

Gender-Inclusive Learning Environment

7 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Create a gender-neutral learning environment

Teachers and learners avoid gender stereotyping and aim to ensure that all learners are appreciated, respected, and treated equally.

2. Ensure everyone gets hands-on

Provide girls with multiple and sustained opportunities to get hands-on, particularly with technology. Girls' engagement with technology is often more restrictive and less autonomous than that of boys.

3. Design learning experiences to embrace context and problem-solving

Context-based learning is critical to girls' engagement, and perception of what it means to do STEM. Girls want to see the relevance of STEM subjects to their lives, and to see their social value.

4. Connect learning to careers and role models

For each topic, context or problem, explore related STEM careers and provide role models. Aim for a gender balance in both historical and contemporary figures.

5. Engineer collaborative learning

Provide opportunities for social learning and collaboration. Research has shown that girls prefer interaction and cooperative learning over competition and this can have positive implications for their engagement with STEM subjects.

6. Provide choice and creative opportunities to demonstrate understanding

Problem-solving, creativity and design have been identified as essential skills in all students' STEM development. Girls value creativity but often perceive STEM subjects and careers as lacking creativity.

7. Encourage a growth mindset

Believing that success is due to natural ability is described as having a 'fixed mindset', whereas believing that success is due to effort and persistence is described as having a 'growth mindset'. Girls are often limited by a fixed mindset, and can interpret struggle or difficulty in learning as lacking natural talent.

Creating a gender-inclusive teaching and learning environment in your classroom can inspire girls to engage more deeply with STEM, and to see themselves as successful STEM learners and potential STEM leaders.

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