

STEREOTYPE ACTIVITY







This activity is intended as an introduction to the concepts of prejudice and discrimination with an examination of the nature and limiting effects of our application of stereotypes. A working definition of these concepts is provided in the Background Information Sheet.

You may wish to amend the cards on the Student Sheet to represent different groups of people or to adapt the activity to suit the age, abilities and prior experience of your students. The intention is that the activity will encourage students to challenge their own stereotypes.

INSTRUCTIONS

☐ Group students in pairs and distribute cards made from the Student Sheets – one card per pair.

	Support students as they decide upon three characteristics people might associate with the
	person described on their card.
	When they have recorded these on their card, bring students together again and ask each pair
	in turn to describe their person to the class by listing the three characteristics.
	They might start their statement with: Some people might think this person
	The rest of the class then tries to guess the person being stereotypically described.
	Display the captions 'Positive characteristics' and 'Negative characteristics' on the wall. Ask
	students to place their cards appropriately.
	Invite the class to comment on whether they agree with each placing and to consider why
	positive characteristics were attributed to some people and negative to others.
	Discuss with students why we generalise in this way and can it ever be useful.
	Encourage students to consider possible exceptions to their stereotypical descriptions.
	For example:
	Can we have a non-elderly grandmother?
	Are all people who wear glasses brainy?
	Do the scientist Albert Einstein and the pop singer Mika fit the stereotype of a refugee?
	Again in pairs, ask students to choose a label some people might apply to themselves and their
	partners.
	Encourage the pairs to write a short statement detailing what someone might say about them if
	they only looked at the label. They should say how they feel about this labelling.
TALKING POINTS	
	What are the possible negative effects of stereotyping?
	In what way can stereotyping be limiting?
	Should we be judged by the actions of a few?
	Can you judge a person on only a few characteristics?
	Does it make a difference to your attitude if you know someone personally?
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