Starter Activity

New Entry	Definition
Mansplaining	
Moobs	
Cat Lady	
Gender Fluid	
Woke	
Manspreading	
Bruh	

Language Theories:

Marked Expressions

One feature of the English Language which could be considered sexist is the use of **marked expressions** to describe female roles as deviant to **unmarked male expressions.**
A **marked form** is one which stands out as different or deviant from the norm, for example *"priestess"*.
An **unmarked form** is the norm which marked lexical items are measured against, for example *"priest".*

There are two ways of showing **markedness:**

Covert marking is demonstrated through **antonyms (opposites).** An example of **covert marking** is *young (unmarked)* and *old (marked).*
Overt marking is a more obvious form, which shows **markedness** through the modification of **marked expression** using **affixation** (pre-fixes and suffixes). The most common example of **overt marking** is the addition of the **suffix "-ess"**, for example **"actor/actr-*ess"*** to show deviation from the male norm*.*

It is important to remember that sometimes **marking** is necessary to show **biological difference,** for example "lion/lioness".

Another example of **overt marking** is **modified nouns**. Some roles, for example nursing, have stereotyped gender expectation and so to show **deviation from the norm**, the **nouns** are **modified** to show this difference.
e.g. *FEMALE* doctor, career *WOMAN*, *MALE* nurse, *MALE* prostitute.

Notice that not all marking is aimed at "deviant" women, and that some examples of marking is aimed at "deviant" men.

Generic Terms

The use of **masculine pronouns** (*"him/his/he"*) as generic pronouns when the gender is non-specific is no longer considered acceptable as they suggest a **male-centric world**. Most people now seek to exclude these **exclusive language choices** with **inclusive language** such as *"their"*.

Another example of **generic terms** being **exclusive** are phrases such as *"mankind"* and *"manmade"* which suggest an **androcentric world** (focused or centred on men).

Stereotypes

Stereotyping involves assigning a basic set of characteristics to represent a group as a whole. These may be **positive or negative.**
Stereotyping can lead people to believe that certain groups must conform to certain roles and behavioural expectations.
There are many **stereotypes** about males and females, for example "Mother and Baby" classes, which suggest that women are sole carers for children, excluding fathers, grandparents and other carers.

Semantic Derogation and Deterioration

Semantic derogation is when **lexical items** have **negative connotations** and meanings associated with them.
Semantic deterioration is when **lexical items** gradually develop negative connotations.

Theorist, **Sara Mills** suggests that many female terms are **marked** and indicate **sexual promiscuity** *(mistress, madam, hostess)* whereas **unmarked male terms** such as *"bachelor" shows* freedom and independence. Although they have identical meaning, when contrasted with "*bachelor"*, *"spinster"* has more **negative connotations.**

A word which has experienced **semantic deterioration** is the lexical item *"lady",* which now is used in terms such as "dinner-lady" and "cleaning lady". You'd never hear someone describing a male-cleaner as a *"cleaning-lord",* would you?

Marked Expressions	Generic Terms	Stereotypes	Semantic Derogation & Deterioration