

# Everyone's Different

With this topic sheet, we are asking children to relate the experiences of others with their own experiences, thereby changing a culture of 'them and us' and increasing empathy and understanding across the school culture. The key outcome is for pupils to understand that we are all different and all equal, everyone is unique and valued, thus breaking down barriers of stereotypes and assumptions about each other.



## Fitting In

"So school was for me about hiding the fact you are a disabled person and trying to fit in and be normal - because I had a very negative image of myself and disabled people because of being segregated"

**Simone** (born 1969) <http://bit.ly/1cGqBHS>

## Feeling Different

"I don't think that I considered myself much different to most of the other kids around me until, probably later on, around the ages of seven or eight was probably the first time that I started to feel a little bit different from other kids and being singled out for support of different sorts, you know physiotherapy, or assistance with going to the loo"

**David** (born 1970) <http://bit.ly/14YKoAp>

"I don't understand that, I could never understand why people used to take the mickey out of me. I mean I didn't realise I walked different to them. You don't not when you're a kid do you?"

**Esther** (born 1909) <http://bit.ly/19iN00c>

"The only thing I realised being different was people would always talk about going here and there, 'Let's go to the cinema, let's go to this club', and I was never really included in those discussions or invited. That was tough, that was really, really tough"

**Joanne** (born 1984) <http://bit.ly/1acy4xa>

"I remember some teasing in the playground at my primary school and maybe that was when I really began to think I was negatively different in some way"

**Alice** (born 1957) <http://bit.ly/1aTSpu4>

## Standing Out

"There were fifty of us kids, we all had to have our Sunday best on, our Sunday school uniform, blue and white cap, grey jacket, grey shorts, no long-uns. So we all had our callipers showing and all that sort of thing. And there were fifty of us kids, can you imagine? Fifty of us kids walking through the town in a long crocodile. Thank God they didn't make us hold hands, we must have looked a sight. Kids walking along, clanking and squeaking with our callipers and limping and dragging. And then we went into the church and everybody turned around and looked at you, 'cause we had our own block of seats in St Nicholas's church in Sevenoaks. And then of course we had to walk back and by the time we got back we were all - we didn't know it, but we were all traumatised, and that happened every Sunday, summer and winter"

**Ronald** (born 1929) <http://bit.ly/17VwoKf>

## Identity

"My disability identity is my second identity, you know, my main identity is my beliefs and my values and my opinions"

**Miro** (born 1989) <http://bit.ly/17dmvF1>

"I remember for example we had a uniform and of course I'd never worn a uniform. I couldn't quite bear to be dressed just the same as everybody else, so I wore it except that I put tinsel in my shoes"

**Micheline** (born 1950) <http://bit.ly/1559AWe>

"I wasn't in the in crowd, I was in the out crowd"

**Donna** (born 1983) <http://bit.ly/15DJTYh>

# Everyone's Different

## Discussion and Activity Ideas

### Are We All the Same?

Ask the class to get into pairs. Explain that we all have things in common and things that make us different from each other. Ask them:

'Find four things that are the same about you and your partner and four things that are different about you'. Then ask the pairs to feedback to the class one thing they found out about their respective partner.

**Art activity:** The same pairs draw a portrait together using speech bubbles to describe their similarities and differences: 'We are the same because..', 'We are different because..'

### Identity

#### 'Come into the Circle' Game -

Arrange the class in a circle. Call out: 'Come into the circle if you have brown hair' (for example). All children with brown hair come into the middle. Repeat process with other statements: 'Come into the circle if you like football', 'if you have a brother', 'if you speak another language', etc. The children will find it is rarely, if ever just one person in the middle. End by calling all children into the middle, i.e. 'Come into the circle if you're in Year 4'.

**Class discussion:** Explain that these are things that make up our identities. Ask the children: 'How did it feel to be in the circle?' 'How did it feel to be not in it?' 'Were you afraid you may be the only one?' 'What would it (or did it) feel like to be the 'only one'?'

**Writing Activity:** This discussion could lead to an activity to write a poem or a short story called 'The Only One'.

**Art activity:** Have a short class discussion about identity. Ask individuals questions such as: 'How would you describe yourself? What is important to you? What should people know about you? How would your best friend describe you? How would your teacher describe you?' Then ask the children to design a badge, or coat of arms to illustrate their identity.

### Standing Out

**Class discussion:** Play Ronald's clip. Ask the children:

'Why do you think Ron felt he and his classmates were traumatised by walking to church each week?'

'What do you think they might have been feeling?' 'Do you think people's attitudes have changed since Ron went to school in the 1940s? How do you think his walk to school might be different today?'

### Feeling Different

**Writing Activity:** Play a selection of the audio clips to the class. Ask the children to share examples of when they may have felt different. After this discussion, ask the children to write an imagined diary entry of a school day from one of the people they have just heard, or from another made up person. This will include how the person felt that day. Choose a selection of children to read theirs out to the class, Then in a class discussion, ask the children for ideas about what might make a difference to that person's day. **Teachers please be aware:** This can be an emotional activity for some children.

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### Other Resources

'Who Am I' and  
'Challenging  
Stereotypes' -  
available from EHRC.  
<http://bit.ly/1em3xQn>

### Curriculum Areas

PSHE  
Citizenship  
History  
Literacy  
Art  
SEAL Outcomes