



The mindful approach to PSHE

Jigsaw and LGBT+

Celebrating Difference, equality, diversity and LGBT+ (LGBTQI) in Jigsaw PSHE

LGBTQI... “I know what the first four stand for. Isn't QI that TV programme that used to be hosted by Stephen Fry?” Indeed. But if we're talking about sexuality and gender identity, what do the Q and the I stand for? Is the lexicon of language confounding you?

It's so easy to feel bewildered by the array of terms to describe sexuality, and especially gender identity, plus the frequency with which new terms seem to arrive. As a teacher you want to feel confident that when it's fitting to talk about sexual orientation or gender identity with one of your pupils, the whole class, a colleague or someone in your private life that you're informed that what you're saying is both accurate and appropriate.

At Jigsaw we often receive enquiries from teachers who'd welcome an explanation of the terms describing sexuality and gender. Here we're going to focus on those most relevant to a primary setting. There are plenty of websites which explain pansexual, polyamorous, demisexual, aromantic and a plethora of words and phrases coined in recent times. What, as teachers, we need to be able to do, though, is simply feel confident to:

- Explore the eclecticism of what constitutes a 'family' in the 21st century, with the aim of ensuring all children feel included. There are perhaps as many family situations as there are children and an increasing number of children whose families comprise same-sex parents, and maybe in the wider family a gay uncle or a lesbian aunt. In Jigsaw, children are all valued and we try to ensure everyone feels included.
- Explain and correct the terminology children often hear and say, sometimes without really understanding what it means, and that used in inappropriate ways can cause offence and hurt.
- Model that it is OK to be who you are and that we are all unique individuals who are worthy of respect.



It is important that your pupils hear accurate information from you e.g. what does 'gay' mean? Because if you don't explain, they may well glean their understanding from places potentially far from ideal. At Jigsaw, we believe that it is better for children to be given information in age- and stage-appropriate ways, by teachers who are sensitive and hold no prejudice, giving you the opportunity to correct misunderstandings and challenge unkind or inappropriate language.

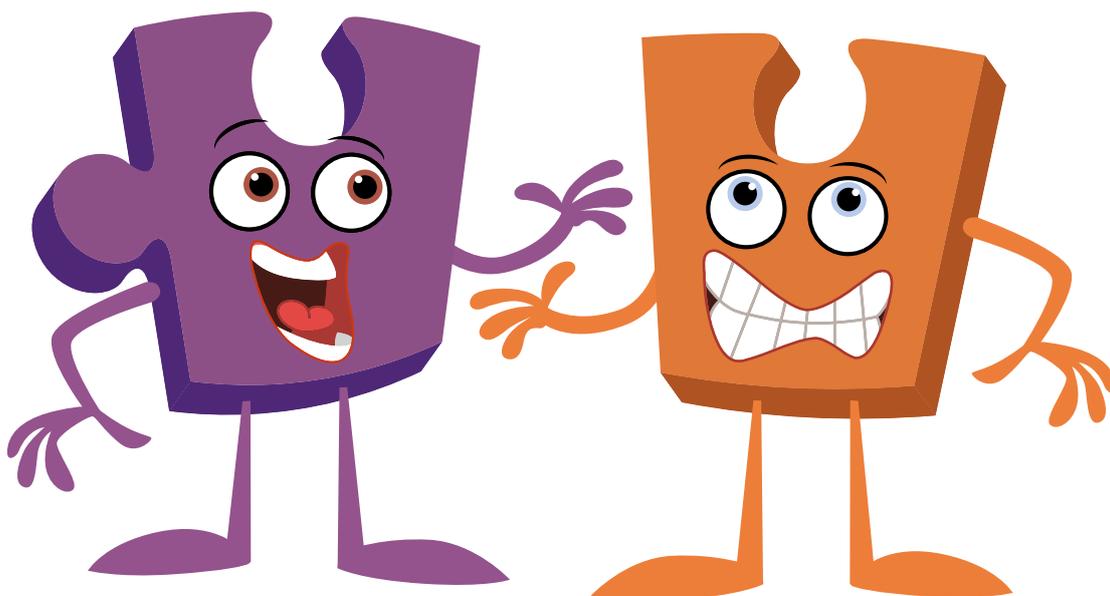
The attached Glossary explains terminology on an adult level and also attempts to offer the same definitions in language appropriate for children. Some terms are not included on the child-speak list as we do not deem them necessary or appropriate for primary children.

In 2015, Jigsaw worked in partnership with [Educational Action Challenging Homophobia](#) (EACH) which led on a Department for Education-commissioned programme to support lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning young people in school and challenge homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying. EACH adapted some of the Jigsaw Puzzles (lesson plans) to include in its whole-school resource: [Inspiring Equality in Education](#). EACH uses the abbreviation LGBT+ to cover matters regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or those questioning* their sexuality or gender identity (*this where the + comes in).

The Glossary provides a valuable resource for all teachers utilising the Jigsaw programme. As is highlighted in our Jigsaw article, 'Same-sex relationships and homophobia', the issue of equality is covered in a general way in all years, and throughout the Jigsaw programme, using the concepts of similarity and difference. Children are encouraged continually to explore the similarities and differences between themselves and their peers and to accept everyone's right to 'difference'. Jigsaw does not contain a dedicated LGBT+ section; rather, there are many points at which the topic is considered as an integral part of a number of Puzzles e.g. Being Me In My World, Celebrating Difference, Relationships, Changing Me, thus normalising the issues. Celebrating Difference addresses bullying behaviours in every year group, including homophobic and cyber bullying, and always ensures children know how to ask for help and support.

The definitions given are for adults, hence the additional child-speak suggestions, and obviously will be tailored appropriately for each year group and setting. For example, for younger age groups it is unnecessary to include references to sexual intimacy: stressing the element of love alone is sufficient.

Examples of how LGBT+ issues are covered in Jigsaw



It is important to note that Jigsaw lessons do not cover explicitly any LGBT+ terms or descriptions. In many teachers' experiences, children will very often have heard of concepts such as homosexuality, lesbian, gay, trans, etc. but they might not be aware of what each of these concepts means. It is the responsibility of the teacher and the school to ensure that these concepts are explained in a way that is appropriate to the age and stage of development of each child. And, of course, it is not just within the realms of PSHE Education that this might occur. It is vital that an explanation is approached in a sensitive way – to ensure children have sufficient information for their age and stage of development. It does not mean that adults need to share all their knowledge of a subject with a child, as that would, no doubt, be inappropriate.

Here is how the Puzzle Celebrating Difference covers LGBT+ in Jigsaw.

Year Group	Piece	Detail
All		<p>The Weekly Celebrations encourage everyone in school to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept that everyone is different • Include others when working and playing • Know how to help if someone is being bullied • Try to solve problems • Try to use kind words • Know how to give and receive compliments <p>Similarly, the Jigsaw song, 'The Colours of Friendship', enables children to reinforce the learning messages of the Puzzle and understand about how they can be caring, how they can share, and give by living the friendship way.</p>
All		All year groups contain lessons on bullying and what to do about unfriendly behaviour, appropriate to children's age and stage of development.
F1/2	3	The Piece on Families encourages children to identify what is similar and different about their families when comparing to others' families. The book 'The Hueys in the New Jumper' helps children to understand about similarities and differences among families.
1	1, 2, 6	In Piece 1, children are encouraged to identify similarities between people in their class and talk about some ways in which they are the same as their friends. In a direct comparison to Piece 1, children are now encouraged in Piece 2 to identify differences between people in their class, as well as being able to reveal some ways they are different from their friends. Piece 6 enables children to understand that differences make us all special and unique.
2	1, 2	Year 2 introduces children to the idea that sometimes people make assumptions about boys and girls (stereotypes); within these lessons, there is the opportunity for children to understand some ways in which boys and girls are similar and feel good about this, as well as being able to understand and accept that this is OK.

3	1, 2	<p>Year 3 builds upon the concepts introduced at Year 2 and starts looking at the various types of 'different' that mean something to children. The activities in lessons encourage children to explore similarities and differences in families, and to notice what is positive about the similarities and differences. 'The Family Book' by Todd Parr celebrates the love we feel for our families and all the different varieties they come in. Whether you have two mothers or two dads, a big family or a small family, a tidy family or a messy one, the book assures readers that no matter what kind of family you have, every family is special in its own unique way.</p> <p>Piece 2 explores differences in families again, this time using the book 'And Tango Makes Three', by Justin Richardson, which tells the story (based on truth) about two male penguins who raise a chick together.</p>
4	All	<p>All lessons in Year 4 cover concepts such as judging others by their appearance, disability, understanding how other people can influence us, problem-solving in bullying situations, being unique (and valuing everyone's 'uniqueness'), and finish with celebrating how everyone looks different.</p>
5	All	<p>Lessons in Year 5 examine different cultures, racism, rumours and name-calling, understanding different types of bullying, and celebrating difference across the world. All of this work builds on the values and skills that have been explored in earlier year groups.</p>
6	All	<p>Year 6 starts with examining 'what is normal?' (the answer to which, of course, is that there is no such thing), then explores understanding disability, power struggles and cyber bullying, why people might bully others, celebrating differences in physical abilities, and differences that might cause conflict.</p>

Talking to children about LGBT+

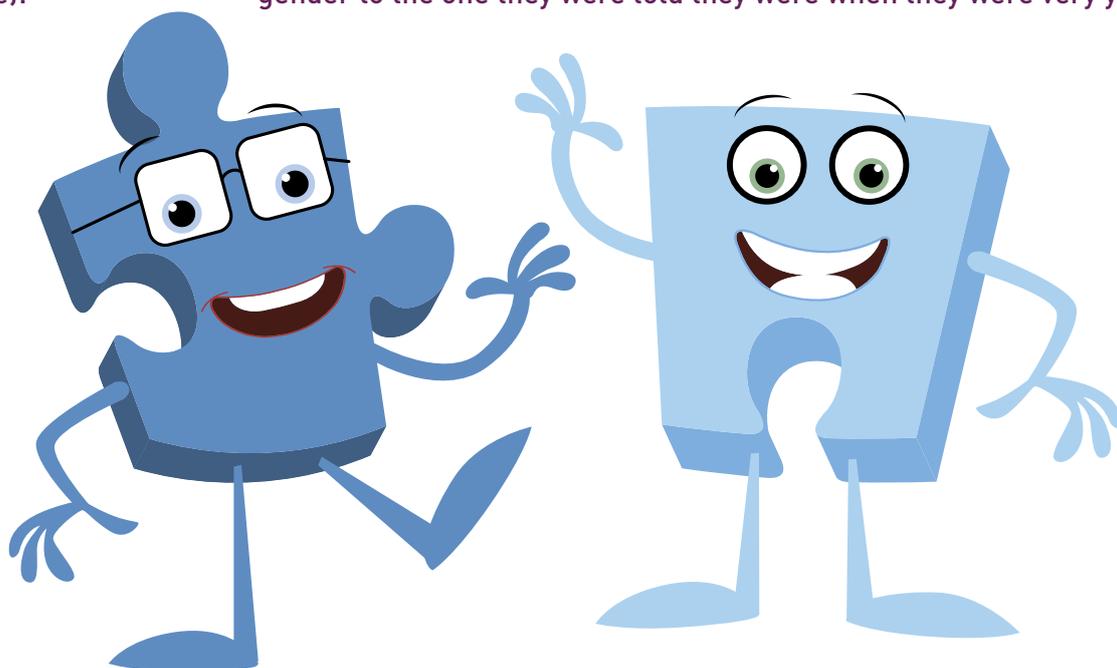
Children often use the word 'gay' as a derogatory term, sometimes without understanding what it means. To children 'gay' often means stupid. The most important thing is to emphasise that no words should be used to hurt people. When we hear 'gay' used derogatorily it's always incumbent upon us to address this inappropriateness. It is not necessary with children to add sexual connotation to the word. It is invariably enough to explain to children that being gay means being attracted to or loving someone of the same sex in a 'romantic' relationship.

Using the word 'gay' in a disparaging way is seen as homophobic and as such is unacceptable. Teachers need to be as vigilant about this as they would if racist or disablist language were used. Children may have heard the word 'gay' in the playground or from older siblings or friends and may repeat it without knowing what it means. Indeed, it does not matter so much when children hear about same-sex relationships for the first time. What is important is that it is dealt with sensitively and respectfully – as should be the case with any 'difference' that children may experience in their lives now or in the future.

Children may also use other LGBT+ terms in a derogatory and/or incorrect way, and again, it is the responsibility of the school to correct children sensitively and age-appropriately. The terms and explanations listed here should help teachers to do this with confidence and self-assurance.

Glossary in child-speak

- Bisexual (adjective):** A grown-up who feels comfortable being in love with either a man or a woman. They might live with or be married to this person.
- Cisgender (adjective):** Someone who is male and happy being a boy or a female who is happy being a girl.
- Gay (adjective):** This is when a man or a woman loves someone who is the same sex as them. They might live together or be married.
- Gender (noun):** If you're male the word to describe your gender is most usually boy. If you're female then it's girl. Some children don't see themselves as a boy or a girl and we say they are 'questioning their gender'.
- Heterosexual (adjective):** When someone is attracted to someone of the opposite sex.
- Homophobia / Transphobia:** This is when someone uses unkind words about a person being gay or questioning their gender.
- Lesbian (noun):** This is a woman who is attracted to or falls in love with someone who is another woman
- Sex (noun):** This word is used to describe all the body parts that make someone male or female.
- Sexuality:** This is the word we use to describe who somebody is romantically attracted to or falls in love with. A person might be heterosexual, gay, bisexual or a lesbian.
- Stereotype:** This describes what someone believes about a group of people (often without knowing all the facts) and it is usually a simplified and fixed idea. Stereotypes are often unkind and can offend people.
- Trans / Transgender (adjective):** This describes people who recognise that they are a different gender to the one they were told they were when they were very young.



Glossary in adult-speak

Bisexual (adjective):	An emotional, sexual and physical attraction to both men and women. 'Bi' is an acceptable, social shorthand for a bisexual person.
Cisgender (adjective):	a person whose gender identity, gender expression and biological sex align (e.g. woman, feminine and female). In other words, it describes people who do not identify as trans.
Gay (adjective):	An emotional, sexual and physical attraction to the same sex. This word can apply to men or women. Some women will refer to themselves exclusively as lesbian as opposed to gay.
Gender (noun):	One's sense of being a boy, a girl, neither or both. The way a person feels about themselves, their bodies, their behaviour and where they 'fit' as a boy/man, girl/woman, trans or other.
Heterosexism:	The assumption that everyone's heterosexual unless someone is 'obviously' gay or lesbian because they are 'out'.
Heterosexual (adjective):	An emotional, sexual and physical attraction to someone of the opposite sex.
Homophobia / Transphobia:	A resentment or fear of gay, lesbian or bisexual people / trans people.
Intersex (adjective):	Someone born with, often, ambiguous genitalia i.e. primary, and later secondary, sex characteristics are indeterminate as either exclusively male or female. Its causes can be hormonal, genetic or physical. Most intersex people choose to present as either male or female.
Lesbian (noun):	A woman who is emotionally, sexually and physically attracted to women.
LGBT+:	Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans people plus those who do not identify with these labels but identify as neither heterosexual nor cisgender.
Queer (adjective):	Queer is an umbrella term used by some to define themselves as neither heterosexual nor cisgender. Queer was coined and originally used from the late-19th century: deployed pejoratively against those with same-sex attraction or in such a relationship. Recognising the 'political charge' inherent within 'queer' and its potential for offence, in accord with the Department for Education and Criminal Justice System, Jigsaw and EACH use the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, cisgender, trans and questioning.
Questioning (adjective):	Someone within a process of exploration regarding their sexual orientation, gender identity or both.
Sex (noun):	The biological or physiological features used to define someone as male or female.
Sexual orientation:	Legislative term used to describe how an individual chooses to identify their sexuality as lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual.

Sexuality:	The combination of emotional, sexual and physical attraction to someone of the opposite, same or either sex depending on that individual's sexual orientation.
Stereotype:	A commonly-held belief about a group of people that is fixed and over simplified. Stereotypes invariably caricature and are rarely constructive.
Trans / Transgender (adjective):	An umbrella term for people who identify with a gender other than that assigned to them at birth.

Jigsaw thanks [EACH](#) for sharing the glossaries here.

