

# **completely GORGEOUS**

## **Teaching Suggestions**

### **Lower Secondary**

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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 site, 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.

# 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.

Find out more about how genetics can influence what you look like.

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.

Write your own definition of adolescence. Then do some further research to explain the physiological changes an adolescent might reasonably expect to go through. One way of finding some information would be to ask women and men in their late teens and early twenties, and people of your parents' age, "What physical changes occurred, or are occurring during adolescence?"



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).

Write a letter to the editor of one of the magazines which perpetuate only the skinny ideal; demand a change of direction, or write your own very frank point of view. If the magazine editor ignores your opinion, what other actions could you take? (Boycott magazine, boycott advertisers, read the magazine more critically, etcetera.)

Design and develop a story, video, puppet show or a role-play which is based on the fact that it is okay to be the size you are as long as you eat nutritiously, exercise regularly and you are healthy.

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?

Why are we told to be skinny? Who's telling us to be skinny? Who do you think is emphasising this point of view? After thinking about your own opinions, have a look at the list of thirteen theories that *completely GORGEOUS* gives us. Make a copy of these then cut them out into separate sections. Try to rank them in a ladder with the theory which you think is most influential at the top and the least influential at the bottom.

After you have finished shuffling them around, compare and discuss your rank order with other members of your class. Do you believe any of these theories? Are your beliefs based on facts or myths? Try to be really honest here, and talk about your thoughts in group or class discussions.

In an activity which challenges you to think about what are facts and what are opinions and prejudices, label one wall AGREE and the opposite wall DISAGREE. Instruct the group to listen to a statement as it is read out to them. After they have heard the statement, students are then to move to a wall (Agree or Disagree) or to a point between the walls which matches their opinion. A short informal debate (some rules needed here) between the two sides of the room will bring out the details of the opinions the students hold.

- Girls who are thin have more fun.
- 'You're too fat,' is a message used to sell products.
- The women I know are satisfied with their bodies.
- People who are in control of their lives are usually slim.
- Fat people are friendly and warm-hearted.

- Women who have jobs dealing with the public should be attractive.
- Thin people are usually more serious than plump people.
- Successful males get to the top by looking good.
- Most young women have an eating disorder.
- Our bodies can easily get out of control so we must be on guard.
- Women are not attracted to fat men.
- Thin is beautiful.
- Most people are afraid of looking old.
- Women do not need to eat as much as men.
- Fat people are unhealthy.
- Females will spend lots of money to be thin.
- Men will spend lots of money to be fit.
- Most people do not care about the looks of the people around them.
- Girls worry too much about their appearance.
- If you like someone it doesn't matter what size they are.

## **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 it's cracked up to be"?

## **Weight For Me**

### **Things to do:**

Study some short-term diets taken from magazines. Find out if they would supply enough energy and nutrition for a growing adolescent or an adult. In what ways might the short-term diet damage your health? Perhaps you could get a nutritionist from your local hospital or health centre to come and speak to the class and answer questions.

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

*Cleo* magazine's survey 'Love, Sex and the Dieting Woman', found that '67% of women feel guilty every day about eating'. Conduct an anonymous survey of your class to see how many of your classmates feel like this. On a piece of paper simply write down, "I never feel guilty about eating" or, "I often feel guilty about eating". In a coeducational class, track both boys' and girls' thoughts. Hand in your responses and then collate them on the board. Then talk about your findings.

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.

After reading 'Weight for Me', explain the drive reduction, incentive value and extrinsic motivation theories of eating behaviour.

Prepare one side of a debate: To diet or not to diet? That is the question.

List the dangers of short-term dieting and produce a poster warning against them.

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.

Write a letter of response to one of the girls who wrote to the author Kaz Cooke about their eating disorder.

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.

You may be able to invite someone who has suffered with an eating disorder or someone with expertise on the subject to speak to your class or get hold of a video from your local eating disorders support group. See 'Links' for help in finding one.

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 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?

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Do some reading about penises using *completely GORGEOUS* or the books *What's Happening to My Body? A Growing up Guide for Parents and Sons* and *Everyman*. To make sure that you are aware of all the parts, draw a diagram and label each 'bit'. Remember that diagrams are only a guide - everyone is different. Then, in your own words write an answer to this question: Is there such a thing as a normal penis?

Read the section about 'Girly Bits'. Look at a diagram from a book which includes all the bits that girls have. You'll need a small hand-held mirror so you can see your own girly bits, including the clitoris, labia and vagina. Lock yourself in the bathroom so you're not disturbed! Compare your own body to the diagram and identify the different parts. Remember everyone is different, a diagram is only a guide!

Create a dialogue in which you convince a friend who has sex (occasionally or more often) that he or she should use a condom. Write this either from the point of view of a male or a female. Talk about this issue in a personal development or health education class. Explain what you need to practice so you can use a condom properly.

Girls and Guys - explain to your boyfriend or girlfriend that being in love doesn't mean you have to have sex. How would you say 'no'? Have two conversations - one ending in a decision not to have sex - one ending in a decision about safe sex.

Find out which contraception methods protect best against pregnancy. Which contraception methods protect best against sexually transmitted diseases?

How serious can sexually transmitted diseases be? Draw up a chart which lists all of the diseases referred to in *completely GORGEOUS* and include columns which list the symptoms, complications, how the disease can be avoided and the cure. (If there is one!)

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:

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 are stereotypes? Which stereotypes are challenged in *completely GORGEOUS*?

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:

Beauty is very hard to define and different people have varied views of what it means. Write a definition of somebody’s inner beauty. In a group discussion write your own definition. In a coeducational class look closely at any different views boys and girls have about beauty. Ask men and women about their definitions of beauty and compare their views with their younger counterparts.

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.

Why don’t they show bigger models? Before you give your answer to this question, read ‘Models’ in the ‘Fashion Victims’ section.

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.

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

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.

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?

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

Why do people use lotions and potions?

Read everything that *completely GORGEOUS* mentions about moisturisers. Make a list of all the key points which you hadn't heard of before 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?

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*.

Write yourself a letter. Begin it 'Dear Me'. Describe yourself in detail, without mentioning your physical characteristics. What do you enjoy, what are you good at, what are your achievements, what are your dreams? Congratulate yourself. We are taught to treat others with tenderness, yet we denigrate ourselves readily. Find out how to stop putting yourself down in the 'Boosters' section in the 'Body Image' magazine. Can you think of some more ideas?

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.

Look at sculptures and paintings of women from different eras. Collect photocopies or pictures showing how before advertising and the mass media, images of larger women were accepted as normal and beautiful. Do these pictures show a more realistic range of women's shapes and sizes?

Design and develop a story, video, puppet show or a role-play which is based on the fact that it is okay to be the size you are as long as you eat nutritiously, exercise regularly and you are healthy.

# **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).

Write a letter to the editor of one of the magazines which perpetuate only the skinny ideal; demand a change of direction, or write your own very frank point of view. If the magazine editor ignores your opinion what other actions could you take? (Boycott magazine, boycott advertisers, read the magazine more critically, etcetera.)

Design and develop a story, video, puppet show or a role-play which is based on the fact that it is okay to be the size you are as long as you eat nutritiously, exercise regularly and you are healthy.

In an activity which challenges you to think about what are facts and what are opinions and prejudices, label one wall AGREE and the opposite wall DISAGREE. Instruct the group to listen to a statement as it is read out to them. After they have heard the statement, students are then to move to a wall (Agree or Disagree) or to a point between the walls which matches their opinion. A short informal debate (some rules needed here) between the two sides of the room will bring out the details of the opinions the students hold.

- Girls who are thin have more fun.
- ‘You’re too fat,’ is a message used to sell products.
- The women I know are satisfied with their bodies.
- People who are in control of their lives are usually slim.
- Fat people are friendly and warm hearted.
- Women who have jobs dealing with the public should be attractive.
- Thin people are usually more serious than plump people.
- Successful males get to the top by looking good.
- Most young women have an eating disorder.
- Our bodies can easily get out of control so we must be on guard.
- Women are not attracted to fat men.
- Thin is beautiful.
- Most people are afraid of looking old.
- Women do not need to eat as much as men.
- Fat people are unhealthy.
- Females will spend lots of money to be thin.
- Men will spend lots of money to be fit.
- Most people do not care about the looks of the people around them.
- Girls worry too much about their appearance.
- If you like someone it doesn’t matter what size they are.

## **Weight For Me**

### **Things to do:**

*Cleo* magazine’s survey ‘Love, Sex and the Dieting Woman’, found that ‘67% of women feel guilty every day about eating’. Conduct an anonymous survey of your class to see how many of your classmates feel like this. On a piece of paper simply write down, “I never feel guilty about eating” or, “I often feel guilty about eating”. In a coeducational class, track both boys’ and girls’ thoughts. Hand in your responses and then collate them on the board. Then talk about your findings.

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?

Prepare one side of a debate: To diet or not to diet? That is the question.

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.

Write a poem or a creative essay based on Carrie's, Jane's, Penny's, Rula's, Haylie's and Georgina's experiences.

Write a letter of response to one of the girls who wrote to the author Kaz Cooke about their eating disorder.

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 Is Normal?**

### **Things to do:**

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...*

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

What are stereotypes? Which stereotypes are challenged in *completely GORGEOUS*?

## **Fashion Victims**

### **Things to do:**

Beauty is very hard to define and different people have varied views of what it means. Write a definition of somebody's inner beauty. In a group discussion write your own definition. In a coeducational class look closely at any different views boys and girls have about beauty. Ask men and women about their definitions of beauty and compare their views with their younger counterparts.

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).

## **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:**

Why do we feel bad about how we look, even when we know this is not logical? Can there be a difference between 'thinking' and 'feeling'? How can we change our negative 'feelings'? (See 'Body Image: Boosters'.) Listen to Kathleen in the 'Body Police' section. How could you help her?

There are millions of gorgeous body shapes! Discuss.

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.

Find out more about how genetics can influence what you look like.

Write your own definition of adolescence. Then do some further research to explain the physiological changes an adolescent might reasonably expect to go through. One way of finding some information would be to ask women and men in their late teens and early twenties, and people of your parents age, "What physical changes occurred, or are occurring during adolescence?"

## Weight For Me

### Things to do:

Study some short-term diets taken from magazines. Find out if they would supply enough energy and nutrition for a growing adolescent or an adult. In what ways might the short-term diet damage your health? Perhaps you could get a nutritionist from your local hospital or health centre to come and speak to the class and answer questions.

## 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:**

Interview a local chemist about the list of ingredients on the back of a sunscreen or moisturiser he or she is selling. Ask what the ingredients really mean, and what they do. Find out why a collagen molecule cannot be absorbed by human skin.

## **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 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.

### **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.

Why are we told to be skinny? Who's telling us to be skinny? Who do you think is emphasising this point of view? After thinking about your own opinions, have a look at the list of thirteen theories that *completely GORGEOUS* gives us. Make a copy of these then cut them out into separate sections. Try to rank them in a ladder with the theory which you think is most influential at the top to the least influential at the bottom. After you have finished shuffling them around, compare and discuss your rank order with other members of your class. Do you believe any of these theories? Are your beliefs based on facts or myths? Try to be really honest here, and talk about your thoughts in group or class discussions.

## **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?

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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**

### **Shapes & Sizes**

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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.)

Why don’t they show bigger models? Before you give your answer to this question, read ‘Models’ in the ‘Fashion Victims’ section.

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.

Read the ‘Lotions and Potions’ section on ‘Science fibbing’, ‘Brainy briny’, and ‘Buzzwords’. Find moisturiser and wrinkle cream ads in women’s magazines. What are some of the claims made which sound ‘scientific’? What does it really mean? Write a report for a consumer magazine explaining why an ad is misleading or how it is trying to sell the product.

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.

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?

Cut out ads from magazines or keep a diary of TV ads aimed at men and those aimed at women. What differences do you notice? Are men usually encouraged to be ‘healthy’ and ‘sporty’ while women are encouraged to be ‘thin’ and ‘beautiful’? What are the exceptions?

# **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**

### **Weight For Me**

#### **Things to do:**

Prepare one side of a debate: 'To diet or not to diet? That is the question.'

## **What Is Normal?**

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

What are stereotypes? Which stereotypes are challenged in *completely GORGEOUS*?

## **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.

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.

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Write your own definition of adolescence. Then do some further research to explain the physiological changes an adolescent might reasonably expect to go through. One way of finding some information would be to ask women and men in their late teens and early twenties, and people of your parents' age, "What physical changes occurred, or are occurring during adolescence?"

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?

Why are we told to be skinny? Who's telling us to be skinny? Who do you think is emphasising this point of view? After thinking about your own opinions, have a look at the list of thirteen theories that *completely GORGEOUS* gives us. Make a copy of these then cut them out into separate sections. Try to rank them in a ladder with the theory which you think is most influential at the top to the least influential at the bottom. After you have finished shuffling them around, compare and discuss your rank order with other members of your class. Do you believe any of these theories? Are your beliefs based on facts or myths? Try to be really honest here, and talk about your thoughts in group or class discussions.

In an activity which challenges you to think about what are facts and what are opinions and prejudices, label one wall AGREE and the opposite wall DISAGREE. Instruct the group to listen to a statement as it is read out to them. After they have heard the statement, students are then to move to a wall (Agree or Disagree) or to a point between the walls which matches their opinion. A short informal debate (some rules needed here) between the two sides of the room will bring out the details of the opinions the students hold.

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- ‘You’re too fat,’ is a message used to sell products.
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- Most people are afraid of looking old.
- Women do not need to eat as much as men.
- Fat people are unhealthy.
- Females will spend lots of money to be thin.
- Men will spend lots of money to be fit.
- Most people do not care about the looks of the people around them.
- Girls worry too much about their appearance.
- If you like someone it doesn’t matter what size they are.

## **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 it’s cracked up to be”?

Some people might say that girls worry more about their body shape than boys. What is your opinion? What about boys who spend hours in the gym trying to build a particular body shape? What about boys who take dangerous steroid drugs? What do you think motivates them? Find out about the dangers involved.

## **Weight For Me**

### **Things to do:**

*Cleo* magazine’s survey ‘Love, Sex and the Dieting Woman’, found that ‘67% of women feel guilty every day about eating’. Conduct an anonymous survey of your class to see how many of your

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classmates feel like this. On a piece of paper simply write down, “I never feel guilty about eating” or, “I often feel guilty about eating”. In a coeducational class, track both boys’ and girls’ thoughts. Hand in your responses and then collate them on the board. Then talk about your findings.

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.

List the dangers of short-term dieting and produce a poster warning against them.

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.

You may be able to invite someone who has suffered with an eating disorder or someone with expertise on the subject to speak to your class or get hold of a video from your local eating disorders support group. See ‘Links’ for help in finding one.

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?

Do some reading about penises using *completely GORGEOUS* or the books *What's Happening to My Body? A Growing up Guide for Parents and Sons* and *Everyman*. To make sure that you are aware of all the parts, draw a diagram and label each 'bit'. Remember that diagrams are only a guide - everyone is different. Then, in your own words write an answer to this question: Is there such a thing as a normal penis?

Read the section about 'Girly Bits'. Look at a diagram from a book which includes all the bits that girls have. You'll need a small hand-held mirror so you can see your own girly bits, including the



clitoris, labia and vagina. Lock yourself in the bathroom so you're not disturbed! Compare your own body to the diagram and identify the different parts. Remember everyone is different, a diagram is only a guide!

Create a dialogue in which you convince a friend who has sex (occasionally or more often) that he or she should use a condom. Write this either from the point of view of a male or a female. Talk about this issue in a personal development or health education class. Explain what you need to practice so you can use a condom properly.

Girls and Guys - explain to your boyfriend or girlfriend that being in love doesn't mean you have to have sex. How would you say 'no'? Have two conversations - one ending in a decision not to have sex - one ending in a decision about safe sex.

Find out which contraception methods protect best against pregnancy. Which contraception methods protect best against sexually transmitted diseases?

How serious can sexually transmitted diseases be? Draw up a chart which lists all of the diseases referred to in *completely GORGEOUS* and include columns which list the symptoms, complications, how the disease can be avoided and the cure. (If there is one!)

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

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:**

Beauty is very hard to define and different people have varied views of what it means. Write a definition of somebody's inner beauty. In a group discussion write your own definition. In a coeducational class look closely at any different views boys and girls have about beauty. Ask men and women about their definitions of beauty and compare their views with their younger counterparts.

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.

Why don't they show bigger models? Before you give your answer to this question, read 'Models' in the 'Fashion Victims' section.

## **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*.

Write yourself a letter. Begin it 'Dear Me'. Describe yourself in detail, without mentioning your physical characteristics. What do you enjoy, what are you good at, what are your achievements, what are your dreams? Congratulate yourself. We are taught to treat others with tenderness, yet we denigrate ourselves readily. Find out how to stop putting yourself down in the 'Boosters' section of 'Body Image' magazine in *completely GORGEOUS*. Can you think of some more ideas?

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:

Why do we feel bad about how we look, even when we know this is not logical? Can there be a difference between 'thinking' and 'feeling'? How can we change our negative 'feelings'? (See 'Body Image Boosters'.) Listen to Kathleen in the 'Body Police' section. How could you help her?

'There are millions of gorgeous body shapes!' Discuss.

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.

Read the 'Lotions and Potions' section on 'Science fibbing', 'Brainy briny', and 'Buzzwords'. Find moisturiser and wrinkle cream ads in women's magazines. What are some of the claims made which sound 'scientific'? What does it really mean? Write a report for a consumer magazine explaining why an ad is misleading or how it is trying to sell the product.

Interview a local chemist about the list of ingredients on the back of a sunscreen or moisturiser he or she is selling. Ask what the ingredients really mean, and what they do. Find out why a collagen molecule cannot be absorbed by human skin.

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.

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?

Cut out ads from magazines or keep a diary of TV ads aimed at men and those aimed at women. What differences do you notice? Are men usually encouraged to be 'healthy' and 'sporty' while women are encouraged to be 'thin' and 'beautiful'? What are the exceptions?

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

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Read everything that *completely GORGEOUS* mentions about moisturisers. Make a list of all the key points which you hadn't heard of before 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?

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?