



Activities for your school or youth group to help get young people thinking about diversity

Activity one:

Everyone takes a different character description.

Get into character by reading the description.

Stand in a line.

Youth worker will read out questions and if it fits you, you take a step forward. By the end of the question the person closest to the end (success) wins. Then read out your description to everyone else and compare your privileges to others.

Descriptions:

1. You are a white straight man. Your parents are still together, and both have careers. You live in a big house. Your Dad brings you to work and when you are 16 you get to do job experience at his doctors' surgery. You have every book needed to do well in your studies. You holiday every year. Nobody has ever bullied you. Nobody has ever been racist towards you.
2. You are a straight white girl. Your parents are still together, and both have careers. You live in a big house. Your Dad brings you to work and when you are 16 you get to do job experience at his doctors' surgery. You have every book needed to do well in your studies. You holiday every year. Nobody has ever bullied you. Nobody has ever been racist towards you. When you went to choose science and engineering in college you were told you might be better suited to hair and beauty.
3. You are a straight, white man. Your parents are divorced. Your Mum is fighting addiction and poor mental health. You live with siblings in a small flat. You want to go to college. You do not have your own bedroom; you don't have a desk. Your neighbour is loud at night when you try to do schoolwork. When you turn 16 you must earn money quickly to support your younger siblings.
4. You are a black, straight man. Your parents are still together, and both have careers. You live in a big house. Your Dad supports your dreams and education and buys you books to materials to support your learning. When you were 14 walking to school you the police stopped and searched you because you fit the description of a suspect. When you arrived at school, they punished your lateness. When you dress in sports clothes your white friends think you look scary. Your new neighbour asked you "Where are you really from?"





5. You are new to Leigh. Your parents had to move here because of unrest in your home country. Your parents speak a little English. You learned English at primary school. Your parents work hard, very long hours. There is no extra money. When school, doctors, or public meetings happen you need to translate meetings for your parents. Some children at your school do not want to be your friend because they don't understand your religion.
6. You are a young black woman. People always want to touch your hair. Your school does not allow cultural hair styles that suit your hair type. When you achieved a top grade in your exam, people assumed you cheated. A girl at school was being mean to you, and when you defended yourself, they told you to go back to where you came from. A boy wanted to date you because he had never dated a black girl before and wanted to see if it would be different than dating white girls.
7. You are a young black person. You have dreams of becoming a police officer. So far you have been stopped by the police 7 times, all because you look like someone else. In school a group of lads attacked you and were using racial slurs. You reported it to the police. It did not get taken any further and the lads are still racist towards you. You begin to dislike the police but when you complain about racism, people tell you it is not racist.
8. You are a young black boy. You fled a war zone and came to England alone. You must be age accessed because nobody believes you are 14. You have limited friends. You are given a foster carer, but nobody speaks your language. You must visit the home office to get legal status. You have no national insurance and are facing deportation. You do not know where your parents are, and they might be dead because of air strikes.
9. You are a white teenager. You are not sure what you want to do with your life. Your parents put you in extra curricula activity. You attend events and groups that cost money, but your parents have the money to pay for it. When you fell behind in maths your Mum and Dad paid for a tutor. When you are 16 you get given money to go to college and your parents buy your entire reading list. When you studied Spanish for your GCSE's, your parents took you to Spain. When you did a project about Egypt, your parents took you to Egypt. You are not sure what you want to do in life, but your Dad will give you a job in his business until you decide.
10. You are a young trans black woman. Your school and parents do not support your transition. You always get called He pronouns, even though you have changed your name and pronouns to She. You have faced transphobia and racism in school. Your parents kick you out for bringing shame on the family and you now live in a hostel. You do not live in an environment to concentrate on your education. You are falling behind in subjects you used to be good at and you're still waiting on referrals to mental health services.





Take a step forward if:













1. You are a majority ethnicity
2. You have never faced racism
3. You have never faced sexism
4. You have money for extra curricula activity
5. You have a job lined up with your family
6. The police have always been there to protect you
7. You have the impression the police will protect you
8. You speak English
9. Your family speaks English
10. Your parents will support you financially
11. You have automatic legal rights in the UK/ Not a refugee.
12. There is no pressure when choosing subjects for education
13. You want to remain the sex you were assigned at birth
14. You have options of education after school and money to do so
15. Both your parents have jobs
16. You can go to college and don't have money worries
17. Nobody is bothered about your religion or beliefs
18. Nobody has ever tried to touch your hair
19. Nobody has ever told you to go back to your own country
20. You have everything you need to do well. Environment, connection, role models and networks.

Discuss: who has reached the other side of the room first and why?





Activity 2: Who are these people and what did they do? Some of these people may be famous for more than one thing.

		
Who: What:	Who: What:	Who: What:
		
Who: What:	Who: What:	Who: What:
		
Who: What:	Who: What:	Who: What:
		
Who: What:	Who: What:	Who: What:





Answers to activity 2:












1. Stormzy; rapper and activist for Grenfell. Set up a black student programme for Cambridge.
2. Benjamin Zephaniah; Poet famed for inclusion and integration of culture.
3. Lemn Sissay; Poet and writer known for speaking about institutional racism and abuse in care.
4. Martha P Johnson; American trans rights activist. Threw the first brick at Stonewall. We wouldn't have LGBTQ Rights in the world without her bravery and sacrifice.
5. Mary Seacole; Nurse who wasn't allowed an education so set up as a business. Saved lives during and after the Crimean war.
6. Queen Charlotte; first mixed-race royalty. Her race has been removed from history. She was Portuguese with African heritage. She was often painted to have pale skin but history has proven she has brown mixed skin. (Married George III)
7. Marcus Rashford; footballer and children's Rights campaigner. He got the government to turn on stopping free schools meals and has began a social media campaign "It's never the child's fault."
8. Leslie Thomas QC; human and civil rights lawyer in the U.K. Leading on Justice for Grenfall.
9. Akyaaba Addai Sebo; Founder of Black History Month – is now retired
10. Nicola Adams MBE; first woman to win a Boxing Gold Medal for the UK. She is an advocate for the black and LGBTQ+ community.
11. Olive Morris; Activist and feminist. Fought and campaigned against police brutality. She fought for squatters Rights in Brixton when black people weren't allowed access to housing or safe spaces.
12. Dianne Abbott; First Black woman MP (for Hackney.) She had successfully campaigned for Black students to attend Cambridge and then graduated there. She famously said; "You can not be, what you can not see."





Activity 3: Where are these foods from?

Due to years of trade and colonisation many people don't realise the food we eat didn't originate from the country it is known in - or in fact the food can be sourced from a new country and people assume that is where it originated.

			
<p>1 Coffee Beans: A. Brazil B. Ethiopia C. Netherlands D. Mexico</p>	<p>2 Kola Nut (For Cola/Coke): A. South America B. West Africa C. North America D. Eastern Europe</p>	<p>3 Black Tea: A. England B. India C. Japan D. China</p>	<p>4 Mangoes: A. India B. Spain C. Jamaica D. Florida</p>
			
<p>5 Rum (18+): A. Ireland B. Cuba C. Barbados D. Fiji</p>	<p>6 Potatoes: A. England B. Ireland C. Peru D. Spain</p>	<p>7 Chicken as a meat: A. Spain B. England C. America D. India</p>	<p>8 Bacon: A. China B. America C. England D. Kenya</p>
			
<p>9 Broccoli: (Historic names because broccoli is old) A. Asia Minor (aka Turkey) B. Rhodesia (aka Zimbabwe) C. Prussia (aka Germany/Belgium) D. Czechia (aka Sri Lanka)</p>	<p>10 Rice and peas (kidney beans): A. Jamaica B. Ghana C. America D. Netherlands</p>	<p>11 Curried Goat: A. West Indies B. South America C. South East Asia D. North Australia</p>	<p>12 Baked Beans: A. English B. Native America C. India D. Scottish</p>

Bonus Question: In what religion was the "British" classic Fish and Chip a popular dish?

- A. Christian
- B. Muslim
- C. Jewish
- D. Hindu





Answers to activity 3:

1. B. Ethiopia
2. B. West Africa
3. D. China
4. A. India
5. C. Barbados
6. C. Peru.
7. D. India.
8. A. China.
9. A. Asia Minor aka Turkey
10. B. Ghana
11. C. South East Asia
12. B. Native America

Bonus - Jewish. An immigrant opened the first ever fish and chip shop in 1860. It came to the North (Mossley) in 1863.





Activity 4: Microaggressions.

(This activity is better suited to high school aged young people)

A microaggression is a subtle, and often indirect, way of making people feel uncomfortable and overlooked. Sometimes people show microaggression without realising it, or it can be established within an institution, such as a rule that's "always been around" which makes certain situations inaccessible for minority people.

Here are some microaggressions people have faced: can you discuss why people have called them out as something that needs to be changed?

1. **"You didn't sound black on the phone."**
2. **"Can I touch your afro? Is it real?"**
3. **"You speak really good English."**
4. **"You don't act gay"**
5. **"I can't pronounce that, can we shorten your name?"**
6. **"If you used to be a man, have you had THE op?"**
7. **"Oh, don't worry about her, she is always crazy. It's probably the time of the month."**
8. **"Where are your really from?"**
9. **"The baby has two mums. Who is the dad then?"**
10. **"If you are mixed race, what are you mixed with? I assumed...."**

Prompts for youth workers:

1. What does a black person look and sound like? What accent are they assuming the person has?
2. Ask people with straight hair, how many times they have been asked these questions. Afro is a hair style not a hair type. Black hair can be coily (Tight curls, high volume), curly or wavy. Coily hair may not be styled to an afro but many people call coily hair an afro.
3. Are we to assume all Black people aren't from England? Do white immigrants get asked that question?
4. What do gay people act like? Are there stereotypes of gay people?
5. Use the spelling in Starbucks as an example. If people can learn big or long words in English, we can learn to pronounce names from other cultures.
6. There is more than one operation and we don't ask about other people's private parts.
7. This is misogynistic. Women can express emotions regardless of cycle. Women can be firm, strong, and emotive.
8. Again, this assumes Black people aren't born here.
9. Most LGB couples use a donor. Women specifically raise their children with 2 mums. The donor can be anonymous or a friend but is still the donor and not the dad.
10. People of mixed origin aren't just black and white; heritage is diverse due to colonisation. People should not assume they know due to skin tone or colour.

Can you think of any institutional microaggressions that been neglectful to minorities?

Prompts for youth workers: Gendered toilets. Stop and Search. Security following BAME people in shops. Lack of black and brown role models, in positions of leadership and authority. Black and brown representation in media. Overwhelmingly low numbers of BAME people attending and graduating top universities, but little change to support accessibility.





Activity 5: Vote with your feet

Set the room to be agree/yes on one side and disagree/no on the other (I don't know or maybe can be the middle).

Read the statements out and let the young people decide what they believe and ask randomly why they think that. Encourage free thinking rather than conforming to where friends go.

1. **The U.K has racism within it.**
2. **Black Lives Matters is a justified campaign.**
3. **White privilege exists and white people have a choice to use it for good.**
4. **Class privilege exists and is intersectional with race privilege.**
5. **If I were to witness racism, I would call it out and report to trusted adults.**
6. **I am aware of the stereotypes around race and ethnicity.**
7. **Racism in the U.K is different to racism in the USA.**
8. **Police brutality is only in America.**
9. **I would like to see more black history and BAME figures in history on the curriculum**
10. **Adding culture, race, colonisation, and heritage to the curriculum is important to our learning.**
11. **The more I learn about race the less likely I am to be racist or prejudice.**
12. **I understand what "white washing" is and believe it to have happened (someone influential from history who was really Black being portrayed as White).**
13. **Politicians and people in power aren't allowed to be racist.**
14. **There are enough diverse people in our leadership.**
15. **Women of colour are treated fairly in the media, public eye and leadership.**














Activity 6: Fashion/ pop culture

Did you know that fashion trends are a cycle and often repeat themselves a few decades later? Here are some fashion trends that we still see today, can you guess if they originated in black culture? Black culture doesn't always stem from a country of black origin; due to colonisation, slavery and immigration black culture has travelled across the world.

True = black origin and subculture

False = other culture or subculture

		
<p>1. Hoop Earrings: True False</p>	<p>2. The Mullet True False</p>	<p>3. Logomania True False</p>
		
<p>4. Heavy Eyeliner True False</p>	<p>5. Snap backs True False</p>	<p>6. Acrylic Nails True False</p>
		
<p>7. Trainer Culture True False</p>	<p>8. Doc Martens True False</p>	<p>9. Braids True False</p>



**Answers for Activity 6**

1. **Hoop Earrings – True.** Hoop earrings date back to women in ancient times but became a fashion statement in the 1960's during the Black Power Movement.
2. **Mullet – False.** The mullet became a trend in the 1970s when David Bowie and Paul McCartney had them cut. But the term “mullet” only arrived in 1995 when the Beastie boys (apparently) used the term.
3. **Logomania aka monogram – True.** The original design was Louis Vuitton which was for suitcases and bag. But in the 1960's a man called Dapper Dan (in Harlem) started to print brand names on street wear and it was picked up by hip hop artists.
4. **Heavy eyeliner – False.** Heavy eyeliner as a fashion trend has been around since new romance and punk subcultures but the use of black around the eye originated from ancient Egyptians. It was believed it was to stop the reflection of the sun burning their eyes when walking distances.
5. **Snap Backs – True.** Caps have been around in hot countries since 1900s, especially in sport and farming. But the style we see today, as a snap back rather than peak cap, really took off in the 1980's when rappers like Tupac and Will Smith wore them on TV.
6. **Acrylic Nails - True.** The style has been documented as far back as the Egyptians but the nails we still see today started to appear on the salon scene in the 1970s and became associated with black 70s Disco stars such as Diana Ross and Donna Summers who wore colourful square tipped nail designs.
7. **Trainer Culture – True.** Trainer culture saw its beginnings in 1970s America, as trainers made the transition from sportswear to a form of cultural expression. It blew up in the 1980s due to the rise of hip-hop culture. “Jordans” arrived in 1985. Predominantly worn by kids of colour, the explosion of signature basketball trainers birthed a generation of trainer collectors, but now it's a staple footwear for all.
8. **Doc Martens – False.** Originally Klaus Märtens made the boot during and after WW2 as he found military boots uncomfortable for the Alps. They were later picked up by the skin head subculture in the 1960's. Original skin heads were a mix of all races, as it was an antifascist, working class, movement that took inspiration from Caribbean heritage and soft punk music. (Ska and Reggae music was often listened to by skin heads)
9. **Braids – True.** Braid and corn/canerows are commonly used to manage coily or thick hair – however there is a debate currently of people with straight hair having braids. Is it appreciation or appropriation? This is because original the row pattern were used to determine tribe, (class) status, religion, marital status and wealth. During slavery, stolen people used braid patterns to notify other stolen people where they were from. For women they date back to 3000BC and for men the 19th century, particularly Ethiopia. In the 1960s and 70s row became popular due to the Black Power Movement, they were worn to appreciate heritage and reject white beauty standards. Side note – In America they call braids corn rows as they resemble a corn field whereas in the Caribbean they are called cane rows as they resemble their crops of sugar cane.

