BEAUTY IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

This project was developed for the “Didática da Língua Inglesa” course, with the purpose of designing a sequence for a basic education group in a public school, centered in the work with texts: visual ads and photos; a lecture (Ted Talk); Youtube comments. The main goal is to use the English language to discuss beauty standards, stereotypes and racism.
- Target public: 2nd year of High School
- Number of classes: six.

Warm-up
[The teacher will hand out the pictures inserted below and ask the students the following questions. The teacher should guide the discussion towards the topic of stereotypes, beauty standards and the media’s impact on these notions.]

1. Look at the images below. What do they have in common?
2. Compare each pair of photos with a partner. What differences do you see?
3. Do you know who these people are? Do you think they are attractive?
4. Where do you think these photos were published? What was the purpose of the images? Why do you think they were altered?
Pre-text activity

Match the following concepts with their meanings:

1. Beauty Standards
2. Colorism
3. Status quo

( ) “The existing state of affairs, especially regarding social or political issues.”¹
( ) An ideal image imposed by society and media; a combination of features considered desirable in a certain time and place, often artificial and unattainable.
( ) “A form of prejudice or discrimination in which people are treated differently based on the social meanings attached to skin color.”²

Reading and Comprehension - TED TALK

¹ https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/status_quo
[The teacher will present the questions to the students and then play the following video. After watching it, the students will discuss the questions in small groups, and then with the whole class guided by the teacher.]

Link to the subtitled video

1) Watch this lecture by Chika Okoro and pay attention to how they classify girls in the auditions for the movie “Straight outta Compton”. Write down keywords that describe each category.
A:
B:
C:
D:

2) Which are the most favorable features in movies according to Chika Okoro?

3) How did colorism start in the United States?

4) Chika Okoro received this “compliment”: “Oh, you’re so pretty… for a black girl”. In your opinion, is that offensive? Why?

5) Does “colorism” affect any other part of the world? How?

6) According to Chika Okoro, why do we have these beauty preferences?

Activity

Match the images with the corresponding sentences.
2. In pairs, describe to each other the family members that live in your household.
Based on the description, draw your classmate’s family and then check if it resembles reality.

**Discussion**

*The teacher can again explain the concept of Beauty Standard and write “must be” on the board and show them how to use the new structure. The discussion first occurs in pairs or small groups and then they can report what they discussed to the whole class, guided by the teacher. This discussion should happen mostly in English.*

1) What are the beauty standards in Brazil? Discuss it with a partner. Use the structure “You must be…” and the adjectives that you learned in the previous activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You must be...</th>
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2) Do you think that everyone could fit that description? Do you know people in real life that do?

3) How do we learn our notions of beauty?

4) What do people do to change their appearance? When is it too much?

5) What are some privileges of being considered beautiful?
Written Production

[Students should work in pairs.]

1) Look at these comments posted on the Youtube video. Are they positive or negative feedback? Do you agree with them?

   LightFly2013  5 meses atrás (editado)
   This saddens me so much. This girl is Nigerian-American and if she was raised in Nigeria, she would have a better sense of self and her beauty according to her darker hue. Granted, colorism exists in that country on some levels, but NOTHING like in the United States.
   Ler mais
   Responder • 16  
   Ver todas as 14 respostas

   Kristian Thomas  7 meses atrás
   I hope the people in the room understood her message. She wasn’t saying “me before everyone else” she was saying “all of us are beautiful and should be represented as such”. Awesome message
   Responder • 127

2) Write your own comment now to post it in the comment section. It should contain how you feel about the video, your own opinion, how the beauty standards in the USA compare to Brazil’s and, if you want, a personal experience.

   You can use:

   I think that...
   I liked what she said about...
   I agree/disagree with...
   In my opinion...
   In Brazil people must be...

Wrap up
1) Ask your classmates: Do you know....?

[The teacher should distribute copies of the grid and read the descriptions with the students, checking if they understand the vocabulary. The teacher explains the activity: the students must walk about the class and ask their classmates if they know any celebrity that fit the description. The student who completes it first wins the game.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A TV show/movie with a dark-skinned protagonist</th>
<th>An actress who is older than 50</th>
<th>A famous asian actress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A successful black singer</td>
<td>An actor/actress who is overweight</td>
<td>A disabled celebrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A celebrity with freckles or skin marks</td>
<td>A bald celebrity</td>
<td>A TV show/movie with an Indian protagonist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References

Latham-Koenig, Christina; Oxenden, Clive; Seligson, Paul. AMERICAN ENGLISH FILE 2 -

Videos:


Photos: