



Lesson Plan

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For Professionals Working With Teens

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Lesson for "Three Double Standards That Hurt Guys and Girls"

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to

1. Identify at least three double standards based on gender role stereotypes.
2. Explain at least three possible consequences of deviating from gender role stereotypes.
3. List at least two strategies for successfully challenging double standards based on gender role stereotypes.

NATIONAL SEXUALITY EDUCATION STANDARD ADDRESSED

ID.8.CC.2 Explain the range of gender roles.

ID.12.SM.1 Explain how to promote safety, respect, awareness and acceptance.

TIME NEEDED

50 minutes

MATERIALS

- Flipchart paper
- Markers and tape
- Copies of "Three Double Standards That Hurt Guys and Girls"—one per student
- Double Standards Case Study handouts—one per group of three to four students

PROCEDURE

1. Begin by stating that the lesson will focus on double standards. Ask participants to define double standards. Use the following definition to supplement participants' definitions: a rule or principle that is unfairly applied in different ways to different people or groups.

2. Explain that the following statements are tweets from #DoubleStandard:

- When I'm at home I want everyone to text me back right away, but when I'm out, I honestly take like 20 minutes to text back.
- Why is it fair that our parents got to do certain stuff in high school, but they won't let us do it !?!?
- Hey teachers, if you don't grade assignments over spring break, don't give us assignments to do over spring break.
- This cop in front of me was too busy texting while waiting at the stop light that he didn't realize the light turned green.
- Why is it OK for guys to sleep around and nobody cares but when a girl even talks to a guy she's a whore?

3. Ask participants to share their reactions to the first four tweets. These are lighthearted and, in most instances, harmless double standards. Now ask participants for their reactions to the last tweet. Ask why this tweet is more serious and potentially harmful than the first four.

4. Explain that many double standards in our society, like the last tweet, are based on gender role stereotypes. Gender role stereotypes are assumptions about how a person should act, dress or behave based on their biological sex (male or female). [7 minutes for steps 1 through 4]

5. Distribute copies of the article “Three Double Standards That Hurt Guys and Girls” and read together with your participants, noting that they will now read more about double standards based on gender role stereotypes. Once the students have read the article, ask the following questions:

- Why do you think these double standards exist?
- What purpose do they serve?

[10 minutes]

6. Explain that gender role stereotypes in our society dictate that men and boys are expected to act tough, not show feelings, be aggressive, be strong, be athletic, be heterosexual, want to have sex and be sexually experienced. If men or boys deviate from these expectations, they often face consequences, such as getting called names, harassment, abuse, fights, developing low self-esteem and feeling pressure to have sex when they don't want to.

7. Note that gender role stereotypes in our society dictate that women and girls are expected to be polite, be emotional, stay a virgin, be unprepared for sex/not carry condoms, worry about physical appearance, be caring, not be athletic, cook, clean and be nurturing. If women or girls deviate from these expectations, they often face consequences such as harassment, abuse, assault, having a bad reputation and feeling pressure to avoid sex even if they want to have sex or be unprepared for sex.

8. Ask the following questions:

- What is your reaction to these gender role stereotypes and the consequences for deviating from them?
- What are the benefits of deviating from the gender role stereotypes? Adhering to gender role stereotypes?
- Who experiences more negative consequences for deviating from gender role stereotypes—boys or girls? Why do you think that is?
- How might these gender role stereotypes influence people's behavior or decision making?

[8 minutes for steps 6 through 8]

9. Tell participants that they will now get to examine additional double standards based on gender role stereotypes. Divide participants into small groups of three to four participants each. Distribute a Double Standards Case Study to each group. Instruct participants to read their case study and answer the questions that follow on the handout.

10. After about five to seven minutes, ask for one or two groups to read their case study to the larger group and share their responses to the questions. After each group has reported back, ask the following questions of the entire class:

- What are your reactions to these case studies?
- How easy or difficult do you think it would be for the people in the case studies to deviate from gender role stereotypes?
- How is it different for girls to deviate from gender role stereotypes compared to boys?
- The author of “Three Double Standards That Hurt Guys and Girls” talks about teens feeling pressure to follow certain “rules” related to gender roles and about working to eliminate the need to follow the rules. Do you think it's possible to break the rules? Why or why not?

[15 minutes for steps 9 and 10]

11. Explain that the last activity will give participants the opportunity to think about breaking the rules around double standards based on gender role stereotypes. Instruct participants to work in pairs to develop a tweet similar to the ones heard at the beginning of the lesson. However, their tweets should focus on challenging one of the three double standards from the article. Remind them that tweets are limited to 140 characters. Each pair should record their tweet on flipchart paper and tape it to the wall.

12. To focus their efforts, remind participants of the three double standards from “Three Double Standards That Hurt Guys and Girls” and ask them to identify one of those double standards to challenge in their tweets.

- Guys that have multiple sexual partners get praised, while girls get slut-shamed for having sexual feelings, having sex or just because people think they’ve had sex.
- Guys shouldn’t cry or show their true emotions, while girls can cry and express their emotions.
- Girls are encouraged and pressured to worry about what they look like, but guys can be teased for worrying too much about what they look like.

13. After about five minutes, ask for some pairs to share their tweets with the larger group. To conclude the lesson. Remind participants that, as the author of “Three Double Standards That Hurt Guys and Girls” states, they are “the people who can change these double standards and make our schools and communities places where it’s safe for guys and girls to be exactly who we are”—without fear of being judged.

14. Encourage participants to use #DoubleStandard if they have a Twitter account and want to share their tweets. [10 minutes for steps 11 through 14]

Double Standards Case Study—Jasmine

Jasmine has recently started going out with Andre, a guy she's had a crush on for a long time. They've been taking things pretty slow, but she feels ready to take things to the next level and is thinking about having sex with Andre. One day when Andre asked Jasmine to grab his phone for him out of his backpack, she noticed that there were no condoms anywhere in his bag. Knowing that Andre didn't have any condoms with him, she thought it might be a good idea to pick some up just in case, especially since she's going to his place in 20 minutes and knows no one else will be home. She goes to a local store and is about to buy a box of condoms when she notices that the cashier is in her gym class at school. She isn't sure if she should stay on line or not.

1. What double standard is reflected in this case study?

2. How might double standards based on gender role stereotypes influence Jasmine's behavior?

3. What are the possible outcomes if Jasmine adheres to gender role stereotypes?

4. What are the possible outcomes if Jasmine deviates from gender role stereotypes?

5. How could Jasmine proceed while staying true to herself?

Double Standards Case Study—Dylan

Dylan has recently had a major outbreak of acne—pretty typical for teen guys, but definitely annoying. Yearbook photos are being taken in a week, and he really hopes the acne clears up by then. Even though he’s had concerns about this in the past, he’s never talked about it with his guy friends. Dylan has heard some girls in his class talk about a store in town where they buy cover up and acne treatment. He decides to go to the store to see if there’s anything that can help him there. He’s about to walk in when a bunch of his guy friends come out of the video game store next door. Dylan isn’t sure if he should continue into the store now that he’s been seen or pretend as if he were going into the video game store.

1. What double standard is reflected in this case study?

2. How might double standards based on gender role stereotypes influence Dylan’s behavior?

3. What are the possible outcomes if Dylan adheres to gender role stereotypes?

4. What are the possible outcomes if Dylan deviates from gender role stereotypes?

5. How could Dylan proceed while staying true to himself?

Double Standards Case Study—Isaiah

Isaiah has a new girlfriend, Serena. He likes her a lot and thinks he'd like to have sex with her at some point, but doesn't feel ready right now. After basketball practice, his buddies, who have all said they've had sex before, start asking him about his sex life, assuming he and Serena have already had sex. He's not sure what to say. It would be pretty easy for him to go along with what his friends already assume, or he could tell them the truth.

1. What double standard is reflected in this case study?

2. How might double standards based on gender role stereotypes influence Isaiah's behavior?


3. What are the possible outcomes if Isaiah adheres to gender role stereotypes?

4. What are the possible outcomes of Isaiah deviates from gender role stereotypes?

5. How could Isaiah proceed while staying true to himself?

THREE DOUBLE STANDARDS THAT HURT GUYS AND GIRLS

By Krystal Barragan, 17, Staff Writer



SLUT!

Double standard: A rule or principle that is unfairly applied in different ways to different people or groups.

Why is it so wrong for guys to be emotional once in a while and cry, but if a girl cries it's perfectly normal—expected even? Why is it that guys are often praised for having all the sex they want, but when a girl has sex, she's called a slut?

These are double standards—when two groups of people, in this case guys and girls, are judged differently for the exact same behavior. Why does this happen? Who even made up these standards in the first place? I never knew what double standards were until I went to high school.

Guys that have multiple sexual partners get praised, while girls get slut-shamed for having sexual feelings, having sex or just because people think they've had sex.

Double standards are not fair. They can cause us to lie and feel pressured to be or do something that's not right for us. They can also be harmful to both guys and girls. I learned this the hard way when a vicious rumor spread about me at school.

My freshman year in high school, I quickly latched onto the upperclassmen. I was friends with all of the juniors and seniors. I thought things were going smoothly, until one day I heard a rumor about me! My friend pulled me aside in the cafeteria and whispered what she had heard about me. As she told me, my jaw dropped, and I started to cry tears of anger! Some random guy made up a story that I "hooked up" with one of his friends. What does that even mean? Everybody who heard this rumor automatically branded me a slut. I was disgusted and hurt because it was a false rumor, but that didn't stop others from slut-shaming and judging me.

Who knew that being a girl in high school would be so hard? While I was called names, the guy was praised. While I was being pointed at and whispered about, he got high fives and pats on the back. He was treated like he scored the winning basket. I, on the other hand, was treated like I missed the easy shot that would have won the championship. Then, I realized something. Maybe this guy didn't mean to hurt me. Maybe he was trying to make his friend look better by saying he had "hooked up" with me or maybe his friend made up the rumor to make himself feel better.

I understand how this double standard hurt me, but how does it hurt guys? What if you're a guy who doesn't want to have sex yet? These guys may feel pressured to have sex—or at least say they've had sex. If a guy doesn't actually have sex, he could lie and make up a sex life just for his reputation, which is exactly what happened when rumors started to spread about me. I don't know who started the rumor, but someone lied to make a guy's reputation better, not taking my feelings into consideration. And there are guys who may not be lying about the sex they have. But why have sex just because you feel pressured to brag and impress your friends?

And what about girls who've had sex? Girls who attempt to have a sex life may get slut-shamed and bullied. But again, why treat girls any differently than guys? In some cases, girls may not even be sexually active, and rumors swirl around about them. This can cause them to be slut-shamed also, just like it did to me. This then causes girls to be ashamed of themselves.



Guys shouldn't cry or show their true emotions, while girls can cry and express their emotions.

When I asked most of my guy friends if they cry, they responded with a flat out, "No." They wasted no time thinking about the question that I had just asked. I wanted to dig deeper, but no matter what I asked, they continued to respond with, "No, I don't cry." Guys who claim that they don't get a little emotional are sometimes simply following the rules that society has laid out for them—their gender role. We all know traditional male gender roles that say a guy should be a big man who is the provider, rock of the family and strong both mentally and physically—and of course, he never, ever cries.

Guys are human beings and should be able to show some vulnerable emotion, whether it's from a sad movie, a family member's death or a joyful moment. We are all human, and we all have emotions and hearts. Even the Grinch had a heart. It is OK for guys to show some emotions other than anger. I imagine it would feel nice for guys not to have to put on a tough-guy front when he's feeling emotional.

The double standard that says tears are OK for girls but not for guys means guys aren't supposed to express all of the normal emotions, while girls are too often assumed to be overly emotional. Women and girls do not just sit home and cry 24 hours a day. We have a range of feelings, just like guys. Double standards like this one mean that people—especially guys—feel pressure to follow the standard that says guys don't cry.

Girls are encouraged and pressured to worry about what they look like, but guys can be teased for worrying too much about what they look like.

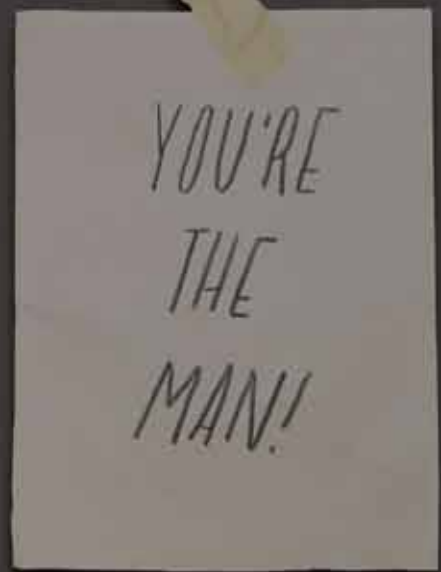
We live in visual world where everyone is judged by what they look like, but no one is judged as harshly for what they look like as girls and women. Girls are often judged based on appearance, and some girls are pretty harsh on themselves and go crazy over how they look—what brands they are wearing and what size they are. I'm a girl who spends hours getting ready, but what if I didn't want to fuss over what I looked like? Some people might give me a hard time for that. In contrast a guy could roll out of bed, get dressed and have "bed head" without anyone thinking any less of him. I know more recently there is sometimes pressure on guys to look a certain way, but when there is pressure on guys to look a certain way, there's a lot less on them than girls. A guy who spends a lot of time on his looks runs the risk of being teased for worrying too much about what he looks like.



This double standard means girls are encouraged and rewarded for paying a lot of attention to their looks, while guys might get teased or even bullied for the same behavior. Some guys may like to take time making sure they look good, and that should be OK. And some girls may not want to worry so much about what they look like and prefer to be judged for what they know or can do.


These double standards are based on gender roles, what we've decided is acceptable or unacceptable for guys and girls. It's OK for guys to have sex, but not OK for girls. It's OK for girls to cry, but not OK for guys to cry. Girls should spend a lot of time on their appearance, but guys shouldn't. We use these rules to judge guys and girls and to control how people behave. And it's just not fair that rules are applied differently for guys and girls. Why do we need rules like this in the first place?

We all feel pressure at some point to follow these rules. And we may feel pressured to do things that we wouldn't normally do to be accepted by our peers. We can all get caught up in judging someone for not following the rules or feel pressured to be what other people think we should be, but wouldn't it be more interesting to go through high school having fun and being ourselves? Think twice the next time you hear someone being slut-shamed or you laugh at that guy who got emotional or poke fun at that girl for how she dresses. We're the people who can change these double standards and make our schools and communities places where it's safe for guys and girls to be exactly who they are.



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