

Last name, first name _____

Homework for Lesson 2 Day 1

I. Gender, Sex, Gender Norms...

Imagine that you are speaking to a group of people who have heard vaguely about gender studies but know little about them. They think that gender is something like sex; perhaps it is just a newer term for the same thing. They also believe that biological sex differences are very important, the foundation of all differences men and women, something fixed forever. Write 7 - 9 lines in which you tell these people about gender, including two points: (A) describe this concept and (B) convince your audience that while gender is an important distinction between people, it is an unstable, changeable category (think what factors does gender depend on).

II. Qualities and Stereotypes*

In contemporary society Russia as well as in the contemporary U.S., it would seem, there is near-equal **equality*** of the sexes. Are there some qualities, however, that people believe pertain to only one sex? If so, what *character traits* characterize the stereotypes of men and women? What are the attitudes among Russians towards such stereotypes?

*stereotypes [translated from Russian]

**equality [translated from Russian]

Assignment A. Russia: A Boy's Qualities, a Girl's Qualities

You already know that many parents teach their children *sex roles*. Certain qualities comprise these roles. So what qualities do people ascribe to be comprising the qualities of a little boy, and which are the qualities of a little girl?

Go online and visit the website for the Russian store of children's clothing, Matushka Gusynya ["Mother Goose"]: specifically, the section of the store designated as the catalogue of clothing for kids over the age two, located at <http://www.matushka.ru/index.php?op=cat&sec=4>. Read the descriptions of clothing for boys and girls, then respond to the following questions:

- What qualities of a *little boy* can we infer from these descriptions? Transcribe these qualities using the adjectives from the descriptions.

- What qualities of a *little girl* can we infer from these descriptions? Transcribe these qualities using the adjectives from the descriptions.

- Are there differences in how boys' and girls' items are described? What are these differences?

- Despite the fact that the clothes are intended for very small children, who don't have very distinct character traits, the marketing department of the Mother Goose clothing company insists on sex differences in its advertising, which will be read by the parents. Why do you

think they write their materials in this way for the parents? Your response must consist of at least three sentences.

Assignment B. You can see that some popular conceptions of character traits of children in Russia are marked by the sex differences. Is this true of the U.S.?

Visit google.com and type in, first, “boys’ clothing.” Look at a few websites for stores that sell clothing for boys. Then go back to google.com and type in, “girls’ clothing”; visit several sites for stores that sell clothing for girls. Answer the following questions:

- What differences do you see between the descriptions of clothing for boys and for girls?
- Are they the same differences as the ones that you saw on the Matushka Gusynya website? Explain your response.

Assignment C. Here are some *character traits*, which are sometimes linked to gender stereotypes. Read through the list; some words will be familiar, while others are new. Underline the words that you do not know. Please memorize them gradually.

Черты характера

*F = feminine M = masculine N = neuter (grammatical gender)

Сила и слабость/ Power and Weakness

сила (F), adj сильный	power/strength
слабость (F), adj слабый	weakness
смелость (F), adj смелый	courage

Качества ума / The Qualities of the Mind

ум (M), умный	intelligence
глупость (F), глупый	silliness, stupidity
хитрость (F), хитрый	sly, scheming

Качества характера / Qualities of Character

способность приспосабливаться/ приспособиться к обстоятельствам	the ability to adapt to circumstances
→ <i>приспособиться к обстоятельствам – to adapt to circumstances</i>	
независимость (F)	independence
авторитетность (F)	assertiveness
→ <i>исполнять роль первой скрипки в обществе – to be the leader/authority in the group</i>	
суровость (F)	severity, harshness
сострадание (F), сострадающий	compassion
заботливость (F), заботливый	care, the propensity to care for others
чуткость (F), чуткий	sensitivity
нежность (F), нежный	tenderness
решительность (F), решительный	resoluteness
уверенность (F), уверенный	confidence
вялость (F), вялый	laxity, indecision
впечатлительность (F), впечатлительный	sensitivity, the ability to be deeply touched by certain events
эмоциональность (F), эмоциональный	emotional quality
хладнокровие (N), хладнокровный	composure
мстительность	vindictiveness
импульсивность	impulsiveness

Качества внешности и поведения... / Qualities of Appearance and Behavior...

кокетливость	flirtatiousness
→ <i>кокетничать с представителями противоположного пола – to flirt with [the representatives of] the opposite sex</i>	
авторитетность (F), авторитетный	authoritativeness
→ <i>отстаивать/отстоять свой авторитет – to defend one's authority</i>	
галантность (F), adj галантный	gallantry
привлекательность (F), привлекательный	attractive
ухоженность (F), ухоженный	well-tended physique
внимание к внешности	attention to one's physique

→ *заботиться о своей внешности* – *to take care of one's physique*

соблазнительный, соблазнительность

seductiveness

сдержанность (F), сдержанный

reserve

общительность (F), общительный

gregariousness

болтливость (F), болтливый

chattiness