

This is a really useful tool for dealing with the tendency people, young and old, have to over generalise their own experiences and draw implications and conclusions that are not reflective of reality. We see over generalisations underpinning all forms of prejudice, such as sexism and racism, and an exercise like Always, Sometimes, Never enables students to explore context, cultural differences, the literal meaning of language in contrast to everyday expressions, the exception to the rule.

All the statements will/should end up in 'Sometimes' and it will not feel at all satisfactory for either the teacher or the students because the term 'sometimes' is so ambiguous and imprecise. Following up with the 'Some' Concept Continuum (Line) is a helpful way to explore this further and to expand vocabulary.

Always, Sometimes, Never

Aims:

- Students will identify over-generalisations, assumptions, stereotypes and prejudices in our everyday thinking.
- Students will think creatively and critically in relation to the statements, identifying exceptions and limitations in relation to the statements and the categories, Always, Sometimes, Never.
- Students will reflect critically on the implications of affirming a universal, absolute rule and on how important context is when making generalisations.

Activity:

Organise class into groups of 4 and give statements sorting activity followed by whole class feedback and discussion

Students must consider whether each of the statements is always true, sometimes true or never true and sort them into groups labelled Always, Sometimes, Never.

Class discussion will result in all the statements being placed in the 'Sometimes' category. Finding examples to highlight problems with or exceptions to a statement being accepted as an absolute, universal command will be easier for some statements than others.

Facilitation Questions for Classroom Discussion:

- What if the statement was always true?
- What if the statement was never true?
- Can everyone do what the statement suggests?
- Should everyone do what the statement suggests?

- How might the exceptions to the statement be important?
- Is the statement clear or could it be misunderstood?
- Are all the statements equally important?
- Are there any assumptions in the statement?
- Are there any stereotypes or prejudices in the statement?

Eat fruit and vegetables every day

Take regular cardiovascular exercise

Let girls go first

Tell the truth

Help a stranger in need

Look before crossing a road

Be thankful for everything you have

Get angry

Use violence

Do what you are told to do

Read the instructions

Clean your teeth

Recycle