

## Lesson Plan 5 The Letter I: 'I' is for 'I' Statements

Resources

**Safe Space: Looking at 'I Statements' as an aspect of Safe Space**

PowerPoint,  
slide 1

This lesson is about encouraging your students to dismantle unhelpful modes of engaging in dialogue, i.e. using generalisations to create inaccurate representations of the topic at hand. This lesson will see you steer students to more ultimately helpful ways of expressing their opinions and describing aspects of their identities and lifestyles. In this way they will prevent the perpetuation of stereotypes and misconceptions.



## Learning Objectives

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- To understand that generalisations can cause misconceptions
- To practice using 'I statements' in everyday speech

## KS3 Curriculum Mapping

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- PSHE: Stereotyping, respect, behaviors and emotions
- RE: enquiry, application, communities, diversity, belief and practices
- Citizenship: crossover with PSHE and RE (respect and communities), identity, social and moral dilemmas

## Preparation

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- Safe Space film (included)
- Generalisations statements printed × 15 (included)
- Generalisations vs I Statements printed × 15 (included)
- Generalisations films × 2 downloaded (included)

## Running time

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50 mins

**Recap from the Letter D lesson** / 5 mins

Slide 2 Revisit your Safe Space class agreement

Slide 3 Watch the Safe Space film if needed

Slide 4 **Topic Introduction Generalisations vs I Statements** / 10 mins

Example  
generalisations  
to be handed  
out to students

**Objective** To recognise the use of generalisations in our own speech.

Clear space for students to move around:

Slide 5 **Activity Clumps Icebreaker**

Instruct the students that they have 10 seconds (for each statement) to get into clumps of people who:

- Were born in the same month as them
- Same shoe size
- Share the same favourite colour as them
- Have the same favourite subject at school
- Have the same amount of siblings
- Does the same thing in their free time
- (Add your own)

Then ask them to sit together in a circle / back at tables for the group discussion.

When everyone is settled, ask the following:

- Did you stay in the same groups or move around?
- Are any of you exactly the same in every way?
- Can you belong to some groups with some people and other groups with others?
- Does having something in common with someone mean you don't have any differences?

Capture the student responses on the board if useful.

Slide 7

**Activity** Generalisation discussion / 10 mins

Ask the students 'what is a generalisation?' and take some suggestions. Then share the definition on the PowerPoint. 'A generalisation when we say something which is not necessarily true in all cases, or for all people included in the statement'.

Slide 8

Show these example generalisations with your students on the presentation or hand out printed version to pairs of students.

- All the students in this class love maths
- Only girls like the colour green
- Young people play video games all day and never go outside
- People always share the same faith or belief as their family
- Parks are unsafe
- (Add more relevant to this school)

Slide 9

Ask some students read out the generalisations. After each one / all, hold a discussion based on the following questions:

Slide 10

- How do they feel about these statements?
- Are they always true, are they true for everyone?
- Do we ever say things like this about the groups we belong to?
- Can they think about some other statements?

## Activity Generalisation discussion / continued

Slide 11

Then put all the generalisations in the middle table and ask the following:

- How does it feel when someone makes a generalisation about us?

*It diminishes our experience if it's not true. It feels uncomfortable and makes us feel like we don't have space to be an individual.*

- What happens when we make generalisations about our own or other communities?

*People pass on the wrong impression that everyone in a particular group is the same. This can lead to misunderstandings.*

Slide 12

It may be helpful to work through the definitions of the words 'stereotype' and 'nuance' on the following slide.

### Extension

Potentially introduce scapegoating to help promote higher order thinking alongside stereotyping.

## Main Activity I Statement / Generalisation comparison / 15 mins

Paper & pens  
(one per student)

Slide 13

**Objective** To practice reframing generalisations as I statements

**Activity** Watch the films

Slide 14

Tell your students you will watch two one-minute films. The first film is full of generalisations, the second is a similar story but uses I statements.

Slide 15

Then discuss as a group what the broad difference between the two films were. Show the table on the PowerPoint with the 'generalisations vs I statements' table. Working quickly as a whole group, ask some volunteers to fill in the I statements corresponding to the relevant generalisations.

Pair up students.

Generalisations  
vs I Statements

Slide 16

**Activity** Written work

Give each pair one of the small paragraphs contained in this plan, depending on the subject you teach.

They must work together to find three generalisations in the paragraph and reframe them underneath as I statements. If they have time, they can then write out the paragraph again having replaced the original sentences with their own.

You can leave the prompt questions on the board.

Once they have finished, you can ask one or two pairs to read their edited version and explain why they made the choices they did. They can then stick the worksheet in their books.

**RE**

My name's Nicoletta. I was christened in the Greek Orthodox church. Greek Orthodox people attend church on Sunday. My favourite festival in our calendar is Easter, but honestly we eat too much on Easter day! I quite like the fact that our services are in an old version of Greek. It's nice to listen to but the problem is people don't really understand what's being said! But I like to go and see my friends and relatives.

**PSHE**

I've started to think about what I'd like to do when I leave school. Lawyers are boring so I don't want to study law, but I do quite enjoy attending the debating club at school. My friends tell me that I'm good at PE but my parents say that women aren't as successful as men in sport. Nobody my age really knows what they want to be doing ten years from now but I would like to find something to focus on!

**CITIZENSHIP**

There's a school in my local area which I pass every day on my way home. The people there are always speaking the same language between themselves, but I don't know what language it is. I sometimes wonder if the students there have friends who are different to them. In my school people love the fact that we all speak different languages; not only are modern foreign languages the most useful subject to learn, but it can also be quite fun to learn new phrases.

Bring the group back together and hold a reflection session using the following discussion questions:

- What are some of the dangers of using generalisations?

*They give us a false impression about the topic. If someone doesn't know anything about a subject and they hear a long list of generalisations, they will go away with misconceptions and stereotypes.*

- Why are I statements helpful?

*They tell us about the person's lived experience and personal perspective. We're not encouraged to assume anything further. We learn something specific and keep open minds to new information.*

It is up to you to emphasise the points you think are most relevant for your students, but as you take this tool forward into Identity work, the use of I statements means you will be avoiding unhelpful misrepresentations, but also protecting your (perhaps more vulnerable) students from having the role of representative or spokesperson imposed upon them. Your students will be able to focus on learning about lived experience of identities.

Slide 18

**Extension activity or home learning**

Students can write a small paragraph about themselves focusing on positive dialogue whilst using only I statements, e.g.:

My name is Molly. I am 12 years old and I really enjoy playing video games. Although many people associate video games more with boys, I think it's something for everyone to play. I am a Christian but don't really go to church often like most people would assume. I still think that doesn't make me any less of a Christian. My favourite colour is yellow as it reminds me of warmth and sunshine!

Slide 19

The next lesson is 'The Letter O'. You will be thinking about what happens when someone says something that upsets us, such as a generalisation, or what we must do when we've said something to upset someone else!