

A House for Everyone by Jo Hirst

Grade: 1st or 2nd grade

OVERVIEW

A House for Everyone is a story of a group of friends who are working together to build a fort. They are each unique in the way they express themselves- from hair to clothes to the toys with which they each prefer to play. Throughout the book, readers learn how the kids have unique differences, yet are all the same when it comes to playing and working together.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- Understand that there is no such thing as “girl things” or “boy things.” Instead, people can do, play with, or like what they like regardless of their gender
- Understand the importance of treating others with respect regarding gender expression
- Become familiar with the terms gender identity and gender expression

STANDARDS

- **Washington State Sexual Health Standards:** Explain there are many way to express gender (H1.Se5.1) and Understand importance of treating others with respect regarding gender expression (H1.SE5.2b)
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.7**
Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.1:** Ask and answer such questions as *who, what, where, when, why,* and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *grade 2 topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups

TIME

One 40 minute lesson

5 minutes to review classroom ground rules and introduce vocabulary

15 minutes for reading and discussion

5 minutes to model worksheet

10 minutes for partner work and share out

5 minutes closure or extension

RESOURCES / MATERIALS NEEDED

- A House for Everyone by Jo Hirst
- Anchor chart
- Document Cam
- White board/ chart paper

- Story pages for pairs of students to read while filling out worksheet.
- Worksheet (1 per partnership)

VOCABULARY

Define key words for discussion:

- **gender identity** is how you feel inside about whether you are a boy or a girl, or something else.
- **gender expression** is how you express yourself on the outside through things like clothing, hairstyles, and the way you do things.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

Ground rules: Introduce or review classroom rules to create a safe place for students to discuss the book. Consider using the ground rules listed below:

- Respect other people in the class
- One person speaks at a time
- Everyone has the “right to pass” if someone doesn’t want to talk
- Everyone will have a chance to speak

Introduction: Gender Identity and Expression

Post and discuss the vocabulary words for this lesson.

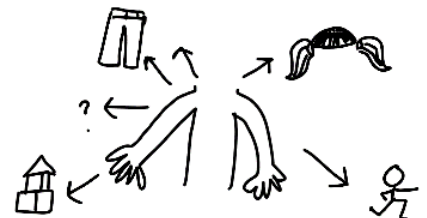
We will read a story about a group of friends who are building a fort. We will get to know each friend, learn about their different gender identities, and what makes them unique.

Gender identity is how you feel inside about whether you are a boy or a girl, or something else. (You can draw this image on the board, and make a cue for the words by pointing inward toward your heart – and have kids say the words and do the cue with you.)



We’ll also see how these kids express their gender.

Gender expression is how you express yourself on the outside through things like clothing, hairstyles, and the way you do things. (You can draw this image on the board as well as make a cue for this word by expanding your arms outward while saying the words)



Ask students to think, pair, share: What kinds of clothes can people choose to wear? What kinds of hair can people choose to have?

Clothes	Hairstyles
<i>shorts</i>	<i>Short hair</i>
<i>Dresses</i>	<i>Long hair</i>
<i>t-shirts</i>	<i>Pig tails</i>
<i>jeans</i>	<i>Braids</i>



Part of the way a person expresses their gender

Read aloud

1. Introduce the book, A House for Everyone.
 - *I am going to read you a story. I want you to notice what the characters like to wear and play. I also want you to notice how the characters are the same as or different from each other.*
2. Read A House for Everyone, pausing for discussion questions along the way
 - (p.5) “and she never, ever chooses to wear a dress.” *What are some different clothes that you choose to wear and why?*
 - (p.9) “Sometimes, when he plays basketball, he wears his hair in a ponytail.” *What are some ways you like to wear your hair? Can anyone wear their hair that way?*
 - (p11) “Clothes are for everyone. We can all wear the clothes that we like.” *Why is it important to be able to choose clothes that you like and make you feel comfortable?*
3. After reading, ask students to name the characters in the story and as students answer, write the characters’ names on the worksheet across the top.
 - *Say: Now that we know who the characters are in the story, we can look at how the characters express themselves.*
 - Begin with Ivy (p 4-5 under the doc cam) and use the text to fill in the chart. Model how to refer to the text to fill out the chart. You can also refer to the cues/visuals to remember the difference between **gender identity** and **gender expression**.
 - Move on to Alex. Show how you can use the text to answer the questions about Alex’s gender expression. *Alex likes building with legos, has short hair, and wears scarves and shorts. What is Alex’s gender identity? Alex does not feel like a boy or a girl. They like people using “Alex” or “they” when talking to or about them. Fill in “not boy or girl, they”.*
4. Work with the class to fill out the chart for Sam, turning to page 8-9 and placing under doc cam. As you reread these pages, have students think and share what Sam likes to do, what clothes Sam wears, and what they notice about Sam’s hair. Once students share, record their answers in the chart. Ask students what Sam’s gender identity is, and record on the chart.

Student Activity

- In partnerships, students work for 5 minutes to complete the chart.
- Pass out the worksheet and copies of the text for students to refer to when filling in the chart.
- Call class back together to finalize the last two columns of the class chart. Solicit students’ ideas and help guide answers as necessary.

Closing

- What are some things you learned today about gender identity or gender expression?
Think, pair, share

ASSESSMENT

The objective will have been met if the student is able to:

- Explain that clothes, hairstyles, and activities are for everyone, regardless of gender.

Things to consider

Being aware of the ways that society tells boys and girls they should dress takes many conversations, and may not occur from just one lesson. You can help your students continue to explore hurtful and limiting gender stereotypes by doing some of the following more regularly:

- Using gender neutral language. Instead of saying "boys and girls" say "students, readers, room (number), class..."
- When you hear students say, "That's a boy color/toy/game" or "You can't do that you're a boy/girl" interrupt it every time. Gently remind them, "There is no such thing as a boy/girl color/toy, if you like it then you can use it."
- Read more books with people expressing gender in various ways.
- Model for students by sharing examples of things people like and do that may not fall into "traditional" gender norms.
- Consider following up with the book [They, She, He, Me: Free to Be!!](#) By Maya Gonzalez and Matthew Sg

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Teaching Tolerance: Gender Diversity Lessons

<http://www.tolerance.org/>

Keywords: gender, equity, bullying, lessons, diversity

Gender Spectrum

www.genderspectrum.org