

Topic: The media and public opinion

Lesson: Celebrity voices	KS or Year Group: KS3
Resources: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Resource 1 - Quotes2. Resource 2 - Quotes (teacher's version)3. Sky video	Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students consider the responsibility that comes with fame.• Students consider the possible conflict between free speech and media responsibility.

National Curriculum

Key Concepts: 1.2a, 1.2c

Key Processes: 2.1a, 2.1c

Range and Content: 3d

Lesson

This lesson looks at how the voices and actions of celebrities are heard by millions. Does this power come with any responsibilities for the celebrities? Might these responsibilities have any impact upon their right to freedom of speech?

Starter

- Check the students understanding of 'celebrity' by asking them to come up with a list of celebrity names to put up on the board.
- Draw a distinction between 'fame' and 'celebrity'. What might be the difference between these two terms? Ask students which people on the list are celebrities and which are famous people. For example: is Tony Blair a celebrity or a famous person? Is Jade Goody a celebrity or a famous person?
- Ask students to create a definition of 'celebrity'. A possible working definition could be that a famous person might be exceptionally talented or qualified in a particular area, which gives them the expertise to comment on issues related to that area with authority. A celebrity may be somebody with a high media profile but without that authority in a particular area.

Main activity

Activity 1

- Give out **Resource 1 – Quotes**.
- Ask students to read the quotes and then to say whether they think it was said by a celebrity or a famous person. They should give reasons for their choices. This could also be done as an ICT matching activity.
- Using **Resource 2 – Quotes (teacher’s version)**, reveal the correct answers. Ask the students whether they consider each personality a celebrity or famous person.
- Ask students whether the quotes matched their expectations of that personality or were they surprising? Why?
- Ask students if they think any of the things said were irresponsible or wrong? Why? Remind them that a famous person who is exceptionally qualified in one particular area may not have sufficient knowledge or expertise to responsibly comment on issues outside that area.
- If the students do think that some of the things said were irresponsible or wrong, do they think the celebrity should have been ‘allowed’ to say them? Are there any ways in which their comments might harm somebody else? In what ways does their right to freedom of speech sometimes conflict with media responsibility?

Activity 2

Students to watch the **SKY video**, in which model Penny Lancaster talks about standing up to bullies in school. The following questions could form the basis of a discussion about how she is using her celebrity to get across a message:

- Why is this an important subject for Penny?
- Do you think she is qualified to speak out about such an issue?
- Why do you think the media are interested in hearing her views?
- Would the media be as interested in the subject without a celebrity being available to talk about their own experience?
- What does this tell us about the media today?

Plenary

In the case of a celebrity making potentially harmful or irresponsible comments, ask the students to consider whether the students think responsibility for their public speech lies with the celebrity or with the media reporting it? Or neither? Should the onus lie with the readership/audience?

They could write a paragraph to answer this or discuss it as a class.

Celebrity voices

Aim high

Ask the students to write a quote of their own that they would want to be spread around the world and that they could be remembered for. Do they consider your message a responsible one?

Assessment

Ask students to find examples of quotes/actions from at least two famous people and two celebrities that are (a) responsible and (b) irresponsible. How were they reported in the media (TV, internet, magazines, radio)? What does the student think of the quote or action and the person responsible?

(This should match Level 6 AT or higher)

Summary of key learning

- Students have decided how the status of celebrity differs from fame
- Students have considered how such a privileged status comes with a responsibility that the media also shares

Resource 1 – Quotes



- “Nothing is promised in life except for death.”
- “If we don't succeed, we run the risk of failure.”
- “Whenever I watch TV and see those poor starving kids all over the world, I can't help but cry. I mean I'd love to be skinny like that but not with all those flies and death and stuff.”
- “The greater your capacity to love, the greater your capacity to feel the pain.”
- “The cool thing about being famous is travelling. I have always wanted to travel across seas, like to Canada and stuff.”
- “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”
- “Rio de Janeiro, ain't that a person?”
- “Sometimes it is not enough to do our best; we must do what is required.”

Resource 2 – Quotes (teacher's version)

- “Nothing is promised in life except for death.”
Kanye West, popstar / rapper
- “If we don't succeed, we run the risk of failure.”
Dan Quayle, former U.S. Vice President
- “Whenever I watch TV and see those poor starving kids all over the world, I can't help but cry. I mean I'd love to be skinny like that but not with all those flies and death and stuff.”
Mariah Carey, pop singer
- “The greater your capacity to love, the greater your capacity to feel the pain.”
Jennifer Aniston, actress
- “The cool thing about being famous is travelling. I have always wanted to travel across seas, like to Canada and stuff.”
Britney Spears, popstar
- “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”
Mahatma Gandhi, politician & civil liberties campaigner
- “Rio de Janeiro, ain't that a person?”
Jade Goody, celebrity and former Big Brother contestant
- “Sometimes it is not enough to do our best; we must do what is required.”
Sir Winston Churchill, former British Prime Minister