

Diversity, equality and the law in the UK

Topic 2: Why do we need laws on race equality?

Learning intentions:

- Describe some of the ways people have been treated because of racism in society (past and present)
- Identify an Act of Parliament that has helped make life in the UK more equal
- Describe how equalities legislation promotes and protects individuals and groups in society

Treating people differently

Start by giving students the following scenario: The school canteen has decided to treat everyone the same today and serve only one choice of lunch – roast chicken.

- What do they think about this?
- Why might this be a problem for some people?
- What should the canteen do?

Draw out in discussion that some people would have to go without lunch because they might be vegetarian, follow a religion that does not permit them to eat meat, or have an allergy to chicken. Is this acceptable?

Next ask students to consider the question: Is treating people differently positive or negative?

Hint: ask students to think about other examples involving race, religion, gender or age, where someone might need to be treated differently to help them go about their daily life or at work without discrimination.

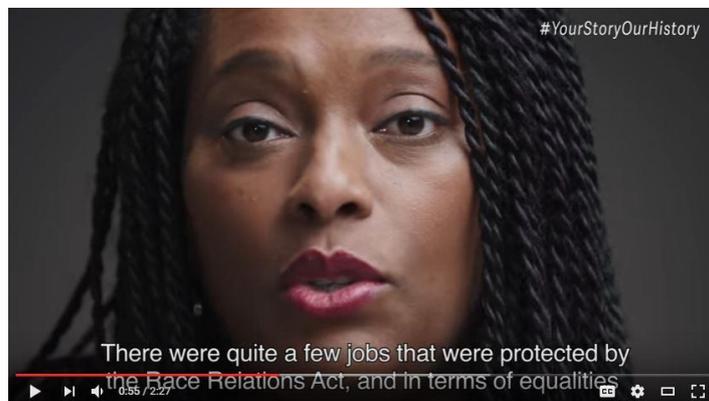


How have laws been used to make our country more just and equal?

Introduce the idea that in the UK we have laws on equality to help ensure an individual or group in society is not discriminated against because of their characteristics (race, religion/belief, sexual orientation etc.). Protected characteristics are explored in more depth in Topic 4 of these materials.

The film they are about to see explores the experiences of Janett and shows us why a law was introduced to protect people who are black, Asian and minority ethnicities from discrimination.

Watch video 1: [Educating people about diversity and equality](#)



Ask students to respond to the following questions to check understanding of what they have watched. A pupil response framework is provided on *resource sheet 4*.

- How have changes in the law forced the police and other institutions to change the way they treat BAME people?
- What was the experience of the sisters?
- What law was mentioned?
- What did the police begin to do because of changes in the law?
- The RRA led police to appoint equalities and diversity officers. What did Janett help the police to do?

Draw out a range of responses to check understanding as a class discussion.

What is racism?

Check students have a clear understanding of the terms **race** and **racism**.

The Equalities and Human Rights Commission provide the following definitions of race and racism.

- **Race** refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.
- **Racism** is treating someone unfairly because of their race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins.

Class debrief and discussion

As a class draw the discussions together by exploring the question: How do equality laws ensure that people are not discriminated against?

Hint: revisit the examples students discussed at the start of the topic in relation to race, religion, gender and age.

Resource sheet 4

Questions relating to video 1: 'Educating people about diversity and equality'

a) How have changes in the law forced the police and other institutions to change the way they treat BAME people?

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b) What was the experience of the sisters?

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c) What law was mentioned in the film?

- The Equalities Act 2010
- The Race Relations Act
- The Equal Pay Act

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d) What did the police begin to do because of changes in the law?

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e) The RRA led police to appoint equalities and diversity officers. What did Janett help the police to do?

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