

Lesson 11: Influencing attitudes

Overview

During this lesson students start to think about how their attitudes and opinions are influenced. They learn how newspapers can sensationalise facts and also get information wrong. They discuss how this can impact on our own attitudes and wider society. Finally they consider the importance of developing their own understanding and finding out the facts, so they can be confident in their own ideas and opinions.

Starter

Activity 1 (5mins): Power of advertising (Slides 3-5)

Play the coke advert: "I'd like to buy the world a Coke": www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfU17niXOG8

Use the slides to discuss how advertising impacts on our attitudes, behaviour and lifestyle choices.

Introduce the learning objectives.

Main

Activity 2 (5mins): Two minute challenge (Slide 6)

In pairs, students list as many things as they can that influence people to do or think something e.g. friends, personal experience, magazines. Share as a class, going round and not allowing repetition.

Activity 3 (5-10mins): Diamond 9 (Slides 7-8)

Using Worksheet 12, create and cut out nine cards that feature different external influences. Students are asked to rank them into a diamond shape; with the most important characteristic at the top point and least important at the bottom (see the slide for an example). First they rank individually under timed conditions, then group them into pairs and they have to agree on the ranking, then group into 4s and they have to agree again. Discuss which has the greatest influence. Are these influences good or bad?

Activity 4 (10mins): Headliners (Slides 9-16)

Students work in teams. Using the slides, present three different headlines reporting the same issue. One will be real and two are spoofs. Students' record which one they think is real. Repeat this three times in total with different headlines. Reveal the answers and award students a point for each correct answer. Discuss how the sensationalised and negative headlines, impact our opinions and attitudes? What behaviour could this lead to in society? Links to the original headlines can be found in the further information section.

Activity 5 (15mins): Headline writers (Slide 17)

Group in pairs. Students are required to create their own headlines. One will be sensationalised and create a negative attitude, and one will be based on fact providing a balanced view. You could use the article on worksheet 41 which reports some student protests. When creating a sensationalised headline, they should create a negative view of the students in the news article. Choose some students to present their headlines and discuss how they would influence attitudes. You could include peer assessment.

Learning objectives

- ▶ Understand that our attitudes can be affected by external influences.
- ▶ Be able to recognise how my attitudes and opinions are influenced.

Subject links

- ▶ Citizenship
- ▶ PSHEE
- ▶ English
- ▶ History
- ▶ RE

Resources

- ▶ Slides: Lesson 11
- ▶ Worksheets:
12 - Diamond 9
41 - Headline writers

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Activity 6 (10mins): Fact and fiction (Slides 18-27)

Using the slides, present headlines which portray a negative and inaccurate image of human rights. Discuss what image they portray and how they would impact on attitudes. Then highlight how these articles are actually incorrect. What is the danger of reporting inaccurate news? Why would some newspapers do this? Highlight the importance of understanding the facts and not believing everything you read. You could ask students to suggest alternative factual headlines.

Plenary

Activity 7 (5mins): Rumours and opinion (Slides 28-31)

Use the slides to promote the importance of finding out the facts when forming our own opinions and ideas. Consider rumours about friends. Are they sensationalised in the same way journalists exaggerate the news? How does that impact on people's attitudes e.g. arguments and bullying. Highlight that when they have a good understanding of different things, and find out the facts, they can feel confident in their own conclusions and can avoid acting in a prejudicial or discriminatory way.

Support notes

Extension/homework/extra activity ideas

Use these ideas as inspiration for alternative, differentiation or homework activities, or to develop learning in other subjects or lessons.

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Extension 1: Born racist or homophobic?

Discuss whether people are born racist or homophobic. What might influence their attitudes? Explore: upbringing, attitudes of parents and family, personal experience, negative experiences, media, friends, fear of the unknown and lack of understanding, intolerance, arrogance, work, clubs etc.

Extension 2: Sensationalising extremism

Source newspaper articles and headlines that promote a negative attitude towards religion e.g. Islamophobia. How does the media influence these attitudes? Are they justified or sensationalised? What problems could this cause for society?

Extension 3: World war propaganda

Extend learning to show how attitudes have been powerfully influenced by the Government throughout history by sourcing propaganda media. How does this influence attitudes, what problems does it cause and how does it compare to propaganda we see in papers today?

Useful links/further information

Visit the useful information section of Equal Rights, Equal Respect to access this information:

www.equalityhumanrights.com/equalrightsequalrespect/usefulinformation

- ▶ **Background to equality and human rights** - background information to discrimination and human rights.
- ▶ **Equality and human rights case studies** - provide further case studies and stimuli for students to produce news articles and headlines.
- ▶ **Glossary** - glossary of key words.

Visit the training section of Equal Rights, Equal Respect to access this information:

www.equalityhumanrights.com/equalrightsequalrespect/training

- ▶ **Equality and human rights training video** - training tips for delivering equality and human rights education.

Activity 4 article links:

- ▶ www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-491707/Britons-squeezed-workforce-foreigners-says-Treasury.html
- ▶ www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1290047/Metropolitan-Police-crime-statistics-reveal-violent-criminals-black--victims.html
- ▶ www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-386874/Teenage-girls-control.html

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Extension 4: Influencing attitudes online

Discuss how online news and blogs influence attitudes. Highlight that newspaper forums are moderated. Why would they do this? Would this create a biased view? If comments posted by the public are moderated, who owns the power of this media? How can blogs influence attitudes? Explore the impact of websites such as Wikileaks. Is the release of Government information through these channels a good or bad thing? How would it impact on our attitudes?

Differentiation ideas

- ▶ Differentiation by outcome.

Prior learning

- ▶ Understanding of human rights is required for activity 6 (Lessons 8-10).
- ▶ Understanding of prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination are required to discuss the impact of negative external influences (Lessons 5-6).

Preparation and planning

- ▶ You will need to cut out the Diamond 9 cards so each student has nine cards. An example is provided on the slides.
- ▶ Photocopy enough copies of the worksheets for your students.