Fertile Question: *What part does my gender play in constructing who I am?*

Core Content Area 2: A conscious and deliberate awareness and response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC 2.1: Personal choices</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2.1.1 Gender and the roles we play</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2.1.2 Who are you choosing to be like?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2.1.3 Nurturing your spiritual self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC 2.2: Stepping forward, stepping back</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2.2.1 Building healthy relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC 2.3: Gender and religion</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2.3.1 Gender roles in the Christian traditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2.3.2 Gender roles in Islam and Judaism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2.3.3 Gendering God through music, art and prayer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Depthing Understanding: The courage to lead

Extending Knowledge: Gender in scripture
Fertile Question: *What part does my gender play in constructing who I am?*

**Core Content Area 2:** A conscious and deliberate awareness and response

**TOPIC 2.1:** Personal choices

**Lesson 2.1.1 Gender and the roles we play**

In this lesson students will explore the connections between gender, choices and roles.

**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

**For students to explore and analyse the connections between gender, choices and roles, select from the following activities:**

1. Explore the part gender plays in the roles people play.
   a. Deepen understanding about gender and the roles people play.
      i. Divide the class into pairs (of mixed gender if possible). Students will be given a pair of words to think about and discuss their meaning before striking a freeze frame pose to represent the two words. Remind students to use their whole bodies: facial expression; arms and legs, hands and fingers, and levels – high, medium and low to demonstrate the pose. As a warm up all pairs could practise by striking a freeze frame pose for the following pair of words: feminine/masculine. All pairs should freeze at the same time. The teacher might ask a few pairs to explain which person took which role and why they chose the pose they did.
      ii. Assign each pair one of the following pairs of words to discuss briefly and to demonstrate a freeze frame pose to portray: leader/follower, observer/activist, strong/weak, disconnected/connected, alive/numb, powerless/powerful, driver/passenger, aware/oblivious, scared/courageous, cold/warm, found/lost, lover/hater, hunter/gatherer, peacemaker/troublemaker. This time each pair will demonstrate to the class one at a time. Students then can respectfully ask clarifying questions about why the position was chosen. If the pairs are mixed gender, students might explain why they each took the role they did. If the pairs are same gender, the students might be asked if they would have chosen a different pose if they were of the opposite sex.
      iii. Discuss as a class, the effectiveness of this activity for deepening understanding about perceptions of these paired roles, and the part gender plays in constructing who we are, the words we use and what we do.
   b. Reflect on the roles you and your family members play in life.
      i. Thinking about how you function in your relationships, which words from the following word pairs best describes you: leader/follower, observer/activist, strong/weak, disconnected/connected, alive/numb, powerless/powerful, driver/passenger, aware/oblivious, scared/courageous, cold/warm, found/lost, lover/hater, hunter/gatherer, peacemaker/troublemaker, nurturer/protector, loud/quiet? How much do you think that your gender influences your behaviour in relationships? What are the other factors that might contribute to the way you behave? Is there one way you behave predominantly that seems to be evident in all of your relationships? How consciously or deliberately do you behave this way?
      ii. Use ToonDoo or similar to create a cartoon that illustrates the main role you choose in your relationships. An example can be found here.
Fertile Question: *What part does my gender play in constructing who I am?*

Core Content Area 2: A conscious and deliberate awareness and response

**TOPIC 2.1: Personal choices**

**Lesson 2.1.2 Who are you choosing to be like?**

In this lesson students will examine ways in which men and women have influenced their lives.

**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. Choose which profiling web tool is suitable for your students to use in Activity 1.a.iii.

**For students to explore the ways that men and women have influenced their lives, select from the following activities:**

1. Explore the ways in which your life has been influenced by the men and women in your life.
   a. Identify the ways in which your life has been influenced by others.
      i. Complete the personal inventory in [Useful Resources](#) to identify the people who currently have an influence on your life.
      ii. Analyse your inventory. What percentage of your personal characteristics and interests are influenced by people of your own gender? Who appears more than once on your list of influential people? Why might it be important to deliberately choose what/who influences your life?
      iii. Create a character profile for the most influential man or woman in your life so far. Use [Fakebook](#) or [ToonDoo](#) to create your profile.
   b. Reflect on family traditions in your life and the part that your gender has to play in your participation in those traditions.
      i. View the [YouTube clip](#) of the mother and son dancing together Gangnam style! Describe the relationship between the mother and son. In what way would you describe the relationship you have with your mother? Is it different to the way you relate to your father? Are the boys treated differently in the family to the girls? (Include your wider family groups).
      ii. Create a chart that profile the roles that each of your family members play. An example is given in [Useful Resources](#). Compare your chart with a partner. How much does gender play a part in the role you and your family members play?
      iii. Choose an activity that you do or used to do with a family member (or family friend) that you believe will have an impact on you throughout your life. (For example, an annual camping or fishing trip, birthday dinner, sporting event, theatre event, religious ceremony etc).
      iv. Write a brief description of the event including who participates and what roles people traditionally take in the event. Would your participation change or have changed if you were a different gender? Share with a partner.
      v. Conclude this lesson by reflecting on the following: In your family what messages about gender roles do you agree with? Which messages about gender do you disagree with? Why?
Fertile Question: *What part does my gender play in constructing who I am?*

**Core Content Area 2: A conscious and deliberate awareness and response?**

**TOPIC 2.1: Personal choices**

**Lesson 2.1.3 Nurturing your spiritual self**

In this lesson, students will explore the ways they might nurture their spiritual selves.

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**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

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**For students to explore ways of nurturing their spiritual selves, select from the following activities:**

1. Explore ways of understanding and nurturing one’s spiritual self.
   
   a. Review the components of spirituality as outlined in the movie clip and in previous lessons for this unit.
      
      i. Review the four points of contemporary spirituality outlined at the start of the unit: experience, conscious involvement, life integrated and positive in direction, that is, self-transcendent towards ultimate values. In other words a healthy spirituality is one that involves an ongoing process of living in a particular way in mind, body and spirit that seeks out and incorporates life giving values. This process in turn has the potential to transform people and bring about social and personal wellbeing, justice, peace and deeper connections with the earth in union with God.

      ii. Make a list of the activities and values you treasure in your life at the moment that are positive and healthy. Activities might include: sport, prayer, family activities, activities with friends, resting, work, study, playing or listening to music, surf life-saving etc. Values might include: freedom, compassion, seeking justice and peace, discernment, wisdom etc.

      iii. Make a list of the activities in your life that are less positive or unhealthy. Compare the lists. What improvements might you make that would lead to a healthier, more spiritually balanced you? Being human we all have such a list. What might lure us towards these activities? What processes might we engage in to shorten this list.

   b. Explore the importance of reflection as a tool for spiritual awareness.

      i. View the [short movie clip](#) where Brett Kirk, 2010 captain of the Sydney Swans, speaks about the importance of affirmation and meditation for the health of the internal life.

      ii. Construct an affirmation for yourself that reminds you of your strengths and to strive positively toward ultimate values in life. Consider repeating the affirmation to yourself for thirty days and keeping an affirmation diary to chart any changes that occur in your life during this time.
Fertile Question: What part does my gender play in constructing who I am?

Core Content Area 2: A conscious and deliberate awareness and response

TOPIC 2.2: Stepping forward and stepping back

Lesson 2.2.1 Building healthy relationships

In this lesson students will explore issues of relationships connected to gender.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources in this lesson.

For students to explore ideas about healthy relationships, select from the following activities:

1. Explore ideas about healthy relationships.
   a. Explore the importance of knowing what you want in a relationship.
      
      If you really want a relationship, it’s worth thinking carefully about exactly what that means. What exactly do you want in a relationship and what’s important to you?
      
      i. View the following short comedy clip about knowing what you want in a relationship.
         
         Some of the qualities of healthy relationships can be trust, honesty, affection, respect and love.
      
      ii. Write a list of the things you’re looking for in a relationship and underline the things you won’t compromise on. Write a second list of things that would be definite deal breakers. Share your lists with a partner or in a small group. What are the common themes for healthy and unhealthy relationships?
   
   b. Explore examples of healthy and unhealthy relationships.
      
      i. The following letter appeared in Girlfriend magazine recently.
         
         My girlfriend is pretty, funny, popular and is great most of the time. We have been going out for nearly two years. Sometimes when she drinks, she makes fun of me calling me a loser and sometimes she even hurts me physically when no one is looking. I love her so much but am not sure what to do. No one would believe me if I told them what she was like.
         
         Write a letter of response to this young man challenging him to think about what he wants in a relationship. (One way to think about this is to ask if you would be happy if your son or daughter was in a relationship like this).
Fertile Question: *What part does my gender play in constructing who I am?*

Core Content Area 2: A conscious and deliberate awareness and response

**TOPIC 2.3: Gender and religion**

**Lesson 2.3.1 Gender roles in the Christian traditions**

In this lesson students will investigate the leadership roles of men and women in the Catholic and Anglican Christian traditions in Australia.

**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. For students with lower literacy levels, consider choosing activity 1. b

**For students to investigate the leadership roles of men and women in the Anglican and Catholic Christian traditions, select from the following activities:**

1. Investigate the issue of women’s leadership in the Catholic Church.
      i. Read the following two excerpts from the Apostolic letter that outline the role of women in the Catholic Church and why women cannot be ordained to the priesthood.
      
      The presence and the role of women in the life and mission of the Church, although not linked to the ministerial priesthood, remain absolutely necessary and irreplaceable. As the Declaration Inter Insigniores points out, "the Church desires that Christian women should become fully aware of the greatness of their mission: today their role is of capital importance both for the renewal and humanization of society and for the rediscovery by believers of the true face of the Church." #10

      "She holds that it is not admissible to ordain women to the priesthood, for very fundamental reasons. These reasons include: the example recorded in the Sacred Scriptures of Christ choosing his Apostles only from among men; the constant practice of the Church, which has imitated Christ in choosing only men; and her living teaching authority which has consistently held that the exclusion of women from the priesthood is in accordance with God's plan for his Church." #1

      ii. Write two conclusions that you could draw from these two statements about the teachings of the Catholic Church about the role of women.

   b. Explore the roles of women in other leadership roles in the Catholic Church.
      i. Explore the various Vicariates of the [Archdiocese of Brisbane](https://www.brisbanearchdiocese.org.au). Which areas are led by women? What contribution are women making to the leadership of the Archdiocese?

2. Explore the issues of ordination in the Anglican Church in Australia.
      i. Read the article about Bishop Goldsworthy. How does the description of Bishop Goldsworthy’s spiritual journey represent the aspects of Sandra Schneider’s definition of the spiritual journey, ie personal experience, a conscious deliberate awareness and response, integration and transformation? Locate examples from the text to illustrate each aspect. Share with the class.

   b. Find out which other Christian faith traditions ordain women as leaders of their congregations.
Fertile Question: *What part does my gender play in constructing who I am?*

Core Content Area 2: A conscious and deliberate awareness and response

**TOPIC 2.3: Gender and religion**

**Lesson 2.3.2 Gender roles in Islam and Judaism**

In this lesson students will explore differences in gender roles in the World faith traditions of Islam and Judaism.

**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

**For students to explore differences in gender roles in the World faith traditions of Islam and Judaism, select from the following activities:**

1. Research gender role differences in modern Judaism.
   a. Investigate gender roles in rituals in modern Judaism.
      i. Read the three variations in Jewish prayer of three variants of Judaism, Orthodox, Conservative and Reform (progressive) Judaism found in Useful Resources. What might the words of the prayers indicate about leadership and gender in the three variants of Judaism?
      ii. Investigate the Bat Mitzvah and Bar Mitzvah ceremonies in Orthodox and Reform Jewish communities. Compare and contrast the two ceremonies, noting the similarities and differences between the roles that girls play in Bat Mitzvah compared with the roles that boys play in Bar Mitzvah in the two different variants. Useful resources include: Judaism.about, Bat Mitzvah Florida Reform Jewish community. Share findings with the class.
   b. Explore the feminist movement in Israel.

2. Explore the feminist movement in Islamic Malaysia.
   a. Investigate a gender issue for Muslims in Malaysia where 61.3% of the population practise Islam according to 2010 Census figures.
      i. Access the Malaysian Sisters in Islam website.
      ii. Choose an issue of gender for Muslims in Malaysia about which you would like to know more. For example: dress requirements for women, polygamy, child marriage etc. Use the website to collect information about your chosen issue. Record the following: a description of the issue, one thing that was surprising, one thing that you would like to share with the class that would help extend understanding about the gender issue.
      iii. Share findings with the class.
Fertile Question: What part does my gender play in constructing who I am?

Core Content Area 2: A conscious and deliberate awareness and response

TOPIC 2.3: Gender and religion

Lesson 2.3.3 Gendering God through music, art and prayer

In this lesson students will explore the way God is gendered in music, art and prayer.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

For students to explore the way that God is gendered in music, art and prayer, select from the following activities:

1. Explore the way God is gendered in music, art and prayer in the Christian tradition.
   a. Explore metaphors for God used in hymn lyrics.
      i. View the YouTube clip Women of faith as a discussion starter about the experience of singing hymns together and the lyrics of the hymns.
      ii. Examine the lyrics of three hymns from the Christian tradition. Choose one from each of the following: Catholic hymns, Hillsong lyrics and Anglican hymn lyrics. Paste the lyrics of the three songs into a word document and use the highlighting tool to highlight metaphors, similes and ideas about the nature of God. (An example is in Useful Resources). Share with a friend. How often is God referred to in a masculine or feminine way? How often are the descriptions gender neutral?
      iii. Complete a SWOT analysis to explore the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats when God is described in songs with human characteristics (including gender).
   b. Examine the words of prayers used in Catholic liturgy.
      i. Choose one of the prayers of the Catholic Mass to examine the words. Examples include the Gloria, Nicene or Apostles’ Creed, Our Father, Hosanna, etc. Copy and paste the prayer into a word document and use the highlighting tool to highlight metaphors, similes and ideas about the nature of God. Share with a friend. How often is God referred to in a masculine or feminine way? How often are the descriptions gender neutral? Does language matter?
   c. Create a gender neutral representation of God.
      i. Discuss with the class what the concept of gender neutral might mean? Is it possible to create a gender neutral presentation when one always brings to an activity who they are (including one’s gender)?
      ii. Locate an artwork, image or images that depict an aspect of God in some way. Useful websites include Google images, Google art project, The Blake prize online gallery. Choose a sacred song or hymn that further emphasises the aspect of God portrayed in the image. Choose a line from one of the prayers in the Catholic Mass that supports your theme.
      iii. Create a motivational poster using your selected image, words from the hymn as a title and words from the prayer as the extra text. An example is in Useful Resources using Bighugelabsmotivator. Be sure to acknowledge the sources of your work. Share presentations in an appropriate way.
Lesson 2.1.2
Personal inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Description or attitude to the characteristic</th>
<th>Which person or people most influence your choices?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hairstyle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dress style</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piercings or tattoos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Favourite TV shows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taste in music</td>
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<td>Film genre and/or books read</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing an instrument</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Choice of career</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ideas about success</td>
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<td>Personality type</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most important thing in life</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to be a man/women</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to treat others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitude to the environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political views</td>
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Lesson 2.1.2

Family Role Chart Example

Mrs Calhoun

Family roles: Mum, step-mum, wife, ex-wife, daughter, sister

Ways of relating at home: Caregiver, disciplinarian

Jobs at home: Lawn mower and gardener, budgeter, fashion police

Jobs and interests outside of home: Teacher, member of Pastoral Council at church, rock climber, friend.

Back to the lesson
Lesson 2.3.2

VARIATIONS IN A JEWISH PRAYER

Orthodox Prayer: “Blessed are You the God of our forefathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac and God of Jacob, the great mighty God who bestows beneficial kindness and creates all, who recalls the kindness of the patriarchs and brings a redeemer to their children’s children, for his Name’s sake, with love. O King, Helper, Saviour and Shield, Blessed are You - the Shield of Abraham."

Conservative Prayer: “Praised are you, Lord our God and God of our Ancestors, God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, great, mighty, awesome, exalted God who bestows loving kindness, Creator of all. You remember the pious deeds of our ancestors and will send a redeemer to their children’s children because of Your loving nature.”

NB: In some Conservative congregations, the matriarchs (Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel) are added as in the Progressive Prayer.

Progressive Prayer: “Blessed are You the God of our forefathers and mothers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac and God of Jacob, God of Sarah, God of Rebecca, God of Leah and God of Rachel, the great mighty God who bestows beneficial kindness and creates all, who recalls the kindness of the patriarchs and matriarchs and brings a redeemer to their children’s children, for God’s Name’s sake, with love. O Ruler, Helper, Saviour and Shield, Blessed are You - the Shield of Abraham and the helper of Sarah.”

Back to Lesson

Lesson 2.3.3

God of Day and God of Darkness
God of day and God of darkness,
now we stand before the night.
As the shadows stretch and deepen,
come and make our darkness bright.
All creation still is groaning
for the dawning of your might.
When the Sun of peace and justice
fills the earth with radiant light.
Still the nations curse the darkness,
still the rich oppress the poor.
Still the earth is bruised and broken
by the ones who still want more.
Come and wake us from our sleeping,
so our hearts cannot ignore
all your people lost and broken,
all your children at our door.
Show us Christ in one another.
Make us servants strong and true.
Give us all your love of justice,
so we do what you would do.
Let us call all people holy.
Let us pledge our lives anew.
Make us one with all the lowly.
Let us all be one in you.
You shall be the path that guides us,
you the light that in us burns.
Shining deep within all people,
yours the love that we must learn.
For our hearts shall wander restless
’til they safe to you return.
Finding you in one another,
we shall all your face discern.

For the beauty of the earth. Lyrics by Folliot S. Pierpoint.

Image: Brian Forbes, July 21, 2008 via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution.

Text from the Gloria New Translation.

Marty Haugen
USEFUL RESOURCES

Mike Baird, January 08, 2006, via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution.
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No real name given, February 24, 2008, via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution.
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