

Digital Citizenship Lesson Plan

General Topic (as defined in the Digital Literacy Framework)	DF6
Digital Citizenship f) Self-Image and Identity	
Applicable Grade Range	
6-9	
Outcome(s) to be Addressed	
The student is aware of the gender stereotypes that exist in video games, virtual worlds and elsewhere on the Internet	
Importance / Significance of Lesson	
Stereotyping surrounds us in our everyday lives. In video games, stereotypical characteristics are used appeal to a gamers sense of values or their beliefs as to what is cool or strong or tough or agile. It is important for students to be aware of the influencing role that video games can play in developing our understandings and beliefs about gender and other stereotypes and how they can be misleading.	
Duration	
30 minutes	
Overview	
Students will look at a variety of characters from different video games and try to sort them based on common traits and perceptions.	
Lesson Plan and Extension Activities	
Identify a number of characteristics that represent the following groups in society: Men, women, boys, girls, adults, kids, gamers, skaters, cool kids, geeks, tough guys, strong people, wimps, etc., etc. (you can list as many or as few as you want). Have a discussion around why each characteristic represents that stereotype and whether it could be used to represent another group in society (can girls be tough? Can kids be grown up or adults be kids?) Pull up the picture at http://www.gamergirltay.com/2012/05/most-useful-video-game-support-characters/ . Work with your students to sort each character in the picture into one or more of the stereotypical groups that you've chosen to use. Question each placement – like is Sonic a	

boy or girl? Why? Is the blue colouring of his character representative of the male gender? Does he 'look like' a boy and why? What other factors might make you think Sonic is a boy or girl? What about Master Chief? Does his elevated ranking mean that the character is a man? Other identifiable factors? Could Master Chief be a girl? Some characters are definitely a male or a female, but others could be called into question – things like length of hair, style of dress, sound of voice could confuse gender lines. What about Minecraft characters that are quite pixelated – boy or girl? Not always so easy to decide.

Divide students into groups of three or four and assign them a stereotype. Have them create a presentation depicting characters that fit into their allotted stereotypical group and find a picture to include in a slideshow or presentation (a listing of an assortment of presentation tools is included below) and ask them to include a short summary of each character and what makes them fit into their group.

As students share their work with the class, note any characters common to more than one group or characters that could fit into the group or perhaps do not belong.

Adaptations

Younger students: can look at what makes each character a 'boy' or 'girl' and explain why they chose to label them as one or the other

Older students can design their own characters and describe in detail why they chose certain characteristics to represent their characters.

Additional Resources

<http://www.sporcle.com/games/OctoKing/name-all-these-video-game-characters>

google or another search engine to find pictures of characters

Presentation tools:

www.slideshare.net

www.prezi.com

www.voicethread.com

<http://cooltoolsforschools.wikispaces.com/Presentation+Tools>

<http://blog.crazyegg.com/2013/05/28/online-presentation-tools/>

Cross-curricular Outcomes Also Addressed

Social Studies – research and collection of information

Language Arts – written work detailing and describing characteristics and why they were chosen or what they are intended to mean

Fine Arts – sketching or painting of characters

~developed by Kristin Sward, 2014