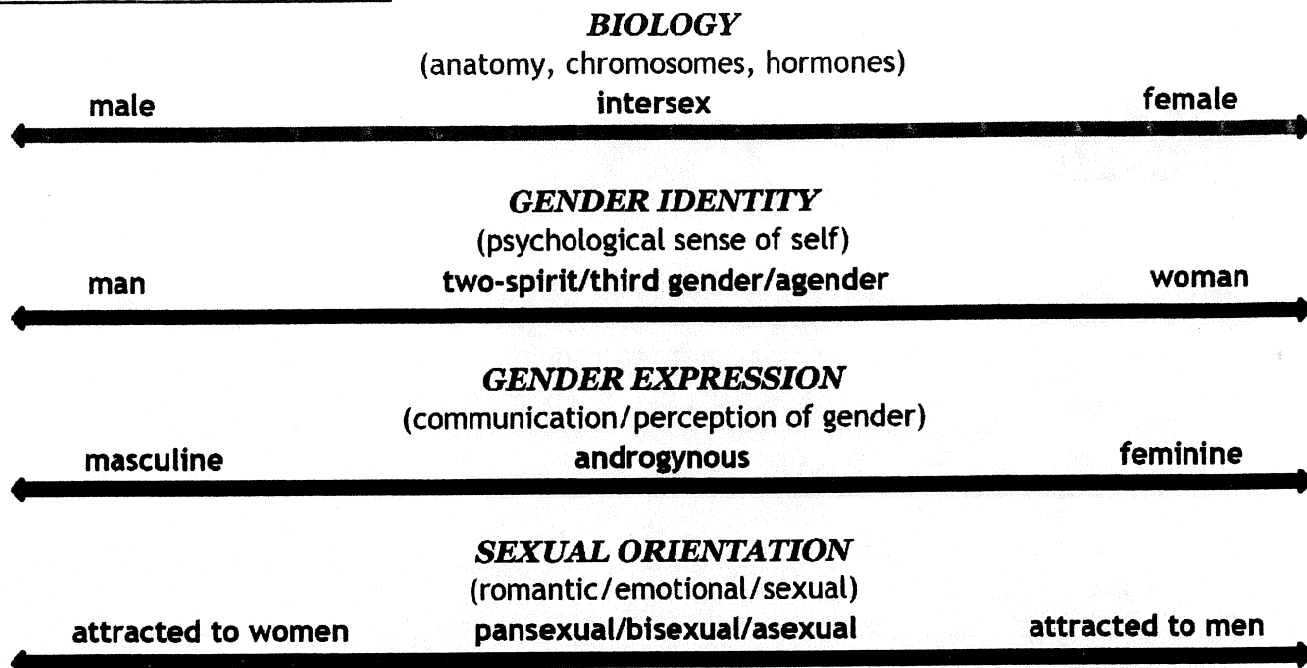


12 easy steps on the way to gender inclusiveness...

1. Avoid asking kids to line up as boys or girls or separating them by gender. Instead, use things like *"odd and even birth date,"* or *"Which would you choose: skateboards or bikes/milk or juice/dogs or cats/summer or winter/talking or listening."* Invite students to come up with choices themselves. Consider using tools like the "appointment schedule" to form pairs or groups. Always ask yourself, "Will this configuration create a gendered space?"
2. Don't use phrases such as *"boys & girls," "you guys," "ladies and gentlemen,"* and similarly gendered expressions to get kids' attention. Instead say things like *"calling all readers,"* or *"hey campers"* or *"could all of the athletes come here."* Create classroom names and then ask all of the "purple penguins" to meet at the rug.
3. Provide an opportunity for every student to identify a preferred name or pronoun. At the beginning of the year or at Back-to-School Night, invite students and parents to let you know if they have a preferred name and/or pronoun by which they wish to be referred.
4. Have visual images reinforcing gender inclusion: pictures of people who don't fit gender norms, signs that "strike out" sayings like "All Boys..." or "All Girls..." or "All Genders Welcome" door hangers.
5. When you find it necessary to reference gender, say *"Boy, girl, both or neither."* When asked why, use this as a teachable moment. Emphasize to students that your classroom recognizes and celebrates the gender diversity of all students.
6. Point out and inquire when you hear others referencing gender in a binary manner. Ask things like, *"Hmmm. That is interesting. Can you say more about that?"* or *"What makes you say that? I think of it a little differently."* Provide counter-narratives that challenge students to think more expansively about their notions of gender.
7. Look for examples in the media that reinforce gender stereotypes or binary models of gender (it won't be hard; they're everywhere!). When with others, call it out and interrogate it.
8. Be intolerant of openly hostile attitudes or references towards others EVERY TIME you hear or observe them, but also use these as teachable moments. Take the opportunity to push the individual on their statements about gender. Being punitive may stop the behavior, at least in your presence. Being instructive may stop it entirely.
9. Teach children specific language that empowers them to be proud of who they are, or to defend others who are being mistreated. *"Please respect my privacy."* *"You may think that, but I don't."* *"You may not like it, but I do."* *"Hey, they're called 'private parts' for a reason."*
10. Help students recognize "all or nothing" language by helping them understand the difference between patterns and rules. Teach them phrases like *"That may be true for some people, but not all people,"* or *"frequently, but not always,"* or *"more common and less common."* Avoid using "normal" to define any behaviors.
11. Share personal anecdotes from your own life that reflect gender inclusiveness. Even better, share examples when you were not gender inclusive in your thinking, words or behaviors, what you learned as a result, and what you will do differently next time.
12. Do the work yourself. What are your own experiences with gender? What might be some of your own biases? What assumptions do you make about the gender of others? Share reflections about your own evolving understandings about gender.

Continuum of Sex and Gender



- **Biology** includes external genitalia, internal reproductive structures, chromosomes, hormone levels, and secondary sex characteristics such as breasts, facial and body hair, and fat distribution. These characteristics are objective in that they can be seen and measured. The scale consists not just of two categories (male and female) but is actually a continuum, with most people existing somewhere near one end or the other. The space more in the middle is occupied by intersex people who have combinations of physical characteristics such as an organ that could be thought of as a small penis or a large clitoris, or an XXY chromosomal pattern.

- **Gender Identity** is how people think of themselves and identify in terms of sex (man, woman). Gender identity is a psychological quality; *unlike biological sex*, it can't be observed or measured, only reported by the individual. *Like biological sex*, it consists of more than two categories, including those who identify as a third gender, two-spirit (both), or agender (neither).

- **Gender Expression** is everything we do that communicates our sex/gender to others: clothing, hair styles, mannerism, way of speaking, roles we take in interactions, etc. This communication may be purposeful or accidental. It could also be called social gender because it relates to interactions between people. Gender expression also exists on a continuum, with feminine and masculine at either end. In between are those who express their gender androgynously (neither masculine nor feminine) as well as those who express their gender at various points along the continuum.

- **Sexual Orientation** indicates who we are emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to. The ends of this scale are labeled "attracted to women" and "attracted to men". In the mid-range is bisexuality/pansexuality; there are also people who are asexual (attracted to neither men nor women). We tend to think of most people as falling into one of the two ends of the continuum (attracted to women or attracted to men), whether they are straight or gay, with only a small minority clustering around the bisexual/pansexual middle. Most people are in fact not at one extreme of this continuum or the other, but identify somewhere in between.

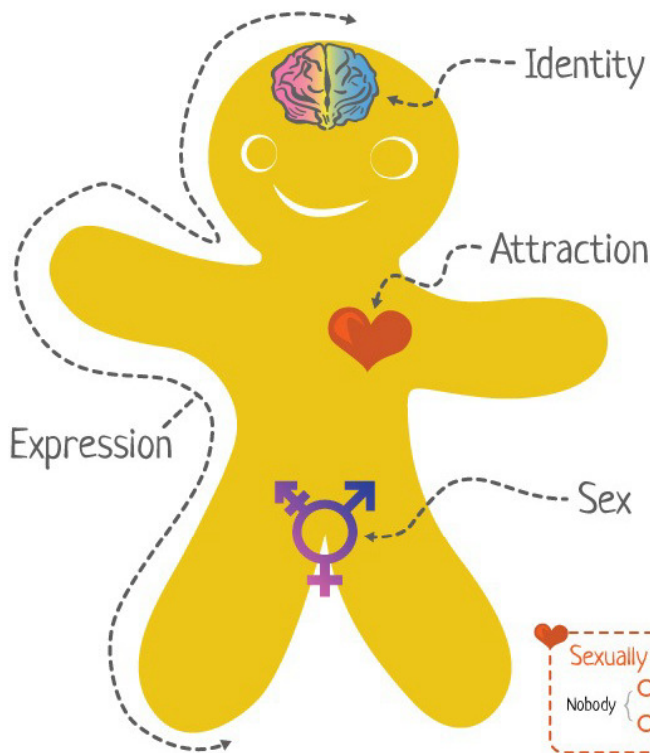
NOTE: Our cultural expectation is that men occupy the extreme left ends of all four scales (male, man, masculine, attracted to women) and women occupy the extreme right ends. For each scale, the popular notion that there are two distinct categories, with everyone falling neatly into one or the other, is a social construction. The human condition does not operate as a strict binary system. If we look at what actually exists, we see that there is much middle ground. Very few people are actually at the extreme ends, and there are people at every point along the continuum. Each continuum concept exists independently. It is important to avoid assuming that you know where a person falls on all of the continuums just because you think you know where a person falls on one or two.

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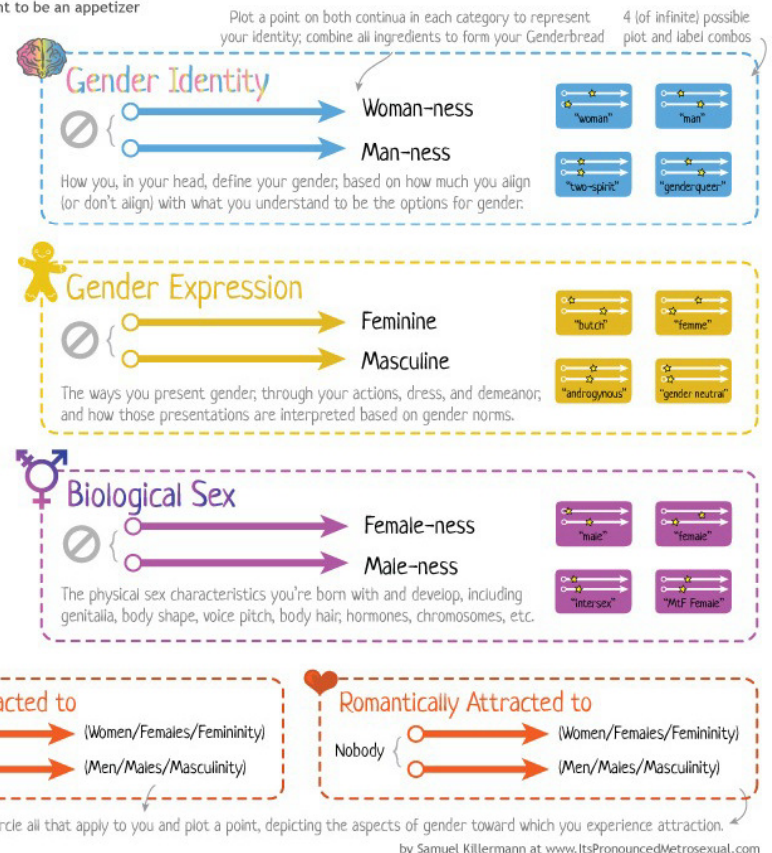
The Genderbread Person v3.3

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more. In fact, that's the idea.

by its pronounced **METRO**sexual.com



For a bigger bite, read more at <http://bit.ly/genderbread>



BREAKING THROUGH THE BINARY: GENDER EXPLAINED USING CONTINUUMS

Written by social justice comedian Sam Killermann, this is an adaptation of a chapter from his book *The Social Justice Advocate's Handbook: A Guide to Gender*

Gender is a tough subject to tackle. There are many facets to consider and many pressures at play, and we have all been conditioned in such a way that our first instinct is almost unanimously wrong. But we're going to tackle it. No. We're going to tackle the snot out of it. Coming to our aid, I would like to present to you: The Genderbread Person!

Now let's talk about it.