

# MISGENDERING AND RESPECT FOR PRONOUNS



## OVERVIEW

As a class and in small groups, students will watch a video about pronouns, have a conversation about pronouns, and discuss misgendering. As a class, students discuss ways to combat misgendering and how they can make sure that the gender pronouns of all students are respected.



## OBJECTIVES

Students will explore the importance of pronouns and their vital role in self-identification. Students will unpack misgendering and discuss ways to combat it within their classrooms and schools.



## THINGS TO PREP & TOOLS NEEDED

Computers/smartphones, Internet access.



## TIME

55 minutes.

## ALL ABOUT THE ACTIVITY

1. (5 minutes) Introduce the lesson and tell students that we will examine their understanding of pronouns and gender-neutral language.
2. (5 minutes) Introduce the [What Are Pronouns?](#) video.

Example: “We’re going to watch the *What Are Pronouns?* video created by Minus18, Australia’s largest LGBTQ youth organization. They also created a web app game all about navigating gender pronouns.”

3. (5 minutes) Play the *What Are Pronouns?* video.
4. (15 minutes) Lead a group discussion on the *What Are Pronouns?* video.
  - In the video they talked about how pronouns make an impact on people. How did you see using the right pronouns with people making a difference?
  - What steps can you take towards using the right pronouns for people?
5. (10 minutes) Define misgendering: Misgendering refers to the experience of being labeled by others as a gender other than one that a person identifies with.

- Ask: Have any students experienced misgendering or unintentionally misgendered someone (without sharing their names)? Let students know that sharing their stories is appreciated but not expected.
- Ask: What should you do if you misgender someone?
  - Possible answer: If you accidentally use the wrong pronoun when identifying someone, please correct yourself in front of that person and begin using the right pronoun. Everyone makes mistakes, and making visible your work to respect and use someone's pronoun after a mistake is an important moment to take. It is not the responsibility of the transgender or gender nonconforming person to address your feelings after misgendering.

6. (10 minutes) Gender-neutral language: Practice makes perfect!

- Students practice using gender neutral language and pronouns. Show students a picture of a classroom or group of young people. Have them practice addressing the group without using gendered words like "boys," "guys," or "girls." Show the [TSER pronoun graphic](#) and have students open a book to read sentences replacing the gendered pronouns for gender-neutral ones. School mascots can also be given gender-neutral pronouns for added practice!

7. (5 minutes) Closing: Ask: What are steps that we can take to make sure that gender pronouns are respected and used at our school? Write out the suggestions from the class and keep it to refer to in classroom ground rules.

- Suggestions: Introduce our names and pronouns to new people, make a space to display pronouns on worksheets and name tags, and correct misgendering that we witness.

## FOLLOW-UP/EXTENSIONS

1. Have students individually or in groups choose one of the ideas to combat misgendering and develop a plan of action to bring it to life in your school.
2. Act out scenarios of misgendering or using gendered language to address a group, brainstorm useful and respectful responses, and help each other gain confidence in practicing good pronoun etiquette.
3. Use [\*\*GLSEN's Educator Resource on Pronouns\*\*](#) for more tips and suggestions on gender-neutral language.
4. Have students take out their phones and check out the app to try out new pronouns at [www.minus18.org.au/pronouns](http://www.minus18.org.au/pronouns). Have them practice 2-3 different pronouns.

## TAGS

Pronouns, misgendering, gender neutral, trans, gender, genderbinary.

DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN THIS ACTIVITY? TELL US HOW IT WENT AND WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER!  
EMAIL US AT **STUDENTS@GLSEN.ORG** OR **EDUCATORS@GLSEN.ORG**.