WITHOUT
PREJUDICE

HANDBOOK
TOWARDS A HARMONIOUS SOCIETY

Activities for
the classroom

Previously ‘The Prejudice Book’ by David A. Shiman

Revised Australian edition
Peta Jones Pellach
Since its original publication this book has involved many people, as consultants and advisors. We offer thanks to each of them.

The book was first published in the United States in 1979 under the title “The Prejudice Book”. Written by David A. Shiman and colleagues in the College of Education and Social Services at the University of Vermont the book was published by the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith. A Human Rights agency, the ADL was founded by B’nai B’rith in 1913 and has regional offices throughout the world. Its mission is to promote human rights for all through the development of law, media relations and through involvement in educational programs.

In 1988, an Australian edition of this book was prepared by Barbara McLean, Elizabeth Hirschl and June Lewis, and published by the B’nai B’rith Anti-Defamation Commission (ADC), under the leadership of Dr. Paul Gardner with the support of the NSW Department of Education.

In 2005, Ernie Friedlander and Steve Denenberg from B’nai Brith’s Alfred Dreyfuss Anti-Defamation Unit formed a working group to review and update the book. Subsequently, former High School Principal, Dan Moalem, was co-opted to assist in completing the task and including the contribution of the NSW Dept. of Education & Training. This edition is the result of that work.

Special thanks are offered to the NSW Community Relations Commission, providing us with a grant to giving additional finance, which was badly needed. As well as to a number of people. To Ruth Wilson for her assistance in the early stages of the revision; to Peta Jones-Pellach, who brought over thirty years of experience as an educator to write the revised edition; to the numerous advisors, including Avril Alba, Sandy Hollis and Susie Breiger as well as officers from the NSW Dept. of Education. Special thanks also go to Russell Stern and to Ian Ossher.

The driving force behind this project was Ernie Friedlander, who says: ‘Fair Go’ is the motto of most Australians which means there is no room for prejudice or discrimination, based on colour, race, religion or ethnic origin, in our country. In 1944, when I was 9 years old, my mother and I were on a forced march with many other women and children from Budapest, Hungary. A soldier who was marshalling us, felt sorry for us and he told my mother how disgusted he was at what was happening, but he was under orders, and he would be shot if he did not carry them out. As it was getting dark, he whispered to my mother that we were approaching a curve in the road and that we should pretend to tie our shoelaces and, at an appropriate moment, disappear down the slope.

His action saved our lives, as the other 200 women and children were taken to concentration camps and murdered. My mother and I made our way home, but this freedom was short lived as we were soon rounded up by the Nazis and sent to a Ghetto in Budapest where we managed to survive. Fortunately for us the Russian forces arrived in Hungary soon after this and liberated us. I am eternally grateful to this soldier for his kind and caring action.

I regret that I never had the opportunity to offer that soldier my sincere appreciation for saving our lives under extremely dangerous conditions. However, this valuable lesson taught me not to generalise or hold prejudices against any group or stereotype any community but rather to consider people on their individual merits and behaviour.

We believe that most people are decent human beings and are willing to offer others “a fair go” regardless of their colour, gender or religion. We believe that if we are to achieve harmony in our society we cannot and must not tolerate discrimination. We hope and pray that this edition of “The Prejudice Book” will help achieve this goal and we thank everyone who has helped make this possible.

Steve Denenberg  
Executive Director  
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Ernie Friedlander OAM  
President, Alfred Dreyfuss Anti-Defamation Unit  
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Joint Project Coordinators
Author’s Foreword

It is clear that teachers can have a real influence on the lives of their students. This is a privilege and a responsibility that cannot be taken lightly. When young adults, educated in Australian schools, become involved in racially motivated violence, we may despair of the influence of their homes or the streets but we can also resolve to do better in our schools to combat those negative influences. At some level, the persistence of racism in society is a failure of our education system’s ability to overcome it. However, regardless of where the problem starts, within the school and classroom we must instil attitudes that our students will take with them into their adult lives.

This book is designed to assist teachers in their efforts to build a more harmonious school environment and to educate Australians who will enter society without prejudice. The exercises are written for a Year 5 - 6 age group but are also suitable and adaptable for Years 7 and 8. Some of the concepts introduced are sophisticated and will require children to extend their vocabulary and their understanding. It is believed that children are capable of hypothesizing and inferring at this level even before they enter high school. Reaching children as they approach adolescence is essential if we are to change attitudes.

The vision for a caring and compassionate Australia, promoting understanding, tolerance and inclusion as outlined in the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools, is one to which most teachers are committed. “Thank you” to B’nai B’rith for providing the opportunity to contribute to the future of Australian society.

This book is written to be a resource for teachers. As such, it is intended to offer flexible alternatives in the way in which it may be used, recognizing that teachers are the best judges of the needs of their students. The material contained in this book is suitable to be taught as a single unit of work in the HSIE program for Year 5 or 6. It can be taught intensively, in a block of teaching, or spread throughout the term or the year. The material can also be used selectively by the teacher, to respond to particular identified needs. Although it is recommended that the exercises be completed sequentially, it is possible to select particular exercises that respond to issues being faced in the classroom or in the school. It is certainly not essential that each exercise is completed with every group of students.

It is recommended strongly that the teacher read and consider the first section of the book, the Teachers’ Self-Examination section, before proceeding to engage with students on the important issue of Prejudice. This book endorses the principle that the teacher is the key to education, not simply its conduit. The teacher is the essential component in the development of attitudes among students and can be enormously influential. Reflective teachers are aware of the impact they have on their students and learn to respond appropriately as the effect of their teaching becomes evident. This book is intended as a tool to empower teachers in their quest to influence Australian students to be caring responsible citizens and to make Australia a country “without prejudice”.

Peta Jones-Pellach

Peta Jones Pellach has had a career in education for over thirty years, including twenty years in NSW high schools. She currently is Director of Adult Education at The Shalom Institute at the University of NSW and is Education Consultant to the Executive Council of Australian Jewry. She is passionate about interfaith dialogue and has twice represented Australia in regional interfaith conferences.
REFLECTING ON VALUES
Teacher Self-Examination

Rationale
This book is predicated on an optimistic view about the influence of the teacher and the classroom experience on students. Its authors believe that teachers can make a difference and change attitudes, but before we are able to teach our students to say ‘No’ to prejudice and discrimination, it is important that we create an environment conducive to the values we are promoting. The first step is to reflect on and analyse our own attitudes and behaviours as well as the environment of the school and classroom in which we are operating.

The items in the Self-Examination Questionnaire are intended to help you, as a teacher, to reflect upon the different dimensions within the school and the classroom which can contribute positively or negatively towards the reduction of prejudice and discrimination. The items do not form a scale in the sense that one can score 6/10 or 8/10. Instead, the questionnaire raises issues, allows for interrelationships among the issues and suggests procedures which are likely to be effective in varying degrees with different groups of students at different times. As a teacher, one has a responsibility to explore current practices and to be aware of possible consequences. As an individual, one must constantly be alert to and willing to challenge the ‘conventional wisdom’, the stereotypes and the prejudices which have been part of our everyday learning experiences.

The areas that have been identified as having an influence on effective teaching with regard to prejudice and discrimination are:

a) the school context
b) classroom environment and organisation, including curriculum constraints
c) reflective teaching: self-awareness with regards to style of teaching, evaluation and selection of curriculum content

a) The School Context
Consider the following anecdote:
Parents from a language background other than English enrolled their 10-year-old son in a local primary school when the father’s new employment required relocation. The child was Australian-born. Together with other educational documentation, his mother provided the school with a letter from the child’s paediatrician that he suffered severe food allergies. Some months later, the child had a severe allergic reaction to food eaten during a school activity and had to be rushed to hospital. Subsequent investigations proved that the school authorities had not passed on the child’s medical history to all relevant educational staff. The Principal had assessed that the parents were over-protective and indulgent. She had assumed that due to the ethnic background of the family and the fact that he was their only son, they would tend to exaggerate his illnesses. Further proof that this was not a serious medical alert, in the Principal’s eyes, was that the parents did not talk about the allergies during the enrolment interview except to point out the inclusion of the letter in the documentation.

Two forces were at play: the Principal’s pre-conceptions about the behaviours and values of people from a particular ethnic group and the failure of the parents to conform either to those pre-conceptions or to the behaviour expected from Anglo-Australians.

The school involved welcomed students from diverse backgrounds, generally provided a nurturing atmosphere and high quality of care. Yet it fell short when confronted with a genuine case of cultural difference that meant that parents understated their son’s needs for fear of appearing either pushy, over-cautious or in special need. This illustrates just how difficult it is for a school to fulfill its mission.

The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (2005) notes that education is not just about equipping students with specific skills. Schools have a role in building character. A values-based education will help students exercise ethical judgement and social responsibility and such an education can only take place inside schools that themselves model social responsibility. All Australian schools should articulate a mission that reflects the Nine Values for Australian Schooling.
This book is designed to enhance the third of those values, “Fair Go”. Schools should ‘Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society.’ A ‘fair go’ means that prejudice will be eliminated and that diversity will be valued.

The school’s mission needs to be reflected in the school environment and to permeate all aspects of school life, in and out of the classroom. It is well-recognised that the co-curricular activities of the school can be as influential at least as those activities that take place in the formal classroom. The entire school community, from teachers and students to parents, administration and the broader community, will be affected by the school’s ethos – not just its stated mission but all aspects of its behaviour and presentation.

Classroom Environment
A grade 5 teacher decides to read passages from Oliver Twist to his class, where Fagan is described as a ‘Jew’. The Jewish child in the class is distinctly uncomfortable. The teacher does not notice. At lunch-time, children begin to taunt the already distressed child and mockingly warn each other to watch their pockets. When the children return to the class room, the student is churlish and uncooperative. The teacher is totally unaware of the reason for the child’s uncharacteristic behaviour and at no time realizes that it was his insensitivity. He was aware that she was the only Jewish child in the class but not aware that presenting the unsympathetic character of Fagan the Jew without any rider or explanation would cause distress.

A beneficial classroom relies first and foremost on the awareness and sensitivity of the teacher.

A beneficial classroom environment stresses values such as empathy, fairness, respect for truth and reasoning, and tolerance. The tone of the classroom is set by the teacher. The environment teaches children to support each other and to accept their differences. It encourages students to genuinely listen to each other and assists students to accept responsibility for their own learning. Ultimately, it is a classroom where students have real choices and a share in the decision making. It is one where students value cooperation rather than competition and where students come to appreciate the importance of other forms of learning in addition to academic knowledge.

A beneficial classroom is the product of careful planning by the teacher within a supportive school context. It is necessary to develop an atmosphere where students feel safe to express their opinions, sure in the knowledge that they will be listened to and not ridiculed. At the same time, the students must be willing to subject those opinions to question and scrutiny by other members of the class, including you as teacher.

The selection and organisation of knowledge through the formal curriculum is recognised as an exercise in social control on behalf of those who hold power in society. It places value on certain kinds of knowledge accepted as being more relevant for those who end up in positions of influence. When all students are expected to follow the same path, some will not succeed. The experiences familiar to children who have not gained academic success have been that they are ignored or devalued, thus failing to provide one element of motivation which could lead to a greater expectation of academic success.

In the past, curriculum was ethnocentric – i.e. focussing on the interests and point of view of one's own group. That alternative perspectives existed was ignored. There was little understanding of other countries, often because of lack of adequate knowledge and resources. Much of the attention of the curriculum focussed on great events with scant attention to the workings of society. This resulted in a failure to examine the ways in which the existing institutions and structures in society perpetuate inequalities. By failing to deal with such matters, the curriculum itself became a vehicle of discrimination. With radical improvements to the curriculum in recent years, there are still significant gaps. More importantly, teachers are themselves the products of the ethno-centric curricula of past years.
Ability grouping, especially to provide for extension of gifted children and extra support for those with special needs, has its place in schools. However, like all other aspects of school organisation, it needs to be managed in such a way that it does not become a source for and justification of prejudice. It is an organisational practice that may make effective teaching in the area of prejudice and discrimination more difficult. Inflexible ability grouping may perpetuate class and racial attitudes prevalent in adult society since it is true that many of the less academically successful students do come from culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The ‘labelling’ process which seems to inevitably follow on from organisational practices such as ability grouping, is a contributory factor in nurturing the formation of unhealthy, prejudiced attitudes and behaviours.

In all exercises, statements or opinions and examples elicited from students should, as far as possible, be positive rather than risk unintentional reinforcement of stereotypes. There are many challenges in creating a classroom environment conducive to a ‘fair go’ attitude.

c) Reflective Teaching

At parent-teacher night early one year, a parent told me that her daughter thought I didn’t like her very much. I was horrified. There weren’t many children I didn’t like. In this case, I didn’t yet know the children and certainly hadn’t formed any strong opinions about any of them. I reassured the mother and asked her to assure her daughter that her misapprehensions were not true. The next morning, I made a point of observing the girl in question. She wasn’t particularly academic or ‘chirpy’. She wore make-up to class at age 12. In fact, she was the type of child I was less inclined to ‘like’. What she clearly had was outstanding Social Intelligence. She had noted something in me that I hadn’t even noted in myself. She earned my particular respect.

This incident was a salient warning. We all carry prejudices. Children perceive them – sometimes before we do ourselves. Reflective teachers will learn to identify their own strengths and weaknesses and to work on overcoming the latter. Because most teachers carry prejudice or gaps in knowledge that are the results of our own education, teachers need to be constantly aware of the messages they are conveying, explicitly or implicitly, in their choices of subject-matter or methodology.

The teacher holds the key to the atmosphere in the classroom. The rationale underlying the final section of the questionnaire stems from the belief that the teacher is the best judge of the balance of information and ideas conveyed in her/ his classroom is achieving the goals of a values-based education. Any curriculum which does not reflect the cultural pluralism of our own society, and which fails to provide students with the opportunities to develop skills in social literacy, is a potential vehicle for injustice. Beyond the curriculum, classroom organisation, the way student evaluations are handled, the range of extra-curricular activities, the opportunities for student decision-making and taking of responsibility, all play a role.

In some settings, especially but not only where there is ability grouping, teachers are more likely to have higher expectations of the academically successful student, take greater pleasure in them, give them more opportunities for leadership and service, and provide more positive feedback and encouragement than they do with less academically successful students. The students accept these evaluations of themselves and mutually reinforce them. The teacher is able to wield enormous influence on all the students in the classroom, to breed insecurity or to teach respect, to create divisions or to encourage harmony.

Teachers have the power to adjust the curriculum and monitor developing attitudes to ensure that in their own classrooms the atmosphere of trust, respect and democracy pervades. The first step is being a ‘Reflective Practitioner’, aware of one’s performance as a teacher.

The questionnaire that follows is an expression of the views discussed above. Its goal is to ‘jiggle’ minds, not judge behaviour. Its purpose is to help us all make school and classroom communities as humane, just, and democratic as we possibly can.
1. What visual signs are there in your school that diversity is welcomed? Is there multi-lingual signage? Pictures of faces that reflect the diversity of the community? Other signs?

2. What activities are held in your school to engage the parent-community?

3. How welcome do non-English speakers feel at those activities?

4. What efforts are made to encourage participation?

5. How accessible is the Principal?

6. How easy is it to talk to teachers?

7. What is done to communicate the values of the school to the parent community?

8. Does the school have a bullying policy?

9. What are the induction procedures for new members of staff?

10. How and for what are students rewarded? Are records of achievements displayed?

11. How much say in decision making within the school do teachers have?

12. How much say in decision making within the class do students have?

13. What criteria do you use for grouping students? How satisfactory are these criteria? Do you place students in different ability groups for different purposes?

14. Are comparisons of student academic performance visible on blackboard or bulletin boards for all to see?

15. Do your students tend to ridicule, laugh at, smirk at, or tease other students because of their academic performance or other characteristics?

16. Do you think your curriculum helps students develop skills to participate effectively in a culturally diverse society?

17. Do you think your curriculum helps students learn to function effectively in different cultures?

18. Do you think your curriculum contributes to strengthening students' sense of individual identity and aids them in understanding themselves better in light of their own heritage?

19. Does your curriculum include study of social issues such as prejudice, discrimination, and exploitation?

20. To what degree does your curriculum deal with the historic experiences, cultural patterns and social condition of diverse groups? Does your curriculum include both positive and negative aspects of these experiences? Does your curriculum present members of diverse groups as active participants in society as well as victims of oppression and exploitation?

21. Have you ever evaluated text books and test materials for cultural bias?

22. Do economically disadvantaged or students from particular ethnic backgrounds perform more consistently poorly on tests you give?

23. When students from culturally and linguistically diverse communities or socio-
24. Are you more likely to take credit for student successes than you are to assume responsibility for their failures?

25. To what degree do you spend time and effort dispelling misconceptions, stereotypes, and prejudices that students appear to hold?

26. To what extent do you feel at ease and competent to discuss controversial issues such as ethnic conflict?

27. Do you encourage and support students who wish to take action on social problems that they have studied and become concerned about?

28. Do the questions you ask have the potential to ridicule a student in the eyes of another?

29. To what extent do you use questions as a means of social control (including the ‘what did I just say?’ type of question)?

30. To what extent do the questions you ask provide students with a real invitation to express their views, to themselves pose questions, and to exchange views with each other?

31. To what extent do you use questions to encourage students to consider sympathetically views they themselves may not hold?

32. Make a list of five students whom you like most and feel most comfortable with and five for whom the reverse is true. Are those you prefer more similar to you in terms of their background and values?

33. Do you tend to wait longer for certain students to respond to questions? Are you more impatient with others and quicker to supply answers for them?

34. Do you tend to expect less from certain children? Are these students more likely to be from culturally and linguistically diverse communities or socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds?

35. To what extent do you think the students’ behaviour towards each other is a reflection of your attitude or a more general attitude in the school?
We want to help students understand and be able to apply values of respect, compassion, responsibility and understanding. In order to do so, they need to view diversity in Australian society as an asset and not a liability.

The exercises in this section are preliminary steps towards creating the atmosphere in which diverse opinions are acknowledged, respected and valued. The first step is encouraging students to express their individual opinions and allowing others to express theirs.

Since making value judgments and expressing opinions are part of many of the exercises presented in this handbook, creating a classroom climate which is trusting and non-judgmental is particularly important. The following exercise should make it easier to move later into discussions of personal, value-laden topics related to race, gender, beliefs and ethnicity, which might be more threatening to students.

**Exercise 1:**

*Classroom Warm-up: Expressing Opinions*

**Time Required:**

- 30 mins + feedback

**Aims:**

- To give students the opportunity to state their opinions in public
- To help students realise that diversity of opinion exists on every issue

**Materials:**

None

**Procedure:**

Before beginning the exercise you should stress that there are no right and wrong answers in this exercise only differences of opinion and belief.

Divide the room into four opinion corners designated as “strongly agree”, “somewhat agree”, “strongly disagree”, and somewhat disagree”, leaving the centre of the room for “undecided”.

Tell the students that you will read statements aloud to them. They are to listen to each statement and then “vote with their feet” by moving to the spot in the room that best represents their opinion.

Select statements from the list offered below, beginning with non-controversial ones, then proceed to those related to more divisive issues.

It is important that the teacher makes no comment on the students’ opinions as the exercise is in progress.

**Sample Statements (Exercise 1)**

1. Cats are smarter than dogs.
2. Soccer is more fun than any other sport.
3. Children should be seen but not heard.
4. Everything always turns out for the best.
5. Women should take care of the home while men go out to work.
6. Boys shouldn’t play with dolls.
7. Girls shouldn’t want to play football with boys.
8. A husband and wife should make all important decisions together.
9. Children should have the same rights as adults.
Exercise 2:
Expressing Opinions

Time Required:
- 30-40 mins + feedback

Aims:
- To give students the opportunity to express their opinions on controversial matters.
- To help students realise that diversity of opinion exists on every issue.

Materials:
Markers for each student

Procedure:
Select statements from the list below that will arise in your future lessons. Write them on banners around the room with a line below the statement, marked from ‘strongly disagree’, to ‘strongly agree’. Ask students to walk around the room and read each of the statements and put a single mark on each line where their opinion lies. Students should be confident that they are able to place their mark without scrutiny from others.

Sample Statements
1. Overseas workers are taking jobs away from Australians.
2. Certain races are more likely to work as gardeners than other Australians.
3. There is no discrimination in Australia.
4. A lot of certain races are engaged in drug-dealing.
5. European people treat Africans and Asians unfairly.
6. Aboriginal culture is not as advanced as European culture.
7. People should be required to stop work (retire) when they reach the age of 65 years.
8. Most old people need to be taken care of.
9. Slow learners should be in special classes by themselves.
10. Children with disabilities should go to school with all other children.
11. Children who are deaf should go to special schools for the deaf.
12. Healthy children feel uncomfortable when they are around children with disabilities.
13. People are poor because they are lazy.
14. In Australia, anybody can become Prime Minister.
15. Rich people are smarter than poor people.

Follow-up and Evaluation:
At the end of each exercise, students should be asked their responses to the exercise itself. Every encouragement should be made for students expressing critical views.

Students should try to recall who in the class made all the same responses as they did. The expectation is that no two students were in agreement on everything. This should be elicited from the students and used to illustrate that diversity of opinion is to be expected among friends and colleagues.

Identify those issues on which there seem to be the greatest differences in opinion. Later these can serve as starting points for discussions of the reasons students “voted” in certain ways on particular issues.
The marks on the charts should be collated. (Perhaps students could be asked to volunteer to collate the results). The resulting graphs can serve as springboards or reference points for discussion in succeeding lessons.

In order for the atmosphere of trust to be created, it is important that the teacher has made no judgments on the students’ opinions while the exercise is in progress. In fact, reserving discussion of the opinions expressed will help consolidate the atmosphere of trust essential for future exercises.

However, if a particular issue has led to conflict between students or any feelings of discomfort, the teacher may need to grapple with that matter immediately. This is one of the many occasions where the professionalism of the teacher will be required.

Ideally, it will be possible to treat this activity exclusively as an exercise in diversity and wait until later in the year for more in depth discussions regarding student explanations and values.

**Exercise 3:**

**People Perceive Differently**

**Time Required:**
- 40 mins minimum

**Aim:**
- To help students understand that people have different perceptions of the same phenomenon

**Materials:**
A vivid, action-filled picture or a short, action-filled video clip

**Procedure:**
Show the students the picture or video clip and ask the students to write down the three most interesting things about it. Have them rank their choices in order of importance. Ask students to share their choices with the class and to briefly comment on why they made the choices they did. Write the choices on the board.

**Follow-up and Evaluation:**
Point out that while everyone saw the same image, there was great diversity in what students found interesting or important in the image. Again, point out that no-one is right and no-one is wrong.

Discuss with the students the role that diversity in perception and opinion plays in our lives.

Ask students to consider the advantages and disadvantages of a world where everyone sees things the same way.

Follow up with an opportunity for students to express their ‘diversity’ through creative writing or creativity in the visual arts.
Exercise 4:
Accuracy of Perceptions

Time Required:
• 40 mins

Aim:
• To help students to recognise the link between the accuracy of their perception of another person and their knowledge of that person

(Having established that there may be diversity of perception does not preclude examining the issue of accuracy of perception.)

Materials:
None

Procedure:
Pair the students in the class so that some are with very good friends while others are paired with students they barely know.

Each student should independently make a list of five things (such as TV shows) that s/he thinks the other person likes. Then, each student should make a similar list of five things that s/he likes.

After this part of the exercise has been completed, ask the students to compare lists. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

• Was the list you drew up for your partner different from his/her own?
• Which pairs of students have the most similar lists?
• Why were some pairs’ lists more similar than others?

After discussing how accuracy in perception is a function of how well students know the person with whom they were paired, proceed by asking students for which of the following groups their guesses would be most and least accurate:

• Another student (same age) in their school.
• Another student (same age) in another school in Australia.
• An Australian (same age) living in an indigenous community
• A student (same age) in the U.S.
• A student (same age) in Iraq.
• A person (same age but not in school) in Iraq.

Ask them to offer reasons that explain why some guesses would be more accurate than others.

Follow-up and Evaluation:
This exercise can highlight the importance of information, common experiences, and actual contact with other people in describing accurately or making judgments about them.
It may be valuable to ask the students to create a slogan or slogans that can be displayed prominently in the classroom that reinforce(s) this message.

Exercise 5:

**Perception and Frame of Reference**

**Time Required:**
- 30-40 mins

**Aim:**
- To help students understand that a person’s perception or judgment of something or someone is greatly influenced by one’s frame of reference (ie; values, beliefs, experience, country)

**Materials:**
- None

**Procedure:**
Create approximately eight statements such as those given below.
Present the class with the statements and ask the students whether they agree or disagree with each of them.

*(Name of school)* is the best school in town.
Sydney Swans is the best football team.
Australia is the best country to live in.
The recent test we had was easy *(or hard).*

Using the student responses to these statements, help them to see that their answers are expressions of their own frame of reference and that other people might answer these questions quite differently because their frame of reference would be different.

**Follow-up and Evaluation:**
Revisit the questions discussed above and examine their responses. Below is an example of how students might analyse their perceptions.

- **Australia is the best country to live in?** *(probably most students will agree)*
  - Why do you believe this?
- **How did you come to hold this opinion?** *(e.g; influence of parents, media, school, politicians)*
- **How do you think a Japanese student *(or some other national)* would react to this statement?**
- **What country do you think a Japanese would think is the best?**
- **Why do you think a Japanese student might believe this?**
- **Is either the Australian or Japanese student correct in his/her opinion?**
Exercise 6: Cultural Influences

Time Required:
- 30-40 mins

Aim:
- To help students understand that their perception of phenomena is heavily influenced by their upbringing, experiences, values, and beliefs

Materials:
None

Procedure:
Present students with examples of human behaviour that demonstrate the various influences on their perceptions.

Examples:
- Two people meet and you observe the first person bow to the other. What does this signify to you? (Help students to see that in some cultures this signifies subservience while in others it is a substitute for a handshake. You might ask them under what circumstances would they bow or shake hands).

- Some children are terrified by loud thunder while others are much calmer. Discuss this phenomenon. (Some students have had it explained that the danger is the “lightning”. They understand that lightning has electricity which can burn or kill someone whereas thunder is only harmless sound. As thunder arrives several seconds after the lightning, by the time it arrives, the danger is over. Help students to understand that our reactions are a function of previous experiences.)

Follow-up and Evaluation:
Ask students to offer examples based on their own life experiences in which their actions in one context (or with one person) were influenced by previous experiences in a similar context (or with another person).

Ask students to identify a group (racial, ethnic, sex, disabled, age) about which they hold some opinions. The following questions might then be asked:

- What opinions do you hold?
- How did you come to hold these opinions? (e.g.; influence of parents, media, school, friends)
- Do you think that a member of that group would have the same opinions as you?
- In what ways might their opinions be different? (or the same)
- What might account for these differences?

Through this activity students should be able to identify some of the ingredients of their own frame of reference and begin to realise that other people have frames of reference that are different from their own.
As students develop confidence in their own right to express an opinion and as they begin to understand the diversity of opinions that comprise their school community, the focus needs to shift to the individuals within their group.

**Exercise 1: Valuing Individuals**

**Time Required:**
- 40-60 mins

**Aim:**
- To help students view each person in a group as a special individual.
- To help students realise that each individual is, also, a member of many different groups.

**Materials:**
One potato for each student and a large bag

**Procedure:**
Roll potatoes out of the bag and ask each student to take one. Then ask them to examine the potato before them and “make friends” with the potato so that they can introduce their new friend to the rest of the class. Give the students one minute of silence to get acquainted with their new friend.

After the silent period, initiate the activity by showing your potato to the class and introducing it to them by means of a little story. The story might focus on certain physical characteristics of that potato, i.e., it has a certain bump because it was dropped on the way to market or has many eyes and can see in all directions at once. Students then introduce their “friend” to the rest of the class. Following this, ask the students to put their “friend” back into the bag. Observe if there is any difference between the way the children handle their “friend” and the way they handled the potato earlier.

After the potatoes are back in the bag, ask the class if they would agree with the statement, “All potatoes are the same.” Then ask students if they think they could find their “friend” again. Take the potatoes out of the bag and invite students to find their friend. A few students might have difficulty doing this, and some last minute exchanging will no doubt occur.

Ask the students to identify one way in which their potato is unique i.e; different from all the others. Break down into small groups to save time.

Conclude this activity by drawing the analogy between potatoes and people and by reiterating that a statement such as “they’re all alike - means that the person saying it has probably not taken the time or thought it important enough to get to know his/her “friend”. Then proceed to the appropriate follow-up activities.

(Adapted from: Rainbow activities, Creative Teaching Press, Inc., South El Monte, Cal., 1977).

**Follow-up Activities:**
These activities focus on the interrelated themes of individuality and commonality.

**A. Individuality**
Continue with the analogy between potatoes and people. Ask the students to pair off with someone they don’t know very well. Give them two minutes (one for each student) to study the other person silently. After the elapsed time, have students...
introduce each other to the rest of the class, trying to highlight some interesting and positive characteristic of the other person's appearance.

OR

Building from the analogy between potatoes and people, ask the students to pair off with someone they don’t know very well. Each student should ask five questions of the other person to gain information for their introduction of that student to the rest of the class later on. Encourage the students to ask questions which will provide them with interesting information to share with fellow students, e.g. hobbies, favourite TV show, travel. After the interview time, have students introduce each other to the rest of the class.

OR

Again, using the analogy between potatoes and people, ask the students to pair off and try to discover at least one way in which their partner is unique, i.e. different from everyone else in the class. This might involve considerable activity and time as the students examine each other in search of uniqueness. You might wish to divide the class into 2-3 groups to speed up the activity. After doing this, have students report to the class on the unique characteristic that they have found.

B. Commonality

Comment that although each potato is unique, all still have certain common characteristics that enable them to be grouped in different ways. Ask the class to generate a list of characteristics that are common to all potatoes. This might be used as a brief introduction or review of the process of generalising. Then ask students to identify other ways the potatoes might be grouped. They should be able to generate a list that includes colour, size, shape, irregularities, weight, and firmness among others. Write this list of grouping characteristics on the board. Then, ask students to select two or three potatoes and indicate into how many different groups each might be placed. They should realise that each can be grouped in many different ways.

This activity can either be a follow-up to the previous exercise or can be used in place of it. Using the potato analogy as an introduction, point out to the class that it is often important to be able to identify commonalities among people as well as uniqueness or individuality. Select six students who represent many of the differences (e.g., racial, religious, gender) in your class and ask them to come to the front of the room. First, ask other students to list as many characteristics as they can which are common to all students. You should write these on the board.

This activity can lead to a review of the process of generalising. It can also reinforce the point that the group categories used determine how one describes another person or thing. Then, raise the question “Are there characteristics common to some but not to all?” Ask the rest of the class to group these students in as many different ways they can. Point out that every student is part of many different groups.

C. Individual and Group

To emphasise both their individuality and commonality, the class might create a bulletin board something like “I AM AN INDIVIDUAL/WE ARE A GROUP” or “ME/WE”. Each student would contribute something that expresses or represents him/herself (e.g. photograph, drawing, piece of clothing) to the individuality side of the board. The class together would decide how they want to express or represent their commonality on the other side of the bulletin board.
Exercise 2: Minority Feelings

Time Required: 40 mins

Aim:
- To help students understand the concept of ‘minority’.
- To help students understand how it might feel to be a member of a minority.

Materials:
None

Procedures:
Begin the activity by writing the word MINORITY on the board. Have students look up the meaning in a dictionary after brainstorming with the class about the meaning of the word. Common answers will be racial minorities or ethnic groups, but try to draw out a larger meaning, such as feeling different from the people around you (e.g. being the only child in class who forgot to bring lunch). The point to be made is that everyone is in a minority at some time. For instance, children are a minority when they are surrounded by adults or when they are outnumbered by dogs and cats. Encourage the children to think of other such examples. Stress that feeling “in the minority” can occur even though one is not a numerical minority. Point out that not having access to power, being treated differently from the way others are treated, or feeling a lack of control can also produce these feelings. You might offer the example of women in our society who are the numerical majority but are often treated like or feel like minority members. Point out also that someone might be in a numerical minority without actually feeling like a minority. For example, someone with a physical handicap might be fully integrated into a classroom, treated fairly and sensitively by his/her peers, and feel welcome. For such a person, being a numerical minority might be unimportant.

After discussing the word “minority”, write this title on the board: WHEN I AM IN THE MINORITY, I FEEL ... Tell the children they are going to write a special kind of poem called a list poem. Ask them all to shut their eyes and think how they feel when they’re different in a crowd of people. Write their answers on the board, but do not evaluate them. More than likely, the first few lines will be superficial, but lines with deeper feelings will gradually come. From time to time, re-read the lines, starting with the title. Continue writing on the board until there are fifteen or so lines, or until there seems to be no more response from the class. Now ask the class to look over all the lines in the list carefully.

Ask them to reorganise the poem, combining lines where sentiments duplicate or overlap, and changing the order of lines to make the poem flow more smoothly. When the poem is finished, leave it on the board for a day or two and make copies to give to each student.

Conclusion:
Before concluding this activity, you might also want to mention that sometimes people feel really good about being in a minority. For example, a student who passes a test that most others have failed might be happy that he/she was not in the majority.
Follow-up Activities:

A. The teacher might point out to the children that many of them probably felt like a member of a minority when they entered a new school or moved into a new town. In this case, they were in the minority of “new” people.

Ask the students to talk about entering a new class, school, or neighbourhood.

• How did they feel in the beginning?
• What sorts of things did they have to learn in order to feel comfortable in their new environment?
• How did they want other children to treat them?
• How did others treat them?

Point out that new students are entering their school all the time. Suggest that they develop their own program for orienting new students in their class and making them feel at home and welcome. This program should be written down. It can then be put into operation when the next new child enters the class.

B. A more risky activity might involve asking students to discuss their own experiences as minorities. This can be particularly valuable if there are racial, ethnic, or religious minorities in the class. Let the students tell their own stories in their own way rather than try to guide their presentations. Your role might be one of reflecting or restating what the students from diverse backgrounds say and offering them the support or encouragement that they might need. This can be an important learning experience for the majority of students who often have little awareness of the sorts of things with which “minorities” (those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds), have to deal.
Exercises 3, 4, 5 and 6:
Disabling Conditions

**Time Required:**
- At teacher’s discretion

**Aims:**
- To allow students to experience simulated conditions comparable to those experienced by people with disabilities.
- To help students understand some of the feelings people with a disability might have.

**Materials:**
If needed, listed under separate activities.

**Alternative Procedures:**
Activities might be part of your effort to prepare your class for the addition to the class of a new student who has a disability. If there is already a student with a disability in the class, you might wish to relate this activity to his/her feelings and to fellow students’ attitudes toward his/her presence.

After each exercise the students should be encouraged to discuss the feelings they experienced. Sample questions are offered in the first activity below which can be easily adapted for each succeeding activity. If appropriate, the students might be encouraged to propose and implement actions aimed at making their classroom or school more hospitable to people with a disability.

Stress that these are serious activities, not games. They are not an opportunity to make fun of people with disabilities.

**Exercise 3:**
Visual Impairment

**Materials:**
Spectacle frames (old sunglasses or play spectacle frames without lenses). Plastic sheeting of varying degrees of opacity.

**Procedure:**
Cut out lens shapes from a range of plastic material and attach to the lens or space for the lenses of the spectacle frames.

Using different lenses, ask students to participate in activities involving near and distance viewing tasks such as reading various sizes of print, reading from the board and identifying other students. Students should comment on the effect of the different lenses in terms of the ease, speed and clarity with which they can make out the images.
A further exercise would be to engage the class in a regular activity with only two or three students wearing the lenses. Discussion could focus on how the person with impaired vision felt and how his/her work might be affected? Did the students with normal vision have any reactions toward the students with the impaired vision?

**Exercise 4:**

**Visual Impairment (Adaptable to Auditory Impairment)**

**Materials:**

Blindfold

**Procedures:**

Blindfold a student in the class. Continue conducting your class in the regular manner, without considering the fact that one student cannot see. Do this for approximately fifteen minutes. Afterwards, as well as discussing the students’ feelings, ask them to identify ways in which the classroom and other areas could be better planned to make mobility easier and safer for, students with a visual disability.

Ask them if they would be willing to make those changes.

**Exercise 5:**

**Auditory Impairment**

**Materials:**

Soundproof headphones

**Procedure:**

Have a student put on the headphones. Stand behind the student and give him/her directions for placing objects on a table. Then move in front of the student and give the same instructions. Do your best to communicate with the student, but with oral directions only. Do not give visual clues with your hands or eyes. Give various students the opportunity to try to communicate with the ‘deaf’ person.
Exercise 6:
Motor Impairment

**Materials:**
A wheelchair or a set of crutches

**Procedure:**
Have a student spend a day (or part of a day) in a wheelchair or on crutches. Have him/her keep track of the physical/architectural barriers encountered. What feelings does he/she have? Ask student which activities he/she was unable to do. Have the student share their feelings and frustrations. Ask class to identify ways in which the school, its programs and environment, would have to be changed to accommodate someone in a wheelchair or on crutches.

AND/OR

**Materials:**
Telephone, crepe bandage, pencil, paper

**Procedures:**
Have the students try to use a phone without using their hands

OR

Wrap a student’s hand in a crepe bandage so that s/he cannot move either the wrist or individual fingers. S/he should have difficulty holding the pencil. Ask the student to try to write his/her name address, and phone number.

(Adapted from activities developed by John Willard and John Evert, Consulting Teacher Program, College of Education and Social Services, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont, 1977.)
Exercise 1:
Cultural Diversity

Time Required:
- 20-30 mins

Aim:
- To help students become aware of the diversity of or within Australia’s population.

Materials:
Map of the world (poster size); drawing pins and string or markers.

Procedure:
Reproduce the map on pages 63-64 of this book or create a similar one that can serve as a large poster in the classroom.

Have students ask their parents about their countries or places of origin and allow each child a number of lines on the map that show the routes they or their ancestors took to arrive on our shores.

This map should be a visual reminder and a source of pride and inspiration to students, demonstrating that they have come from all parts of the world, from across the globe and country, to the same place. For indigenous children suggest the same on our Australian map.

Exercise 2:
Cultural Diversity 2

Time Required:
- At teacher’s discretion

Aim:
- To help students become aware of the diversity of the Australian community.

Materials:
Internet access

Procedure:
Visit the site:
Assign the exercises to individuals or groups, as appropriate for your class.
Exercise 3:
Contributions of Australians from Diverse Backgrounds

Time Required:
• Extended exercise

Aim:
• To help students learn about the contribution that people from different groups (ethnic, religious) are making to our nation.

Materials:
Magazines, scissors, construction paper, glue, and felt pen.

Procedures:
(The activity described below focuses on racial, ethnic, and religious diversity but can be used equally well to study the contributions of any group).

Have the children collect various magazines, catalogue, containing pictures of people. Tell them to cut out pictures of people of different races, ethnic groups. After they have collected a sizeable amount, have them cut away unnecessary printed matter or background. Cut out a large outline of Australia on coloured construction paper (pieced together) and put it on a notice board. Have the students glue the cut-out people onto this silhouette of Australia. When all gluing is completed, let them select a name for their people poster. Have the class identify the different racial, religious, and ethnic groups in the poster. Then divide the class into clusters of 4-5 students. Each cluster will select a group for further study. Students should try to learn all they can about their group’s contribution to our nation. This might involve using internet, library and community resources. They should be encouraged to find out the following information about their particular group:

1. Approximate size of the group’s population in Australia.
2. Location(s) of its population, if appropriate.
3. Group’s presence within the local community.
4. Names of famous members of the group.
5. Specific contributions by members of the group in areas such as: sport, music, art, business, government, science, education, dance, theatre, civil rights, and social justice.

Each group of students might write a report to share with the rest of the class and make a poster for display about the particular racial/ethnic group that it has studied.
Exercise 4:
Personal Contact Inventory

Time Required:
• 40 mins minimum

Aims:
• To enable students to record the nature and degree of their own contact with people of different groups (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, people with disability).
• To encourage students to broaden their contacts with other Australians of different backgrounds or lifestyles.

Materials:
Personal Contact Inventory (see below).

Procedure:
Give each student a copy of the Inventory. Referring to the groups studied in exercise 3, ask students to answer each question in terms of the particular group under discussion. (This can be done more quickly by a show of hands).

Personal Contact Inventory
Think back over your life and the amount of contact you have had with (insert group). Then answer each of the following questions by writing O for often having contact with (insert group), S for sometimes having contact, and N for never or almost never having contact.

1. See in your town/community?
2. See on television shows?
3. See on television news programs?
4. See in movies?
5. Hear parents talk about?
6. Hear other adults talk about?
7. Hear other children talk about?
8. Hear politicians talk about?
9. Read about in newspapers and magazines?
10. Read stories about?
11. Study about in school?
12. Attend school with?
13. Have as classmates?
14. Have as teachers?
15. Buy things from (shopkeepers)?
16. Have as members of my church/synagogue/mosque?
17. Belong to the same group such as a club or scouts?
18. Go to the same parties?
19. Play with after school?
20. Live near?
21. Talk with?

KEY
O - often having contact
S - sometimes having contact
N - never having contact
Ask students to look at their responses for each group. Does any pattern emerge? Why might there be ‘no contact’ responses on particular items? What effect might the presence or absence of contact have on knowledge about, and attitudes towards, the particular group being discussed?

**Exercise 5:**

**Indigenous History and Heritage**

**Time Required:**
- Extended exercise

**Aims:**
- To create awareness of the history and the richness of the heritage of indigenous Australians.
- To emphasise the contribution of indigenous Australians to the nation.

**Materials:**
Internet access

**Procedure:**
Visit http://www.dreamtime.net.au/index.cfm

Peruse the site for information about the indigenous community, including a timeline of Indigenous history.

Allocate each student one of the dreamtime stories on the site to relate to the class and/or to illustrate and display to the class.

Further exercises considering the issues facing indigenous Australians are included in the following sections of the book.
Prior to embarking on the exercises in this section, teachers need to familiarise themselves with the concept of ‘stereotype’. The following statements may be of assistance:

**Stereotype**

- Stereotypes are learned and culturally transmitted generalisations about people which have become ‘frozen’ in our minds.
- Holding stereotypes about certain groups prevents us from thinking and feeling about their members in new and different ways and blocks us from seeing group members as unique, special human beings.
- Stereotypical statements can be neutral, positive, or negative, but they are generally more negative than positive.
- Many people connect certain stereotypes with certain prejudices. These people generally use a particular experience or example to justify or rationalise their own prejudice.
- Stereotypes are often used by people to rationalise treating certain groups unequally or as inferiors.
- Stereotypes do change over time as a result of other changes taking place in society.

**Examples:**

- An antisemite points to the fact that many Jews are merchants, lawyers and businessmen as evidence that Jews only care about money.
- People opposing women in important government positions point to the fact that women cry more easily than men as “evidence” that women are too emotional and unstable to perform responsible jobs.

### Exercise 1: Gender Stereotyping

**Time Required:**

- 40 - 60 mins

As students might relate to an activity focussing on gender stereotyping this is a fairly easy way to engage them in a meaningful discussion about “What is a stereotype?”

**Aims:**

- To help students understand the concept of a stereotype

**Materials:**

None

**Procedure:**

Give students a copy of the lists opposite and ask them to indicate whether they associate the term or phrase in the first table more with one gender than another, with both genders equally or with neither gender. The students should put a tick in the appropriate column. *(Note: Some of the words might require a simple definition).*
Fill in your own gender: Male (M) or Female (F)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Neither</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Adventurous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gentle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Quiet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Powerful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Vain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Emotional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Noisy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Competitive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Affectionate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Weak</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Afraid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Confident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Brave</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Take charge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Bad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Give in easily</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Good</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Then give students the checklist of “Roles people fill” and ask them how they think roles should be divided.

Place an M in front of the items you think should be male responsibilities, F in front of those that should be female responsibilities and MF in front of those that should be both male and female responsibilities.

1. ___ deciding whether to have children
2. ___ caring for children
3. ___ being doctors
4. ___ educating children
5. ___ providing food
6. ___ earning money for the family to use
7. ___ making laws for the country
8. ___ preparing food
9. ___ providing clothing
10. ___ cleaning clothing
11. ___ driving the car on family trips
12. ___ deciding where the family will live
13. ___ cleaning the home
14. ___ serving in the army
15. ___ running the country’s government
16. ___ building homes
17. ___ building roads
18. ___ running businesses
19. ___ settling disputes within a family
20. ___ being religious leaders (e.g. minister, rabbi, priest, imam)
21. ___ being police
22. ___ creating art, music or literature
23. ___ helping people who have emotional problems
24. ___ doing repairs around the house
Put their responses on the board in summary form and create a “Boys’ Stereotype” and a “Girls’ Stereotype” with the class. Summarise the boys’ and girls’ responses separately to discover what differences exist.

Ask students to evaluate the answers:

• How do you feel about the way your gender is portrayed?
• Which gender’s description do you consider more positive?
• If you held this view of the opposite gender, how might you treat them or what might you expect of them?
• Are the gender-role stereotypes ones that you want to fit into when you are an adult?
• What might be some of the reasons people give for suggesting men and women should fill certain roles? How valid are these reasons?
• Try to imagine that boys were described like girls and vice versa. Can this work? Why? Why not?


Follow-up Activity:

Racial Stereotyping

Time Required: 30 mins

Pick a group with which your students will not be familiar, such as the Fante tribe in Ghana or Fulani or Ibo tribes in Nigeria. Ask the class to tell you what they think a Fante person, for example, is like. Students will probably respond, “What or who’s a Fante?” They may not have heard of people called Fante and will probably be unable to conjure up any mental picture. After they fail to identify the group, tell them that a Fante person belongs to a tribe by that name in Africa. Now, ask them again what they think a Fante person is like. Write their responses on the board.

Point out that they have just made certain generalisations about a Fante person based on their opinions, level of information, and attitudes about Africans (or, more exactly, African tribes). Point out that they have created a stereotype.

Discuss the statements provided by the students as an introduction to the concept of stereotype. You might also want to extract some questions from the Personal Contact Inventory (Activity 10) to explore the sources of the students’ information about Africans or about some other group or individual of whom they know very little.
Exercise 2:
Stereotype and Fact

Time Required:
• 30-40 mins

Aim:
• To help students distinguish between stereotype and fact.

Materials:
Stereotype/Fact Test provided

Procedure:
This activity assumes that students have already been introduced to the concept of stereotyping.

Refresh students’ memories by giving them a definition of a stereotype or, preferably, have them provide their definition of the term.

Give each student a copy of the Test. Ask them to tick S for statements that are examples of Stereotyping and F for those which are Facts. Some of the statements used in this activity are similar to those in an earlier one. To avoid confusion you might want to point this out to your students, explaining that you are using similar statements but that the activity has a different purpose.

In the ensuing discussion, point out that a stereotype might not be totally false. In fact, many do possess an element of fact. However, stereotype, like an overgeneralisation, exaggerates or steps beyond the facts.

### Stereotype/Fact Test

S = Stereotyping  
F = Fact

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most people over 65 years of age are no longer working.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians are dishonest and can’t be trusted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans are rich.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women are too emotional to hold important jobs in the government.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are poor because they are lazy and don’t want to work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Australian Government is run principally by men.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in wheelchairs can’t play sports like basketball.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia is a very wealthy country with a lot of natural resources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many Aborigines have made important contributions to Australian society.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of the wars in the world have been caused by the actions of men.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of the wars in the world have been fought over religion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The United States’ government is friendly to Australia.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat people are greedy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys are braver than girls.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People who live in Sydney (or Sydney’s Eastern Suburbs) are richer than people who live in other places in Australia.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with a physical disability are frequently absent from work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese people eat cats and dogs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Follow-up Activity:

- Create a STEREOTYPE/FACT bulletin board with your class. This can be based on: those statements in the above activity which stir the greatest interest or controversy; examples drawn from a student-generated list of stereotypes or those associated with a particular group (e.g., race, ethnicity, sex, class, disability, religion).

Students can research the topic in the library, interview community members, invite speakers to class,

The FACT side of the bulletin board might include examples which are contrary to the traditional stereotype as well as much factual information that you and the students can uncover.

The STEREOTYPE side, besides having examples, might also report on the sources of the stereotype, the changing nature of the stereotype and possibly, a history of the use of the stereotype to rationalise prejudice and discrimination.

Exercise 3:
Stereotyping in Society

Aim:

- To make students aware that stereotyping is widespread in their society.

Materials:

None

Alternative Procedures:

If it is not evident to students that most people hold stereotypes about different groups, the following activities should help to make this point.

1. Students can conduct interviews with adults (e.g., parents, shopkeepers, relatives, teachers), in which they ask the adult to list five words they think of when they hear the names of specific racial, ethnic, religious or occupational groups. The student should write down the list of words and bring them to class. As a class, the students can develop a profile of the particular group as described by the adults interviewed. (You might discuss with the students ways to approach adults to ensure that the responses given by them are as honest as possible).

2. Students can be allocated particular time-slots and television stations to view to record all the examples of stereotypes they can identify in the programs and in the advertisements. The survey/observation sheet below may be helpful.
The subsequent discussion should not only note that stereotypes are frequently employed for both entertainment and for advertising but that another problem may be the absence of certain characters. For example, programs showing children in Australian classrooms may have token representatives of certain ethnic groups but these characters may be irrelevant to the plot.

Discuss with the students ways that they might rewrite the programs viewed to remove bias.

It should also be noted that some programs consciously counteract stereotypes. Students should be able to discuss how this is done.

Students can be encouraged to write to the television stations and the advertisers to note their dismay at the use of stereotypes (or the absence of particular groups) in their programs and also to praise positive examples when stereotypes are defined.

### 1. Stereotypes on Television – Observation Sheet

1. Name of program ________________________________________________
2. Time-slot _____________________________________________________
3. Intended audience _____________________________________________
4. Identify the main characters and complete the chart regarding them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Character 1</th>
<th>Character 2</th>
<th>Character 3</th>
<th>Character 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role (villain or hero)</td>
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<td>Gender</td>
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<td>Age-group</td>
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<td>Identifying (racial) characteristics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other identifying characteristics:</td>
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### 2. Stereotypes on the Internet

- Allocate the following terms to students and have them do an internet search. (It will be necessary to ensure that the computers they use have the appropriate software to block pornography)

Japanese, Swedish, Jews, Muslim, Lebanese, Irish, Puerto Rican
• Instruct students that their aim is to discover the extent that the internet can be used to promote ugly/negative stereotypes.

• How many sites did you need to visit before finding one that was hostile to the group?

• What was the purpose of the site? Was it exclusively devoted to promoting ugly/negative stereotypes and offensive material?

• What key words would have taken you directly to this site?

• How much of an impact do you think that sites like these have?

3. Racial or Ethnic Group

Ask students to identify the different groups (racial, ethnic, gender, religious,) to which they belong. Students then select one of these groups (perhaps with the assistance of the teacher to ensure that the selection made will serve the purposes of the activity) and ask their parents, relatives, to explain the ways in which other people might stereotype their particular group. If you think sharing this sort of information with classmates could be threatening to certain students, you could ask them to print responses on a plain sheet of paper and seal them in an envelope. You could then collect all the information and present it to the class. Drawings, writing, and collages would also be appropriate ways to present stereotypes. This potentially risky activity can bring valuable information to the students. It would probably be best not to end this activity with stereotype profiles, as was done in previous exercises. Students will realise that the stereotypes of their own group are not accurate descriptions of themselves, their family or group; many of the characteristics might be offensive, insulting, and demeaning. This has to be treated in a sensitive fashion which enables the students to express their feelings. Students should be brought to the realisation that if the stereotype of their own group is harmful and inaccurate, so also are the stereotypes of other groups.

Use the hypothetical situations offered below which are most appropriate for your students. Read the paragraph to the students and use the questions provided to guide the discussion.

a Let’s pretend that you learn that an African man is going to come to your class. You have never met Africans but have seen them on television and have read about them. What do you think he will be like? Would you be surprised if he was not black? How do you think you will feel? How will you act towards him?

b Let’s pretend that a Japanese family with several school-age children has just moved into your neighbourhood. This is the first Japanese family to live locally. Although you have not met many Japanese, you have heard your parents and friends talk about them and have seen them on various television shows and in movies. What do you think the children will be like? Do you think that you will feel uncomfortable having them in your school, in your own classroom or sitting next to you? How do you think you will act towards them at?

c Let’s pretend that a new family has moved into the neighbourhood. You learn that they are very rich and that there is a daughter who will be in your class. That’s all you know. What thoughts might you have? What would you expect her to be like? How might you behave towards her at first?

Discussions of statements such as these might lead the class to examine the nature and sources of stereotypes as well as inferences or generalisations we draw from previous experiences.
You would also want to discuss the ways in which prejudging people can reduce our opportunities to make new friends or to learn from others and/or can hurt another person’s feelings.

**Follow-up Activities**

a. To help the students relate the issues of prejudging and stereotyping to their own lives, ask if any students have been the victims of prejudging by someone else. You might offer a personal example to get the ball rolling.

Some of the questions that might be addressed:

- In what ways were you prejudged?
- What do you think the other person was basing his/her prejudgment on?
- How did it affect you?
- How were you treated?
- How did you feel?
- What finally happened?
- To you?
- To others?

Besides merely discussing the experience as it actually occurred, suggest alternative scenarios to the students (e.g., *What if you hadn’t been prejudged in that particular way? Or if you had been prejudged in another way what might have happened?*) This activity can also be reversed, i.e., you might ask the students to offer examples of instances in which they have prejudged others and build the discussion on that.

b. Students can take responsibility for educating the rest of the school about the dangers of stereotyping. As a class, they might identify a particular group about whom they believe other students hold certain stereotypes. Utilising one of the school bulletin boards, they might proceed to teach the other students about the process of stereotyping and its harmful effects, and, by using a collage or other techniques, instruct the school in the ways that the image of a certain group has been distorted in our society. Students might also identify examples of people who are portrayed in ways that are contrary to the traditional stereotype. These might be added to the display.
Exercise 1:
The Concept of 'Prejudice'

Time Required:
- 30 minutes

Aim:
- To help students understand the concept of prejudice

Materials:
None

Procedure:
As a way of introducing the term “prejudice” to the class, have them read the following story.

One day, while walking to school, Peter was bitten on the leg by a dog named Nipper. From that time onward, Peter ran away every time he saw Nipper. But Peter wasn’t only afraid of Nipper. Whenever he heard any dog barking he became scared and would start to cry.

Peter’s parents were worried because they didn’t want Peter to be afraid of all dogs. They knew that all dogs weren’t like Nipper. They told him that most dogs would not bite him. They tried to introduce him to friendly dogs. But Peter would not change his attitude towards dogs.

Defining Prejudice

A note to the teacher regarding alternative procedures:

Students in Years 5 and 6 vary greatly in their sophistication regarding ideas of ‘prejudice’ and their life experiences also vary greatly. Depending on the level of understanding and experience of your students, you might want either to take the class through both activities below or to move directly into the second activity. In either case, the aim of the exercises is to help the students understand the following points about prejudice, which are derived from Gordon W. Allport’s “The Nature of Prejudice”.

- Prejudice involves a feeling, favourable or unfavourable, toward a person, thing, or group without sufficient warrant.
- Although these feelings may be positive or negative, most prejudices about people tend to be negative.
- Even though a prejudicial judgement lacks a basis in fact, a prejudiced person will often cling to his/her prejudice even when confronted by new and conflicting evidence.
- Prejudice might be most often described as a negative or hostile feeling/attitude toward a person who belongs to a particular group, and who is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities ascribed to that group.

In summary, you will want to stress the following characteristics of prejudice in your subsequent discussion: its negative nature, its lack of basis in fact, and its resistance to change. You should refer to earlier activities dealing with generalisation and stereotypes and have students explore the relationship between stereotypes and prejudice.
In fact, things even got worse. Peter wouldn’t stop to talk with anyone walking a dog on a leash. He refused to visit the homes of his friends who owned dogs. Peter even started carrying stones to throw at any dog he saw.

Using the previous story as the take-off point, guide the class through a discussion of the relationship between over-generalisation and prejudice, pointing out the danger of generalising about an entire group on the basis of very limited experience. The following questions might help in the discussion.

- Do you think that Peter’s attitude towards dogs is justified? Remember, he was bitten by Nipper.
- If you were Peter’s friend, what would you say to him or how would you try to help him?
- Ask the students if they think that Nipper or other dogs sense that Peter is afraid of dogs and doesn’t like them. This might be linked to a discussion of whether or not people ‘know’ when they’re feared, not liked, or are the objects of prejudice.
- Ask the students to create their own story about prejudice which shows the same type of thinking that Peter showed in the story above?

Encourage students to draw on their own experience as well as instances in which their prejudice might come from a secondary source such as television, parents, or peers.

Finally, create a definition of prejudice (including examples) together with the class, which can serve as a point of reference for subsequent discussions.

**Exercise 2:**

**How Prejudice is Formed**

**Time Required:**
- 30 minutes

**Aim:**
- To explore how prejudice is formed

**Materials:**
None

**Procedure:**
Ask students to report negative experiences they have had with people who are different from themselves, i.e., experiences which, if the student is not careful, might lead to over-generalisation about the group as a whole and possibly to prejudice. Their examples might be drawn from experiences with bus drivers, teachers, shopkeepers, old people, as well as people of different racial or ethnic groups. This might be difficult for some students and you might break the ice by providing your own example.

- Ask students to:
  - Describe their experiences.
  - Discuss whether or not the experience affected their attitude toward members of that group.
  - Did they find themselves becoming prejudiced? If yes, explain how. If no, explain why not.
Discuss whether or not they now harbour any negative feelings toward members of that particular group.

Help students explore the reasons why, in some instances, they became somewhat prejudiced while, in others, they did not. Try to help them realise that the strength or impact of their own experiences, their opportunities for other contact with members of that group, and the “lessons” they learn at home, through religion, with peers, can either foster or inhibit the formation of prejudicial attitudes.

Follow-up Activities:
1. Ask students if they have any prejudiced attitudes towards other groups but don’t really understand why. If students can identify any, this might lead into a useful activity in which they try to articulate, as best they can, the feelings that they have towards the group. They should then try to learn everything they can about the particular group to discover whether or not their prejudice is at all justified. This should, if possible, include personal, firsthand experiences on the part of the students.

2. Pose some hypothetical questions to help the students explore the effects of prejudice. (These ideas might also lend themselves to role-play. Students could be encouraged to develop skits showing the effect of this type of prejudice on both the victim and the perpetrator, and even on bystanders).

   a. What if you were prejudiced against people with glasses? black people? migrants? fat people? teenagers? How might you act towards these people if you felt prejudiced against them?

   b. What effects might your actions have on these other people? on you?

Through this activity, help students to see that prejudice is a two-edged sword. It not only harms those who are treated in a prejudicial way, but it can also do harm to the person who is prejudiced by, for example, denying him/her the opportunity to learn from people with different knowledge and experience.

Exercise 3:
Prejudice and Dislike

Time Required:
- 30 minutes

Aim:
- To help students distinguish between a prejudice against a group and the dislike of an individual.

Materials:
None
Procedure:
First discuss terms “dislike” and “prejudice” with the class. Then ask two students to read the dialogues below. For each of the dialogues below, ask the students if the attitude displayed is a prejudice or a dislike. The students should be encouraged to explain the difference between the two terms in their own words.

Dialogue 1:
Mary: I can't stand Bobby Lewis.
Josh: Why?
Mary: He's always teasing people.
Josh: How do you mean?
Mary: Oh, you know. He calls Carol "dummy" and laughs when she makes mistakes in class.
Josh: Well, she's not very smart.
Mary: That's not the point. He's just mean. And he calls me “skinny” every time he sees me.
Josh: Oh, Bobby doesn't mean any harm. He's just trying to be friendly.

Dialogue 2:
George: Want to hear some good news? About Antonella?
Robin: What about her?
George: Well, she's moving at the end of the year.
Robin: Don't you like Italians?
George: I didn't say that. She's fat.
Robin: So what?
George: She's the same as all Italians. You know, always eating spaghetti and pastrami and stuff.

Dialogue 3:
Ahmed: I'm going to change my seat.
Marc: Well, I won't sit next to Michael. He's a thickhead.
Wendy: He's deaf, not stupid.
Ahmed: What about his funny noises?
Wendy: He tries to speak clearly.
Marc: Michael's weird.

(This dialogue shows fear of difference. Students might discuss ways in which each person is different)
Exercise 4:
Prejudice in our Language – Loaded Words

Time Required:
• 40 minutes

Aim:
• To help students become aware of how language can contribute to racist and sexist attitudes.

Materials:
Text below

Procedure:
Loaded Words

Examine the two extracts below. The first was taken from a 1967 History textbook for Grade 5 students. The second is an alternative view of the same event.

As a rule the natives were timid and kept out of sight, but here, perhaps because they wanted to get water from the spring, they suddenly attacked. It was lucky that the explorers were on the alert, and a quick volley from their rifles sent the natives scurrying into the bush.

An Aboriginal historian might have painted the scene thus:

We were aware that the whites were heavily armed and would not hesitate to murder, so normally it would have been folly to go near them. But, on this occasion, they had taken possession of our one waterhole and we were desperate with thirst. Armed only with woomeras and spears against their guns, we tried to regain this vital piece of territory. However, the white invaders, refusing to acknowledge our ownership and our dire need, once more fired at us, killing my father and brothers and severely wounding my uncle. Those remnants of our family who yet were capable of moving crawled back into the bush, still half-crazed with thirst.¹

Both these extracts relate the same incident. How did you feel after reading each extract? Why is there a difference between the extracts? Can you say that one is a more accurate account than the other?

Exercise 5:
Prejudice in our Language – Loaded Words (cont)

Time Required:
• 30 minutes

Aim:
• To identify hidden and not so hidden messages

Materials:
Text below

Procedure:
Examine the extract below that our parents would have used at school here in Australia. What effect do you imagine that words and phrases such as ‘although’, ‘no’ and ‘do not’ have on the reader?

Australia’s tribal aborigines are in an Early New Stone Age state of development. Although they make polished stone axes, they have no permanent homes and neither grow crops nor keep herds. They have not yet reached the standard of civilisation that was attained in Sumeria and Egypt more than 6,000 years ago. Should we make them and their children learn our ways of living, or should we allow them as far as possible to continue living the life of their ancestors in the hope that their outlook will gradually change through contact with more advanced people?

Ask students:
If your parents were educated in Australia, discuss with them what impact such language had on their thinking.

If they were brought up elsewhere, what stereotypes were prevalent in the school books they used?

How different (if at all) is this writing from that expressed by Joseph Goebbels in his speech of 5 November 1934 against Jews.

Jewry can rest assured that we will leave them alone as long as they retire quietly and modestly behind their four walls, and do not affront the German people with the claim to be treated as equals. If the Jews do not listen to this warning, they will have themselves to blame for anything that happens to them.

Ask students to pick out the words and phrases which illustrate a denial of human rights.

It is desirable that teachers help students to reach a full understanding of the hidden meaning behind what may, on the surface, appear to be ordinary statements.

Exercise 6:
Language in the Media

Time Required:
• 10 minutes introduction, viewing outside school hours, 40 minutes follow-up

Aim:
• To consider the impact of language in our media

Materials:
Television or newspapers

Procedure:
Use the table below to identify how language used in our media influences the views we have of current events and of the people around us.

Discuss the impact of the language used and how prejudice is not only reflected but can be formed by the choice of words.

The following exercise requires the teacher to explain that the group being described will not always be mentioned explicitly. Sometimes an image will accompany the news story that will identify the subjects of the story as belonging to a particular group and sometimes the adjectives are subtly inserted into a report.

Follow the daily news of a particular television channel or of a particular newspaper for at least a week and note the words used to describe the following groups in society.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White/Europeans</th>
<th>Middle-Eastern (descent)</th>
<th>Asian</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word:</td>
<td>Number of times used:</td>
<td>Word:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Word:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>Muslims/Arabs</td>
<td>Jews/Israelis</td>
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<td>------------</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word:</td>
<td>Number of times used:</td>
<td>Word:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Compare the results of students’ observations and discuss the impact of this language on viewers/readers. Encourage students to write to the papers or television channels if their analysis reveals prejudice in the choice of language.

**Exercise 7:**

**Sexism**

**Time Required:**
- 40 minutes minimum time

**Aim:**
- To understand that sexism is a pervasive form of prejudice.

**Procedure:**
This activity can also be included as part of a textbook analysis. Select some appropriate paragraphs and chapters *(perhaps from a Social Studies text)* that exemplify the sexist use of language described below. Ask students to read through the materials and note every instance of sexist bias that they can identify. They should look for examples of the types of bias described below. There are others but these are the most glaring.

**Subsuming terminology:** terms which presumably include females but which, in fact, exclude them, e.g., mankind, man-made problems, Neanderthal man, chairman, sportsmanship, survival of man, and use of he/his as generic terms *(“If a person wants to succeed, he can do it”).*

**Nameless women:** females identified in terms of those who “own” them or are included among other possessions, e.g.,
- “The settler took his wife and children across the mountains”. “Mr Joseph Brown and his wife.”

**Stereotyped view of women:**
- Words and phrases such as “The fair sex”.
- Description in terms of appearance and clothes rather than occupation or character. Use of denigrating words and phrases, e.g., “Joan is a great worker. She thinks like a man.” “Don’t cry, Jack. Take it like a man.”
- What about a ‘scheming’ or ‘hysterical’ woman where a man might be described as ‘shrewd’ or ‘outraged’?
- Do only women gossip, whereas men converse?

After the students have completed this task ask them to rephrase the statements to eliminate their sexual bias. Encourage students also to establish a language monitoring procedure to point out bias in language usage as it appears in texts and class discussions. Keep in mind that it is not always easy and it is often awkward to rephrase every apparently sexist word or phrase. Nevertheless, attempting to do so will significantly raise the students’ awareness of the problem and make them more conscious of their own language usage.
Exercise 1:
The Concept of ‘Discrimination’

Time Required:
• 40 minutes minimum time

Aim:
• To help students distinguish between appropriate and socially harmful discrimination.
• To help students understand the concept of discrimination.

Materials:
None

Procedure:
Pose questions such as those given below to the class.
• If I gave you a choice of a banana, an apple, or a pear to eat, which would you choose and why?
• If you had to choose between buying a blue coat or a purple coat, which would you choose and why?
• If you had to pick a book from the library to read, what type of book would you pick? Why would you pick that type of book rather than one on some other subject?

Help the students to understand that each act above is one of discrimination, i.e., differentiating among various objects, and that in each case it is possible to offer sound reasons for the action. It should be noted that none of these acts of discrimination is potentially harmful to other human beings.

Ask students to identify other ways, along these same lines, that they discriminate in their daily lives.

Then proceed to explore types of socially harmful discrimination that are rooted in prejudice. The questions below might be framed in several different ways and you should select the style with which you are most comfortable. Students might write essay answers or create mini-dramas.

Possible types of questions include:
• If you were starting a rugby/netball club, would you open membership in your club to both boys and girls?
• Would you avoid being friends with someone because s/he is a Jew, or Lebanese, Catholic, poor, ?
• If you were an employer and were hiring a new worker, would you hire someone twenty-five or someone fifty-five years of age? why?
• Should all children who have a disability be educated in special schools?
There are many possible answers to the questions on the previous page. The follow-up questions are particularly important. Help the students to explore the stereotypes or prejudices that might lie beneath their rationalisations. Help students to think about the effects on others (and perhaps even long-term societal effects) of discrimination based on gender, age or disability.

If beneficial, move into a discussion of the question of whether it is ever fair to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, disability. This might involve a discussion of affirmative action. It might also produce examples of stereotypes that the students hold which enable them to justify and rationalise certain types of discrimination.

Follow-up Activities:

Having discussed acceptable and unacceptable types of discrimination, the class might try to identify examples of discrimination in their own classroom, school, or community. Examples of this might include: certain clubs only open to certain people, only certain students being eligible to serve as school officers, certain rooms such as toilets and staff rooms only open to certain people, certain sports teams only open to certain students.

The following questions might guide this discussion:

- What reasons do you think people might give to justify this type of discrimination?
- Do you think that the reasons are legitimate?
- If not, can you think of a fairer way? Why would this be fairer?

As an extension of this activity, students might identify some unjust conditions that they would like to see changed. The class together might develop its rationale for change and then try to develop a strategy for bringing about this change. The class can actively seek changes in what they perceive to be discrimination.

Exercise 2:

Society’s Inequities

Time Required:

- Multiple sessions. Minimum time 2 x 40 minutes

Aim:

- To have students try to explain certain inequities in our society related to racism and sexism.
- To discover student attitudes, values, and knowledge about race and sex discrimination in Australia.

Materials:

Statistics follow
Procedure:
This activity might be used as a diagnostic and/or culminating exercise. Read the following statement to the students and give each a copy of the statistics presented below. *(These might need to be adapted e.g., bar graph for easier use).*

You have a visitor in your home from another country. Your guest says to you, “I am confused. You call your country the land of opportunity, but when I studied your country before coming here, I discovered that this doesn’t appear to be true. Look at these facts about Aborigines and women in Australia. Can you explain them to me?”

Give the students an opportunity to read over the statistics. Then, you might wish to divide the class into groups before conducting the discussion. Giving the students a writing assignment or setting up a role-playing exercise might also be valuable.

Encourage students to brainstorm different explanations for these statistics. Write these on the board. Then ask them to narrow the list to those explanations that seem most plausible. Your class discussion might move in a variety of directions, e.g., stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination. It might also serve as a good take-off point for research activities.

Facts:
1. Indigenous Australians/Aborigines
   *(data based on 2001 Census figures)*

   Indigenous students as a group leave school earlier, and leave with a lower standard of education, compared to their non-indigenous peers. Although the situation is slowly improving, and the gap narrowing, both the levels of participation in education and training among Indigenous Australians and their levels of attainment remain well below those of non-Indigenous Australians.

   The following statistics are taken from the ABS, and mainly refer to 2001 statistics, when a census was taken.

   - 39% of indigenous students stayed on to year 12 at high school, compared to 75% for the Australian population as a whole.
   - 22% of indigenous adults had a vocational or higher education qualification, compared to 48% for the Australian population as a whole.
   - 4% of Indigenous Australians held a bachelor degree or higher, compared to 21% for the population as a whole. While this fraction is increasing, it is increasing at a slower rate than that for non-Indigenous Australians.

   While some of these statistics reflect cultural differences, it has been claimed that they also reflect the poorer quality of some schools in low-income areas, rather than being due to any explicitly discriminatory policies. On the other hand, particularly for rural Indigenous Australians leading traditional lifestyles, these statistics reflect only part of the education of an individual. For example, a young Indigenous Australian is likely to have far greater traditional knowledge of the land than a non-indigenous peer.

   Nevertheless, they leave a young Indigenous Australian at a significant disadvantage compared to non-indigenous peers, and are at least partly to blame for lower income, poorer health, and higher unemployment.
The proportion of Aborigines in Australian prisons is up to 14 times higher than that of the total population.

The proportion of Aborigines suffering from trachoma is up to 35 times higher than that of non-Aborigines.

Of those students attaining a university degree, .03% were Aborigines.

Infant deaths per 1000 live births are about three times as high as for all Australians. (Source: Department of Aboriginal Affairs (1984). Aboriginal social indicators. Canberra: A.G.P.S.)

Women

Women make up just over half the population (50.11%).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimated in 1987 that women made up 39.7% of the labour force, but they are not evenly represented in the different occupations. Approximately 16% of doctors are women (74% in U.S.S.R). In 1981 women constituted 16.6% of all academic staff, but only 2.1% of the professors.

The average weekly total earnings for females in February 1986, was $276.40 compared with $422.70 for males.

In the Australian Parliament in 1986, 8 out of 148 seats in the House of Representatives were held by women, and 14 out of 76 Senate seats.

Exercise 3:

Objects of Discrimination

Time Required:

30

Aim:

To help students become aware of the enormous variety of people who are discriminated against in our society.
Materials:
None.

Procedures:
Ask the students to identify all the types of people they can think of who are discriminated against in our society. They should be able to generate a list that includes racial and ethnic groups, some religious groups, people with disability, poor people, old people, children, and certain language or cultural groups. You might have to help them to see that fat and skinny people, extremely tall and short people, and people from certain parts of the country are also occasionally discriminated against.

Write this list on the board. Then have them identify some of the ways in which these people are discriminated against.

- Disabled: e.g. barriers-blocking access to buildings.
- Fat/skinny: e.g. difficulty in finding clothes.
- Tall: e.g. inadequate legroom in vehicles, low mirrors in public lavatories.

You might ask the students to indicate which of the types of discrimination on the board they consider to be most destructive to society. The discussion could also focus on ways that society could more appropriately respond: what needs to be changed, and who can help bring this about.

Exercise 4:
Outside the In-Group

Time Required:
• 30-40 minutes + follow-up

Aim:
• To help students experience feelings of being excluded from a group

Materials:
None

Procedure:
This activity might serve as a useful introduction to examining the behaviour of people who feel themselves to be cut off or blocked from the ‘mainstream’ of Australian life. It might also be valuable for exploring human relationships within the classroom.

Game 1:
Ask a group of 8-10 students to form a tight circle and lock arms. Another student outside the group tries as hard as s/he can to break into the group. When and if this student successfully breaks into the circle, s/he becomes part of that group. Another person then takes his/her place outside and tries to break in. Each student takes a turn being outside the group. An adequate amount of open space is needed for this exercise.
Game 2:

All the students place their chairs in a circle. One student is asked to come to the middle of the circle and all the other students are instructed to ‘flow’. They all move from chair to chair in a clockwise direction. *(The instruction ‘change flow’ can be used to have students move in the opposite direction).* There is, of course, always a vacant chair – the student in the middle has vacated it – but when asked to sit down, the student is always denied her/his place by the moving flow. If s/he manages to sit down, the student who was supposed to have moved into that chair becomes the one in the centre.

Many different feelings might be generated by these games. The person on the outside (or centre) will have a sense of isolation, of being left out. After a few unsuccessful attempts to break in, the outsider might show aggression, clown around, withdraw, act uninterested, or respond in a variety of other ways. The group might feel united in their common task, or conceivably, take pity on the outsider and let him/her into the circle.

Afterwards, discuss the feelings and behaviour that emerged during the game: how it felt to be kept out; how it felt to fail and/or succeed- what techniques were used by various participants to gain entrance to the group. You might want to compare the outsider’s feelings and behaviour with those of people in our society who find themselves outside.

*(Adapted from: Shrank, Jeffery, Teaching human beings, Boston, Beacon Press, 1972.)*

**Follow-up Activities:**

Ask students if any of them had ever been kept out of a group that they wanted to be part of.

• How did you feel?
• Why do you think you were kept out?
• How did you want to act?
• How did you actually act?

OR

Ask students if any of them has ever kept someone out of a group.

• How do you think that person felt?
• How did you feel keeping the other person out?
• Should everyone be allowed to be part of every group?
• Are there instances *(or reasons)* when it is justified to keep someone out of a group that you might be part of?
• What are justifiable reasons?
• What sorts of reasons are not justifiable?

You might need to pose some hypothetical situations to help students explore reasons for discrimination.
Exercise 5:  
Teasing/Bullying

Time Required:  
• 40 mins

Aim:  
• To help students understand the effects of teasing and bullying.  
• To help students understand the motivations underlying teasing and bullying.  

Note: It is assumed that there are strategies in the school to deal with bullying.

Materials:  
None

Procedure:  
Have the students read the following story.

Peter is eleven years old and his family has just moved into a new town. The school year is about to begin, and Peter is looking forward to meeting other children and making new friends. But Peter is also afraid and nervous about starting school. You see, Peter stutters. Often when he tries to say a simple sentence like "This is my book," it comes out sounding like "Th-th-this is my b-b-book". In previous schools, students have laughed at him and have made jokes by imitating him. Peter hopes that this will not happen again. But on the first day of school, when the teacher asks Peter to say his name, he answers: "P-P-Peter," and many students start to laugh. For the rest of the day, a group of students continually make fun of him by saying, "Hey, P-P-Peter, t-t-talk to me".

Ask the class to finish this story by writing out brief answers to the following three questions:

• How do you think Peter feels?  
• How do you think he will react to this teasing?  
• If you were there, how might you help him?

After the students have written their answers have them share them with the rest of the class. The initial focus should be on the person being teased, with the discussion moving into questions related to why some people tease others. The students might discuss their own experiences with teasing. The following questions might serve as guides for the discussion:

• Have you ever been teased?  
• How did you feel?  
• Why do you think people were teasing you?  
• How did you want to react?  
• Have you (or your friends) ever teased anyone?  
• Whom did you tease?  
• Why did you (or your friends) do this?  
• How did you (or your friends) feel while you were teasing?  
• How do you think the person felt?  
• How did the person react?

These open-ended questions might lead the discussion in a variety of directions. Try to stay focussed on the motivations for and effects of teasing.
Exercise 6:

Discrimination Dilemmas

Time Required:
• Exercise conducted over a full school day or 2 days

Aim:
• To help students explore dilemmas associated with prejudice and discrimination.

Materials:
None

Procedure:
Before trying this exercise it would be important to review the meaning of the terms “prejudice” and “discrimination” with the students (see Activities). Students need to be able to differentiate between these terms in order to participate intelligently in this exercise.

This activity is relevant to almost any type of prejudice and discrimination. It is derived from the writings of the sociologist Robert Merton. In looking at the relationship between prejudice and discrimination, he identified four types of persons. (1) the unprejudiced nondiscriminator (i.e., “all-weather liberal”) who acts consistently according to democratic, humane values; (2) the unprejudiced discriminator (i.e., “fair-weather liberal”) who, while basically good at heart, will sometimes discriminate because this is expedient, less conflictive, or socially convenient; (3) the prejudiced non-discriminator (i.e., “fair-weather illiberal”) who, while feeling hostility towards other groups, will subordinate his/her feelings and act in a non-discriminatory way because it is expedient or less conflictive; and (4) the prejudiced discriminator (i.e., “all-weather illiberal”) who is an active bigot.

Discuss the interrelationship of the terms “prejudice” and “discrimination” or “bigot” with the students, perhaps making reference to the four “types” mentioned above. Present the following dilemma to the students:

You are going to have a party and have invited all your good friends. All your friends are of the same ethnic background as you. Since planning the party and inviting the guests, you have made a new friend named Kim who is a newly arrived migrant from a non-English speaking background.

You want to invite Kim to your party but you know two or three of your other friends are very intolerant of migrants.

What do you do? Do you invite Kim?

Encourage students to explore the issues that emerge from this dilemma.
• Feelings and values of party-giver?
• Kim’s feelings (e.g., would he/she be comfortable?)
• Feelings and values of the other friends?
• Conflicting principles involved?
This activity might be adapted so that the party-giver has a more open choice of whom to invite, i.e., a party has been planned and the student, knowing that one friend is black (or white) and that two other friends don’t like blacks (or whites), has to decide whom he/she will invite to the party (or even whether or not he/she will have the party at all). This activity, by giving the student the option not to invite his prejudiced friends, raises even more issues.

Two other hypothetical dilemmas that might be posed are:
- Asking a girl who likes cricket to join the previously all-boy team (or just to play in an all-boy game).
- Inviting a friend confined to a wheelchair to a party where there will be lots of physical games.

**Follow-up Activities:**

Ask the students if they have ever been faced with a dilemma similar to that in the first activity presented (i.e., the party).

- What was the dilemma, i.e., issues/principles involved?
- What did you finally decide to do?
- How did you feel afterwards?
- In retrospect, do you feel you acted properly?
- If not, how might you act differently now?

Since students might also have to deal with their parents’ and other adults’ attitudes and biases, the following dilemma might be appropriate to use with the class. Alternatively, the activity could be adapted to deal with peer attitudes and pressure. This would also make a good role playing exercise.

Your parents have learned that you have been playing at Barbara’s house after school and appear to becoming a close friend of hers. Although they don’t know Barbara personally, they do know that they don’t want you to hang around with that sort of person. (Select an appropriate reason, e.g., Barbara is a different race or religion, she is a troublemaker and doesn’t work hard in school, her parents are “bad” people and/or live on the wrong side of town.)

You think your parents are being unfair. You like Barbara and want to spend time with her.

**Some of the questions worth exploring are**

- What are the different options open to you?
- What would you do? And why?
- Is it proper for other people to tell you with whom you should be friends?
Exercise 1: Identifying Attitudes

Time Required:
- 40 minutes + follow-up

Aim:
- To help students identify and examine their attitudes towards other racial, ethnic, or religious groups.

Materials:
“Attitudes Questionnaire”.

Procedure:
Each student should be given a copy of the questionnaire. You might need to adapt the language to your students’ level.

Assign different racial, ethnic, or religious group to different clusters of students or assign the same group to the entire class. The former approach is better for comparing student attitudes and feelings.

Ask students to think about the group assigned to them in terms of each statement on the questionnaire. Next to each statement, they should write SA if they strongly agree with the statement, A if they just agree, U if they are undecided, D if they just disagree, and SD if they strongly disagree. They should not put their name on this paper (see following page).

When they have completed the questionnaire, collect all papers and redistribute them among the students. This will ensure anonymity while tabulating and discussing the responses. Then compare student responses and discuss the attitudes and feelings expressed. This activity might lead to a fruitful discussion of stereotyping. Students might be introduced to stereotypes of which they were not previously aware so allow plenty of time for discussing their responses.

Attitudes Questionnaire

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<td>SA</td>
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<td>Disagree</td>
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<td>SD</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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Exercise 1:
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<th>Attitudes Questionnaire</th>
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<td><strong>Name of Group</strong> ____________________________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Have many habits and manners that annoy me</td>
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<td>2. Are similar to other people</td>
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<td>3. Are very good at sports</td>
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<td>4. Will take advantage of other people</td>
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<td>5. Are usually good dancers</td>
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<td>6. Tend to keep to themselves</td>
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<td>7. Often interfere in other people’s business</td>
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<td>8. Are generally tolerant of other people</td>
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<td>9. Are usually intolerant of other people</td>
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<td>10. Are smart and work very hard</td>
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<td>11. Are lazy</td>
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<td>12. Discriminate against others</td>
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<td>13. Don’t work hard and are not reliable</td>
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<td>14. Usually become rich by cheating other people</td>
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<td>15. Always want more money and power</td>
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<td>16. Usually try to control other people</td>
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<td>17. Are mostly loyal citizens</td>
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<td>18. Are just at trustworthy as other people</td>
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<td>19. Practise strange customs</td>
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<td>20. Often help people in trouble</td>
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<td>21. Are as friendly as other people</td>
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<td>22. Are shrewd</td>
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<td>23. Smile and laugh a lot</td>
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Utilise the “Personal Contact Inventory” to help students examine the roots of their attitudes towards other groups. This might involve comparing their attitudes with the degree of contact they have had with that particular group. Often the students might discover that their attitudes towards a group are based on very little actual personal experience with members of that group.

(Adapted from: McCuen, Gary E – The racist reader, Anoka, Minnesota, Greenhaven Press, 1974.)
Exercise 2: Acceptance of Others

Time Required: 30 minutes

Aim:
- To help students become aware of their own level of acceptance of different racial, ethnic, national or religious groups.
- To help students become aware of their own level of acceptance of different disability groups.

Materials:
Copies of “The Social Distance Scale” (in’ or ‘an’ adaptation of the Bogardus Scale) which is presented in two slightly different forms below.

Alternative Procedure:
To introduce either of the activities below, begin by explaining the purpose of the exercise to the students. Read them the following set of directions:

You have all heard of public opinion polls where many people are requested to state their opinions or attitudes on a particular subject. This questionnaire deals with your attitudes towards different groups of people in society. Please read the questionnaire you have received. In the blank space in front of each name or phrase, write the number that best describes how close you would let yourself get (either physically or emotionally) to this type of person. Each number represents a different type of attitude. Do this for each type of person on the sheet. Leave the space blank if you do not know anything about the group. Answer on the basis of your first feeling or reaction. Do not put your names on the sheet, for it is not necessary that you be identified. Are there any questions?

1. Racial, Ethnic, National, Religious Groups:
Give the students copies of “The Social Distance Scale” to complete.

Select those groups that are relevant to your instructional purposes. You might want to adapt the instrument, modelling it on the sample given below. Ask students to write the appropriate number indicating their level of acceptance of that particular group in the space provided. For example, before Chinese, they may wish to write the number seven if they would be willing for their sister or brother to marry (or date) a Chinese person. They should write only one number for each group.

**The Social Distance Scale**

**Categories of Acceptance**

1. I would not let them into my country.
2. I would let them into my country but only as visitors.
3. I would let them become citizens in my country.
4. I would welcome them as classmates in my school.
5. I would welcome them as neighbours on my street.
6. I would let them into my club as a personal friend.
7. I would be willing for my sister or brother to go out with or marry them.
Exercise 1: Fairness at School

Time Required:
- 40 minutes

Aim:
- To help students understand that there are different interpretations of fairness, justice, and equity.

Materials:
None

Procedure:
The questions raised in these activities are ones with which every classroom teacher must deal. You will have many examples of your own which could also be developed into activities.

Through discussions regarding situations described below, the students should come to understand some of the complexities associated with these terms. In particular, the students should understand that, depending on the circumstances, fairness and justice do not always result when everyone is treated the same, and unfairness and injustice do not always result when individuals are not treated the same.

The sorts of questions to be explored here are:
- Is treating everyone the same always fair?
- Is it sometimes fairer to treat people differently?
- Do certain circumstances merit special treatment?

Examples:
1. The teacher is giving a maths test and he/she tells the class that every student except Mary has 30 minutes in which to complete the test. Mary, who has been absent a lot, is to be given 45 minutes to finish the test.
   - Do you think that this is fair?
   - Can you think of any circumstances under which this would be fair? Or would be unfair?

2. The teacher allows Robert, who is on crutches, leave the class and go to lunch ten minutes before any other student.
   (Same questions as those in example 1 can be asked).

3. The teacher spends more time helping some students than others.
   (Same questions as those in example 1 can be asked).

4. (This situation is easily adaptable to race). Often in the past, women were not given the same chance as men to get an education and hold a good job. In fact, many men used to discriminate against women and made it hard for them to enter certain
occupations (e.g., law, medicine, construction). Men tended to hire men rather than women. Should we now discriminate against men to give women a chance to catch up? Would this be fair?

You might also ask students to discuss experiences they have had when they did not feel they were treated with fairness, justice, and equity. These can be discussed in terms of the questions presented earlier.

Exercise 2: Fairness as Policy

Time Required:

• 40 minutes minimum

Aim:

• To help students think creatively about equitable treatment and ways to allow everyone to have a “fair go”.

Materials:

Allocated space to write down ideas

Procedure:

Ask students to think about what positive discrimination could help them or others they know function better at school or in the community. Students should be encouraged to write their ideas for positive discrimination anonymously. This can be done on slips of paper or by accessing a blog, board or poster.

After a number of suggestions have been compiled, the class should discuss which of the ideas has merit and what the advantages and drawbacks of implementing such policies might be.

Exercise 3: Applying Learning to Analysis

Time Required:

• 40 minutes

Aim:

• To provide students with the opportunity to apply their learning about facts, opinions, generalisations, stereotypes and discrimination to the analysis of a written text.

Materials:

Story entitled “Princesses, Prejudices, and a Pea”.
Procedure:
This activity should help you determine how well students have understood some of the major concepts studied. Ask the students to read the following story and then complete the following assignment:

- Identify statements of fact and opinion
- Identify generalisations
- Identify examples of stereotyping
- Identify examples of prejudice (sexism, racism, class bias,)
- Identify examples of discrimination

Discuss how the story supports/contradicts the principles of “fair go”.

“Princesses, Prejudices, and a Pea”
This is a story that is very old. You might have heard it as a small child.

Once upon a time there was a prince who wanted to get married. He was in love with a girl in the local village. “My goodness,” said his mother, the queen, “you can’t marry her. Her father is only a farmer. The person you marry must be a real, genuine princess.” Although the prince was sad, he knew that his mother was right. A farmer’s daughter wouldn’t know how to order servants about or how to entertain nobility. He realised at last that if he did not marry a real princess, it would be a “black” day for the entire kingdom.

So he went all over the world in search of a real princess to marry. Goodness knows, there were plenty of girls who said they were princesses, but it was hard to tell whether they were the real thing or not. He met a fat girl whose skin was as white as – purity itself. She said she was a princess, and the prince thought she would be wonderful to have as his wife because fat people are always jolly and lots of fun. But again his mother said “no”. A real princess, she told him, would not be fat. A real princess would care about the way she looked. He then met an Indian girl who said she was a princess. But he did not believe this maiden from India because his mother had always told him that foreigners cannot be trusted.

Each time he thought he found a real princess, she would say or do something that made him suspect that she might not be ‘the real thing’. At last he went back home. He was very disappointed, for he did so want to find himself a princess that is, a real, genuine one.

One night, in the kingdom, there was a dreadful storm. The thunder roared, the lightning flashed, and the rain came down in ‘buckets’. It was quite terrifying, and no sane man would be out on a night like that. But, suddenly, there was a knock at the great gate of the town, and the old king himself went down to open it.

There, outside the gate, stood a girl. But, what a sight she was! Her clothes were soaked through, her hair was dripping wet, and the water poured in at the toes of her shoes and out at the heels. She looked miserable and everyone was very surprised when she declared that she was a princess.

“We’ll soon find out about that!” said the old queen. She didn’t say a word to anyone, but went straight into the guest room to prepare a bed for this would be princess. She took all the bedclothes off the bed and carefully placed a tiny pea under the mattress. She then piled twenty mattresses on top of it, and on top of the twenty mattresses she piled twenty eiderdowns. Then she went back to the soaking wet girl and told her that her bed was ready.
The next morning, the old queen asked the young girl how she had slept. “Slept!” cried the girl. “I didn’t sleep a wink! I couldn’t close my eyes all night – heaven knows what was in that bed! I feel as though I’ve been lying on a rock – I’m black and blue from head to foot. It’s awful!”

That was certainly proof enough. They all knew then that she must be a real princess. Otherwise she would never have felt that tiny pea through twenty mattresses and twenty eiderdowns.

Only a real, genuine princess could be that sensitive.

So the prince took her for his wife and they lived happily ever after. The pea was placed in a glass case in the museum. It was ready for another day. You never know when you’re going to need to discover a princess.

Exercise 4:
Applying Learning to Action

Time Required:
- Extended period over a number of days

Aim:
- To empower students to apply the lessons they have learnt throughout the course of these exercises.

Materials:
None

Procedure:
Acting on values is the logical final activity for this book.

In some of the activities presented earlier, suggestions for possible student action are offered. This activity is included here to reiterate the importance of helping students to do more than just profess values and beliefs. They should be encouraged and assisted to find ways to act which are meaningful to them. This activity should, however, be based on concern expressed by the students. Like adults, students cannot be coerced into meaningful social action.

As the school is the logical forum in which students might take action on concerns related to prejudice and discrimination, suggest that they might identify some changes within it that they would like to bring about. In order to identify desired changes, have the students brainstorm

about those “human relations” characteristics that they think belong in an ideal school. These characteristics might include items such as equal treatment of boys and girls, no name-calling or teasing, no fighting, more emphasis in curriculum on certain neglected minority groups. Don’t let the brainstorming activity be interrupted or halted by statements such as “They’ll never let us do that”, or “That’s impossible”. Your goal at this point is only to generate a list of desired characteristics.

Conduct this brainstorming activity during a class period or continue it over a period of time, during which the students add new characteristics as they think of them. Write these on the board and continue brainstorming for as long as it seems productive.

Specific suggestions include:

1. Ask the class if there are people in their school who are treated differently from others. Is this different treatment fair? Why do you feel the way you do? If students believe that some are treated unfairly, have them suggest actions that might be taken to rectify this situation. They might wish to take some action to try to change the situation. You can help them plan and implement a strategy to bring about the desired change.

2. Students can examine the physical structure of their school to determine if a disabled student, e.g., one in a wheelchair, would have a fair chance to get an education. A student might put him/herself in a wheelchair to see if there are any architectural barriers in the school. The students’ research into this problem might result in proposals to make education in the school more accessible to the disabled.

3. Students can be asked to devise a “Welcoming Policy” that would ensure that all new students to the school (and, perhaps, their families) would feel included in the school community.

4. Students should create a school “No Discrimination” Policy, which they can launch with a suitable ceremony.

5. If the school does not have a bullying policy, students should be asked to initiate one that
   a. Defines bullying;
   b. Ensures that students are fully informed about bullying; and
   c. Imposes appropriate sanctions and remediation for both perpetrators and victims of bullying.
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