Lesson Plan: Language and Terminology to Explore Gender and Sexuality

(based on Gender Spectrum: What Educators Need to Know)

Curriculum Connections

PHE 8/9/10

- Propose/analyze strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying.

PHE 10

- Explore and describe factors that shape personal identities

Social Studies 10/11/12

- Explain and infer different perspectives on past or present people, places, issues, or events by considering prevailing norms, values, worldviews, and beliefs (perspective)

Rationale

This lesson will explore the language and terminology which help us to understand and discuss the historical inequality which gender and sexual minorities have faced and continue to face. This understanding will help students to think critically about gender and sexuality which will help promote a more inclusive school and a more equitable world.

Lesson Plan

Suggest that one of the main ways society is organized is through gender. We often don't question the common beliefs we have about gender and this leads to inequality for many people. Today students will learn some concepts for thinking critically about gender and imagining a more equitable world.

Distribute one memory game to each pair of students. Have students match the words and definitions, then elicit the correct answers.

Ask students to follow the instructions at the top of the page to play the memory game. While they do this, write these questions for discussion on the board:

1. What are some examples of gender expansive characteristics or interests for men? What are some examples of gender expansive characteristics or interests for women?
2. What is the difference between 'trans' and 'gender expansive?'
3. What is the difference between heterosexism and homophobia?
4. Can you be oppressed in some ways and privileged in others? Why or why not?
5. Did you have a strong reaction to any of these words? If so,
    a. Which ones?
    b. Why do you think you reacted that way?
    c. How might your reaction help or harm other people?
6. What questions do you have about any of these concepts?

After students have a chance to play a couple of rounds, have them talk about the above "questions for discussion" with their partner. Then elicit responses for each question from the class. Record students' questions and use them as the basis for a lesson or future research assignment.

Wrap up the lesson by encouraging students to identify forms of sexism, heterosexism, homophobia, transphobia, privilege and oppression in their everyday lives. (You might even make this a homework assignment.)

Assessment

Are students able to correctly match the words and definitions during the memory game? Are students able to use the words in a meaningful way during the class discussion?
Do students exhibit a respectful attitude towards difference during the lesson?

Memory Game

First, cut out the cards with a partner. Then try to match the words with the correct definitions. After your teacher elicits the correct answers, mix up the cards and flip them over. Take turns flipping over two cards at a time and try to get a match. The player with the most matches wins.

Sexism	The belief that male gender identities and masculine gender expressions are superior to female and/or feminine ones.
Heterosexism	The assumption that everyone is heterosexual, or that heterosexuality is preferable.
Homophobia	Discomfort or disapproval of people who are perceived to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual.
Transphobia	Discomfort or disapproval of people who are perceived to be trans.
Trans	Refers to a person who has a gender identity that is different from the sex they were assigned at birth.
Gender Non-binary	Refers to a person who does not conform to society's expectations of how they should look, act or interact based on their gender.
Gender Identity	Refers to a person's internal, deeply-felt sense of being either male, female, both or neither.
Oppression	Unfair use or distribution of power based on gender, race, social class, sexual orientation, ability, etc. (examples include racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, etc.)
Privilege	Refers to the advantages or rights held by people from dominant groups on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, ability, social class, etc. For example, men often experience privilege that people of other genders do not have.