Lesson 6

Bullying Prevention: Labels, Stereotypes, and Prejudice

Overview
Labels and stereotypes create prejudice against students, making them more easily targeted for bullying. Increasing students’ awareness of the negative power of labels and stereotypes can reduce unkind behavior and bullying.

Objectives
Students will be able to:
- Recognize that labels, stereotypes, and prejudice can contribute or lead to bullying or unfair treatment of others
- Recognize that all people are individuals beyond a label or stereotype
- Understand that increased empathy can reduce the negative effects of labeling, stereotypes, and prejudice
- Identify and practice empathic skills

Lesson at a Glance

Part 1

Group activity: Sorting and classifying writing utensils.
Video: Real Voices student talks about labeling at his school.
Partner activity: Labels and stereotypes at school.
Class discussion: Stereotypes and stereotyping.
Video: Real Voices student talks about being stereotyped.
Group exchange: What problems does stereotyping create?
Individual activity: Writing stereotypes associated with labels and groups at school.

Part 2

Class discussion: How labels and stereotypes make some people more vulnerable to bullying. Role and responsibility of bystanders.
Video: Real Voices students relate their experiences with bullying.
Partner exchange: What it would be like to be treated the way the bullied students were treated.
Video: Real Voices interview about being a bystander.
Class discussion: How empathy reduces stereotypes and can lead to less bullying.
Group exchange: How to practice empathy in everyday life.

Supplies and Equipment
- DVD player and monitor or computer with projector and screen
- Assorted writing utensils for the classifying activity, enough for several per group
- Clipboard and Observational Assessment Form if doing the observational assessment

Lesson Materials
- Grade 8 DVD, Lesson 6 segment
- Handout 6A: Labels and Stereotypes at School
- Bystander Power poster
- Optional: “The Rules of Respect” homework

Lesson Preparation
- Have an assortment of writing utensils available for groups that do not have enough for the classifying activity.
- Copy Handout 6A: Labels and Stereotypes at School, one per student.
- For screen 6.8, you will need to mention a stereotype that students in your school are familiar with. Before teaching the lesson, preview how it introduces stereotypes in the script accompanying screen 6.5. If the example used in the lesson is not appropriate for the students in your school, substitute one that is.
- Optional: Copy “The Rules of Respect” homework, one per student.

Digital lesson materials!

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www.secondstep.org
Teaching Notes
For the first activity of this lesson, you could choose to have students sort and categorize a variety of candies rather than writing utensils.

Using Lesson Content Every Day
Recognize that no matter how open-minded we’d like to believe we are, we all carry our own history of labeling and stereotyping. Be aware of your own prejudices so that you do not make assumptions about students, their families, or their habits before you get to know them.

Be aware of language that implies labels and stereotypes. Do not allow students to call each other derogatory names, even in jest. Explain to them that labeling and stereotyping hurt individuals and promote a negative school climate.

Listen for statements that overgeneralize, such as “No adults care about what kids think” or “All the kids who go to that school are snobs.” Explain how overgeneralizing can lead to stereotyping and prejudice.

Why This Lesson Is Important
We have a natural tendency to categorize because it helps us make sense of our complex world. This tendency can lead us to sort, classify, and label people. Stereotyping may be particularly common in early adolescence, when students focus on social identity, groups, and status. Stereotyping helps students sort out how people fit in a social structure, but it may also contribute to unfair assumptions, prejudice, and bullying.

In this lesson, students discuss stereotyping and the ways in which labeling others can lead to unfair treatment, bullying, and prejudice against individuals and groups of people. Students are more likely to feel empathy when they view others as individuals rather than as “types,” such as the jock.

Students are also encouraged to reflect on ways to counter bullying and prejudice. For example, they discuss how bystanders might help others who are being treated unfairly. The goals of these activities and discussions are to increase student empathy, awareness of stereotyping, and respectful behavior; and to decrease bullying.
# Lesson 6, Part 1

Bullying Prevention: Labels, Stereotypes, and Prejudice

## You will need:
- Grade 8 DVD, Lesson 6 segment
- Extra writing utensils
- Handout 6A: Labels and Stereotypes at School, one per student

## Outline

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td><strong>By nature, human beings sort and classify.</strong></td>
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| 6.2 | **Group Activity**  
Sorting and Classifying  
- Must have at least 10 items.  
- Sort items into four groups based on similarity. |

## Script and Instructions

### 6.1 Before class starts, display the introductory screen.

### 6.2 To get started, you’re going to do an activity with your group.

**Take out all of the writing utensils you have with you. Your group needs at least 10 items. If you do not have 10, raise your hand.**

Distribute extra writing utensils as necessary.

**Sort the items into four groups based on how they are similar.**

You will have three minutes.

**Give students three minutes to complete the activity. Observe and coach as necessary.**
### Outline

- Discuss the activity and sorting and classifying in general.

### Script and Instructions

Everyone look at how you grouped your items. How did your group decide what to do with each item? (We sorted and classified according to common characteristics.) Call on students in a couple of groups to describe how they sorted their items.

As you may remember from the opening screen, human beings sort and classify by nature. When we organize our rooms, lockers, or notebooks, we are trying to create order out of chaos.

**Why does it feel good to sort and classify things?** (Brings order, we know where to find things, it helps us gain control over large amounts of items or information.)

Introduce the video.

Have students watch the video.

Video length: 00:50 minutes

This human tendency to sort and classify things and information means we tend to do the same with people. We try to sort people into groups with common characteristics and give those groups a label. However, labels define people narrowly.

Let's listen to how one student describes his perceptions of the way students at his school are labeled.

Play the video.
## Lesson 6, Part 1
### Bullying Prevention: Labels, Stereotypes, and Prejudice

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<td>6.4</td>
<td><strong>Partner Activity</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Labels at School</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td><strong>Handout 6A: Labels and Stereotypes at School</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distribute Handout 6A.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Now, with your partner, you’re going to identify some of the labels and groups here at school.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Together, think of as many labels or groups as you can that you know of here at school. Each of you must write them down on your own handouts.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>You will have two minutes to finish Section 1 on Handout 6A. Remind students that everything they write down must be appropriate to be said out loud in the classroom.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Give students two minutes to complete Section 1 of the handout. Observe and coach as necessary.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Call on a few students at random to report their ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>What are some of the labels or groups you were able to identify?</strong> (Various answers.) After each label is given, ask other students to raise their hands if they also wrote that label down.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A stereotype is an assumption you make about someone or a group of people because of how they’re labeled. An example of a label is the term *jocks*. A stereotype about jocks might be “All jocks are dumb.”

This stereotype is based on the over-generalization that *all* athletically skilled people are somehow less intelligent than another group. Obviously, kids who are athletic are likely to be just as intelligent as anyone else.

What are some stereotypes that adults have about teenagers? (They’re disrespectful, idealistic, moody, lazy, addicted to TV and video games.)

What are some stereotypes that teens have about adults? (They are controlling. Their lives are easy. They don’t understand what you’re feeling/modern problems. They forget what it’s like to be a teen.)

Note: If the following example of a stereotype is not appropriate for the students at your school, substitute one that is.

Stereotypes may convey a positive or negative image. Some people might think the stereotype “All African-American kids are good at basketball” is a positive stereotype.

Can you think of a way that stereotype might actually make a person feel uncomfortable or angry? (They might feel embarrassed if they’re actually not good at basketball but are expected to be. They might want to be recognized for their own individual strengths. No one wants to be judged as a group rather than seen as unique.)

Let’s listen to a student tell about her experience being stereotyped by her classmates.

Play the video.

Have students watch the video.

Video length: 1:27 minutes
### Lesson 6, Part 1

**Bullying Prevention: Labels, Stereotypes, and Prejudice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.7 Group Exchange</td>
<td>How did it make Mizan feel to be stereotyped by her classmates? (Angry, insulted, she wanted them to know her as an individual.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss the video and introduce the group exchange.</td>
<td>You will have one minute to talk in your groups about what other kinds of problems you think stereotyping (positive or negative) creates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have students do the group exchange.</td>
<td>Give students one minute to exchange ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call on a few students at random to report.</td>
<td>Call on a few students at random to report. Possible responses: It keeps you from seeing other people as individuals. It hurts people’s feelings. It can limit people’s options. It makes people feel they have to be or act a certain way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8 Individual Activity</td>
<td>Now you will do Section 2 of your handout on your own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce the individual activity.</td>
<td>1. Choose two or three of the groups or labels that you think apply to you.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have students do Section 2 of Handout 6A.</td>
<td>2. Write one in each “Group/Label” box.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Write down as many common stereotypes you can think of about that group or label, both positive and negative, whether you think they are true or not.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For example, if I included “jocks” as a label in Section 1 because I like to play sports, I’d write that in the “Group/Label” column. And then I’d include both positive and negative stereotypes I’ve heard about jocks in the other two columns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You will have three minutes to fill out this section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Give students three minutes to complete Section 2 of the handout. Observe and coach as necessary.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 6, Part 1
Bullying Prevention: Labels, Stereotypes, and Prejudice

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call on a few students at random to report.</td>
<td>What are some of the negative and positive stereotypes you identified? (Various answers.) Think about the labels or groups that you identified. Are the stereotypes true for you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss stereotypes.</td>
<td>One of the problems with stereotypes is that people can assume that certain things about you are true when they aren’t. How do you think the stereotypes that exist in our school affect the way you or other people are treated? Refer to the stereotypes the students named. Possible student responses: It makes us less likely to appreciate people as individuals. We make assumptions that aren’t true about people. We hurt people. We don’t make an effort to get to know people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Part 1. Conclude here, or continue on to Part 2.</td>
<td>Today we explored how labels, stereotypes, and prejudices can have an impact on how people treat each other. Next time we will talk about how we can counteract the negative effects of labels, stereotypes, and prejudices.</td>
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</table>
### You will need:
- Grade 8 DVD, Lesson 6 segment
- Bystander Power poster
- Optional: “The Rules of Respect” homework, one per student

### Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If presenting the lesson in two parts, select the Lesson 6 menu on the Grade 8 DVD, then select “Part 2.”</td>
<td>Last time we explored how labels, stereotypes, and prejudices can have an impact on how people treat each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recap Part 1 of this lesson.</td>
<td>Today we will discuss how we can counteract the negative effects of labels, stereotypes, and prejudices. We’ll also talk about how labels, stereotypes, and prejudices may lead to bullying.</td>
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#### 6.9

**Bullying:**

**Bullying** is when one or more people repeatedly harm, harass, intimidate, or exclude others. Bullying is unfair and one-sided.

Discuss bullying.

#### 6.9

Let’s talk about how labeling and stereotyping relate to bullying. For one thing, students who are negatively stereotyped can be vulnerable to being bullied.

Fill in a label and stereotype in the following phrases that might apply to your school population.

**For example, having the thought or attitude that “All _________ are _________” or “People from _________ are _________” can make people feel like they have a right to mistreat others.**

Emphasize that this kind of labeling and stereotyping allows students to take an “us vs. them” point of view.

**What kinds of bullying related to labels and stereotypes do you see in our school?** Students may mention teasing, harassing, name-calling, spreading rumors, and so on based on race, ethnicity, religion, etc.

If students mention fighting, be sure to point out that it is not the same as bullying. You may want to review the definition and emphasize that bullying is one-sided.
Lesson 6, Part 2
Bullying Prevention: Labels, Stereotypes, and Prejudice

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are some of the labels or stereotypes that you identified on your handout from Part 1 that make some people more vulnerable to being bullied? (If people are labeled as “weird” or “different,” they are more likely to be picked on. If people are labeled “gay” or “geeks,” others may think they have a “reason” or “right” to bully them.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No one ever deserves to be bullied. We all have the right to be treated with respect. We all have the right to feel safe in school.</td>
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6.10

**Real Voices**

Introduce the video.

Have students watch the video.

Video length: 2:54 minutes

6.11

**Prejudice:**
A prejudice or assumption about someone else.

The word *prejudice* literally means pre-judgment, or assumption. What kinds of prejudgments were being made about Habib and Jordan? (Habib: That he is a terrorist because he is from the Middle East; that he deserves to be bullied or harassed because he is different. Jordan: That he is not American because of his ethnic background.)

6.10

Stereotypes can become particularly hurtful and even dangerous when they are applied to racial, ethnic, and religious groups and to people’s sexual orientation. When this happens, prejudices are formed.

Let’s listen to some students talking about how bullying can result from prejudices.

Play the video.
### Lesson 6, Part 2

**Bullying Prevention: Labels, Stereotypes, and Prejudice**

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<tr>
<td><strong>6.12</strong></td>
<td><strong>Partner Exchange</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• How would you feel?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• How would you respond?</td>
<td><strong>3 minutes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduce the partner exchange.</td>
<td><strong>Give students one minute to exchange ideas.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have students do the partner exchange.</td>
<td><strong>Ask volunteers to tell the class about their partner discussion.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have students report.</td>
<td><strong>Some of you said you would have felt angry.</strong> When people are negatively prejudged the way Habib and Jordan were, they may feel like fighting back. We can see how prejudices against a racial, ethnic, or religious group can contribute to violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss how prejudices can contribute to violence and bullying.</td>
<td><strong>When groups of people believe a prejudice, it makes it seem okay to be closed-minded.</strong> If people believe that a prejudice such as the one held against Habib is true, they may feel as if they have a right to bully or hurt others.</td>
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| **6.13** | **Real Voices** |
| Introduce the video. | **As you remember from the last lesson, we know that we are bystanders when we are aware of this or any kind of bullying.** As bystanders, we have an opportunity and a responsibility to respond in whatever way we feel we can to help become “part of the solution.” |
| Have students watch the video. | **Abel was a bystander to bullying that started because of someone’s ethnicity.** Let’s hear him talk about what he wishes he had done. |
| Video length: 00:51 minutes | **Play the video.** |
### Lesson 6, Part 2
Bullying Prevention: Labels, Stereotypes, and Prejudice

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| **6.14 Bystander Power**<br>Research shows that when student bystanders take action against bullying, the bullying usually stops. | **What did Abel say about not intervening?** (He regretted it. If he had told the others to stop it could have made a difference. He might have been able to help the person being bullied.)

**In fact, research shows that when student bystanders take action against bullying, the bullying usually stops.**

**Why do you think this is true?** (People don’t want to behave in a way that will be unpopular with their friends/peers. They don’t want to get in trouble.)

**What are some things you might do as a bystander to be “part of the solution” when students are bullied because of stereotypes or prejudices?** (Be an ally to a student who is being bullied. Challenge others to reconsider their biases when they make statements out loud about someone based on a label or stereotype. Examine your own tendency to label and stereotype.)

Respond to the video and review empathy.

| **6.15 Empathy:**<br>Empathy is the ability to identify, understand, and respond thoughtfully to the feelings and perspectives of others. | **In Abel’s story, no one was willing to stand up for the bullied student. It takes courage to stand up for what is right. One way of gaining courage is by enhancing your empathy skills.**

**Let’s review the definition of empathy.** Read the definition on the screen.

**When you empathize with someone else, you are more likely to see that person as an individual who has feelings, just as you do. How does seeing someone as an individual help reduce the negative effects of labeling, stereotypes, and prejudice?** (It’s harder to be unkind to someone when you realize that you are individuals who are alike in some ways. You are likely to treat someone better if you can understand what it might be like to be in their shoes.)

**Now let’s stop and think for a minute. If we reduce labeling, stereotyping, and prejudices, we can see each other as individuals. And we’ve learned that when we take time to see people as individuals, we empathize with them. Do you think this could help reduce bullying? Why?** (When we can empathize with others, we are less likely to allow bullying to happen. We can see that bullying is unfair. It is something that we wouldn’t want to happen to us.)

Discuss how more empathy leads to less bullying. | **3 minutes**
| **3 minutes** |
### Lesson 6, Part 2

**Bullying Prevention: Labels, Stereotypes, and Prejudice**

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<tr>
<td><strong>6.16</strong></td>
<td><strong>Group Exchange</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can you increase empathy?</td>
<td>Now I’d like you to get together with your groups and talk about reducing stereotyping by increasing empathy. What are some things you can do to increase empathy? You have two minutes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introduce the group exchange.

Have students do the group exchange.

Call on students at random to report.

Give students two minutes to exchange ideas.

Call on students at random to report.

Possible responses: Make an effort to get to know people as individuals. Try to imagine yourself in their shoes. Resist the urge to label, stereotype, and pre-judge others. Remember that no one deserves to be treated disrespectfully. Join or start diversity clubs at school.

| **6.17** | **Bullying: Labels, Stereotypes, and Prejudices** |
| *Understand the damaging effects.* | Today we discussed how labels, stereotypes, and prejudices can have an impact on how people treat each other. We learned that these negative beliefs and attitudes can sometimes result in bullying. |
| *Use empathy to stand up for what is right.* | We also explored ways we can counteract the negative effects of labels, stereotypes, and prejudices by enhancing empathy. |

Summarize the lesson.

Optional: “The Rules of Respect” homework

Distribute and explain “The Rules of Respect” homework.

Using Lesson Content Every Day

Remember to incorporate the Using Lesson Content Every Day suggestions into daily academic tasks.
Lesson 6
Handout 6A: Labels and Stereotypes at School

Section 1: With your partner
1. Think of all the groups and labels that are used here at school.
2. Write as many of them as you can here.

| Name: ________________________________ |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group/Label</th>
<th>Negative stereotype</th>
<th>Positive stereotype</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Section 2: On your own
1. Choose two or three of the groups or labels that you think apply to you.
2. Write one in each “Group/Label” box.
3. Write down as many common stereotypes as you can think of about that group or label, both positive and negative, whether you think they are true or not.
Lesson 6
Homework: The Rules of Respect

Name: ________________________________

What would happen if no one obeyed stop signs, traffic lights, and speed limits? Chaos! Mayhem! And, no doubt, someone would get hurt. Luckily, there are “rules of the road” in place to keep drivers safe.

Now think about how we can keep ourselves and others safe from labels, prejudice, and stereotypes. With an adult, come up with your own “Rules of Respect” that will keep you and others safe from the harm that labels, prejudice, and stereotypes can do. Make sure your rules tell others what to do, rather than what not to do.

The Rules of Respect

1. ________________________________

2. ________________________________

3. ________________________________

4. ________________________________

5. ________________________________

6. ________________________________

This homework assignment was completed on _________________.

            [date]

__________________________
[adult] signature
Name: ________________________________

Answer each question to explain what you learned. Then write a reflection to show how what you learned connects to your life.

What I Learned

List three negative effects that labeling or stereotyping can have on people.

1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________

How can having empathy help reduce bullying?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Connecting to My Life

Reflect on your own prejudices or experiences with labeling or stereotyping others. What can you do to change your own negative attitudes or behaviors?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Grade 8

Lesson 6

Additional Practice: Combating Labels and Stereotypes

Preparation
1. Students will work first with a partner and then with their group.
2. Make copies of the additional handout on the next page for each student.
3. Draw an example of a Venn diagram on the board.

Instructions for Students
1. Work in pairs and then in a group.
2. Each pair draws a Venn diagram on the back of the additional handout and follows the Venn diagram instructions.
3. Use the post-activity questions to discuss your results with the other pair in your group.
Lesson 6
Additional Handout: Building Empathy

Venn Diagram Instructions
1. Read and respond to each Venn diagram question with your partner.
2. After each response, determine whether or not you have that experience in common.
3. If you have the experience in common, write it in the overlapping section of your Venn diagram.
4. If only one person has had that experience, write it in that person’s section of the diagram.
5. For every “yes” answer, follow up with the question, “What was/is that like?”
6. Write one interesting fact about each of your group members.

Venn Diagram Questions
1. Have you ever stayed overnight in the hospital?
2. Has someone close to you died?
3. Have you ever won an award?
4. Have you ever lost a championship game or important competition?
5. Do you attend religious services?
6. Have you ever worried about the safety of a loved one?
7. Have you ever been really embarrassed?
8. Have you ever changed schools?
9. Have you ever been teased?

Post-Activity Questions
1. In your groups or pairs, did you discover you had more experiences in common or more experiences that were unique to each individual?

2. Did you learn anything you didn’t know before about the people in your group? If so, what?

3. What is an experience you have in common with one or all of your group members?
Lesson 6
Academic Integration Activities

Language Arts and Social Studies
*How can stereotypes lead to violence?*

During many historical conflicts, stereotypes were especially prevalent and problematic. Have students think about historical situations in which stereotypes led to violence and the mistreatment of innocent people (such as the Holocaust, the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, immigration quotas based on racism in the early 1900s, Japanese-American internment camps during WWII, or confiscation of Native American land by the government). Put students in groups to discuss the following questions about the selected historical situation and stereotypes: What is the difference between a positive and a negative stereotype? How do you think it feels to be labeled negatively? What effects did labels and stereotypes have in this situation? How did stereotypes “justify” the mistreatment of innocent people? How can labeling and stereotyping others negatively be prevented?

Health and Science
*How similar are we?*

Biological classification is a method used to group species according to shared physical characteristics. An estimate of the total number of living species is somewhere between 13 and 14 million. Humans are just one of these species. Although humans have some differences, they are approximately 99.5 percent genetically identical. Have students work in groups. Have each group examine biological classification. You can find various versions of biological classification on the Web and in science textbooks. Then have groups discuss the following questions: How are humans classified? (You can have each group give the kingdom, phylum, subphylum, class, and so on.) Which characteristics do all humans share? Although the differences among humans are only .5 percent, what are some of these tiny differences? How have these tiny differences led to stereotypes and prejudices? Have groups discuss their responses with the class.

Media Literacy
*What stereotypes do you see?*

Preselect and show clips from the Disney movies *Peter Pan* or *Aladdin*. The *Peter Pan* clip should include a scene with the Indians. The *Aladdin* clip should show the characters Aladdin and Jafar and include the song “Arabian Nights.” Have small groups watch the clip, then have each group discuss the following questions: What visual stereotypes do you see? What verbal stereotypes do you hear? Why are these stereotypes? Have groups come up with changes they could make to the movie that would make it not perpetuate stereotypes. Have each group explain their changes to the class.