

DIY THE DEBATE LINE

A whole-class activity for exploring the changing nature of gender stereotypes through history and around the world

PREPARATION

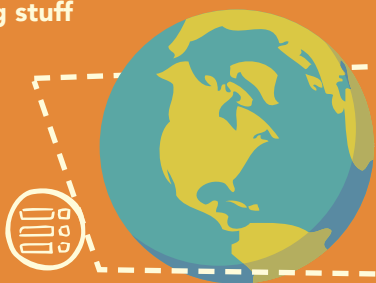
Before you get started read the **safety and support section**. It is essential to plan a debate that does not reinforce existing stereotypes

See the section '**Understanding Gender**' in **UNESCO's 2018 Guidance for Comprehensive Sexuality Education** for developmentally appropriate learning objectives and the relationship between gender norms, gender inequalities and gender-based and sexual violence.

Gather resources from trusted sources such as these (there are more listed at the end):

Let toys be toys

Stereotypes stop you doing stuff



1 Pick a stereotype you didn't know about before, for example: 'All children wear dresses'. (There are some surprising ones summarised **here**).

2 With the class, research this and other stereotypes from around the world and through history.

3 Create two imaginary lines intersecting your classroom or space. One is a line of history and it intersects with another line of global locations. Stick post-it notes around to identify eras and locations.

4 Share your surprising stereotypes and then ask pupils to position themselves on the lines in time and space.

5 Open up a debate by taking the stereotype around the world and through history. Are stereotypes useful? If they're not fixed what does this tell us?

Use visual aids and interesting facts to prompt the discussions, like **this article on breeching boys**.

To work more with gender stereotypes **read and watch the Welsh Government #thisisme campaign** which is all about recognising how gender norms and gender inequalities can have an impact on our lives.

Try out **GENDER WATCH BINGO!** A participatory creative audit of a whole school approach to gender equality.

DO ensure you use positive language when introducing stereotypes. Instead of saying 'people don't', or 'school children can't', make the statement affirmative, such as 'everyone can'. Introducing topics this way ensures that no one feels singled out if they are already awesome enough to be busting that stereotype!

What you'll need

Resources or IT with access to search engines
String (if an imaginary line feels a bit difficult)
Post-it notes to mark global locations and time frames on the strings



EXTENSION

Find a stereotype you didn't know before and learn all about it, how long it has existed and if it exists across the world.

Use this as your inspiration and fill a time capsule with the stereotypes that you think will disappear in the future and the reasons why.

Take your time capsule on a journey and share it with a class in a different year group.

Help them to join the debate and create and share their own time capsules!

ACTIVITY



Learn more about the importance of challenging gender stereotypes from **Save the Children** and **Educate a Child**

Learn about the importance of an **intersectional** approach to addressing gender stereotypes **here**

Ten ways to challenge stereotypes in the classroom

Let toys be toys is a campaign aimed at gender stereotyping by toy manufacturers, the stores that sell toys and marketing campaigns

The National Education Union has fantastic resources, see **Breaking the Mould**, and Gender Stereotypes Stop You Doing Stuff.

Parliament resources for running debates can be found **here**.

More debating resources

A Guardian article about the benefits of promoting debate in the classroom

Philosophy for Kids P4C have lots ideas on how to run debates and encourage critical thinking skills

The Welsh Government campaign **This is Me** aims to target harmful stereotypes and empower young people

The unstereotype alliance aims to challenge corporate and media stereotypes

Try out AGENDAs DIY resources: **Smashing Commercial Sexism; Making Rainbow Ribbons 4 Gender Equality; Gender Snap Pairs; Toys R For All of Us.**