



Gender concepts and terms

You are learning how to...	In the context of...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply psychological terms with precision and distinguish between closely related concepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender development

Sex and gender terms

Psychologists use many different terms when studying gender. Some important ones are defined below. Read the definitions and then the statements underneath. Each statement corresponds with a definition. Decide which, and be ready to explain your answers.

- **Sex** – the biological fact of being male or female. This may refer to *chromosomal sex* (XX or XY), *gonadal sex* (the possession of ovaries or testes) and/or *genital sex* (the possession of a vagina or penis).
- **Gender** – the social, psychological, behavioural and cultural aspects of being female or male (i.e. femininity and masculinity).
- **Gender identity** – the way a person understands and classifies themselves in relation to gender (i.e. how people feel, think and talk about themselves; the psychological aspects of gender).
- **Gender role** – the expected ways of acting for men and women in a given society (i.e. the behavioural aspects of gender).
- **Gender stereotypes** – simplistic ideas that regard all men/women as being the same in relation to a particular trait or characteristic.
- **Sex role stereotypes** – widely held but usually simplistic ideas about the appropriateness of particular behaviour from men or women.

Sex and gender statements

- Women never stop talking.
- Women have ovaries.
- Women have traditionally taken on caring occupational roles like nursing.
- I am a woman.
- Women should stay at home and look after the family.
- Men have, on average, superior spatial reasoning ability to women.
- In the West, women are expected to be empathetic.
- Men have a Y chromosome and a penis.
- Men can't multitask.
- Men should be the breadwinners.
- Women have, on average, superior verbal reasoning ability to men.
- In the West, men are expected to be dominant.
- Men should not wear skirts, although women may wear trousers.
- I'm a boy.

Important: the AQA-B specification only requires you to be able to define & identify the terms **sex**, **gender** and **sex-role stereotype**. However, in your reading about this topic you will encounter a greater variety of terms, including all the ones above. The requirements of other specifications vary – please check.