

**TEACHER'S NOTES****RACISM****NEWSSTAND****TRAVELLERS****INTRODUCTION:**

The Irish Travellers have their roots in a Celtic nomadic population in Ireland. They are an indigenous nomadic group with a distinct social and cultural identity. Most Travellers in Northern Ireland today were born and raised here. The objective of the lesson is to enable students to examine the prejudices shown towards the Travelling community and the source of this prejudice. It is important for students to acknowledge that Travellers are not a new group who have migrated to Northern Ireland. They have lived here for many centuries, despite the fact that their lifestyle and customs are distinct from the rest of the population.

**KEY QUESTIONS:**

- What are your views on Travellers?
- Are Travellers treated differently?
- Is there any evidence of prejudice and discrimination against the Travelling community in Northern Ireland?

**TIME:** 1 hour (1double period)

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

This lesson will offer students opportunities to explore:

- How Travellers are treated by the majority population
- The main forms of discrimination and prejudice against the Travelling community
- The solutions to prevention of conflict between the Travelling community and the settled community in Northern Ireland

Throughout the lesson students have opportunities to:

- Examine their own opinions on Travellers and opinions expressed in their community
- Evaluate the sources of prejudice towards Travellers
- Assess the methods that could be used to promote the inclusion rather than exclusion of the Travellers
- Develop thinking and being creative skills

**RESOURCES:****Newspaper Articles**

Article A: "Councillors attack on Travellers 'Racist'" Newsletter 16/04/04

Councillor called 'racist' for referring to travellers as 'gypsies' when he claimed their camp was deterring tourists from visiting Benone strand.

Article B: "Plans to provide sites for Travellers" Irish News 29/04/04

Call for better facilities for travellers to avoid conflict with settled community. It is claimed that there are too few sites and facilities at existing ones are poor.

Article C: "Traveller group slams 'sledgehammer' law" Irish News 14/05/04

Need for more short stay sites to be provided for the travelling community, before law against unauthorised encampments passed.

Article D: "We don't want to attract Travellers, says councillor" Impartial Reporter 13/05/04  
Fermanagh District Council divided over fear that if they provide site they'll attract travellers. Travellers group considers the site necessary and labels the council's reasoning as 'racist'.

### **PREPARATION:**

Brainstorm the word Stereotype on the whiteboard. Students can then go to the site's Glossary to pursue a definition.

Ask students to take 5 minutes writing down all they know about Travellers. Then ask students to read out what they have written. Then ask them the following questions:

- a) Have you ever met a Traveller?
- b) Have you a Traveller as a friend?
- c) Have you ever spoken to a Traveller?
- d) Have you ever read a book on the Travelling community?

This will offer discussion on whether their opinions on Travellers are based on stereotypes or actual experience.

### **LESSON PROGRESSION:**

Take each article individually and answer the following questions:

1. What words are used to describe the Travellers?
2. Does the title of the article suggest the article is for or against Travellers? Give reasons for your answer
3. Describe the main forms of prejudice and discrimination facing the Travelling community in Northern Ireland
4. Is there any evidence to suggest that Travellers' needs will be catered for or is the problem simply being pushed from one town to another? Give reasons for your answer

### **CONCLUSION:**

Using Article D carry out a role-play which reflects the attitudes and opinions of the people of Fermanagh to Travellers.