



A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

Recognising and challenging
stereotypes of visible difference

**TEACHER
GUIDE**

Scotland: **S1-S2**
England: **YR7-8**

CONTENTS

Guide Notes	3
Teacher support	
Objectives	
Lesson and assembly delivery notes	
Acknowledgements	
Preparation	4
Creating a safe learning environment	
Looking Different	5-6
Glossary of key terms	
Implicit attitudes test	
Support for Students	7-8
Appropriate language	
Advice on potential triggers	
Support resources	
Learning outcomes	9
Curricular links	
Learning objectives	
Learning outcomes for students	
Lesson One	10-14
Lesson Two	16-18
Assembly	18-19

GUIDE NOTES

Teacher support

If you would like to know more about visible difference, please see our teacher training and CPD resources at changingfaces.org.uk

Objectives

The aim of these lessons and Assembly materials is that pupils will learn about visible differences and the effect that stereotypes in the media can have on people who look different.

Lesson and assembly delivery notes

The content of these lessons and assembly is suitable for Year 7 and Year 8 in England and S1 and S2 in Scotland.

These resources are designed to be delivered over 2 lessons, either as consecutive sessions or over a 2-day period.

There is some overlap in the content of the materials in the lessons and assembly. We suggest that you use them with different groups of pupils to avoid duplication.

For teachers delivering an assembly only, please read the following sections of the guide, before moving on to the assembly plan at the end of this guide:

[Preparation, p4](#)

[Looking different, p5-6](#)

[Appropriate language, p7](#)

[Advice on potential triggers, p7](#)

[Curricular links, p9](#)

Acknowledgements

This guide and the accompanying slides for the lessons and assembly reproduce a number of images in order to make a specific point about the use of stereotyped depictions of characters. The copyright holder for each image, where known, is acknowledged where the images appear.

PREPARATION

Creating a safe learning environment

Before beginning the lessons/assembly, teachers should be confident they have established a safe environment for discussion of what can be sensitive and difficult topics. Remind students of the school's policy/rules on bullying. They should also be reminded that if they have questions they prefer not to ask in class, they can write them anonymously and use a class *question box*.

Before starting the lesson, agree with the students a set of ground rules. These could include the importance of the following:

- confidentiality
- listening to each other
- working together with respect
- taking a non-judgemental approach to different points of view
- carefully considering the words they use
- not sharing personal stories without permission.

Remind students of these at the start of the second lesson, or assembly.

The PSHE Association has helpful advice on [Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing guidance](#). This includes some detailed suggestions for ground rules and the importance of establishing a safe learning environment.

In the context of the ground rules, remind students of the school safeguarding policy and the trusted adult(s) they can talk to if they have further concerns or worries related to issues raised in the lesson. If teachers are already aware of any students who may be particularly affected by issues raised in the lesson(s), they should discuss this with them, individually, before the lesson.

When preparing for these lessons/assembly, teachers should be familiar with their responsibilities set out in the school Safeguarding Policy, Anti-bullying Policy and other school policies relating to equality issues. It may be helpful to inform the school designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in advance that the lesson/assembly will be taking place.

LOOKING DIFFERENT

Only 3 in 10 young people would consider being friends with someone who has a visible difference.

Looking different

In the UK today there are 86,000 children of school age who have a visible difference – a mark, scar or condition that affects their appearance. Some of the most common causes of visible difference include birthmarks, burn scars, craniofacial conditions, cleft lip and/or palate, and skin conditions such as vitiligo and eczema.

Research by the charity Changing Faces has found that almost half of children with an unusual appearance have experienced bullying based on how they look.¹ A survey found that only 3 in 10 young people would consider being friends with someone who had a visible difference, which explains why many children and young people who look different have reported experiencing isolation and loneliness.²

Glossary of key terms

- **Craniofacial conditions** affect the growth and development of the skull and the face. Examples include Treacher-Collins syndrome and Crouzon syndrome.
- **A cleft lip and/or palate** is a gap or split in the upper lip and/or roof of the mouth, which is present from birth.
- **Vitiligo** is a condition which causes pigmentation to be lost from areas of the skin, resulting in pale, white patches.

¹ Disfigurement in the UK, 2017

² Looking different: The future of face equality, 2018

LOOKING DIFFERENT

An Implicit Attitudes Test found that 66% of people held negative attitudes towards people with a visible difference.

Implicit Attitudes Test

An Implicit Attitudes Test (IAT) carried out on behalf of Changing Faces in 2017 found that 66% of people held negative attitudes towards people with a visible difference.³ There are also a number of persistent myths and assumptions, which affect how people with a visible difference are viewed by society, including the idea that people who look different have little chance of a successful, happy life.

Unconscious attitudes can lead to some teachers having significantly lower expectations of pupils with a visible difference and becoming resigned to appearance-related bullying being inevitable for pupils who look unusual. It is important that we are able to recognise and challenge our own implicit bias, as well as supporting pupils to do the same.

Changing Faces uses various expressions including the phrase 'visible difference' to describe someone who has a mark, scar or condition on their face or body that makes them look different. 'Disfigurement' is a term that is used in a legal context as it is enshrined in law in the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, which give legal protection to people with 'severe disfigurements'. It's important to note that not everyone feels comfortable with the word 'disfigurement', preferring instead 'visible difference', 'unusual appearance' or 'looks different'.

³ Public attitudes to disfigurement in 2017, Changing Faces, 2017

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Appropriate language

When talking about visible difference, it is important to use non-judgemental, matter-of-fact language. For example, 'Amina has a cleft lip', 'James has a large birthmark on his face' and 'Fiona is a burns survivor'. Avoid using phrases such as 'burns victim' or 'terribly scarred' as these are examples of sensationalist, judgemental language.

The slides for Lesson One include images of people with a visible difference, which may prompt questions from students. Information to support you with this is provided in the lesson plan below. Please also refer to the Preparation section, on page 4, on 'ground rules' for handling questions from students.

Advice on potential triggers

These resources contain content that may be potentially be emotionally triggering for some students. Some photos of film characters are included in one of the slides that accompany lesson one. These images are from films with a maximum age rating of 12, although the decision to show the slide will depend on your professional judgement on whether they are appropriate for your class.

There may be students who have a visible difference, or have a family member who does, in your class. We do not expect any students to share their personal or family experience, although they may make the choice to do so.

If students are affected by any of the issues raised by these resources, encourage them to share how they are feeling with a trusted adult in the school, outside of the lesson. You may need to remind them who this adult is.

Remind students also of the question box in the classroom where they can anonymously 'post' questions they'd prefer to ask less publicly.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Support resources

Changing Faces has produced guidance and resources for children and parents, which offer advice on living confidently with a visible difference:

changingfaces.org.uk/advice-guidance/children-parents-families

One-to-one support is also available from Changing Faces:

changingfaces.org.uk/services-support

Other websites which pupils and teachers may find helpful are:

youngminds.org.uk

respectme.org.uk

childline.org.uk

anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

The PSHE Association has further guidance on handling potentially sensitive issues with pupils: pshe-association.org.uk

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Curricular links

These resources will contribute to the delivery of rights-based approaches to learning, as well as the promotion of an inclusive school ethos. They also support the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing curriculum in Scotland and the development of students' mental, emotional and social wellbeing (in particular HWB 3-08a, 3-10a).

For schools in England, these resources will contribute to the delivery of Relationship and Sex Education curriculum at Key stage 3, particularly within the areas of respectful relationships, including friendships; online and media; and the law.

Learning objectives:

- In **Lesson One** and in the assembly, students will learn about visible differences and the effects that stereotypes in films and TV, which are often negative, can have on people who look different.
- In **Lesson Two**, students will focus on thinking about other ways that a 'baddie' character can be indicated without reference to their unusual looks.

Learning outcomes for students

After completing the activities in these lessons, students will be able to:

1. Explain what a stereotype is and identify some examples.
2. Describe how negative stereotypes of visible difference are often used in film and on TV.
3. Explain the impact that stereotypical depictions of visible difference can have on people who look different.
4. Identify the effect that stereotypical depictions of visible difference can have on the way that society views people who look different and behaves towards them.
5. Suggest alternative ways to represent 'bad' characters without using appearance-related stereotypes.



50 mins

LESSON ONE

Learning objective

Students will learn about visible differences and the effects that stereotypes in films and on TV, which are often negative, can have on people who look different.

NB: At the start of the lesson, teachers should remind students of the ground rules they have agreed (see Preparation section on page 4).

Resources required:

- Secondary Lesson One slides
- Post-it notes/writing paper/notebooks
- YouTube access – '*I am not your villain*' film
- Question box for students to post questions anonymously



50 mins

LESSON ONE



10 mins



Solo & group activity

Activity 1: What is a stereotype?

The first step of this activity is designed to assess students' initial understanding of the word 'stereotype'.

Steps 2 - 4 build towards **Learning outcome 1**: Students will be able to explain what a stereotype is and identify some examples.

Step 1 (baseline assessment): Display slide 2. Ask students to draw a mind map with the word 'stereotype' at the centre. Model this on the whiteboard if your students need more support. Then ask them to write what they know about stereotypes. If necessary, prompt students with further questions such as 'how might stereotypical views make people feel?' and 'Are all stereotypes negative?'.

Step 2: Display slide 3 which provides a simple definition of the word stereotype. Check students' understanding of this before going on to demonstrate with the example that follows.

Step 3: Display slide 4. This shows a road sign warning drivers that there are frail pedestrians likely to cross the road ahead. Ask students what they think this says about elderly people. If necessary, explain that there is a stereotype that older people are frail, slow at walking and unlikely to have fun like younger people.

Step 4: Display slide 5. This demonstrates that this stereotype does not represent all older people and so is untrue, or unfair. Clockwise from the top-left, the images show; an older graduate; Ed Whitlock, who ran a marathon in less than four hours, aged 85; Iris Apfel, who is 99 years old and an international fashion icon; and an older couple having fun on roller blades.

Step 5: Display slide 6. Ask students what impact they think the stereotype of old people may have on other older people and how might they feel. Ask students to add to their mind map in answer to this question, and share some with the class to support students who may have more difficulty with vocabulary, or with empathy.



10 mins



Group activity

Activity 2: Understanding visible differences

Step 1: Display slide 7 and then slide 8. Introduce students to the main causes of visible difference.

NB: This may be the first time that some students have seen images of people with a visible difference and they may be unsure how to react. The images might also potentially be emotionally triggering for some students.

Step 2: Display slide 9 and talk about the individuals who are pictured. From right to left:

- Marcus is one of Changing Faces' Young Champions and was born with a facial cleft and a cleft palate.
- Winnie Harlow is an international model who has been in ad campaigns for famous brands such as Nike. She has a condition called vitiligo that affects the pigmentation of her skin.
- Adam Pearson is an actor, TV presenter and campaigner who has a condition called neurofibromatosis.
- Nikki Lilly is a YouTube influencer and winner of 2016 *Junior Bake Off*. She has a condition called arteriovenous malformation (AVM).

Step 3: Reassure students that it is natural to notice if someone looks different and that some people can find this difficult if they have not seen many people with an unusual appearance. Remind students that it is important to be respectful of others and to remember that someone who looks different is a person with feelings, just like them. Explain that one of the reasons they are doing this lesson today is because people with a visible difference can be misunderstood and aren't always treated well by others.

NB: Students may ask questions about the people shown on slide 9. Remember to use matter-of-fact, non-judgemental language. Please refer to the *Support For Students* page for further guidance.



10 mins



Group activity

Activity 3: Stereotypes in film and TV

This activity is designed to deliver **Learning outcome 2:** Students will be able to describe how negative stereotypes of visible difference are often used in film and on TV.

Step 1: Display slide 10. Organise the students into groups of 3 or 4 and ask them to write a list of film or TV characters who have a scar, mark or condition that affects their appearance.

Step 2: Ask each group to share their list with the rest of the class. As each character is suggested, ask students if this is a 'good' or a 'bad' character. Write the characters in two columns on the whiteboard under headings 'good' and 'bad'.

Step 3: Ask students what they notice about the list of characters (i.e. there are many more bad characters with a visible difference).

Pupils may, at this point, bring up Harry Potter. This is not wrong, but they should be encouraged to think about the differences between Harry Potter's scar and the visible differences of notable villains. To take this further, see the *Challenge Activity* on page 14.

Step 4: Display slide 11, showing a selection of film villains who have an unusual appearance.

Activity 4: The impact of stereotypes

This activity is designed to deliver:

- **Learning outcome 3:** Students will be able to explain the impact that stereotypical depictions of visible difference can have on people who look different.
- **Learning outcome 4:** Students will be able to identify the effect that stereotypical depictions of visible difference can have on the way that society views and behaves towards people who look different.



10 mins



Group activity

Step 1: Display slide 12. Use the following questions as the basis for discussion of the use of visible difference in films/TV.

- Have students noticed before now that many villains have a visible difference?
- What impact do they think this has on how society sees people with a visible difference in real life?
- How do they think negative stereotypes might affect how people behave towards someone who looks different?
- How do the students think someone who looks different might feel when they see a villain with a visible difference in a TV programme or a film?



5 mins



Video

Step 2: Display slide 13, which includes a YouTube link to a short film produced by Changing Faces for the [#IamNotYourVillain](#) campaign. This film is **3 minutes** long and features young people with a visible difference discussing how they feel about the stereotype of the film villain who looks unusual. This reinforces the impact of appearance-related stereotypes in film and TV on people in real life.

Reminder: Please make sure you are in slideshow mode to view the video.



5 mins



Solo activity

Step 3: Ask students to refer to the mind map they created at the start of the lesson. Ask them to add more information to the mind map on what they've learned in the lesson. Encourage them to include thoughts about how stereotypes can make people feel, if they have a visible difference. Make sure students keep their mind maps somewhere safe as they will need them for Lesson Two.

Step 4: Display slide 14 which includes further sources of information and support for students.

Challenge Activity: Harry Potter debate

This is an optional debate which may be engaging to further challenge some students. A group could be asked to present their discussions to the rest of the class.

Harry Potter's lightning bolt scar is a 'cool' shape, and it is small and neat and can easily be hidden by his hair. It is also not portrayed as the first thing somebody might notice about him, merely one of his characteristics, along with his trademark round glasses and his mother's eyes. When other characters do notice his scar, they react with curiosity and awe, rather than horror or disgust. By contrast, lots of villains are given prominent, unconcealable visible differences that are immediately noticeable and elicit negative reactions.

Questions to encourage debate:

- Why are small, 'cool' scars seemingly permissible in a hero, but anything else suggests villainy?
- Is there a sense that Harry Potter is 'allowed' to have a scar and still be a good guy precisely because it is discreet?
- Do other fictional villains encourage the idea that the more 'severe' or noticeable the visible difference, the more evil the character?

There are no wrong answers, and discussions may be lively!



50 mins

LESSON TWO

Learning objective

Students will focus on thinking about other ways that a 'baddie' or villain character can be indicated without reference to their unusual looks.

Resources required:

- A3 paper
- Post-it notes/notebooks
- Pencils and colouring pens/pencils
- Question box for posting anonymous questions
- Mind map completed in Lesson One
- Character design template (optional)
- Final slide from Lesson One



5 mins



Group activity

Activity 1: Recap on learning from Lesson one

This recap works as a **baseline assessment** to be aware of any adjustments that may be needed to this lesson. Remind students about the ground rules they have agreed for these lessons.

Step 1: Ask the students to share what they remember from Lesson One.

Step 2: Ask the students to refer to their mind maps and write down three things they learned in the last lesson. If necessary, scaffold this with the heading 'Three things I learned about stereotypes'. Depending on the answers, summarise the key themes for students who need more support in recalling.



10mins



Group activity

Activity 2: Whole-class discussion

This activity is designed to deliver **Learning outcome 5**: Students will be able to suggest alternative ways to represent 'bad' characters without using appearance-related stereotypes.

Step 1: Explain that it can be difficult to challenge stereotypes in film and TV, but it can be done. For example, the 2017 film Wonder Woman was a huge box-office success and challenged the idea that superheroes are men and that a superhero film with a woman as a main character would not be a success.

Step 2: Facilitate a discussion: how could TV and film directors show that a character is a baddie without using an appearance-related stereotype? This discussion supports the main learning objective in this lesson. It encourages students to think about the tools that are at a director's/script-writer's disposal to show an audience that a character is a villain, without using a stereotype.

Students might find it difficult to come up with suggestions, as the scarred villain stereotype is ingrained in film-making and seen as an easy way to show that a character is bad.

If students are having trouble thinking of ideas, suggestions include:

- Using scary music when the character is on screen.
- Including scenes that show the character making an evil plan or behaving badly towards other characters.
- Using dramatic effects such as thunder and lightning
- Directing the actor to act or talk in a nasty or suspicious way.

Step 3: Ask students to write the heading 'My advice to directors' in their notebooks along with a short list of do's and don'ts for directors/script-writers, to help them avoid using appearance-related stereotypes to show who is the villain.

NB: Students might ask if a character wearing a mask is OK. If a character is robbing a bank, for example, then a mask would be a reasonable thing to wear to avoid being identified.



30 mins



Group activity

Activity 3 (option 1): Poster design

As with activity 2, activity 3 (options 1 and 2) are also designed to deliver **Learning outcome 5**: Students will be able to suggest alternative ways to represent 'bad' characters without using appearance-related stereotypes.

This activity is intended to demonstrate what students have learned so that teachers can assess progress made from the start of Lesson One.

Ask students, in groups of 3 or 4, to design a poster on A3 paper. Their aim is to raise awareness in the school about negative stereotypes of visible difference in films and on TV.

The most successful posters will include:

- Information on how negative stereotypes are often used.
- Explanation of why this is a 'lazy' device.
- How this can affect behaviour towards people who look different in real life.
- How this affects people who have a visible difference.
- A message to writers and directors on other ways they could represent villains/baddies, for example a list of do's and don'ts when creating their characters.

For most groups it will be helpful to share these 5 criteria with students when setting the task. If time allows, share some of the posters and highlight how they have met these criteria.



30 mins



Group activity

Activity 3 (option 2): Character design

Depending on responses to the mind map exercise, some groups of students can be set an alternative, simpler activity to design their own new character. Distribute the Character design template (overleaf) and ask students to draw their new character and to outline their evil plan. There is also space for them to describe how audiences will know their character is the baddie or villain.



5 mins



Solo activity

Activity 4: Time to reflect

Step 1 (option 1): Hand out post-it notes or paper and ask students to write down one thing that they have learned about stereotypes and visible difference from the past two lessons. These can be displayed alongside the students' posters.

Step 1 (option 2): Ask students to refer to their mind map and to highlight in a different colour the three most important things they've learned about stereotypes and visible difference over these two lessons. Share some of these with the whole class, to reinforce the learning. The mind maps can then be used as a final assessment, together with the posters and/or character design.

Step 2: Display the last slide from Lesson One with information on how students can find out more, or seek support, if they are affected by any of the issues they've discussed in these lessons.



20 mins

ASSEMBLY

Learning objective for students:

In this assembly, students will learn about visible differences and the effects that stereotypes in films and on TV, which are often negative, can have on people who look different.

Resources required:

- Secondary assembly slides
- YouTube access – '*I am not your villain*' film



5 mins



Group activity

Activity 1

Step 1: Display slides 1 and 2. Pose the question 'What do these statements have in common?' and display the statements on slide 3 for discussion. If time and group size allow, take suggestions from students.

Step 2: Display slide 4 and talk through the definition of a stereotype.



5 mins



Group activity

Activity 2

Step 1: Display slide 5 and ask students to consider the question on screen. If time and group size allow, take suggestions from students.

Display slide 6 and talk through each of the characters (information provided on the slide), explaining that these are examples of film villains. Ask students to think about what these characters have in common (apart from being villains). If time and group size allow, take suggestions from students.

NB: The characters on the slide are all examples of villains with a mark, scar or condition that affects their appearance.

Step 2: Talk through slides 7 and 8. The main point to get across is that there is a persistent stereotype that an unusual appearance is a marker of villainy. This has an impact on how people who look different in real life are treated by others.

Using the second question on slide 7, ask students if they can think of any heroes of 'goodies' who look unusual.



5 mins



Group activity

Activity 3: Understanding visible difference

Step 1: Show Slides 9 and 10, which provide an introduction to visible difference and some of the main causes. Please refer to the glossary on page 4 for more information and to the Changing Faces website.

Step 2: Show slide 11, which has some images of people who have a visible difference. Introduce the four people shown on Slide 11 using matter-of-fact, non-judgemental language and use the information below to help. From left to right:

1. Marcus is one of Changing Faces' Young Champions and was born with a facial cleft and a cleft palate.
2. Winnie Harlow is an international model who has been in ad campaigns for famous brands such as Nike. She has a condition called vitiligo that affects the pigmentation of her skin.
3. Adam Pearson is an actor, TV presenter and campaigner who has a condition called neurofibromatosis.
4. Nikki Lilly is a YouTube influencer and winner of 2016 *Junior Bake Off*. She has a condition called arteriovenous malformation (AVM).

NB: This may be the first time that some students have seen images of people with a visible difference and they may be unsure how to react. The images might also potentially be emotionally triggering for some students. Reassure students that it is natural to notice if someone looks different and that some people can find this difficult if they have not seen many people with an unusual appearance. Remind students that it is important to be respectful of others and to remember that someone who looks different is a person with feelings, just like them. Remind students about the impact of the appearance-related stereotypes used in film and TV on people with a visible difference in real life.

Step 3: Ask students to imagine how the people in these images might feel if others they meet treat them as if they are in some way villains.



5 mins



Video

Activity 4: Challenging stereotypes

Step 1: Display slide 12 which includes a YouTube link to a short film produced by Changing Faces for the [#Iamnotyourvillain](#) campaign.

Reminder: Please make sure you are in slideshow mode to view the video.

- This film is **3 minutes** long and features young people with a visible difference discussing how they feel about the stereotype of the film villain who looks unusual.
- This film can be used to reinforce the impact of appearance-related stereotypes in film and TV on people in real life.
- Pupils will know who most of the characters mentioned in the film are.
- Introduce the film to pupils and ask them to reflect on what they hear in the film as they leave the assembly.

Step 2: Show slide 13, which includes websites where students can find more information and advice about visible differences and their responses to what they have seen and discussed.

Remind students that if they are affected by the material in this assembly they can talk to a trusted adult in the school.

RESOURCE FEEDBACK

We would love to know what you think of these resources and how we can improve them. If you are willing to give feedback please use the QR code below to take you to our feedback form or visit:

<https://www.changingfaces.org.uk/awod-classroom-feedback/>

Or you can email education@changingfaces.org.uk



How to scan QR codes

1. Open your camera app.
2. Focus the camera on the QR code by gently tapping the code.
3. Follow the instructions on the screen to complete the action.