

# **TACKLE HOMOPHOBIA**

## **Challenging Homophobia and Meeting the Needs of Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Members of the School Community**

# Arts Subjects

Arts can be used for cross curricular projects. You can also highlight gay and lesbian issues in the subjects alone; analyse lyrics, homophobia in music, views of gays and lesbians art now and in history.

## Visual Art

Lesbian, gay and bisexual artists whose work has been influenced by their sexual orientation include amongst others: David Hockney, Keith Haring, Maggie Hambling, Robert Mapplethorpe, Frieda Kahlo, Pierre et Gilles, David LaChapelle, Gluck (Hanna Gluckstein), Michelangelo, Da Vinci, Caravaggio.

Stoke Newington School in Hackney analysed and performed a range of different songs as part of their Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Trans Month celebrations in February 2008:

- Small Town Boy by Bronski Beat – Year 7
- You spin me round (Like a record) by Dead or Alive – Year 8 and 9
- Fast car by Tracy Chapman - Year 9
- Man Who sold the World by David Bowie – Year 11
- Standing in the Way of Control by the Gossip – Year 11
- Take your Mama by Scissor Sisters - Choir

The Art department at Stoke Newington School explored 'Identity' by Andy Warhol

For more information check out the LGBT History Month website:

<http://www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/schools/SNschool.htm>

## English Language

Students will be able to develop their language to describe people who are gay, lesbian or bisexual in a constructive way. Exploring how particular language may be perceived as offensive may help inform discussion about the way language has evolved.

Language in newspapers: Look at different mainstream newspapers and how they report LGB issues.

## English Literature

Incorporating gay, lesbian and bisexual writers and novelists will highlight diversity within literature and the relevance of background and experiences to inform storylines.

Writers and novelists: Oscar Wilde, Virginia Woolf, Truman Capote, Carol Anne Duffy, Shakespeare's Sonnets, Alice Walker's 'The Colour Purple'.

### Consider

- Why does Marguerite Johnson in Maya Angelou's 'I know why the caged bird sings' think she might be a lesbian? What are the consequences of these worries (she has unprotected sex resulting in the birth of her son)? What would have been a better response? How would you respond? How and why is that different?
- Why does Carol Ann Duffy not identify the gender of the subject in her poems? Do you imagine a man or a woman when you are reading? Why do we assume that everyone is heterosexual?
- Why might WH Auden and S Sasson write poems to men?

In Stoke Newington School in Hackney the humanities department developed a PowerPoint presentation about James Baldwin as part of the celebrations for LGBT history month in February 2008.

# Geography

Study the lives of gays and lesbians in other countries to inform students' understanding of seeing the world through another person's point of view.

## **International Issues**

Provide students with the opportunity to explore the situation for gay, lesbian and bisexual people in other countries, such as Iran, Jamaica, Poland and the United States.

## **Domestic Issues**

LGB issues can be considered when discussing migration. For example, why do 45% of the UK's ethnic minority population live in London? Why does Brighton have a large and visible LGB community?

# History

There are many ways to discuss diversity and sexual orientation in history. How was the view of the family unit, gays and lesbians 100 years ago, 50 years ago? Why did people hold these views?

## Second World War

What was the situation like for gays and lesbians during the holocaust?

## Key Historical Figures

- Alan Turing, codebreaker (broke the Enigma code in 2nd WW), founder of computer science.
- Discuss Edward II and his relationship with Gaveston.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans History month is celebrated in February. The Department for Education & Skills have helped to fund a website:

<http://www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk>

The website contains lots of examples of activities taking place in schools to mark LGBT history month.

## Maths

Provide mathematical examples that relate to gays and lesbians to explore the various situations people find themselves in where they use maths to overcome difficulties.

### For example solve the question:

- Lisa and Emma have entered civil partnership, they're buying a house and are calculating the interest on their mortgage.

Research indicates that between **4** and **10%** of the UK population are lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB). So taking a mid point of **7%** would mean that **2** in every class of **30** young people will grow up to be LGB.

It might be useful to use these statistics to calculate the total number of LGB people in school and other communities or workforces, alongside calculating the number of men compared to women or people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities in for example a workforce if it was to be representative of the population of the UK.

## ICT

The internet is widely used by gay rights organisations around the world. As being lesbian, gay and bisexual is illegal in many countries, the internet enables people to access information about health, social issues and more which might not be easily accessible elsewhere.

### Websites

Go to websites such as [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk) or [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk) to explore how gay rights organisations work in the UK.

Stoke Newington School in Hackney developed a DVD about Civil Partnerships. Further details from <http://www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/schools/SNschool.htm>

# Modern Foreign Languages

Foreign languages potentially enable students to explore the language, culture, religion and social issues of the country. Studying the differences enables students to gain a better understanding of diversity, different view points and different ways of living.

## Topic Work

When describing family include examples of families with same sex partners. Include diverse examples in model letters/emails from penpals.

## Literature

Choose a text, which brings up same sex relations in another language than English. Use literature, newspapers and film to illustrate.

## Social Issues

Talk about human rights in different countries and talk about sexual orientation.

The Modern Foreign Languages department at Stoke Newington School in Hackney use the film '**Ma Vie en Rose**'

## Citizenship

Citizenship education provides students with the opportunity to explore a diverse Britain where respect and tolerance is crucial for successful society. Students will be able to challenge homophobia and find ways of accepting difference in people.

- Introduction of key legislation: Equalisation of the age of consent, lifting of the ban on gay people in the army, Civil Partnership, Equality Act 2006
- Politicians who are 'out' as LGB – Chris Smith MP, Angela Eagle MP, Alan Duncan MP.

Amnesty International have produced a free resource containing a range of activities to mark LGBT history month

<http://www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/documents/LGBTHistoryMonth2.pdf>

Tacade's 'Citizenship 11-16' resource contains case studies featuring gay volunteers and explores the impact of the criminal justice system following a homophobic attack.