

Lesson 3**Stereotypes and prejudices****Our ideas about other people, groups or countries**

Learning objective	The students understand how stereotypes and prejudices are linked and how they may lead to simplified but also unfair views of individuals, groups of people and whole countries.
Student tasks	The students think about their views of others and discuss them in groups.
Resources	Blank sheets of paper and markers.
Method	Group work, plenary discussion.

Key terms

Stereotypes: These are opinions that groups have about themselves or other groups.

Prejudices: These are emotionally charged opinions about social groups (often minorities) or certain people (often from minority groups).

The lesson

The objective of this lesson is to enable the students to transfer their understanding of how others are viewed on an individual level, to a more general one, that is, how larger groups, religious communities, ethnic groups or countries are judged.

The teacher prepares a brief, clearly structured lecture on the difference between stereotypes and prejudices to be given at the beginning of the lesson.

By summarising the processes of learning and the results and insights gained from the last two lessons, the teacher helps the students to understand the difference between stereotypes and prejudices. The teacher introduces the two concepts by referring to the different views of the boy who was studied in the previous two lessons. He/she tries to present these views as stereotypes and prejudices (see the background material for teachers at the end of this chapter, where a model for this brief key lecture has been included). In the next step, the students form small groups. They work on descriptions of social groups, for example:

- boys and girls;
- professions;
- ethnic groups;
- countries;
- continents.

It is important not to ask the students to give their personal views of others. Rather, they should imagine what society, the neighbours or the media might say or think about the groups that have been assigned to them in this task.

The students try to distinguish between stereotypes and prejudices, thus applying what they have heard from the teacher at the beginning of the lesson.

The teacher may give some hints on the blackboard and the students prepare their presentation of results in the form of a list by themselves. Experience has shown that a list prepared beforehand (see example below) will help the students to note ideas for use later in the discussion.

After the teacher's initial lecture about stereotypes and prejudices, the students work in groups of three or four for about 15 minutes to reflect on the above task. The teacher should consider carefully which of the above examples to offer. Depending on the political situation in the country concerned, it may be possible to choose examples close to the students' own experience. On the other hand, the teacher should only mention ethnic groups living in the country or the community if no one is hurt by such a choice and only if no discussions and disputes that might get out of hand are likely to be triggered off.

The groups' discussions and results should be presented in a plenary session. Each group agrees on a spokesperson, who will present the group's results following a pattern of criteria such as the following:

- our country, our group, our ethnic entity, our profession;
- stereotypes expressed by the group;
- prejudices expressed by the group;
- our assumptions why groups have such views;
- our opinions, including possible differences of opinion.

The teacher will help the students by recording each group's results (in note form) on a flip chart.

Example of how to record results to support the students:

Group	Country/profession/group	Stereotypes	Prejudices	Comments
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

Finally, the teacher sums up the lesson, referring both to the procedure and the results, and informs the class about the next steps.