

Session 2

Crossing Divides

Key learning

Pupils explore their own assumptions and prejudices that may lead to division.



Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- A copy of *The Rough-Face Girl* by Rafe Martin and David Shannon

Story

Be Curious (Community)



Children's literature

Begin by looking at the front cover of *The Rough-Face Girl*.

Notes



Engage in discussion/book talk with your pupils. Collect whole class responses in a quadrant, scribing the most poignant responses.

Ask:

- What do you see?
- What do you think?
- What do you know?
- What do you want to know?

Explore vocabulary

Introduce the words below to your pupils before you begin. Talking about them together will support their understanding and help draw out important themes as the sessions progress.

- **uniform**
- **conform** (prefixes "co/com/con" mean 'together/with')
- **reform** (prefix "re-" means 'again')

difference.

Ask your pupils to look at the morphology of these words. For instance, 'uni' means 'one' and 'form' means 'shape' or 'likeness'. Hence, the word uniform means 'one shape' or 'one likeness'.

- Whilst there are obvious benefits to uniformity, what do you think are drawbacks?
- What then do the other two words mean? How do you think these words will play out in the following texts?

Discussion

Have children work in small groups of two or three, with a particular emphasis on 'talk partners' and structured conversations. Encourage children to discuss and respond to some of the following questions:

- What do we know about the girl on the front cover? Why do you think this?
- Is she covering or hiding her face? Why is she doing this?
- Why does she have one eye exposed?
- What does she have wrapped around her hands and arms? Why?
- Do you think she sees herself as beautiful?



Children's literature

Read the story all the way through. Highlight that the opening pages of *The Rough-Face Girl* show a 'community' of wigwams – this tells us a little about the cultural influence that defines the image and perception that our main character may have of herself.

For many people, ideas of beauty are shaped by what their culture or society says is beautiful.

- Is that the best way to decide what beauty is?
- If not, how should we decide? Who gets to decide what is beautiful?

Consider creating a shared mind map with your pupils to explore the different influences that shape how people define and think about beauty.

Ask:

- What did others in the story say about the Rough-Face Girl?

Discussion

After reading through the text, ask your class to list all of the positive affirmations and negative words spoken about the Rough-Face Girl.

Suggested questions:

- Does it matter what others say about our beauty?
- Was she beautiful before she was healed?
- What defined her beauty? What was referred to specifically as being beautiful? (*hair and heart*)
- Who defined her beauty?
- How did the sister of The Invisible Being define beauty? (*internally – the heart*)
- How did the sisters of the Rough-Face Girl define beauty? (*externally – outward appearance; clothes, face, hair etc*)

Explain that many important voices have encouraged us to look beyond what people look like on the outside and instead see who they are on the inside.

Examples:

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character."

Martin Luther King Jr's 'I Have a Dream' speech

When God was selecting a new king, he didn't choose based on the outward appearance. 'But the Lord told Samuel, "Don't look at his appearance or how tall he is, because I have rejected him. God does not see as humans see. Humans look at outward appearances, but the Lord looks into the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7 (NIV simplified)

Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)

Ask:

- What other influences are there?

Ask your class to list answers to this question, being sure to highlight social media as a big influence today.



Film

Show your class one of the two film options below

Option 1:

Dove Beauty

For many young people today, social media defines beauty and also gives us the power to 'create' what we believe is beautiful.

Watch the Dove Beauty commercial and discuss the following questions:

- If you could speak to her, what would you say?
- Why did she think she needed to do that?
- Why might she have wanted to do that?
- How do you think she looked at the end?

Option 2:

Barbie

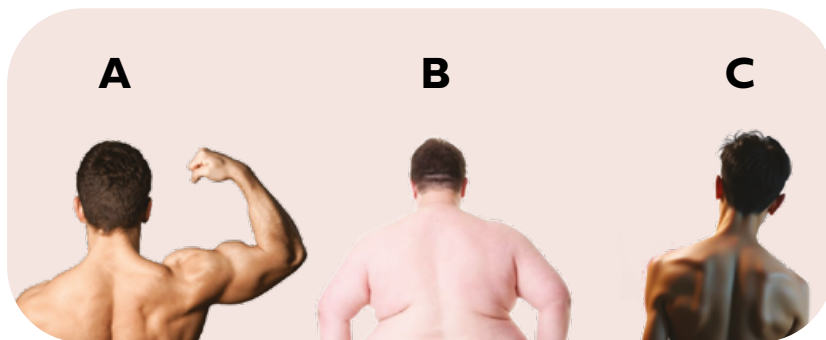
This video shows young girls envisioning themselves in various professional roles, highlighting the importance of dreaming big and believing in their potential. This advert can help children understand that beauty comes from confidence and self-belief.

Watch the Barbie commercial and discuss the following questions:

- If you could speak to those young girls, what would you say?
- How do you think it felt for them to take on those roles?
- Why might they have wanted to do that?
- Do you consider their confidence and courage to be a form of beauty?

Discussion

Following your choice of option 1 or 2, pose the key question: What does it mean to be 'manly?'



Show children the series of images on the slides.
Again, ensure the focus of children is not solely on the external attributes.

Take a class vote on which image is the 'manliest'.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- Which image do you think is most 'manly'?
- Does the size of your muscles define who you are?
- What is similar/different about the people on the screen?
- Do our similarities and differences change how beautiful each of us is?



Bible passage

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

Sometimes, the world tells us to judge people by what they look like, what they wear, or how popular they are. But God wants us to think differently. He wants us to look deeper, to notice people's kindness, their feelings, and the good things inside them.

For example, imagine a present that seems plain on the outside but when you look inside, you see that it's full of amazing surprises. People are like that too! If we only look at the outside, we might miss the special things God has put inside each person.

When we let God help us change the way we think, we start seeing people the way he sees them – full of value, full of love, and full of potential.



Reflection

Notes

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Consider this quote:

"Comparison is the thief of joy."

Theodore Roosevelt

It can be easy to fall into the trap of measuring ourselves by the standards set by others. Our friends, family, culture and even religion may dictate to us what is beautiful. The constant pull of society today is to get us to compare ourselves to others and this can strip us of our joy and gratitude. Take a moment to reflect on all that makes you who you are.



Prayer

Dear God,

Sometimes we wish to be just like everyone else. We see others and think that being the same would make life easier.

Help us to understand that you made each of us unique and special for a reason. Remind us that our differences are what make us beautiful and important.

Give us the courage to embrace who we are, to celebrate our talents, and to appreciate our own special gifts.

Help us to see that it's okay to be different, and that being ourselves is the best way to be.

Thank you for loving each of us exactly as we are.

Amen.



Song

Finish the session by playing the song *This is Our World* by iSingPop.



End of session 2

difference.