



Activity N°4 : Fitting the frame

Awareness-raising
Finland

Key words: *Gender / Stereotypes / Image*



Target groups:

- Journalism students
- Professional journalists
- Other media professionals
- Media literacy trainers

Duration: 60 minutes

Context: This exercise, which is inspired by "Frames¹", seeks to explore gender diversity. How are genders expressed? What are society's norms? Who fits into the frames?

Objectives:

- To expose gender stereotypes
- To discuss gender norms in society

Equipment:

- Posters/flip charts
- Marker pens

Media resources: *(required for the activity if available)* Images of people who are as different from one another as possible, with only one person in each image. Photos from newspapers and magazines may be used.

¹ Break the Norm! Methods for studying norms in general and the heteronorm in particular by RFSL Ungdom, Sweden

Organisation:

Class configuration	Time in minutes	Sequence of activities
GR	10'	<p>Brainstorming: Have two large blank posters on display. Start the activity by writing "Masculine" on one and "Feminine" on the other. Ask the participants what the terms "masculinity" and "femininity" suggest in our society (and not according to their own criteria). Write their words or short phrases on the respective sheets, or "frames".</p>
PRS	10'	<p>Reflection: In pairs, examine the contents of the frames:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What comes to mind when you read these words? - Where do these expectations about men's and women's behaviour come from? - Are there any differences between what is expected in sport and in society in general? - Is it possible fully to meet all these criteria?
GR	5'	<p>Who fits into the frames? Give each participant an image. Ask them to place their image somewhere on the frame, either on the inside or the outside. The choice of where the image is placed must be made bearing in mind the extent to which the person represented conforms or not to the features described in each frame.</p>
GR	15'	<p>Consider the results, asking questions about a few: why is one person in the centre of a frame, another on the edge, another outside it?</p>
GR	15'	<p>Discuss the possible consequences of not fitting into the "frames", which may take the form of jokes, comments, strange looks, harassment or violence. Do not hesitate to steer the discussions towards other gender-related issues. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why are most of the attributes listed in the masculine frame considered to be more valuable than those in the feminine frame? - Why are masculine women often perceived more positively than feminine men?

Variant: The activity could also focus on gender in the specific context of sport:

- During the brainstorming, use the words "sportsman" and "sportswoman" instead of "masculine" and "feminine".
- Use images from the sports pages of newspapers.

In order to focus on critical analysis of the media, the activity could be extended by observing the images taken from the sports pages.

An analysis of gender diversity could be initiated using the following questions:

- Is the gender diversity represented in these pages as broad as in other sections of the newspaper?
- Do these images reflect the diversity of society in general, or one specific to sport?

The analysis could also compare the types of images shown of women and of men.

Suggested follow-up activities:

- **Stereotypes and representations** Unit: Activity n° 10. Writing about and overcoming prejudice
- **Images** Unit: Activity n°7. Where are the women?
- **Gender** Unit: Activity n°7. Where are the women?

