

Without Limits

By Sandra Moyer

Grade Level: 3 - 6



Objective(s):



To define specific jobs as traditionally feminine or masculine
To express their own occupational preferences without regard to gender
To research people with nontraditional jobs
To explore the students' preferences

Time:

2 class periods



Materials:



Library books
Newspapers
Internet
Paper
Pencil or pen
Chalkboard, flip chart, or overhead projector

Procedures:



Ask the students to solve the following riddle:
A father and his son are in a car accident. Both are rushed to the hospital and the boy is wheeled into the operating room. The surgeon looks at the boy and says "I can't operate on my own son!"
How can this be? Discuss their responses.
Answer: the surgeon is the boy's mother.

Have the students generate a list of occupations. Have each student designate each occupation as Female or Male. If someone asks if a career can belong to both, create a third column for Both. Ask the students to share their responses. Create a table to show the students opinions. Ask the students the following questions:

- Which occupations were mostly seen as female?
- Which occupations were mostly seen as male?
- Why is a job considered female?
- Why is a job considered male?
- How are these qualities gender related?
- Which of the careers listed are of interest?
- Why does this career sound interesting?
- Is this a nontraditional career?

List these on the chalkboard, flip chart, or overhead projector.

Ask the students if they know someone in a nontraditional career. Have students write reports on people with nontraditional careers using books, newspaper articles, and the Internet. Have them present their findings to the class.

Extended:

Elicit non gender specific names for occupations such as fireman, mailman, policeman, etc. May use the following job title list. Ask questions that enable students to determine how these words discourage girls or boys?

Invite people in nontraditional careers into the classroom to discuss their occupation, any difficulties related to gender that they have encountered, and how they have adjusted. Have the students write a short report on the career that sounded the most interesting to them.

The Power of Language

Biased Job Title	Unbiased Job Title
Anchorman	Newscaster
Cameraman	Camera operator, cinematographer
Cleaning lady	Housekeeper, custodian, janitor
Congressman	Legislator, Congressional representative
Draftsman	Drafter
Fireman	Firefighter
Foreman	Supervisor
Mailman	Letter carrier, Postal carrier
Metermaid	Parking monitor
Paperboy	Newspaper carrier
Policeman	Police officer
Salesman	Sales associate, salesperson
Spokesman	Spokesperson
Stewardess	Flight attendant
Weatherman	Weather forecaster, meteorologist