

Role play: "Tanned or not tanned – this is the question!"

Activity Description

Content & Goals:

Tanned skin has not always been considered beautiful and is not seen so everywhere in the world. The ideal of beauty has changed a lot in different societies in the course of time. Every culture has, up to today, completely differing perceptions of beauty. This exercise is supposed to make the pupils understand that the ideal of beauty is dependent on its perception in society. In role plays, the pupils will present the ideals of beauty in different societies, cultures and eras and will discuss in how far in former times, today and in which cultures tanned respectively fair skin were or are a sign for beauty, success, wealth etc.

Realization:

- Can be integrated into classroom lessons
- Cross-disciplinary goals are possible (e. g. Philosophy, History, English, Art Education)
- International links are possible

Variations:

Variations are possible: e. g. a) role play b) story adaptation with new media use (photo story, audio/visual realization), c) presentations. Role plays etc. can be prepared at home or during class.

Requirements of material and media:

- Internet access needed for internet search
- Depending on the variation: photo / audio / video equipment (you might want to have the pupils use their photo mobile phones if available!)
- Possibly props needed

Time requirements:

- **Preparation time:** medium time need (2 to 3 hours)
- **Need of class time:** at least 3 double periods (3 x 90 mins.)
- **Wrap-up time:** medium time need (2 to 3 hours)

Sources of information

Sources of information for this activity are the learning texts on the learning platform (Skin, Sun).

Please find below some further hints for a deeper search in literature and internet. The material may be used to construct the role plays.

Articles on skin health and sun protection:

US American educational site for "going sun-wise", i. e. an informational and educational site. With helpful information and practical exercises for kids and teenagers.

<http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/actionsteps.html>

Practical site on sun protective clothing, with further links.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_protective_clothing

An informative and playful site about tanning, sun exposure and sun protection.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/hottopics/sunshine/index.shtml>

Articles about beauty ideals and skin colour:

Article on skin tanning, from a scientific view and with cultural, historical and sociological background information: a very detailed introduction.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_tanning

Article "A History of Skin Tanning": historical overview about beauty ideals and skin colour in human history.

<http://www.skincarederm.com/history.htm>

An article about the Japanese Geisha: the beauty ideal in this Asian country is very pale skin.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geisha>

A newspaper article about Japanese girls striving for "a whiter shade of pale" (April 2004)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2004/apr/04/japan.nicolemowbray>

Promotion campaign of an Indian cosmetics company, promoting fair skin and skin bleaching products as a guarantee to become beautiful and successful.

<http://www.fairandlovely.in/>

International links

The pupils from various countries could discuss (in English) about the subject „Sunlight and Ideal of Beauty“. This can be done with the help of photographs (e. g. photos from cell phones) and an audio conference. Central point of this discussion may be to compare ideals of beauty in different countries and cultures, using skin colour as an example. The pupils present to each other which skin colour is seen as most beautiful in their countries and cultures.

For example, the pupils can discuss about the differences in ideal of beauty in Asia / Europe / Africa / America. The promotion site of an Indian cosmetic company might be a good starting point for this discussion (e.g. showing the Asian preference for fair skin). The pupils might want to discuss the video in common.

Link: <http://www.fairandlovely.in/> (Status Dec 2007).