

A stereotype: a generalisation about, or a standardised image of, a person or group of persons. It ignores the fact that we are all individuals.

Authors regularly use and question stereotypes. Consider which characters reflect stereotypical views and values.

- a. **Verb:** Mr Lim *stereotypes* consumers who buy bottled water as “trendy suckers”.
- b. **Noun:** Aunt Alexandra perpetuates *the stereotype* of the submissive girl in a dress, who should be a “ray of sunshine” in the lives of men. (*to perpetuate: to make perpetual - continuing or enduring indefinitely*)
- c. **Adjective:** Scout Finch does not conform to *stereotypical* gender roles. (*to conform to: to become similar in terms of character; to act in accord or harmony*)
- d. **Adverbial:** *Reinforcing feminine stereotypes*, Aunt Alexandra expects Scout to play with tea sets, “small stoves” and her “Add-A-Pearl necklace”.

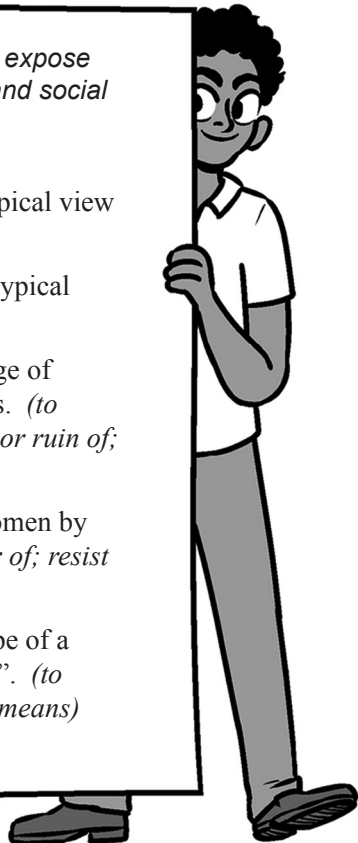
TEXT 8: “Chinese Dancing, Bendigo Style” by Joo-Inn Chew: *Joo-Inn Chew’s father is Chinese and her mother is Australian. As “half Chinese” children, with “middle-class urban-hippie parents”, she grows up in Bendigo, surrounded by “fifth generation Australian farmers”. (See Text 9)* “We didn’t seem to belong anywhere. The kids in my country primary school had sandy hair, pale freckly skin and blue eyes that could read the board from the back of the room without corrective lenses. They drank red cordial and ate white-bread sandwiches. The girls played Barbies and netball and had names like Debbie and Michelle. The boys rode BMXs and kicked footballs and were called Craig and Derrick. All of them knew the difference between the Hawks and the Magpies (...) My siblings and I had dull black home-cut hair and glasses that got broken when we failed to catch balls that were thrown at us. We ate wholegrain bread (...) We lurked at the edge of the playground and ate our lunch in the library where we read the Guinness Book of Records for the tenth time.” (247)

Using the sentence models, analyse the stereotypes in Text 8. (Also Text 62, p. 90.)

- 1.
.....
- 2.
.....
- 3.
.....
.....

Exposing stereotypes: Authors often question and expose stereotypes to make a point about identities, injustices and social expectations.

- a. **To challenge:** Ms Jinger *challenges* the stereotypical view that football is “too rough” for girls.
- b. **To expose:** Ms Jinger *exposes* the coach’s stereotypical attitude towards women’s physical capacities.
- c. **To subvert:** Diana *subverts* the stereotypical image of a “dutiful daughter” by resisting her mother’s goals. (*to undermine the principles of; to cause the downfall or ruin of; to overthrow something established*)
- d. **To defy:** Sally *defies* the stereotypical view of women by refusing to burst into tears. (*to challenge the power of; resist boldly or openly*)
- e. **To undermine:** Sybylla *undermines* the stereotype of a submissive girl by refusing to “beg for forgiveness”. (*to weaken; to destroy gradually; to weaken by secret means*)



TEXT 9: Joo-Inn Chew (“Chinese Dancing, Bendigo Style”) finds a place to belong.

“We joined the association (the Bendigo Chinese Association), and my sister and I put our names down to learn ‘Chinese dancing’ (...) We weren’t all friends, but when we stepped out together to the music we were a tribe! (...) Everyone in the group knew what it was like to suffer under a Chinky surname, to look a little different and perhaps to have a Chinese parent who would stay too long at parent-teacher night discussing our marks. And we knew how good it felt to have these differences go from being liabilities to being assets, reasons to go on stage, to dress up and dance and be applauded (...) We did Chinese dancing and walked in the procession for years. It was glorious to march before the cheering city, to smile and wave like royalty, to dance and be applauded by classmates — all for being Chinese. Most importantly, for being the kind of Chinese that we really were — not Asian waifs, but Australian Chinese, half-halves, part-Chinese but mostly Australian, same and different, just a little bit special.” (249-50)

Using the sentence models and quotes, analyse how Chew challenges the stereotypes in Text 8.

1.
.....
2.
.....
3.
.....

The language of stereotypes

“A gutless wonder is about the worst thing you can be in our town (...) Once you’ve been labelled a gutless wonder, then that’s it, the label sticks. Like it’s been superglued to your forehead. It’s there for life, no matter what you do.” (Blacky in *Deadly Unna* by Phillip Gwynne. Penguin, 1998, p. 9.)

Using a verb

1. In *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, Lieutenant Kotler **typecasts** the Jews as “animals”. (*to typecast: to cast (an actor) continually in the same kind of role, especially because of some physical characteristic.*)
2. Jeremy **conforms to** the “rough and tumble” image of a footballer. (*to conform to /to comply with: to become similar in terms of character; to act in accord or harmony.*)
3. Harper Lee **suggests** that Aunt Alexandra’s **parochial** attitude gives rise to **stereotypical** views of women. (*parochial: having to do with a parish; confined to or interested only in one’s own parish, or some particular narrow district or field.*)
4. In *No Sugar*, Jack Davis **challenges the stereotype** of the “native” as a “savage” who must be “taught” the basic essentials of a civilised life. (*Text 58*)

Using a noun

5. Mr Neville perpetuates **the stereotype** of the “uncivilised” and unclean “native”. (*Text 58*)
6. The 4th Juror resorts to **generalisations** to refer to the 16-year-old defendant as “trash”. (*Unlimited generalisations are general statements made about the whole of a group.*)
7. The jurors’ **bigotry** is evident in the descriptions of the 16-year-old defendant. (*A bigot is someone who is intolerantly convinced of the rightness of a particular creed, opinion, practice.*)
8. The questions posed by Sally Morgan’s classmates reveal **the stigma** that is attached to an indigenous identity. (*stigma: mark of shame, disgrace, sign of a defect*) (*Text 15*)

Using an adverb and adverbials

9. **Stereotypically**, the costume of the “blue striped pyjamas” reduces the Jews to the status of ignorant children.
10. **To show the problems of a stereotypical view of Boo Radley**, Harper Lee accentuates the superstitious behaviour of the citizens in Maycomb.
11. **By focusing on the handkerchief and toiletries**, Mr Neville reinforces the stereotype of the uncivilised “native”. (*Text 58*)
12. **Because of their prejudiced attitudes**, many of the jurors, unquestioningly and conveniently, accept the evidence.

Using an adjective

13. According to Reginald Rose, most of the jurors have **prejudiced** attitudes that prevent an honest and open discussion of the evidence.
14. John Boyne depicts Lieutenant Kotler as a **bigoted** Nazi.
15. Jack Davis seeks to dislodge the **stereotypical** view of the “native” as a “savage” who must be “taught” the basic essentials of a civilised life. (*to dislodge: to remove or drive from a place of rest or lodgement; to dispel: to drive off in various directions; scatter; dissipate; disperse*)

TEXT 10: In “Baked Beans and Burnt Toast”, Jacqui Larkin visits Hong Kong. Drawing upon her experiences such as her “first day in kindergarten” in Sydney and her flight to her father’s “home” in Hong Kong, Jacqui reflects upon the different assumptions people make about her identity based on her Asian appearance. Her experience at the Hong Kong airport — the officer asks her “DO YOU SPEAK CANTONESE?”, which she doesn’t — parallels her first day at kindergarten. Her teacher asks her, “DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?”, which is Jacqui’s mother tongue. (See Text 47 and 62)

“Even I feel like staring at me as we shuffle into class and sit on the floor. The only black head in a sea of blond, brown, sandy and ginger. I stand out like a plate of chicken feet at a sausage sizzle.

‘Good morning girls and boys,’ says the teacher in that sing-song way that kindy teachers do. ‘My name is Mrs Barton. I will be your teacher for the year.’

Mrs Barton starts marking the roll. (...)

‘Jacqui?’ continues Mrs Barton and, for the first time, but certainly not the last, I feel myself turning red. She doesn’t do a doubletake on anyone else’s name, so why mine?

‘Yes,’ I reply.

She looks closer at the roll and adjusts her glasses. ‘Jacqui Five Hundred?’

For a minute I think there must be two Jacquis in kindy.

‘No,’ I offer tentatively.

‘Well is that you or isn’t it?’

My friend Jo-Ann, who I’ve known since preschool, puts up her hand. ‘It’s Soo, Miss. Not Five-Hundred. Her name’s Jacqui Soo.’

Mrs Barton looks back at her roll. ‘Oh, I see. The administrative staff have put Jacqui Five Hundred. Well then, Jacqui Soo, your mother needs to write more clearly so that people can read it. Or else get some help with her writing.’

‘Anyway,’ she says. ‘Welcome girls and boys. You too, Jacqui Soo.’ I don’t know why she has to keep using both my names. She wouldn’t call Jo-Ann, ‘Jo-Ann Bakoss’; it’d just be ‘Jo-Ann’.

‘Tell me Jacqui Soo, DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?’

I’m not sure why she’s shouting. I only speak English. But I just nod because my tongue feels as though it’s swelling up in my mouth.

‘Does she, Jo-Ann? Does Jacqui Soo speak English?’

‘Yes, Miss,’ replies Jo-Ann, already revelling in teacher’s pet status.

‘If she has any trouble, Jo-Ann, you can always help her.’” (pp. 331-332)

Using the sentence models and appropriate quotes, analyse the conversation between Mrs Barton and Jacqui Soo.

1.
.....
2.
.....
3.
.....
4.
.....
5.
.....

TEXT 36: In his short story “The Darling River”, Henry Lawson’s narrator yarns about the “bunyip” from Adelaide, Kelly from “down the Murrumbidgee”, the whaler from Louth and the shearers and their “swags”. There’s the “cute Yankee”, who, after a long night in the hotel, concludes that “you’ve got the makings of a glorious nation over here, but you don’t get up early enough!” And then there’s the fishermen.

“There are a good many fishermen on the Darling. They camp along the banks in all sorts of tents, and move about in little box boats that will only float one man. The fisherman is never heavy. He is mostly a withered little old madman, with black claws, dirty rags (which he never changes), unkempt hair and beard, and a “ratty” expression. We cannot say that we ever saw him catch a fish, or even get a bite, and we certainly never saw him offer any for sale.

He gets a dozen or so lines out into the stream, with the shore end fastened to pegs or roots on the bank, and passed over sticks about four feet high, stuck in the mud; on the top of these sticks he hangs bullock-bells, or substitutes — jam tins with stones fastened inside to bits of string. Then he sits down and waits. If the cod pulls the line, the bell rings.

The fisherman is a great authority on the river and fish, but has usually forgotten everything else, including his name. He chops firewood for the boats sometimes, but it isn’t his profession; he’s a fisherman. He is only sane on points concerning the river, though he has all the fisherman’s eccentricities. Of course he is a liar.



When he gets his camp fixed on one bank it strikes him he ought to be over on the other, or at a place up round the bend, so he shifts. Then he reckons he was a fool for not stopping where he was before. He never dies. He never gets older, or drier, or more withered looking or dirtier, or loonier - because he can’t. We cannot imagine him as ever having been a boy, or even a youth. We cannot even try to imagine him as a baby. He is an animated mummy, who used to fish on the Nile three thousand years ago, and catch nothing.” (102)

Using appropriate sentence models, analyse Lawson’s depiction of the fisherman.

1. (Characterisation)
-
2. (Setting)
-
3. (Tone)
-
4. (Style/repetition/negatives)
-
5. (Comparisons/metaphors)
-