

TEACHER'S GUIDE: Do TV Shows and Movies Make Sexual Harassment a "Normal" Part of the School Experience?



Objectives

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Explain whether or not sexual harassment is a "normal" part of students' school experience.
- ▶ Determine how TV shows and movies make sexual harassment "normal" in schools.
- ▶ Create a public service announcement (PSA) to communicate their personal messages about sexual harassment in school.

Time: 90 minutes

Level: Grades 7-9

What do current studies "say" about sexual harassment? (35 minutes)

1. Take an educated guess: (15 minutes)

- See completed chart at the end of the Teacher Guide with correct answers for each statement.
- Here are several ways to facilitate the completion of this chart:
 - Students work individually to make guesses, share their guesses with a partner and then find out the correct answers from you.
 - You create signs with a different percentage on each one. (Some signs will have the correct percentages and some signs will not.) Each student receives one sign with a different percentage. As you read each statement (or invite a student to read each statement), students stand if they think they are holding the correct percentage for that statement. You will reveal the correct answer after each "round." (If there is time, invite some students to explain why they think their percentage is correct.)
 - You type each statement on a sheet of paper and create a line on one wall of the room to represent 0% through 100%. Each statement is given to a pair or trio of students. The students read each statement and decide where it should be placed on the percentage line. (If there is time, invite some students to explain why they think their percentage is correct.) After all statements are placed on the wall, you reveal the correct answers for each statement.
- Be sure students complete their charts with the correct answers. They may want to refer back to this data later in the lesson.

2. Educate yourself: (20 minutes)

- Invite a student to read the introduction and the three questions to consider as they read USA TODAY's article.
- Direct students to read the article and respond in writing to the three questions on the chart.
- Facilitate a classroom discussion about the three questions. Invite students to share their responses. Encourage students to respectfully agree and disagree. (If you have a class that might be growing in maturity, set the tone BEFORE you start the discussion questions. Feel free to remind students that this may be a sensitive topic for some classmates and they will want to show respect to one another as they share their thoughts.)

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What do TV and film "say" about sexual harassment? (20 minutes)

- Invite a student to read the introduction.
- Give students a few minutes to think about the TV shows and movies they have seen that have shown the behaviors listed. If students have a hard time making connections, take a moment to brainstorm with the class or place students in trios to brainstorm together. Since these actions are prevalent in current TV shows and movies, students should be able to make the connection.
- Direct students to silently and individually respond to the question: Do TV shows and movies promote sexual harassment as being "normal"? Explain.
- Once students have completed their written responses, invite several students to share what they have written with the class.

What do I say about sexual harassment? (35 minutes)

- Before starting this section, decide whether you would like students to work individually or in pairs to complete their PSAs.
- Also, this PSA activity could be a very robust and time-intensive activity if desired. Determine if you would like students to simply craft the message and theme for a rough draft of their PSA during their time together and complete a final draft as homework over the course of a few days, or if you would like them to create a version of a PSA that can be completed during the allotted class time.
- Invite one student to read the introduction and the four steps to create a PSA.
- Ask students if they have questions about the assignment and answer these questions.
- Give students time to complete their PSAs.
- Invite students to share their PSAs with the class.
- Think about where students can display their PSAs in your school community.

National Standards

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Standards

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction, nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
2. Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

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National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) Standards

1. Through the study of culture and cultural diversity, learners understand how human beings create, learn, share and adapt to culture, and appreciate the role of culture in shaping their lives and society, as well the lives and societies of others. In schools, this theme typically appears in units and courses dealing with geography, history, sociology and anthropology, as well as multicultural topics across the curriculum.
2. Personal identity is shaped by family, peers, culture and institutional influences. Through this theme, students examine the factors that influence an individual's personal identity, development and actions. This theme typically appears in courses and units dealing with psychology, anthropology and sociology.

Statement about sexual harassment in school	Correct answer
What percent of students experienced some form of sexual harassment?	48%
What percent of sexual harassment was experienced by text, email, Facebook or other electronic means?	30%
What percent of students witnessed sexual harassment more than once during the school year?	56%
What percent of students who admitted to sexually harassing others didn't think it was a big deal?	44%
Who is more likely to be sexually harassed in school? (boys or girls)	Girls: 56% Boys: 40%
Who is more likely to be sexually harassed via text, email, Facebook or by other electronic means? (boys or girls)	Girls: 52% Boys: 35%
Who is more likely to witness sexual harassment in schools? (boys or girls)	Girls: 33% Boys: 24%
Who is more likely to say they sexually harassed other students? (boys or girls)	Girls: 18% Boys: 14%
What percent of girls and boys who admitted to sexually harassing another student said they were also a target of sexual harassment?	Girls: 92% Boys: 80%

TEACHER'S GUIDE: Do TV shows and movies influence careers held by women and men?



Sexual harassment defined by the U.S. Department of Education

Sexual harassment is conduct that:

1. is sexual in nature;
2. is unwelcome; and
3. denies or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from a school's education program.

Sexual harassment can take different forms depending on the harasser and the nature of the harassment. The conduct can be carried out by school employees, other students and non-employee third parties, such as a visiting speaker. Both male and female students can be victims of sexual harassment, and the harasser and the victim can be of the same sex.

The conduct can occur in any school program or activity and can take place in school facilities, on a school bus or at other off-campus locations, such as a school-sponsored field trip or a training program at another location. The conduct can be verbal, nonverbal or physical.

The judgment and common sense of teachers and school administrators are very important elements in determining whether sexual harassment has occurred and in determining an appropriate response, especially when dealing with young children.

Examples of sexual conduct include:

- making sexual propositions or pressuring students for sexual favors;
- touching of a sexual nature;
- writing graffiti of a sexual nature;
- displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures or written materials;
- performing sexual gestures or touching oneself sexually in front of others;
- telling sexual or dirty jokes;
- spreading sexual rumors or rating other students as to sexual activity or performance; or
- circulating or showing emails or Web sites of a sexual nature.

Example: A school official sends a student a text message to arrange a time to meet for a sexual encounter. Sending such a text message would constitute sexual conduct.

For more information: http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocrshpam.html#_t1a