

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

GENDERED EXPECTATIONS

Gender roles
Gender
Gender equality
Social norms
Values
Gender non-conforming
Violence
Discrimination
Bias

- ✓ 1. To help learners identify gender roles.
- ✓ 2. To help learners recognise assumptions about gender.
- ✓ 3. For learners to reflect on how roles are assigned from birth.
- ✓ 4. To explore the implications they have for gender equality.

🕒 45 min - 1 hour

★ Photo Set A and Photo Set B (provided)

PROCEDURE

- 1 Choose a set of photos to work with (A or B), or for bigger classes use both sets. Divide the learners into small groups and hand each group a different picture (Eg. A1, A2, or A3). Make sure you hand out all the pictures from a set. Do not let the groups see one another's pictures.
- 2 Ask each group to describe in bullet points, who the baby or child in their picture is, and their possible life story. They should include a brief description of the baby or child's characteristics, their school, their family and the like. Give the learners about 10 minutes to complete this task.
- 3 Then ask the groups to share their child's life story with the class (without showing the picture). The groups are likely to have made assumptions as to the child's gender based on what they are wearing. For example, the learners will assume that the picture of the baby in blue clothes is a boy, and the baby in pink is a girl. They will likely proceed to select gendered occupations and hobbies as they describe the children later in life.
- 4 Ask a representative from each group to stick their photographs up on the board simultaneously. Learners should notice that pictures A1, A2 and A3 are of the same baby and B1, B2 and B3 are of the same child.
- 5 Ask learners to reflect on how their group plotted out the baby or child's life story. Ask them:
 - a. Whether there was any disagreement or discussion about the baby/child's **gender** based on the picture. (This question is especially relevant for the group that received the picture of the child dressed in gender-neutral clothing - A3 and B3).
 - b. Whether the baby/child may NOT be of the gender that they described, and why not.
 - c. How the baby/child's gender impacts on their description of their characteristics and personality.
 - d. How the baby/child's gender impacted the 'choices' the group made for them later in life, for example in terms of motherhood or fatherhood and employment. Which characteristics each group highlighted. For example, was motherhood highlighted for the girl child, while fatherhood was not ascribed to the boy?
 - e. Whether there were differences in the level of achievement ascribed to the children at school and beyond. What are these?
 - f. Whether it was easier to see difference in the photographs of the babies compared to the older child.

6 Debrief with the learners about how similar perceptions play out in our broader society. Key questions for discussion may include:

- a. On what are societal perceptions of gender based? How are gendered characteristics ascribed to people when their gender is not apparent from their appearance? How do we respond to these people? What assumptions do we make in order to fit them to our overall view of how each gender should behave?
- b. How do gendered perceptions affect the expectations of one's role in relationships?
- c. How do gendered perceptions and expectations (including **gender non-conformity**), change across different age levels and across the life span?
- d. How do gendered perceptions impact exposure to **violence**? For example, ask learners what kinds of violence are most likely to be experienced by girls, and by boys, at each phase (age) of their lives.

TEACHER TIPS



General

This exercise is intended to encourage learners to confront the gendered assumptions we make based on appearance, and to understand how gendered expectations, **social norms** and **values** impact their perception of others, and others' perceptions of themselves.



Making the Link with Gender & Violence

This exercise allows learners to understand how **gender**, **social norms** and **values** combine to create gendered and unequal expectations in our society; and how these expectations impact on exposure to violence across the life course. Teachers should emphasise the gendered differences in exposure to violence. For example, men are more likely to experience violence from people they do not know, but women are more likely to experience violence from acquaintances and family.

This exercise also raises the possibility of **gender non-conformity**, and teachers should point out that being gender non-conforming may increase someone's risk of **violence**.



Assessment Ideas

Ask learners to write a reflection paper on how gendered expectations have shaped their own life opportunities and choices, or the life of someone with whom they are familiar. Evaluate learners on their ability to engage with issues of **gender**, expectations, **discrimination** and **bias**.



WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Hand out one photo to each group. Make sure that a group does not see another's photographs.

PHOTO SET A



PHOTO A1

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

PHOTO SET A



PHOTO A2

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

PHOTO SET A



PHOTO A3

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Hand out one photo to each group. Make sure that a group does not see another's photographs.

PHOTO SET B



PHOTO B1

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

PHOTO SET B



PHOTO B2

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

PHOTO SET B



PHOTO B3