Questions to ask yourself (and your students) that will help you analyze texts for gender messages. Keep the following questions in mind as you read:

- How is gender constructed in this text? *(Felluga, 2002)*
- What are the text's assumptions regarding gender? *(Felluga, 2002)*
- What are the covert ways in which power is manipulated in the text so as to establish and perpetuate the dominance of men and subordination of women? *(Felluga, 2002)*
- What are the female points of view, concerns, and values presented in the text? And if absent, how so and why? *(Felluga, 2002)*

- How do the illustrations portray each character?
  - How are they dressed?
  - What are their facial expressions?
  - How do they relate to the other characters in the story?
- How is language used to create images of gender?
- How much agency does each character demonstrate?
- What behaviors are displayed by each character?
- What emotions do characters of different genders express?
- Which behaviors are depicted as positive and which are portrayed as negative?

Look at the ways the main character represents gender.
- Are male characters depicted as potent, powerful, adventurous, and more active than females?
- Are females in passive, observer roles that are subordinate and valued less than male roles?
- Are the male characters “portrayed as competent and achievement-oriented”? *(Kramer, 2001)*
- Do male characters “use their brains effectively and creatively to solve problems”? *(Rudman, 1995)*
- Are the female characters “depicted as dependent, emotional, silly, clumsy, and lacking intelligence,” less competent, and limited in their ability? *(Kramer, 2001)*
- Are female characters overly concerned with their appearance?
- Are female characters “dressed in skirts or dresses even when they are engaged in activities inappropriate for this sort of costume”? *(Rudman, 1995)*
- Are girls acted upon or are they active? *(Fox, 1993)*
- Do the images reflect the statement that “boys do and girls are”? *(Bradley & Mortimer, 1979)*
- When females are presented as active and assertive, are they portrayed as passive in the end? *(Rudman, 1995)*
- Which characters are involved in activities that are considered socially prestigious?
- Do you see any alternative gender role models?
- What ramifications do characters face when they present an alternative portrayal of gender? *(Diekman and Murnen, 2004)*
- Do ‘non-sexist’ books portray a “narrow vision of gender equality in which women adopt stereotypically male attributes and roles”?
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Bibliography


