

Thinking about the treatment of Roma and Sinti (Gypsies) during the Holocaust - A Citizenship Lesson (Primary)

This lesson plan ties in with the Mosaic of Victims case study.

Focus:

- Living in a diverse world
- Children's rights – human rights

Duration: 50 minutes

Resources: Flags to discuss, Roma flag or Roma flag powerpoint.

Objectives

- Learn about how Roma and Sinti Gypsies were treated during the Holocaust.
- Reflect on differences between people and whether people should be treated unfairly because they are different.

Activities

- Explain the objectives of the lesson to pupils.
- Play a game to demonstrate differences between the children in the class.

Tell them: Stand up if you have

- Buttons
- Laced shoes
- Boots
- Hair tie etc
- Blond hair, brown hair, blue/brown eyes

Ask pupils what this tells us about the class. **Ask** what the world would be like without differences.

Explain that some people are treated unfairly because they are different in some way – give some examples e.g. where they come from or their appearance.

Could you say that all children in white socks are naughty? Could you say that they never say please and thank you?

No that would be unfair.

Ask what they would think if someone with, e.g., a white shirt committed a terrible crime and someone said everybody with a white shirt is terrible.

Ask if all people who wear white shirts are the same? (hopefully students will all say “no”).

Get two students to hold up the Roma Flag or show the Roma flag powerpoint slide.

Ask them about the symbols. Prompt them about the sky and earth and the wheel if necessary.

If you don't have a flag

Look at the Roma Flag powerpoint. Get pupils to decide which way up the flag goes. The flag will rotate to the wrong way with one click and then the right way on the second click. Ask pupils what they can tell about the Roma people from the flag, good answers could be they like to be outside and they like travelling.

Ask them which group of people might have this flag.

Look at slide two and briefly explain the different groups of Travellers.

Tell the pupils that Travellers have sometimes been treated unfairly.

Ask are all Travellers the same? (hopefully, students all will say “no”).

Discuss

Briefly **explain** what happened to people who were different during the Holocaust. Roma and Sinti Gypsies were treated as inferior people. They were forced to go into prisons or Labour camps. Hundreds of thousands of them were murdered by the Nazis.

However Gypsy people did survive Nazi persecution and have a lot to be proud of. Positive images of Traveller culture can be easily found on the Internet e.g. www.grthm.co.uk or www.passingplaces.org.uk