

YEAR 5-6: LESSON 4

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
BOYHOOD
INITIATIVE**


**Lifting
Limits**

**The
Children's
Society**



CONTEXT

This lesson is the fourth of four lessons for pupils in upper key stage 2. Building on the previous lessons and pupils' understanding of gender stereotypes, it introduces the concept of gender discrimination and the effect this can have on people's lives. The lesson begins by introducing an event in history that documents gender discrimination in sports and how this was overcome, and moves on to modern examples of how celebrity role models in sports have challenged gender discrimination. Pupils discuss how gender stereotypes and discrimination in everyday situations can be safely challenged by acting as 'positive agents of change' themselves.

Statutory Relationships and Health Education – Primary (DfE)

Respectful relationships:

- What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.

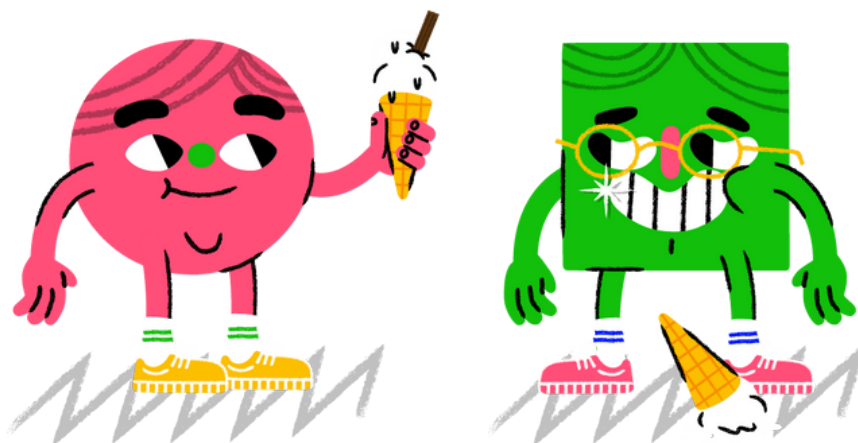
Programme of Study for PSHE Education – Key Stage 2 (PSHE Association)

Relationships:

- R21. about discrimination: what it means and how to challenge it.

Living in the wider world:

- L9. about stereotypes; how they can negatively influence behaviours and attitudes towards others; strategies for challenging stereotypes.
- L10. about prejudice; how to recognise behaviours/actions which discriminate against others; ways of responding to it if witnessed or experienced.



LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Pupils learn how gender stereotyping can lead to discrimination.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Pupils will be able to:

- explain how gender stereotypes can lead to prejudice and discrimination.
- recognise how gender discrimination has been challenged in the past, and today.
- identify ways to address gender discrimination if experienced.

RESOURCES

- PowerPoint: Year 5/6 - Lesson 4
- **Resource 1: Agents of change**
- **Resource 2: Discrimination scenarios**
- 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 / Historical stimulus - Remind pupils of ground rules. - Pupils are shown a photograph of a women's football team (1920s) and introduced to the women's football ban (1921).	10 minutes
2. Main Activity 1	Prejudice and discrimination Explain the meanings of the terms 'prejudice' and 'discrimination'.	5 minutes
3. Main Activity 2	Agents of change Pupils are introduced to example agents of change - celebrity role models who promote gender equality in sport.	15 minutes
4. Main Activity 3	Challenging discrimination Pupils discuss ways of challenging stereotyping and discrimination in everyday situations.	15 minutes
5. Plenary	Signpost support / Gender equal society statement - Signpost pupils to further support. - Pupils write about a gender equal society to reflect on their learning.	15 minutes
Total		60 minutes

LESSON PLAN

Introduction (10 minutes)

Ground rules reminder / Historical stimulus

Remind pupils of the class agreement about how to approach the subject matter and positive ways of working together.

Show the pupils an image of the Dick, Kerr Ladies football team (1917-1965).

Explain that this is a historical photograph of the Dick, Kerr Ladies football team. Explain that in the 1920s, there were many women's football clubs in England, many started by women who were working in factories during World War One. The Dick, Kerr Ladies team were one of the most successful, playing 755 games and 682 wins!

Stick two pieces of flipchart paper at the front of the classroom, one headed: boy/man, and the other: girl/woman. On each piece of paper, draw a large box or square in the centre.

Ask pupils to think of some stereotypical characteristics of boys/men and girls/women, write them on sticky-notes and then put them in the corresponding boxes/squares on the flipchart paper.

Lily Parr, one member of the team is known for scoring 986 goals over her 30-year career.

The image of the Dick, Kerr Ladies Team appears not to include women from diverse backgrounds, but we know many women, from all different backgrounds enjoyed playing football – although often they were excluded. Emma Clarke, (1876-1905) is considered to be the first known Black women's footballer in Britain.

However, in 1921, the Football Association (FA) met at their headquarters and announced a ban on women playing football on all their grounds, stating that it was 'quite unsuitable for females and ought not be encouraged.'

Pupils might be interested in why this happened. You could explain that towards the end of WW1 when men returned from battlefields, many men went back to their old factory jobs that the women had taken over during the war. Some people did not want women doing the things they thought were for men only, such as factory work or football. Some people thought that football was not suitable for women, because it somehow did not reflect their character or physical ability, despite the success of so many women's teams!

If you have time, you may want to ask pupils: How might people (including the women who played football) have felt and what might they have thought about this?

Explain that, despite the ban, many women continued to meet to play football in parks or fields and formed their own Women's Football Association, but it was not until 1970 that the ban was finally lifted.

References:

The Dick, Kerr Ladies official website: <https://www.dickkerrladies.com/>

The story of Women's Football in England, The FA. <https://www.thefa.com/womens-girls-football/heritage/kicking-down-barriers>

- *You might also want to reflect that football is not the only activity that has discriminated against women – until 1918, women in the UK were not allowed to vote (for political parties), and then only if they were at least 30 years old. The women given the right to vote in 1918 had to be married to men who owned land, or had to own land themselves, which meant that women who weren't wealthy still couldn't vote. (The 1918 Act also allowed nearly all men over 21 to vote, whether or not they owned property, which meant men who were not wealthy were also not allowed to vote.) Women gained equal voting rights with men in 1928.*
 - *Pupils may want to share, or you may want to mention, other examples of gender discrimination, such as men not being offered parental leave from work because it is assumed women are the main carers of children. Dads may want to take time away from work to spend more time with their children and look after them (including when they are sick), but some workplaces do not allow as much time off for dads, as for mothers, or even allow it at all.*
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Main Activity 1 (5 minutes)

Prejudice and discrimination

Explain that women's exclusion from football is an example of 'gender discrimination' – *when a person, or group of people, are treated differently or unfairly because of their gender.*

Explain that this often comes from 'prejudice' – *a negative judgement, opinion of, or feeling towards, a person or group of people (based on a fixed set of ideas about the characteristics of that group of people).*

Remind pupils of the definition of 'gender stereotyping' – *a widely held, oversimplified idea about a person, or group of people, based on their gender.*

Explain how much prejudice and discrimination come from stereotyping, ie: when there is a widely held view that 'only men can do this' or 'only women can do that' (stereotype); people can react negatively towards someone doing something different to that expectation (prejudice); and this can lead to them being treated differently or unfairly (discrimination).

Explain that the UK government has laws and rules to protect people against discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 states that it is against the law to discriminate against someone because of a range of "protected characteristics", including sex, race, disability and religion. Therefore, more people have equal rights today, but unfortunately discrimination continues to happen.

Main Activity 2 (15 Minutes)

Agents of change

Introduce the following celebrities from sport, giving a brief synopsis of their contribution and role in tackling gender discrimination.

- **Alex Scott** – professional football player and one of the most high-profile UK female sports commentators, she campaigns for women to be more visible in sports.
- **Marcus Rashford** – professional football player who has faced racism himself, and spoken up against racism and in support of women's football.
- **Jack Grealish** – professional football player who challenges stereotypes through both his behaviour and emotional expressiveness.
- **Phil Roper** – professional hockey player who speaks up about men, not just in sport, but also fatherhood, family life and mental health.
- **Helen Richardson-Walsh** – professional hockey player who campaigns for inclusion of women and LGBTQ community in sport, and for mental health awareness.
- **Ross McCartney-Oliphant** – male netball player who talks openly about why netball is a sport for boys as well as girls.

Give [Resource 1: Agents of change](#), to groups of pupils. Ask pupils to choose a role model to discuss in their group, basing their discussion on the following questions: *(Note: They may not have all the information to answer each question, so they may need to infer some answers.)*

- What do they stand for? For what cause or issue are they an 'agent of change'?
- What motivates them, or what inspires/inspired them?
- How do they challenge discrimination?
- What might be difficult about this?
- What support do they get?
- Are they a good role model and 'agent of change' and why?

Take feedback from some of the groups, asking them to share something about one of the role models that made them think about what it takes to be a positive agent of change.

For example:

- *They may have experienced stereotyping or discrimination of some kind themselves.*
- *They believe these issues are important to talk about openly.*
- *They are using their 'platform' – celebrity status, social media or other ways of speaking out - to share positive messages.*
- *They are not afraid that not everyone will support them – they speak up for what they know is right.*
- *They demonstrate positive behaviour and action themselves.*
- *They are calm and thoughtful in what they say and do.*

Celebrity agents of change exist beyond the world of sport. For example: musicians such as Harry Styles regularly challenge the stereotype of how boys and men should dress, the things they talk about and how they behave. Clara Amfo is a famous Black, woman radio and TV presenter who has spoken out about racism and how that can affect mental health, including her own.

People can face more than one form of discrimination at any one time, such as about gender and ethnicity, and this can therefore affect some people more negatively than others (for example, Black women in football). *When more than one factor influences discrimination, this is called 'intersectionality'. Factors might include ethnicity, as well as characteristics like disability or age. You may want to add that this lesson focuses primarily on the issue of gender discrimination, but that pupils will learn about other types of discrimination in other lessons outside Beyond Gender Stereotypes.*

Main Activity 3 (15 Minutes)

Challenging discrimination

Explain that it is not just celebrities who can be 'agents of change'. There are things we can all do to help tackle gender discrimination. If we want to, we can also become positive 'agents of change'

An agent of change can be described as a person or group of people who promote a better way of thinking or doing something, which may also inspire others.

Explain that part of becoming a positive 'agent for change' is choosing the most appropriate way of responding to a situation; the importance of calmly dealing with issues, thinking about the place they are and the situation they are in, and never resorting to aggression or violence.

With pupils working in pairs, give each pair one scenario from [Resource 2: Discrimination scenarios](#).

Ask the pupils to help advise the people in the scenarios how to become positive 'agents of change':

- What do they think about what is happening?
- What could the people involved do about the situation?
- What could other people do to help?

Bring the class back together and share a few examples from different groups.

Discuss some of the pupils' ideas. Talk about appropriate ways of responding. For example, would getting cross and shouting about it be a suitable way to manage this situation? What other ways could work?

What if a pupil was finding this challenging (they want to do something about it but feel that it is difficult)? What might make some situations more difficult? What could they do in this situation to make it easier?

For pupils requiring support:

Offer pupils just two or three different options for managing the situation. Ask them to choose the option they think is best and explain why.

For pupils requiring challenge:

Ask the pupils to explain why this would be the best strategy to use in this situation, and how others might react.

Plenary (15 Minutes)

Signposting support / Gender equal society statement

Remind the pupils of who to talk to about any concerns they have about stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination, following the lessons, and referring to [Circles of support](#).

Ask pupils to reflect on their learning over the last four lessons, and to think about gender equality and what that means to them. Ask them to write about what a society that is gender equitable would look like and how they can contribute towards creating it.

Prompt them to consider:

- How people of different genders think, feel and behave.
- How people of different genders treat others.
- What kind of products, services and advertising exist.
- What the world of work is like.

ADDITIONAL / EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Pupils describe someone they know who is a good role model for gender equality (choose role models of different genders) and explain why, for example, because they demonstrate the opposite of stereotypical behaviour, or they stand up against discrimination for others.
- Read the books researched and written by Gail Newsham, that tell the official story of the Dick, Kerr Ladies football team: *In a League of Their Own*, and the children's book: *Football's Forgotten Legends*.

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!

