

Move Beyond Stereotypes (Grades 6-12)



Overview:

This lesson explores the stories of real people to help students learn how to move beyond stereotypes. They'll learn how accepting others' authentic and unique selves demonstrates respect and fairness.

Character Education Objectives:

Students will:

- how sharing our individual stories with the world helps break down unfair stereotypes.
- explore Human Library stories.
- reflect on their experiences with the Human Library story.

Materials:

- Videos from Aumen Film Co. (2017) *The Human Library Trailer*.
Youtube.com. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7vJgyRJ-zo>

Opening Discussion:

- “Stereotypes lose their power when the world is found to be more complex than the stereotype would suggest. When we learn that individuals do not fit the group stereotype, then it begins to fall apart.” – Ed Koch
 - Ask students what this quote means to them?
- Share some stereotypes (teens, elderly, rich, poor). Then, ask about a stereotype students have (or used to have) about a group or individual.

Instruction and Activity:

- Teach students about Human Library projects. It is a collection of real-life human stories you can “check out.” These stories aim to break stereotypes. In addition, they help people embrace fairness and togetherness through our differences.
 - Example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7vJgyRJ-z0>
- Ask students to explore the Human Library to learn more about others. Most importantly, suggest choosing individuals whom they may normally stereotype.
 - <https://humanlibrary.org/meet-our-human-books/>

Discussion:

- Why did you select that particular human library book?
- What did you learn about someone else today?
 - Why did learning about someone’s story impact any stereotypes you have or had?
 - How does getting to know someone else’s story make you a more connected citizen?
 - Describe how hearing someone else’s journey impacts your own story.

Reflection:

- What did you learn about yourself today?

- How did what you learn today help you move beyond stereotypes?