

7 TEACH

RESOURCE 20

Diversity

This assignment is meant as an introduction to the themes of prejudice and discrimination. Print out the pictures, eight in all. Split up the group into four small groups. Place picture A of the four people on the table, and have every group pick a character. You could, for instance, ask them who they would want to sit next to on a long bus trip. When every group has picked one person, you hand out worksheet 2. Ask them to check all the items that go with their character. Then hand them picture B of their character, and ask them to adjust the answers on their worksheet. Ask them the following questions:

- 1 Has your impression of him/her changed by picture B? If so, why?
- 2 Do you think we often reject people because of the first impression we have of them?

In conclusion, watch the Diversity film.

In this film, you meet four of the characters - Kim, Michiel, Dylan and Batja. They introduce themselves by talking about their passions and how they would like to be perceived. Unfortunately, 'other people' – who do not know them or want to know them – do not see all of these aspects, and they label them on account of an outward aspect of their identity. They are confronted with prejudice about the group they are supposedly to belong to.

How do I deal with disruptive questions from the group?

If you want to discuss subjects such as prejudice and discrimination, this may evoke strong reactions. If you ask the students for their opinions, they may offer negative comments. Make sure that you are prepared for this to happen.

- Always react to comments that you feel are out of order. If you do not react, the group may interpret your silence as 'such comments can be made here'.
- If a comment affects you, it is ok to show it. This contributes to an open atmosphere in which comments can be discussed. However, you should not become abusive or get angry, as this will hurt the open atmosphere.
- Reject the behaviour of the person making the comment, but not the person himself/herself.
- Try to listen – summarise – ask clarifying questions. This method will help you to find out why the comment was made in the first place.
- Always discuss the incident with the person in charge of the group, as they know the group best.
- Afterwards, you can talk the incident over in private with this person, to avoid involving the entire group. Unless the whole group agrees with the comment, you could try asking clarifying questions



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20 things you should know

- 1 Identity means describing yourself in different words and images.
- 2 You describe yourself, who you are (self-image), who you want to be and how you want to be perceived (image).
- 3 A self-description is never finished, you grow and you change as you grow older.
- 4 You have some characteristics from the moment you're born, they shape you and you shape them.
- 5 It would be great if your self-description matched the way others describe you. That would really feel good.
- 6 We define ourselves by the groups we belong to or feel connected with. We divide others into 'we' and 'they'.
- 7 Our contact with others determines to a large extent who we are and how we see ourselves.
- 8 The groups we belong to or identify with will often change with context and over time.
- 9 A group you identify with, is called an ingroup. A group you don't want to be associated with, is called an outgroup.
- 10 You cannot pick all of your ingroups, for instance if they involve disability, nationality or background.
- 11 Some of the groups we belong to, are not groups we have picked ourselves. You have a certain background and are judged accordingly; there is nothing you can do to change it.
- 12 Prejudices are thoughts in our heads, our ideas about others. As long as you don't express them or act upon them, you won't hurt others.
- 13 Discrimination is behaviour towards others; only by doing, saying or writing something out in the open can you discriminate against people.
- 14 Discrimination is the unjust, unequal treatment of others because of their descent, religion, age, sexual orientation or gender.
- 15 Everyone may be confronted with discrimination.
- 16 Be aware of your own prejudices.
- 17 Become motivated to change them.
- 18 Meet someone new and don't dismiss them because of some aspect of their identity.
- 19 We are all equal, yet very different.
- 20 Put yourself in someone else's shoes.