

# **Racial Profiling**

## **A Thematic Unit for ESL Learners**

**Developed by Denise McCarthy  
and Tracy Ousdahl**

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**Racial Profiling**  
**A Thematic Unit**  
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## RACIAL PROFILING

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### CHECKLIST FOR LEARNING

In this unit you will be able to:

- Talk about racial profiling
- File a complaint against racial profiling
- Speak up to the police or judge about unfair treatment
- Read short stories
- Write about something that happened in the past
- Identify and use prepositional phrases
- Explaining reasons using because
- Identify and using adverbials
- Redress Grievances

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**Warm-up Activity**

Take a few minutes to think about these questions. Discuss them with your classmates.

1. What is racial profiling?
2. Do you feel comfortable making complaints to the police?
3. Do you ever feel anyone is judging you because of your race?
4. Have you ever judged someone because of their race?

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**Opening Story****1) Iris' Story:**

Maybe I had a stereotype of black people because television influences your mind a lot. I thought all black people were bad because I heard that these people hate all Latin people. When I saw somebody black on the street, I felt scared and walked far from them.

But one day I walked on the street and I heard a black baby cry. He moved me a lot. It's very difficult for me to explain that. I felt very sad because I had a wrong idea in my head. I understood that not all people are the same, and I see them different. Almost all people have wrong ideas about each other. It's a big problem.

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**Talk about it**

Discuss these questions with your classmates:

1. What did Iris think about black people?
2. How did she get her idea?
3. What changed her mind?
4. What is the problem?

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**Language Practice**

Complete the Story. Fill in the blanks with these verbs. You may use some verbs more than once.

<b>have</b>	<b>understood</b>
<b>walked</b>	<b>felt</b>
<b>influences</b>	<b>heard</b>
<b>saw</b>	<b>moved</b>
<b>thought</b>	<b>see</b>
<b>hate</b>	<b>were</b>
<b>had</b>	<b>are</b>

Maybe I \_\_\_\_\_ a stereotype of black people because television \_\_\_\_\_ your mind a lot. I \_\_\_\_\_ all black people \_\_\_\_\_ bad because I \_\_\_\_\_ that these people \_\_\_\_\_ all Latin people. When I \_\_\_\_\_ somebody black on the street, I \_\_\_\_\_ scared and \_\_\_\_\_ far from them.

But one day I \_\_\_\_\_ on the street, and I \_\_\_\_\_ a black baby cry. He \_\_\_\_\_ me a lot. It's very difficult for me to explain that. I \_\_\_\_\_ very sad because I \_\_\_\_\_ a wrong idea in my head. I \_\_\_\_\_ that not all people \_\_\_\_\_ the same, and I \_\_\_\_\_ them different. Almost all people \_\_\_\_\_ wrong ideas about each other. It's a big problem.

Write three questions about the story. Then ask your partner to answer your questions. Are your partner's answers correct?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

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**More stories**

2) Last year I parked my car in front of my house at 8:00 P.M. in the evening. The next morning, I noticed that someone broke into my car and stole my video camera and briefcase. The family that lived next door to me had four teenage boys. I thought these teenagers broke into my car and stole my things. I didn't talk to them about it since I didn't have proof. After that, I wasn't friendly to them anymore.

Denise McCarthy is an ESL instructor at City College of San Francisco

3) Three years ago, my husband and I bought a house in El Cerrito. My neighbor, Elaine, who lived across the street, was 94. I didn't want to get to know her because I thought we didn't have anything in common. I didn't think she was interesting because she was so old. One day I met her, and I realized that she was a fascinating woman. We became good friends, and I spent many wonderful times listening to her stories. She died last year, and I still miss her a lot.

Tracy Ousdahl is an ESL instructor at City College of San Francisco

**Talk about it****Discussion Questions**

1. What are stereotypes?
2. Who has stereotypes?
3. Where do stereotypes come from?
4. Are stereotypes good or bad?
5. What groups do we stereotype in the U.S?
6. What stereotypes do North Americans have about you?
7. What groups do people stereotype in your country?

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## Looking at Grammar: Prepositions - Location of time and space

Read Denise's story again. The underlined phrases are prepositional phrases that show location and time.

Last year I parked my car in front of my house at 8:00 P.M. in the evening. The next morning, I noticed that someone broke into my car and stole my video camera and my briefcase. The family that lived next door to me had four teenage boys. I thought these teenagers broke into my car and stole my things. I didn't talk to them about it since I didn't have any proof.

### Location in *time:(when)*

Last year  
The next morning  
At 8:00 P.M.  
In the evening

### Location in *space: (where)*

in front of  
into my car

### **More practice**

**Put the following prepositional phrases in the correct column below.**

In the old part of town  
On Monday morning  
To the store  
In the water  
At that time

At six o'clock  
At City College  
In 2003  
On March 25th  
Away from home

### Location in *time:(when)*

### Location in *space: (where)*

In Groups, think of 3 new prepositional phrases for time and space. Write them in the columns below.

**Location of time:**

**Location of space:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

In the story below, the prepositional phrases are underlined. Put them into the right categories.

4) Reyna's Story:

My brother has a problem with a policeman some months ago. He was driving his car on the highway when the police stopped him and asked him for his driver's license. My brother told him that he didn't have it, but the police officer didn't wait for an explanation. He got very angry and ordered my brother to get out of the car. My brother tried to say that he forgot his license at home, but the police officer didn't listen to him. The police officer towed away his car. My brother then asked the police officer to give him a ride to the nearest bus stop because he was far from home, but the police officer said he didn't care what happened to my brother and he left him alone on the highway. My brother walked for many hours until he arrived at home. He didn't get his car returned.

**Location of space:**

**Location of time:**

---

**More practice:**

Read Tracy's story again. Underline the prepositional phrases of time and space.

Three years ago, my husband and I bought a house in El Cerrito. My neighbor, Elaine, who lived across the street was 94. I didn't want to get to know her because I thought we didn't have anything in common. I didn't think she was interesting because she was so old. One day, I met her, and I realized that she was a fascinating woman. We became good friends, and I spent many wonderful times listening to her stories. She died last year, and I still miss her a lot.

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**Language Practice - Explaining Reasons**

**Use *because* to explain a reason.**

**Example:**

I thought all black people were bad *because* I heard they hate Latino people.

Match the statements in Column A with the statements in column B.

**A.**  
Maybe I had a stereotype of black people

I didn't talk to them about it

I didn't want to get to know her

I felt sad

**because**

**B**  
I had a wrong idea in my head

I thought we didn't have anything in common

Television influences your mind a lot

I didn't have any proof

Now combine the two sentences and write them below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

---

**What do you think?**

Answer the questions below. Use *because* to explain your reasons.

1. Why are people sometimes afraid of other groups?
2. How do stereotypes hurt people?
3. What stereotypes do people have of your group? Why do they have these stereotypes?

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**Getting Rid of Stereotyping**

Which of the following help to create stereotypes? Which help to break down stereotypes? Add more ideas to the lists.

ignorance  
dislike  
interest  
impatience  
friendships  
understanding

no contact  
negative images  
prejudice  
acceptance  
fear  
invisibility

**What creates stereotypes?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**What breaks down stereotypes?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How can we understand other people who are different from us?

Work in small groups. Write down the things we can do to get to know others better.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**More Practice**

In groups, underline the prepositional phrases in Pablo's story.

5) Pablo's Story:

My experience with the police was one Friday around 3:45 P.M. I was 23 years old. I was outside my house. I lived next to the parking lot of Michael's Ice Cream Store at San Jose Avenue. Two friends stopped by to say hello. We were talking outside my house when we saw three guys with a gun across the street from us. They were around 14 years old. After ten or fifteen minutes, the police arrived and the three boys ran away.

The police look at us. We thought they were looking for the three guys. We look Latino, so they thought we were the ones. Then one of the officers took out his gun and pointed it at us. I told the officer that the guys he was looking for ran that way. He told me to be quiet and put my hands on my head. Three more police cars arrived. My friends and I were afraid. They didn't let us talk. They asked for the gun and we told them we didn't have any gun. One of the officers went into my house. My mother was visiting from Mexico and was very scared. The police put us in handcuffs. One of the neighbors came over and started to tell them that we are good boys, and the boys they were looking for had run away. After that a police supervisor arrived. He spoke Spanish with us. He was very sorry for the big mistake.

## Discussion Questions

1. When do police stereotype people?
2. What kinds of stereotypes do they make?
3. Why do you think they stereotype people?

Put the sentences from Pablo's story in the correct order  
Write a number next to each sentence.

### **Pablo's Story:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I was outside my house. I lived next to the parking lot of Michael's Ice Cream Store at San Jose Avenue.

\_\_\_\_\_ The police look at us. We thought they were looking for the three guys. We look Latino, so they thought we were the ones.

\_\_\_\_\_ The one of the officers took out his gun and pointed it at us. I told the officers that the guys he was looking for ran that way.

\_\_\_\_\_ One of the neighbors came over and started to tell them that we are good boys, and the boys they were looking for ran away.

1 My experience with the police was on Friday around 3:45 P.M. I was 23 years old. Two friends stopped by to say hello

\_\_\_\_\_ We were talking outside my house when we saw three guys with a gun across the street from us. They were around 14 years old.

\_\_\_\_\_ He told me to be quiet and put my hands on my head. Three more police cars arrived. My friends and I were afraid. They didn't even let us talk.

\_\_\_\_\_ They asked for the gun and we told them we didn't have any gun. One of the officers went into my house. My mother was visiting from Mexico and was very scared.

\_\_\_\_\_ After ten or fifteen minutes, the police arrived and the three boys ran away.

\_\_\_\_\_ The police put us in handcuffs. After that a police supervisor arrived. He spoke Spanish with us. He was very sorry for the big mistake.

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**Using Language: Adverbials**

The words and phrases in the box below are adverbials.

of	after	since	while
as soon as	until	before	

**Examples of adverbials in a sentence:**

- My brother was driving his car on the highway when the police stopped him.
- My brother walked for many hours until he arrived home.

Use the adverbial in parentheses to combine the sentences into one complete sentence.

1. The police officer became angry. (as soon as)  
My brother told him he didn't have his driver's license.

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2. The police officer ordered my brother out of the car. (when)  
He towed away my brother's car.

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3. My brother asked the officer for a ride to the bus stop. (after)  
The officer left my brother alone on the highway.

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4. We saw three guys with a gun across the street from us. (while)  
We were talking outside my house.

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**What to do if you are stopped by the police.**

Read the American Civil Liberties (ACLU) "Bustcard" guidelines below.

**ACLU Bustcard**

- ✓ **Be polite and respectful.**
- ✓ **Stay calm and in control.**
- ✓ **Don't get into an argument with the police.**
- ✓ **Anything you say or do can be used against you.**
- ✓ **Keep your hands where the police can see them.**
- ✓ **Don't run. Don't touch any police officer.**
- ✓ **Don't resist, even if you believe you are innocent.**
- ✓ **Don't complain on the scene or tell the police they're wrong or that you are going to file a complaint.**
- ✓ **Don't make any statement regarding the incident.**
- ✓ **Ask for a lawyer immediately upon your arrest.**
- ✓ **Remember the officers' badge and patrol car numbers.**
- ✓ **Write down everything you remember ASAP.**

Place an X next to the sentences that are correct.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Never bad mouth a police officer.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Don't put your hands in your pocket.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Tell the police if you think they made a mistake.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Tell the police you are going to file a complaint.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ It's not necessary to ask for a lawyer if you are innocent.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Don't talk too much about the incident with the officer.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ If possible, get the badge and patrol car numbers.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Immediately write down everything you remember.

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## More Stories

### 6) Rosa Maria's Story:

Some years ago, the police stopped me because they thought I didn't stop at a signal. They gave me a citation. I went to court and the judge dropped the charges because I explained my case. I didn't speak English, so they gave me a translator and the judge believed me.

### Looking at Grammar: Past Tense Verbs

**Remember:**  
Regular verbs + -ed = past tense

**Present:**

look	+ed	=	<b><u>Past</u></b> looked
explain	+ed	=	explained
believe	+ed	=	believed
stop	+ed	=	stopped

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### Grammar Practice: Past tense verbs

Put the verbs in the spaces in Rosa Maria's story below.

<b>gave</b>	<b>stopped</b>	<b>didn't</b>	<b>gave</b>
<b>went</b>	<b>thought</b>	<b>explained</b>	<b>believed</b>
<b>dropped</b>	<b>didn't</b>		

### Rosa Maria's Story:

Some years ago, the police \_\_\_\_\_ me because they \_\_\_\_\_  
I \_\_\_\_\_ stop at a signal. They \_\_\_\_\_ me a citation. I \_\_\_\_\_ to  
court and the judge \_\_\_\_\_ the charges because I \_\_\_\_\_ my case. I  
\_\_\_\_\_ speak English, so they \_\_\_\_\_ me a translator and the judge  
\_\_\_\_\_ me.

Make a list of the regular verbs and irregular verbs from Rosa Maria's story.

**Regular Verbs:**

**Irregular verbs:**

Read Silvano's story and put the verbs in the correct categories.  
Your class can add more to the list.

7. Silvano's Story:

On the 15th of September at 1:30 A.M I **parked** my car in the parking lot at work. When I **opened** the car door a police officer called me. I **responded** by asking him what happened. He **was** very violent and **threw** me to the floor face down. He **beat** me on my face and legs and **climbed** on my back. My manager **came** out and **saw** the police **put** a transparent bag with something that **looked** like drugs in my glove compartment. My manager **got** close and **told** them that I **worked** for his company for many years and that he **knew** me very well. Then the police **took** the bag out of the glove compartment. Then they **gave** me a ticket that **stated** I **made** left turn without caution. I **didn't** want to sign the ticket, but my manager **told** me to sign it and I **could** handle the case in court. I **got** a lawyer and the case is now in the San Francisco municipal court.

**Regular Verbs**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Past</b>
park	parked

**Irregular Verbs**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Past</b>

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**Discussion Questions:**

1. What was Rosa Maria's traffic violation?
2. What did she do?
3. Why did the police stop Silvano?
4. What did he do?
5. What can people do if they believe the police are not fair to them?

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**Taking Action:**

Below are things people can do when they are unfairly stereotyped by the police or others. Add other things to the list.

- complain to the person directly
- complain to the police
- write or call elected officials
- file a complaint with a government office
- complain to community organizations
- go to court
- talk it over with friends and family
- file a lawsuit
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Talk it over:**

1. Which things did Silvano do?
2. Which things did Rosa Maria do?
3. Which things did Pablo do?
4. Which things are easy to do?
5. Which things are hard to do?
6. Have you ever done any of the above things? Explain
7. Which can you do? Which can't you do? Why?

**Filing a Complaint:**

Fill out the complaint form using Pablo's story.

<b>Office of Citizen Complaint</b>		
<b>1. Primary Complainant:</b>		
_____	_____	_____
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name
<b>Home Address:</b>		
_____		_____
Street		
_____	_____	_____
City	State	Zip Code
<b>2. Personal Information</b>		
Age _____	Date of Birth _____	<b>3. Telephone Number</b>
Sex: _____		Home: _____
Ethnicity: _____		<b>4. Location of Occurrence</b>
Occupation: _____		_____
		<b>5. Date/Time of Occurrence</b>
		_____
<b>6. Narrative of Incident</b>		
_____		
_____		
_____		
_____		
_____		
_____		
_____		
_____		
_____		

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**Extension Activities:**

1. Invite a speaker from the Office of Citizens' Complaint (OCC) to come to your classroom.
2. Brainstorm questions you and your classmates will ask the speaker.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

**Categorizing:**

How can you categorize your questions?

Questions about:	The Office of Citizens Complaint
	Kinds of complaints
	Filing out complaint forms

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Work with your classmates to make a booklet of information about filing a complaint against racial profiling. Follow these instructions:

1. Write two questions you will ask the OCC speaker.
2. Ask the speaker your question and write his/her answer.
3. Collect all of the questions and answers from your classmates.
4. Categorize the questions and answers
5. Ask your instructor to copy the booklet for you.

**Question One**

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**Answer**

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**Question Two**

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**Answer**

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**Checklist for learning:**

**I. Vocabulary - Check the words you know . Add more if you wish.**

**Nouns**

- Stereotype
- Influences
- Hate
- Briefcase
- Proof
- Ignorance
- Impatience
- Prejudice
- Acceptance
- Understanding
- Complaint
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Verbs**

- Dislike
- Influence
- Understood
- Explained
- Believed
- Complain
- Stated
- Responded
- Filing
- Regarding
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Adjectives**

- Wonderful
- Ignorant
- Impatient
- Calm
- Negative
- Understanding
- Fascinating
- Wrong
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Adverbs**

- As soon as
- Before
- After
- Until
- Since
- While
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Language**

**Check what you can do in English. Add more if you wish.**

- Talk about racial profiling
- File a complaint against racial profiling
- Speak up to the police or judge about unfair treatment
- Read short stories
- Write about something that happened in the past
- Identify and use prepositional phrases
- Explaining Reasons using because
- Identifying and using Adverbials
- Redressing Grievances
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Looking Back

A. In this unit I learned \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. I want to study more \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. The activity I liked best was \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D. The activity that I liked least was \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thematic Unit Field Test Form  
First Amendment Plus**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School or program \_\_\_\_\_

Title of unit tested \_\_\_\_\_

1. General description of your program: size, goals, general curriculum focus:
  
2. Description of class: proficiency level, size, #hrs/week
  
3. Description of students, i.e. country (ies) of origin, age, native literacy level, goals for learning English
  
4. Overall reactions:
  - a. What did you like best about this unit, overall?
  
  - b. In general, do you have any suggestions for improvement? Anything you would add, delete or change in the unit as a whole?

This whole unit took \_\_\_\_\_ hours over the course of \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

Did you add or skip any segments? Please comment.

Please send Thematic Unit Field Test Forms and/or notes written directly on units to:

Gail Weinstein  
[gailw@sfsu.edu](mailto:gailw@sfsu.edu)  
English Department  
San Francisco State University  
1600 Holloway Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94132