



# Life in Britain

## **U** Upper

- Lesson 1: Great Britain and the United Kingdom
- Lesson 2: National emblems
- Lesson 3: The National Anthem
- Lesson 4: Who is a British citizen?
- Lesson 5: People in Britain today – where do they come from?
- Lesson 6: Britishness – What does it mean to be British?
- Lesson 7: We humans are all different
- Lesson 8: Knowing about others
- Lesson 9: Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination
- Lesson 10: Being old
- Lesson 11: Being poor

## The role of the mass media

## **U** Upper

- Lesson 12: Introducing the mass media
- Lesson 13: Comparing newspapers
- Lesson 14: Making a newspaper
- Lesson 15: Television
- Lesson 16: The importance and influence of the media

# Lesson 9: Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination



2/3 x 30-45 mins

## Aim

To understand the idea of stereotypes and how they can lead to discrimination.

## Learning outcomes

Children should be taught:

- to talk and write about their opinions, and explain their views, on issues that affect themselves and society;
- to research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events;
- to appreciate the range of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom;
- to recognise and challenge stereotypes;
- that differences and similarities between people arise from a number of factors including cultural, ethnic, racial and religious diversity, gender and disability.

## Resources

- Video extract on challenging stereotypes accessed at:  
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3606869/Children-stunned-meet-female-firefighters-surgeons-RAF-pilots-drawing-MEN-doing-jobs.html>
- Books published in the 1950s and early 1960s (reading books for infants can be very suitable for this. The old Janet and John books portray very fixed ideas of male and female roles that are not prevalent in today's reading schemes. Enid Blyton stories would offer other possibilities) as well as some present-day texts
- **Resource sheet LIB9a:** *Stereotype cards* (cut up into individual cards in advance – you will need to prepare several sheets)
- **Resource sheet LIB9b:** *Lazy stereotypes*
- **Resource sheet LIB9c:** *Prejudice and stereotypes*
- TV *Katie* adverts – google Life with Katie (a good example is Cooking with Katie) at:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZETiB0jt80](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZETiB0jt80))

- The pamphlet *Fair Play: talking with children about prejudice and discrimination*, (Barnardos (Northern Ireland) and Save the Children) at:  
[www.barnardos.org.uk/fair\\_play\\_booklet-2.pdf](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/fair_play_booklet-2.pdf)
- The video *Racism and discrimination* at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ayoSRpQ8I-U> (this provides a useful insight into the subject)
- a useful, complementary KS2 lesson on this topic in available on the Red Cross site  
<http://www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/Teaching-resources/Quick-activities/Exploring-stereotypes>

## Activity 1

**NB:** At least two lessons will be required to teach the material that follows in sufficient depth – particularly if some of the visual resources are used. You may wish to allow three sessions, or perhaps one normal lesson and a longer second one.

Remind the children that the class has already discussed the similarities and differences between people. People all have their own characteristics and should be accepted for who they are. What matters is the 'content of their character', rather than the group to which they belong.

Invite suggestions as to what the above phrase – much used by Martin Luther King – actually means (i.e. that people should be judged by their qualities and behaviour, rather than their appearance; it is their core values and virtues that matter, such as their honesty, integrity, respect for others and sense of fairness. People are individual human beings, so we should avoid labelling them simply as 'black', 'white', 'male', 'female' etc. If we do this we may come to assume that all white or all black people, all boys and all girls, are the same.

Discuss the idea of stereotypes and stereotyping. Talk about the toys given to young children, of how boys have been traditionally encouraged to play with cars, or with guns, while girls were given dolls – as though all boys or all girls automatically have those preferences in their play. Invite suggestions on the suitability of such parental or family choices. At this point, you might play the extract listed in Resources, relating to young primary school children and their reactions when stereotypes are challenged.

Use the resource cards from **Resource sheet LIB9a: Stereotype cards** to focus attention on a variety of forms of stereotypes. Place the children in groups of three and give each group any three cards and ask them to write down what images they have of the groups of people mentioned on the cards – e.g. of footballers, they may write that they are men, in their 20s or 30s etc.

In a plenary session, discuss the stereotypical characteristics listed by the groups and any problems they present; challenge, as necessary. As a class, decide whether or not the generalisations are fair and accurate, making it clear that footballers do not have to be male, nor do ballet dancers have to be female. Re-emphasise the importance of treating others with respect, no matter who they are.

## Activity 2

Discuss stereotypes for some groups in more detail, using examples such as older people believing that teenagers are loud and disrespectful. Ask the children if they are aware of, or have opinions of, people who dress differently because of their religion (e.g. ministers in dog collars or nuns with veils; Muslims who adopt modest dress codes, etc.).

Ask if they are aware that in old programmes on television or in films many young blonde women were often portrayed as superficial and brainless, while women generally were shown doing all the domestic jobs – like the old advert of Katie in the kitchen, preparing food with her Oxo cubes. Choose some items from the Resource list, to show or play to the class.

Point out how dangerous this lazy labelling of people purely on the grounds of the group to which they belong, their appearance or some other characteristics, can be. It gives a false impression of what they are like and leads to unjustified fears, prejudice and discrimination.

Invite ideas on the meaning of these latter two terms (e.g. for prejudice: an unfair feeling of dislike for a person or group that is not based on reason or on actual experience, but is just on account of their sex, religion, nationality, culture, race or other personal traits; for discrimination: unfair treatment of one particular person or of a group of people on account of such characteristics. Discrimination based on race is called ‘racism’.)

Make the point that discrimination can take a variety of forms and occurs for many different reasons. Children are most likely to discriminate because of the prejudiced attitudes they hold. Give examples, which might include:

- mocking someone on account of a disability;
- not letting girls join in a kickabout in the playground;
- avoiding groups of teenagers on street corners, regarding them as threatening, or up to no good.

Emphasise the importance of respect, to which all members of the school or the community are entitled. Invite ideas on what it means – pointing out that it refers to a way of treating or thinking about something or someone. If you respect a sports person, television personality, teacher or other adult, you admire that person and would want to treat him or her well. You would want to show due regard for the feelings, preferences and rights of that person.

Make the point that some people often feel more comfortable with, and more easily able to respect, others who are similar to themselves. Yet all people, whatever their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, dress etc. deserve respect, unless there are good reasons for disapproving of or disrespecting them (e.g. they have done something wrong, hurt someone, etc.)

Using **Resource sheet LIB9b: Lazy stereotypes**, discuss the list given and invite ideas on their accuracy or otherwise. Are they thoughtless slogans that are an easy way of writing off whole groups of people?

Alternatively, children could work in groups to consider one set of people who are often the victims of stereotyping – based on their gender, age or race. A representative of each group could then report back to the class on the discussion they have had.

In a plenary session, emphasise:

- the desirability of all boys and girls, men and women, of whatever colour, creed, gender etc.,

having the chance to follow the interests, careers and lifestyles that they wish to pursue and live the life they wish to lead;

- that people should be judged not on the basis of their identity, but as individuals.

## Differentiation

**SEN:** Children will probably need plenty of assistance in getting to grips with the idea of stereotypes and in making suggestions about the different categories.

**More able:** The more demanding **Resource sheet LIB9c: Prejudice and stereotypes** provides a good opportunity to encourage these children (working in pairs) to challenge easy stereotypes. It offers some information on the situation that developed in Nazi Germany. Some children may wish to find out more about Jews and the treatment they received in Germany and elsewhere in Europe.



## Teaching about ... homophobia

The emphasis on treating people with respect can be used as a means of tackling the issue of homophobia, either in this or an additional lesson (see also Lesson 10 in the unit **Feelings and relationships**). In discussing the sloppy terms sometimes applied to other people, the use of 'gay' might be mentioned; it is a label often used by children to brand others (for instance, quieter, less assertive and more sensitive boys, who may or may not be gay).

Discuss the term 'LGBT people'. Make the point that they are often described in crudely homophobic ways, and treated with disrespect and made the

object of lazy, stereotypical thinking. Showing disrespect to these people is as wrong as showing disrespect to other groups. We cannot change the people we are or the group to which we belong, whether it be based on our colour, gender or sexual orientation.

Mention the importance and relevance of the Golden Rule – suggesting that we must treat other people as we would wish to be treated. To abuse or discriminate against others of different sexual leanings is hurtful, even cruel, and not the way that we would wish to be spoken to or judged.

Life in Britain  
Resource sheet LIB9a

Key Stage 2  
Part 2

### Stereotype cards

Ballet dancers	Businessmen
Factory workers	Footballers
Parents	Teachers
Teenagers	The elderly
Young boys	Young girls

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Life in Britain  
Resource sheet LIB9b

Key Stage 2  
Part 2

### Lazy stereotypes

Stereotypes are a very easy way of labelling people or groups. It is simple to make generalisations about them.

**Some sexual stereotypes**

- Girls are more concerned about their appearance than boys.
- Girls like to play with dolls, boys with toy guns.
- Blondes are scatty and not very bright.
- Girls are tidier than boys.
- Boys are better than girls at sport.
- Men are stronger than women.
- Men are better at hard physical work, whereas women are better-suited to office jobs.
- Men are better drivers than women.

**Some stereotypes about young and old people**

- Children like unhealthy drinks and foods.
- Children make a lot of noise.
- Young people in gangs are frightening and unfriendly.
- Teenagers are rebellious and badly behaved.
- Old people are forgetful.
- Old people are often grumpy.

**Some stereotypes about people from other countries**

- All Welshmen like rugby.
- All French men and women love to eat garlic.
- Germans have no sense of humour.
- English people are all arrogant.
- Italians are lazy.

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Life in Britain  
Resource sheet LIB9c (1 of 2)

Key Stage 2  
Part 2

### Prejudice and stereotypes

Stereotypes are built on **prejudices**. Sometimes, we make these generalisations when we do not really understand much about a group of people. We place them in boxes and have a fixed idea about what they are all like. This is easier than making the effort to learn more about them.

Stereotypes are based on ignorance. Rather than seeing people as individuals, each with their own personalities and customs, it is convenient to label people as though they are all the same, 'black', 'white', 'old' etc.

Stereotypes are always false, because they make it seem as though all people in a particular category or group are the same. They can be dangerous. In Germany, before and during the Second World War, many generalisations were made about Jews, such as Jews are greedy, or Jews are a threat to Germany's way of life. They were made a scapegoat for the things that were wrong in Germany – such as unemployment. Because many Germans blamed Jews for their misfortunes, it was easy for Hitler to encourage discrimination against them. In the Second World War, several million were sent to concentration camps, where many died.

When people act upon their prejudices, they often discriminate against other people. If they believe that girls are no good at hard, physical jobs, they might not let them have a go at bricklaying or driving a truck. If they believe that black people or gypsies are in some way inferior, they may make life difficult for them, make them feel unwelcome and treat them cruelly.

STOP DISCRIMINATION

**Points to consider**

- Wouldn't it be better to accept people for what they are, whatever their gender, race, religion or other characteristics?
- Surely, character and personality are more important than sex, colour or creed?

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Life in Britain  
Resource sheet LIB9c (2 of 2)

Key Stage 2  
Part 2

### Key words

**Prejudices:** Feelings or attitudes that we develop about something or someone, which are not based on actual knowledge or understanding.

**Scapegoat:** A person or group who is blamed for something, even though he or she is innocent.

**Discrimination:** Treating people differently, usually unjustly, because of such things as their age, race, religion and sex.

**Concentration camps:** Places where people are herded together, against their will and under very harsh conditions, often as a result of their membership of a particular group; they are often political prisoners or members of minority groups. They are kept without enough food or facilities, made to do forced work and ultimately often put to death. This happened in Germany in the Second World War, where victims were kept in death camps such as Auschwitz and Belsen.

**Points to consider**

- Should we accept people for what they are, whatever their gender, race, religion or other characteristics?
- Can you think of any examples of prejudice, discrimination and scapegoating in the school, local community or country at large?

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