Unit 1 Study & Learning: understanding stereotypes

Objective: to provide further practice of understanding stereotypes, this time within the area of **Study & Learning**.

The three-step strategy for developing this soft skill is:

Step 1: Be aware of different kinds of stereotypes. (Ex. A, Ex. B)

Step 2: Consider the stereotypes you hold and what they are based on. (Ex. C)

Step 3: Think about the negative impact of certain stereotypes. (Ex. D)

You may decide to highlight this strategy at the beginning of the lesson, and to conduct a short discussion to check that the students understand the skill and why it is useful. However, if you prefer to teach this lesson without discussing the underlying soft skill, this is also possible. The lesson is designed to be engaging and successful either way.

For more information about teaching life skills and ideas for highlighting the soft skill, please refer to p. xi and pp. 8–9 of the Teacher's Book.

MATERIALS:

- board and markers

Lead-in

Draw the following family tree on one side of the board: Jenny (52) married to Mike (53) with their three children below: Shauna (25), Dan (22), Mariese (20)
Now write the following roles below that in a random order:

- *secondary school physics teacher*
- *fashion and design student*
- *primary school teacher*
- *trainee preschool teacher*
- *chemical engineering student*

On the other side of the board, write the ***How to say it*** box:

HOW TO SAY IT

She/He could/may/might be … because …
She/He can't be … because …
She/He is most likely to be … because …

Put the students in pairs and ask them to match each role with a person in the family. Read the phrases in the ***How to say it*** box aloud and encourage them to use these in their discussion.
Allow a few minutes for their discussion and then elicit ideas as a class. Point out that there are no correct or incorrect answers here, but encourage students to give reasons for their answers. If the answers students give are stereotyped, e.g. *Jenny – the primary school teacher, Mike – the physics teacher, Shauna – the preschool teacher, Dan – the engineering student, and Mariese – the fashion and design student*, encourage them to say what they based their choices on. Ask them to recall what stereotypes are (*ideas we have, or assumptions we make, about what a person or group of people is like*). Explain to the students that they are going to look at the topic of understanding stereotypes in the context of **Study & Learning**.

A

- Erase the board and write the following question: *In what different ways can you categorise students? Think of as many as possible. Think about academic groups and social groups.*
- Put the students in pairs and read the question aloud. Give them about five minutes to discuss the question and make notes. If you wish, elicit one or two ideas to get them started, e.g. *sporty students.*
- When they finish, elicit some ideas and build up a comprehensive list on the board, e.g. *sporty students, academic students, students grouped by subject (e.g. science and engineering students), older (mature) students, students who play music, students who do theatre, students who have positions of responsibility*, etc.

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B

- Now ask the students to work in small groups. Refer them to the different categories on the board and give them about ten minutes to discuss specific stereotypes about each group. Discuss two or three ideas first as a class, e.g.:
  - *People often assume that science and engineering students are male.*
  - *Students who take subjects such as art and home economics are seen as less academic than those who study sciences.*
  - *People assume that mature students work harder than younger students.*
- When they finish, elicit ideas as a class. Write some of the more common stereotypes on the board.

C

- Encourage students to think about why they have these stereotypes and what they are based on: are they based on their own experience or the experience of friends, or is it because they are portrayed that way in the media?
- Ask them if they think any of the stereotypes are true and, if so, invite them to give reasons why.

D

- Ask the students to stay in the same groups, and refer them to the stereotypes that they identified in Ex. B. Encourage them to identify the potential negative impact of each stereotype, e.g.:
  - *People assume that science and engineering students tend to be male – this can put girls off studying the subject.*
  - *Students who take subjects such as art and home economics are seen as less academic – this could mean that they are overlooked for academic opportunities, such as scholarships and awards.*
  - *People assume mature students work harder than younger students – this could mean that mature students don't get invited to as many social events as younger students.*
- Give the groups about five minutes to discuss their ideas and then have a class feedback session.

Reflect

- Erase the board and write the following questions: *Think about yourself as a student. What stereotypes do you think other students and teachers might have about you? Do you think it is true?*
- Give students a couple of minutes to reflect individually before putting them in pairs to share their thoughts.
- Then invite students to share their ideas with the rest of the class. Encourage them to think about how it makes them feel when someone stereotypes them.

EXTRA: HOMEWORK

Ask the students to make a note of any instances of stereotyping that they see portrayed in the media (TV, radio, internet, newspapers) over one week. These could include cultural, gender, age or any kind of stereotyping. Ask them to bring their findings to the next class to share with other students.

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