



LESSON 5.1 Stereotyping - Part I

Module #5: Exploration of Others

Since having a great high school experience is really all about relationships, it is important for freshmen to explore the values and beliefs of other students – and how they're similar and different. There are dangers in not taking the time to truly understand the people we consider "different" from us – dangers that can have a lifetime of negative consequence.

Enduring Understandings

- I. Race, gender, ethnicity, and culture are all different and cannot be interchanged. Understanding each is an integral part of getting to know others and what defines them.
- II. **Stereotyping is very common and very dangerous – if not recognized and corrected.**

Essential Questions

- I. What is culture? (I)
- II. **What is stereotyping and what are the dangers of stereotyping? (II)**
- III. What is ethnic intimidation? (II)

Lesson Objective(s)

1. Students will develop an understanding of the differences among racial, ethnic, and cultural groups at school.
2. Students will understand the effects of stereotyping.

Lesson 4.9

Lesson 4.10

Lesson 5.1

Lesson 5.2

Lesson 5.3

Directions:

1. Use the enclosed content page "Cultural Assessment Definitions" as a teacher's resource for a brief discussion of *ethnocentrism* and *stereotyping*.
2. Define *ethnocentrism*, emphasizing how normal it is for people to be ethnocentric.
3. Next, give students the definition of *stereotyping*.
4. Divide the class into four subgroups and ask each subgroup to choose one of the groups named below:
 - People who are the Jocks
 - People who are Skaters
 - People who are the Nerds
 - People who are the Teachers
 - People who are the Band Members
 - People who abuse drugs and alcohol
 - People who are the Freshmen
 - People who are Goths
5. Ask each subgroup to compile a list of stereotyping statements about the chosen group and to record their list on flip chart paper. Students do not have to *believe* the statements to be true. They may have heard them from other people or from radio, television, movies or written media. Encourage students to identify any stereotypes they may have at one time believed to be true. Allow the groups to have three or four minutes to make their list—time them!
6. Help strengthen the "safe environment" by stressing that most people use stereotypes, usually without intended malice. Stereotyping is an expected initial response to diversity and the unknown. General statements about groups of people are often attempts to organize and categorize information about the world. These general statements can be helpful or they can be greatly misleading, depending upon their accuracy and how they are used.

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Materials & Supplies

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Masking Tape

**FOCUS
POINT**

In order to get along with all types of people, we must recognize the dangers of stereotyping – and this recognition starts with the stereotypes we possess ourselves. This silly, fun exercise drives home the point for more serious application in real life.

- This lesson and discussion can be greatly enhanced if your student leaders can share instances in which they have witnessed or been victim to stereotyping. Have them share these experiences and talk about how they felt, responded, etc.
- Blog/Journal Entry: Have you ever been a victim of stereotyping? If so, when? What was the context? How did it make you feel? If not. What did you learn about stereotyping from today's activity?

**resources
&
extension**

Directions Continued:

7. Ask each subgroup to present the list on their flip chart paper to the entire group. Post the charts on the wall. After all the lists are read, ask the larger group for their observations about the stereotypes. Listen for the following kinds of observations:
 - Many, if not most, stereotypes describe qualities that are considered negative
 - Some statements may describe more positively-valued traits; however, they may still be stereotypes
 - Many of the stereotypes are similar for more than one group
 - The stereotype statements were easy to identify; most of us have heard many stereotypes about other groups
 - Most group members knew of at least one stereotype statement
8. While processing the activity, try to reach some of the following conclusions:
 - While it is true that members of a cultural group share many common values, traits, and characteristics, it is not true that all members of a cultural group are alike in all ways. In fact, one always finds a range of differences in values, attitudes, and behaviors among persons of any cultural or ethnic group.
 - The fallacy of stereotyping is a common shortcoming of generalization. We draw conclusions where no conclusions are warranted. As a result, we can be sure that our conclusions will often be wrong!
 - At times, stereotypes are based on misinformation about a culture. This may occur if one draws conclusions about a group from experiences with a small, and not always representative, sample. For example: If you challenge a person's stereotypic remark, the response might be "Well, all of the (label) people I've ever met are like that!" The "all" referred to may be only a handful of people or a small subgroup in a larger community, but are rarely representative of the group as a whole.
9. The above examples also suggest that stereotypes can be both negative and positive. Stereotypes that communicate negative information can promote censure, mistrust, and fear; This can lead to strong emotional reactions, as when a black person in a confrontation with a white person automatically assumes that the white person is a racist; or when a white person assumes that the black person walking toward him on the street is likely to assault him.
 - At other times, stereotypes are based on the characteristics of a few members of a group who are highly visible and appear to represent the group as a whole. For example, the preponderance of black athletes in professional basketball leads many people to conclude, "Black males are good basketball players." Similarly, media publicity about black youth gangs perpetuates a stereotype of black youth as prone to violent, aggressive behavior. It is possible to draw such conclusions when one has limited or no contact with members of the cultural group. With limited exposure, one cannot sort myth from reality, or the exception from the rule.