

Key stage 2

Lesson 5: Unconscious Bias

Key Questions	Learning Outcomes
<p>What is unconscious bias? How can we prevent it?</p>	<p>By the end of the lesson we want pupils to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify some of their own biases. Understand that stereotypes may lead us to have conscious or unconscious biases. Learn how to challenge bias and avoid making assumptions based on superficial characteristics. <p>Key words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bias Trait Unconscious Assumption Stereotype Influence Inclusive
Activities and Content - TN: Teacher notes in blue	Resources
<p>Starter activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children split whiteboard/paper into 4 quadrants. The teacher reads the names of various occupations out (doctor, fighter pilot, record breaking athlete, engineer). Children draw what each person looks like – one person in each quadrant. Did you immediately think of a stereotypical example? Did you think about: skin colour, hair colour, age, gender, disability? Do you think that you unconsciously assumed the traits of each person? Unconscious thoughts are things that happen in your brain without you really focusing on it Now look at your drawings again: what could you change to make them more inclusive, considering their traits more carefully: use a range of skin colours, ages, genders. Think about whether they are disabled or able-bodied. <p>TN: Some children will automatically draw pictures that represent a diverse range of people. Their own experience or previous education may make them very aware of issues involving representation. Extend their thinking by asking them to include characteristics that they haven't already or asking them why they think we are doing this activity today.</p>	<p>Starter activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A4 paper Colouring pencils, including a range of skin tone possibilities
<p>Matching activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children match pictures of people with various jobs. Can they tell who has which job? Why did they make their choice? <p>TN: We have deliberately chosen people who have protected characteristics and are under-represented in the media and education because of their gender, disability or ethnicity. This initial activity is designed to find out if children are aware of any biases that they have.</p> <p>Examples of people and their real-life jobs</p> <p>Kubra Dagli (Turkey) – Taekwondo world champion: https://www.instagram.com/kubra.dagli/</p> <p>Silas Adekunle (Nigeria) – Highly paid engineer and robotics specialist: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silas_Adekunle</p> <p>Lily Rice (UK) – First European female to do a Wheelchair backflip – YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePoFlsIWHD4&ab_channel=BBCStories Article: https://www.unilad.co.uk/featured/paraplegic-teen-becomes-first-european-girl-to-land-wheelchair-backflip/</p> <p>Kizzmekia Corbett (USA) – Doctor working on Coronavirus vaccine: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kizzmekia_Corbett and https://magazine.umbc.edu/her-science-is-the-worlds/</p> <p>YouTube video with interview and explanation of Kizzmekia Corbett's achievements: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8h4FDVqGls&ab_channel=TheFranklinInstitute</p> <p>Dr. Manjeet Singh Riyat (UK) – Doctor: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manjeet_Singh_Riyat and https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-derbyshire-52366378</p> <p>More examples:</p> <p>Ellie Simmonds (UK) – Paralympic swimmer: https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/139963500906917477/</p> <p>Mallory Cave (USA) – Pilot: https://youtu.be/lbnbCLQDwHY</p>	<p>Matching activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pictures of people Pictures of occupations Slide with correctly matched people and occupations

Activities and Content (cont'd)

Discussion

- Did any of the answers surprise you?

Bias

- Sometimes we make assumptions about people (we guess something about them related to the way they look).
- This can happen without us realising.
- This is called bias.
- We are all biased in some ways and sometimes it is useful. For example, you might assume that a person wearing a uniform might be able to help you if you are lost or a dog that is barking might bite you. It might not be true, but it might be a good guess.
- Bias is a problem when we judge someone on how they look and treat them differently because of that, especially because of the colour of their skin, their hair, their disability, their gender or any of the other protected characteristics.

Unconscious thoughts

- Sometimes we make these judgements without even realising it.
- When something happens in your head without you realising it, that is called unconscious thoughts.
- Examples of unconscious thoughts are dreaming, having emotions and deciding something without thinking it through properly (on impulse).
- We have limited control over our unconscious mind.

Unconscious bias

- Unconscious bias means that we might make judgements about someone without knowing what we're doing.
- We might, without realising it, judge someone because of how they look.
- We might judge someone unconsciously because of the colour of their skin, their hair, their clothes or their heritage.
- It means we might treat someone less kindly without realising why.
- We might even make up reasons to be unkind to someone that aren't true.
- We ALL have unconscious bias of some kind.

Am I a bad person?

- Being unconsciously biased doesn't make us bad people.
- However, we do have a responsibility to be honest about the way we might judge and treat other people and challenge our biases.
- It can be hard to stop unconscious bias because:
 - We might not notice we have unconscious bias.
 - We might be influenced by other people in our lives (friends and family).
 - We might be influenced by the things we see in books and the media (For example, we might see a lot of stereotypes in the films that we watch).
 - We might not see or hear things that challenge our biases.
 - There can be a lack of representation of certain people in certain jobs, which can influence who we think can do those jobs.

What can we do about it?

- We have to try and notice when we're doing it and check that we're treating everyone kindly, no matter what they look like.
- The more you practice this, the less biased you will be.

Thinking time

- Think about all the people you have spoken to today.
- Did you treat them all the same? Why was that?
- Were you as kind as you could have been to everyone that you met this week?
- Do you think you have any unconscious bias?

Now let's reflect

I can explain... It might make me feel uncomfortable but... I have learnt... I still need to work on... I feel...

Glossary for teachers

Unconscious bias - Unconscious favouritism towards or prejudice against people of a particular ethnicity, gender, or social group that influences one's actions or perceptions.

Stereotype - A stereotype is an idea or belief some people have about a group of people that is based upon how they look on the outside.

Links to other lessons

- Racial socialisation lesson allows us to explore where stereotypes come from and how they are perpetuated.

- Representation lesson explains the reasons why we may have bias and how to improve this situation.
- A school's PSHE curriculum should also look at diversity across local communities and the world and explore the impact of this in more depth.
- Children should learn about the protected characteristics more general, as per the equality act 2010, as this gives a wider understanding of diversity, discrimination and inclusion.