

# You, Me, Story!

## Learning Guide

*Date Published: Version 2, October 2022*



## Contents

<b>About Our Project</b> .....	3
What is Global Learning? .....	4
Guidance for Educators .....	5
<b>Terminology</b> .....	6
About Trans .....	7
What about Queer? .....	8
Other Experiences .....	8
Why words and pronouns matter? .....	9
<b>Allyship and learning</b> .....	10
<b>Global Case Studies</b> .....	12
<b>Storytelling Tips for Teachers</b> .....	14
<b>Storytelling Activities</b> .....	16
Introduction – Flight instructions .....	17
Grounding Activity .....	18
Self-Expression Game .....	18
Gender Expression .....	20
Sex Assigned at Birth and Gender Identity .....	20
Asu-Shu-Namir Video .....	21
Mind Map Interests .....	22
Johnny Barnes Video .....	23
What Are They Feeling? .....	26
Costume Character Design .....	27
Freeze Frame Poses .....	27
<b>Storytelling Skills</b> .....	28
Story Template .....	28
Description and Voice .....	29
Everyone Can Tell A Story .....	30
<b>Booklists and Resources</b> .....	31
Recommended Resources .....	32
<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	33
The Team .....	33
The Funders .....	33

## About Our Project

All forests start with seeds. The seed for You, Me, Story! was planted by Xanthe Gresham-Knight's Arts Council England (ACE) funded *Goddess Lounge*, an online in women's storytelling programme featuring international performers, environmentalists, authors, and including non-binary artists. Thanks to the LGBTQIA+ stories told by Amelia Armande and Alex Etchart and as part of that project, we started our adventure in East London and East Sussex.

Using Global Learning to underpin the learning, we have created this guide aimed at KS3 learners. The guide will allow you to develop as an educator *and* better understand the LGBTQIA+ folks in our communities. This guide shares our learning as well as the trusted work of expert organisations.



*Image by Alexander Grey*

Amelia and Alex developed their *Goddess Lounge* work to build storytelling tools and activities. By adapting the fantastical tale of Asu-Shu-Namir a non-binary, androgynous being in the Akkadian myth of Ishtar's descent into the Underworld, as told by Amelia, into a practical storytelling lesson on identity and what's important to each one of us.

We then facilitated the creation of fearless and bold characters based on what we learned while watching Alex's Johnny Barnes music video, where we go deeper in understanding the history of this queer folk song, using the video as a way of exploring character development.

As a team, we have stretched, challenged ourselves and learned loads while discovering first-hand the interest in young people to learn more about themselves using creativity to explore their identities and discover who they are.



*Pride flags in Leadenhall Market by Matt Brown*

### What is Global Learning?

Global Learning, or Global Citizenship Education, aims to empower learners to engage and assume active roles locally, nationally and/or globally, to face and resolve global challenges and ultimately to become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful and sustainable world.

It builds on a diversity of world views and indigenous wisdoms to foster the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours towards a kinder, more regenerative way of life.

Global Learning is a key element of Target 4.7 of the [Sustainable Development Goal 4](#) on Education. This is a commitment to: ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

## Guidance for Educators

Storytelling has been a means through which oppressed communities have shared their experiences and continues to be a tool and space to bring difficult stories to the fore. Storytelling is also an important tool that educators use for language development, imaginative play and participatory engagement.

Myths like Asu-Shu-Namir and folk songs like Johnny Barnes work on a symbolic level. Generations of storytellers and singers have worked on the stories until, like the process of natural selection; those stories find the perfect form to inspire infinite interpretations and retellings.

Within archetypal storytelling, stories written about powerful deities are often depicted with multiple genders. For example, Shiva's many aspects in the Hindu tradition and Hapi the ancient Egyptian Nile God. We also see characters from folk stories cross-dressing in order to access spaces that were not accessible for women.

Through this project, we have explored the use of storytelling to explore identity and self, as well as self in community and society, focusing on KS3 learners.

A 2017 Stonewall School report identified that almost half of all LGBT pupils face bullying at school for being LGBT and in their experience, most teachers failed to intervene or challenge this bullying. Three in four LGBT pupils have never learnt about gender identity and what 'trans' means at school, however;

**“In schools where pupils are taught about LGBT issues, LGBT pupils are less likely to experience homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying than in schools where pupils don't learn about LGBT issues. LGBT pupils in these schools are also more likely to report feeling safe, welcome and happy at school.”**

- School Report, Stonewall

[Please read the full report here.](#)

We will be using various LGBTQIA+ terms in this guide. Take a look at [this useful list](#) from Stonewall. Terminology adapts and changes as societies change and develop understanding, so this is a useful list to refer to for up-to-date terms.

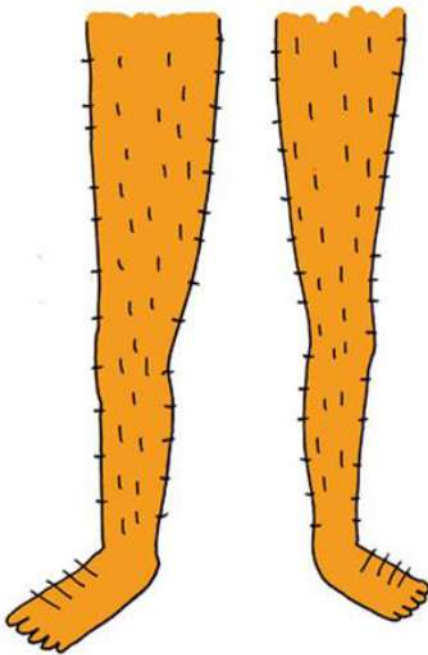
Learn more about activist and actor Ki Griffin [as they share their experience](#) as the first non-binary person on British TV and how they deal with experiences of bullying.

## Terminology

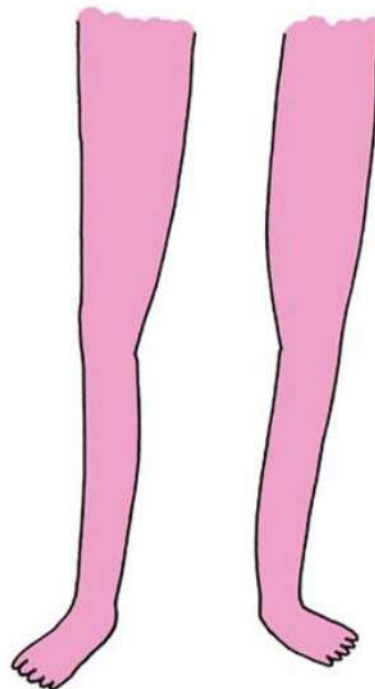
We know from songs, stories, historical artefacts, paintings, and criminal records that LGBTQIA+ people have always existed across many cultures. Although definitions aren't always perfect, the acronym LGBTQIA+ is an umbrella term for folks whose sexual orientation or gender falls outside "typical" roles. It covers a whole range of terms which express the choice of whom you love, to what body you're born with or are happiest living in.

Throughout history, people from the LGBTQIA+ community have faced judgment, exclusion, and violence. However, across the globe, this community has fought to be heard, recognised and respected through resilience and siblinghood. Stories and art have often been the mechanisms for keeping alive diverse experiences, value systems and ways of living.

WHICH IS THE  
MAN?



WHY?



"Gender Stereotyping" by sickboyy

Below we are sharing an introduction to trans and non-binary experiences, the diverse words and approaches to transness and how to build allyship in the classroom. As educators, it is important we understand how the language we use can create safety and space for self-expression for LGBTQIA+ folks.

Amelia Armande and Alex Etchart identify as non-binary and their identities connect them with the stories they share.

People who are non-binary use pronouns they/them, as a way of having space to explore around their gender, without expectations connected to 'he' or 'she'.

Other expressions similar to non-binary include gender-neutral, genderfluid and genderqueer. All of these speak to gender being something not fixed, but playful and transient.



Image by Katie Rainbow

### About Trans

Trans is hard to define because it means different things to different people experiencing it. There is no one way to be Trans.

The best framework is: *it's what's inside that counts* - how someone feels, how they want to express themselves and how they want to be treated. This gives people the space to explore themselves with as few expectations on them as possible, whether that be through gender expression, hormones, surgery or all the above.

Referring to someone as the gender they are now and the accompanying pronouns, gives people the space to explore themselves with as few expectations on them as possible. A *trans woman* is a person who feels like a woman now, a *trans man* is a person who feels like a man now.

## What about Queer?

Both *trans* and *non-binary* can fall under the umbrella of '*queer*'.

Queer was an old slur against gay people, now reclaimed to communicate something beyond definitions, boxes, and binaries. According to Stonewall, queer is a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Queerness allows people to dance on a spectrum, not limiting themselves or others by labels or past experiences. It builds spaciousness and exploration of ourselves and society.

In everyday usage, queer is often a quick way of including all LGBTQIA+ people in one word, with a particular emphasis on including people who are sometimes forgotten.

## Other Experiences

### Intersex

Stonewall defines intersex as term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female.

Intersex people may identify as male, female or non-binary. According to Amnesty International this is around 1.7% of the population, comparable to the number of people born with red hair. Intersex experience is independent of trans experience.

### Asexual

The A in LGBTQIA+ stands for Asexual, which refers to people who don't experience sexual and/or romantic desire either often (demi-sexual) or at all.

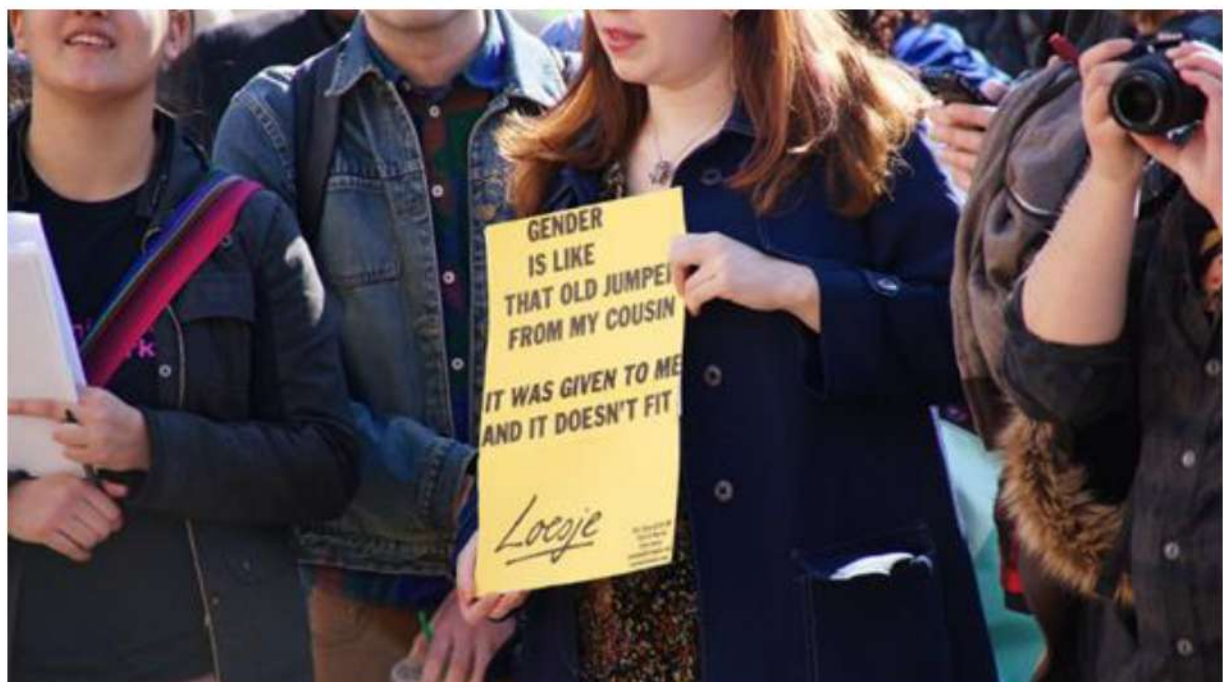
### AFAB/AMAB

You may hear advocates use AFAB (or assigned female at birth) and AMAB (or assigned male at birth). This is to avoid saying someone is 'born a girl' or 'born a boy'. Instead, it suggests we're all 'born a child', with different chromosomes/body parts.

### Cis-gendered

Cis-gendered is someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.





*Rally for Transgender Equality by Ted Eytan*

### Why words and pronouns matter?

Pronouns are one of the ways we reinforce the story of who we are to each other day to day. For many people pronouns are not important - they don't have a huge impact on how they feel perceived or how they perceive themselves.

For binary trans people and non-binary trans people pronouns can be very important.

To support non-binary people:

- When meeting someone and asking their name...
- Ask their pronouns and do your best to remember them (maybe save pronouns next to their name in your phone or on the school register)
- When introducing yourself, name your own pronouns
- They may not be important or challenging for you. But, by acknowledging yours, you're making space for others to share theirs. This supports those in the room who have pronouns that don't necessarily align with how they are perceived, and who otherwise may go misgendered by assumption.
- When sharing your pronoun, don't trivialise the experience for those who need the support of having their pronouns acknowledged and used.
- If you make a mistake and use the wrong pronoun ('mis-gender' someone), the best thing to do is correct it (e.g., "Sorry, I mean they"), then move on fairly swiftly.
- This avoids apologising in a way that takes space and focuses on someone's pronouns being different.



Image by cottonbro

## Allyship and learning

We suggest these four principles:

- *Listen to people with lived experience.* It is important to listen to people from the LGBTQIA+ community about their experiences, how they describe themselves, and what they need.
- *Don't deny experiences just because you haven't witnessed or participated in them.* When gay people talk about the violence they're experiencing at the hands of straight people, it's not a personal attack but an attempt to name a problem so we can work towards solutions.
- *Do your own research, educate yourself.* Having to prove how common prejudice and discrimination are, explain the impact, educate the world, is all extra emotional labour for those experiencing it.
- *Advocate for others.* Talk to your friends who are not LGBTQIA+ when you learn new things to take this emotional labour off the people most affected. From friendly to challenging conversations in our workplaces, social lives and families, educating, holding people to account and challenging harmful opinions all help to build a safer world for everyone.

- You can find information on how to be an ally to the LGBTQIA+ community [in this guide](#) by University of Bath.
- It is not just the responsibility of LGBTQIA+ people to strive to establish an inclusive working culture. Royal Holloway shares work guidance [in this guide](#).
- [Guide to Allyship](#), was created by Amélie Lamont to help you become a more thoughtful and effective ally.

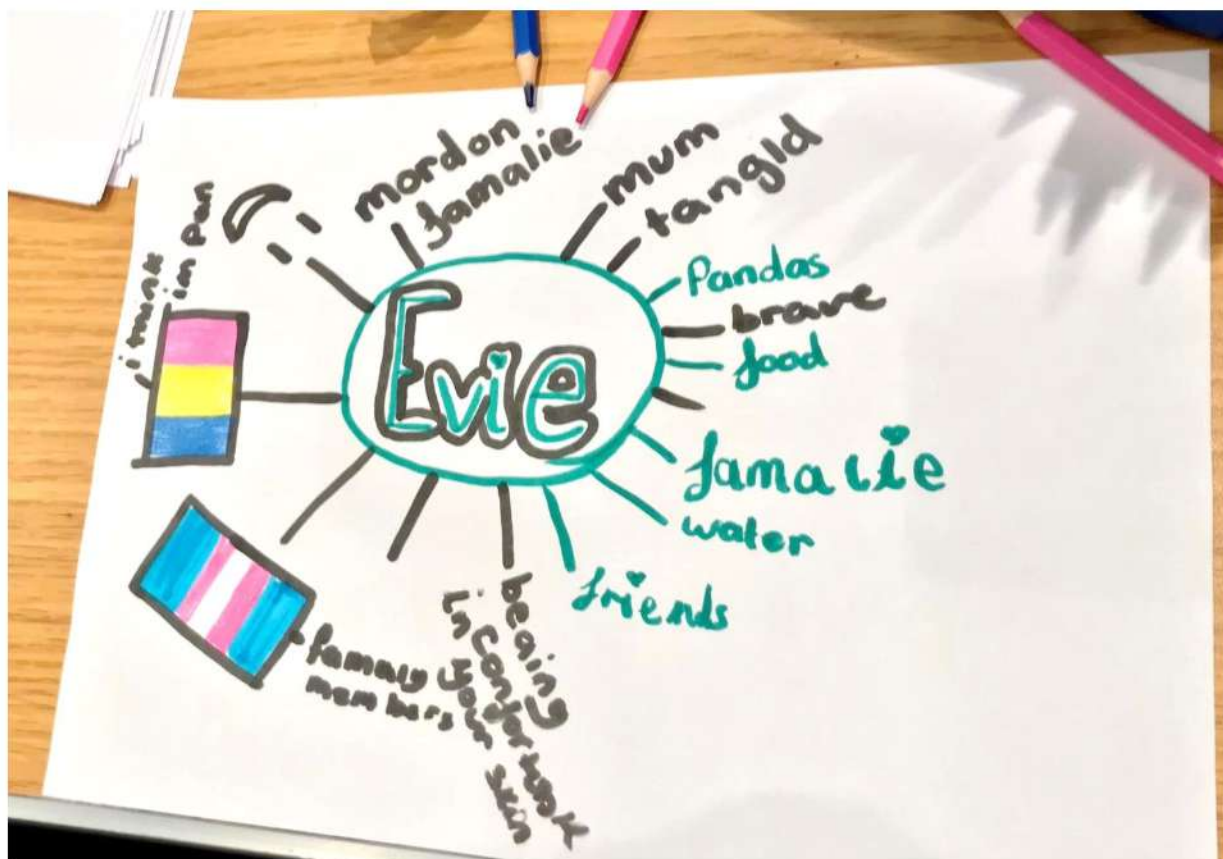


Image of a mind map by a Tower Hamlets Student, Global Learning London

Opportunities to deepen learning:

- Egtooth has a team of talented practitioners and mental health specialists tackling the challenges presented in Hastings and Rother. In 2022, for International Nonbinary Peoples Day, they shared a [“Guide to showing up for Nonbinary people”](#), kindly put together by [Alister](#) (they/them).
- Pronouns.org is a practical resource dedicated to the empowering and inclusive use of personal pronouns in the English language. [Learn more about personal pronouns and why they matter on their website.](#)
- Learn about Sociolinguist Archie Crowley's experience in their TED Talk as [they deconstruct three common myths around language](#), demonstrating language as a fluid system that naturally evolves in the direction of inclusion.
- In this [video](#) by BuzzFeed trans and non-binary folk share some statements they're tired of hearing.

## Global Case Studies

In this section, we are sharing case studies to explore with young people in order that they hear the voices of non-binary people, their relationship with gender and their culture.

Learning Objectives:

- ▲ Recognise the ways in which our beliefs about what it means to be male, female, or non-binary are shaped by cultures and societies.
- ▲ Understand that on nearly every continent, and for all of recorded history, thriving cultures have recognized, revered, and integrated more than two genders.
- ▲ Identify historical and contemporary case studies from around the world of non-binary peoples and communities
- ▲ Acknowledge discrimination and prejudice faced by non-binary peoples including how these may intersect with other aspects of identity



*Image by Mario Patinho*

Throughout history and across the world, thriving cultures have recognised, revered, and integrated people who do not identify with binary genders.

Much changed during the period of European Colonisation when Euro-centric norms were embedded, often erasing ideas and values around sexuality, gender, and diverse family structures of indigenous peoples, many of whom lived more plurally. Consequently, some indigenous LGBTQIA+ histories have been lost.

- Watch [young people from indigenous communities](#) who are taking to social media in new ways to educate people about how gender identity is viewed in their culture.
- The Hijra of South Asian countries including India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh date back to between 400 BCE and 300 CE. They are a trans community who are both venerated and stigmatised in society.:
  - [This video](#) shares the experience of some of India's transgender community.
  - This powerful [documentary](#) focuses on the Hijra community in Bangladesh.
- Many Indigenous American cultures celebrate gender-diversity and people who do not fit into the Western gender binary:
  - Being Muxe is often confused with being transgender, but it is an identity specific to the Oaxaca region and the indigenous Zapoteca (Mexico) culture. Learn more in this video from The Guardian (play until 7.40 minute).
  - The Māhū of Hawaii and Tahiti were also pre-colonial genders outside male and female. Learn more by watching "[A Place in the Middle](#)".
- Sistergirls/Brotherboys are terms used for transgender people within some Indigenous Australian or Torres Strait Islander communities and have distinct cultural identities and roles:
  - Sistergirls are Indigenous women who were assigned male at birth but live their lives as women, including taking on traditional cultural female practices.
  - Brotherboys are Indigenous men who were assigned female at birth but “choose to live their lives as male, regardless of which stage/path medically they choose”. Kai shares his story in the [film “Brotherboy”](#) by Charlotte de la Fuente.

#### Questions for discussion

- How do the people in the video feel about their gender expression and gender identity?
- What examples are given of non-binary people’s roles in society in the past and in their lives today?
- What examples are given of the prejudice and discrimination they have faced?
- What was the impact of European Colonialism on cultural perspectives on gender?
- How do people express themselves through the creative and performing arts? Which art forms?

## Storytelling Tips for Teachers

Traditional oral narrative is designed to be short, cinematic, action packed, with arresting twists and turns. Stories don't preach or lecture, they just 'are'. Their emotional impact can be utterly unquantifiable and instantly recognisable.

A Scottish proverb says that oral storytelling is 'Eye to eye, mind to mind and heart to heart'. The storyteller, and subsequently the listeners, embark on a journey with every character.

**“Storytelling doesn't belong to any one person. Stories are the commonwealth of humanity. They are our link to the past and our roadmap to the future, and we forget them at our peril.”**

- Amelia Armande

The following techniques will help you with the journey:

### Using Rhythm

Rhythm can be the beats in the syllables and sentences, in the music or poetry, but also the rhythm of the whole story. If the structure is succinct, with beginnings, peaks, and endings all in the right place, the story will be engaging and exciting.

### Using your instincts

If you need to tell a story because you feel it is important, because you love it and you are bursting to tell it, you will find its hills and valleys instinctively.

### Painting Pictures

Vivid, broad, brushstrokes are effective when describing characters e.g. 'They had shoulders like the shoulders of mighty elephants, thighs like the thighs of the camels in the desert and a waist as thin as a reed.' Good stories have the freshness of a vivid dream.

### Telling the Right Story at the Right Time

Stories of birth, death, solstice festivals such as Harvest, and Halloween told at the right time of year hold powerful magic. As does, telling stories of reconciliation when there has been conflict in the playground or telling trans stories when there is hostility in the media

**“Stories catch on the heart and embed themselves in the psyche, like a seed-burr on a dress. Over time, the seed flourishes, bears fruit, dies into multiple interpretations, and stubbornly retains its essence. What will resonate for lifetimes is listened to in minutes.”**

- Xanthe Gresham-Knight

#### A Note on Responsibility

Good storytelling inspires trust in the audience. If you tell a story well enough, you will be believed – especially by young people. Trust, in turn, requires the teller to be responsible. Never leave your audience in the dark wood. Give them hope and light at the end.

Be sure to 'walk' your audience gently out of the emotional space of the story back to day-to-day life, and be ready to discuss the themes, emotions, and wider context of the story you have just told.

Asu-Shu-Namir is one of the oldest recorded myths. It is 5,000 years old. Since that time, stories of the gods have consistently been adapted to serve and reflect the values of the ruling culture.

Not all stories work for the good. Misogynist, racist, intolerant views are pervasive in traditional material and the teller must navigate this. Examples might include vulnerable princesses, and goblins which are an anti-semitic trope.

When Amelia finds an uncomfortable bit in a story, they like to 'tell it with an asterisk'. Stepping out of the story for a moment, to explain why these views are understood to be intolerant today, before moving back into telling it. Alternatively, you can cut the uncomfortable section, or subvert it with alternative versions or playful contemporary themes, as Amelia did.

Be open to learning from your audience and if given feedback about a story that has been harmful, listen and be open to taking on new ideas. Stories have multiple meanings and tellers cannot always predict how they are being received.

## Storytelling Activities

Our team created a set of activities that introduces learners to storytellers Amelia Armande, Alex Etchart and the stories that they have found a deep connection with. They invite young people to explore their own interests, influences, fascinations, and inspirations and express these through the creative arts.

Learners will be introduced to perspectives on concepts of gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation and romantic attraction/orientation and explore perspectives from communities around the world and in an historical context.



*Character Creation by East Sussex student, image 18 Hrs*



## Introduction – Flight instructions

It is important to set up an open and supportive environment for exploring issues of identity and diversity.

The following transcript can be used to set some ground rules and invite participants to add in anything else they would see as important to create an open and supportive environment.

Depending on the space you are using and staff available, plan for ways in which participants can take a few moments if they are feeling overwhelmed or have heightened emotions.

For some young people these discussions will be very emotive and may put them in a position of vulnerability amongst their peers.

Plan for how to support participants following the activities and ensure they know of safe staff members they can speak with or where to seek further support.

- Hello passengers, welcome! These are our flight instructions for today.
- We are going to explore some thoughts and ideas today and we need to have some safety guidelines to ensure a safe flight.
- The discussions today may bring up many feelings and emotions. We will provide pauses during the flight so you can think about how you are feeling and try to describe those feelings.
- Some of the feelings that may come up might be discomfort about new or different ways of looking at things. Sometimes this can make us feel like giggling. This is OK but it's not OK to giggle at other people.
- If you feel strong emotions or are overwhelmed, please feel free to 'tap out' / move to a separate space (see what works with your location) and take some deep breaths for a few minutes.
- Discussions today may make us think about ourselves and our own identity, so it is an opportunity to explore who you are. We must also respect that others in the group can also explore who they are and we must respect that without judgement.
- Would anyone like to add anything to the safety instructions?
- Let's all enjoy the flight!

## Grounding Activity

Learning Objective:

- ▲ Recognise the many ways in which we are all unique.

This grounding activity helps participants to arrive in the space and settle into the group. It helps them to focus inward on themselves in preparation for a discussion on identity.

Sitting in a circle. Close your eyes or look down. Take some deep breaths.

Facilitator reads aloud:

- There are 7 billion people on the planet today.
- There have been 100 billion people alive throughout history, on this planet, in this universe. 1 billion is one thousand millions.
- Each and every one of those 100 billion people is unique, each individual.
- Each and every one has had different life experiences, different thoughts and ideas, different things that make them laugh, different dreams for their future.
- Even when we have many things in common with the 100 billion people who have lived on this planet throughout history – There are immense possibilities of human variation.
- Think about that. There has never been and never will be another you.
- Your time on this planet, and the experiences you have will be unique to you.
- You are not just 1 in a million, you are 1 in a 100 billion.

## Self-Expression Game

Learning Objectives:

- ▲ Recognise that our self-expression manifests in a multitude of ways.
- ▲ Recognise the value of becoming more comfortable with and connected to all types of people, including those who are different from you.

This game supports young people to reflect on their own self-expression, find out what they have in common with others in the group, explore common feelings and experiences as well as differences. Before starting, arrange chairs in a circle, or sit, in a circle, on the floor.

One way in which we are unique is how we express ourselves to the outside world

Swap seats if... (Pause for people to feedback or comment between some)

- ...you don't like getting your haircut
- ...you love getting your haircut
- ...you have pierced your ears (more than once)
- ...you have ever dyed your hair
- ...you have worn clothes that make you feel uncomfortable
- ...you have a favourite piece of clothing (how does it make you feel?)
- ...you have experienced people making a nasty comment about what you wear
- ... you have experienced people making a nasty comment about your hair
- ...you prefer being with small groups of people
- ...you love making people laugh
- ...you love getting your face painted
- ...you enjoy coming up with costumes for fancy dress parties
- ...you like to dance
- ...you like to sing
- ...you have a favourite recipe you know how to make
- ...you are part of a club or after-school group

Ask pupils to discuss their own unique style, what influences their style and any positive or negative experiences they have had related to how they express themselves:

- When do you feel your best self?
- For those comfortable to, ask them to feed back to the group.
  - When is it challenging to be your best self?
  - When do you feel pressure from others not to be yourself?

The way we express ourselves is also influenced by other people – what we are told looks good, what fashion items are available, how famous people express themselves, what is presented in the news, media, magazines, or TV.

- What has influenced you? Positively or negatively?

## Gender Expression

Learning Objective:

- ▲ Recognise that one of the ways in which we are unique is our gender expression.

Gender expression is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the way you act, dress, behave and interact.

It is important that young people develop an understanding that we all express our gender differently and in a great number of ways and that our gender expression is independent of our [gender identity](#).

- What do we understand by the term's masculine and feminine? These might be at opposite ends of a spectrum.
- Where we see our gender expression might be along a continuum? This may also change over the course of our lifetime.
- Our gender expression is independent of our gender identity and sexual attraction/orientation.

Pupils pick an [example card](#) which has a description of someone's gender expression or gender identity.

Discuss in pairs or small groups:

- What questions does it bring up for you?
- What feelings do they express, or might they have?

**“In Indian mythology, there are loads of gods, goddesses and otherworldly beings that are depicted as trans, and they transform from one gender to another and back over time. That is kind of how I feel on a daily basis.”**

- [Krishna Isthia](#), performance artist

## Sex Assigned at Birth and Gender Identity

Watch this video to learn about the [difference between sex assigned at birth and gender identity](#).



Image by Amelia Armande

### Asu-Shu-Namir Video

#### Learning Objectives:

- ▲ Engage with storytelling and learn from professional storytellers.
- ▲ Recognise the ways in which our beliefs about what it means to be male, female, or non-binary are shaped by cultures and societies.
- ▲ Understand that on nearly every continent, and for all of recorded history, thriving cultures have recognized, revered, and integrated more than two genders.

One of the example cards discussed gives an example of how gender identities are shaped in different ways in different cultures and societies and throughout history.

- We are going to introduce participants to a storyteller who has been inspired by the Mesopotamian story of Asu-Shu-Namir.
- Asu-Shu-Namir (sometimes written as Asushunamir) is a being in the Akkadian myth of Ishtar's descent into the Underworld.
- Asu-Shu-Namir means 'one whose face is radiant'
- Mesopotamia is a historical region of southwest Asia. [Here's a map.](#)
- This story is thousands of years old.

Amelia's Story (Please read before watching the video)

*"This story was inspiring and important to me because it comes from some of the oldest recorded writing known to humanity - this story was found recorded on actual stone tablets from ancient Babylon!*

*I got really excited by this, because Asu-Shu-Namir is non-binary, and so am I.*

*Sometimes you get people trying to say that non-binary and trans identities are a new, modern thing, but this story shows that non-binary genders have been around as far back as our earliest records of written language. And not even just as small parts or inconsequential characters - Asu-Shu-Namir is a literal deity who saves a goddess from the underworld when no one else could! They were honoured in religious ceremonies, and we know from historical records that intersex and non-binary people often had important roles as religious leaders.*

*Finding this story helped me feel connected to non-binary people throughout history - I realised that being non-binary has always been a part of the human experience".*

Amelia Armande

[Click here to watch Amelia Armande's Asu-Shu-Namir video](#)

### Questions and Discussion

- How did the storyteller explore gender expression and identity?
- How do the characters express masculinity and femininity?
- How is Asu-Shu-Namir's gender identity explored?
- What different performance styles are used in the video? Why do you think Amelia chose to use them?
- What about this video do you think makes it a 'storytelling' piece, rather than a traditional film?
- In this video, all of the characters are played by Amelia, with Asu-Shu-Namir also represented by two other performers.
  - How does Amelia make the characters different from one another?
  - Why do you think Asu-Shu-Namir is represented by multiple performers?
  - What does this tell us about the role of performers in relation to gender?

### Mind Map Interests

#### Learning Objectives:

- ▲ Recognise the many ways in which we are all unique.
- ▲ Identify the benefits of diversity to individuals, schools, and the broader community.
- ▲ Recognise the value of becoming more comfortable with and connected to all types of people, including those who are different from you.

Part of our unique identities is our interests and passions. Amelia was deeply inspired by the story of Asu-Shu-Namir. [Please click here to see Amelia's mood board for creating Innana.](#)

What inspires and fascinates you?

Using paper and pens, ask participants to mind map the interests that reflect who they are. You can arrange participants to work and discuss in small groups but work on their mind map individually ([Click here for a samples of mind maps](#)).

Those who are comfortable to share, share with the wider group.

Questions for discussion

- Are some of these interests you have always had or are some new to you?
- What would they have been two years ago? What might they be in five years' time?
- Have any of your interests been influenced by others? Friends, family or media/famous people?
- Highlight your top 3.

### Johnny Barnes Video

Learning Objective:

- ▲ Identify the distinctions between sex registered at birth, gender identity, gender expression and attraction/orientation.

Sexual orientation<sup>1</sup> is a person's physical, romantic, emotional, aesthetic, and/or other form of attraction to others.

In Western cultures, gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Trans people can be straight, bisexual, lesbian, gay, asexual, pansexual, queer, etc. just like anyone else.

For example, a trans woman who is exclusively attracted to other women would often identify as lesbian.

You can learn more about gender identity, gender expression/presentation, as well as sex assigned at birth, this the [Gender Unicorn](#), a comprehensive infographic and teaching tool about gender.

---

<sup>1</sup> Definitions in this section are from [TSER](#)



Image by Alex Etchart

Alongside our sexual orientation we also have romantic attraction/orientation.

- For most people these are the same (you experience both sexual and romantic feelings to the same gender or genders).
- For some people they are different - for example:

A person could be asexual (experience little or no sexual attraction) and could also be heteroromantic (experience romantic attraction to the opposite gender).

### Alex's Story

The story that Alex Etchart was inspired and fascinated by was the folk song Johnny Barnes passed down by Irish traveller Sally Connors to renowned folk singer and song collector Sam Lee.

The stories we pass down keep our culture, history and ancestors alive. Folk music is part of an oral tradition that existed a long time before classical music notation with written music notes on a page. Mothers would teach songs to their children, who would in turn teach their children, and over time the songs would adapt and change and adopt new stories and melodies.

*"I wanted to teach my choir a folk song that reflected my experience of loving men. However, we have lost many folk songs about this because they were censored by classical musicians transcribing folk songs, because in UK and Irish history men who love other men have been shunned. It was not seen as a part of our traditions that should be remembered".*



*“In this song, a rich Lord finds out that his daughter has fallen in love with a common sailor. He is enraged because he wants his daughter to marry into nobility. He orders the hanging of the young sailor, but when his soldiers bring young Johnny Barnes before the Lord, Johnny is so beautiful, the Lord falls in love, spares Johnny’s life, and goes on his own journey of self-discovery”.*

The line that most fascinates Alex in this song is *“If I were a woman, as I am a man, it’s in love with him I’d go.”* Because it shows someone, hundreds of years ago, imagined themselves in a different body, a different gender, in order to love the person that they wanted to love. To Alex, it proves that trans experience is as old as time”.

Please note that this video contains flashing images:

[Click here to watch Alex Etchart’s Johnny Barnes video](#)

Password: youmestory

Questions for discussion:

- What happened in this story?
- How does the film make connections between Alex and the Lord?
- Who do you think are the faceless characters? What might they represent?
- Who do you think are the elaborately costumed Characters? Why does the Lord join them? What might they represent? (Hint: what are the lyrics in that section?)
- How does the music change throughout the Johnny Barnes video? What effect does it have?
- Both Alex and Amelia feature in their videos - what is similar about their performance? What is different?
- How can we all use creative expression for exploring ourselves and our identities?
- What examples are there today of a father banning his daughter from loving someone? For what reasons?
- There's a saying, "You fear most in others what you fear in yourself". How does that relate to this story?



Image by Alex Etchart

### What Are They Feeling?

Learning Objectives:

- ▲ Recognise the many ways in which we are all unique.
- ▲ Identify the benefits of diversity to individuals, schools, and the broader community.
- ▲ Recognise the value of becoming more comfortable with and connected to all types of people, including those who are different from you.

Using the image above ([hi-res available here](#)), ask participants to think about how the following people are feeling:

- The Lord,
- The faceless creatures,
- The director,
- A young person watching the video, who doesn't always feel like they fit in,
- A person who identifies as non-binary.

## Costume Character Design

Ask participants to look back at the notes made in their mind map. If they could create a character that combined their top three choices, what might they look like?

[Here are some samples](#) and notes from the costume designers on the Johnny Barnes film.

Ask participants to take some time to draw or write a description of their character, thinking about:

- What shapes, colours and symbols could you use to represent your interests?
- What kind of creature is your character? Human? Superhuman? Animal? Something else?
- Is gender an important part of your character's expression, or not so important?
- What does your character wear? Are their clothes practical? What are they made of?
- Inspired by your interests, what special skills or powers could your character have?



Image by Alex Etchart

## Freeze Frame Poses

Learning Objectives:

- ▲ Recognise the many ways in which we are all unique.
- ▲ Identify the benefits of diversity to individuals, schools, and the broader community.

Ask participants to get into small groups and take a few minutes to introduce their characters to the rest of the group:

- In what ways are your characters similar?
- In what ways are they different?
- If your group of characters were working together as a team, how could they help each other?
- As a group, come up with a freeze frame pose representing how your characters could work together as a team. See if you can find poses to represent your characters' personality, skills or powers.
- How can you bring an aspect of your character into your everyday life?

## Storytelling Skills

Learning Objectives:

- ▲ Participate in storytelling games.
- ▲ Recognise the value of becoming more comfortable with and connected to all types of people, including those who are different from you.
- ▲ Introduce participants to the story template and in pairs or small groups, build on the characters introduced in the previous activity to put together the bones of a story.



Image by Amelia Armande

### Story Template

This classic storytelling template was adapted by storyteller Amelia Armande.

1. This story is about... (introduce your character)
2. More than anything they wanted... (describe something your character wants)
3. But they couldn't have it because... (describe the character's obstacle)
4. First they tried... (describe a way they tried to overcome the obstacle)
5. But it didn't work because... (explain how that failed)
6. Then they tried...
7. But that didn't work because...
8. Finally they tried...
9. And that worked because...
10. And in the end... (describe how life was different now your character got what they wanted)

This isn't the ONLY way to tell a story - just one that is used a lot in folk and fairy tales. [Click here to access the template, so your learners can practice.](#)

## Description and Voice

### Description

Explain to participants that when you are telling a story, you are using your words to create images and sounds in peoples' heads, and so it's good to practice describing things.

- What *describing words (adjectives)* could you use to help people visualise your character? Are they *Speedy? Ancient? Hairy?*
- You can use these to describe how your character looks and how your character behaves - perhaps they are *stern* or *kind* or *mischievous*.
- What *similes* can you think of to describe your character? A simile is where you compare your character to something else: "As quick as the wind", or "As strong as a bear".
- Sometimes you can use similes to surprise people, make them think or make them laugh.
- How does it feel to imagine a character "As speedy as a snail" or "As sad as a sunny day"? Can you think of any surprising similes for your characters?



Image by Amelia Armande

## Voice

Explain to participants that when you are telling a story, your characters will speak, and you can change your voice to give your audience clues about your character, as well as make them sound different from other characters to make your storytelling clearer.

- How does your character speak? Quickly or slowly? Loud or soft? High or low?
- What language does your character speak in?
- How could you use your voice to show that your character was angry? Happy? Sad? Scared?

## Everyone Can Tell A Story

- Working in small groups, tell the factual story of how they got to school today in one and a half minutes.
- Ask participants to tell the same story again, this time practicing with 'Description and Voice' and adding sensory detail to one key moment e.g. making tea:
  - 'It was scalding hot, sweet and smelled of cinnamon and cardamom.
  - It burnt my lip and made my blood rush...'

The one sensory moment will take up time, meaning that the rest of the action will have to be summarised so that the story of getting up and getting to school still only lasts 90 seconds.

- Tell the same story one more time, but with a magical element - a massive lie embellished with sensory detail:
  - On the tube I met Elvis Presley who returned from the dead.
  - He looked deep into my eyes as he held the tube rail with one hand and The Big Issue with the other.
  - His lip trembled, his knee jiggled and as he started to croon, 'You ain't nothing but a hound dog,'
  - the scent of cologne and sweat caused me to throw up...

Once more the lie must be incorporated into your narrative, which must last 90 seconds.

- Feedback session with the other members of the group.

## Booklists and Resources



*book rainbow by estherase*

The You, Me, Story! team has compiled a selection of book lists recommended by trusted organisations that are committed to equality. It is so important that our young people can see themselves in stories, no matter how they are told.

- As part of our project, Tower Hamlets School Library Service created this resource list for teachers around Transgender and non-binary issues. Resources in the list are for primary and secondary schools. [Please find it here.](#)
- Stonewall is a team of bold, passionate people fighting for the freedom, equity and potential of LGBTQIA+ people everywhere. They have created a [list LGBTQIA+ inclusive books for children and young people.](#)
- LGBTQ Reads is a site dedicated to promoting [curated LGBTQIA+ literature for all ages](#), run by author and blogger Dahlia Adler.
- Book Trust is the UK's largest reading charity, they reach millions of children every year with books, resources and support to get every child reading, regularly and by choice. They have lists exploring [picture books that celebrate LGBTQIA+ families](#) (EY-KS2), [Teen and YA books with LGBTQIA+ characters](#) (KS2-KS3), [Middle-grade books with LGBTQIA+ characters](#) (KS2-KS3) and [Transgender and non-binary characters](#) (EY-KS3).
- Goodreads is the world's largest site for readers and book recommendations. Their mission is to help people find and share books they love. Here's their [list of Graphic Novels Featuring LGBTQIA+ Themes.](#)

## Recommended Resources

Our team has collated useful resources for educators to learn about the LGBTQIA+ community and the issues they face, as well as resources to use in the classroom [in this padlet](#).

We would like to highlight a couple:

### Adult Learning

- This school [toolkit](#) for Trans inclusion will help you support trans children and young people in educational settings.
- Allsorts of Visibility: [Celebrating LGBT+ People of Colour](#) is a series of resources intended to celebrate and showcase LGBT+ people of colour.

### For the Classroom

- [The Gender Unicorn](#), created by TSER, accurately portrays the distinction between gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex assigned at birth, and sexuality. TSER wanted to recognize genders outside of the western gender binary.
- These [tried and tested resources from Historic England](#) can be used to teach about LGBTQIA+ through history, drama and PSHE. They allow young people to explore the issues of sexuality, identity, the law and its place in British history.

### Support for Young People

- As our project started in East Sussex and East London, here are our local organisations:
  - East Sussex, [All Sorts Youth Project](#)
  - East London, [Step Forward](#)
- Mind has collated a comprehensive list of organisations that provide mental health support for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, or questioning. [You can find it here](#).
- Gendered Intelligence is an organisation that works to increase understandings of gender diversity and improve the lives of trans people. [Click here for some useful information](#).



## Acknowledgments

### The Team

This project was created by [18 Hours](#) and [Global Learning London](#). The following folks are part of the YMS team: Faaria Ahmad, [Amelia Armande](#), Mandy Curtis, Triny Diaz, Ruth England, [Alex Etchart](#), [Xanthe Gresham-Knight](#) and Fatema Zehra.

18 Hours and Global Learning London are members of the [Consortium of Development Education Centres](#), which brings together independent, not-for-profit organisations that support and deliver global learning in schools and communities across England.

[The Tower Hamlets School Library Services](#) is an organisation that feeds us with stories, books, public service, curiosity and wonder.



### The Funders

You, Me, Story! Was funded by [Arts Council England](#) in 2021. We are extremely grateful to them for allowing us to learn together while partnering with generous, talented and imaginative storytellers and educators.

With special thanks to the invaluable support from Alia Alzougbi and our partners at [Rich Mix](#) and [Shubbak](#).



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



As part of this resource, we have included links and/or content from:

A Place in the Middle	Nonbinary.miraheze.org
All Sorts of Visibility	Pexels
All Sorts Youth Project	Pixabay
amaze.org	Pronouns.org
Amélie Lamont	Public Broadcasting Service
Amnesty International	Refinery 29
Beyond Blue Official	Royal College of Nursing
Booktrust	Royal Holloway University
Brighton & Hove City Council	Sam Lee
British Broadcasting Company	ScreenCraft
BuzzFeed India	Step Forward
Cambridge University Press	Stonewall
Channel 4	Survival International
Charlotte de la Fuente	TED Conferences
creativecommons.org	The Children's Society
East End Women's Museum	The Conversation
Educate & Celebrate	The Guardian
Eggtooth	The Independent
Gay Times	The Proud Trust
Gendered Intelligence	The Victorian Multicultural Commission
Goodreads.com	Trans Student Educational Resources
guidetoallyship.com	Twinkl
Harvard Divinity School	United Nations
Health.com	University of Bath
Historic England	University of California Irvine
JSTOR Daily	Warwick International Higher Education
LGBTQ Reads	Academy
Marlborough St Mary's CE PS	Wikimedia
Mind	Wikipedia
Minus18	WithRespect
National Geographic	worldpress.org

All images included are from [creativecommons.org](https://creativecommons.org), [pexels.com](https://pexels.com), and [pixabay.com](https://pixabay.com); all, free for non-commercial use under [licence CC BYNC-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/) or [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) unless otherwise stated.

This means that you are free to copy, distribute, and display portions or the full version of text and images, provided you give explicit credits to Global Learning London and the organisations mentioned in the resource.

However, if you intend to distribute a modified version of our material, you must ask us for permission first and distribute the resulting work only under the author's consent.

