



Rights, Respect, Responsibility
(Grade 8)

**Blue Is for Boys
and Pink Is for
Girls...or Are They?**



Lesson 1

Ground Rules

What are some guidelines we want in order to maintain a safe classroom environment during this instruction?

In addition to our list, remember:

- Please **share the information** from class
- **Do NOT share anything personal**, such as someone's questions, comments, or stories.

Anonymous Question Box

- Write down questions during the lessons.
- Use appropriate terms whenever possible.
- Do not write your name on it, unless you'd like to discuss the question privately.
- Place questions in box at the end of class.
- Your questions will be answered when we cover the related topic.

Gender Stereotypes

Today we are going to be talking about gender, how we understand our maleness, our femaleness, or a combination of these. We will be talking about who we are and how we express this to others.

Let's start with a quiz!

- I'm going to show you a series of pictures, and I'd like you tell to me whether, *stereotypically*, what you see is for girls or for boys.
- Remember, I said *stereotypically*. So I'm asking you to tell me which gender comes to mind *first*.



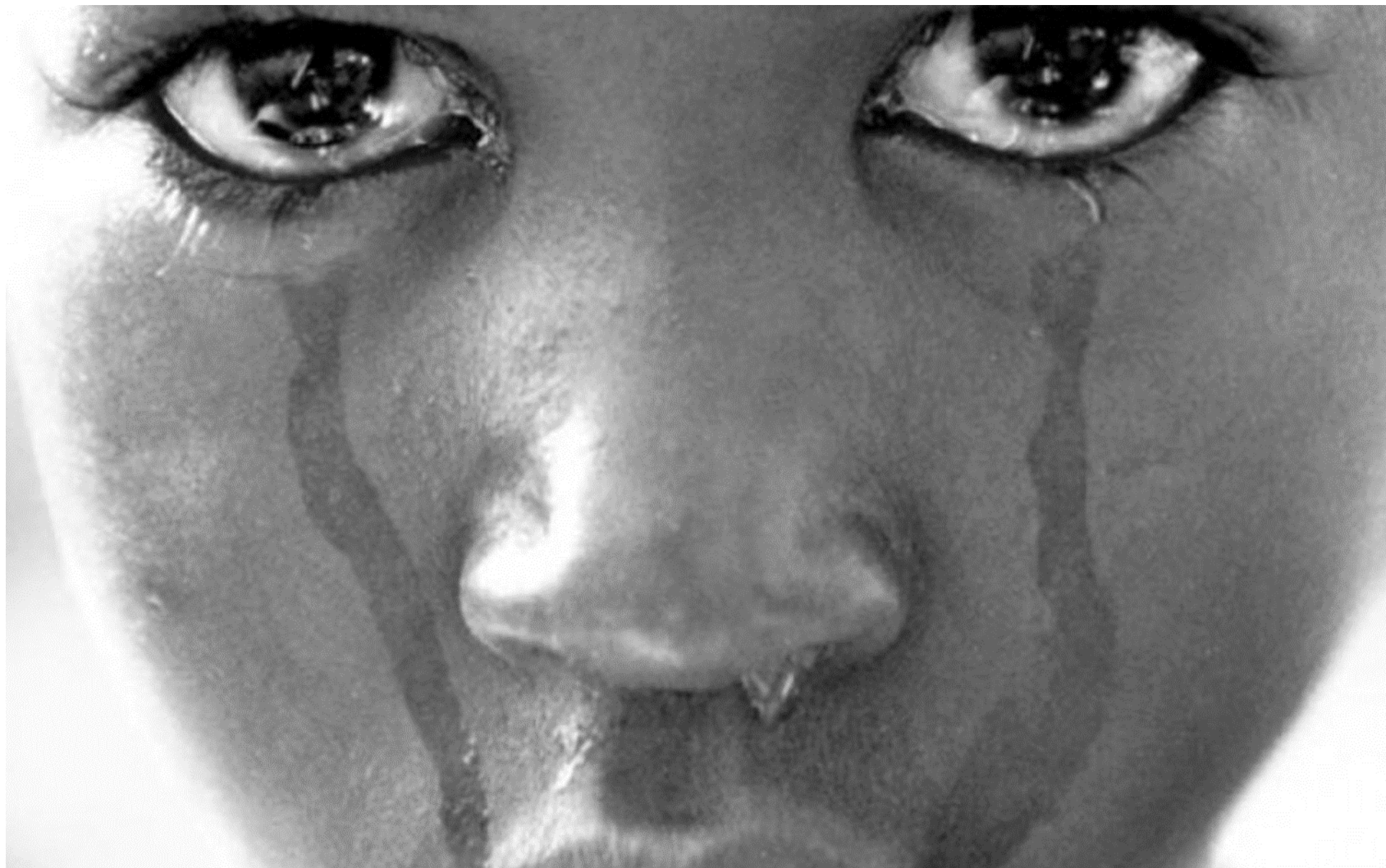
Boys or Girls?

















Class Activity: “Boys or Girls?”

- How did you know whether to classify something as “boy” or “girl”?
- I am going to ask you to come up with examples of messages about gender that you’ve received in your lives. These can be about any gender, not just your own.
- For example, sometimes when there is more than one gender of children growing up in a family, siblings might be treated differently because of their parents’/caregivers’ ideas about gender.

Class Activity: “Gender Messages”

MESSAGE

- Example: *It's more ok for boys to stay out late than it is for girls.*

SOURCE

- Example: *parents or caregivers*

In your pairs, try to come up with at least 5 messages and their sources.



**Class Discussion:
“Gender Messages”**



What If...?

- We talked earlier about certain things people often associate with a particular gender.
- These next pictures show some examples of people breaking those stereotypes.
- As you look at them, I'd like you to think about your reaction. How does seeing these pictures make you feel?

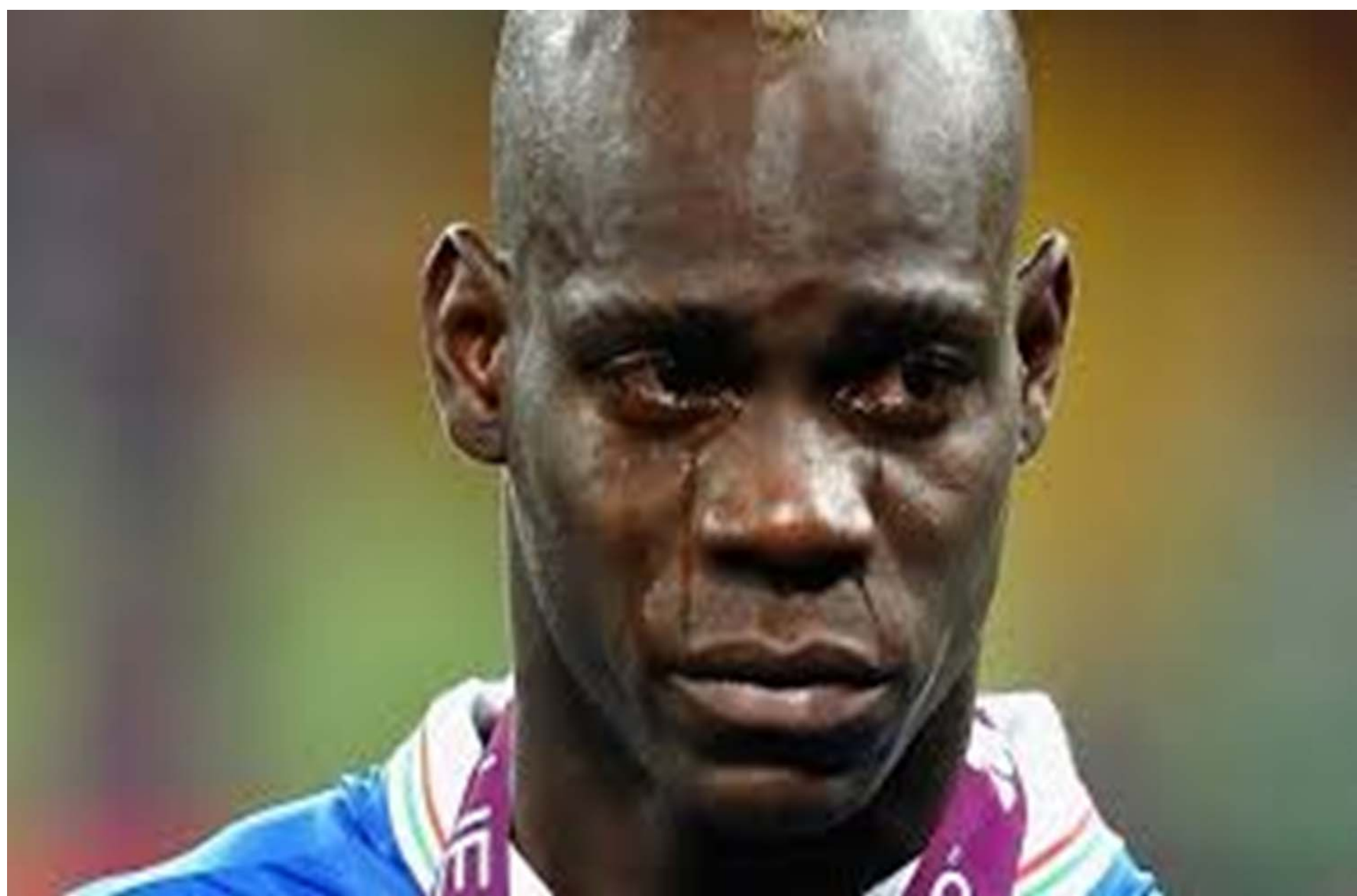




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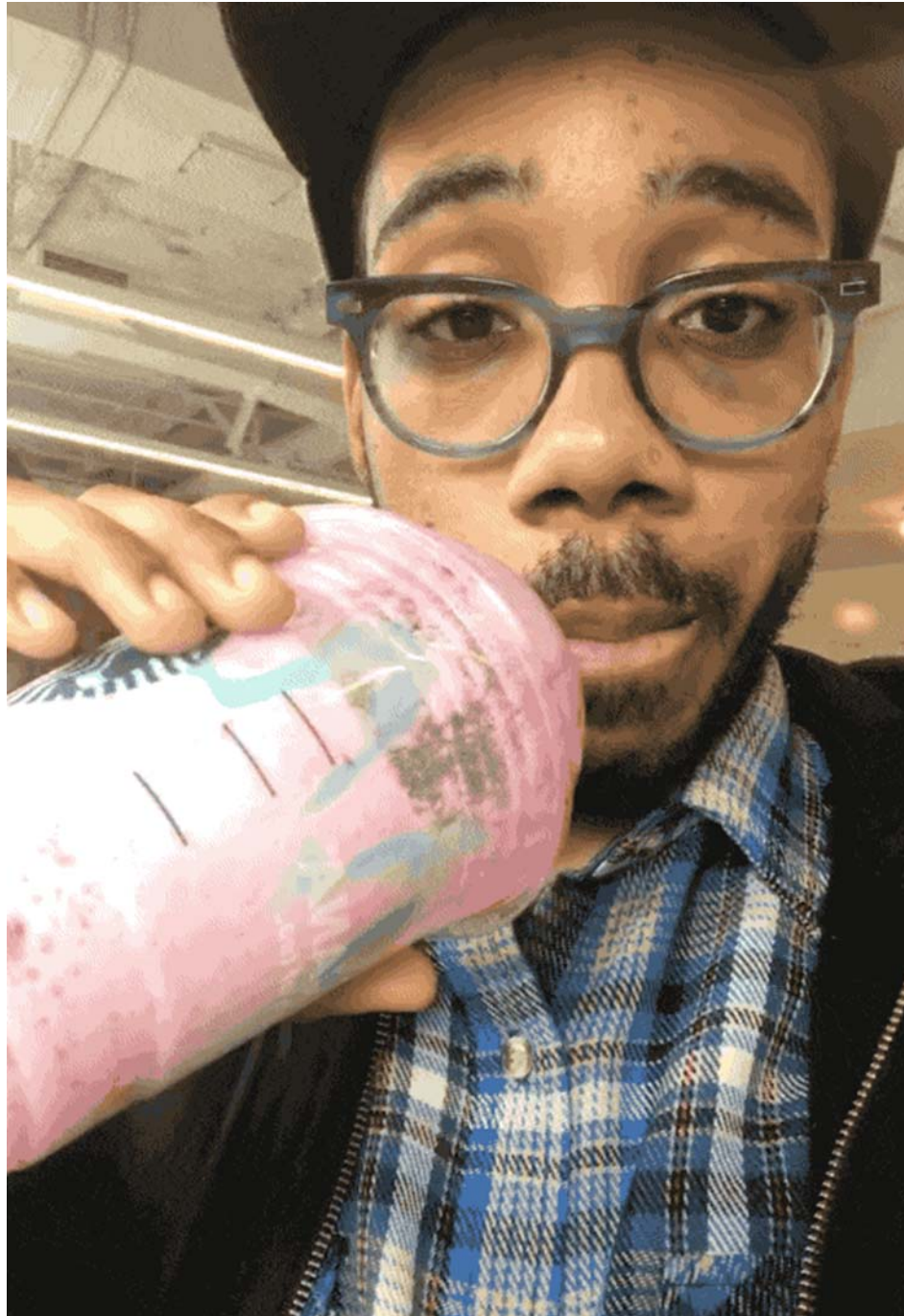








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Discussion

- Let's go back to the Boys and Girls lists we generated earlier.
- Look at the “boys” list. Are any of these things something a girl could do as well?
- Look at the “girls” list. Are any of these things something a boy could do as well?

Discussion

- If a girl does any of the things on the “boys” list, what are the consequences for her?
- If a boy does any of the things on the “girls” list, what are the consequences for him?
- Why do you think that is?
- Why is it that people are impressed by a girl who is a good athlete, but wonder whether a boy who’s a strong ballet dancer is gay?

Discussion

- We've been talking about messages that people receive about how they should act as boys and girls.
- As many of you know, there are also people who do not identify as the gender they were assigned at birth, but rather as *transgender* or *gender queer*.
- This means that even if they were called a boy or girl at birth and may have body parts that are typically associated with that gender, on the inside they feel like a different gender.

This is gender identity—how you feel about your gender when you close your eyes.

Gender Identity vs. Expression

- *Gender identity* doesn't necessarily match ***gender expression***.
- **Gender expression** is how we present ourselves to the world.
- **Gender identity** is *not* a choice.
- **Gender expression** *is* an individual choice.

Think for a Moment...

- Think for a moment about the experience of hearing these gendered messages and feeling like you were a different gender.
- If you felt on the inside like you were a girl, but everyone perceived you as a boy and pushed you to be more masculine, or...
- You felt on the inside that you were a boy but everyone perceived you to be a girl and pushed you to be more feminine, or...
- You felt like you were both a boy and girl, or somewhere in between a boy and girl.

What would that feel like?

Summary

- We've talked about some really complicated issues today!
- Keep thinking about this as you go through your life.
- The most important thing to remember is that every person has the right to express their gender in a way that makes the most sense to them.

No one has the right to make fun of someone else for how they express their gender.



Homework



- Read through the different versions of a story in the “*Martin and Tia*” homework sheet.
- Answer the questions on the back of the sheet that addresses your response to the different versions of a story as told by a girl and a boy.