



My Cultural Bias

CB-04

WebQuest



CQ⁺

De-escalating Polarisation
in Europe



THEME ALLOCATED:	My Cultural Bias _ Stereotypes
TITLE OF THE WEBQUEST:	Creating a Raising Awareness Poster
INTRODUCTION	
<p><i>“Japanese people are tidy”, “Latinos are feisty”, “Chinese Americans are good at maths”, “French people are arrogant”, “African-Americans are athletic”. We all have faced or heard to some degree certain of the above statements at school, at work, between friends or on the news. Some of us may also have used them to explain an incident or one’s behaviour. This means that maybe without knowing it, we have used stereotypes addressed to cultural groups we do not belong to for one situation to make sense.</i></p> <p>A stereotype is a widely held, simplified, and essentialist belief about a specific group; it is “an image in our head”, a generalisation that we construct and attribute to all members of a group. Groups are often stereotyped based on <u>sex</u>, <u>gender identity</u>, <u>race and ethnicity</u>, nationality, age, socioeconomic status, language, and so on. Stereotypes, as cultural constructions deeply embedded within social institutions and wider culture, are formed through power relations, reflecting social groups’ prestige and status.</p> <p>Stereotypes impact our thoughts, actions, and emotions in diverse ways. They influence the information we receive from the environment, organise it in a certain way, guide our thinking towards certain versions or away from others, influence whether the information already gained will be retrieved or not. They influence and shape how we interact with each other, by creating expectations of what the expected behaviour is, and often leading to a self-fulfilling prophecy. Stereotypes, even when they're positive, can be problematic. This is because stereotypes label people</p>	



based on assumptions and don't take the fact that each of us is a unique individual into account.

All of us can contribute to challenging common stereotypes in our communities; individual and team efforts can lead to awareness-raising and actions taking. This WebQuest aims to familiarise you with the steps needed to create engaging posters which you can share with your social media, your local authorities and your networks.

TASKS

You live in a vibrant community with people with diverse backgrounds and ethnicities, mainly after the refugee and migration flows over the past few years. You have realised that not all community members are happy with this new world order; racist and xenophobic attacks rise, the media extensively use the “us VS them” scheme, and negative representations of migrants are most commonplace rather than positive or neutral ones. You have started to worry, and you want to inform your friends and neighbours about the characteristics that follow people on the move. You have decided to create informative posters on racial stereotypes and to take part not only in your local festival against racism and intolerance but also to use your social media accounts to spread anti-discriminatory messages.

PROCESS:

Step 1: Do your research!

The first step in creating your poster and raising awareness is getting well-informed about the topic at stake. That means that you should search for valid sources which will offer you relevant concepts and ideas on what stereotypes are, the impact of positive and negative stereotypes and how to tackle them. National and University Libraries and scientific magazines can become your friend for sure; however, online learning opportunities are usually one click away, providing access to core theories and principles using everyday language. Below lay some examples to help you started, while we strongly advise you to continue your own research:



- [Video] What is Stereotype | Explained in 2 min - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-laJElgFNhM>
- [Video] Psychology: Stereotypes - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3FSfirWccw>
- [Video] Racial/Ethnic Prejudice & Discrimination: Crash Course Sociology #35 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSddUPkVD24>
- [Video] Stereotypes: How do we overcome them? Why do we have them? - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbZhrDmmOrM>
- [Video] 70 People Reveal Their Country's Most Popular Stereotypes and Clichés - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MRZbWuUmkk>
- 5 STEPS TO OVERCOME STEREOTYPES - <http://elearning.daremightythings.com/osdyroy1/bustingthrough-Micro/resources/Resource-5-Steps-to-Overcome-Stereotypes.pdf>

The second equally important research endeavour of yours should be dedicated to learning more about the needs and gaps of the society you live in. What are the actual issues in your community/city/neighbourhood? What is the scenery in terms of stereotyping and racism? Conducting field research on your own (i.e., creating the research material, interviewing locals and politicians) may be a bit challenging for you in terms of skills, interests, and resources. In that case, the second-best option is to detect previous research attempts which have explored the issue. You can start by using the following research engines:

1. Google Scholar - <https://scholar.google.gr/>
2. CORE - <https://core.ac.uk/>
3. ScienceOpen - <https://www.scienceopen.com/>
4. Directory of Open Access Journals - <https://doaj.org/>
5. Education Resources Information Center - <https://eric.ed.gov/>
6. arXiv e-Print Archive - <https://arxiv.org/>
7. Social Science Research Network - <https://www.ssrn.com/index.cfm/en/>



8. Public Library of Science - <https://plos.org/>
9. OpenDOAR - <https://v2.sherpa.ac.uk/opensoar/>
10. Bielefeld Academic Search Engine - <https://www.base-search.net/>
11. Zenodo - <https://zenodo.org/>
12. Semantic Scholar - <https://www.semanticscholar.org/>

For tips on how to conduct accurate and specific Google searches, the following links are a good starting point:

- Use These 33 Google Search Tricks to Find Exactly What You're Looking For - <https://zapier.com/blog/advanced-google-search-tricks/>
- [Video] Google Search Tips - <https://www.perkinselearning.org/technology/posts/google-search-tips>
- [Video] Google Tricks That Will Change the Way You Search - <https://time.com/4116259/google-search/>

Step 2: Start creating your poster!

After searching and studying stereotypes and discrimination for length, you should have a good understanding of the phenomenon and the ways it enters your community. This may also mean that you might have a general idea of what you want to put on your poster and what dimensions you want to raise awareness of. The following tips aim to support and guide you while developing your content:

- Tips for effective poster design - <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/metallurgy-materials/about/cases/tips-advice/poster.aspx>
- How to Make a Poster: Beginner's Design Guide (& Templates) - <https://visme.co/blog/how-to-make-a-poster/>
- How to Make a Poster That Stands Out: <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Poster-That-Stands-Out>
- Online Poster Maker: <https://piktochart.com/formats/posters/>



Take a look at the platforms and software proposed below that can provide you with the space for applying your ideas. However, you can always search for more options and find the platform that best suits your taste:

- Canva - <https://www.canva.com/>
- PowerPoint Online - <https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/powerpoint-online/mdafamggmaaaginoondinjgkgcbpnhp?hl=en>
- Visme - <https://www.visme.co/?ref=PATResearch>
- Stencil - https://getstencil.com/?tap_a=9103-1801f8&tap_s=647215-fd4746

Step 3: Spread the message!

At this stage, you should be ready to share your poster with your target audience. You have worked hard, and it is time for your creation to fulfil its initial purpose. There are multiple ways you can disseminate your poster and you should seize the opportunities offered that best fit you. For example, you can contact local civil society organisations that implement anti-racist or integrational programs, grassroots initiatives, or even local policymakers. You can also participate in local events and festivals. You can also start thinking of using online platforms and social media, such as Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter and encourage your followers to spread the message. For higher visibility and engagement online, take a look at the following tips:

- The 9 Fundamental Social Media Marketing Tips You Must Follow for Business Success - <https://nealschaffer.com/5-tips-social-media-marketing-strategy/>
- How to Market on Social Media Effectively - https://mailchimp.com/resources/how-to-market-on-social-media/?gclid=CjwKCAjwvsqZBhAlEiwAqAHEleW_cNEcqVZhAtFYxDu5BdSWiONchnPxAjx4jjR8ll8ah5v2tfK40xoCgVsQAvD_BwE&gclid=aw.ds



- 10 Strategies to Gain Visibility on Social Media - <https://www.cyberclick.net/numericalblogen/strategies-to-gain-visibility-on-social-media>

Good luck!

EVALUATION

As a self-assessment exercise for this WebQuest, you are asked to complete a short self-reflection exercise and write 350-400 words on how you rate your performance in the task, what elements you enjoyed or didn't enjoy, etc. The following questions will guide this self-assessment:

- What elements of this activity did I enjoy best?
- What aspect did I find most challenging and why?
- What skills did I acquire through this activity? Is there something I was good at that I did not think I would be good at? How would I evaluate my research skills? How would I evaluate my digital skills?
- Did I enjoy researching (racial) stereotypes in my community and coming up with a solution to address the issue?
- Would I like to further develop my innovative solution? Would I consider furthering this idea and developing my own social or online campaign? Explain your answer.

CONCLUSION

Through this WebQuest, you had the chance to familiarise yourself with the concept of stereotypes and the ways they affect your community. You have worked extensively to create a visually appealing output that will engage the target audience to think about stereotypes and possible solutions to combat them. You have also communicated the message by approaching leaders of your community or/and developing an online initiative using social media.

You may have also noticed how this experience has started to change you. You may have noticed that your research skills have started to get better; that you know where and how to search for relevant sources, that you read articles faster, that you know how to compare the information you



read, or even how to choose what to keep and what not to keep for your purpose. You may have realised that your digital skills are improving; that you now know a range of platforms to create content, that you create eye-catching posters, that you are more confident in using social media and that your followers go upwards.

If you are inspired by the solutions you have come up with so far, why stop there? Why not consider if you can fund your solution through local fundraising or crowdfunding through GoFundMe? Why not raise awareness among your friends, family, and members of your community? Create a group online, share information, discuss, and debate the issues, and inspire others to enter the race against discrimination, just as you have!

Keep in mind that *“stereotypes lose their power when the world is found to be more complex than the stereotype would suggest. When we learn that individuals do not fit the group stereotype, then it begins to fall apart”* (Ed Koch, 1987).

Questions that a trainer might use in a whole class discussion to debrief this WebQuest:

- How would you rate the overall experience? Did you enjoy learning through completing a WebQuest challenge? What made it more/less fun?
- How did you find working in a group/alone to complete the task? Would you rather work alone/in a group?
- What is the one most important thing that you learned through this task?
- How did you find the task of creating a poster? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this awareness-raising technique?
- Do you feel like you have gained new skills? If so, what are they?
- In which ways do you think you have contributed to combating stereotypes?
- Do you feel like you could bring this idea forward and start a wider campaign? Why or why not?



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