

ESL Topics: Gender Roles

Sample Questions & Answers:

Beginner:

1.) What are the advantages of being a man in your culture?

"Being a man in Canada doesn't really have many advantages over being a woman in Canada. Both sexes under the law have equal treatment and rights."

2.) What are the disadvantages to being a man or women in your culture?

Even though men and women have equal rights under the law, men are still often expected to pay for women on dates, work longer hours, and do more physical work on the job. I can't speak for women, though.

3.) What jobs are associated with males in your culture?

*In Canada, men usually do a job that requires **manual labor**. Construction workers are considered very masculine.*

4.) What jobs are associated with females in your culture?

*In Canada, women usually perform most jobs that work directly with children. Nurses, daycare workers, and kindergarten teachers are usually considered **feminine** jobs.*

5.) What are some actions that are not considered to be **ladylike** in your culture?

*Women who have a tendency to **swear** and use **profanity** are often seen as not very ladylike. **Spitting** is also not considered very ladylike.*

6.) What are some things that are not considered to be **masculine** or "macho", in your culture?

Canada has become very liberal over the past few decades. However, wearing makeup, and being very fashionable is not very masculine. Very fashionable men are often referred to as "metrosexuals".

7.) What are the responsibilities of men and women in the family?

*Men are usually expected to be the **nine-to-fiver**, while women are expected to be **stay-at-home moms**. However, the lines are starting to blur. If the woman's salary is higher than the man's, the roles may switch.*

8.) If you are a man, are you attracted to tough independent women or more traditional roles associated with women?

*In my case, I've always been attracted to women who are more **nurturing** and **family oriented**. However, I still have a lot of respect for women who are career oriented and independent.*

Intermediate:

1.) Has your culture made any significant changes regarding gender roles in society? If so, please explain.

*As I already mentioned the lines between men and women roles in society is not longer clearly defined. Furthermore, Canada has become much more accepting of people with different **sexual orientations**. For example, the LGBT community is no longer **ostracized** by society.*

2.) Which sex holds more top positions in your country workforce?

*Men still hold more top positions than women in Canada, but it's starting to change, especially in politics. Men are more **cutthroat** and competitive which are important characteristics of business professionals.*

Advanced:

1.) If you are a married man or woman, does your spouse allow you to have friends of the **opposite sex?**

While I'm not married, I do have a girlfriend who is Korean and I find her to be very jealous in certain situations. While I've never hung out with female friends alone, I know for a fact she would disapprove.

2.) Are there any **stereotypes** about women or men in your country? If so, what are they, and do you believe there is a hint of truth to them?

*In Canada, women are considered to be terrible drivers. Another common stereotype associated with women is they aren't good with money, and have a tendency to buy things on **impulse**. Yes, there is a hint of truth to these stereotypes, but don't tell my girlfriend I said that.*

Tips:

1.) Even my best students sometimes say **mens** or **womens**. Remember, singular is man and plural is men. There is no mens.

The only time we use the word men's in English is if we are looking for a section related to men. For example, "*Where is the **men's** clothing section?*" or "*Where is the **men's** change room?*"

Match:

Match the words from column 1 with the best-suited answer in column 2.

Column 1	Column 2
1.) manual labor	a.) focusing on family
2.) feminine	b.) saliva
3.) profanity/swearing	c.) gender which you are attracted to
4.) family oriented	d.) physical work
5.) ostracized	e.) using bad words

Column 1	Column 2
6.) stereotypes	f.) urge
7.) impulse	g.) to exclude from a group
8.) cutthroat	h.) related to women
9.) sexual orientation	i.) competitive, ruthless
10.) spit	j.) generalization

Questions:

- 1.) Have you ever had a job that was manual labor?
- 2.) Do you use profanity when you are out drinking with friends?
- 3.) Do you want to be more family oriented or business oriented in your future?
- 4.) What are some stereotypes about people from the West?
- 5.) Is your current business very cutthroat?
- 6.) What are some actions that would get you ostracized from your friends?
- 7.) Do you judge those with non-traditional sexual orientations? Do you have any gay friends?
- 8.) Are you attracted to very independent women or more feminine women?
- 9.) Is your career path associated with mostly men or women? What is the ratio of male to female workers?
- 10.) If you are a man, would you feel embarrassed being a stay-at-home father?

Vocabulary:

- **feminine**: Qualities traditionally associated with women. *"Women of the 1950's and 1960's appeared to be much more feminine than the women of today."*
 - **ladylike**: Behaving in a very polite and elegant manner. *"Not only is she well educated, she's very ladylike and funny too."*
 - **swear / profanity**: Using bad words. *"She is always swearing and using profanity at work, but around her parents she is quite ladylike."*
 - **spitting**: The act of releasing saliva from your mouth with force. *"I can't believe she spit in my face, what a bitch!"*
 - **masculine**: Behaviors connected with men; manly. *"I am not interested in having a very masculine husband. I dated enough bad boys in college."*
 - **metrosexuals**: A city man who is very meticulous about his grooming and appearance. A man who loves to shop. *"Davis Beckham is such a metrosexual."*
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- **nine-to-fiver**: Have a job from 9 am to 5 pm; salary man, white-collar worker. *"He's living the dream; being a nine-to-fiver married to a gorgeous woman is all I ever wanted."*
 - **stay-at-home mom**: A woman who doesn't work, instead takes care of the children. *"Being a stay-at-home mom isn't as dull as everyone says it is."*
 - **nurturing**: To take care of; to help grow. *"I miss my grandmother, she was a very nurturing woman and shaped who I am today."*
 - **family oriented**: To care for and encourage growth. *"Women are usually better nurturers than men."*
 - **sexual orientation**: Your preference for sexual relations. *"He is single, but I'm not sure what his sexual orientation is."*
 - **ostracized**: To be removed or not liked by a group, community, or family. *"Once my co-workers found out I was gay, I was immediately ostracized."*
 - **cutthroat**: To be very competitive and ruthless. To do what you must to succeed. *"My boss does not accept failure. He is a very cutthroat businessman."*
 - **opposite sex**: The opposite gender of what you are. *"I think he is gay, I've never seen him interested in the opposite sex."*

- **stereotype**: A generalization about a group of people based on race, religion, culture or sex. *"Chinese people being terrible drivers, is a negative stereotype that is just not true."*
- **impulse**: Doing something based on urge; not planned *"When I drink I start to smoke impulsively, it's a terrible habit."*

Daily Expressions, Phrasal Verbs & Idioms:

1.) **"gender gap"**: A big difference between men and women.

"The gender gap between men and women's salaries is no longer an issue in America. "

2.) **"To feel like a new man/women"**: To feel refreshed and new in both health and spirit.

"I had the week off and all I did was sleep and relax around the house. I feel like a new man."