

## Discrimination

### Let's get started...

When you look at people, what is the first thing you notice? Do you think about what language they speak? Do you think about where they come from? Do you think about their religion? Do you think about their clothes?

### Background:

Discrimination means treating people differently because of their race, religion, gender, or some other category. Some discrimination is legal, and some discrimination is illegal. For example, if you are a man, you cannot use a women's bathroom. This is legal discrimination. But it is illegal discrimination if a bus driver says you cannot ride the bus because you do not speak English. Today, when we talk about discrimination, we usually talk about illegal discrimination.



**In pairs for 5 minutes, ask and answer these questions:**

Have you ever experienced discrimination?  
Where did it happen and when did it happen?  
What happened?  
Were you the only person who was being discriminated against?  
How did you feel?

**Share your partner's answers with the group.**

### Discussion Questions:

Think about different kinds of discrimination. Talk about racial, religious, sexual orientation, height-related, and age-related discrimination. When do these kinds of discrimination happen? What are other kinds of discrimination?

Do you think that people discriminate against non-native English speakers?  
When or where do you think that happens? Has it happened to you?

What can you do if your employer is discriminating against you?

Does discrimination happen often in your native country? What are the most common kinds of discrimination in your country?

What kinds of discrimination are legal or illegal in your native country? Are there laws about discrimination in your native country?

Talk about American discrimination laws with your teacher. What do you think about them?

Which statement do you agree with?

- Discrimination is never okay.
- Discrimination is sometimes okay.
- Discrimination is always okay.

Have you ever watched a movie or read a book about discrimination? Talk about the story. What did you think while you were watching the movie or reading the book?

What are some examples of discrimination from history? Talk about the history of discrimination from your native country and America.

Have you seen any examples of discrimination in the news or media?

What is gender discrimination like in your native country? Have gender roles changed in recent history? What do you think about gender roles in America?

Do you think racially diverse countries have more discrimination than non-racially diverse countries?

Is there any height-related discrimination in your native country? Are tall or short people discriminated against?

Reverse discrimination is when people who are usually NOT discriminated against experience discrimination. What do you think about reverse discrimination?

Do you think it is okay for a public school to forbid students to wear religious clothing (for example, a head covering)? In your native country, can students wear religious clothing?

Do you think pregnant women experience discrimination? In your native country, do pregnant women experience discrimination?

Do people with disabilities experience discrimination in America or your native country? Should it be the government's responsibility to make sure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against?

If you saw someone discriminating against someone else, what would you do?

**New words and Idioms:**

discrimination, race, religion, gender, category, legal, illegal, sexual orientation, height-related, age-related, employer, statement, media, diverse, reverse discrimination, forbid, pregnant, disability