



Department of Teaching and Learning
Family Life Education

GRADE: 5

Lesson 3

NOTE: This lesson contains information about sensitive topics about which students may have questions. Please use the script and encourage students to seek a trusted adult if they have specific questions.

TIME:

35 minutes



LESSON FOCUS: The effects of messages from mass media related to gender stereotyping.

STATE STANDARD:

5.10 The student will examine the messages from mass media related to sexuality.

DESCRIPTIVE STATEMENT:

Printed materials, advertising, television, internet, movies, and music are discussed in relation to gender stereotyping and to the avoidance of sexual exploitation.



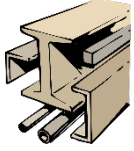
LEARNING TARGET:

I will examine how the messages from mass media stereotype gender and promote unrealistic views of gender-specific characteristics.



KEY TERMS:

- Gender stereotyping
- Mass media



MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 sheet of notebook paper
- Strategies for lesson are listed in red within the lesson (all strategy procedures are listed at the bottom of the lesson plan).
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CU040Hqbas
Riley on Marketing (1:11 minutes)
- www.herofactory.lego.com
- www.friends.lego.com



LINK (activate prior knowledge/lesson intro)

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Cross the Line Activity:

1. Teacher will have a line down the room and ask students the following question: Do you believe media, (such as TV shows, video games, movies, websites, and ads/commercials) affects the way you view the roles/characteristics of boys and girls? Students should stand on the right side of the line if they answer YES and on the left side of the line if they answer NO. Once on the appropriate side, students will collaborate to develop a justification for their answer and choose a representative to share.

Introduce the definitions of the following:

2. **Gender Stereotyping:** A stereotype is a view or a characterization of a person or a group of persons based upon narrow and frequently incorrect assumptions. Sometimes this can be seen when someone puts down another person because of their gender or doesn't believe they are able to do something because they are either male or female.
3. **Mass Media:** It is communication—whether written, broadcast or spoken—that reaches a large audience. This includes television, radio, advertising, movies, the Internet, newspapers, magazines, and so forth.

Say to students:

Today, we will evaluate media messages, in relation to gender stereotyping, to determine how they often promote an unrealistic view of gender characteristics. (introduce learning target)



ENGAGE AND EXPLAIN:

- Say to students:
Mass media not only gives people information and entertainment, it also affects people's lives. By creating a certain type of message, media can manipulate people's attitudes and beliefs and shape their opinions. Do television commercials and other forms of advertising reinforce inequality and gender-based stereotypes? For example: Women almost exclusively appear in ads that promote

cooking, cleaning or childcare-related products. In general, women are underrepresented in roles, or ads, that reference leadership. Particularly concerning are instances when women are depicted in dehumanizing, oppressive ways, especially in music videos. In contrast, media messages often portray men as adventurous, brave, strong and effective. Examples of media images supporting these behaviors are seen through the successful businessmen, construction workers, muscle men and others. Advertisements for toys such as trucks and superheroes are almost always geared toward boys, while advertisements for toys such as kitchens and dolls are geared toward girls.

- Show the YouTube video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CU040Hqbas, *Riley on Marketing*. Once complete, have a discussion with students to answer the following questions:
 - **What kinds of questions does Riley ask about the toys around her?** (Responses should center around: Riley is trying to figure out why there are such big differences between “girl toys” and “boy toys.” She wonders why companies think girls only want to buy toys that are pink or have to do with princesses, not superheroes. Riley says that companies try to “trick the girls into buying pink stuff.”)
 - **What do you think she means by this?** (Guide students to consider the fact that things like toy companies and television shows send very powerful messages to kids about what is normal, popular, or desirable – both for girls and for boys.)



ACTIVE LEARNING:

Spot the Messages:

- Divide the class into four to six groups. If possible, make sure each group contains a mix of boys and girls.
- Distribute the Spot the Messages Student Handout, one for each student. Direct half of the groups to the LEGO® Hero Factory website (www.herofactory.lego.com). Direct the other half to the LEGO® Friends website (www.friends.lego.com).
- Read the directions on the handout aloud to students. Instruct students to explore these websites in their groups, following the directions on their student handouts.
- Invite each group to share the T-chart that they created with the rest of the class. Ask: Which group—girls or boys—is the LEGO® Hero Factory site aimed at? What kinds of messages does it send about what this group is supposed to like and how they are supposed to act? Students will likely conclude that the site targets boys. They should recognize that it sends messages that boys are supposed to be “heroes,” and that they like robots and/or outer space. The games on this site involve shooting, fighting and creating comics. The colors on the site are dark and strong: red, blue, black and gray. The robots pictured are big and powerful.
- Ask: Which group is the LEGO® Friends site aimed at? What kinds of messages does it send this group about what they are supposed to like and how they are supposed to act? Students will likely conclude that the site targets girls. It sends messages that girls are supposed to spend lots of time with friends. The girls on the site all look similar: big hair, big eyes, small noses, small waists and skinny legs. The LEGO® Friends playset has girls build places such as cafés, beauty shops and a veterinarian office. The colors on the website are light and fresh: pink, purple, blue, green. There are hearts, butterflies and flower decorations.
- Discuss with students why these messages are stereotypes. Encourage them to recognize that while some girls are interested in hanging out with friends, beauty shops, decorating and cupcakes, others aren't. Also encourage students to recognize that some boys are not interested in fighting, robots or

being strong. Students should understand that girls and boys don't always have to listen to the messages they get from online media, or play only on certain sites. It's fine for girls and boys to like all kinds of things.

- Teacher will ask students to look back at the answer they gave to the question at the beginning of the class, "Do you believe media affects the way you view sexuality and gender stereotyping?" Ask students to think about how their answer has or has not changed, based on the information they received today. Go over how to do the **3-2-1 strategy** and tell them to apply what changed, or did not change, in their thinking to the second question, "2 things you learned about yourself and how mass media influences you."



REFLECTION:

Have students choose one of the following questions and respond in a written, individual reflection:

- What are some ways the media promotes gender stereotyping? (A: We learn about stereotypes from advertising that promotes a product toward either only girls or only boys by colors used, words used and images used that appeal to that gender)
- How can stereotypes about girls and boys make people feel? Stereotypes can make some people feel like they don't fit in, or that they should try to be something that they are not. Stereotypes can also encourage people to assume, or believe without question, that there are differences between groups of people.
- If you saw an advertisement of the Lego Hero toy and saw both boys and girls playing with the toy in the advertisement, how may that change the stereotype that is often conveyed in ads such as this one?



LESSON CLOSURE:

Encourage the students to share what they have learned with their family members.

Name _____

3-2-1

3 New Things You Learned Today:

1.

2.

3.

2 Things that Connected To You In This Lesson

1.

2.

1 Question You Have About Anything In This Lesson

1.

SPOT THE MESSAGE

Which website are you examining (circle one)?

LEGO Friends website

LEGO Hero Factory website

Directions: Explore the website in your group. Look at:

the pictures	the videos	the style	the colors	the words	the games
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Think about the things you see. Which things seem like they are for girls? Which things seem like they are for boys? List them in the chart below. (There are no right or wrong answers!)

GIRLS	BOYS

Take a vote! Whom do you think this website is for? (circle one)

GIRLS

BOYS

BOTH