Who Gets a Chance?

Trace how a group-based belief can shape decisions and opportunities.

P.7.6 "Explain how stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination influence behavior."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline Mira's group-based assumption, circle her negative feeling, and label her unequal assignment and Leo's response 1 and 2 in the order they occur. Use your marks to trace how a belief can influence behavior.

The Repair Fair

1. At a neighborhood repair fair, teens sign up to fix lamps, sort donated parts, and design signs. When Mira sees that Leo is in the art club, she assumes he cannot handle electrical tools. That assumption is a stereotype: a belief about what someone can do based on membership in a group. Mira feels uneasy about working with him before she has seen him repair anything. This negative judgment is prejudice. She assigns Leo to signs even though he requested lamp repair. Treating him differently because of that group-based judgment is discrimination. Leo stays quiet while the repair team makes plans.

2. At first, the other volunteers follow Mira's assignment without asking why. Leo has repaired lamps with his grandfather, but no one asks about his experience. As a result, the team loses a skilled helper, and Leo gets no chance to show what he knows. When a lamp stops working, Mira says the repair table is short on people. Another volunteer, Sam, notices Leo's request on the sign-up sheet and asks whether he wants to join. Sam's question does not guarantee that Leo will succeed, but it replaces a group-based guess with a chance to demonstrate skill.

3. During the next shift, Leo tests the lamp with the team and finds a loose wire. The team fixes it after an adult supervisor checks that the power is off and guides the repair. Mira tells Leo she should have asked about his experience instead of assuming he lacked it. She then offers all volunteers a choice of tasks and checks what training each task requires. One fair decision cannot erase every biased belief, but a changed routine can affect future behavior. It may make volunteers more likely to ask about skills and less likely to exclude someone without evidence.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Mira's belief about art club members influence both her feeling toward Leo and the task she gave him?

2. How did Mira's assignment affect Leo's behavior and the repair team?

3. How did Sam's response differ from Mira's first response, and what opportunity did it give Leo?

4. How might Mira's new way of assigning tasks change volunteers' behavior during later shifts?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a different school situation in which a stereotype leads to prejudice and then discrimination. In five or six sentences, explain how the unfair action affects someone's behavior and describe an evidence-based choice that could change what happens next.

Who Gets a Chance?

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline Mira's group-based assumption, circle her negative feeling, and label her unequal assignment and Leo's response 1 and 2 in the order they occur. Use your marks to trace how a belief can influence behavior. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Mira's belief about art club members influence both her feeling toward Leo and the task she gave him?	**She assumed art club members could not handle electrical tools, felt uneasy working with Leo, and assigned him to signs instead of the lamp repair he requested.**
2	How did Mira's assignment affect Leo's behavior and the repair team?	**Leo stayed quiet and had no chance to show his repair skills. The team lost a skilled helper.**
3	How did Sam's response differ from Mira's first response, and what opportunity did it give Leo?	**Sam noticed Leo's request and asked if he wanted to join instead of guessing his ability from his club membership. This gave Leo a chance to demonstrate his skills.**
4	How might Mira's new way of assigning tasks change volunteers' behavior during later shifts?	**Offering task choices and checking training may lead volunteers to ask about skills rather than exclude someone based on a group-based assumption.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A debate captain assumes ninth graders cannot speak confidently at tournaments. She feels worried whenever a ninth grader asks to compete. Without hearing them speak, she gives all the speaking spots to older students. One ninth grader stops volunteering, so the team never hears his strong opening argument. The captain could hold the same tryout for everyone and judge each speaker's preparation. That choice would give students a chance to demonstrate their skills instead of being judged by grade level.

Accept answers that distinguish a group-based belief, a negative judgment, and an unequal action, then explain a supported effect on behavior. For Your Turn, the alternative should use evidence about an individual rather than another group-based guess.