



Stereotypes

Materials:

- Copies of the 3 articles listed below (1 copy per student group)

Brainstorm

Ask students: Do you think stereotypes can be good? Accept student responses and neither affirm or correct students at this time.

Discuss

I want to start off today's class by acknowledging that the topic we will be discussing throughout this lesson may make some people feel uncomfortable. That's OK. I also want to assure you that this classroom is a safe space and we will follow the respectful discussion guidelines* we have used throughout the year. Today we're going to be talking about stereotypes. Have you ever had an encounter where you were the victim of someone stereotyping you? Call on student volunteers and if possible, allow them time to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences without judgment.

Dive in!

Thank you for the courage to share your examples of stereotyping. I'm sorry you had to endure those experiences. A **stereotype** is a belief about a particular group of people or a thing. Stereotypes are often overgeneralized (all teenagers are troublemakers, all boys are good at math) and can be perceived as either positive (people from France are romantic) or negative (old people don't understand technology), but stereotypes are always harmful. Stereotypes can influence the way we think about ourselves and lead to faulty beliefs about us by others. Today, we're going to explore stereotypes in more detail and at the end of today, hopefully you'll all see the harmful effects of stereotypes.

Activity

Distribute copies of the articles to student groups. Have one member of each group read it aloud.

- Anonymous: I Felt I was a Victim of a Negative Stereotype:
<https://y-stop.org/stories/i-felt-i-was-victim-negative-stereotype>
- Shieh-Chi Chen: There's no such thing as a "good" stereotype:
www.linkedin.com/pulse/thing-good-stereotypes-shieh-chi-chen/



High School

- Kumari Devarajan: The Downside to Positive Stereotypes:
www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2018/02/17/586181350/strong-black-woman-smart-asian-man-the-downside-to-positive-stereotypes

When groups have read and discussed the article, call on each group to summarize the article for the rest of the class. Then, ask: What stereotype was identified in the story? What is harmful? How? What strategies does the author suggest we can use to stop stereotyping?

Reflect

To wrap up the lesson, ask students verbally: Now that we've completed this lesson, do you still agree with your statement earlier about stereotypes?

Professional Development

Take 5 minutes and honestly reflect on how you address stereotypes in your teaching practice. Is this an area in which you'd like to improve? How?

For Further Study:

- Common Sense Media, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Resources for the Classroom:
www.commonsense.org/education/top-picks/diversity-equity-and-inclusivity-resources-for-classrooms
- Learning for Justice, Lesson Plans for Exploring Identity and Diversity:
www.learningforjustice.org/topics
- 52 Essential Questions to Inspire Children for Life: Podcast topics include talking to students about inclusion, race, gender, and more.
podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/52-essential-conversations-to-inspire-children/id1418151997