



## Learning Activities

### 'Tolerance: Keeping an Open Mind'



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#### Key Learning Objectives:



#### PSHE and Citizenship:

Pupils should be taught:

- to talk and write about their opinions, and explain their views, on issues that affect themselves and society (1a)
- to research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events (2a)

#### Other Subjects:

- Pupils should be taught to plan their writing by:
  - identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own
  - noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary. (English: Writing - Composition. Years 5 and 6)

#### Vocabulary:

- Open-minded – unprejudiced, tolerant
- Curious – questioning, inquisitive
- Opinion – a view or judgement
- Reject – snub, deny

- Stereotype – A *stereotype* is a very simple opinion about a whole group of people that doesn't allow for any individual differences.
- Prejudice - pre-judging, or making assumptions about a person or group of people, and judging them to be inferior or superior without knowing enough about them.
- Discrimination - what may happen when people act on their prejudice.
- Intolerance – narrow-mindedness, prejudice
- Injustice - unfairness, discrimination

**As this lesson raises issues that might be very sensitive in your local community it is particularly important to refer to your class Ground Rules at the start of the lesson to ensure discussions and activities take place in a safe climate that fosters mutual respect. Teachers with a subscription can get advice on creating effective Ground Rules for PSHCE lessons here:- <http://www.gogivers.org/teachers/enrichment-and-reference-materials/>**

### **Slide 17.**

Click on the camera icon to view a short video with an unexpected outcome.

### **Slide 18.**

Discuss each of the headlines in these newspapers. How does the editor want the reader to react in each case? Is the paper offering a balanced view?

### **Activity 1.**

'What are they like!'

**Resources:** Marker pens, five large pieces of paper, each headed with one of following titles:

- Elderly People
- Teenagers
- Toddlers
- Boys
- Girls

Organise the children into groups of four (approx.). Give each group one of the sheets of paper and marker pens. Allow them five or ten minutes to draw a rough sketch of someone belonging to the group in the heading, labelling them to show as many things they can think of about their character and habits. For instance they might say that teenagers are always on social networking sites, wear lots of make-up, or are moody.

Pin up the sheets. Ask each group in turn to share their picture and main points with the class.

Talk about whether some or all teenagers/elderly people etc. fit this description. Can the children describe a teenager/elderly person they know who is not like this? Is it therefore fair to imply that all teenagers/elderly people are like this?

Introduce the word 'stereotyping' to describe this kind of behaviour. What negative results could come from people having **stereotypes** of teenagers/elderly people etc.?

Discuss how a 'stereotype' is an idea or image of a particular type of person that has become fixed through being widely held.

We use stereotypes as a way of simplifying our social world. They reduce the amount of thinking we have to do when we meet a new person.

The disadvantage of stereotyping is that it causes us to ignore differences between individuals. We make generalisations about people that might not be true.

## **Activity 2.**

### 'What Kind of Statement?'

Write the definitions of stereotype, prejudice and discrimination (above) on the whiteboard.

Ask the class which of the statements below is an example of **stereotyping**, **prejudice** or **discrimination**:

- The Year 2's all behave like babies. (stereotype)
- We don't like children in Year 2. (prejudice)
- Let's not let the Year 2's play with us. (discrimination)

Give out the sheet at the end of this document, and ask the children to identify each statement as **stereotyping, prejudice** or **discrimination**.

Answers:

- Children who like reading are the most boring children in the school. (prejudice)
- Young children are noisy. (stereotyping)
- People who wear glasses are clever. (stereotyping)
- Poor people are all lazy. (stereotyping)
- Women are better at cooking than men. (prejudice)
- Girls are not as good at sport as boys. (prejudice)
- All British people like football. (stereotyping)
- All old people are forgetful. (stereotyping)
- Boys are better at maths than girls. (prejudice)
- I pick black people for my team because they are the best athletes. (discrimination)
- Blue eyed people are artistic. (stereotyping)
- Left-handed people are clumsy, so I won't let them do delicate jobs in my factory. (stereotyping and discrimination)

Ask the children to discuss in pairs, and identify these statements made by a shopkeeper:

- I don't trust ten year olds. (prejudice)
- All ten year olds shoplift. (stereotyping)
- I no longer allow ten year olds in my shop. (discrimination)

After the children have identified the statements, add a fourth:

- Ten year olds are the reason why prices are so high in all the shops in the area.

Ask the class to think about this, using the following questions to help them:

- How would you know if this information is accurate?

- Can you think of other reasons why prices might be high?
- Is it fair to blame ten year olds for high prices, without more facts?
- How does stereotyping lead to blaming?

Explain that this is an example of **scapegoating**. Scapegoating is when people unfairly blame a person or a group of people for something, when the blame lies elsewhere or when it is uncertain who is to blame.

Note: A scapegoat, in biblical times, was originally a goat that was driven off into the wilderness to carry away the sins of the people. The word has come to mean a person, often innocent, who is blamed for the sins or sufferings of others, generally as a way of distracting attention from the real causes.

Ask the children whether they have ever been a scapegoat. How did it feel? Was the real culprit ever identified?

Refer back to the PPT Presentation and ask the children if/why they think people with **closed minds** are likely to be prejudiced or intolerant.

### **Discussion:**

Can the children think of any groups in society that currently suffer from intolerance or prejudice?

E.g.

- People with disabilities
- The elderly
- Muslims
- Women/men
- Europeans
- Black people

Ask the children whether they think that certain groups are more subject to stereotyping than others? If so, why might this be so? (e.g. because they know less people belonging to these groups, and know little about them, they have heard negative things in the media.)

How do intolerant attitudes affect individuals?

E.g.

- Job opportunities
- Self-esteem
- Exclusion
- Friendships
- Name calling/Violence

Show the video: 'Stereotypes - have you ever been judged by how you look?' [<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/22655181>]

If appropriate for your group of children, ask pupils if they would like to share an incident when someone (**remind children not to name the person and refer to your Ground Rules**) made a biased judgement about them, and/or acted unfairly towards them because of their age, size, skin colour, clothes, gender, accent, family, where they live, or any other reason.

- What did people say or do because of the assumption they were making?
- Why do they think those assumptions were being made?
- How did the experience make them feel?
- How do they think they should have been treated?

If they can't think of an experience they have had themselves, can they share any real examples of intolerance that they have experienced themselves or know others have experienced?

Ask the children if they think there is anything an individual can do to help reduce stereotyping and intolerance? Refer back to the PPT presentation to support them in this.

### **Activity 3.**

#### Questionnaire

As a class design a short questionnaire to explore tolerance in the school or local community. These could be handed to children,

staff, parents and neighbours as appropriate but it will be important to consider any local sensitivities. Questionnaires should be completed anonymously and questions might be around:

1. Whether it is a) very easy, b) easy, c) difficult, or d) very difficult hard for kids in the school/people in the community to make friends with kids belonging to different groups. The idea would be to determine the number (or %) of students/people who have felt unwelcome or rejected because of their:

- academic ability,
- athletic ability,
- beliefs,
- ethnicity,
- family income,
- gender,
- hobbies/interests,
- home/neighbourhood
- first language
- musical preferences
- personal appearance
- race.

2. Whether the children/people would be willing to do things to encourage more interaction in school/the community, e.g.:

- introduce themselves to someone new
- sit with someone different at lunch,
- choose someone they don't know when picking a team
- dance with someone from another group
- invite 'outsiders' to a party with their friends.

3. Whether there is anything that can be done to improve relationships between groups in the school/community, e.g. shared facilities, opportunities to meet, parent groups, sharing skills (e.g. languages) etc.

If you have a Go-Givers subscription take the children to 'How to Design a Questionnaire' at:  
<http://www.gogivers.org/kids/toolkit/> for some useful tips.

## **Activity 4.**

### Letters to create a more tolerant society

Invite the children to write letters to their local MP or the Prime Minister to suggest ideas as to what could be done to make Britain a more **tolerant** society.

### **So what might they write about?**

*For example - what could be done to:*

- Help people from different backgrounds get on better together
- Stop racism against migrants who have come here to work
- Stop discrimination against groups of people in the work place
- Educate children to be more open-minded
- Take a more sympathetic attitude to refugees
- Provide more support for people who want to learn English
- Create more places in communities where people can come together
- Counteract stereotyping and prejudice in the media
- Look at how the law can stop abuse on social media
- Ensure that elderly and other vulnerable people are cared for well
- Provide for the needs of people with disabilities.

### Success Criteria:

Tell the children that you will be looking for:

- Depth of insight into the issues that concern them. *Have they used their personal experience? Is there evidence of research?*
- Creative and practical solutions.
- Ability to express their views clearly and persuasively.
- Ability to reason and prioritise. *Have they explained fully why they have prioritised one issue over another?*



- Presentation. *Is their letter set out in a way that is easy to read and absorb?*

## **Activity 5.**

### People Chain

Return to Slide 16 and contrast the idea of the figures in the paper chain with the reality of the diversity of people in the world.

Ask each child to create an individual 'person'. Stick them all together, in all their variety (height, size, skin shade, hair colour etc.) to make a chain.

The children could then research or make up captions to go with this display to accentuate how difference can be positive and the importance of keeping an open mind when faced with something 'different'.

## **Activity 6.**

### Are there limits to tolerance? Should we ALWAYS be tolerant?

Explain to the children that sometimes, when different groups of people have strong beliefs that conflict with each other, the law needs to decide which beliefs and behaviours should be tolerated, and which cannot.

What do the children think about the following situations where religious rules come into conflict with national laws?

CBBC Newsround video looks at the case of same-sex marriage  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/26798803>

CBBC Newsround story about Muslims in France not being allowed to wear a Niqab  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/28125871>

# Stereotyping, prejudice or discrimination?

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- **Discrimination is** what happens when people act on their prejudice.
  
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