

MIRRORS AND WINDOWS: SHATTERING STEREOTYPES

PART ONE: CAT'S EYES



#3489

OPEN-CAPTIONED
AIMS MULTIMEDIA

1997

Grade Levels: 7-12

16 minutes

DESCRIPTION

Demonstrates that people with disabilities are basically no different from anyone else. When Catherine attends a friend's party, no one knows she's blind. As they discover the truth, some guests act differently around her. Catherine shows that she's not so unlike them after all. At the conclusion, the actresses who portray Catherine and her friend talk to the viewers.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Behavioral Studies

- Standard: Understands various meanings of social group, general implications of group membership, and different ways that groups function
 - Benchmark: Understands that while a group may act, hold beliefs, and/or present itself as a cohesive whole, individual members may hold widely varying beliefs, so the behavior of a group may not be predictable from an understanding of each of its members (See Instructional Goals #1, #3, and #4)
 - Benchmark: Understands that social groups may have patterns of behavior, values, beliefs, and attitudes that can help or hinder cross-cultural understanding (See Instructional Goals #1, #3, and #4)
 - Benchmark: Understands that people sometimes react to all members of a group as though they were the same and perceive in their behavior only those qualities that fit preconceptions of the group (i.e., stereotyping) which leads to uncritical judgments (e.g., showing blind respect for members of some groups and equally blind disrespect for members of other groups) (See Instructional Goals #1, #2, #3, and #4)
 - Benchmark: Understands that there are similarities and differences within groups as well as among groups (See Instructional Goals #1, #3, and #4)

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To dramatize stereotyping.
2. To stimulate discussion on stereotyping.
3. To emphasize that people should be judged by who they are, not by superficial criteria.
4. To emphasize that people with differences should be treated like all other individuals.

VOCABULARY

1. pet peeve
2. sixth sense
3. shortsighted

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Discuss the meaning of *stereotyping* and share personal experiences with stereotyping.
2. Discuss how stereotyping is affected by the media.
3. Create lists of similarities and differences of people who are blind and people who are sighted. Discuss. Save for AFTER SHOWING activities.
4. Discuss feelings encountered when one does not fit into a peer group.

DURING SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. View the video more than once, with one showing uninterrupted.
2. Pause the video after the phone conversation between Catherine and Stephanie.
 - a. Why does Catherine not want Stephanie to inform the others about her?
 - b. What is Catherine's pet peeve?
 - c. What is the significance of the title *Cat's Eyes*?
3. Pause the video when Catherine leaves the costume party.
 - a. How did the others at the party find out that Catherine was blind?
 - b. What was Ty's first impression upon discovering Catherine was blind?
 - c. Why does Ty say to Catherine that he's sorry she is blind?
 - d. Why is Catherine able to get around Stephanie's house without using her cane?
 - e. How does Catherine want to be treated? Why?
 - f. Why do people become nervous when around others who are not exactly like themselves?
 - g. What stereotypes are portrayed by the costumes of those attending the party?
4. Pause the video after Mike and Ty have the arm-wrestling match.
 - a. Why did Ty say he was going to break up with Catherine?
 - b. How will dating Catherine effect Ty's being cool?
 - c. What does it mean to know someone "on the inside"?
 - d. How do material possessions influence some people's opinion of others?
 - e. In what way can Catherine see better than Ty or Mike?
 - f. What did Ty learn from Catherine?
 - g. How do people who are blind compensate for not being able to see?
 - h. What is a "normal" girl to Ty and how does this influence him when deciding to break up with Catherine?
 - i. What was Mike thinking when he told Ty he was being mature about breaking up with Catherine?
5. Pause the video after the phone conversation between Mike and Ty.
 - a. What realization did Ty come to after a month of not seeing Catherine?
 - b. Why was Ty surprised that Catherine would be dating someone else?
 - c. Why was Ty upset when he learned that Mike was seeing Catherine?
 - d. What does it mean to be *shortsighted*? How was Ty shortsighted?
 - e. What was Mike's attitude about Catherine during the entire video?

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. When Catherine first appeared in the video, did there appear to be anything different about her? When did it become clear that she was blind?
2. Discuss reactions to the revelation that Stephanie was actually the real Catherine Armstrong.
3. How did the revelation deepen the impact of the moral of the video?
4. Why do people treat people with differences differently?
5. What effect does fear have in the way people with differences are treated?
6. How can stereotyping lead to prejudice and discrimination?
7. What attributes or characteristics of humans are stereotyped? Can inanimate objects be stereotyped?
8. Discuss personal experiences with stereotypes as a person who is deaf or hard of hearing.

- a. Who treats people with hearing losses differently?
- b. Why are people with hearing losses treated differently?
- c. What can be done to overcome the effects of stereotyping?

Applications and Activities

1. Invite a person who is blind to speak about and demonstrate mobility training and assistive technology.
2. Using the list of similarities and differences of people who are blind and sighted from the BEFORE SHOWING activities, modify and discuss.
3. Experience blindness by covering both eyes for a day. Discuss experiences with others after the blindfolds have been removed.
 - a. How did the loss of vision affect the day?
 - b. What feelings were experienced?
 - c. What obstacles were overcome and which became barriers?
 - d. What effect does the amount of residual hearing have on this experiment?
4. Practice the following rules when communicating with a person who is disabled.
 - a. Speak directly to the person.
 - b. It is appropriate to extend one's hand in a handshake with a person who has limited use of the hand or an artificial limb.
 - c. When speaking with a person who is blind, always identify oneself and the others in the group.
 - d. If offering assistance, wait until the offer is accepted and then wait for instructions.
 - e. Treat adults as adults and use first names when doing so with the entire group.
 - f. Don't lean or hang on wheelchairs or other assistive devices.
 - g. Be patient and listen attentively. Do not speak for or finish speaking for the person.
 - h. When talking with someone in a wheelchair, place oneself at eye level.
 - i. Gain the attention of a hearing-impaired person by tapping the person on the shoulder.
 - j. Relax. Don't be embarrassed to use common phrases such as "See you later" or "Did you hear?"
5. Check school buildings for obstacles that prevent students with disabilities from being fully involved in activities or classes. Bring these obstacles to the attention of the school administration.
6. Research and report on the impact of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its requirements.

RELATED RESOURCES

Captioned Media Program

- 22nd Floor, The #3328
- Carol's Mirror #3018
- Have You Ever Been Ashamed of Your Parents? #2073
- Make a Move #3378
- Perception #2861
- Who's Different? #2145

World Wide Web

The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid-safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & TEACHERS OF BLIND KIDS
<http://www.az.com/~dday/blindkids.html>

This site is a resource for parents and teachers working with students who are visually impaired or blind. Topics include: orientation and mobility, Braille, educational materials, networking and much more.

- AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND <http://www.afb.org/afb/>

The American Foundation for the Blind is a leading national resource for people who are blind or visually impaired. This site includes links and resources on various related topics.

- A BLIND NET HOME PAGE <http://www.blind.net/blindind.htm>

This site contains factual information on visual impairments and blindness as well as links to organizations, companies and other related Web sites.



**PLEASE RETURN LESSON GUIDE
WITH VIDEO**

**Lesson guide also available
online at *www.cfv.org***

National Initiatives Team

Research to Practice Division

**Office of Special Education and
Rehabilitative Services**

U.S. Department of Education

