

Exploring Sexism Towards Women & Girls

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This short resource is designed to help you learn about and reflect on sexism towards women and girls. What is it? What does it look like? Where can it show up? There will be an opportunity to reflect on your own actions, understand their potential impact on others, and explore ways to be more mindful and accountable with your actions moving forwards. This resource is not about shaming you. It is about inviting you to explore ideas and concepts that we often overlook as a culture.

■ What is Sexism?

Sexism is defined as:

Prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination towards someone on the basis of their sex.

Some examples of sexism towards women and girls include:

Telling someone to be more “ladylike” or to act less like a “boy”

Comments like “sit properly” or “girls shouldn't act like that” send the message that there's only one right way to be a girl. Everyone should be able to express themselves without being judged.

Judging someone for not acting how people expect girls to act

Not all girls are quiet, caring, or soft-spoken — and that's okay! Saying a girl is “too bossy” or “not girly enough” just because she speaks up or acts differently reinforces unfair stereotypes.

Talking down to someone because they're not doing what is “expected” as a girl

Saying things like “What do you know? You're a girl!” is sexist. It assumes girls aren't as knowledgeable or capable as boys, even when there's no reason to think that.

Only praising women for being “motherly” or for staying home

There's nothing wrong with being caring, but when girls are only valued for being nurturing or taking care of others, it is not only limiting and a form of stereotyping, it is sexist. Women can be leaders, athletes, scientists — anything they want!

Assuming a woman needs a man to fight her battles

It might seem helpful, but stepping in to “protect” a girl when she hasn't asked for help can be patronising. Women are capable of handling their own challenges — just like men are.

Stereotyping women's roles — “Get back to the kitchen”

Jokes or comments about women belonging in the kitchen or at home suggest that's the only place they should be. In reality, women belong wherever they choose — whether that's in sports, business, science, or anywhere else.

It is important to know that these are not the only examples of sexism in action. These are common examples of sexism that we often see in school and wider society relating to women and girls. Below is a video to watch to further understand the impact of sexism generally and towards

women and girls; if you are working through this resource on paper, the video title is included so you can watch in your own time. Make sure you also spend time working through the reflection sheet that accompanies this short resource to consolidate your learning further.

■ Exploring Sexism Further

- Video: ["Let's Talk About Sexism" — CBBC Newsround](#)

■ An Important Note

Understanding sexism towards women and girls is something that takes time, effort and consistency. We have started well in this short resource, but completing this doesn't mean you know everything there is to know about sexism! There are some recommended people and organisations to follow to continue your learning below. Make sure you spend some time checking them out. It is important that we keep up our efforts to learn about sexism — it is not something a resource sheet like this can ever cover fully.

Recommended People and Organisations To Check Out

- Jordan Stephens
- Ben Hurst
- Big Red Ryan
- Paul C. Brunson
- Alex Holmes
- Jeff Perera
- Professor Neil
- Glasgow Girls Club
- Beyond Equality
- Gina Taylor
- Cheer Up Luv
- Women's Aid Solace

Exploring Sexism Towards Women & Girls (Worksheet)

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■ Part 1: What is Sexism?

1. Define Sexism

What do you think sexism means? Write down your thoughts.

2. Recognising Sexism

Where have you heard the term sexism before? Can you think of an example of sexism you've seen or heard about? How did it affect the people involved?

■ Part 2: Examples of Sexism

Reflect on these scenarios and consider why they might be sexist:

- Being told to be more "ladylike" or to act less like a "boy."
- Judging someone for not acting how people expect girls to act.
- Talking down to someone just because they're a girl.
- Only praising women for being "motherly" or for staying home.
- Assuming a woman needs a man to fight her battles.
- Stereotyping women's roles with phrases like "Get back to the kitchen."

(Explanations of these examples can be found in the "Exploring Sexism" information sheet.)

■ Part 3: Reflecting on Sexism

1. Impact of Sexism

Now you know what sexism means and have explored some examples of it in action, in what ways can it cause harm?

2. Personal Reflection

Have you ever done or said something that could be considered sexist? What led to it, and how do you feel about it now?

3. Learning and Application

What have you learned about sexism that you didn't know or understand before? What steps could you take to ensure that you are applying what you have learned moving forward?

■ Final Thoughts

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