

Gender A B C

Education Programme
for Secondary Schools



Gender Social Norms and Stereotypes

MODULE 6/12

The GenderABC project is coordinated by



and implemented by



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for Secondary Schools

Gender Social Norms and Stereotypes

This educational module was developed by **AIDOS**
in the framework of the project GenderABC.

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Section I

INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose

The aim of this module is to analyse the most significant social models and norms that define gender differences. Participants are asked to realise that expectations on women and men’s identities are fed by culture, language, education, family and depend on the historical period, as well as on the cultural background. The purpose is to reflect the historical link between these norms and gender disparity, the extent to which stereotypes and prejudices are solidified, and how much they succeed in preventing personal fulfillment and achieving personal goals and inclinations.

2. Main topics

- Gender differences and roles
- Gender stereotypes and social norms
- Sexism in language
- Recognition and overcoming of prejudice
- Cultural differences and changing of traditions
- Gender Equality





3. Keywords

Gender • Gender equality • Gender stereotypes • Gender roles
Sexism in language • Social norms • Tradition

4. Learning objectives

- Promote reflection on stereotypical and non-stereotypical inclinations and behaviours from a gender perspective
- Increase self-awareness and knowledge of “long-held”, biased or unintentional stereotypes
- Work on sexist language and cultural messages which feed gender prejudices
- Add value to positive, prejudice-free gender images and representations
- Promote critical thinking and free self-expression

5. List of activities

	 Activity name	 Total duration	 Materials	 Importance ¹
1	Talking about gender	45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newspapers and magazines, photos and advertisement• Glue• Scissors• Poster	★ ★ ★
2	Advertising Play	45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poster• Felt-tips pens and pens• Coloured paper	★ ★ ★
3	Prejudices	45-60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pens• Paper• Multimedia player	★ ★ ★

¹ Activities are ranked from one to three stars, in increasing order of importance, i.e. three stars for “highly recommended”.

Section II
ACTIVITIES

Activity I Talking about gender ★ ★ ★



Total delivery time
45 minutes
Preparation: 10
Delivery: 15
Follow-up: 20



- Materials**
- ☐ Newspapers and magazines, photos, advertisement
 - ☐ Glue
 - ☐ Scissors
 - ☐ Poster

→ BACKGROUND

The objective of this activity is twofold: on the one hand, the aim is to **recognise the most widespread and represented gender models in one’s own culture**; on the other, participants are supported in the **identification of interchangeable gender roles**.

→ SCENARIO

Educators start the activity by engaging the participants in a small introduction on gender roles, giving some suggestions and asking questions, without anticipating too much or starting a philosophical disquisition.



A Educators place in the middle of the room newspapers, magazines, flyers advertising clothing or games, photos of celebrities in musicals, cinema or sports. It is important to provide as many representations as possible, to use pictures both of people and of several everyday objects and activities (working, traveling, cooking, childcare, sports and fashion) and to change the recipient of cultural messages (adults, young people, etc.).



B Educators ask participants to look at the material and to choose from 1 to 3 pictures that, according to them, represent male and female gender (the number of pictures should change depending on the amount of time available).



C Educators provide a poster, which is divided into two parts (masculine and feminine), leaving a blank space in the middle (which is used when participants disagree on opinions). Participants arrange the pictures in their corresponding section and start the discussion on single characteristics (Have they changed over time? And in different cultures? If they were present in the other gender, what effect would it have?).



D Then, the purpose of the educators is to reflect on the disparity of the two overall representations of male and female, using the dichotomies that emerge in the debate (strong/weak, home/work, nature/culture, etc.), and to reflect on the cultural and non-biological nature of many of those aspects that materialise the gender dichotomy.



E At the end, educators monitor the data restitution, so that participants can consider and discuss the activity. During this final stage, gender norms and stereotypes would come out from the cultural products. At that point, the educators' task is to encourage reflection on representations and roles to go beyond the norm, introducing the concept of interchangeable roles.

→ BRIEF

The activity ends with participants sharing their opinions on what emerged.

The group reflects on the role played by culture in consolidating, overcoming and deconstructing gender norms, stereotypes and prejudices.

Educators point out how roles are subject to cultural changes, evolve over time and change according to the society and the microcosm in which they are inserted (such as family context). When necessary, educators should give examples recalling the images that have been analysed.

Educators need to adopt a curious and open-minded approach, accepting and embracing any point of view, in order to promote critical reflection and to encourage the peer group to discuss opinions. Any kind of judgement and reproach could be counter-productive and should be avoided, even when participants consciously uphold gender inequality or endorse stereotypes and prejudices.

Activity 2 Advertising Play ★★



Total delivery time

45 minutes
Preparation: 5
Delivery: 25
Follow-up: 15



Materials

- ☐ Poster
- ☐ Felt-tip pens and pens
- ☐ Coloured paper

→ BACKGROUND

Educators start the activity by showing the poster from the previous activity. The aim is to **resume the discussion on stereotypes and to delve into it**. After the introductory activity, the group is divided into small groups of 4-5 participants and the role-play game is explained.

→ SCENARIO



A Each group plays a meeting in an advertising agency. A famous brand has commissioned a commercial to sponsor products without depicting gender stereotypes.



B For the making of the commercial, each group creates a catchphrase and an image (a drawing, a comic strip, a picture, the description of a scene). If possible and useful, they can use their smartphones to download images.

Each group has a specific task:

- **Group one** advertises household cleaning products (dish soap, floor soap)
- **Group two** promotes childcare products (diapers, clothes)
- **Group three** promotes carpentry and DIY products (hammers, saws)
- **Group four** sponsors underwear (pants) and pajamas

To facilitate and support the activity, educators assign each group a specific product, as suggested in the brackets.

→ BRIEF

The activity ends with a plenary session, with groups giving feedback and sharing opinions and thoughts. If the discussion has a slow start, *educators should ask key questions, such as:*

- Does this commercial differ from the commercials we usually see on TV?
- What message does it convey that differs from the others?



Activity 3 Prejudices ★★



Total delivery time

45-60 minutes
Preparation: 15
Delivery: 20-35
Follow-up: 10



Materials

- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Multimedia player

→ BACKGROUND

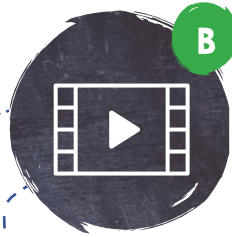
The aim of this activity is to **promote self-knowledge and the expression of emotions:** how writing down your thoughts, feelings and emotions helps you understand yourself?

It helps participants develop their emotional intelligence and gain a deeper understanding of how they perceive stereotypes.

→ SCENARIO



Educators ask participants to get back to the discussion thread from the last meeting.



Then, they watch a video (*see next page*), which serves as an input for a brief plenary discussion and for an individual writing activity.



A discussion is generated on the stereotypes and prejudices depicted in the video. The group discusses their perceptions of the stereotypes, both in relation to the present situation and to their cultural and historical contexts.



- Educators hand out a sheet of paper and a pen to each participant and an anonymous (anonymity is maintained and protected) individual writing activity starts, **with the following requests:**
- Explain the moment you witnessed the endorsement of a gender prejudice (against yourself or others)
 - Explain a moment where you were the victim of a gender stereotype, tell how you felt

The video can be selected from those suggested below or chosen by the educators (in the language spoken by the group), according to the specific context of the group. Whichever video is chosen, educators should use it only as a starting point for participants to think and discuss, stressing that it does not intend to give them absolute truth, rules or judgments.

Examples of videos:

- Gender stereotypes and education²
- Gender roles in society³
- Gender roles – male and female⁴

→ BRIEF

- Participants are not asked to read their texts aloud, so they are at ease and privacy is maintained.
- Educators also point out the usefulness of the writing activity, which gives participants the opportunity to express and think about their own memories, emotions and situations that are not often thought of, but make up everyone’s memory. In the process of writing, feeling and emotions become clearer, allowing the mind to calm down and reorganise. Educators invite the group to use introspective writing even in their private life, when there are complex decisions to be taken, conflicts or strong emotions. At the end of the activity, educators thank the group for their involvement.



² EIGE European Institute for Gender Equality, *Gender stereotypes and education*, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrZ21nD9I-0>
³ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdEAz3mjaSw>
⁴ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YlwWS2atEmc>

Session Plan

Name of the module: Gender Social Norms and Stereotypes

Venue / school: _____

Focal point / teacher: _____

Class (grade and reference): _____

N° of participants: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____ **Duration:** _____

Activity/(ies) chosen: _____

Materials (all checked): ☐ yes ☐ no

NOTES:

[illegible]

MODULES LIST

Secondary School Modules

- 01 *Cyber Violence*
- 02 *Early Forced Marriage*
- 03 *Empowerment and Communication*
- 04 *Female Genital Mutilation*
- 05 *Gender-Based Violence*
- 06 ***Gender Social Norms and Stereotypes***
- 07 *Group Building*
- 08 *Human Rights and Children's Rights*
- 09 *Intimate Partner Violence*
- 10 *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*
- 11 *Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights*
- 12 *Sexual Violence*

Primary School Modules

- 01 *Body Safety / Female Genital Mutilation*
- 02 *Empowerment and Communication*
- 03 *Gender-Based Violence*
- 04 *Gender Social Norms and Stereotypes*
- 05 *Human Rights and Children's Rights*
- 06 *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*

Support Documents

- 01 Risk Assessment
- 02 General Methodology
- 03 General Glossary

Gender A B C

A project by:



End FGM
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