

Book Title:

Information is accurate: Y/N

Author:

Writing style matches intended audience: Y/N

	Exclusionary	Insufficient mention	Addressed	Exemplified
--	--------------	----------------------	-----------	-------------

Healthy Relationships

Consent: asking				
Consent: giving				
Consent: accepting no				
Power				
Types of relationships				
Balancing different relationships				
Bystander intervention				
Sexual Violence/Abuse resources				

Gender

Traditional roles				
Sexual Scripts				
Trans*				

Sex Education

Intersex				
Disability				
Reproduction options				
STI prevention				
Phallic pleasure				
Clitoral pleasure				

Sexuality

LGBQA+				
Masturbation				
Monogamy, polyamory, casual dating				
Pornography				
Sexting				

Written Review

Glossary & Explanation of Terms

Exclusionary

Topic not included, or discriminatory description

Addressed

Includes accurate information well incorporated into the text

Insufficient Mention

Definition given, but topic not well incorporated into the text

Exemplified

Significant time addressing topic, goes above and beyond

Goals of this Rubric:

- Help review books and resources for their content and inclusion, to determine their individual rigor.
- Help audit the books and resources available in a classroom or home, to ensure that collectively all important topics are addressed.
- To provide a starting point for developing a resource library focused on comprehensive sex ed and healthy relationship education.

Other Factors to Consider:

- The best resources are going to teach the skill of *how* to make a healthy decision over *what* decision is the right one to make.
- Make sure to review illustrations in addition to written content.
- There is sometimes benefit to resources that focus specifically on a topic or two. However, it is preferred that books at least mention the ways in which they are limited.

Limitations:

- This is not an enumerated list. Please add to the rubric as you see fit.

Healthy Relationships

Teaching positive behavior is an essential part of sexual violence prevention. Therefore, we highly encourage all resources to teach skills that center on developing healthy relationships. These relationships include those between family, friends, crushes, dating partners, and sexual intimacy partners.

Consent: Open communication is an essential part of all relationships. Consent plays out in three main ways (1) initiating or asking, (2) giving or responding, and (3) accepting verbal and nonverbal refusal. Modeling behavior is a great teaching tool!

Power: One way to ensure that consent can happen freely and authentically is to help each partner analyze their social power. This minimizes pressure and coercion in relationships.

Types of relationships: Does the book talk about crushes, friendship, love between family members, loving a favorite pet? These are just as important as sexual, intimate, and/or romantic relationships.

Balancing friends/family: No one relationship should ever eclipse others. Resources that promote a healthy balance between spending time with family, friends, and romantic/sexual partner are ideal! Look also for resources that address jealousy.

Bystander intervention: Saying or doing something when we witness sexual harassment or misconduct is important. Ideally, we are creating a world where sexual violence does not happen, but until then, it is also important to know how to make your move.

Sexual violence/abuse resources: Many books like to focus on identifying physical, emotional, and spiritual abuse and knowing what to do once abuse has occurred. This is important information to have. However, if you are looking for violence prevention material, this content should not be the sole focus of any resource.

Gender

Gender is the social and cultural aspects that are often assumed based on someone's sex assigned at birth. However, what it means to be a woman, man, nonbinary, or trans is different to each person who identifies that way.

Gender is an important topic to address because it impacts the way we move through society and the ways in which we negotiate relationships.

Traditional roles: U.S. society places assumptions and expectations onto people with particular gender identities. For instance: boys don't cry; women like cooking. When gender roles are strict, they have a higher chance of being harmful. They limit the lives of those around us, and they actually enhance the likelihood of sexual violence happening in our community.

Good resources will highlight the way traditional roles don't always match up with people's lives, and will demonstrate that it is okay to step outside of those norms.

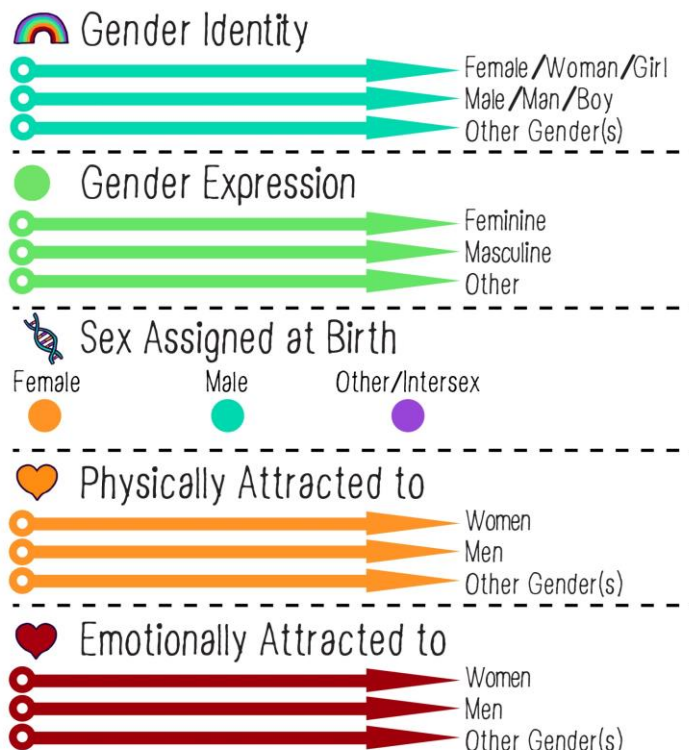
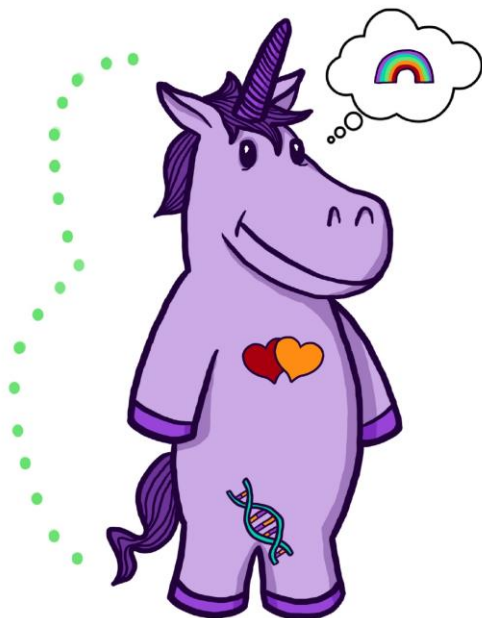
Sexual scripts: Gender is acted upon during sexual intimacy. Some examples include the assumptions that men always want sex and women say no but they mean yes. Not only are these heteronormative and binary, but sexual scripts work against affirmative consent and healthy sexuality. Healthy sexuality requires breaking down the expectations we have about intimacy, and ensuring all partners are equal participants.

Trans*: This is a broad term to identify folks who identify or experience gender identity in a way that may not match their sex assigned at birth. This includes folks who are nonbinary or genderqueer.

Most body part books describe cisgender bodies, in that they label people who have penises as boys and people with vaginas as girls. That would make those resources exclusionary.

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

Sex Education

This is all about the nuts and bolts. Most books you find will cover how babies are made. While that can be important information, there is so much more to cover!

The “sex education” portion of this rubric is meant to cover the basic how stuff works. “Sexuality,” which follows, covers sensuality and more about how to get it on!

Intersex: Not all bodies have clear reproductive organs. Sometimes there is no visual difference, and sometimes there is. Being intersex can impact someone’s ability to create a pregnancy. If a book is talking about penises and vaginas, it should address being intersex.

Disability: Folks with physical, cognitive, and intellectual disabilities can still be sexual people. Depending on the disability, intimacy may look different than it does for an able bodied person, or it may not. Similarly, attaining effective consent may be different, or it may not.

Reproduction options: Not all types of intimacy lead to a chance of reproduction. When describing sex that could create a fetus, it is important for there to be information about preventative measures (like condoms, hormonal birth control, etc.). The best books also address the outcomes of a pregnancy, including: abortion, miscarriage, carrying to term, parenting, and adoption.

STI prevention: Resources should provide information on preventative measures. Also look for information about testing and treatment, partner notification, and the difference between viral and bacterial infections.

Pleasure: Reproduction is not the only reason people have sex. Pleasure can include general feel-good feelings and orgasm - phallic and clitoral! Sex is supposed to feel good for all the people involved.

Sexuality

Sexual intimacy is more than traditional intercourse. So, when discussing sexual acts, good resources should mention the different ways that sexy time can happen.

LGBQA+: Sexual orientation has a wide and variant spectrum of identities. The labels used are always evolving. So if you ever have a question about a particular term, it is best to look it up on a trusted website or speak to an educator at a local LGBTQ+ organization.

To name a few, lesbian and gay refer to being attracted to the same sex and/or gender. Bisexual refers to attraction to both or either sex and/or gender. Pansexual refers to someone who might be attracted to someone of any sex and/or gender. Queer can be a catch-all for any type of not-straight sexual attraction. Overall, it is always best to refer to someone's sexual orientation using the words that they use for themselves.

Representation of asexual or aromantic relationships or intimacy is almost always lacking in books and resources. This most significantly comes in the form of the assumption that everyone wants to have sex and be romanced. At the very least, books should name these orientations, normalize the idea that not everyone is into certain types of physical intimacy, and normalize the idea that not everyone values the same type of relationship structure.

Masturbation: Resources that are centered on healthy sexuality should not shame sexual exploration. Masturbation is a normal thing for many people (of all genders and ability) to do. Skills that should be taught when discussing masturbation include: (a) time management, (b) open communication, and (c) how to engage in safe sexual play.

Monogamy, polyamory, casual dating: We know that over the course of a person's life, they may engage in different types of relationships. Similarly, some folks are happier in particular arrangements than others. Therefore, no one type of relationship should be portrayed as supreme.

Skills that can be broadly applied to all relationships are important. Similarly, there is value in having a specific focus on the nuances that will guide decision making and communication within particular relationship structures.

Pornography: Media literacy is incredibly important when discussing pornography. It is crucial to provide the skill of discernment – to know that what is on screen was developed for entertainment rather than to portray real sex between real people.

Shame is never a good way to impact behavior.

Sexting: As with everything else, a good resource is going to guide a reader on how to make a healthy decision based on their own values. Certain precautions should be addressed. First and foremost, no healthy relationship involves coercion. Folks should understand that demanding photos or sexually explicit texts is bad behavior. Second, in most jurisdictions, minors exchanging nude photos are liable under child pornography laws. Third, "revenge porn" is not illegal in most places, and so unfortunately there may be little retribution if this content is shared without consent.