
#RETHINKLABELS

A two day lesson plan for reducing bias and stereotypes in the classroom.



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Labels, Stereotypes, and Ally Behavior

Subject: English Language Arts, Social Studies, Humanities (grades 7-12).

This can be a modified activity for any classroom in order to help create a positive learning environment. This lesson plan is based on the #ReThinkLabels campaign sponsored by The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio.

Materials:

1. Online video from The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0WJIDvNzNNO>
2. Worksheets (see page 3-6)
3. Two kinds of colored paper

Time: 2, 45-minute classes

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to define stereotype and ally in their own words.
2. Students will analyze the meaning of political cartoons dealing with stereotypes and labels.
3. Students will be able to identify how they and others have been labeled and discuss the damage caused by such behavior.
4. Students will create a positive label for themselves and contribute to a school or class wide art installation.

Outline:

Day 1

1. Students watch the #ReThinkLabels video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0WJIDvNzNNO>.
2. As a class, students respond in an open format to the video.
 - a. Which statement was most powerful to you?
 - b. What surprised you the most?
 - c. Do you think this is common? Or are only some people vulnerable?
3. In small groups students can take three minutes to write down some of the labels they hear regarding individuals or peer groups.
 - a. After sharing, the class can discuss why they think some labels exist.

4. Teacher defines stereotypes using the worksheet provided. (See page 3)
 - a. Stereotypes can be defined as a generalization regarding a group; applying one characteristic to a defined category of people.
 - i. Stereotypes can lead to bias and discrimination.
 1. High School ELA teachers can reference *The Scarlet Letter* as an example of social shaming and labels, or the text of their choice.
 2. Social Studies teachers can reference Holocaust, Slavery, or the rejection immigrants.
 - ii. Student can complete the worksheet as homework or class work. (See pages 4-5)

Day 2

1. How do we become an ally?
 - a. An ally can be defined as a person who stands up for others.
 - b. A system of oppression continues when we stay silent.
 - i. Ally behavior includes:
 1. Interrupting conversations that include labeling people
 2. Questioning why someone/group is labeled
 3. Offering a different viewpoint
 4. Standing up with others
 - c. Post the “How to be an Ally” sheet in your room or have students create one for their class. (See page 6)
 - d. Teacher can model ally behavior or ask students to come up with responses.
2. Empowerment Activity
 - a. Drawing from the examples in the video students will create a wall of positive labels.
 - i. On the first paper students write down one label they have been called in the past. Students can share if they are comfortable, then tear up the words in a symbolic gesture and place them in a communal pile or trash can.
 - ii. On the second paper students write down the best label anyone has ever given them. These words are shared and posted in the classroom or hallway.
 - b. Teachers can extend the activity to an essay or paragraph about “The Best Label” they have ever been given.

Name _____ Class _____

Labels and Stereotypes in the United States

Stereotype- A widely held, but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.

What synonyms can be used for stereotype? Write down at least two.

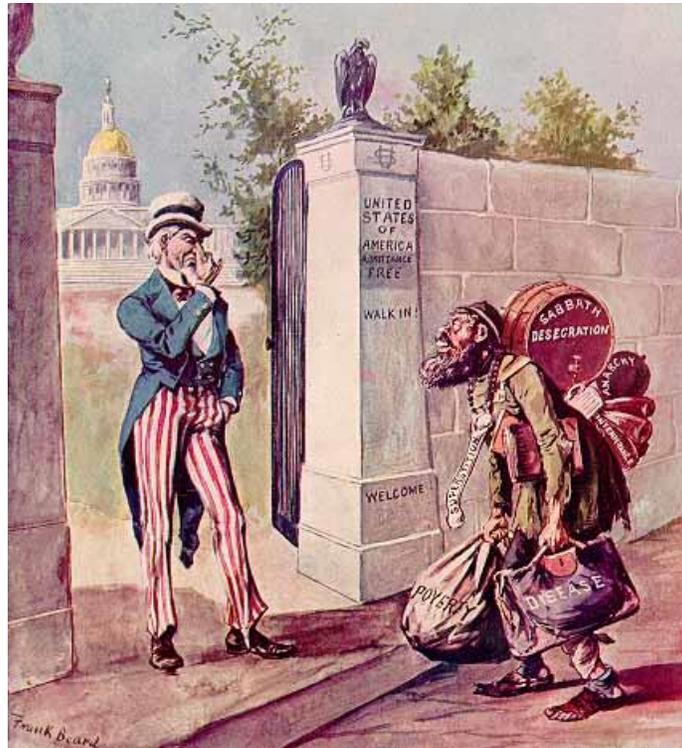
Another term we can use when someone is stereotyped is **Pigeonholed**, which comes from a term for the small opening where a domesticated pigeon nests.



How does the image of a pigeon hole symbolize being stereotyped?

How can stereotyping others impact relationships and behavior? Think of both big and small results.

Name _____ Class _____



"The immigrant Jew", 1899 accessed from <http://flashbak.com/chicago-cartoon-from-1899-shows-uncle-sam-turning-away-the-stinking-iew-16895/> on December 29th, 2015.

1. What is Uncle Sam's response to immigrant Jews?

2. According to this cartoon, what stereotypes of Jews existed?

3. What impact might these stereotypes have on the American government and people?



"You don't look like an Indian" accessed from <http://www.bluecorncomics.com/stharm.htm> on December 29th, 2015.

1. What are some of the images in the boy's thought bubble?

2. Why does he say "You don't look like an Indian"?

3. If you were the girl in the cartoon, how would you have felt and responded to this situation?

I am an ally because ...

**I interrupt conversations that
include labeling people,**

**I question why someone is
labeled,**

I offer a different viewpoint,

And I stand up for others!