



## Power Relationships

**Age:** Secondary

**Level:** B1-B2

**Global Knowledge or Global Attitudes and Action:**

Global Knowledge

**Standard for Learning Outcome:** Student encounters ideas about power relations.

**Learning Outcome:** S.D1.S7.LO1 Identify power relationships and the forms of power

**Standard for Global Skill:** Student acquires the skills to be a questioning citizen.

**Global Skill:** S.D3.S4.LO2 Identify biases

**Sustainable Development Goals:** 4: Quality Education, 5: Gender Equality

### Part 1 (15 mins)

- A.** Ask students what sorts of things might be included in a person's identity. Elicit answers like nationality, family members, gender, or things the person likes to do or is a member of. Ask them to read Ana's social media profile and underline words or phrases they think represent her personal identity.

**Suggested answers:** middle-school student, Mexican, Maya, teenager, dancing, shopping, hanging out with friends, gamer, computer programmer, interested in math and technology

- B.** Ask students to complete the mind map with words and phrases they think reflect their personal identity. If students feel comfortable sharing their identities with their classmates, give them a few minutes to do this in groups or pairs.

### Part 2 (20 mins)

- A.** Ask students to match the words and the definitions. Once they understand the terms, ask them how they think a person's identity might relate to these terms. For example, someone who identifies as a White, upper-class male might have more power and privileges than someone who is non-White, female and from a lower socio-economic group. A person in that group might experience oppression, whereas a person from the first group may not, but even people from privileged groups can feel oppression if they have a

disability or some other characteristic that makes them different from the majority of the group.

**Answers:**

1. c 2. a 3. b

- B.** Ask students to decide whether each example represents power, privilege, or oppression. After checking answers, ask them to think of other examples of each category.

**Answers:**

1. O 2. PO 3. PR 4. PR 5. O 6. PO

- C.** Put students in groups. Ask them to think of different possible forms of power, privilege, or oppression that might be present among a group of world leaders. Encourage them to use the cues in the box for ideas.

**Suggested answers:**

**Ethnicity** – Most (or all) of the people in the photo appear to be White, which might suggest that the most powerful companies in the world are run primarily by White people.

**Age** – The woman speaking may be younger than some/most of the attendees. Older people tend to have more economic power and better jobs, especially men. Young people, especially women, may have a hard time finding a well-paid job or professional growth opportunities.

**Nationality** – Being a global innovation conference, countries with more advanced technology may have a bigger impact. Depending on your nationality, you may have more or less power in the world.

**Gender** – There are some women in the photo, but most are men. Men still hold most of the political and economic power in the world, which gives them more privileges and can make women feel oppressed.

**Appearance** – Certain ways of dressing or wearing your hair still project power. If you cannot afford to 'power dress', you may actually have less power.

**Money** – Most people who run big companies have quite a lot of money. Having money gives you power and privileges that other people do not have.

**Social status** – With money often comes social status, and belonging to a socio-economic group with money and social status gives you power over other people.



Secondary | **Teacher's Notes**

Language – It is very probable that all of the people in this photo speak English and possibly several other languages. Being able to communicate in more than one language can help you get a better job or become a world leader. Knowledge can give you power.

**Part 3 (15 mins)**

**A.** Tell students they are going to learn about a form of oppression called ageism. Explain that they should think about the statements in the true-false exercise carefully and that they will find out the answers when they read the text below. Do not give answers until they have read the text.

**Answers: 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. T 5. F**

**B.** Have students read the text and then go over the exercise in A. Ask them to point out support for the answers in the text. Once they have understood the answers to the exercise, put them into groups. Monitor their discussions and give help with language or ideas as needed.

**Extension**

**A.** Ask the class if they feel that young people can help fight against different types of oppression. Ask if they know any examples of teenagers who are involved in good causes around the world or who have made a difference in their communities, countries, or the world. Ask them to read the text. Go over the tips for how young people can work against oppression and answer any questions. Put students into groups and ask them to choose a type of oppression against which they think they could make a difference.

**B.** Ask the groups to make a plan to fight against the type of oppression they chose. Write these steps on the board:

1. Describe the type of oppression you chose. Who is oppressed? Why? How do you think the people feel?
2. Decide what you can do to help and make a specific plan. Assign roles and tasks to each person in the group.
3. Present your plan to the class.

An activity like this is designed to empower students to want to and to be able to help make their school, their community, their country, or the world a better place for them to grow up in. It is hoped that at least some of the students actually carry out the plan and make even a small difference in tolerance and equality in their world.