

ALL ABOUT ME: PURPLE, NOT JUST PINK & BLUE



Lesson Objectives:

- To help promote positive expectations, aspirations and identities for both girls and boys.
- Children will be given the opportunity to explore the physical and behavioural differences between boys and girls.
- Children will learn to challenge the gender stereotypes and social assumptions.

Key Messages:

This lesson helps to introduce the class to the programme and what to expect from the work they will be doing over the next few lessons. They will be asking about how they might manage their feelings and how to keep themselves safe. They will be exploring their relationships and finding out more about their bodies and how they will change during puberty.

This lesson focuses on what it might mean to be a girl or a boy, unpicking stereotypes and media expectations around gender identity.

The lesson begins by looking at the idea that pink is a girl colour and blue is a boy colour. This is because from a very early age we are socialised to believe that pink is a girls colour.

This in fact is nonsense. It wasn't until fairly recently that pink became associated with girls. If you ever go to visit stately homes, with big portraits of the owners and their families on the wall - the children painted in pink dresses are all boys. Pink was the sign of a male child. Red - due to the colour of British soldiers uniforms was seen as the colour that depicted real men. so pink was the sign of a little man

Closing:

Today we explored what we expect girls and boys to be like. But we realised that just because you happen to be a girl or a boy doesn't automatically mean you have to like certain things or can't do certain things... Girl's and boys don't all fit neatly in the same box. And you can grow up to do anything you want to do.

Key Messages continued:

This only changed much later around the time of the second world war... so even very entrenched notions of cultural gender identity can change swiftly.

We will look at the rules of being a girl or being a boy: do they feel pressure to behave in a certain way or to follow particular interests - are there things that they feel unable to do or say because of their gender? Where do these rules come from and are they real rules....? Do boys and girls fit neatly in to boxes? Can they think of better rules?

In the lesson children will watch the Always Advert - "throw like a girl."

As part of this lesson, where appropriate children may also talk about people who identify as non-binary or transgender and what this means.



Useful Links:

- Find out why and how we talk about gender identity here.
- To watch *throw like a girl*

CARRYING ON THE CONVERSATION AT HOME:

Sit and watch the Always advert together - listen to the language used. Talk to your child about why being a girl an insult...? ask if your child has ever heard people do that...what about the grown ups? If you have older children too, you may have heard their friends use the word 'gay' as an insult too... this is all part of the same idea, and needs to be challenged. Do they think it's fair? What can we do to change it...?

When you are out and about notice how girls and boys are represented in adverts, TV shows, even the clothes that are offer.... it is never too young to encourage children to view the world they live in critically.

Have you ever listened to how other adults treat the girls and boys they come into contact with. The compliments they give or the activities they encourage. Think about how adults respond when a child falls over... do we respond the same to little boys and little girls....?

Gender is something that both girls and boys can feel constrained by. Young men can feel pressure to be tough and not to show their feelings or vulnerabilities. Young women can feel disempowered. Boys and girls need to be encouraged to talk about their feelings (did you know that by the age of 8 boys already have 70% less vocabulary for their emotions than girls - except anger). Girl also need encouragement to be tough, to run, jump climb, and have adventures. Gender should never be a constraint for children's ambitions or expectations.