

The Sex Educator

A MAGAZINE FOR EDUCATORS
WHO CONDUCT SEX EDUCATION ACTIVITIES
WITH HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS

Produced by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux
du Québec, Université du Québec à Montréal and Tel-Jeunes.

18

AUTUMN | 2011

BY JULIE BOURGEOIS

FLIRTING WITH SEDUCTION

THE CHALLENGE
OF EDUCATING YOUTH
ABOUT SEDUCTION

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NO.18, AUTUMN 2011

THIS MAGAZINE IS A COLLABORATIVE PRODUCTION OF

Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec (MSSS)

- Direction des communications
- Direction générale de santé publique
Richard Cloutier
Valérie Marchand
Nadia Campanelli

Université du Québec à Montréal
Julie Bourgeois, Sexologist-educator,
Master's student in sexology
Francine Duquet,
Professor in the Department of Sexology

and Tel-Jeunes
Linda Primeau, Clinical supervisor

Layout: Sébastien Roy, MSSS

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The Sex Educator is also available in French under the name *Ça Sexprime*.

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Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2011
Library and Archives Canada, 2011
ISSN 1712-5782 (Printed version)
ISSN 1718-5238 (PDF version)

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Not so long ago, I really didn't feel like having a girlfriend. But recently, I've been feeling like I wanted to have one. I think I'm finally ready. I was wondering if you could give me a few seduction tips to get girls interested in me.

(Kevin, 14 years old)

My problem is that at school, there's this guy Simon. Every time I see him, I can't stop smiling, my heart beats really fast and I blush. I've never talked to him and the fact that he doesn't even know I'm alive makes me very sad. I've tried everything: smiling at him, walking in front of him, but it's like I'm invisible. What can I do to have him notice me and be interested in me?

(Alexandra, 14 years old)¹

These adolescents' questions reveal their lack of knowledge about seduction and their clumsiness in this area. In your opinion, what tips are they looking for? How can they learn to use charm at their age? Are peers and the media the only sources of information about this topic? Do you think we need to give young people information and guidance when it comes to seduction, given the media hype where sexual seduction is often at the forefront? What role can you play in the '*seduction*' of youth?

1. Excerpts based on www.Tel-jeunes.com (the names have been changed).





WHY TALK TO TEENS ABOUT SEDUCTION

Seduction seems to be a subject of great concern to adolescents. What can you do to impress a boy or a girl? What can you do to get him or her to notice you? How can you find out if that boy or girl is interested in you? These questions can cause young people to look for resources to better understand the game of seduction and receive some guidance. From whom can they get these resources or tips? From their parents? The media? Their peers? Their teachers, educators or other professionals?

Wood et al. (2002) have analyzed the perceptions of 100 Canadian adolescents (aged 13 to 16) regarding how they are influenced by various sources of information about dating. The teens said that parents and teachers give them the most accurate information about dating. Paradoxically, it appears that information exchanged among peers has the greatest influence on these adolescents and the pertinence of such information can certainly vary. This brings us to question the accuracy of the information, messages and values about seduction circulated not only by peers but also by parents and teachers.

Indeed, young people who misconstrue or misinterpret such information will have an understanding of seduction based on incorrect reference points. Subsequently, these adolescents may do things that might be out of character for them. Let's take the example of Alexandra, who is wondering how she can get Simon, a boy in her school, to notice her. Following a friend's recommendation, she may choose to dress in a provocative way so as to get Simon's attention. By doing that, not only might she be going against her own values, but she also risks sending out a message that she is ready to have intimate sexual relations, which is not necessarily the case; for his part, Simon might get interested in her for this reason only or, on the contrary, he might feel awkward about it.

It is normal for adolescents to test their powers of attraction. However, their first experiences can have repercussions on self-confidence and body image. If Simon remains indifferent despite Alexandra's efforts to interest him, she might think that there must be something about her physical appearance that is not attractive to boys, and thus become self-deprecating. Such embarrassing or distressful experiences can shake young people's beliefs in their potential to be seductive, discourage them from trying again and hurt their self-esteem and body image, which is already fragile because of changes that occur during puberty (Wood et al., 2002). Therefore, it is important that teens think about and discuss seduction games, ideally before they try them out, so as to reduce the pressure they could put on themselves by wanting to entice someone at any price.

WHAT EXACTLY DO WE MEAN BY SEDUCTION?

You most probably have an idea of what seduction is, but a closer look at this concept will undoubtedly help you talk about it with young people. Seduction can be defined as verbal and non-verbal communication with the goals of attracting someone's attention (Canto-Sperber, 2001) and creating feelings of attachment that will eventually lead to sexual intimacy or a romantic relationship with this person (Morris, 1971). Gestures are done intentionally and stimulate the senses, especially hearing, sight, smell and touch (Canto-Sperber, 2001). To further clarify this concept of seduction, it is important to add more detail to our definition.

A person can participate in seduction **actively**, by trying to attract someone's attention, or **passively**, by letting himself or herself be seduced (Canto-Sperber, 2001). The person who attempts to actively entice reaches out to the other person to show his or her interest and desire; the message is that the seducer is forward, powerful, indeed dominant (Colson, 2009). The person being seduced will be either receptive or not to the charms and desires of this individual (Canto-Sperber, 2001) by participating or not in the seduction game. Seduction can also be a **state of mind**. In this case, the fact of feeling seductive bolsters self-esteem and body image (Colson, 2009).

Why do we want to seduce? What is the purpose of seduction? **Essentially, attempting to seduce someone allows us to determine if the other person is interested.** Once we have demonstrated our interest and desire to this person, he or she can accept or refuse our overtures. However, the main intention behind seduction can vary from person to person. Generally, we try to seduce with the goal of creating feelings of attachment so as to accede to a romantic relationship or to sexual intimacy (Morris, 1971; Henningsen, 2004). It is also possible to want to seduce someone to feel desirable, to have fun (Henningsen, 2004), to get noticed or to test our powers of seduction. Ciceri (2002) describes seduction as a process and divides it into five distinct steps, presented in Table 1. In steps 2 and 3, the partners try to minimize their faults and highlight their good qualities. In this manner, they appear more attractive in the other person's eyes (Dindia, 2000). In time, as we can see in step 4 (Table 1), the level of trust attained in the relationship will determine if the partners will reveal more personal elements.

TABLE 1
THE STEPS OF SEDUCTION

(Ciceri, 2002, p. 4)



“Seduction can be defined as verbal and non-verbal communication with the goals of attracting someone’s attention and creating feelings of attachment that will eventually lead to sexual intimacy or a romantic relationship with this person.”

SEDUCERS SEDUCE, CHARMERS CHARM AND CRUISERS CRUISE

EXPRESSIONS

Flirting, cruising, romancing, courting, come-ons, charm, galantry: How do these concepts relate to the act of seduction? In fact, they are all **forms of seduction**. We should point out how they differ from one another in terms of purpose and intention. Moreover, the nuances brought to the various terms young people use when talking about seduction will enrich the concept itself.

The expressions **to flirt** and **to cruise** refer directly to the action of seducing. They are **ways employed to get close to someone, to verify if we are interested in this person and if the feeling is mutual** (Mimoun, 2007). **To charm** is defined as **a certain indefinable something that attracts us to another person** (Mimoun, 2007). Although charm can seduce, it cannot be described or learnt; it just simply works. There is also a subjective component to charm: what is charming to us may not be to someone else, and vice versa.

Being **romantic** is **responding to another person's amorous expectations**. A teen who is romantic indicates a potential to be emotionally engaged and sensitive to his or her own feelings and those of a partner; a romantic teen is letting the other person know that he or she is special (Allen, 2007). Offering flowers or organizing an evening alone together are examples of being romantic. **The goal of coming on to someone is sexual conquest to satisfy a narcissistic need** (Mimoun, 2007). For instance, a teenage girl will consider her sex partners not only as individuals but as challenges that, once met, bring her a sense of accomplishment and pride. Coming on is not a means but an end.

Gallantry is characterized by boys' discernible politeness and courtesy toward girls. Being considerate, complimenting the other person and offering to pay for outings are examples of gallantry. Some people can interpret this seduction strategy as sexist. For others, it represents sweet gestures that are greatly appreciated.

SEDUCTION AND ADOLESCENCE

We've seen some of the purposes of seduction. Now let's look at its roles during adolescence. We know that puberty brings physical and psychological changes in adolescents. These changes provide a space where teens can test their limits and explore their potential (Ribstein, 1995). Seduction is not an exception to this rule: adolescents are also prompted to test their powers of seduction. How far can their new bodies take them? There are also certain sexual imperatives they are likely to explore (Ribstein, 1995), which will give rise, in some youth, to strong desires to have sexual relationships within romantic relationship or not. Indeed, Kevin, whom we read about earlier, says that not that long ago he "really didn't feel like having a girlfriend" and that now he really feels like having one. Exploring seduction can probably help him respond to his sexual desires and be romantically intimate with another person. These experiences allow adolescents to access the best in themselves and to see themselves as unique and valuable individuals (Colson, 2009).

DIFFERENT FACES OF SEDUCTION AT ADOLESCENCE

We have seen that seduction occupies a significant place in the psychosexual development of adolescents. But how can they attempt seduction? Is there a miracle recipe that guarantees positive results, as adolescents so often demand? Will they depend on their physical appearance, their personality or what is socially expected of boys and girls? The following sections profile the forms seduction can take during adolescence when

it is related to aestheticism, stereotypes and authenticity. The advantages and disadvantages of different forms of seduction are described so that you can get young people to think about and discuss issues of seduction during adolescence.

SEDUCTION AND AESTHETICISM

It is difficult to dissociate aestheticism and seduction. Like birds that use their colourful feathers, human beings seek to attract the attention of sex partners through a quest for beauty. **Sight is the first of our senses that is stimulated by seduction: physical attraction for another person can lead us to want to seduce or be seduced** (Canto-Sperber, 2001). Therefore, it isn't surprising that adolescents pay particular attention to physical appearance when it comes to seduction. Indeed, body changes linked to puberty require getting used to these new bodies and stimulate desires to test their seduction potential. It is usually also during adolescence that we wish to consolidate our sexual identity, which is becoming much more physically apparent; to differentiate themselves, boys and girls will tend to emphasize body characteristics distinctive to their own gender (Rosenbaum, 1993). Actually, adolescents may highlight several of these characteristics during seduction, in different ways.

For example, girls might wear tight-fitting clothes to direct the focus to their breasts and hips (Fortin, 2002). They can also choose to partially expose their breasts and stomachs to attract the gaze of others (Blanchard, 2008). These strategies are probably greatly influenced by the media, which convey messages that to succeed in seduction, girls must show certain parts of their bodies (Blanchard, 2008). Moreover, using makeup is an important aesthetic practice among girls. A girl can use it to highlight her feminine facial traits, to hide imperfections, to feel more beautiful, or to make herself look older than she is. Boys will try to put their muscle structures to the fore by wearing tight clothing (Duquet and Quiénart, 2009). Sport performance is perceived as a seduction strategy focused on the body. Moreover, boys give great importance to facial hair, which represents their masculinity.



But what do we qualify as seductive? What is considered seductive in someone varies from one person to another and one group to another (Vigarello, 2004) and, in Western societies, is largely influenced by the media (Colson, 2009). It is important to remember that **fashion and media largely define what is aesthetically desirable, and sometimes present idealistic, even unrealistic portraits of what is seductive**. Images projected in the media can push adolescents to attach excessive importance to physical appearance when they want to be seductive. Idealization of the body and stereotypes widely disseminated by the media can also intensify one's deepest anxieties and shortcomings (Colson, 2009, p. 3). Indeed, adolescence is often a stressful period of life, due to all the physical and psychological changes that occur. This level of anxiety can be accentuated by ideals of beauty presented in the media. Teens who don't think they fit these models might believe that they are not attractive and do not deserve to be courted.

Each new generation has its particular fashions that will dictate what is and isn't seductive. Today's young people are no exception. Some of them might even confine their seduction abilities to their physical appearance or to conforming to fashion dictates. However, a relationship between two people cannot be based on appearance alone: turning to aesthetic practices to seduce is superficial if they are not paired with deeper qualities. Therefore, as educators, it is important that we get young people to recognize other elements at play in seduction and to develop critical thinking skills in this regard.

SEDUCTION AND STEREOTYPES

Stereotypes play important roles during adolescence: they can represent reassuring reference points to which young people will adhere until they develop their own identities; stereotypes can also act as traps that keep teens from expressing themselves. This being said, stereotypes also influence seduction. Let's look at Kevin's case again. He would like Tel-Jeunes to give him "a few seduction tips to get girls interested in him." Stereotypes provide concrete models, "tips" he can use to try to seduce the person who has caught his eye. But what are these stereotypes that are "so seductive" at first glance?

In our society, it is generally expected that boys be the active players in the seduction game: they are responsible for showing interest and desire in the other person. They are also expected to take the initiative during first dates. Girls are usually assumed to be content with playing a passive role, mainly by showing openness or indifference to boys' advances (Canto-Sperber, 2001). Despite the advent of feminism, stereotypical behaviours that boys and girls usually adopt during first dates still persist and often constitute the only model of seduction presented to young people. Table 2 itemizes some stereotypes.

Is there a miracle recipe for seduction? Not necessarily. In some respects, stereotypes are reassuring for an adolescent in search of an identity since they provide clear directions to follow in a teen's attempts to seduce. Therefore, it is often easier for adolescents to adopt these stereotypes than to be "themselves", since their identities are still developing. As educators, it is important to help them examine the repercussions that these sexual stereotypes have or will have on their sexual and romantic relationships.

TABLE 2
EXPECTED STEREOTYPICAL BEHAVIOURS
DURING FIRST DATES, BY SEX

GIRLS	BOYS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait for the boy to make the first move • Accept or decline the boy's invitation • Concern about appearance • Plan what to wear • Make conversation • Put the brakes on sexual activity • Talk with a friend about the date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the first move • Ask the girl out on a date • Choose the time and place of the date • Compliment the girl on her appearance • Be gallant (e.g. open doors) • Pay for expenses (e.g. movie tickets, meal in a restaurant) • Initiate sexual activity

Sources: DeLucia, 1987; Rose and Frieze, 1989; Laner and Ventrone, 2000; Seal and Ehrhardt, 2003; Morr Serewicz and Gale, 2008.

In fact, stereotypical courtship behaviours presented in Table 2 reflect the imbalance between boys' and girls' roles related to first dates. Boys take on active, dominant roles: they're supposed to organize the date, pay all the expenses, and initiate sexual activity. What happens if a boy doesn't want to have sex? How will the girl perceive the fact that he isn't making overtures? Will she interpret this as a lack of interest in her? As rejection? If he doesn't follow the stereotypes listed in Table 2, the boy could be seen as not being a 'real guy' by his peers and his self-esteem could be undermined. Conversely, girls take on more passive, even submissive roles: they're supposed to be concerned about their appearance and put the brakes on sexual activity. But what would happen if a girl lets it be known that she would like to have sexual relations? How will the boy interpret the girl's taking the initiative? By not adopting behaviours that are expected of her, the girl's peers could perceive her as "easy" (Duquet and Quiénart, 2009). We can see that these stereotypes put pressure on boys and girls, pushing them to act in ways that may not correspond to who they really are and what kind of romantic or sexual experiences they would like to have.

Educators must keep in mind that it is unrealistic to insist that young people have completely egalitarian sexual and romantic relationships. Adolescence is a time of life during which we test limits, are awkward, and fear being judged by others, and conformity is in fact very important. Yet, it is essential that young people be aware of the repercussions these stereotypes could have on their romantic and sexual relationships, and that they know how to strike a balance between these 'techniques' and the behaviours with which they are more comfortable.

“ [...] stereotypes put pressure on boys and girls, pushing them to act in ways that may not correspond to who they really are and what kind of romantic or sexual experiences they would like to have.”

SEDUCTION AND AUTHENTICITY

As we said earlier, adolescence is a period of life when one develops an identity. Body changes and an interest in sexuality are enough to make teens ask themselves who they are and what the future holds for them. Keeping this in mind, wanting to seduce while remaining true to oneself can be quite a challenge to a young person.

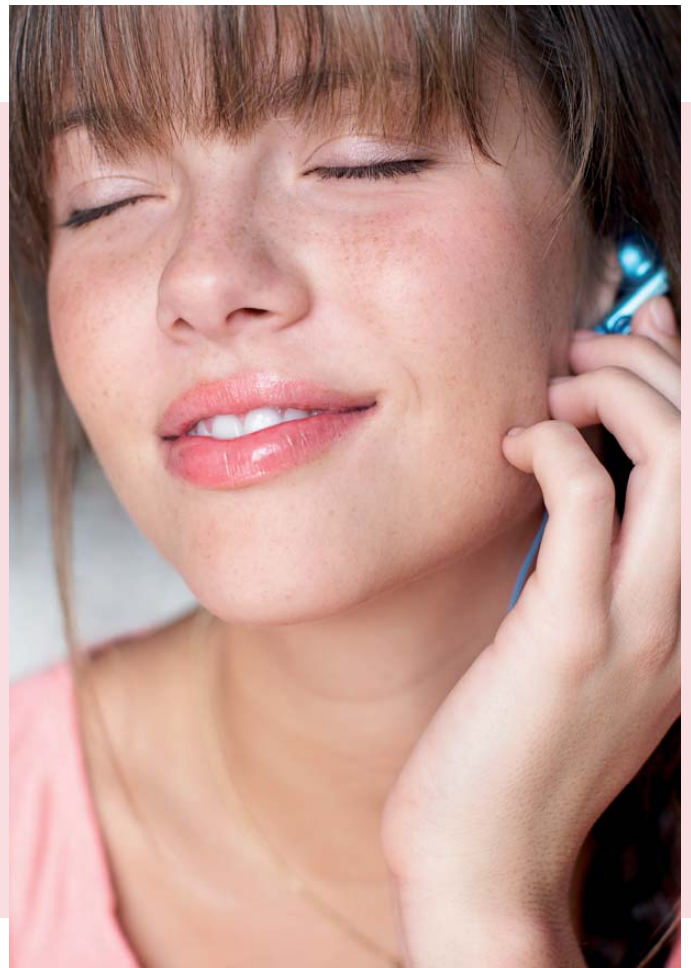
Let's go back to Table 1. We saw that it is in the second and third stages of the process of seduction that partners highlight their qualities and minimize their faults to make themselves more attractive. In doing so, they conform to the other person's desires and reduce the risks of being rejected. Canto-Sperber (2001) states that seduction is based on creating a persona. In other words, being authentic does not appear to go hand in hand with seduction. So is it impossible to seduce while being authentic?

It is normal to want to show our best side when trying to seduce someone. Hiding some of our less flattering features is certainly tempting, and isn't necessarily bad; we want to please and reveal our best qualities. However, we must be careful not to be putting on an act that means we're taking on characteristics that have little to do with our true nature. Though tempting, such a practice only contributes to giving an image that only resembles us a little or not at all, and that could cause a lover to have unrealistic expectations. It's a bit like wearing a mask: over time, it can start to feel heavy and the risk that the other person discover our true nature increases; this may cause disappointment and even result in a break-up. Of course, authenticity in seduction means risking rejection, but it also includes honesty, which helps avoid many problems.

Regardless of the seduction technique chosen, what is important is to be in harmony with oneself (Mimoun, 2007); when trying to woo someone, we should use techniques that resemble us and with which we are comfortable. Is it nonetheless possible to seduce and be seductive by counting on one's personality? In one study (Regan and Joshi, 2003), 46 teenage boys and girls aged 14 to 16 were asked to indicate the qualities they would like to see in a romantic sexual partner. Intelligence, intellect, sense of humour, and social skills were the characteristics that led the pack, followed by physical appearance. In light of these data, we can say that it is more effective to try to entice by revealing one's true personality than by using methods linked to appearance or stereotypes. In this context, let's look at the two cases presented at the beginning. In response to Kevin's question, it is suggested that he use his sense of humour and his listening skills, for example; both of these qualities could be just as seductive for girls as a muscular body and money to pay for film tickets. As for Alexandra, her passion for volleyball and her beautiful smile is likely to get Simon's attention more than excessive make-up or sexy clothes. Although aesthetics and stereotypes may, in a way, be part of the seduction game, it is important for adolescents to be aware that these methods should not take priority over authenticity.

IN CONCLUSION

It is absolutely normal for young people to wonder about seduction techniques. Whether it's about love or sex, or even if it's only a game, seduction is part of discovering oneself and one's capacity to enter into relationships with others. As educators, it is important to keep the idea of *balance* in mind when discussing this topic. While it is difficult not to associate aesthetics and certain stereotypes with seduction, adolescents must learn to use seduction strategies that reflect who they are and with which they are most comfortable so they can attain a balance that suits them.



Learning activities

Now that you are aware of some issues related to seduction in adolescence, you can discuss this topic during activities with teens. The learning activities suggested below are designed to help young people become aware of seduction and what it represents. These activities are intended primarily for adolescents in secondary 3, who are 14 to 15 years old. Though designed for school use, the activities can also be carried out in other environments that welcome adolescents, such as youth homes or centres. The content sections to consult are indicated at the beginning of each activity.

The activities presented should be seen as examples. Depending on the realities of the environment in which you teach or intervene, it may be difficult to offer all three learning activities to a single group. Therefore, each activity is independent. You are free to offer all three, or only the ones that best meet the needs of the youth with whom you deal, or those with which you feel most comfortable.

You can also encourage students to consult one of the school's resource professionals (psychologist, sexologist, nurse or social worker), if needed. In fact, complementary educational services were created to help young people find solutions to the difficulties they face, through a specific program or a special intervention (Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, 2002). These professionals are valuable allies and it is important that they be kept informed of activities that will be conducted in class. Spiritual care and guidance and community involvement animators may also be allies in carrying out these activities, especially Activity 1.

Possible associations with the Québec education program and with complementary educational services programs

GOALS OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Construction of identity
- Construction of a world view
- Action-oriented empowerment

BROAD AREAS OF LEARNING

Health and Well-Being

Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality

Focuses of development

Self-awareness and awareness of one's own fundamental needs

Need for self-affirmation, need for respect of own physical and psychological integrity, need for acceptance and development, need for appreciation and updating, need for expressing emotions

Awareness of the impact of personal choices on health and well-being

Awareness of the principles of balanced sexuality

SUBJECT AREA AND SUBJECT-SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

Ethics and religious culture

Reflect on ethical issues
Practice dialogue

Secondary English Language Arts

Appreciation of a variety of literary works
Oral communication in a variety of contexts

CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

Exercise critical judgment

Form an opinion, express his/her judgment and qualify his/her judgment

Achieve one's potential

Recognize one's personal characteristics, take one's place among others, and make good use of one's personal resources

COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Promotion and prevention services program

Provide students with an environment conducive to the development of a healthy lifestyles and skills that are beneficial to their health and well-being.

Program offering helpful services

Coach students on how to look for solutions to difficulties they experience.

ACTIVITY 1

PROPOSED LEARNING CONTEXT
MEETING WITH THE SPIRITUAL CARE
AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ANIMATOR

MIRROR, MIRROR... WILL I SEDUCE SOMEONE TONIGHT?

DURATION	PEDAGOGICAL GOALS	CONTENT
75 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To present the courtship rituals of birds of paradise To present the aesthetics-based courtship rituals of humans To explain advantages and disadvantages of aesthetics-based seduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seduction and aestheticism (p. 6 of the magazine)
		MATERIAL
		<p>Documentary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Planet Earth</i> (British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC], 2006, Episode 8, Jungles). *

* View the extract on birds of paradise from this episode on Dailymotion (http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xej7dm_les-jungles-1-3_tech; from 1m 15s to 4m 30s)

PREPARING THE ACTIVITY



Viewing the extract

Present the sequence on birds of paradise from Episode 8, Jungles, of the BBC television documentary *Planet Earth*. This extract (3 minutes and 10 seconds) shows the courtship rituals of three species of birds of paradise. The males attempt to seduce potential partners by displaying their eccentric and colourful plumage, singing, dancing, and decorating their territory.

DOING THE ACTIVITY



Team work

Divide the group into non-mixed teams of 4 or 5. Ask the young people to write answers to the following questions on sheets of paper:

- *What resemblances can you find between the courtship rituals of birds of paradise and those of humans?* (Examples of expected responses: courtship rituals are based on body language or appearances rather than on inter-personal skills, etc.)
- *How do girls use their bodies to seduce?* (Examples of expected responses: by wearing clothes that draw attention to breasts and thighs, using makeup, taking special care of their hair and faces, using perfume, etc.)
- *How do boys use their bodies to seduce?* (Examples of expected responses: by wearing clothes that draw attention to muscles, taking special care of their hair and faces, cultivating facial hair, using perfume, etc.)



INTEGRATING THE ACTIVITY

3

Plenary session

Ask each team to give their answers. List them on a board, placing the boys' courtship rituals on one side and the girls' on the other. Then ask the following questions to the entire group:

- *What are some advantages of using your body to seduce?* (Examples of expected responses: to test your seductive powers, to please others, to feel seductive, etc.)
- *What are the disadvantages and limitations of using your body to seduce?* (Examples of expected responses: if you believe you don't meet the beauty standards prescribed by the media, your self-esteem is lowered; the body only represents a superficial part of who you are, etc.)
- *In what other ways can we seduce someone?* (Examples of expected responses: by showing personal qualities such as a sense of humour, intelligence, gentleness, etc.)
- *What are some advantages of seducing not by physical appearance but by other means?* (Examples of expected responses: it allows you to be authentic and honest both with yourself and the other person, etc.)

4

Conclusion

It is difficult to separate aestheticism from seduction. For humans, just as for birds of paradise, appearance plays an important role in courtship. Generally it is the physical attraction we feel for others that leads us to try to attract their attention. But what is considered seductive varies from person to person. It is important to remember that fashion and the media sometimes give idealized, unrealistic images of what is seductive. These images can lead us to lend disproportionate importance to our physical appearance in our attempts at seduction. Also, young people who believe they do not meet the beauty criteria can imagine that they are not seductive and do not deserve to be courted. They must be made aware that a relationship between two people cannot be based solely on looks. Finally, they must learn other means of enticement, means based more on personality than appearance.

ACTIVITY 2

LEARNING CONTEXT
SECONDARY ENGLISH
LANGUAGE ARTS

HE SEDUCES, SHE IS SEDUCED ...

DURATION	PEDAGOGICAL GOALS	CONTENT
75 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To present sexual stereotypes that may be involved in seduction To distinguish between behaviours expected of boys and of girls on first dates To present advantages and disadvantages of adopting stereotypes when trying to seduce someone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seduction and stereotypes (p. 6 of the magazine) Table 2 – Stereotypical behaviours during first dates (p. 7)
		MATERIAL
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> by Ernest Hemingway¹

PREPARING THE ACTIVITY

1

Reading *The Sun Also Rises* by Hemingway

In preparation for this learning activity, ask the young people to read all of Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, and to identify in it stereotypes of masculine and feminine seductiveness.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

2

Team work

Form non-mixed teams of 4 or 5. Ask the adolescents to answer the following questions:

- *What seduction techniques does Jake use?*
- *What similarities can you find between the male characters' seduction models in *The Sun Also Rises* and those currently used in our society?*
- *What seduction techniques do men typically use these days? (See Table 2)*
- *In *The Sun Also Rises*, what seduction techniques does Brett use?*
- *What similarities can you find between the female character's seduction models in *The Sun Also Rises* and those used today?*
- *What seduction techniques do women typically use now? (See Table 2)*
- *How is a boy expected to behave on a first date now? (See Table 2)*
- *How is a girl expected to behave on a first date now? (See Table 2)*
- *Are there enduring stereotypes of male and female seduction?*

1. *Dom Juan* by Molière is the literary work that it is suggested Francophones read for this activity.

3

Reading to the entire group, then performance of a scene from *The Sun Also Rises* by Hemingway (or other work of literature)

Read to the entire group a scene, such as the one beginning, "Brett came up to the bar," in Chapter 3, or Chapter 4 of *The Sun Also Rises*, describing how Jake and Brett meet in a Paris dance hall, leave together in a taxi, kiss, then go to a café; or the scene in Chapter 16 that begins, "We looked out at the plain," in which Jake and Brett walk to a bar where they meet the bullfighter Romero. Select young people or ask for volunteers to read the narration and the conversation involving Jake, Brett and Romero. Then ask the young people to perform the scene chosen.

INTEGRATING THE ACTIVITY

4

Plenary session

Gather the entire group and ask each team to give their responses to the first six questions. Write these answers on a board, placing the male seduction techniques on one side and the female ones on the other. Then ask the group the following questions:

- *What are the advantages of adopting stereotypes when trying to seduce someone?* (Examples of expected responses: stereotypes are comfortably familiar reference points and concrete techniques, etc.)
- *What are the disadvantages of adopting stereotypes when trying to seduce someone?* (Examples of expected responses: stereotypes can generate unfounded expectations in others.)
- *How can we try to attract someone's interest?* (Examples of the responses expected: by counting on personal qualities such as a sense of humour, intelligence, gentleness, etc.)

5

Conclusion

Explain to the young people that it is normal to want to adopt sexual stereotypes when trying to seduce because they provide a reassuring guide to concrete techniques to follow. It is often easier to play a role than to be yourself! When you're young, you often feel awkward about showing another person your amorous and sexual feelings for them; you don't always know what to say or do. You can also be scared that the other person will judge or mock you. For this reason, it is important that young people be aware of repercussions that adopting these stereotypes can have on their loving or sexual relationships; they need to learn how to strike a balance between these techniques and other, more genuine, behaviours.

ACTIVITY 3

FLIRTING AUTHENTICALLY: WHAT A PUZZLER!

DURATION	PEDAGOGICAL GOALS	CONTENT
75 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point out advantages and disadvantages of attempting to seduce in an authentic manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What exactly do we mean by seduction? (p. 4 of the magazine) Seduction and authenticity (p. 8)
		MATERIAL
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three images of adolescent couples—heterosexual, gay, and lesbian—each cut into eight squares. (The number of copies may vary according to the number of young people participating in the activity.)

PREPARING THE ACTIVITY



Presentation of scenarios

KEVIN, 14 YEARS OLD

Not so long ago, I really didn't want to have a girlfriend. But recently, I've been feeling like I wanted to have one. I think I'm finally ready. I was wondering if you could give me a few seduction tips to get girls interested in me.

ALEXANDRA, 14 YEARS OLD

My problem is that at school, there's this guy Simon. Every time I see him, I can't stop smiling, my heart beats really fast and I blush. I've never talked to him and the fact that he doesn't even know I'm alive makes me very sad. I've tried everything: I've smiled at him, I've walked in front of him, but it's like I'm invisible. What can I do to have him notice me and be interested in me?

SIMON, 15 YEARS OLD

I'm really interested in girls but I feel like they just don't see me. I've tried to act like the popular guys in my class: I wear cool clothes, I talk about my hockey feats, I wear perfume... it makes them laugh. Nothing works. Please tell me what else I can do. I really want it to work.¹

1. Excerpts based on www.Tel-jeunes.com (the names have been changed).

DOWNLOAD
THE 3 PUZZLES AT:
CASEXPRIME.GOUV.QC.CA

DOING THE ACTIVITY

2

Plenary session

Lead a discussion with the help of the following questions:

- Have you ever asked the same questions as those asked by the three young people in the scenarios?
- In your opinion, why is it important to be yourself when courting someone?
- Why, in your opinion, is it difficult to try to attract someone while being yourself?
- By not being yourself when trying to woo someone, what could happen?

3

Workshop on non-authentic seduction

Give each adolescent one of the three images of an adolescent couple cut into 8 squares. Explain to them that it is normal to be afraid that once the person in whom you are interested gets to know you better he or she will no longer find you interesting.

Ask the young people to describe in writing, but without writing their name, a situation they have experienced or heard about in which, in order to seduce, someone exaggerated their qualities, minimized their flaws, or even lied. Gather the copies and read aloud some of the young persons' responses. Explain that, for fear of not being considered good enough, you might want to exaggerate your good qualities, minimize your flaws, and maybe even lie.

Next, invite the teens to place in front of them, randomly, four of the eight squares of the image they have in their hands. Explain to them that it is normal, when getting to know someone, not to want to share everything all at once with this person, but that we must still paint an honest picture of ourselves. Ask the young people to place in front of them the four remaining squares of the image, again randomly, and to try to visualize the final result. Explain to them that, when we hide parts of our personality for fear that the other person will not find us interesting, we present a confused picture of ourselves. We become hard to figure out, and everything becomes complicated for the other person. Ask the adolescents to stack up the eight squares of the image before moving to the following step.

4

Workshop on authentic seduction

Explain to the young people what authentic seduction means. When you are getting to know someone who interests you, it is normal not to want to show them everything, not to say everything at once. You have to wait until you trust them. Ask the teens to assemble the eight squares of the image in the correct order, as in a jigsaw puzzle. When they have all done this, explain that over time we gradually share more personal things with the other person. It is not bad to want to show your good side, but if you want to establish a sincere relationship, you have to gradually reveal all of your various sides, including the least flattering. Ask the adolescents to say what they see when they look at the image — a clear picture of an adolescent couple — and explain to them that, when you are authentic, the other person can clearly see who you are.



INTEGRATING THE ACTIVITY

5

Individual work

Ask each young person to write on a sheet of paper the personality traits they deem important to find in a lover.

6

Plenary session

Ask the young people to read aloud some of the responses they have written down. Write the answers on the board. Then ask the group the following questions:

- Do you have any of these personality traits?
- How important do you think these personality traits are when you are flirting with someone?
- What might the advantages be of relying on these personality traits when you want to woo someone?
- In what way do those personality traits considered to be important for girls differ from those considered important for boys?

7

Conclusion

Conclude the activity by saying that it is normal to fear that our personality alone won't be enough to please the person we're interested in. In such cases, it is easy to hide or exaggerate certain facts about ourselves to meet what we suppose are the other person's expectations. When trying to attract someone, it's better to avoid complications, deceptions, and unrealistic expectations and, instead, be true to oneself and establish an equal and honest relationship.

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