



Lesson 2: Break the bias

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, your pupils will...

- Revise language for making comparisons.
- Identify some of our biases and prejudices.
- Acknowledge that we all have unconscious biases and prejudices.
- Reflect on where biases, prejudices and stereotypes come from.
- Recognise that it's our responsibility to break down our prejudices and biases.

Materials

- *Break the bias* presentation →
- *Imagine* Worksheet →
- *Dollar Street* website →
- *Leon Bass* video →

Lesson Plan

(45 mins)

→
Warmer
(10 mins)

→
Part 1
(20 mins)

→
Part 2
(15 mins)

→
Extension
(10 mins)

Warmer (10 mins)

- Remind pupils of the work they did in the last lesson about identities. Reiterate that each person's identity is made up of many different factors, and most of these you can't see by looking at a person.
- Tell pupils you're going to play a game called 'Imagine'. Show **Slide 2**. Ask them to close their eyes, or look down and imagine. Say:
 - *Imagine a boy your age.*
 - *He's from Ethiopia, in Africa.*
 - *Where is he? What is he doing?*
 - *Imagine his house. Imagine his bedroom.*
 - *Imagine his clothes.*
 - *Imagine his school.*
 - *Imagine what he does in his free time.*
- Give pupils about 1 minute to imagine this person and their life. Don't give any extra prompts or examples, just ask open questions.
- Repeat the activity with **Slide 3**. Say:
 - *Imagine a girl your age.*
 - *She's from California, in the USA.*
 - *Where is she? What is she doing?*
 - *Imagine her house. Imagine the kitchen.*
 - *Imagine the area around her house.*
 - *Imagine the clothes she wears.*
 - *Imagine what she does in her free time.*
- Ask for feedback from the class about each person they imagined. Did they find it easy or difficult to imagine these people? Listen to their ideas and notice if any unconscious prejudices or stereotypes come up. For example, if pupils imagined the boy to be poorer than the girl, for the girl to live in a bigger house, or for her clothes to be newer than the boy's.

NOTE: Don't make any judgements or correct pupils' answers. The idea is to bring out any preconceived ideas they may have.

- Ask: *Where do these ideas about Ethiopia and California (or Africa and the USA) come from?* Ask pupils if they have visited these places or if they know anyone from there. If so, acknowledge that these can be good sources of information.




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Part 1 (20 mins)

- Present **Slide 4**. Tell pupils *Now we're going to visit a family from the Philippines. Do you think their homes and lives will be similar to ours, or different?*
 - Show pupils where the Philippines is on a map.
 - Split the class into small groups of 3 or 4. Hand out the **Imagine** worksheet. Ask pupils to discuss and write comparative sentences about each of the topics on the worksheet, starting with 'I think'. For example, *I think houses in the Philippines are bigger than houses in Spain.*
 - If pupils are struggling, allow them to write notes instead of full sentences.
 - If pupils are stuck, ask them to think about what their own homes are like, where they get food, what their favourite toys/games are, and to think about a child their age in the Philippines. Is everything the same?
- NOTES:** Pupils might think there are a lot of differences, or that it is similar to their own life and culture. Both are valid and there are no right or wrong answers to this task.
- When most groups have finished, (give up to 10 minutes) come back together as a class. Present **Slide 5**, read the information and use the link to show photos of the Legarda family on Dollar Street. Use the categories on the website to explore the family's house, paying attention to the categories pupils wrote about.
 - Ask:
 - *Were you right about anything?*
 - *Did anything surprise you?*
 - *Was it more different or more similar to your life than you thought?*
 - Elicit that the ideas we have about people from different places and cultures often come from TV and the internet, our families and neighbours, books we read, etc.
 - For example, you can say: *We often see videos on the news of people who don't have enough food because of drought, or who have to live in refugee camps because of war. This might give us the idea that everyone in that country is poor, hungry or forced to leave their home. Or we might watch a TV series where people drive big cars and are always having fun, so we might think that everybody from that country is rich or has everything they need.*
 - Accept pupils' answers, then ask: *Can we say that a whole country is just one thing?* Remind pupils that if each individual person can be many things, it doesn't make sense to say a country of thousands or millions of people is just one thing.
 - Present **Slide 6**. Explain that ideas we have about people from different places might be biases or prejudices.
 - Explain that everyone has biases and prejudices, but it's our responsibility to look out for them and not act on them. To do this, it's important to think about where our ideas come from and to question them.


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Part 2 (15 mins)

- Present **Slide 7** which shows children from different places all doing an everyday activity, and explain that pupils will make a similar 'collage'.
- Split pupils into six small groups. Give each group an activity:
 - Get water
 - Brush my hair
 - Wash my hands
 - Play with toys
 - Dry the clothes
 - Clean my teeth
- Allow pupils to access **Dollar Street**  or use an internet image search to find photos or videos of their topic from different places and different economic situations. Group by group, help pupils add them to a display board of your choice. (e.g Jamboard (photos only) or Google Slides (photos and videos)).

NOTES: Some images may show things that fall outside of your pupils' experiences, and may surprise them. (For example different types of toilets, lack of running water, basic shelters). If pupils make negative judgements about these places, encourage them to notice the similarities e.g. we all want to have a place to wash and some soap.


It's important to recognise that some people do live in extreme poverty- but this is only 10% of the

world's population. (Source: **Gapminder**) 

Almost everywhere (in rich and poor countries) there is inequality, which means some people have a lot more than other people. In countries where many people live on less than 2 dollars a day, there are also people who are extremely rich.

- Present **Slide 8** and summarise:
 - People live in different places and in different ways- all are valid.
 - Our differences make the world a diverse and interesting place.
 - Though we're different, we all have the same essential human needs and live in similar ways.
 - Most people in the world do have access to the things they need, but inequality is a problem and it means some people don't have what they need.
 - Thinking that all the people from one country are the same, or live in the same conditions, is not accurate.
 - We all have biases and prejudices, and we need to challenge them so they don't make us treat others unfairly.

Extension (10 mins)

- Play the **Leon Bass video** where Leon Bass,  an ex-soldier, talks about the bias and racial discrimination he faced in the USA.
- Ask pupils to think about a time when they have experienced bias or prejudice. One example could be not being asked to join in a game because they were new to a group.

- In pairs, groups or as a class, ask pupils to talk about what happened and how it made them feel.

NOTES: It's important to create a safe, supportive environment for pupils to talk about these experiences.