

Court Room Game¹

Time: approximately 50 minutes

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this lesson:

All children will be able to think about the impact of gender stereotypes;

Most children will be able to think about some of the assumptions underlying stereotypical views of male and female behaviour and how these stereotypes affect them and their own reactions;

Some children will be able to understand that such stereotypes can be challenged and that they can take responsibility for arguing against ideas which seem to them to be wrong, even if this is not the majority opinion.

Resources

- ✓ The attitude statements in Appendix 1, cut up into single statements;
- ✓ Some props e.g. wigs/hats for the judges (not vital).

A Introduction

Time: about 5 minutes

1. Tell the class that for this lesson the classroom will become a series of small 'courtrooms' looking at the attitudes and beliefs held by some people about the roles played by men and women in our society. Encourage the children to share their ideas and knowledge of how the courts work.

2. Give a brief description of how a court works: describe the roles of the judge (who sums up arguments, keeps order and passes sentences); the prosecuting lawyers who argue against the defendant; the defending lawyers who argue in favour of the defendant; lastly, the jury who are twelve members of the public who have to make the final decision. Explain that in this game instead of a defendant there are a series of statements.

B Main Activity

Time: about 40 minutes

Method One

(for classes who enjoy role play):

1. Split the class into groups of four, each consisting of two 'prosecuting lawyers' and two 'defence lawyers'.

2. Give each small group one of the attitude statements in Appendix 1 so that every group has a different statement. Alternatively, focus on a few statements so that more than one group is discussing the same one.

¹ This activity has been adapted from *Spiralling toolkit for safer, healthier relationships* – Bristol Domestic Abuse Prevention Programme (Domestic Violence Responses for Safer Bristol).

3. After they have had a chance to read and think about the statement for a couple of minutes, ask the 'prosecuting lawyers' to think of some ways to argue against it and the 'defending lawyers' to argue in favour of it.

4. Give the groups ten minutes to come up with their arguments. Remind the children that they have to ignore their own personal feelings for this part of the game.

5. After ten minutes, gather the whole class back together and explain that one group at a time will have the opportunity to explain their statements and the arguments they have come up with for or against the statement to the rest of the class, who will then act as a large 'jury' and vote on whether they agree or disagree with that particular statement. Each group will be given about three minutes to explain their arguments.

6. Before the first group starts, nominate another child from the rest of the class as a 'judge' who can keep the group to the point, ask clarifying questions, keep it fair and so on (the teacher may wish to role play the part of 'judge' for the first group).

7. Then allow the first group their three minutes, during which the 'prosecuting' and 'defence lawyers' present their arguments, with the 'judge' questioning, keeping order and time keeping as necessary. When the first group has finished, ask the rest of the class to vote for or against the statement they were discussing.

8. Allow the children to put forward their views, but challenge where necessary. There are some things which are not just a matter of opinion but are totally unacceptable or against the law. DO NOT allow opinions to stand which need to be challenged.

9. After the first group has finished and the vote been taken, nominate a new 'judge' for the next group, so several different children have a turn at being judge.

10. Continue until each small group has had a chance to present their arguments and the class have voted on all the statements used.

Method 2

(for classes that are less confident about using role play methods)

1. Split class into two groups A and B.

2. Explain that you are going to read out some statements and that team A are going to have to argue **for** the statement and team B will argue **against**.

3. Read out the first statement that you want the class to consider and give the teams a few minutes to discuss all the things they might say **FOR** or **AGAINST** the statement. Explain that it does not matter what their personal opinion is.

4. Now ask team A to make a circle facing outwards and team B make a circle facing inwards, standing opposite someone in the A circle.

5. Read out the statement again and give them a couple of minutes to argue their point with the person standing in front of them.

6. Stop the discussion and ask the 'Bs' to move round the circle so they are now opposite someone new. Repeat the process.

7. After one more move, bring this to a close and ask people to sit down. Begin a discussion with the groups by asking questions such as:

- What did that feel like?
- Did anyone have a really good argument that made you change your mind?

8. Now swap roles. The 'As' now argue **against** the statement and the 'Bs' argue for. Repeat the process as above with a different statement.

9. Take feedback from the groups. Allow the children to put forward their views, but challenge where necessary. There are some things which are not just a matter of opinion but are totally unacceptable or against the law. DO NOT allow opinions to stand which need to be challenged.

End Discussion

Time: about 5 minutes

Ask the children to get into a circle and pass round a prop (such as a judge's gavel or wig). Ask each child to share something they found surprising or shocking today; or ask the children to share how they feel personally about some of these statements. Did any of them find they changed their minds when listening to other people's arguments? Which of the statements did they agree most with (if any)? Which did they disagree most with? Why?

Go round the circle and ask all the children to tell the rest of the class one thing they found out today which surprised them, or that they didn't know before.

Suggested Extension Activities

- ➔ Use a range of resources such as newspapers, magazines and the internet to investigate news stories and statistics about domestic violence and to make a class newspaper or poster using this information;
- ➔ Carry out the method not used in this lesson (court room game or carousel);
- ➔ Write a news bulletin about domestic violence in small groups.



Learning outcomes	National Curriculum – PSHE and Citizenship	Links to SEAL	Every Child Matters
<p>All children will be able to begin to think about the impact of gender stereotypes</p> <p>Most children will be able to think about some of the assumptions underlying stereotypical views of male and female behaviour and how these stereotypes affect them and their own reactions</p> <p>Some children will be able to understand that such stereotypes can be challenged and that they can take responsibility for arguing against ideas which seem to them to be wrong, even if this is not the majority opinion</p>	<p>Key Stage Two Pupils should be taught/given opportunities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (a) To talk ... about their opinions and explain their views 2. (a) To ... debate topical issues, problems and events 2. (b) Why and how rules and laws are made and enforced, why different rules are needed in different situations and how to take part in making and changing rules 4. (a) That their actions affect themselves and others, to care about other people’s feelings and to see things from their points of view 4. (c) To be aware of different types of relationships, including marriage and those between friends and families, and to develop the skills to be effective in relationships 4. (d) To realize the nature and consequences of ... bullying and aggressive behaviours, and how to respond to them and ask for help 4. (e) To recognize and challenge stereotypes 5. (a) To take responsibility 5. (d) To make real choices and decisions 5. (f) To develop relationships through work and play 5. (g) To consider social and moral dilemmas that they come across in life 5. (h) To find information and advice 	<p>Theme Six ‘Relationships’</p> <p>(Green Set)</p> <p>Social Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can recognise stereotyping • I can try to challenge stereotypes 	<p>Be healthy (physical, mental, emotional health)</p> <p>Stay safe (from neglect, violence, abuse)</p> <p>Enjoy and Achieve (personal and social development)</p> <p>Make a positive contribution (develop positive relationships)</p>

Year Six – Appendix 1

Attitude Statements for the Court Room Game



Men who stay at home to look after the kids aren't real men


If a boyfriend gets really jealous it must mean they love their partner

Women should not bother to train to be pilots or doctors as they'll only go off and get pregnant after a few years

Men are stronger than women

Women should stay at home and look after the family

Men should be able to see their wife/partner or children whenever they like



It's OK for someone to hurt or threaten their boyfriend or girlfriend if they have been annoyed

Men should always have the final say in a family

If a man pays for things on a date he can expect the woman to do what he wants

Sometimes people can't help hitting out

It's OK for a man to decide where his partner/wife can go and who she can see

If a girl's family tell her to marry someone she should