

Makutano Junction

A Kenyan TV soap opera



Activity

Helping you develop the **Global Dimension** across the **curriculum**

10 Soaps and stereotypes

Activity description

- This activity uses Makutano Junction and UK soap operas to explore both the meaning of “stereotype” and some of the possible effects of stereotyping.

Aims

- To understand the meaning of “stereotype”
- To explore the possible consequences of stereotyping
- To look critically at the media and identify examples of where stereotypes have been produced and to what effect.

What you need?

- DVD MJ Series 3, Episode 3, first half “Battle of the Sexes”
- Four photos of four people (eg: fat person, black person, slender woman and Muslim man).

- To expose students to a soap opera production in and about Kenya.

Curriculum links

- GCSE, 2009 Media Studies Exam, Representation, Knowledge and Understanding
- PSHE Personal Wellbeing KS3 and 4, 1.5 Diversity
- RE, KS3 1.3 Expressing Meaning
- Citizenship: KS 3, 1.3 Democracy and Justice, KS4, 1.3 Identifies and Diversity
- English: KS3 and 4: 1,4 Critical Understanding
- Geography: KS3, 1.7 Cultural Understanding and Diversity

Further details of how this activity meets requirements of the new Secondary Curriculum appear on the Curriculum Links table. For subjects outside the statutory curriculum, check your own exam board for their requirements. For general information on the Global Dimension across the curriculum, see www.globaldimension.org.uk

GLOBAL DIMENSION

Underlying the concept of a global dimension to the curriculum are **eight key concepts**. The following six are covered by this activity:



Citizenship – gaining the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to become informed, active and responsible global citizens.



Social Justice – understanding the importance of social justice as an element in both sustainable development and the improved welfare of all people.



Diversity – understanding and respecting differences and relating these to our common humanity.



Values and Perceptions – developing a critical evaluation of images of the developing world and an appreciation of the effect these have on people's attitudes and values.



Interdependence – understanding how people, places and environments are all inextricably interrelated and that events have repercussions on a global scale.



Human Rights – knowing about human rights and understanding their breadth and universality.

The other two key concepts which can be explored using other Makutano Junction activities are:

Sustainable Development

Conflict Resolution

Find out more: www.globaldimension.org.uk

3 and compare with their view after viewing any stereotyping portrayed.

What you do

1 Brainstorm what “stereotype” means. Acc. To Oxford Dictionary,

“A preconceived, standardized and oversimplified impression of the characteristics which typify a person, society or certain social groups; an attitude based on such a preconception. Also, a person or thing appearing to conform closely to such a standardised impression.”

2 Get into groups of 4-5. Give each group four photos (same for each group); e.g. one of a fat person, one of a black person, one of a slender woman and one of a Muslim man. Ask each group to note down what impressions they have of the four from their photos. Why? Present back to class. Discuss why they have these impressions and assess how fair these impressions are.

3 Ask each person to write down on a piece of paper a time when they have witnessed, or been party to, stereotyping (could have seen it on tv, read about it, done it themselves...). Ask them also to think about the possible effects of stereotyping. Put all the pieces of paper into a hat. Teacher to pick out of the hat a random piece of paper and whoever wrote it, to talk the class through it. Important bit is the ensuing discussion of the possible consequences of stereotyping.

4 In groups, watch MJ, Series 3, Ep 3, first half. Before watching, ask class:

How they think Kenyans dress?

What they think Kenyans do for a living?

What they think Kenyans live in?

Note down their responses on the board. Ask each group, as they watch MJ, to

i) list the main characters, as they watch, in three columns;

stereotyped	middle	non-stereotyped

ii) write down what they think the effect will be on the audience watching these characters in MJ

Top Tips

Ask the students to say what their preconceptions are of Kenyan life before watching Series 3, Episode

5 Each group to present back to the class. As each group presents back, ask them to think about what this half episode of MJ tell them about women in Kenya.

Variations

1 Go back into pairs and each pair to write down one UK TV sit com, soap opera and/or one tv advert where stereo-types are used. Present back to main group and ask each pair to consider:

Why they think stereotyping has been used in these media?

What are the dangers and possible consequences of stereotyping like this?

2 Think of one tv advertisement or programme where there is deliberate non-stereotyping. What effect does this have on the viewer?

3 Draw up a storyline around the Chief (Hope) for the second part of MJ Episode 3, Series 3, which would keep up the challenging of the Kenyan woman stereotype.

4 Ask the class (especially if this activity forms part of Media Studies) why the media are so influential in promoting stereotypes.

Follow-up/Research Questions

Can you think of times when you have formed an opinion about someone by either just looking at them or hearing them talk?

Why do you think we stereotype people?

What are the possible repercussions of stereotyping people?

Why do you think the media have such an influential role to play when it comes to stereotypes?

What are the possible outcomes of prejudice and discrimination?

Find examples of where prejudice and discrimination have had an impact on certain groups.

Useful resources

<http://www.bebave.org.uk>
www.bebave.org.uk

<http://www.understandingprejudice.org>
www.understandingprejudice.org

<http://www.cegnet.co.uk>
The Career Development Organisation

TAKE ACTION

- Challenge individuals who promote views that are based on negative stereotypes.
- Lobby against prejudice, be it against those who are of a different race, colour, religion, sexual orientation.
- Think critically and discuss with friends, how groups of people are represented in the media.

Examples

