

# Dangers of Labeling and Stereotyping

## Summary

This lesson discusses the dangers of labeling and stereotyping ourselves and people around us. It also discusses ways that we can avoid those behaviors.

## Main Core Tie

FCS Exploration

[Strand 5 Standard 1](#)

## Time Frame

1 class periods of 70 minutes each

## Materials

The Lifeboat Activity Worksheet  
Laminated Stereotype Labels  
Who Am I? Worksheet

## Background for Teachers

Print out, cut apart and laminate the Stereotype Labels. Place a rolled piece of tape on the back of each label and set the group aside to be used during the lesson.

## Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to recognize the dangers of labeling and stereotyping themselves and those around them. They will also recognize ways to avoid those behaviors and ways to build strong and meaningful relationships.

## Instructional Procedures

Begin the class by passing out the Lifeboat Activity Worksheet. (Instructions are found on the worksheet.) Stress to the students that only eight people can make it onto the boat. After each group has made their decision, try to come to a class consensus. Many classes may not come to a class decision. Judge your time accordingly to be able to complete the rest of the activities.

Before explaining the purpose of the Lifeboat Activity, ask for ten student volunteers. Have them line up at the front of the room facing the class. Explain to them that each student is going to have a label taped to their forehead. They will not be able to see their own labels, but they can look at the other students labels. *(It is very important to prepare the class for the stereotyping activity. Stress to them that a high level of maturity is required for this activity to work as intended. Let the students know that the labels given to individual student do not reflect that individual whatsoever. They are only part of the activity to teach the dangers of labeling or stereotyping others.)*

To begin the Stereotyping Activity, each student volunteer will try to guess what the label on their forehead is. In order to do this, the rest of the class, and even the teacher, will treat that student like their label. Once they have guessed their label, move onto the next student and continue down the line until each student has guessed their label.

Open up a class discussion about how each student was stereotyped based on their label. Many times, we as individuals, will label, judge or stereotype people around us based on first impressions or limited information. It is important for each of us to broaden our perspective of the people around us and to stop stereotyping people we could build relationships with. The purpose of the Lifeboat Activity was to show that the survivors chosen, were chosen because of their labels. Likewise, many

of the people not chosen to survive, were not chosen because of their labels.

Another component to discuss is that many times we allow these labels or stereotypes to "stick" to ourselves, which can lower our self-esteem. We can learn to recognize these labels and to not allow them to affect our sense of self-worth or self-esteem.

After the class discussion, hand out the Who Am I? Worksheet. (Instructions are found on the worksheet.) The purpose of this activity is for the students to recognize the positive qualities and characteristics about themselves. By recognizing these qualities, it is easier to push away labels and stereotypes and keep them from "sticking" to us.

### Authors

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