

Equity 8™

The gender-equity rating

Words and Your Heart (picture book)

Written and illustrated by Kate Jane Neal, Copyright 2015

Rating: 7 out of 8 stars



Met criteria = 1

Did not meet criteria = 0

Egregiously did not meet criteria = -1

What to look for	Example(s)	Rating	Explanation of rating and recommendations
Did the author tell the entire story without mentioning gender? (Just by mentioning gender we communicate that it's someone's most important quality and activate stereotypes.)	No gendered words, such as she, he, girl, boy, mommy, daddy, etc.	1	No gendered words used.
Did the artist illustrate the entire story without contributing to gender stereotypes?	No pink, bows, or exaggerated eyelashes, etc. on girls. No blue, ball caps, etc. on boys. (Length of hair alone is not enough to exclude a book from this criterion. Authors often want/need to differentiate between characters. Hair is one way to do this that is less loaded with negative stereotyping.)	1	The child is drawn with a single hair in clothes that could be a big shirt with pants or a dress with leggings. We can make the main character any gender we wish. We can also refer to the main character as "a child" and use a gender-neutral pronoun.

<p>Is there counterstereotyping? (Note: not mentioning gender counters stereotypes as it puts gender in the background.)</p>	<p>Are stereotypes challenged by showing the opposite? Examples are showing a boy happily cuddling a baby or a girl swinging a bat with expert skill.</p>	1	<p>We can create this in different ways:</p> <p>When reading to a girl, if we make the main character a girl, we counter messages that girls are not as important.</p> <p>When reading to a girl, if we make the main character a boy, we show her that boys have all possible feelings, too.</p> <p>When reading to a boy, if we make the main character a girl, we counter the message that girls are not worthy of reading about.</p> <p>When reading to a boy, if we make the main character a boy, we counter the typical clothes shown on boy characters and show respect for a variety of the boy's feelings.</p>
<p>Are characters with different gender representations interacting with mutual respect, skill, and admiration? (Or are the characters neutrally drawn so we can create the above dynamic ourselves?)</p>	<p>Are girls and boys both shown using tools while building something? Do they smile at each other? Do they treat each other like a peer (and not an/a inferior or superior)?</p>	0	<p>Only one child is featured.</p>
<p>Does the girl character have agency?</p>	<p>Is her body shown in</p>	1	<p>If we make the main character a girl, yes. She flies</p>

	<i>motion? Is she making something happen through her efforts? Can you see her straining her muscles in active movement?</i>		<i>a type of helicopter, stands powerfully as a superkid, and show in motion. The book would be better if her muscles showed and her face showed exertion.</i>
<i>Does the book's story represent any of the Guiding Principles?</i>		1	<i>Emotional Wellness Authenticity Self-Awareness Contribution Community Joy</i>
<i>Are girls the main characters or do they share the spotlight equally with boy characters?</i>		1	<i>If we make the main character a girl, yes.</i>
<i>Is the writer and/or illustrator a woman?</i>		1	



Authentic You
www.authenticyou.co