

completely GORGEOUS

Teaching Suggestions

Upper Primary

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Suggestions For Teachers

INTRODUCTION

In this website author Kaz Cooke gives us “something that will cheer up anybody who has ‘the uglies’... the facts that will make us relax about diets” and “how to accept a natural body shape, whether it is tall, small, thin or rounded.”

Kaz encourages kids to resist advertising and media messages designed to harm their self esteem. Body and beauty, shapes and sizes, self image and self esteem are all issues which students in schools around Australia think and talk about a lot, both inside and outside their classrooms, amongst themselves and with their teachers. *completely GORGEOUS* invites them to laugh while they’re learning.

completely GORGEOUS has at its base a meticulously researched body of facts first presented in the book, *Real Gorgeous*. Readers of the book have written scores of letters to Kaz saying the book has transformed their body image and self-esteem, and the way they relate to the world, even helping some to recover from, or avoid, eating disorders.

There is a huge amount of information on the site to be used as a resource for research or starting points for discussion, thought or creativity.

USING THE TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions provide students and teachers with activities or questions (for thinking, discussing, or writing about) relating to each section of the site. The activities and questions are sorted as suitable for upper primary, lower secondary, or upper secondary students, or as suitable for all levels.

At the end of this introduction, teachers can choose activities from any of these sections. Often the activities are relevant to more than one key learning area. For example, a role-play uses drama skills, and therefore has an Arts focus, but may also be dealing with Health, Psychology and English issues or skills. In other sections, while the discussion points might be very important for student welfare coordinators or personal development classes, there is often the scope for older students to look in more detail at, for example, scientific or psychological theories.

While many of the activities may be more applicable to girls, there are some sections especially for boys. Many of the issues are common to both sexes, and there are suggestions for activities for all young people.

Teachers will no doubt be aware that a small amount of the material and topics provided in the suggestions and in the site are of a sexual nature. Care should be taken if these areas are culturally or religiously sensitive for class members.

The film *Gorgeous*, for which suggestions are provided here, is contained within the *completely GORGEOUS* website. It is also available on videotape from Film Australia.

HELP WITH YOUR SUBJECTS

completely GORGEOUS, the website, is an active, fun, and useful classroom resource for teachers and students from upper primary school to senior levels of secondary school. It includes the text and illustrations from *Real Gorgeous* the book, the animated 10 minute video *Gorgeous*, some additional material, and games which can be used for exploring issues across the following learning areas and studies:

- Health and Physical Education
- Studies of Society and Environment
- Arts
- English
- Science
- Cultural Studies
- Media Studies
- Psychology
- Personal Development, Pastoral Care, Welfare
- Consumer Education

completely GORGEOUS is an essential reference for the following learning areas:

Human Development:

The potential of people to grow, develop and function in all their capacities.

The personal behaviour of people and the social, biological and physical environments in which people, families and communities grow and develop.

Human sexuality as a particularly significant aspect of human functioning with both individual and social implications.

Physical Activity and the Community:

The concept of fitness and its relationship with biological and cultural factors.

Fitness as a factor in health and performance (including the effects of exercise on the body), cultural images of body shape, social expectations about body shape, social expectations about fitness, and the fitness industry.

People and Food:

The significance of food in dietary needs and practices of different groups, in dietary trends or fads, and in meeting social and emotional needs.

Science:

The key unifying idea is that “working scientifically is a powerful way of generating, understanding and solving problems”.

In the activities for *completely GORGEOUS*, students are asked to analyse situations, propose solutions, test and gather information, and record and report results. There are opportunities for them to draw conclusions, consider accuracy and reliability, and take action using science information and skills.

English:

The whole text of *completely GORGEOUS* can be studied by students of English. Author Kaz Cooke writes, “And hey, let’s face it, we wouldn’t mind a laugh while we’re at it.” Students can study her unique writing style and the techniques used to organise and link the material. You could study the sequence of headings. Also worth a close look is the way Kaz ‘speaks’ to the reader. The craft of writing to reach a specific audience is demonstrated with style.

Students can describe the main features of the writing style. They can pull out examples of humour and seriousness and search for some punchlines.

They can try writing in a comic style themselves.

Gorgeous the film

Hermoine, the star of the animated film *Gorgeous*, is not animated first thing in the morning, she’s desperate. She faces the mirror and onto her shoulder pops Deirdre, screaming insults and advice. Deirdre, the inner voice from hell complete with coach’s megaphone, goads Hermoine to diet, pump iron, be made over by beauty specialists, buy and spend. Fighting Deirdre with every bit of control she can hold on to, Hermoine finally arrives at her job interview. You’ll find out what happens when you see her on the site (or in the videotape available from Film Australia)!

In the video, the themes are:

- self image and body image
- self-esteem
- confidence and insecurity
- pressures on girls and women to look good
- inner conflict
- solutions to having ‘the uglies’ which are not real such as: dieting, smoking, bingeing and vomiting, bouts of excessive exercise, spending on the clothes of the moment, body products, painful beauty treatments and cosmetic surgery
- the beauty industry
- changing fashions: ‘the perfect body’, ‘the look’.

Before Watching the Film *Gorgeous*:

Write down a few phrases which you think express what it means to ‘have the uglies’.

Think about what you like about your body. (This is just for your own reflection.)

Discuss what lengths would you be prepared to go to in order to change your body? Which of these actions could be categorised as ‘healthy’, and which would be better described as ‘risky’ or even ‘crazy’?

Talk about this idea: “Our minds and bodies are separate and they have fights”. Do you agree or disagree? Do you have arguments with yourself?

Think about who does decide body matters for you? Who decides what you are going to wear? Who decides what you are going to eat? Who tells you that you look OK? Do you have control, or are you heavily influenced by peer pressures, the media, family or a particular fashion trend? Try to be really honest with yourself here.

Have you heard people say, “Listen to your body”? What do they mean? Do you listen to your body?

After watching what Hermoine The Modern Girl goes through:

- Write down a list of words which describe what you thought of the film.
- Write a description of Hermoine in your own words.
- What do you think of Hermoine? Is she a true-to-life character? What aspects of her behaviour and concerns are typical of anyone you know?
- Could there have been other events in the story or another ending? Write your ideas in groups and then role-play your new version of the story for the rest of the class.
- Hermoine is a girl under pressure. She isn’t happy with herself. What are the kinds of pressures which girls sometimes feel? What are the ways you can deal with these pressures? Do boys feel any of the same sorts of pressures? Why or why not? What are the pressures boys experience? Are there any pressures both boys and girls experience? Discuss.
- Who is Deirdre? What are her obsessions? When Hermoine says to her inner voice, “You’re kind of weird, Deirdre,” do you agree with her? Why or why not? Who wins in the end?

Hermoine in the Art Gallery:

Find the section which comments on changing views of ideal body shape. Look particularly at the section with the following dialogue:

Painting: “Look, this sort of thing was all the rage when I got painted. If you didn’t have thighs like fire hydrants, you weren’t in the running.”

Supermodel Photo: “Half a lettuce leaf and seven hours in the gym every day and my career was down the toilet before I was twelve and a half.”

Sculpture: “I was just getting used to myself and then the pixie look was back in. How many women look like pixies?”

Describe the representations of female shapes and images on the walls of the gallery.

What message is this section giving about changing and different views of body shape?

What do you think are the main messages which the film has for us? Talk about this in a class discussion.

Health & Physical Education

Shapes & Sizes

Things to do:

Draw up a chart from birth to old age which maps the changes which men and women go through at various stages of their life. You could present this as a timeline, using photos, collage or pictures you draw yourself.

How much influence do you think your family’s physical characteristics have had on your shape and size? Hunt through family photos to see if you are like other members of your family when they were your age. Do you have somebody’s eyes? Your grandad’s legs? Adopted or refugee children, or others who cannot trace their family’s biological history can write a short story about meeting a long lost cousin and recognising parts of themselves in the cousin. Have a class discussion to try to draw some conclusions about how much shape and size is influenced by your family.

In the past, women went through a lot of pain to create smaller breasts (1920s) or bigger bottoms (19th century). Ask some women from your grandparents’ generation to tell you about their views on ‘corsets, step-ins and longline bras’ which they probably wore to create a different body shape. Then do some research to find out about other ways women in Europe, Asia and Africa, over the centuries, have tried to change their physical shape. Why do fashion ideas change? Why do they change so quickly? Who benefits from having fashions change every year?

What devices do women use today to create an artificial body shape? Which ones are dangerous? Why? Interview an older friend or relation who can recall the various devices used over the several decades e.g. waist cinches in the 50s, big shoulder pads in the 80s.

People from different cultures and religions sometimes celebrate body changes and stages of life in different ways. Try to find examples of how different cultures and religions deal with rites of passage, like birth, puberty, marriage and death. You could, for example, do some reading about traditions and practices amongst Aboriginal and Islander Australians now and in the past. Or various members of your class could investigate indigenous peoples’ reactions to shapes and sizes and life stages.

You could do some library research to find out about the Mayans, the Inuit people (Eskimos), Maori, Masai or other groups.

You will need lots of sheets of butchers' paper and felt pens for this activity. You may need to stick some sheets of paper together if you haven't got a large roll of paper. In groups, draw a whole series of bodies which represent lots of different shapes and sizes. You could get members of your class to lie on the floor and trace around their bodies. On your models, write out a range of reasons why there are so many shapes and sizes amongst our population. Stick your models on the classroom wall.

Cut out as many pictures as you can of famous people from magazines. In groups or individually, brainstorm brief descriptions of these people. As far as you know, what are they really like? What evidence do you have for your opinions? Do other members of your class agree or disagree with you? Do we sometimes have wrong impressions of people because of their shape and size?

In your own words explain the meaning of the cartoon ('Fact for the day...' in the 'Why Are We Told To Be Skinny?' section).

Play the 'Shapes and Sizes Game' on the site and grab that chance to make an identikit picture of yourself the way you are. What are the negative words to describe your shape? What are the positive words? Do you usually think of the negative or positive words? Why?

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

Kimberly, aged 18, ('Shapes and Sizes' section) makes us think about some of the negative points about being thin. What problems does she share with us? Can you think of any other reasons why 'being thin ain't all its cracked up to be'?

Weight For Me

Things to do:

completely GORGEOUS tells us that nutrition and diet can affect menstruation and normal development. What evidence does it give us on this point?

Try to find out if women of your parents' and grandparents' generation feel guilty about eating certain foods and ask why or why not? Have their opinions about eating habits changed at different stages of their life? Are there any differences you can detect in people's attitudes to food because of their different ethnic backgrounds or religious beliefs?

When you have read all that *completely GORGEOUS* has to say about nutrition, make a poster collage using pictures, sketches and cartoons which express your opinion about what you should eat more of and less of.

Make sure that you are really well informed about why young people should not diet. Form equal-sized small groups, and in a race against the clock, (say about five minutes) make a list of all the

negative things about diets. Check with the ‘Why Diets are Dumb’ and ‘Diets Create Fat’ sections in ‘The Diet Magazine’. Do you think you have all the answers in the first go? Compare your answers in a class discussion.

Listen to what Carrie, Jane, Penny, Pamela, Rula, Haylie and Georgina have to say in the ‘Eating Disorders’ section. Script a meeting between all of these girls and include a male sufferer. What would they say to each other? Research the advice they should be given and provide it. Role play this piece and perhaps even videotape it.

Alternatively you might script and record a talkback radio show where each person calls in to discuss their problem.

Produce a picture storybook on healthy living. Create characters and provide 8-12 year olds with well-researched advice on exercise and eating habits. Read the book to an appropriate audience.

Share your own stories about short-term diets in a class discussion. What problems can you foresee with the kinds of diets you have talked about? If you can’t think of any, have a look at some fad diets in magazines, or look at the ingredients of diet biscuits or diet drinks to give you some data to analyse.

What possibilities are there for exercise in: your home, your local area, local clubs, your city? What exercise can you do which is not formally organised (such as walking and swimming)? What about team sports? Make an information chart to put on your classroom wall which maps the range of exercise you can do. Which ones might you enjoy?

Play the ‘Weight Game’ with the diets option. Find out from the text of *completely GORGEOUS* why dieting actually makes you put on weight.

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

How serious are eating disorders? In your answer, consider what *completely GORGEOUS* has to say in the ‘Eating Disorders’ section, and use some of the contacts suggested.

Imagine you need to help a friend with an eating disorder. How could you find a support group? What would you tell him or her about the dangers?

In a small group, talk about ‘Food as Sin’. Are there foods that you regard as ‘sin’? Why or why not? In some cultures eating certain kinds of food is sinful. Can you suggest what any of these foods are? If not, try to find out some examples. Are these foods denied because they are seen as being ‘fattening’, or are there other reasons why these foods are avoided?

Read the section on ‘Healthy Eating’. Has it changed your mind about anything?

In your experience, do men eat smaller portions of food than women? What explanations can you offer for your answer?

“Sport is all about winning and losing.” Do you agree? Why or why not?

“Too much exercise or too little exercise can be bad for you.” Is this statement right or wrong? Explain your answer.

What Is Normal?

Things to do:

As a class activity, look at a range of popular magazines and decide if there is a particular image presented of what is ‘normal’ in terms of: breast size, body shape and appearance. Cut out articles, pictures and advertisements which present particular images, and talk about them in class.

In the video Hermoine goes to great lengths to try to change her body shape and appearance. Make a list of all the things she puts herself through. Then add to the list other things you have heard of which women use to try to change their breast, thigh or body shape. Why do normally shaped women think there is something wrong with them? Do some research on this.

Using the information *completely GORGEOUS* gives us about skin, pimples and tanning, create a ‘myths and realities’ sheet which sets out the facts about these issues.

Play the ‘Thigh Quiz’ game with the sleazy game show host! What have you learned from this experience?

Read about tanning in the ‘Do I Have Normal Skin?’ section. Investigate what the sun’s rays can do to skin.

Write a letter to a younger sister or friend telling them what happens to a boy’s OR a girl’s body during puberty, and what periods will be like, if it’s to a girl. Where would you get more information?

What changes might happen to you during puberty? Draw a nude picture of yourself as you might be in ten years time.

Although some people get cramps and pre-menstrual tension (PMT), periods are not supposed to have side effects like pain which interrupt your life. What should you do if you really don’t feel well, if you get unusual pains, or if your moods are changed? How would you find a local doctor, women’s health centre or family planning clinic? Compile a women’s health directory for your area. Exchange information about local doctors you have visited. How helpful were they?

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

What changes happen to a girl’s OR a boy’s body during puberty? Everybody has hormones. What do they do? Research.

What are some of the names you have heard being used for a period? What really happens during a period?

What physical changes can happen to a body getting too little food or too much exercise?

Fashion Victims

Things to do:

In the past, women went through a lot of pain to create smaller breasts (1920s) or bigger bottoms (19th century). Ask some women from your grandparents' generation to tell you about their views on 'corsets, step-ins and longline bras' which they probably wore to create a different body shape. Then do some research to find out about other ways women in Europe, Asia and Africa, over the centuries, have tried to change their physical shape. Why do fashion ideas change? Why do they change so quickly? Who benefits from having fashions change every year?

Some of you might have 'fashion hoarders' at home, parents or friends who have been slaves to fashion and who have kept clothes or shoes which have been 'hot items' at various times in the past couple of decades. Go through some cupboards at home or ask friends for some of their 'fashion relics', and try to track changing fashions over time. Bring your 'artefacts' to school and talk about how fashions have changed. How often have there been shoes or clothing items which really weren't comfortable, but worn just for effect? Which old ones are back in fashion?

Survey at least 10 people aged between 10 and 60 (or older) to find out what 'Lotions and Potions' they use. (Include in your survey items such as moisturisers, cosmetics, and toiletries.) Form small groups to decide what it is you want to find out and what questions you are going to ask. The survey could include questions about brand names, costs, how often they try new products, etc. Give a report on your conclusions in both a written form and in an oral presentation.

Produce a pamphlet that explains why expensive moisturiser creams are not necessarily any better than cheaper ones.

Read everything that *completely GORGEOUS* mentions about moisturisers. Make a list of all the key points which you haven't heard before when you read this section for the first time. Do you think you will use expensive or cheap moisturisers from now on? Or any moisturisers? What would you put on your face?

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

Who do you see as your role models? Who impresses you? Why do you admire them? If you could invite ten of your heroes to your birthday party, who would they be? In a class discussion, talk about who the males and females in your class see as their heroes and role models. Why are they admired? Nominate five heroes of each sex who are admired for who they are or for their achievements, not for what they look like.

How much are you influenced by fashion? What is it anyway? Are there clothes that you wore last year that you wouldn't be seen dead in this year? Why or why not? Who do you think creates the view of what is fashionable and what is not?

Why do people use lotions and potions?

Girls: – When would you wear make-up? At various times throughout history men have worn make-up. What would you think about boys wearing make-up? Guys: – Do you like it when girls wear a lot of make-up? Under what circumstances would you wear make-up (on stage, going out, Halloween)? Discuss all the reasons for and against all sorts of make-up.

You Are Not Your Buttocks

Things to do:

Play the ‘Self-Esteem Game’, to see how you go in the journey to permanent self-esteem. Do you think life is a series of ups and downs? How can you work towards having fewer downs? Discuss.

For so long women’s self-esteem has been tied to their feelings about their appearance. It seems they have always been valued as objects of beauty and desirability ... however, this is somewhat different from men who obtain their self-esteem via achievement, power, status and control.

The media reinforces such associations. Organise a media watch with your friends. Examine the images of women and men presented in several different forms of media. Examine news and current affairs programs. Are female and male presenters the same age or is it more important for one sex to be younger than the other? Do men and women wear the same amount of make-up?

Role play things to say to the ‘body police’. Start with the suggestions in *completely GORGEOUS*.

Select three issues examined in *completely GORGEOUS* that you would like more information on. Draft letters to organisations that might be able to provide you with further data. Refer to the ‘Links’ section on the Main Menu of *completely GORGEOUS*.

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

How important is body image to you? Try to express your own ideas about this issue. Write your thoughts down on a piece of paper without your name. Chart the various points of view that members of your class have expressed on the board, and then hold a class discussion on your findings. It could be really useful to have a discussion across a range of year levels, so that older and younger students can talk together.

Studies of Society / Environment

Shapes & Sizes

Things to do:

Draw up a chart from birth to old age which maps the changes which men and women go through at various stages of their life. You could present this as a timeline, using photos, collage or pictures you draw yourself.

In the past, women went through a lot of pain to create smaller breasts (1920s) or bigger bottoms (19th century). Ask some women from your grandparents' generation to tell you about their views on 'corsets, step-ins and longline bras' which they probably wore to create a different body shape. Then do some research to find out about other ways women in Europe, Asia and Africa, over the centuries, have tried to change their physical shape. Why do fashion ideas change? Why do they change so quickly? Who benefits from having fashions change every year?

People from different cultures and religions sometimes celebrate body changes and stages of life in different ways. Try to find examples of how different cultures and religions deal with rites of passage, like birth, puberty, marriage and death. You could, for example, do some reading about traditions and practices amongst Aboriginal and Islander Australians now and in the past. Or various members of your class could investigate indigenous peoples' reactions to shapes and sizes and life stages.

You could do some library research to find out about the Mayans, the Inuit people (Eskimos), Maori, Masai or other groups.

Weight For Me

Things to do:

What possibilities are there for exercise in: your home, your local area, local clubs, your city? What exercise can you do which is not formally organised (such as walking and swimming)? What about team sports? Make an information chart to put on your classroom wall which maps the range of exercise you can do. Which ones might you enjoy?

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

"Sport is all about winning and losing." Do you agree? Why or why not?

Fashion Victims

Things to do:

Some of you might have ‘fashion hoarders’ at home, parents or friends who have been slaves to fashion and who have kept clothes or shoes which have been ‘hot items’ at various times in the past couple of decades. Go through some cupboards at home or ask friends for some of their ‘fashion relics’, and try to track changing fashions over time. Bring your ‘artefacts’ to school and talk about how fashions have changed. How often have there been shoes or clothing items which really weren’t comfortable, but worn just for effect? Which old ones are back in fashion?

In your library, do some further research to try to find out more about changing attitudes to fashion. Find out what male employers thought of women who wore pants to work in the 1960s. Find out how fashion has sometimes been used as a social statement (e.g. flower power in the 1970s).

Are girls at your school allowed to wear trousers? If not, why hasn’t this changed? Draft a letter to your school council outlining the argument for girls to be allowed to wear trousers. If there is consensus on this issue, seek a teacher’s advice on how you might go about effecting this change.

Play the ‘Fashion Game’, in the ‘Fashion Victims’ section. What new fashion secrets have you now found out? What have you learned? Which outfits would you buy?

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

Who do you see as your role models? Who impresses you? Why do you admire them? If you could invite ten of your heroes to your birthday party, who would they be? In a class discussion, talk about who the males and females in your class see as their heroes and role models. Why are they admired? Nominate five heroes of each sex who are admired for who they are or for their achievements, not for what they look like.

How much are you influenced by fashion? What is it anyway? Are there clothes that you wore last year that you wouldn’t be seen dead in this year? Why or why not? Who do you think creates the view of what is fashionable and what is not?

You Are Not Your Buttocks

Things to do:

Play the ‘Self-Esteem Game’, to see how you go in the journey to permanent self-esteem. Do you think life is a series of ups and downs? How can you work towards having fewer downs? Discuss.

The Arts

Shapes & Sizes

Things to do:

Draw up a chart from birth to old age which maps the changes which men and women go through at various stages of their life. You could present this as a timeline, using photos, collage or pictures you draw yourself.

English

Shapes & Sizes

Things to do:

Cut out as many pictures as you can of famous people from magazines. In groups or individually, brainstorm brief descriptions of these people. As far as you know, what are they really like? What evidence do you have for your opinions? Do other members of your class agree or disagree with you? Do we sometimes have wrong impressions of people because of their shape and size?

Write a description of yourself without mentioning your appearance. (For example, what do you enjoy, what are you good at, how do you feel about things?)

Write a poem which makes some comments on the physical similarities between you and other members of your family, or a poem which tells us what you are really all about rather than what your physical appearance is. You might like to illustrate your writing with your own sketches.

In your own words explain the meaning of the cartoon ('Fact for the day...' in the 'Why Are We Told To Be Skinny?' section).

Weight For Me

Things to do:

Try to find out if women of your parents' and grandparents' generation feel guilty about eating certain foods and ask why or why not? Have their opinions about eating habits changed at different stages of their life? Are there any differences you can detect in people's attitudes to food because of their different ethnic backgrounds or religious beliefs?

Listen to what Carrie, Jane, Penny, Pamela, Rula, Haylie and Georgina have to say in the 'Eating Disorders' section. Script a meeting between all of these girls and include a male sufferer. What would they say to each other? Research the advice they should be given and provide it. Role play this piece and perhaps even videotape it.

Alternatively you might script and record a talkback radio show where each person calls in to discuss their problem.

Produce a picture storybook on healthy living. Create characters and provide 8-12 year olds with well-researched advice on exercise and eating habits. Read the book to an appropriate audience.

Share your own stories about short term diets in a class discussion. What problems can you foresee with the kinds of diets you have talked about? If you can't think of any, have a look at some fad diets in magazines, or look at the ingredients of diet biscuits or diet drinks to give you some data to analyse.

Fashion Victims

Things to do:

In your library, do some further research to try to find out more about changing attitudes to fashion. Find out what male employers thought of women who wore pants to work in the 1960s. Find out how fashion has sometimes been used as a social statement (e.g. flower power in the 1970s).

Are girls at your school allowed to wear trousers? If not, why hasn't this changed? Draft a letter to your school council outlining the argument for girls to be allowed to wear trousers. If there is consensus on this issue, seek a teacher's advice on how you might go about effecting this change.

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

Who do you see as your role models? Who impresses you? Why do you admire them? If you could invite ten of your heroes to your birthday party, who would they be? In a class discussion, talk about who the males and females in your class see as their heroes and role models. Why are they admired? Nominate five heroes of each sex who are admired for who they are or for their achievements, not for what they look like.

Hyper Hype

Things to do:

Produce a pamphlet that explains why expensive moisturiser creams are not necessarily any better than cheaper ones.

You Are Not Your Buttocks

Things to do:

Play the 'Self-Esteem Game', to see how you go in the journey to permanent self-esteem. Do you think life is a series of ups and downs? How can you work towards having fewer downs? Discuss.

Select three issues examined in *completely GORGEOUS* that you would like more information on. Draft letters to organisations that might be able to provide you with further data. Refer to the 'Links' section on the Main Menu of *completely GORGEOUS*.

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

How important is body image to you? Try to express your own ideas about this issue. Write your thoughts down on a piece of paper without your name. Chart the various points of view that members of your class have expressed on the board, and then hold a class discussion on your findings. It could be really useful to have a discussion across a range of year levels, so that older and younger students can talk together.

Science

Shapes & Sizes

Things to do:

Draw up a chart from birth to old age which maps the changes which men and women go through at various stages of their life. You could present this as a timeline, using photos, collage or pictures you draw yourself.

How much influence do you think your family's physical characteristics have had on your shape and size? Hunt through family photos to see if you are like other members of your family when they were your age. Do you have somebody's eyes? Your grandad's legs? Adopted or refugee children, or others who cannot trace their family's biological history can write a short story about meeting a long lost cousin and recognising parts of themselves in the cousin. Have a class discussion to try to draw some conclusions about how much shape and size is influenced by your family.

In the past, women went through a lot of pain to create smaller breasts (1920s) or bigger bottoms (19th century). Ask some women from your grandparents' generation to tell you about their views on 'corsets, step-ins and longline bras' which they probably wore to create a different body shape. Then do some research to find out about other ways women in Europe, Asia and Africa, over the centuries, have tried to change their physical shape. Why do fashion ideas change? Why do they change so quickly? Who benefits from having fashions change every year?

What Is Normal?

Things to do:

Read about tanning in the 'Do I Have Normal Skin?' section. Investigate what the sun's rays can do to skin.

Write a letter to a younger sister or friend telling them what happens to a boy's OR a girl's body during puberty, and what periods will be like, if it's to a girl. Where would you get more information?

Hyper Hype

Things to do:

Do your own research to find out more about 'beauty' products. Collect samples and advertisements. As a group activity, compare a selection of products and look at what they are made of, the effects they claim to produce and the effects noted when members of your class try them. Then talk about what products your class would approve and why. You will have to work out what your criteria are for approval. Write a final report on the products you have tested.

Cultural Studies

Shapes & Sizes

Things to do:

In the past, women went through a lot of pain to create smaller breasts (1920s) or bigger bottoms (19th century). Ask some women from your grandparents' generation to tell you about their views on 'corsets, step-ins and longline bras' which they probably wore to create a different body shape. Then do some research to find out about other ways women in Europe, Asia and Africa, over the centuries, have tried to change their physical shape. Why do fashion ideas change? Why do they change so quickly? Who benefits from having fashions change every year?

What devices do women use today to create an artificial body shape? Which ones are dangerous? Why? Interview an older friend or relation who can recall the various devices used over several decades e.g. waist cinches in the 50s, big shoulder pads in the 80s.

People from different cultures and religions sometimes celebrate body changes and stages of life in different ways. Try to find examples of how different cultures and religions deal with rites of passage like birth, puberty, marriage and death. You could, for example, do some reading about traditions and practices amongst Aboriginal and Islander Australians now and in the past. Or various members of your class could investigate indigenous peoples' reactions to shapes and sizes and life stages.

You could do some library research to find out about the Mayans, the Inuit people (Eskimos), Maori, Masai or other groups.

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

How important is body image to you? Try to express your own ideas about this issue. Write your thoughts down on a piece of paper without your name. Chart the various points of view that members of your class have expressed on the board, and then hold a class discussion on your findings. It could be really useful to have a discussion across a range of year levels, so that older and younger students can talk together.

Weight For Me

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

In your experience, do men eat smaller portions of food than women? What explanations can you offer for your answer?

“Sport is all about winning and losing.” Do you agree? Why or why not?

Fashion Victims

Things to do:

Some of you might have ‘fashion hoarders’ at home, parents or friends who have been slaves to fashion and who have kept clothes or shoes which have been ‘hot items’ at various times in the past couple of decades. Go through some cupboards at home or ask friends for some of their ‘fashion relics’, and try to track changing fashions over time. Bring your ‘artefacts’ to school and talk about how fashions have changed. How often have there been shoes or clothing items which really weren’t comfortable, but worn just for effect? Which old ones are back in fashion?

In your library, do some further research to try to find out more about changing attitudes to fashion. Find out what male employers thought of women who wore pants to work in the 1960s. Find out how fashion has sometimes been used as a social statement (e.g. flower power in the 1970s).

Are girls at your school allowed to wear trousers? If not, why hasn’t this changed? Draft a letter to your school council outlining the argument for girls to be allowed to wear trousers. If there is consensus on this issue, seek a teacher’s advice on how you might go about effecting this change.

Play the ‘Fashion Game’, in the ‘Fashion Victims’ section. What new fashion secrets have you now found out? What have you learned? Which outfits would you buy?

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

How much are you influenced by fashion? What is it anyway? Are there clothes that you wore last year that you wouldn't be seen dead in this year? Why or why not? Who do you think creates the view of what is fashionable and what is not?

Media Studies

Fashion Victims

Things to do:

In your library, do some further research to try to find out more about changing attitudes to fashion. Find out what male employers thought of women who wore pants to work in the 1960s. Find out how fashion has sometimes been used as a social statement (e.g. flower power in the 1970s).

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Who do you see as your role models? Who impresses you? Why do you admire them? If you could invite ten of your heroes to your birthday party, who would they be? In a class discussion, talk about who the males and females in your class see as their heroes and role models. Why are they admired? Nominate five heroes of each sex who are admired for who they are or for their achievements, not for what they look like.

“Only 5 to 10 percent of the population of women are in the height and weight range of models... “, yet they provide adolescent females with the standards by which many judge their appearance. Why? (See 'Coathangers' in the 'Models' magazine.)

How much are you influenced by fashion? What is it anyway? Are there clothes that you wore last year that you wouldn't be seen dead in this year? Why or why not? Who do you think creates the view of what is fashionable and what is not?

Hyper Hype

Things to do:

Read the 'Lotions and Potions' section on moisturisers. Buy some cheap sorbelene cream from a local pharmacy. In a team, make up a name for the cream, put it into another container, design an expensive-sounding label, packaging, and advertising campaign. Try to sell it to somebody, or give it to somebody for a present.

Play the 'Hyper Hype' game 'Behind the Scenes'. What did you learn about fashion photography and magazine photos?

You Are Not Your Buttocks

Things to do:

For so long women's self-esteem has been tied to their feelings about their appearance. It seems they have always been valued as objects of beauty and desirability ... however, this is somewhat different from men who obtain their self-esteem via achievement, power, status and control.

The media reinforces such associations. Organise a media watch with your friends. Examine the images of women and men presented in several different forms of media. Examine news and current affairs programs. Are female and male presenters the same age or is it more important for one sex to be younger than the other? Do men and women wear the same amount of make-up?

Psychology

Don't tell us you're teaching Psychology at Upper Primary level! There are no suggestions for this. Ha, ha, ha! (Sorry.)

Personal Development

Shapes & Sizes

Things to do:

Draw up a chart from birth to old age which maps the changes which men and women go through at various stages of their life. You could present this as a timeline, using photos, collage or pictures you draw yourself.

completely GORGEOUS Teaching Suggestions

In the past, women went through a lot of pain to create smaller breasts (1920s) or bigger bottoms (19th century). Ask some women from your grandparents' generation to tell you about their views on 'corsets, step-ins and longline bras' which they probably wore to create a different body shape. Then do some research to find out about other ways women in Europe, Asia and Africa, over the centuries, have tried to change their physical shape. Why do fashion ideas change? Why do they change so quickly? Who benefits from having fashions change every year?

What devices do women use today to create an artificial body shape? Which ones are dangerous? Why? Interview an older friend or relation who can recall the various devices used over the several decades e.g. waist cinches in the 50s, big shoulder pads in the 80s.

People from different cultures and religions sometimes celebrate body changes and stages of life in different ways. Try to find examples of how different cultures and religions deal with rites of passage, like birth, puberty, marriage and death. You could, for example, do some reading about traditions and practices amongst Aboriginal and Islander Australians now and in the past. Or various members of your class could investigate indigenous peoples' reactions to shapes and sizes and life stages.

You could do some library research to find out about the Mayans, the Inuit people (Eskimos), Maori, Masai or other groups.

You will need lots of sheets of butchers' paper and felt pens for this activity. You may need to stick some sheets of paper together if you haven't got a large roll of paper. In groups, draw a whole series of bodies which represent lots of different shapes and sizes. You could get members of your class to lie on the floor and trace around their bodies. On your models, write out a range of reasons why there are so many shapes and sizes amongst our population. Stick your models on the classroom wall.

Play the 'Shapes and Sizes Game' on the site and grab that chance to make an identikit picture of yourself the way you are. What are the negative words to describe your shape? What are the positive words? Do you usually think of the negative or positive words? Why?

Kimberly, aged 18, ('Shapes and Sizes' section) makes us think about some of the negative points about being thin. What problems does she share with us? Can you think of any other reasons why "being thin ain't all its cracked up to be"?

Weight For Me

Things to do:

Try to find out if women of your parents' and grandparents' generation feel guilty about eating certain foods and ask why or why not? Have their opinions about eating habits changed at different stages of their life? Are there any differences you can detect in people's attitudes to food because of their different ethnic backgrounds or religious beliefs?

When you have read all that *completely GORGEOUS* has to say about nutrition, make a poster collage using pictures, sketches and cartoons which express your opinion about what you should eat more of and less of.

Make sure that you are really well informed about why young people should not diet. Form equal-sized small groups, and in a race against the clock, (say about five minutes), make a list of all the negative things about diets. Check with the 'Why Diets are Dumb' and 'Diets Create Fat' sections in 'The Dieting Magazine'. Do you think you have all the answers in the first go? Compare your answers in a class discussion.

Listen to what Carrie, Jane, Penny, Pamela, Rula, Haylie and Georgina have to say in the 'Eating Disorders' section. Script a meeting between all of these girls and include a male sufferer. What would they say to each other? Research the advice they should be given and provide it. Role play this piece and perhaps even videotape it. Alternatively you might script and record a talkback radio show where each person calls in to discuss their problem.

Share your own stories about short-term diets in a class discussion. What problems can you foresee with the kinds of diets you have talked about? If you can't think of any, have a look at some fad diets in magazines, or look at the ingredients of diet biscuits or diet drinks to give you some data to analyse.

Play the 'Weight Game' with the diets option. Find out why dieting actually makes you put on weight.

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

How serious are eating disorders? In your answer, consider what *completely GORGEOUS* has to say in the 'Eating Disorders' section, and use some of the contacts suggested.

Imagine you need to help a friend with an eating disorder. How could you find a support group? What would you tell him or her about the dangers?

In a small group, talk about 'Food as Sin'. Are there foods that you regard as 'sin'? Why or why not? In some cultures eating certain kinds of food is sinful. Can you suggest what any of these foods are? If not, try to find out some examples. Are these foods denied because they are seen as being 'fattening', or are there other reasons why these foods are avoided?

Read the section on 'Healthy Eating'. Has it changed your mind about anything?

In your experience, do men eat smaller portions of food than women? What explanations can you offer for your answer?

"Sport is all about winning and losing." Do you agree? Why or why not?

"Too much exercise or too little exercise can be bad for you." Is this statement right or wrong? Explain your answer.

What Is Normal?

Things to do:

As a class activity, look at a range of popular magazines and decide if there is a particular image presented of what is 'normal' in terms of: breast size, body shape and appearance. Cut out articles, pictures and advertisements which present particular images, and talk about them in class.

In the video Hermoine goes to great lengths to try to change her body shape and appearance. Make a list of all the things she puts herself through. Then add to the list other things you have heard of which women use to try to change their breast, thigh or body shape. Why do normally shaped women think there is something wrong with them? Do some research on this.

Using the information *completely GORGEOUS* gives us about skin, pimples and tanning, create a 'myths and realities' sheet which sets out the facts about these issues.

Write a dialogue in which you convince a woman who has decided to have cosmetic surgery on several parts of her body that she should change her mind. Here is the start of the conversation:

I am not going to live another day with small breasts, drooping eyelids, fat thighs and big nose...

Play the 'Thigh Quiz' game with the sleazy game show host! What have you learned from this experience?

What changes might happen to you during puberty? Draw a nude picture of yourself as you might be in ten years time.

Although some people get cramps and pre-menstrual tension (PMT), periods are not supposed to have side effects like pain which interrupt your life. What should you do if you really don't feel well, if you get unusual pains, or if your moods are changed? How would you find a local doctor, women's health centre or family planning clinic? Compile a women's health directory for your area. Exchange information about local doctors you have visited. How helpful were they?

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines 'normal' as 'standing at right angles... conforming to standard... regular, usual'. After reading what *completely GORGEOUS* has to say about 'What is Normal?' decide whether there is any such thing as 'normal' breasts, thighs, penises, or labias.

What changes happen to a girl's OR a boy's body during puberty? Everybody has hormones. What do they do? Research.

What are some of the names you have heard being used for a period? What really happens during a period?

What physical changes can happen to a body getting too little food or too much exercise?

Fashion Victims

Things to do:

Some of you might have ‘fashion hoarders’ at home, parents or friends who have been slaves to fashion and who have kept clothes or shoes which have been ‘hot items’ at various times in the past couple of decades. Go through some cupboards at home or ask friends for some of their ‘fashion relics’, and try to track changing fashions over time. Bring your ‘artefacts’ to school and talk about how fashions have changed. How often have there been shoes or clothing items which really weren’t comfortable, but worn just for effect? Which old ones are back in fashion?

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

Who do you see as your role models? Who impresses you? Why do you admire them? If you could invite ten of your heroes to your birthday party, who would they be? In a class discussion, talk about who the males and females in your class see as their heroes and role models. Why are they admired? Nominate five heroes of each sex who are admired for who they are or for their achievements, not for what they look like.

How much are you influenced by fashion? What is it anyway? Are there clothes that you wore last year that you wouldn’t be seen dead in this year? Why or why not? Who do you think creates the view of what is fashionable and what is not?

Hyper Hype

Things to do:

Survey at least 10 people aged between 10 and 60 (or older) to find out what ‘Lotions and Potions’ they use. (Include in your survey items such as moisturisers, cosmetics, and toiletries.) Form small groups to decide what it is you want to find out and what questions you are going to ask. The survey could include questions about brand names, costs, how often they try new products, etc. Give a report on your conclusions in both a written form and in an oral presentation.

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

Why do people use lotions and potions?

You Are Not Your Buttocks

Things to do:

Play the 'Self-Esteem Game', to see how you go in the journey to permanent self-esteem. Do you think life is a series of ups and downs? How can you work towards having fewer downs? Discuss.

For so long women's self-esteem has been tied to their feelings about their appearance. It seems they have always been valued as objects of beauty and desirability ... however, this is somewhat different from men who obtain their self-esteem via achievement, power, status and control.

The media reinforces such associations. Organise a media watch with your friends. Examine the images of women and men presented in several different forms of media. Examine news and current affairs programs. Are female and male presenters the same age or is it more important for one sex to be younger than the other? Do men and women wear the same amount of make-up?

Role play things to say to the 'body police'. Start with the suggestions in *completely GORGEOUS*.

Select three issues examined in *completely GORGEOUS* that you would like more information on. Draft letters to organisations that might be able to provide you with further data. Refer to the 'Links' section on the Main Menu of *completely GORGEOUS*.

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

How important is body image to you? Try to express your own ideas about this issue. Write your thoughts down on a piece of paper without your name. Chart the various points of view that members of your class have expressed on the board, and then hold a class discussion on your findings. It could be really useful to have a discussion across a range of year levels, so that older and younger students can talk together.

Consumer Education

Hyper Hype

Things to do:

Survey at least 10 people aged between 10 and 60 (or older) to find out what 'Lotions and Potions' they use. (Include in your survey items such as moisturisers, cosmetics, and toiletries.) Form small groups to decide what it is you want to find out and what questions you are going to ask. The survey could include questions about brand names, costs, how often they try new products, etc. Give a report on your conclusions in both a written form and in an oral presentation.

Read the 'Lotions and Potions' section on moisturisers. Buy some cheap sorbelene cream from a local pharmacy. In a team, make up a name for the cream, put it into another container, design an expensive-sounding label, packaging, and advertising campaign. Try to sell it to somebody, or give it to somebody for a present.

Women are the major consumers of cosmetics and perfumes. In the cosmetics and perfume section of a large store, document the strategies used to sell products. List ten products that are being sold/promoted when you visit. Describe the marketing strategies being used. Did you believe the sales people? Why or why not?

Play the 'Hyper Hype' game 'Behind the Scenes'. What did you learn about fashion photography and magazine photos?

Questions to think about, talk about, or write about:

Why are some moisturisers so expensive and others so cheap?

Girls: – When would you wear make-up? At various times throughout history men have worn make-up. What would you think about boys wearing make-up? Guys: – Do you like it when girls wear a lot of make-up? Under what circumstances would you wear make-up (on stage, going out, Halloween)? Discuss all the reasons for and against all sorts of make-up.

You Are Not Your Buttocks

Things to do:

For so long women's self-esteem has been tied to their feelings about their appearance. It seems they have always been valued as objects of beauty and desirability ... however, this is somewhat different from men who obtain their self-esteem via achievement, power, status and control.

The media reinforces such associations. Organise a media watch with your friends. Examine the images of women and men presented in several different forms of media. Examine news and current affairs programs. Are female and male presenters the same age or is it more important for one sex to be younger than the other? Do men and women wear the same amount of make-up?