

Title: LGBTQ+ Flags and their Meanings

Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2020

Starter:



Answer these questions

1. What do you think the word 'pride' means?
2. Why would a group of people have to be proud?
3. **Challenge:** What do you think is the purpose of pride parades?

All tasks will have a unicorn (another LGBTQ+ symbol) by them and will be in blue. Please read everything carefully as there is a quiz for the end of the lesson.



LGBTQ+ Flags



The most widely used and well-known LGBTQ+ Flag was designed by Gilbert Baker in 1979. Although often called a 'rainbow', it is distinct as it only has 6 colours.

The second flag was developed for Philadelphia's Pride Celebrations in 2017. They felt that people of colour were not appropriately represented in LGBTQ+ culture.

Gilbert Baker Flag



The original Gilbert Baker flag was designed for the San Francisco Pride celebrations. Harvey Milk, the first openly gay elected official in the US, requested that Baker design a flag that would be a symbol for the LGBTQ+ community in San Francisco.

Each of its colours have a meaning:

Hot pink = Sexuality

Red = Life

Orange = Healing

Yellow = Sunlight

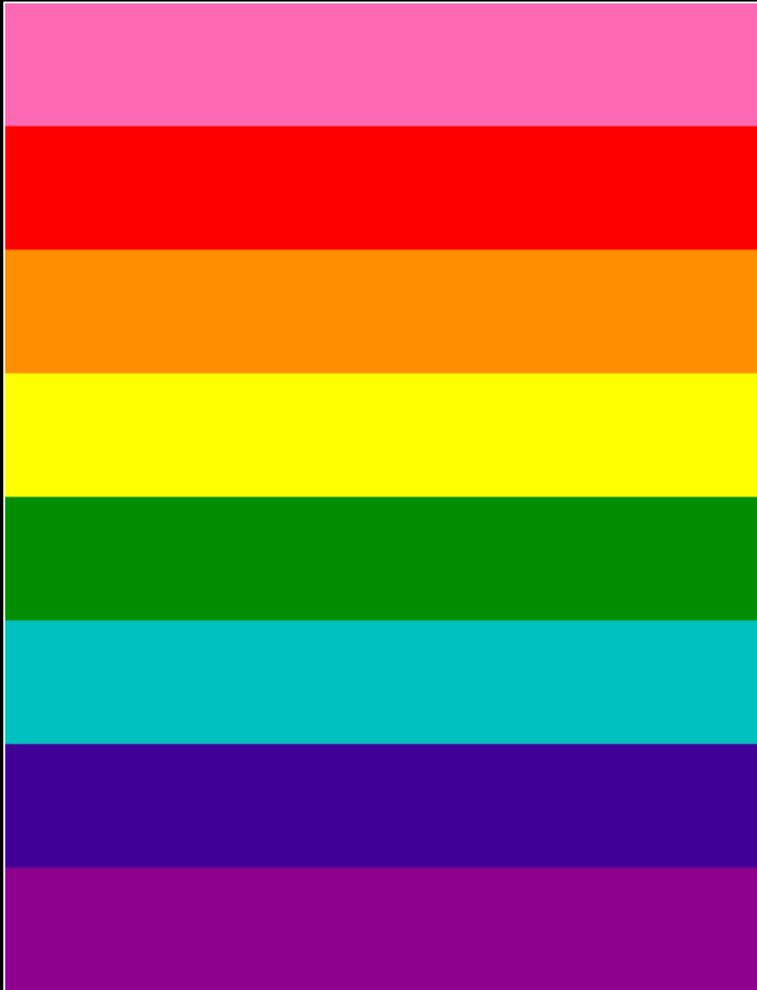
Green = Nature

Turquoise = Magic/Art

Indigo = Serenity

Violet = Spirit

Gilbert Baker Flag



Baker says that the inspiration came from a number of places.

One of these was the pink triangles that Nazis used to denote gay men - similar to the yellow star used for Jewish people.

Another was the song 'Over the Rainbow' sung by Judy Garland in 'The Wizard of Oz' .

He said in an interview that the lyrics spoke of freedom, something that many LGBTQ+ feel they do not have.

LGBTQ+ Flag



Freedom is an important feature in many discussions about the rights of marginalised groups. These groups are often unable to live free of persecution simply for existing in less accepting cultures.

Task:



1. Why is freedom so important to people?
2. Have you ever felt like you weren't free?
3. **Challenge:** Why might people want a symbol to identify their freedom to others?

The Need for Flags

The first artistic depiction of LGBTQ+ people dates back to 11,600 years ago, but LGBTQ+ people are still oppressed all over the world.

Same-sex marriage was only legalised in the whole UK in 2020. In most of the world, homosexuality or same-sex marriage is still illegal.



Asexual Flag

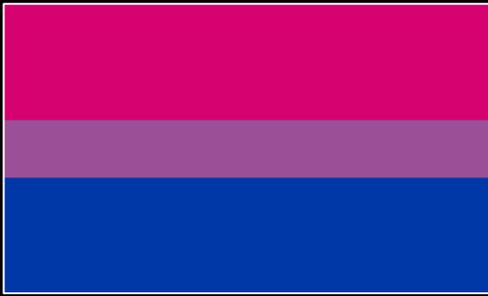


Alongside the traditional Baker flag, smaller sections of the LGBTQ+ community have developed their own flags.

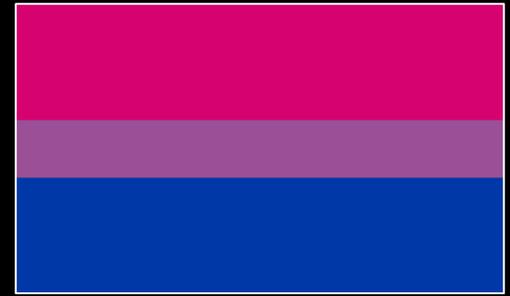
Asexuality is the lack of sexual attraction to others, but people with limited sexual attraction are also represented by this flag.

Janeane Garofalo and Caitlyn Jenner have both come out as asexual.

The flag was developed by the Asexual Visibility and Education Network in 2010. The black stripe represents asexuality; the gray stripe represents gray-ace and demisexuals; the white stripe represents allies; and the purple stripe represents community.



Bisexual Flag



Bisexuality is the sexual attraction to both females and males, or to more than one sex or gender. Marlon Brando, Angelina Jolie, Billie Joe Armstrong and Cara Delevingne have all attested to being bisexual.

The flag was designed by Michael Page in 1998 and he describes the flag's colours as meaning: The pink color represents attraction to the same sex only. The blue represents attraction to the opposite sex only and the overlap purple represents attraction to both sexes. The key to understanding the symbolism of the flag is to know that the purple blends unnoticeably into both the pink and blue, just as in the 'real world,' where bi people blend unnoticeably into both the gay/lesbian and straight communities.



Flags and Visibility



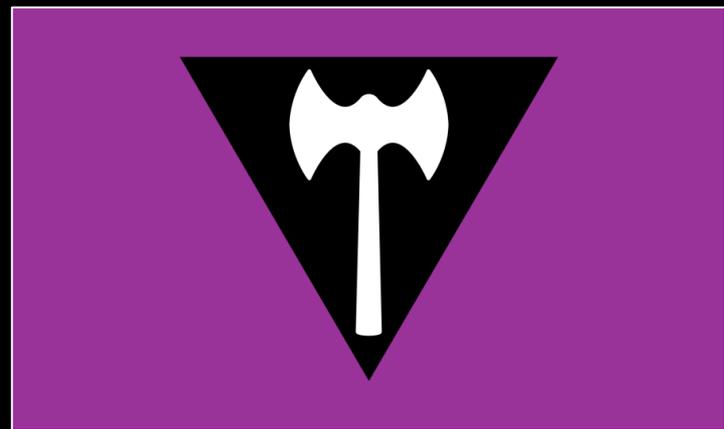
Both asexual and bisexual communities developed flags because of their issues with visibility in the LGBTQ+ and wider communities.

As asexual and bisexual people fit more easily into wider society, their identity is less visible.



Task:

1. Is there a part of your identity that you feel is invisible?
2. How do you feel when people ignore something that is important to you?
3. **Challenge:** Why do you think people are angry about feeling invisible?



Lesbian Flags

There is no commonly used flag for the lesbian community. These are the three most used flags.

A lesbian is a homosexual woman. The word lesbian comes from the Greek island of Lesbos, home to the poet Sappho. Most of Sappho's poetry presented her love of girls and their beauty.

Kate McKinnon, Lily Tomlin and Ellen Page have all come out as lesbian.



Labrys Flag

The Labrys flag was designed in 1999 by Sean Campbell and published in June 2000.

Violet has been used to represent lesbian women and comes from the poems of Sappho where she referenced women she loved using violet tiaras and flowers.

The labrys (the axe in the centre) was a symbol of the lesbian feminist movement in 1970 representing strength and self-sufficiency.

The black triangle was a symbol used by the Nazi regime to mark prisoners as trans men, the homeless and Romani people, as well as homosexual women.

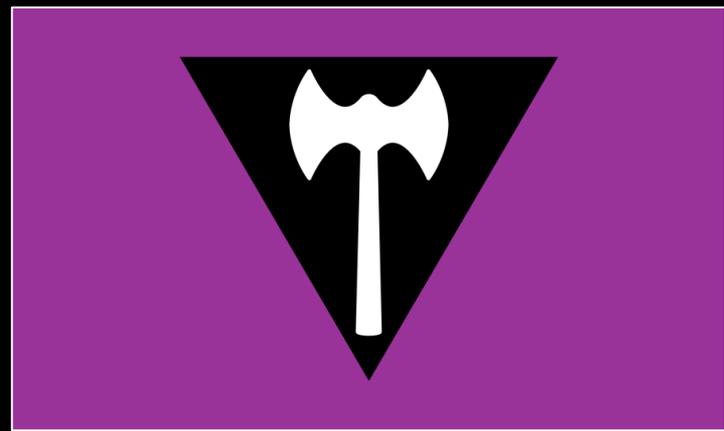


Pink Flag and Lesbian Community Flag



The pink flag (left) was introduced in 2010 and was based on the 'Lipstick Lesbian' flag, and aims to represent women with a more feminine gender presentation.

The Lesbian Community flag (right) was created in 2018 and was based on a seven stripe flag. Each of the colours were meant to represent 'gender non-conformity' (dark orange), 'independence' (orange), 'community' (light orange), 'unique relationships to womanhood' (white), 'serenity and peace' (pink), 'love and sex' (dusty pink), and 'femininity' (dark rose).



Lesbian Flags

In such a large community of people from across the world, it can be difficult to summarise the needs and identities into a simple flag.



Task:

1. If you could choose three colours that represent your identity, what would they be?
2. Why have you chosen these colours?

The Need for Flags

LGBTQ+ identities have also been classified as mental illness.
The last to be declassified was in 2002.

Many societies, including North American indigenous cultures and Indian sub-cultures, recognise two-spirit, transgender and third gender people as legitimate ways of expressing gender. Some sects of larger religions - such as Islam and Hinduism - accept transgender people, although they are marginalised.



Transgender Flag



Whilst gender identity is different from sexuality, many gender identities are represented as part of the LGBTQ+ community.

The most well known of these identities is transgender. This means that a person does not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. Famous trans people include Laverne Cox, Chaz Bono and Marsha P. Johnson.

This flag was designed by Monica Helms in 1999 and she describes it as “The stripes at the top and bottom are light blue, the color for baby boys. The stripes next to them are pink, the color for baby girls. The white stripe is for people that are nonbinary who feel that they don't have a gender. No matter which way you fly it, it is always correct, signifying us finding correctness in our lives.”



Non-Binary Flag



Another gender identity is non-binary. Non-binary people feel they do not fit into either male or female gender exclusively.

The non-binary flag was created in 2014 by activist Kye Rowan. Each stripe color represents different types of non-binary identities: Yellow for people who identify outside of the gender binary, white for nonbinary people with multiple genders, purple for those with a mixture of both male and female genders, and black for agender individuals.

Famous non-binary people include: Sam Smith, Janelle Monáe and Jonathan Van Ness.



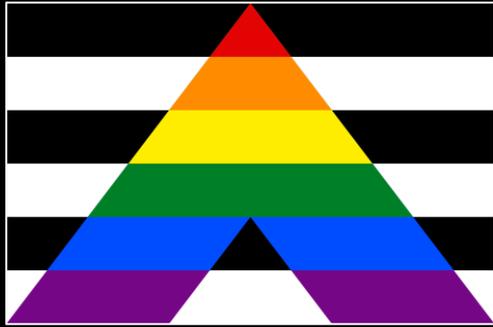
Intersex Flag



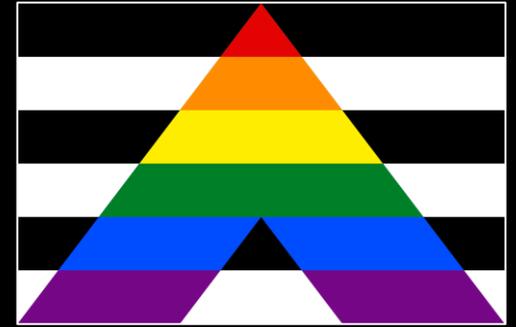
Intersex people are those with undefined sex characteristics at birth which do not fit the typical features of male or female bodies. Some parents choose to define their child's sex at birth, whilst others choose to wait until the child is able to decide for themselves.

The intersex flag was created by Morgan Carpenter of Intersex Human Rights Australia in July 2013. The organization describes the circle as "unbroken and unornamented, symbolising wholeness and completeness, and our potentialities. We are still fighting for bodily autonomy and genital integrity, and this symbolises the right to be who and how we want to be".

Famous non-binary people include: Hanne Gaby Odiele and Lady Colin Carpenter



Straight Ally Flag



Although straight and cisgender people aren't included in the LGBTQ+ community, allies are incredibly important in the progression towards full LGBTQ+ acceptance. An ally is someone who actively challenges discrimination and uses their privilege to advocate for LGBTQ+ rights.

A famous group of straight allies was the National Union of Mineworkers who repeatedly campaigned for the promotion of LGBTQ+ rights after an alliance called Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners raised money for mining communities during the strike of 1984-1985.

The Need for Flags

- I was assaulted by a man. He admitted it. The police suggested I didn't proceed with charges! I took their advice and wished I hadn't. I felt that I had suffered twice: once a physical attack and the second an attack by the state. - **Edward, 57 (North East)**
- I was thrown out of a taxi for kissing my girlfriend. - **Ffion, 42 (Wales)**
- I do not adhere to socially expected norms of male or female in my presentation (clothing, jewellery, makeup etc) and so many people cannot tell what gender I am, leading to invasive personal questions in public about myself, my mental health and, if I reveal my gender, derogatory remarks about my perceived sexuality or presentation. - **Ray, 24 (London)**

Information for you



A last point before the quiz: many LGBTQ+ people use these flags to identify themselves with the community. This information is here to improve your understanding of the LGBTQ+ community, not to out other people. If you know someone who has or wears one of these flags, you should not talk about their sexuality or gender identity with anyone else without their consent.

If you are concerned about someone or yourself, please speak to your tutor, your HOY/AHOY or the school nurse. You can also email NeverAlone@chipping-norton.oxon.sch.uk