

# Script for Guess the Straight Person

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## Supplies:

Tabletent namecards for contestants  
Large paper pad and tape and markers or Chalkboard and chalk  
“Guess the Straight Person” sign  
“Applause” sign

## I. The Rules

### A) Introduction

Briefly describe what Outspoken is, etc.

### B) Safe Space Guidelines

Include respect, confidentiality, step forward/step back (i.e. people who usually talk a lot should give others a chance to have their say, and people who usually do not talk a lot should make the effort to speak up), and take suggestions from the audience.

### C) Define Queer

Queer: Originally a derogatory slur, it has recently been reclaimed by some to be an inclusive word for all of those within the sexual minority community. Because of the original derogatory nature of the word, it is not necessarily accepted by all.

### D) Rules of the Game

- 1) Vote based on appearance
- 2) Ask questions to the panel, questions cannot directly reveal contestant’s sexuality, each panelist answers the question if comfortable.
- 3) Discussion
- 4) Vote again

### E) Disclaimers

- 1) The panelists are not trying to trick the audience, they are dressed the way they normally dress and will answer the questions honestly
- 2) You are free to ask stereotypical questions, and they will not be considered a reflection of the way you think. You can even ask... (insert really stereotypical question to break the ice)

## II. The Game – 25-30 Minutes

**Host:** Now let's play GUESS [dramatic pause!]...THE[dramatic pause!]...STRAIGHT PERSON!  
We'll begin the game with first impressions. This is your first chance to guess... the...straight person! Before us are # lovely contestants: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5...

[Each contestants from stage left to right stage raises hand as their number is called, perhaps could wear a # sticker or pinny – like in gym class soccer]

**Host:** Now, if you were a smart audience member, you've already been observing the contestants closely for signs of queerness...because now, you'll vote on which contestant you think is tonight's straight person.  
Remember, YOU CAN ONLY VOTE ONCE, and there's only one straight person.

[Host walks behind contestant No. 1, holds hand above contestant's head a la Vanna White]

**Host:** Now, raise your hand high if you think contestant No. 1 is straight. My assistant, NAME, will count the votes and post the results on our scoreboard.

[Host counts hands out loud one by one, and repeats the total, make sure to verify your account with the assistant's total. Moves to contestant No. 2]

**Host:** Can I see the hands for contestant No. 2? (Plenty of room for cheesy straight jokes here)

[Host counts votes out loud, repeats total, checks with assistant]

[Host repeats similar procedure for contestant 3 and 4]

**Host:** And finally, how many votes for contestant No. 5?

[Host counts votes out loud, repeats total, checks with assistant. Host consults scoreboard to determine who has the most votes.]

**Host:** With # of votes votes, contestant # is in the lead! Let's hear it for contestant # !!!  
[Begin applauding]

[Audience applause]

**Host:** Now let's move to Round 2, where you, the audience, will think of revealing, scintillating, and insightful questions to correctly guess...the...straight person.

First, let's find out a bit more about our contestants today. Contestant No. 1, if you will please stand.

[Contestant number one stands up]

**Host:** Contestant No. 1 is first name, a freshman in the school. First name hails from hometown and detail to be announced. Welcome, first name !

[Host continues in same manner for all five folks. Encourage applause between each introduction, if time permits.

**Host:** [after final contestant] Let's give a big round of applause for all of our contestants.

[Audience applause]

**Host:** Now you've met them, let's get to know them. The audience members – that's you all – will come up with a question that each of our contestants will have a chance to answer. It can be anything, from "how old are you?" to "Where do you get your hair done?"

Questions can be as wild or as personal as you want, but remember, contestants are allowed to pass if they don't want answer the question.

And, most importantly, questions like "are you gay?" or "do you date women?" are off-limits...that would just give too much away, so don't even think about asking.

My assistant will keep track of your questions to be used later on as we reveal our straight person.

Any questions from the audience?

[Wait for audience response, clarify any questions]

**Host:** OK, let's begin. Who's got a question for our five contestants?

[If no one volunteers, prompt with "it can be anything, favorite food, state capital, cartoon show..."]

\*\*The host must remain in persona during this segment. Lots of comments and acknowledgment to the audience and contestants. "Great question", "You sir, in the blue sweater", etc.

Some more silent prompts:

= "What's the most stereotypical question you can think of?"

= Review some items from assistant's list...ask "Can you think of some others?"

= "I notice you haven't asked too many questions about romance/families/careers/etc. ."

\*\*the contestants should make every attempt to limit answers to 30 seconds or less. Try to have definitive answers. You can answer "pass" on any question you don't feel comfortable answering. Speak in a loud clear voice for your entire answer. We don't want the people in the back to get bored because they can't hear contestant No. 3. Look at the audience while you're answering. Adopt the demeanor of someone who is really excited about being on the game show, maybe you'll even win a prize! Keep smiling!

**Host:** [after about 20-25 minutes of questions] OK, that's all the time we have for questions. It's time for the second vote! Now we get to see how many folks will change their vote. Think you have a better insight as to who is the straight person now? More confused than before? Well, let's vote! Remember, you can vote twice if you want!

[Host holds hand above contestant No. 1's head]

**Host:** Hands up if contestant No. 1 is our straight person.

[Host counts hands out loud one by one, and repeats the total, make sure to verify your account with the assistant's total. Moves to contestant No. 2]

[Repeat procedure for contestant 2,3,4,5]

**Host:** OK, so we've got some new totals! \_Contestant #\_ got the most votes this time. And it looks like some members of the audience changed their vote. By a show of hands, about how many of you changed your vote?

WHY? (lead into part III. Discussion)

### **III. Discussion – 20-25 minutes**

The following are a number of questions you could ask to spark discussion. They have been placed into the three categories of “Beginning”, “Stereotypes”, and “Higher Level”. You are not expected to ask all of these questions. In some situations, some questions may not apply. However, start by asking some of the Beginning questions or make some up that are similar in nature. Then, move on to asking some of the Stereotypes questions. If you think the audience is prepared and engaged, you can eventually try asking some of the Higher Level questions. In any case, be familiar with these questions before you present the program and think about which ones you are personally comfortable discussing. At times, prompt the panel to answer questions.

#### **A) Beginning**

##### 1) Voting Patterns:

- “Does anyone want to talk about why they voted the way they did?”
- In the case of a large vote shift for one or more contestants ask, “It looks as though many people changed their opinion on NAME, who wants to talk about why they changed their vote on NAME?”
- In the case of a contestant getting little or no votes ask, “Can someone talk about why NAME got so few votes?”
- “NAME got the most votes, does anyone want to tell us why they voted for NAME?”

##### 2) Questions About the Questions:

- “Were there any particular answers that really swayed your opinion on someone?”  
“Why?”
- If there are some questions that really stick out as different or unique you could ask, “I thought this question was really interesting – can anyone talk about what this question may have been trying to get at?”
- “Why might any or all of these questions be useful in guessing the straight person?”

#### **B) Stereotypes**

##### 1) Origin:

- “Are there any stereotypes that you see emerging from the questions that were asked?”

- “Do some of these stereotypes contradict each other?” -- How do gay men afford designer clothes, gym memberships, theatre tickets, etc on a hairdresser or struggling actor’s salary?
- “Where do these stereotypes come from?” -- Be sure to discuss the cultural/social/ context of stereotypes – most are usually based on white/western/ American/middle-class cultural norms.
- Audience may mention that many of the stereotypes are based on gender, not sexual orientation. This is certainly true, but you may not want to get into a big discussion on gender since it can be quite deep and time-consuming. But, if the audience mentions it, do go with the topic to an extent – explain that yes, sexual orientation and gender identity are two different things and that many of these stereotypes seem to be confusing the two.
- “Is it safe to say that all of these stereotypes are at one time or another attributed to LGBT identities?”

#### 2) Effects:

- “Does coming out mean having at least some of these stereotypes associated with oneself?” “How does that affect someone questioning their sexuality?”
- “How else might these stereotypes affect an LGBT person?”
- “How does it affect LGBT people’s friends, family, loved ones, allies, colleagues, etc?”
- “How does it affect non-LGBT people in general?”
- “Do you or people you know modify your appearance or behavior or choices made to avoid being perceived as LGBT?” “What are the consequences of doing or not doing so?”
- “Do you think media portrayals of LGBT people are based on stereotypes?” “Does it matter, or is visibility more important than nuanced portrayals?”

#### 3) Purpose:

- “Why do people use stereotypes?”
- “Are any of these stereotypes positive?” “Are ‘positive’ stereotypes harmful as well?”

### C) Higher Level

- 1) “In many cases, some of these stereotypes hold true – which might have a sociological explanation. What are some possible reasons: People who are coming out have already learned how to be ‘gay’ from stereotypes? Marginalized culture affirming stereotypes to create culture/identity/unity/community? Safety? People with stereotypical traits forced to more closely examine their sexuality?”
- 2) “If these stereotypes are predominantly white/western/America/middle-class, what affect might they have on same-sex loving people who are not white/western/ American/middle-class?” (ex: double invisibility, conflicts with white/western/etc dominated LGBT groups trying to impose their mode of existence and experience on people for whom these might not be relevant, misunderstanding leading to counterproductive/useless policy decisions, etc)
- 3) “Some people – some of whom are in policy-making positions – have never willingly met or spoken to anyone they know to be LGBT. How might these stereotypes inform public policy toward LGBT people? Ex: a local politician was quoted in the *Voice* as saying that since all queer people are rich, they don’t need to be included in social services programs.”

4) “How do these stereotypes compare with stereotypes about other groups (people of color, people from Kentucky, Arabs, left-handed people, Socialists, fashion models, Republicans, truck drivers, etc)” “What function do stereotypes serve?”

#### **IV. The Reveal**

For dramatic effect, the panel should stand up for the big revelation. At the count of three, all of the suspects will sit down EXCEPT for the straight-identified person. After the audience calms down from the revelation, the rest of the panel will reveal their sexual identities.

#### **V. Conclusion**

Ask the audience if there were any surprises in the revelation. Ask the panel if they were any surprises in the votes. If they haven't done it in the discussion section (part 3), the panel can discuss how they have been affected by being perceived as straight or queer, if you feel you still have the audience's attention and this was not discussed previously. The post revelation part of the workshop should be kept as short as possible.

Take questions from the audience and then wrap up with concluding thoughts. Whatever conclusion you come up with should reflect the nature of the workshop's dialogues. Prevailing themes will probably be that stereotypes put people in rigid cultural boxes to which they may feel pressured to conform, how a person's perceived sexual identity will lead to specific experiences for that person, how stereotypes dealing with sexual identities can be different for different social groups (racial, class, age, etc.), etc.