so that they are kinder and more inclusive.

Ensure that pupils share only safe and appropriate ways to manage the situations. Remind them that violent or angry reactions are not acceptable. Getting into arguments is not a good idea, it is ok to walk away from (exit) a situation that is escalating and ask for support.

For pupils requiring support:

Reduce the number of questions pupils are asked about the scenario. Focus on: 1) How could this make someone feel? 2) What could others do or say to help?

For pupils requiring challenge:

When thinking about what others would say or do in these situations, ask the pupils 'What if... most of the others were agreeing, or laughing or saying similar things?' *Challenge them to think about how much more difficult this situation might be to manage, and what someone might need to do, or be like, to go against the stereotyping.*

Plenary (5 Minutes)

Signpost support / My head, heart, hands

Remind the pupils of who they can talk to about any concerns they have about friendships, play, stereotyping or bullying, following the lessons, and referring to circles of support.

On A4 paper, in their journals or exercise books, ask the pupils to draw a stick-person to represent themselves.

Ask the pupils to write about:

- What they thought about or have learned because of these lessons. *Pupils write their ideas near the head (in thought-bubbles).*
- What they feel about what they have learned, or what they enjoyed learning about. *Pupils write their ideas near the heart.*
- What they will do or say, that is different from before, because of these lessons. *Pupils write their ideas near the hands/body/mouth.*

Make it clear that pupils do not have to share these with their peers and classmates. These are just for themselves and you, their teacher. If they are on paper, they can be anonymous if you prefer.

ADDITIONAL / EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Pupils can create a comic strip showing one of the playground scenarios, showing a positive (gender inclusive) ending.
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NOTE TO TEACHER

PLEASE COMPLETE THE [POST LESSON SURVEY](#) SOON AFTER THE LESSON, AND NO LATER THAN THE END OF THE WEEK. WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK AND WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

