



RFCDC – LEARNING ACTIVITIES BASED ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Breaking down Covid-19 stereotypes!

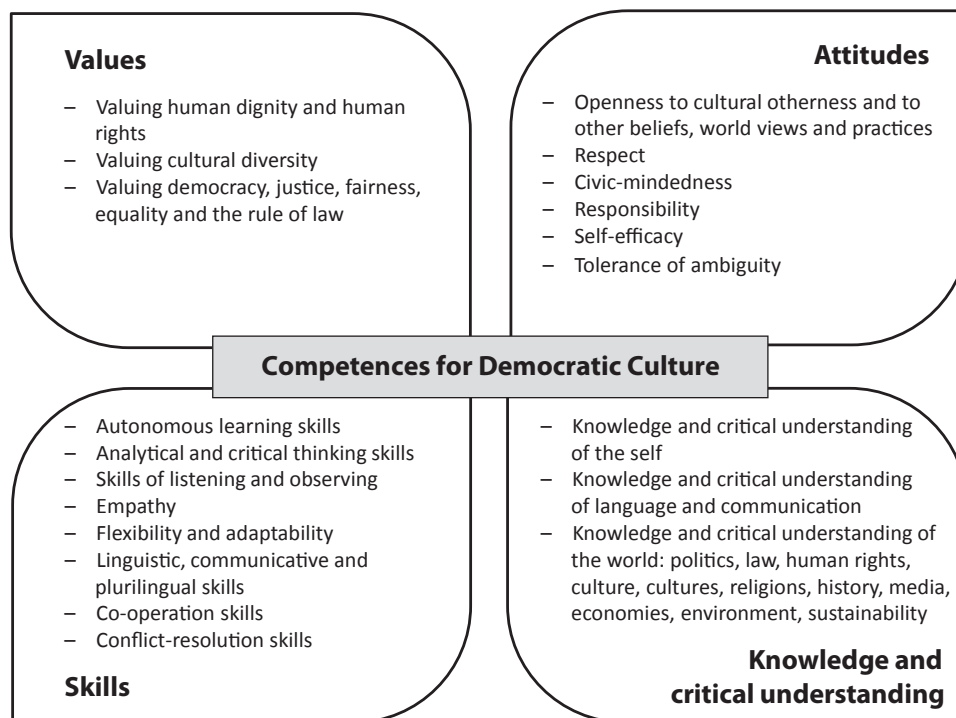
Target group

■ Learners in primary and secondary schools

Rationale

■ The Covid-19 pandemic has affected people’s stereotypes and prejudices about individuals living in other countries or immigrants (e.g., Chinese, Americans, Italians, etc.). Prejudices and stereotypes have increased and sometimes degenerated into racist and violent episodes. In this activity, learners engage in brainstorming followed by creative tasks to explore their own stereotypes and prejudices in a collaborative manner. This activity can help learners to develop an awareness of their own and other people’s unconscious biases, enabling them to address them.

The RFCDC Competences



Competences promoted by the activity

■ Valuing cultural diversity; Openness to cultural otherness; Empathy; Knowledge and critical understanding of the world: politics, human rights, culture, cultures and religions.

Learning outcomes

■ Completing this activity will help learners to:

- ▶ Explain the dangers of generalising from individual behaviours to an entire culture
- ▶ Recognise that the cultural diversity within a society should be positively valued and appreciated
- ▶ Pursue their curiosity about other beliefs and interpretations and other cultural orientations and affiliations
- ▶ Understand other people better by imagining how things look from their perspective

Description of activity

1. After showing a video related to prejudice and stereotypes during the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, briefly explain the meaning of these concepts and stimulate a brief discussion about what the learners have seen and about their own experience with discrimination and prejudice, perhaps using questions such as:

- ▶ Have you ever witnessed these kind of discrimination episodes during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- ▶ Do you know people from other countries/culture/ethnicities who have been discriminated against because of their origin during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- ▶ Who do you think has suffered the most because of discrimination episodes during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Summarise the ideas that emerge on a blackboard or take notes in an online wall.

2. Lead the group through a brainstorming session. Ask the learners to identify groups of people from other countries/cultures/ethnicities who have been targets of stereotypes during the Covid-19 pandemic. For each group, identify and describe two specific clichés that have typically emerged or been emphasised during this period (for example concerning Chinese, Americans, Italians, etc.). Give examples, also taking them from the video that has been shown. Ask the group to offer a description of the personal and social characteristics of the people who belong to the chosen groups and that may have played a role in creating the stereotypes during the pandemic. Write the clichés on a flip chart or black board or in an online wall.

3. Summarize all the clichés that have emerged and ask the learners to imagine or pretend to be a member of one of the groups and to reflect on the harmful and damaging effects of stereotypes on their dignity, rights and well-being. In order to help learners in this perspective-taking task, it is possible to ask questions such as:

- ▶ How would you feel if someone insulted you/would not talk to you/avoided having anything to do with you, simply because of the country you come from/the group you belong to/your religion?
- ▶ How would these stereotypes affect your well-being?

4. Ask the whole group to reflect on the clichés that have emerged and to find as many reasons as they can for breaking down each one of them. For example:

- ▶ Some Chinese had nothing at all to do with spreading Covid-19.
- ▶ Some Italians were really compliant with government rules to avoid the spread of the virus.

Write the information and the breaking-down ideas on a flip chart or black board, or in an online wall.

5. Divide the group into small groups. Each small group should draw a cartoon strip against the discrimination, stereotypes and prejudices towards people from other countries/cultures/ethnicities during Covid-19 that have been discussed, using an online tool cartoon-strips creator. Younger learners may need to be guided in the management of the online tool. In case of difficulties, it is possible to draw a single poster instead of a cartoon-strip, perhaps using an online poster creator.

6. Create an exhibition of the cartoons or posters.

Materials or resources required

- ▶ Videos related to racism and prejudice during Covid-19 pandemic are required. They can be taken from YouTube materials. Search for videos in your own language or with suitable subtitles, which are similar to the following examples:
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_3Nol8Fq6A
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IULceASXv88>
- ▶ A tool for creating comic strips, such as:
 - <https://www.makebeliefscomix.com>
 - <https://www.powtoon.com>

- ▶ If the activity is implemented online, teachers might take notes in online walls, such as:
 - <https://www.pearltrees.com>
- ▶ For younger learners an online poster creator such as Canva or a common online blackboard such as Jamboard:
 - <https://www.canva.com>
 - <https://jamboard.google.com>

Reflection on the activity and the learning outcomes that have been achieved

■ Hold a debriefing session based on the following questions:

- ▶ How do you think stereotypes have impacted your relationships with others during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- ▶ Has anything changed in your thinking after hearing about the ideas from others concerning stereotypes during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- ▶ Did you learn anything about yourself?

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