

Hashtag breakdown



15 mins



Objective: To challenge misconceptions around gender equality.

Resources: PowerPoint, 3x large pieces of paper with #sexism, #toxicmasculinity and #feminism written on each before the lesson begins, assortment of coloured pens, stopwatch/timer, Challenging Stereotypes animation to show at the end if you wish.

Tip: Use a carousel set up, with three grouped tables. You can run this activity with six tables if you'd prefer smaller group sizes.

Activity	PowerPoint
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create or refer to your working agreement - set this out at the beginning to agree behaviour and language expectations (see Teacher Notes). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show the three hashtags in the form of various tweets. Discuss these without giving away what the actual definition of each is - keep this pacy. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show instructions for the activity and divide the class into three groups for a carousel activity. Place one of the large pre-prepared pieces of paper (and a selection of pens) on to each of the tables. Explain you're going to set a timed task. Remind them they will need to work as a team and make sure that everyone is included. Using a stopwatch/timer to keep on track, tell the class that they now have two minutes to discuss and write their thoughts about what they think the hashtag in front of them means. Give a ten second countdown before asking students to move to the next table. Repeat, giving students two minutes to add to previous comments. Repeat the activity one final time so students can visit and contribute to each of the three tables and hashtags. Once back in their starting places ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do we think these words mean? What do these words mean to you personally? Remind them of your working agreement - respecting others but also being non-judgemental. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the formal definitions?: Inform them the correct meanings of these terms by showing the definitions of sexism, feminism, toxic masculinity. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on what they have learnt and discuss any surprises or misconceptions. If there is time, go back around the carousel allowing students to add any further thoughts to each. Remind students that if they feel uncomfortable about anything raised in this session they should talk to an adult they trust. (Parents/carers, other school staff or maybe ChildLine who are open 24/7 for everyone up to the age of 19 on chat, text or call.) 	

Definitions:

- Collins Dictionary: '**Sexism** is the belief that the members of one sex, usually women, are less intelligent or less capable than those of the other sex and need not be treated equally. It is also the behaviour which is the result of this belief.'
- Macmillan Dictionary: '**Sexism** is the belief that men and women should be treated in a different way and are suited to different types of jobs and different positions in society.'
- '**Toxic masculinity** refers to harmful behaviour and attitudes commonly associated with some men, such as the need to repress emotions during stressful situations, and to act in an aggressively dominant way.'
The Independent, 2019 (Go to: [independent.co.uk/life-style/toxic-masculinity-definition-what-is-boys-men-gillette-ad-behaviour-attitude-girls-women-a8729336.html](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/toxic-masculinity-definition-what-is-boys-men-gillette-ad-behaviour-attitude-girls-women-a8729336.html) for more information).
- Collins Dictionary: '**Feminism** is the belief and aim that women should have the same rights, power, and opportunities as men.'

Extension ideas:

- **Discussion:** How does the media/social media fuel misunderstanding, stereotypes and hatred?
- **Discussion:** How are these terms used online? What are the debates and tensions around them?
- **Exploration:** Look at other hashtags e.g. #tradwife, #MeToo and search for articles on tender masculinity. Have they come across these before? What is being discussed?
- **Activity:** Introduce the Equality Act 2010 and consider gender equality within the eyes of the law.