

IDEAS 78

**International Online Teachers Society
Debate
Educational Materials For
Advance and Upper Intermediate
Students**



**International Online Teachers Society
Publishing Committee**



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THE 78th INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TEACHERS SOCIETY ESSAY CONTEST

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RACISM AGAINST ONE OWN RACE

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Although we may not directly admit it, many of us are racists. One way or another, we all have demonstrated a kind of racism that speaks of our inability to accept the race that we belong to.

In my country alone, there has always been brisk business for manufacturers of whitening lotions, creams, and various other products. Apparently, the race to become fairer has really gone faster. What's more, influences from many progressive countries has necessitated that the natives in our country suddenly sprout blond hair with black or dark brown roots, depending on the skills of hair colorists.

We do not want to be caught with gadgets that are locally made because of the belief that they are inferior in quality. We are lucky to have a mobile device maker who dared to fight it out with the larger mobile manufacturers around the world. However, only yesterday, my daughter in 7th grade told me about how one of their classmates tried to hide her mobile phone from the rest of the class simply because it was made locally. See, even our own kids already have a concept of racism. Unfortunately, that concept seems to be directed against our own.

As parents, we have the implicit responsibility to help our children find pride in the race they were born into. Of course, this does not mean that we should also teach them to look down or look too highly to other races. We should try to teach them to respect the citizens of other countries because we have all been created equal in our Creator's eyes. There are no superior or inferior people just as there should never be better or worse individuals than us.

We all enjoy the same privileges in this world. We are all responsible for our fellowmen. We need to teach our children that what is essential for survival in this world doesn't entail looking down on our fellowmen just because of the very color of their skin.

Admittedly, in my own case, racism has sorely been directed against my own race, too. It could only be called colonial mentality then. I don't particularly relish watching movies made by local filmmakers because their plots are too predictable and they all have the same stories. It seems that when a certain genre proves to be successful in the tills, movie makers decide that whatever they churn out in the same context will always make money. Of course, there are some very good creations both on TV and in the movies from local entertainment producers. But those are few and far between, I'm afraid.

I really must work on my patriotism to overcome my racism against my own race. Talk about being ironic, huh?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Define colonial mentality. How is it a form of racism?
2. Why is it so easy to judge people because of the color of their skin or the language they have?
3. How can we overcome racism? Is it worth fighting against?
4. If people like Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King hadn't fought for civil liberty and racial equality, what do you think the situation would be today?
5. What are the harmful effects of racism to society and the world at large? Elaborate on your answer.



RACISM IN TODAY'S WORLD

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We all share the same templates for our physical, physiological and body systems. Although there have been a number of other people who have an extra digit or irregular characteristics apart from what is regularly seen in their "normal" counterparts, the fact remains that we have been born into this planet with hardly anything to make us breeds apart from others. We should not ever consider certain aspects such as color, race or creed as significant factors to say which people have superiority over others. The world was not meant to be that way.

We might have heard stories during our childhood on how we were created to be of different color or races. In my country, the story goes like so: Supreme God decided to fashion beings out of clay and cook the images in an oven. The first batch of beings was left too long in the oven because the Creator forgot about them. They became the black race. The next batch of clay images were taken out too early and they turned out to become the white race. The last batch of beings to be put into the oven was the brown race, where my people belong. We were taken out of the oven at the right time. In the story that was always part of our native literature books in elementary school, apparently the author of that very story had wanted to be creative and came up with such an account of how we were created. The yellow race might have been described in other stories somewhere, but as far as I can recall, the version that was told to us in our books during those days only had those three races: black, white and brown.

It doesn't matter how the story of the creation of the human race is described to us in books and verbal accounts. We should never take those stories to mean that there are races that are created far above others just because they are black, white, brown or yellow. God may even have created other color beings we are not aware of. Goodness, we even have "blue" babies, but that's just because of a cyanotic heart defect. Or we ourselves might elect to do self-tanning or skin whitening just to become more beautiful. But that doesn't mean we need to look down on others when they are not of the same color as us, or whatever color we pretend to be.

The trend has shifted to black hair being dyed blond and red and whatever color of the rainbow there is. I find this funny sometimes because my race was born with naturally black or dark brown hair. Blond hair looks atrocious with dark skin like ours, which is why the attempts by many to look Caucasian or American are deplorable, at most. Be proud of the race you were born into, for it is the race you will eventually die into.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. How has racism become part of culture?
2. Do you think stories of creation like the one told in the essay contribute to racism? How?
3. What is the effect of racism on the race being discriminated against? Be as specific as needed.
4. How have people in your own country tried to adopt a different race? Be as specific as you can.
5. What are the effects of racism on society, as a whole? Elaborate on your answer.

One day our descendants will think it incredible that we paid so much attention to things like the amount of melanin in our skin or the shape of our eyes or our gender instead of the unique identities of each of us as complex human beings. ~Franklin Thomas



RACISM-A CALL CENTER AGENT'S STORY

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You and I belong to the same race. We possess the same body parts, have the same emotions and aspire to achieve the same things. Therefore, we should never allow the color of our skin or the race we are members of to drive a wedge between and among us. It always hurts to be labeled pitiful, unworthy or inferior just because one belongs to another race. Although racism before was even worse, it has not completely disappeared from society. There are still those who find mingling with other races rather uncomfortable. There are even others that refuse to have anything to do with a certain race just because that particular race is reputed to be crooked, corrupt or just "different".

Several years ago, during my call center days, I was talking to a very difficult customer on Internet phone. Although I couldn't blame the person at the other end for being cranky because of our center's method of cold calling, what he said particularly hurt me more than any swear word probably ever could. He said, "You belong to the mud race, don't you? Where are you calling from?" At that, I couldn't say anything since I found it unbelievable that such people could still exist many half-centuries away from the Victorian era. All I managed to say was, "Sir, you're very funny, believe me. Thank you for taking my call. God bless you, sir." I was shaking after that call not because what he said was true, but because I could not believe such cruelty to still exist.

Anyway, that period in my life has long gone. But I still pity those who need to contend with such peevishness day in and day out. Okay, being in a country where powerful nations outsource various segments of their business to can be both pain and glory, but who says that call center representatives need to enjoy that? We're people, too, and probably our ability to adopt particular Western accents is appealing. But that ability, unfortunately, will not suffice to make us cold to insult. I am amazed at those who are able to stay in their jobs without complaint and bitterness. Maybe the reason why that particular era of my career didn't last long was because of my inability to bear the heartache of being insulted.

In our daily lives, let us teach ourselves to embrace the diversity that exists among us. We may belong to different races, but there's absolutely no reason on God's green earth that we can't learn to win the race against racism.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Define racism.
2. Have you or somebody you know ever personally experienced racism? Be able to recount the story in class.
3. How can racism be eradicated? Can it ever be eliminated? Why or why not?
4. How does racism create problems in society?
5. Why do you think we were created of different races? Elaborate on your answer.



Racism and Stereotyping happens daily

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Both racism and stereotyping are common today. Racism is characterized as the prejudice of members of one particular race and the idea that most races are superior to others. Racism has a broad history and it has affected the development of mankind. Wars have been started because of the idea that most races are superior to others. Such forms of racism often turn towards abusive and discriminatory acts. In terms of stereotyping, it is a conventional conception or idea that is shared by people. Stereotyping is based on judging and treating others according to a certain type of idea.

So why are the concepts of stereotyping and racism strong today? One of which is because of the media. The media has a strong effect in the ideas of people. Most people believe that other racial groups are bad simply because of what they have heard in the news. In terms of the internet, online communities tend to share certain ideas which can be racial or negative in nature. Once they pass the ideas, other members of the community will take notice and in turn they too will feel anger and hate to certain groups.

There are a lot of things that are judged by people today. Most people judge other races according to their religion, language, habits, cultural practices and even in the color of their skin. Even the comments or arguments about the actions of others can lead to arguments and fights. For instance, the actions of one actor can lead fans and commentators in a fight. Because of the negative responses of people about certain practices and beliefs, arguments happen and it often sparks the start of battles. In today's standards, racism no longer applies only in the culture of one race but also to group beliefs and concepts.

The internet also increases the concept of racism and stereotyping. Pictures and videos are shared daily in social networking sites. Most of these videos and pictures depict racial slurs and negative practices done by other racial groups. Once idealists and purists see such videos, they are lead to a crusade to publicly humiliate other social media members. In the end, cybercrimes occur simply because people practice stereotyping and racial discrimination.

One of the best ways to prevent both racial discrimination and stereotyping is through education. Educating both adults and children about the negative effects of racism is one of the best ways in preventing discrimination. Another way to prevent both racism and stereotyping is through rules and regulations. By adding rules in social media networks and internet groups, members will think twice before they try to discriminate others.

Questions:

- 1) What is racism and stereotyping?
- 2) How can we stop racism and stereotyping?
- 3) Why is racism common today?
- 4) How does racism occur in the internet today?
- 5) What are cybercrimes?



RACISM - UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

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Some people have this belief that they are superior over others and this is actually what racism is all about, where the result of unconscious bias is cognizant. This has also effects in the real world where race relations get worst and it is all because we are never aware of this emotion, which can be referred to as a kind of human complexity. When we try to stereo type groups of people and have indifference towards each other, this is where racism begins. Without even realizing it, racism is embedded in the consciousness of the people's mind. It also plays a great impact on our being biased.

We all come from varied backgrounds, having different experiences, attitudes and beliefs. These things make us distinct from each other and distinguish a person from another. Nowadays, differences are no longer accepted. Every individual lives in a particular culture and society and we have established a classification system of groups which are based according to one's cultural background. Therefore, any differences of these individuals would be based on their ethnicity or race. This emphasis on assumptions is known as stereotypes wherein racism originated.

Some people can be prejudiced but let me tell you that this is not considered to be an innate character. Because of the environment and social influences that were developed in a person, one may experience racial attitudes and beliefs. It dates back to the time when children were very keen and observant as to recognizing the differences based on the color of one's skin. These differences are thereby tolerated over the years and this is how acceptance of others are predicted or which are being determined based on race, gender or low economic status. Racism is clearly defined here and unconscious bias is very implicit.

Parents also play an important influence over the child's values, beliefs and behavior. Most probably these are what they will acquire and adopt in their own lives too. If the parents are very particular and are highly opposed to a particular race, then this is what will be seen in the attitude and display of behavior of the child. These things may be causes as to how an individual may develop prejudice and in no time at all will turn to be a racist. We should also be able to recognize the contributing factors of education and the effects of society that may play as a very crucial role in the perspective of racism.

Racism can be thought of as a very destructive aspect of human history. We know for a fact that the belief that a particular group of people is superior to another has been in existence for thousands of years. To top it all I firmly believe that any differences between people should be accepted and respected regardless of whoever the person is. We should never make assumptions and wrong notions about people and individuals per se. Let us put a stop and see past the differences in others for us not to face racism and not have this unconscious bias towards others for after all we were created equal in the eyes of God.

Questions for discussion:

1. How would racism affect your direct and indirect relationship with others?
2. Do you always see the differences of other people around you? Does it really matter?
3. Are you being biased with other people most of the time? Explain your answer.
4. Do you agree that racism can be considered as an unconscious bias towards other people? Why or why not?
5. How can you differentiate racism and racial discrimination?



International Online Teachers Society(IOTS) is an independent non profit international organization committed to improving the state of online and offline education in the world by engaging all kinds of language teachers with fluent English speaking skill in the world to shape global, regional and education agendas.
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