

Thrive 365

Dragonfly: Impact Education



Did you know?

The 'outsider' has been a character and a device used in stories since the dawn of humanity. An outsider tends to be a person who is isolated as a result of being different. Sometimes the outsider is portrayed as dangerous and sometimes as pitiful - rarely good *and* powerful. Unfortunately, the role of the outsider is not reserved for fiction and has a **real impact on wellbeing**. Prejudice relies on the concept of the outsider. Perhaps we feel safer thinking we are part of something others are not? Perhaps the fear of the unknown is intolerable to us.

2 Acknowledge fears

If our children express a view that strikes us as discriminatory, our natural response may be to tell them off for expressing that viewpoint. Of course it's important that we guide them towards more open-minded ideas but it's also important to acknowledge and challenge their current thinking.

You can ask questions such as:

- How does it make you feel when you say something like that?
- What do you fear about people who you think might be different to you?

1 Walk in their shoes

Some stories present the outsider as someone who is deserving of pity and sympathy, but who is not our equal. This takes away any sense that the person is like us or could be like us and actually perpetuates fear. When children are encouraged to role-play characters that are worlds apart from their own life, it provides an opportunity for them to embody that person and they are more likely to portray them in a favourable way. Props and costumes can help this by making the character feel real.

3 'No Outsiders'

The charity 'No Outsiders' has the motto 'All different, All welcome' and the mission of 'Preparing children for life in modern Britain'. They seek to promote community cohesion and to prepare young people for life as global citizens. On their website are a range of videos that you can share with children. In particular, a video of a public speaking event where children were asked the question 'have you ever felt like an outsider?'. This is a great starting point for discussion.

<https://no-outsiders.com/about-us>

