

Engaging with LGBT and migrant equalities:

Activities for the ESOL classroom

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1. Introduction

There is a growing recognition within the ESOL teaching community of the importance of making the ESOL classroom more inclusive. This means recognising that students come from a variety of different backgrounds, and that their learning experience is supported and enhanced when they feel respected and recognised for who they are. A commitment to address issues of equality and diversity in the ESOL classroom can be found, for example, in the 2015 Scotland ESOL Strategy (Education Scotland 2015). This commitment reflects a change in the UK legal context: the 2010 Equality Act (UK) identifies a variety of settings, including educational settings, where discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the basis of nine protected characteristics is illegal. It also makes it a legal duty for public sector organisations to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. However, engagement with equality and diversity is not merely a legal requirement that ESOL teachers are expected to comply with: it also reflects a long-standing commitment by many within the ESOL teaching community to ensure learners experience a safe and non-discriminatory learning environment.

This learning resource is designed to facilitate an exploration of LGBT lives and an engagement with issues of sexual and gender diversity in the adult ESOL classroom. It explicitly addresses three protected characteristics under the 2010 Equality Act: sexual orientation, gender identity and marriage status. The resource draws on interview material collected for a project on LGBT migrants in Scotland¹; it includes a few real-life stories from LGBT migrants that touch upon themes such as families and relationships, gender identities, and homophobic, transphobic and racial prejudice and discrimination. The resource explores real LGBT lives and issues from a migrant perspective, and also addresses issues of migrant equality and belonging. This is something that ESOL learners, many of whom are migrants, asylum seekers and refugees settling in the UK, are likely to relate to. A limitation of this resource is that it mainly draws on the experiences of white European migrants from Central Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union; thus, most of the material included in this booklet does not reflect the diversity of ESOL learners in terms of their ethnic and racial background, or their migrant status. However, it is important to keep in mind that many of the issues addressed in the material will resonate with many ESOL learners as migrants: for example, the experiences of adapting to life in a new country, of creating new social networks while at the same time keeping in touch with friends and family 'back home', and of encountering racial and ethnic prejudice. It is also hoped that ESOL practitioners may be inspired by this resource to create their own material, using different stories that better reflect the ethnic diversity of the ESOL learners they work with. With this in mind, we have provided an example of a story about two lesbian asylum seekers from Uganda, adapted from a newspaper article (Megan's and Lydia's story).

¹ The 'Intimate Migrations' project (2015-17) explored the experiences of LGBT migrants from Central Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in Scotland. www.intimatemigrations.net

Exploring LGBT issues in the classroom presents specific challenges for ESOL teachers; these were explored in two focus groups with six ESOL practitioners held in May/June 2017. One of these challenges is a lack of teaching material, as sexual and gender diversity remain largely invisible in published English teaching resources (Macdonald et al. 2014). Although some ESOL practitioners had designed their own material to explore these issues, lack of teaching resources emerged as a clear gap which this booklet seeks to address. Other challenges raised by ESOL teachers include lack of knowledge of LGBT issues, uncertainty about the correct terms to use when discussing such issues, concern about others' feelings and reactions, cultural and faith sensitivities around sexual diversity, issues of privacy for LGBT tutors and learners, fear of being inadequately prepared to handle conflict or difficult conversations, lack of training and uncertainty about how to integrate the topic into the curriculum². These are complex issues with no easy answers, and teaching material can only go some way to address the challenges teachers face. As Macdonald (2014) argues, good practice in exploring LGBT issues crucially hinges on teaching strategies, and opportunities for training and discussion to reflect on these strategies³.

In designing this material, we were inspired by our conversations with ESOL teachers about their own practice and guided by Jennifer MacDougall's long experience as an ESOL and TESOL practitioner. It is possible to address the invisibility of LGBT lives in the ESOL classroom while at the same time integrating the topic as a normal part of the broader curriculum: for example, LGBT issues can be introduced in more general activities about family (Families and Diversity activity). They can also be introduced in discussions of human rights, thus opening up a conversation about grounds on which individuals may be discriminated or marginalised (Equality and Diversity activity). The resource starts from more general topics, where LGBT issues are introduced but are not the main focus; it then moves on to individual stories of LGBT migrants, focussing on particular aspects of their experiences. All the activities have a language learning dimension: they introduce students to new vocabulary and can improve their language skills in core areas such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The activities included are generally more suited to students at intermediate levels and above, although some may also be used or adapted for lower level groups (e.g. Families and Diversity activity). Ideas for class activities (and lesson plans, where included) can also be adapted by ESOL teachers to meet the needs and take account of the language skills of their students. We have also included a glossary of key terms related to LGBT issues, and links to further resources which ESOL teachers may find useful as supporting material.

² These issues were raised in two focus groups involving six ESOL practitioners held in May/June 2017. For a very thoughtful discussion of the challenges involved in exploring LGBT lives in the ESOL classroom see Macdonald et al (2014) and Macdonald (2014), which highlight similar issues.

³ Additional reference material on exploring LGBT issue and issues of equality and diversity in the ESOL classroom is listed in 'Further resources' (p. 67).

Making sexual and gender diversity visible in the ESOL classroom is not only a challenge, but also an opportunity for teachers inspired by principles of social justice and person-centred learning. It can make a real difference to LGBT learners, in terms of making them feel safe, respected and visible, enabling them to talk more openly about themselves in the ESOL classroom, if they wish. For all learners, exploring sexual and gender diversity can prepare them for the reality of social life outside the classroom, bearing in mind LGBT issues may be much more visible, and be addressed very differently in the UK compared to their country of origin. In the experience of ESOL teachers, exploring LGBT issues may create some discomfort or even conflict in the classroom. However, it can also create opportunities for dialogue, if underpinned by ground rules for respectful communication and openness to diversity. If presented as part of a broader dialogue around equality and diversity, exploring LGBT issues need not amount to an imposition of 'British' values, and is not necessarily at odds with respect for learners' culture or faith.

References

Education Scotland (2015) *Welcoming Our Learners: Scotland's ESOL Strategy 2015 - 2020*. Available at: http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/22892/2/ESOLStrategy2015to2020_tcm4-855848_Redacted.pdf

Macdonald, S., El-Matoui, L., Baynham, M. and Gray, J. (2014) *Exploring LGBT Lives and Issues in Adult ESOL. Final Report*. British Council/ESOL Nexus. Available at https://esol.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/attachments/informational-page/Exploring_LGBT_Lives_Issues_Adult_ESOL.pdf

Macdonald, S. (2014) 'Out in the classroom?: Exploring LGBT lives and issues in adult ESOL', in Mallows, D. (ed.) *Language issues in migration and integration: perspectives from teachers and learners*. British Council. Available at https://esol.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/Language_issues_migration_integration_perspectives_teachers_learners.pdf

2. Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to this resource, and we would like to acknowledge their input.

We would like to thank the six ESOL practitioners who took part in the focus groups we organised in May and June 2017, for sharing their insights and experiences with us. We would like to thank Mandy Watt at Education Scotland for inviting us to the meetings of the ESOL working group, and to the group for their input and support.

The idea of adapting research material from a project on LGBT migrants for training and educational purposes emerged during consultations events held in April and December 2016 as part of the '**Intimate Migrations**' project (www.intimatemigrations.net). This booklet is informed by those conversations, and we are grateful to the participants for their support and enthusiasm. Special thanks to Monique Campbell at WSREC for contributing ideas that inform this resource. A twin resource, coproduced with WSREC and aimed at practitioners working in youth and community settings, is available at <https://intimatemigrations.net/outputs/>. Special thanks to our research participants for giving us permission to use the material collected for the project 'Intimate Migrations'. The quotes from the activities **Home is where the heart is** and **Vita's nearest and dearest**, and most of the **personal stories** are adapted from interview material. With the exception of the **Families and Diversity** material, the pictures and drawings used in the resource were also produced by research participants.

We owe many ideas and a debt of gratitude to the organisers of the seminar series 'Queering ESOL', which enabled a thoughtful and wide-ranging discussion about exploring LGBT issues in the classroom (www.queeringesol.wordpress.com). We would also like to thank Mel Cooke (King's College London) and Sheila MacDonald (migrant charity Beyond the Page) for acting as a sounding board during the early stages of the project.

Last but by no means least, the images for the activity **Families and Diversity** were created by Jenny Speirs, who also turned some pictures provided by our research participants into drawings (p. 29 and pp. 36-37, photos 3, 4 and 7). Many thanks to Jenny for her brilliant work as an illustrator. We would also like to credit Tauseef Khan from WSREC for his great work on the layout of the resource.

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3. Glossary

Sex – Refers to the anatomical characteristics of an individual's body; it is most commonly used to refer to the physical differences between female and male bodies (such as the reproductive system and other biological characteristics).

Gender – Refers to the social roles and expectations based on the sex of the person (gender role). Gender is most commonly used to refer to the social expectations people associate with being 'male' or 'female', although gender is not limited to these two categories.

Sexual orientation – A person's sexual identity with regard to the gender(s) of the persons they are attracted to.

Gender identity – a person's individual experience of gender. This may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, and it may or may not correspond with 'male' and 'female' genders.

LGBT – Acronym that stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender.

Lesbian – Woman who is physically and/or emotionally attracted to other women.

Gay – Someone who is physically and/or emotionally attracted to people of the same gender. Most commonly used to refer to men, but some women may prefer to identify as 'gay' rather than 'lesbian'.

Bisexual – Someone who is physically and/or emotionally attracted to people of more than one gender or regardless of their gender.

Heterosexual/Straight – People who are physically and/or emotionally attracted to those of the "opposite gender".

Transgender – Umbrella term for people whose gender identity or gender expression differs from the sex assigned to them at birth. It includes people whose gender identity is the opposite of their assigned sex (**trans men and trans women**), as well as people who do not exclusively identify as masculine or feminine (**non-binary**). Some transgender people wish to transition to the gender they identify with through medical treatment, such as hormone treatment or surgery; people who undergo medical treatment to bring their physical appearance more into line with their gender are referred to as **transsexual**.

Homophobia – The irrational fear, dislike or prejudice of people who are or are perceived to be gay or lesbian.

Biphobia – The irrational fear, dislike or prejudice of people who are or are perceived to be bisexual.

Transphobia – The irrational fear, dislike or prejudice of people who are or are perceived to be transgender.

Note: This is adapted from LGBT Youth Scotland's glossary. LGBT is an umbrella term that brings together different identities; although these share common roots of oppression, there are specific needs related to each identity. In this resource, we cover only lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender identities, although the LGBT+ community also includes other identities, such as intersex and asexual. For an extended glossary please see <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/LGBTI-terminology>

4. Families and diversity

Teacher Notes

Topic Themes

- Family Units
- Equality and Diversity
- Awareness raising on the rights of individuals and groups
- Breaking down stereotypes

Suggested level: Elementary and above

This resource provides opportunities to explore the above themes in the ESOL classroom. The resource also develops students' critical thinking, discussion and (potentially) writing skills. The teacher notes provide suggestions of how the resource can be used. Teachers should feel free to adapt the lesson to meet the needs and interests of their students.

The visuals provided (11 in total) have been designed to represent a diverse range of families and relationships in today's society. Teachers may prefer to provide other visuals they feel represent families in their area or that are relevant to their students. However, it is intended that the visuals include same-sex and multi-ethnic groupings.

Some of the themes may have to be handled sensitively and you should also take account of the level and cohesion of your group. As well as providing awareness raising activities, the visuals and activities allow for students to explore issues around personal and family identity, and, therefore, space should be given for students to talk about their own relationships, where they wish to do so.

This lesson could be used either before or as a follow up to looking at either **Nadya and Marta's story** (on same-sex families) or **Agnieszka's story** (on multi-ethnic families).

Introduction

Before the lesson you could ask students to bring in a photograph of their own family. It would also be useful for the teacher to have a picture of their own family as a stimulus and to personalise the lesson.

Potential language work

The vocabulary to be included in the lesson should be tailored towards the level and interests of the students. Some potential key terms are:

relationships, diversity, equality, same-sex couple, opposite sex couple, dependent children, mixed-race relationships, lesbian, homosexual, heterosexual, single parent, childless, cohabiting, married, single, extended family, ethnic background

What is a family?

Tell students that they are going to explore the concept of family and what it means for them and for other people.

- Write the word FAMILY on the board.
- Put up a visual of a 'traditional' family e.g. a mother, father and 2 children (Could use the first visual from **Teacher Resource**)
- Ask students if this is what a family looks like? Are all families like this? Take different ideas from the group but do not confirm or reject any comments at this stage.

Scene Setting

Ask students to write a sentence to describe what a family means to them.

Example: A family is a group of people who live together.

They should do this individually. After a couple of minutes put the students in groups and let them share their ideas orally. During feedback, board and check meaning/pronunciation of any key vocabulary that comes up.

Ask students to work in pairs to create a list of qualities that they believe are true for all families (e.g. they have two parents). Students can then compare with other groups.

Potential language work

Prior to pair/group work, some useful language for discussion could be introduced. These include:

All families have / consist of / are ...

Not all families have / include ...

In my country a family is / families are always...

Most families I know...

It's usual for families to + verb

Teachers can monitor use of new language during pair work.

Introducing diversity

Put students into small groups. Provide some (three or four) pictures (see **Teacher Resource – visuals** (p. 12), or sourced by teacher) of diverse families to each group. Note that picture 5 in the resource is a copy of the larger image on page 12, but the description is slightly different than students might guess. Do not hand out descriptions at this point.

Ask students if these pictures represent what a family looks like.

- Do they know any families like this?
- Which image most closely represents their family?

(Students could draw a picture to represent their own family here or present their own visual/photograph).

In groups, students describe the visuals and talk about the differences they can see between the families. They can also contrast the visuals with their own family unit.

Potential language work

Prior to group work, this would be a good opportunity to include some work on language on comparisons. Some useful exponents could be:

- *This family is different from because it has*
- *There are more / fewer... in this family.*
- *This family includes / contains a same sex couple, but this one doesn't.*
- *Family Y is most like mine because...*
- *This family is very different to mine because...*

As before, teachers can make use of language that is generated by the students to develop this language area.

Reflection

Ask students to look back at their list of family qualities.

- Are they all true or are some just assumptions about families?
- Would they choose to change any of their ideas? Which ones and why?
- Do families in Scotland / UK appear to be similar to families in their own country?

The questions above could be dealt with whole class or be displayed on board/ hand-out for students to discuss in small groups.

Tell students they can now delete any family qualities that are not true for all families. The list that the students have should now be shorter than before (perhaps only one or two qualities such as 'they do things together' will remain).

Reading and matching (deduction)

Hand out the descriptions of the families which accompany the pictures in the **Teacher Resource**. Each group could be given 4 descriptions and match them to their pictures. Regroup the students and they describe the families, with the other group selecting the pictures. Stronger groups can do this from memory, without reading the text. Students can be given the opportunity to read all the texts to become more familiar with the lexical items.

Alternatives:

- An audio of the scripts can be created and played. Students hold up the corresponding picture as they listen.
- The texts could be displayed around the class and used for a running dictation activity.

- Students are given only some of the descriptions and they write their descriptions for the other visuals using the ones given to them as a model.
- A text could be selected to be used as a 'dictogloss', simple dictation, or even for peer dictation.

Potential Language Work

Language of deduction could usefully be incorporated here. Some useful exponents could be:

- *I think it's probably picture A because....*
- *It could/might/must/can't/couldn't be picture Y because...*
- *There is/are ... in picture X so it must be that one...*

There is also useful language work on lexis for families, prepositions of place and countries/nationalities here. Follow-up work can be done on the vocabulary items.

Students may wish to further amend their list based on what they have read.

Classroom Discussion

Some/all of the statistics below⁴ could be used to develop awareness on different types of families and relationships that make up the population of the UK.

This could be approached in a number of ways such as a reading, quiz, multiple-choice, gap filling or listening task. A gap filling activity is provided in **Student Resource 1** (p. 19).

Statistics (for feedback)

1. In 2016, there were 12.7 million **married or civil partner couple families** in the UK. This was the most common type of family. 7.9 million of them did not have **dependent children**; 4.8 million had dependent children.
2. There were 3.3 million **cohabiting families** in the UK in 2016; this was the fastest growing family type, which more than doubled in number between 1996 (when there were 1.5 million cohabiting couples) and 2016.
3. In 2016, **same-sex couple families** (including civil partner, same-sex married and same-sex cohabiting couple families) accounted for 1% of all couple families. The largest number of **same sex-couple families** were **same-sex cohabiting couple families** (87,000); this was followed by **civil partner couple families** (47,000) and **same sex-married couple families** (29,000). 24,000 **same-sex couple families** had **dependent children**.

⁴ These statistics are adapted from: Office of National Statistics Bulletin Families and Households in the UK: 2016, at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2016#dependent-children-were-most-likely-to-be-living-in-married-couple-families>

4. In 2011, almost 1 in 10 individuals in a **couple relationship** (9%, 2.3 million people) were in an **inter-ethnic relationship**, while 9 in 10 (91%, 23.4 million people) were in a relationship with someone from the **same ethnic group** (Data for England and Wales only).
5. In 2016, there were 2.9 million **single parent families**; the majority (86%) were headed by a **female single parent**, the remaining 14% were headed by a **male single parent**.
6. In 2016, approximately 7.7 million people **lived alone** in the UK; the majority were **women**.

Potential Language Work

- Pronunciation of numbers: large numbers, percentages.
- Core vocabulary work: terms to describe different relationships and families. Key terms are highlighted in the statistics above.
- Language to describe statistics (e.g. the most common type, more than doubled, accounted for, the majority). This language would be particularly useful for IELTS writing part 1 preparation.

This would also be a useful point to mention the Equality Act 2010 (see **Equality and Diversity** materials, p. 20) and how this legislation is statutory in Scotland and the rest of the UK. Allow students to consider the implications of this for the way all people should be treated.

Ask students why it is important to recognise that families can be extremely diverse. Elicit ideas around issues such as stereotypes, changes in how families are made up, legal issues, differences in different cultures/religions etc.

The following questions could be used (whole class or in smaller groups):

What challenges might 'non-traditional' families face?

What negative attitudes could there be to diverse family units?

Why could this be the case?

Give students space to talk about their own circumstances, perhaps using a visual, if they feel comfortable doing so. Elicit some ideas on stereotyping and how these can be harmful to an inclusive society. Students can discuss if they have ever been affected by any of the issues that are mentioned during discussion. **NB.** Do not force any students to 'open up' if they do not appear comfortable doing so.

Bringing it all together

Put students in groups to design a poster entitled '**21st Century Families**' on the similarities and differences of families today. You can give students some suggested headings such as 'family statistics', 'relationships', 'how people live today' to get them started. Encourage the students to be creative. Students display their posters on the wall. They can then go around looking at the other posters. Students might like to select the poster that they think best represents families today.

Follow up/Homework

Students write a short text describing their family and what makes it different/unique. The finished writing can be displayed on the wall along with photographs or pictures of the group's families. Alternatively, students could prepare and deliver short group presentations on this theme.

Final reflection on learning

Ask students what they have found interesting about the lesson today. Have they learned anything new (e.g. new vocabulary, ideas)? How might this impact on their attitudes and behaviour towards families who are different to their own?

Teacher Resource - visuals



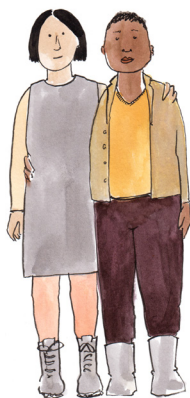
'Traditional Family'

Heterosexual couple with 2 children



Family 1

My name is Rita and I'm Spanish. My husband Adedayo, who is standing in the middle of the photograph, comes from Nigeria. We've been married for 15 years. We have one son called Abeo. His name means 'the bringer of happiness'.



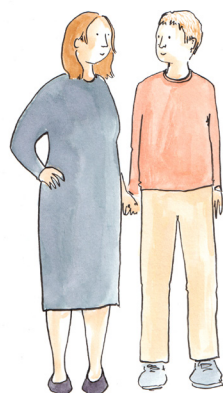
Family 2

Hi. My name is Maria and I'm from Italy. This is a picture of myself and my partner. I'm standing on the left. My partner's name is Nagesa. She's Ugandan. We met 5 years ago in Scotland and have lived together for 4 years now. We are in a civil partnership.



Family 3

Hello, my names Tom and my wife is Margaret. We've been married for 47 years and have always lived in Scotland. We look after our 2 grandchildren, James (who is 14) and his younger sister, Nicole. They live with us now. Their mother died 3 years ago and their father lives in Australia now, with a new wife.



Family 4

I'm Liliana and on my right is my partner Jakub; we are both from Poland. We decided to come to Scotland 5 years ago to find work. We are now very settled here and are planning to get married next year. We are looking forward to starting a family.



Family 5

Hi, this is me and my wee family. My name's Carrie and my husband's name is Jim. We are not married but we have been together for a long time. We're both Scottish. Our wee boy is called Tommy and my daughter is Jessie. She's Jim's stepdaughter as I had Jessie with my ex-husband.



Family 6

Hi, I'm Layla and I am standing on the left of the picture. My mum Jazmine, who is from Angola, and stepdad Edwin, who is from Kenya, are standing next to me. My step-dad was married before to Sally and their son is Bernie. So, Bernie is my half brother. Sally is English and she is now married to Daniel, who is in a wheelchair because he had an accident when he was young. They have a small son, Sam, who is sitting on Daniel's lap.



Family 7

My name's Muhammad and my family are from Pakistan. I'm standing in the middle of the picture. My wife, Zainab, is on my left and next to her is her mum, Alina. We have 3 kids, Saima, Ahmed and our new baby, Fatima. My sister, Shahnaz, is on my right, with her husband, Ali, and son, Tahir. And on the far right is our mum, Noor. We all live together in a big family house. It's very noisy but it's also great having so many family members together.



Family 8

Hello. I'm John and here's my partner, Alan (he has the beard). We are both hairdressers and live and work together. We're both in our 50s now and have been together for almost 30 years. Alan was brought up in France but both his parents are from Scotland, just like mine. We are in a civil partnership. We have a dog, called Justina - she's a member of our family!



Family 9

I'm Gabriela from Bulgaria, and this is a picture of my family. My wife Paula (on my left) is from Spain, but we both live in Edinburgh now. We got married a few years ago when it became legal for same-sex couples to marry in Scotland. We have a daughter together. Her name is Lucy and she's ten.



Family 10

Hello. I'm Winnie from Tanzania. I moved to Scotland about 15 years ago, with my ex-husband, Kelvin. I've got two teenage daughters, Grace and Glory. Grace is 16. She was just a baby when we migrated. I was pregnant with Glory when I came here.

I am no longer with my children's father. I'm a single mum. It's hard work but the girls help me a lot.



Family 11

My name is Andrei, from Moldova. It's a very small country in Eastern Europe. When I came to the UK, I was married to Natasha. However, we got divorced after a few years and she moved back to Moldova. I now look after my son Dmitry on my own, so I'm a single father. Natasha usually takes Dmitry during some of the holidays.

Student Resource 1 – National statistics

1. In 2016, there were _____ million married or civil partner couple families in the UK. This was the most common type of family. _____ million of them did not have dependent children; _____ million of them had dependent children.

7.9

12.7

4.8

2. There were _____ million cohabiting families in the UK in 2016; this was the fastest growing family type, which more than doubled in number between _____ and 2016 (in 1996 there were _____ million cohabiting couples).

1996

1.5

3.3

3. In 2016, same-sex couple families (including civil partner, same-sex married and same-sex cohabiting couple families) accounted for _____ of all couple families. The largest number of same-sex couple families were same-sex cohabiting couple families (_____); this was followed by civil partner couple families (_____) and same-sex married couple families (_____). _____ same-sex couple families had dependent children.

1%

24,000

29,000

87,000

47,000

4. In _____, almost _____ individuals in a couple relationship (_____, or 2.3 million people) were in an inter-ethnic relationship and 9 in 10 (91%, _____ million people) were in a relationship with someone from the same ethnic group (Data for England and Wales only)

1 in 10

9%

23.4

2011

5. In 2016 there were _____ million single parent families; the majority (_____) were headed by a female single parent, the remaining (_____) were headed by a male single parent.

86%

2.9

14%

6. In _____, around _____ million people lived alone in the UK; the majority were _____.

women

7.7

2016

The statistics are adapted from:

Office of National Statistics Bulletin Families and Households in the UK: 2016, available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2016#dependent-children-were-most-likely-to-be-living-in-married-couple-families>

5. Equality and Diversity (The Equality Act 2010)

Teacher notes

Topic themes:

- Equality and diversity
- Human Rights
- The Equality Act 2010
- Protected characteristics
- Equality monitoring in the UK

Suggested level: Intermediate and above

This resource provides opportunities to explore the above themes in the ESOL classroom. The resource also develops students' reading and discussion skills.

This material provides background information on definitions and terms that are used in the Equality Act 2010. It could be of value as information for teachers and / or in helping students understand the laws governing equality and diversity. It also focuses on the content and purpose of Equality monitoring forms, which students will have to complete when enrolling for study, applying for work and so on.

Some suggestions for use in the ESOL classroom are included here. However, it is expected that teachers will consider the level and needs of their students when making decisions on what is appropriate. Key vocabulary items are also highlighted throughout the resource.

1. Definitions and prediction

This statement could be displayed for students to read:

In the UK, the term 'equality and diversity' is used to promote human rights and equal opportunities.

Ask students what they understand by 'equality', 'diversity' and 'human rights'. You may wish to allow students to discuss this in their first language if appropriate. After discussion and feedback, show the following definitions to students (or distribute on a hand out).

Equality is the principle that everyone in society should have access to the same opportunities which could allow them to develop to their full potential. With equality, everyone is treated fairly and no one is discriminated against because of their individual characteristics (for example, age or religion).

Diversity is about welcoming people from different backgrounds and creating an environment where everyone feels included.

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that every person in the world should be provided with, from birth to death.

Key Vocabulary: *principle, potential, rights, freedoms, discrimination, characteristic*

2. Equality Act 2010

Explain to the students that laws exist in the UK to safeguard and protect equality, diversity and human rights.

The Equality Act is a piece of legislation that came into force in 2010. The Equality Act 2010 offers everyone legal protection from discrimination in the workplace and in society more generally.

Discussion

Ask the students to consider what groups or types of individuals might need protection from discrimination.

The following questions could be used to develop the discussion:

- *What groups/individuals in society might need protection from discrimination?*
- *Are you aware of any similar laws in your home country?*
- *Do you feel that such laws are necessary? Why/Why not?*

3. Protected Characteristics

Please refer to **Teacher Notes for Feedback and Student Resources**.

Provide some background information to the students:

Under the Equality Act (2010), UK law recognises 9 'protected characteristics'. This term refers to groups of individuals that are protected by law against discrimination and unfair or demeaning treatment.

Key vocabulary: *protected, demeaning*

Prediction work

Ask students to predict what the 9 protected characteristics are. Provide an example (such as age) to start the discussion (see **Teacher Feedback Notes**).

As an alternative or additional activity, create an anagram or crossword task. The definitions provided could be used as clues. An anagram task is provided (see **Student Resource 1**).

Reading and comprehension

After feedback, provide the list of protected characteristics with definitions to students (see **Student Resource 2**). Allow students to read the text and be prepared to answer questions on any complex concepts and vocabulary items.

Reading and matching

Give groups the examples (see **Student Resource 3**) of how people can be discriminated against based on each characteristic. These can be cut up or given as a complete hand out. Students should try to match each example to a characteristic through reading and discussion. The teacher feedback notes provide key vocabulary items that could be focused on.

Feedback and discussion can follow.

Answers (Examples relate to Student Resource)

1A, 2G, 3F, 4E, 5H, 6I, 7C, 8D, 9B

Group work

Assign small groups with 2-3 different protected characteristics. Ask them to think of other examples of how people may be discriminated against based on each characteristic. This is an opportunity for students to draw on real life examples they have read about, witnessed or experienced. Regrouping students after they have come up with their initial ideas will allow students to share knowledge.

Take feedback on examples students have come up with, noting interesting vocabulary as it emerges. The examples could form the basis of a writing activity for homework, extension or project work.

Extension Activity – ranking

Ask students to look at the nine protected characteristics again and to try to rank which they think are the most important in terms of needing protection. You could use the following instructions:

- *Decide in groups on the 3 characteristics you think need the most protection*
- *Justify why you have chosen these three.*
- *Compare your ideas with other groups. Are they similar or different?*

This could lead to a discussion on why all the protected characteristics are given equal importance, and thoughts the students have on this.

4. Equality monitoring forms

In places of work and study, employees and students are often asked to fill in equality monitoring forms. These forms ask questions in relation to protected characteristics such as gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic background and religion. Most ESOL students will need to complete such a form when enrolling on their language course. Teachers have commented that it is difficult for students to understand these forms. In addition, students are often uninformed as to the purpose of such documents. This can lead to a wariness to completing them.

Introduce equality monitoring forms by showing students a copy of the form used in your organisation. There are also sample monitoring forms online. See for example: <http://m.acas.org.uk/media/word/j/2/Equality-and-diversity-monitoring-form-template.doc>

Discussion

Lead a short discussion on these forms. This is an opportunity to explore difficult vocabulary (according to the needs of the students) and make links to different parts of the form and the protected characteristics that have been explored during the lesson.

The following questions could be used:

Have you ever completed a form like this? What was the situation?

Do you feel comfortable completing this form? If not, why not?

*Did you find any of the questions difficult to answer? Which parts and why?
Can you find any sections where protected characteristics are referred to?
What do you think is the purpose of this type of monitoring?*

After discussion and language work, ensure that students have an understanding of the positive aims of equality monitoring:

Equality monitoring forms help businesses, public bodies, and schools among others ensure that no one is discriminated against or treated unfairly due to protected characteristics. Thus, the forms serve a protective and supportive purpose. The information that is gathered is handled confidentially.

Teacher Notes for Feedback – The nine protected characteristics

The nine protected characteristics are listed below in alphabetical order, rather than importance - they are all equally as important. Each is followed with an example of behaviour which would be discriminatory and illegal under the Equality Act⁵. Some key vocabulary is also highlighted.

1. Age

Refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32-year olds) or age group (e.g. 50 to 60 year olds).

Example: Mohammed is 55. He recently attended a job interview for a post at a technology firm. Mohammed is highly qualified for the post and interviews very well. The interviewers are very impressed by him, and agree that he is the best candidate based on experience and qualifications. However, they decide not to offer him the job because he is much older than the other workers at the firm, and they are worried that he may be less productive, less flexible and find it difficult to 'fit in' with the rest of the team.

Key vocabulary: candidate, qualifications, flexible, productive, to fit in

2. Disability

A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Example: Heidi, who has Down's syndrome, attends a local primary school. The school has organised a museum trip. The class teacher, without consulting Heidi or her parents, has decided that Heidi should not be allowed to go as she is worried that Heidi might not cope with the trip.

⁵ The information on protected characteristics is adapted from the Equality and Human Rights Commission website:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>.

The website also has more detailed information about each of the protected characteristics. Some of the examples included here are adapted from the Equality and Human Rights Commission website, and from the website below:

http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/l/c/Marriage_and_Civil_Partnership_Guide.pdf

Key vocabulary: *impairment, substantial, to cope with*

3. Gender

Gender discrimination is when you are treated unfairly either because you are a woman or because you are a man. (see Glossary, p. 7)

Example: Asha has worked for the same company for ten years. Recently she has discovered that a new employee, who is male, is earning substantially more than she is, even though they have the same job title and carry out exactly the same duties. She chats to her new colleague at lunch one day and learns that he has fewer qualifications and less experience than she has.

Key vocabulary: *colleague, qualifications*

4. Gender reassignment

Refers to the process of transitioning from one gender to another, which many (but not all) transgender people go through (see Glossary, p. 7). For some, gender reassignment involves medical procedures (such as sex reassignment surgery or hormonal treatment) that change their physical appearance. However, people do not need to be undergoing a medical procedure to transition. For example, a woman who decides to live as a man without undergoing medical procedures is also transitioning to a different gender identity and would be protected under the Equality Act.

Example: Petra works in the reception of a large company. Petra was raised as a male: her birth name is Petros and everyone in the company knows her as Petros. However, she has always felt her gender identity is not male, and has decided to spend the rest of her life as a woman, and to officially change her name to Petra. After informing her employer, her manager insists on referring to Petra as 'he', and transfers her to a role in an office where she will no longer meet the public. When Petra asks the reason, she is told that the company does not think it is appropriate that she has face-to-face contact with clients.

Key vocabulary: *transition, gender, transgender, hormonal, treatment, medical procedures, transfer*

5. Marriage and civil partnership

In the UK, marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and woman; people of the same sex (two women / two men) can now get married. Instead of marriage, same-sex couples can also choose to have their relationship legally recognised as a civil partnership.

Example B focuses on same sex marriage. It is worthwhile eliciting what students understand by civil partnership.

Example A: Mary, who works in an office, got married recently. She decides to apply for a promotion, which involves substantial overseas travel. Mary's boss, Shamim, tells her that although she has greater experience, she has decided to give the post to a less experienced single colleague. Her boss explains that she feels that it is easier for a single person to be away from home a lot.

Example B: Matt works as a personal assistant for senior manager John. Matt applies for promotion, and the following week, tells colleagues he has just married

his long-time partner Omar. Matt is due to attend important training regarding the new role, but is told that he can't take part as he has to support John in a series of meetings. Matt knows someone else could have covered for him; he later finds out from colleagues that John does not approve of same-sex marriages, and, it seems, is blocking his promotion.

Key vocabulary: *promotion, same-sex marriage, civil partnership, to cover for someone*

6. Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy (being pregnant) means to be expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the time before, during and after birth when women are entitled to a period of paid leave from work (maternity leave).

Example: Fatima is 3 months pregnant and works full-time. Before informing her employer about the pregnancy, she had been asked to lead on an important project. She has already successfully managed a similar project. Once her employer found out Fatima was pregnant, she was told that the work would be assigned to another colleague. No discussion with Fatima on the project demands or her needs had taken place. Her boss explained that he was worried that she might not be able to cope and would probably be off sick a lot during the pregnancy.

Key vocabulary: *pregnant, to expect a baby/to be expecting, maternity, to lead on*

7. Race

Race refers to a way of classifying people based on physical traits (the way they look), genetics, or ancestry. In the Equality Act, race refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality, citizenship, or their ethnic or national origins.

Example: Abdo, from Kenya, is trying to find a flat to rent. He finds a property online and calls the letting agent, who informs him that the flat is available immediately and arranges a viewing. When he goes to see the flat, the agent is rude to Abdo, making insulting comments about foreigners and black people not looking after their accommodation or paying the rent on time. He is then informed that the property has already been let and is therefore no longer available.

Key vocabulary: *physical traits, genetics, ancestry, colour, ethnic, to let, insulting, rude*

8. Religion and belief

Everyone is free to practice their chosen religion or philosophical beliefs; these affect individuals' life choices and ways of life. The law forbids treating a person or group differently because of what they believe in.

Example: Javaid has recently taken a new job in an organisation which promotes flexible working patterns. He makes a request to his line manager for a work pattern that will allow him to attend the mosque on a Friday. He provides a plan of how he will ensure that he carries out his work and makes up the hours he needs (working late on a Thursday). His request is turned down and the only feedback provided is that the request is considered unreasonable. A colleague tells him she always has Thursday afternoons off to help out at her child's school.

Key vocabulary: *religion, philosophical belief, forbid, work pattern, flexible hours*

9. Sexual orientation

The law says no one should be discriminated against because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual. It also says that no one should be discriminated because they are perceived to have a particular sexual orientation, or because they are associated with a person who has a particular sexual orientation.

Example: Mark and his long-term partner Humza book a double room in a small hotel in the north of Scotland online. When they arrive at the hotel, they are informed that all the double rooms are fully booked and they will have to pay for two single rooms if they wish to stay there. Humza checks online and can see that there are still double rooms available. They confront the receptionist, who tells them that it is not appropriate for two men to share a room together as it might upset other customers.

Key vocabulary: *gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, sexual orientation, long-term partner, confront, appropriate.*

Student Resource 1: Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act is a piece of legislation that came into force in 2010. The Equality Act 2010 offers everyone legal protection from discrimination in the workplace and in society more generally.

There are 9 protected characteristics within the legislation. Find these characteristics by unjumbling the anagrams. The first one is done for you as an example.

1. ega
age
2. dalybitisi
d_____
3. dregen
g_____
4. dregen/migrantsseen (two words)
g _ _ _ r _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
5. grimarea and vilci /tarnishprep (two words)
m _ _ _ _ _ and c _ _ _ p _ _ _ _ _ _
6. nagcrypen and amityrent
p _ _ _ _ _ and m _ _ _ _ _
7. acre
r _ _ _
8. reignoil and fibeel
r _ _ _ _ _ and b _ _ _ _ _
9. uselax/notationire (two words)
s _ _ _ _ o _ _ _ _ _ _ _



Student Resource 2: Defining the 9 protected characteristics

1. Age

Refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32-year olds) or age group (e.g. 50 to 60 year olds).

2. Disability

A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

3. Gender

Gender discrimination is when you are treated unfairly either because you are a woman or because you are a man.

4. Gender reassignment

Refers to the process of transitioning from one gender to another, which many (but not all) transgender people go through. For some, gender reassignment involves medical procedures (such as sex reassignment surgery or hormonal treatment) that change their physical appearance. However, people do not need to be undergoing a medical procedure to transition. For example, a woman who decides to live as a man without undergoing medical procedures is also transitioning to a different gender identity and would be protected under the Equality Act.

5. Marriage and civil partnership

In the UK, marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and woman; people of the same sex (two women / two men) can now get married. Instead of marriage, same-sex couples can also choose to have their relationship legally recognised as a civil partnership.

6. Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy (being pregnant) means to be expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the time before, during and after birth when women are entitled to a period of paid leave from work (maternity leave).

7. Race

Race refers to a way of classifying people based on physical traits (the way they look), genetics, or ancestry. In the Equality Act, race refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality, citizenship, or their ethnic or national origins.

8. Religion and belief

Everyone is free to practice their chosen religion or philosophical beliefs; these affect individuals' life choices and ways of life. The law forbids treating a person or group differently because of what they believe in.

9. Sexual orientation

The law says no one should be discriminated against because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual. It also says that no one should be discriminated because they are perceived to have a particular sexual orientation, or because they are associated with a person who has a particular sexual orientation.

Student Resource 3: Matching

Match the examples below to each of the nine protected characteristics.

Example A (Protected characteristic: _____)

Mohammed is 55. He recently attended a job interview for a post at a technology firm. Mohammed is highly qualified for the post and interviews very well. The interviewers are very impressed by him, and agree that he is the best candidate based on experience and qualifications. However, they decide not to offer him the job because he is much older than the other workers at the firm, and they are worried that he may be less productive, less flexible and find it difficult to 'fit in' with the rest of the team.

Example B (Protected characteristic: _____)

Mark and his long-term partner Humza book a double room in a small hotel in the north of Scotland online. When they arrive at the hotel, they are informed that all the double rooms are fully booked and they will have to pay for two single rooms if they wish to stay there. Humza checks online and can see that there are still double rooms available. They confront the receptionist, who tells them that it is not appropriate for two men to share a room as it might upset other customers.

Example C (Protected characteristic: _____)

Abdo, from Kenya, is trying to find a flat to rent. He finds a property online and calls the letting agent, who informs him that the flat is available immediately and arranges a viewing. When he goes to see the flat, the agent is rude to Abdo, making insulting comments about foreigners and black people not looking after their accommodation or paying the rent on time. He is then informed that the property has already been let and is therefore no longer available.

Example D (Protected characteristic: _____)

Javaid has recently taken a new job in an organisation which promotes flexible working patterns. He makes a request to his line manager for a work pattern that will allow him to attend the mosque on a Friday. He provides a plan of how he will ensure that he carries out his work and makes up the hours he needs (working late on a Thursday). His request is turned down and the only feedback provided is that the request is considered unreasonable. A colleague tells him she always has Thursday afternoons off to help out at her child's school.

Example E (Protected characteristic: _____)

Petra works in the reception of a large company. Petra was raised as a male: her birth name is Petros and everyone in the company knows her as Petros. However, she has always felt her gender identity is not male, and has decided to spend the rest of her life as a woman, and to officially change her name to Petra. After informing her employer, her manager insists on referring to Petra as 'he', and transfers her to a role in an office where she will no longer meet the public. When Petra asks the reason, she is told that the company does not think it is appropriate that she has face-to-face contact with clients.

Example F (Protected characteristic: _____)

Asha has worked for the same company for ten years. Recently she has discovered that a new employee, who is male, is earning substantially more than she is, even though they have the same job title and carry out exactly the same duties. She chats to her new colleague at lunch one day and learns that he has fewer qualifications and less experience than she has.

Example G (Protected characteristic: _____)

Heidi, who has Down's syndrome, attends a local primary school. The school has organised a museum trip. The class teacher, without consulting her or her parents, has decided that Heidi should not be allowed to go as she is worried that she might not cope with the trip.

Example H (Protected characteristic: _____)

Mary, who works in an office, got married recently. She decides to apply for a promotion, which involves substantial overseas travel. Mary's boss, Shamim, tells her that although she has greater experience, she has decided to give the post to a less experienced single colleague. Her boss explains that she feels that it is easier for a single person to be away from home a lot.

Matt works as a personal assistant for senior manager John. Matt applies for promotion, and the following week, tells colleagues he has just married his long-time partner Omar. Matt is due to attend important training regarding the new role, but is told that he can't take part as he has to support John in a series of meetings. Matt knows someone else could have covered for him; he later finds out from colleagues that John does not approve of same-sex marriages, and, it seems, is blocking his promotion.

6. Adapting to life in Scotland

Teacher notes

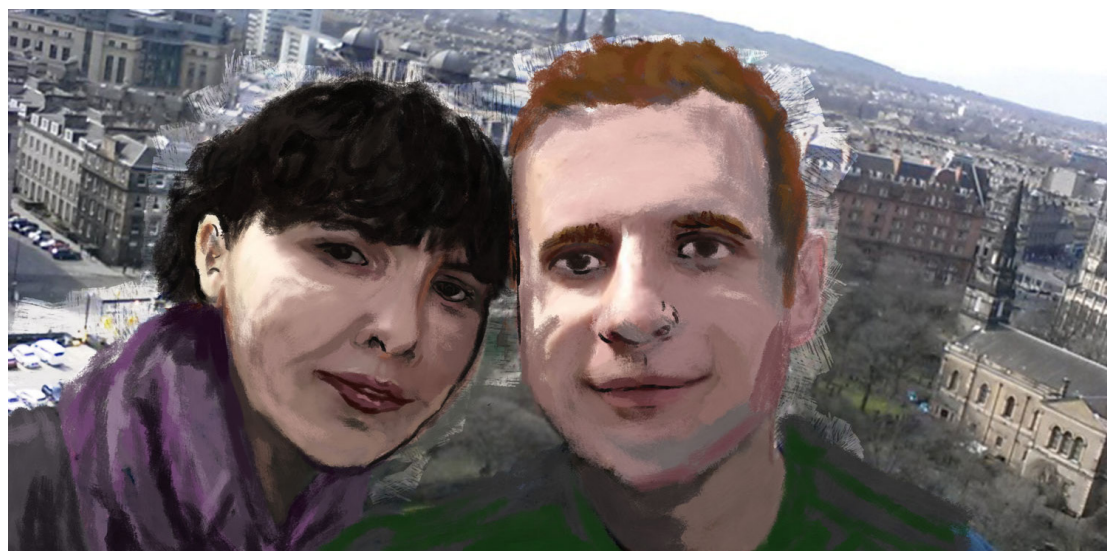
Topic themes

- Initial feelings when moving to a new country
- Language and cultural barriers
- Isolation and loneliness
- The benefits of social networks

Suggested level: Lower Intermediate and above

The following resource provides authentic quotations from Eastern European migrants taken from the Intimate Migrations Project.

This resource could be used in the ESOL classroom to focus on the themes above.



Notes on themes

These notes could be shared with the students to introduce the lesson ideas or might be useful background for teachers:

Some people move to a new country with or to join a partner, family members or friends; others move alone. Established social networks (e.g. family and friends) can be crucial in helping people to settle and in providing practical support (finding work, accommodation etc.). Newcomers often encounter language and cultural barriers as well as social isolation following their move.

For many, not knowing the language is the most challenging issue in the initial period of settlement. This impacts on their confidence and ability to communicate in everyday situations. Language barriers can therefore be an obstacle to settling in.

Language is inextricably linked to a person's identity. The inability to express oneself fully can impact on how we feel about ourselves. It is also not uncommon to feel isolated and lonely. It may be difficult to form relations with local people, especially with limited shared language. When new to a country, it can be difficult to understand cultural references. It also takes time to master humour and small talk. This will add to the difficulty. However, having friends in your new country can have a big impact, and help you feel like you belong.

Potential use in the ESOL classroom

Some ideas for exploitation include:

- Initial brainstorm/group discussion on initial feelings when arriving in Scotland.
- The quotations could be used for general reading comprehension tasks.
- Students are given a selection of quotes to discuss what feelings the people had and the reasons for these feelings. Alternatively, the quotes could be provided as a reading activity with students selecting the quotations which they most closely identify with.
- Rather than handing out the quotations, they could be displayed around the room with students walking around to read and then standing beside the quote they identify with, feel reflects the most common issue when moving to a new country, want to understand more about, and so on.
- Discussion around students' own feelings and how they overcame issues. This could also lead to students giving advice for new arrivals to Scotland.
- Roleplay activities could be set up where students act as migrant/counsellor. The counsellor provides advice to the person with the problem.
- Students could write a personalised account of their migration journey and the way they felt/feel now. These could be shared or used to create a classroom poster/journal.

Example discussion questions

These example questions could be used as a springboard for discussion after initial reading of the quotations. Teachers can adapt and extend to suit the needs/level of their own students.

- *Did you experience any of these feelings when you arrived here? Why/Why not?*
- *Do you feel differently now?*
- *What has had the greatest impact on you settling in/feeling at home here?*
- *What advice would you give to new arrivals to Scotland?*

Differentiation/Personalisation

It would be useful to build a bank of quotes from current/past students to more realistically reflect the backgrounds of the group you are working with.

Weaker students could be provided with some of the shorter quotes.

Potential Language Work 1

- Use of narrative tenses
- Adverbs (e.g. freely, normally)
- Coherence and cohesion of spoken text
- Modal verbs

Potential Language Work 2

The vocabulary to be included in the lesson should be tailored towards the level and interests of the students. Some potential key terms are:

Language barrier, to feel isolated/lonely, to feel comfortable with, to communicate with, to engage someone in..., to respond to, to lose one's identity, to be oneself, to express (one's) emotions, to struggle with..., to spend time together, joke, laugh, small talk, mates

Student Resource 1: Adapting to life in Scotland

The language barrier at first was definitely the most difficult thing. I had language classes since I was in primary school, and coming here I was sure that I would cope. However, the reality was very different. I had problems with understanding people, in particular the Scottish accent. I think it took me a whole year to feel comfortable with the accent. **(Igor, Polish)**

I think language was the most difficult thing at the beginning. For a long time, I couldn't relax because I couldn't freely communicate with people. Simply, I couldn't communicate normally and have a conversation. **(Marta, Polish)**

Being able to use the same language makes you closer. You make a joke – a line that comes from a film and everybody knows why we're laughing. You don't need to spend hours explaining why the joke's funny. It's just a silly joke everyone knows. **(Piotr, Polish)**

I find small talk the most challenging - starting a conversation, responding to small talk. This happens a lot at work. They keep engaging me in small talk. They forget to speak slowly. I work with people who speak Scottish, who speak very fast and use a lot of slang. **(Justyna, Polish)**

At the beginning the most difficult thing was the language. My national identity is Polish. When I think what it means to me to be Polish, it means that I speak Polish. The language is my identity. So, after arriving in Scotland I slightly lost this identity, because I couldn't communicate. Of course, it still isn't the same, but I feel a lot more confident with regard to language now. **(Megi, Polish)**

I was very lonely. I was very isolated, very lonely, because of the language barrier - that was the biggest problem for me. You meet people who aren't friendly. There were some Polish people who had been here one year longer than me, and I thought they would help me, but they didn't really. They made me feel like, 'I know better but I don't have to share this with you'. I had a hard time with Polish people here, I didn't connect with them. Eventually I got many Scottish friends, and I felt so free and natural and I could just be myself. With Polish people, probably because of my sexuality, I was careful about who I was talking to. **(Agnieszka, Polish)**

I don't have Scottish friends. I have never managed to form close relationships with Scots, even at work - we never do more than go out for drinks or go on company trips. I've never managed to get close to anybody, even at college. Maybe it's because my English is not perfect, and it's difficult to express my emotions. **(Rafal, Polish)**

And, there's Derek - he's Scottish. We're mates, we're friends. He helps me. For example, I needed to make a phone call about my Internet connection. I'm still not great when it comes to phone conversations - so I asked him to do it for me. And he helped me with that. Then, I needed to find a GP and I didn't know where to go so he helped me with that, too. He also took me to the hospital when I had a health emergency and he explained everything to the doctor. So, he helps me with the issues that I struggle with as a foreigner. But, we also spend a lot of time together - we play football together and we go out. **(Przemek, Polish)**

7. Home is where the heart is

Teacher notes

Topic themes:

- Sense of displacement for migrants
- Memories and traditions from country of origin
- Ways to recreate a sense of 'home'

Suggested level: Elementary and above

This resource could be used in the ESOL classroom to explore the themes above. The following resource provides authentic quotations and photographs from Eastern European migrants collected from the Intimate Migrations Project.

Notes on the material

These pictures (**Student Resource 1**) were taken by LGBT migrants from Central Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union living in Scotland. They were invited to produce a photo diary on the theme of home. In the quotations (**Student Resource 2**), participants explain what the pictures mean to them. The quotations are provided in the same order as the photographs i.e. picture 1 is related to the first quote.

Potential use in the ESOL classroom

Some ideas for exploitation include:

- Initial brainstorm/group discussion on what students miss about their country of origin.
- Students can be given the quotations as a reading and comprehension exercise and asked to match them to the images displayed around the classroom.
- Students are given a selection of pictures and quotes to discuss what feelings the people had and the reasons for these feelings.
- Discussion around students' own feelings around home: where is home for them? Do they feel at home in Scotland? What things, places or people make them feel at home?
- As a follow-up activity, students could be asked to bring to class one or more pictures that represent 'home' for them, and write a short account about the image and what it represents for them. These could be shared or used to create a classroom poster.
- An alternative to the activity above could be to ask students to create a photo diary. The teacher can explain that pictures used in class are taken from migrants' photo diaries on the theme of home. Which pictures would students take if they were given the same assignment? (The original brief for the photo diary is provided in the box below)

The theme of the photo diary is HOME. You can interpret 'home' in any way you like.

We would like you to include pictures of places, objects and people that you associate with 'home', or remind you of 'home', or make you feel 'at home'. You can include as many pictures as you like; you can take new pictures and/or include old pictures that are meaningful to you.

Example discussion questions

These example questions could be used as a springboard for discussion after initial reading of the quotations. Teachers can adapt and extend to suit the needs/level of their own students.

- Which image do you like the most? Why?
- Where is home for you?
- Do you feel at home in Scotland?
- What helps you feel at home?
- How would you help someone who is new to this country feel at home?

Potential Language Work

The vocabulary to be included in the lesson should be tailored towards the level and interests of the students. Some potential key terms are:

to feel at home, home is where the heart is, tradition, to wonder, security, to miss, to remind, cosy, to have someone to turn to, the essence of

Student Resource 1: Home is where the heart is



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

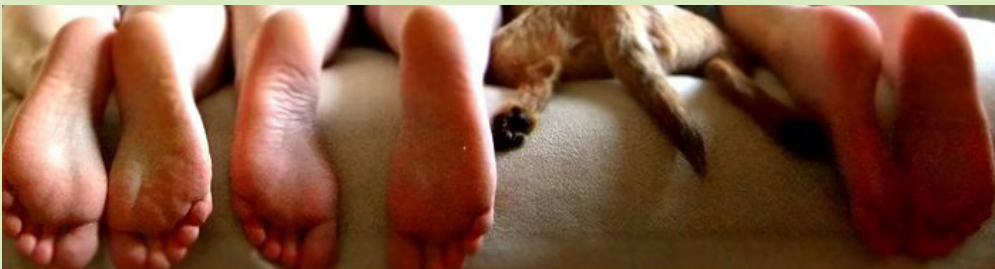


Photo 8

Student Resource 2: Home is where the heart is

"Tradition. I put a lot of effort into preparing pickled cucumbers during the summer. Although they have zero vitamins, I continue to do it. You have to do it. I sometimes wonder what I need them for, but I feel I have to somehow. It's summer, cucumbers are there, so you have to prepare them." **(Wera, Poland)**

"Security. This photo seems very sad. You can see that it's sad, because it's black and white, full of tears, but to me... Let's look at it from the other side. It's cold and terrible outside. However, at home is nice and cosy. This is what it's all about. It means that being with my partner Karolina, you always have someone to turn to. That someone thinks about you. And I feel secure because of that." **(Wera, Poland)**

"Me and my partner. Creating our home. Our first very own flat. He has always made me feel at home, from the first day we met." **(Blagoy, Bulgaria)**

"It is a picture of a photo from a letter my mum sent me recently. The original photo was taken by my brother – it is a picture of my mum with me, when I was little. It is a picture that reminds me of the feeling of home." **(Janos, Hungary)**

"Wherever we go, we miss the food from home - and here are papanashi, one of my favourite Romanian desserts!" **(Livia, Romania)**

"This is me as a child, and this is the housing scheme where I grew up. It's where I started. And obviously most of my memories are from there... Some of them good, some bad, but still wherever I go, maybe I'll return after forty years and I will still feel at home there, even though maybe I won't own the apartment or maybe this building won't be there anymore." **(Luben, Bulgaria)**

"This is Nata – one of our cats. She's always waiting for me to come back home... no matter what time I come back. She's always sitting at the window and waiting. So, this is about a feeling that somebody waits for you. Of course, others at home wait for you too, but they're not always at the window. Sometimes they're already asleep. And Nata always waits for me. And she's a part of our family." **(Nadya, Ukraine)**

"To me this picture is the essence of our home. It doesn't matter that there are no faces here. It's simply the essence of home. We're all together, relaxed – me, my partner Karolina, our son and our dog. And that's us." **(Mags, Poland)**

8. Vita's nearest and dearest

Teacher notes

Topic themes:

- Social networks and relationships with friends and family
- Sexual orientation and coming out
- Homophobic prejudice and how it affects personal relationships
- Attitudes towards homosexuality

Suggested level: Lower Intermediate and above

The following resource provides authentic quotations from Eastern European migrants taken from the Intimate Migrations Project. This resource could be used in the ESOL classroom to explore the themes above.

Notes on the material

The resource (**Student Resource 1**) could be used as a starting point for discussion on the themes above. The drawing and quotes are adapted from an interview with Vita, one of the participants from the research project on LGBT migrants. Vita is a woman in her mid-20s from Lithuania who originally moved to Scotland to study, and has now lived in Scotland for many years.

This is a real account and it is worth drawing students' attention to the use of the first person and the fact that an individual is writing about a deeply personal experience.

Some of the themes may have to be handled sensitively and you should also take account of the level and cohesion of your group. As well as providing awareness raising activities, the text and activities allow for students to explore issues around personal identity, and, therefore, space should be given for students to talk about their own experiences, where they wish to do so.

Sample Lesson Plan

Introduction

- Tell students that they are going to explore the relationships people have with their friends and family. Introduce Vita's drawing, and elicit the idea of 'social networks', without revealing Vita's gender (i.e. you could say this is a drawing made by a young migrant from Lithuania and includes all the people close to this person– each person is represented by a circle).
- Elicit / teach the phrase 'nearest and dearest'. Students discuss in groups who they consider their 'nearest and dearest' to be.
- As a follow-up, students can be asked to take a few moments to think about the people they are closest to, and then draw a visual representing their 'nearest and dearest'. Students then work in pairs/groups and explain who the people in their diagram are, and what makes them important in their lives. This activity could also be done after the reading activity.

Pre-Reading Task

Return to Vita's drawing and reveal her gender - explain Vita is a Lithuanian woman who moved to Scotland to study; Vita identifies as a lesbian and has a Scottish girlfriend, but her family and many of her friends live in Lithuania. Students are going to explore Vita's relationship with her nearest and dearest.

Potential Language Work

The vocabulary to be included in the lesson should be tailored towards the level and interests of the students. Some potential key terms to pre-teach or check understanding of are:

nearest and dearest; homosexuality; lesbian; to come out; elephant in the room; this person is my universe; seeing someone; to keep in touch; to have strong views; to argue; to hang out

Students could be asked to predict what Vita will say about her nearest and dearest, for example:

- *What could be the attitudes of her nearest and dearest towards Vita's sexuality?*
- *What would it be like to come out to friends and family?*
- *What would it be like to keep in touch with friends and family in Lithuania?*

Reading task

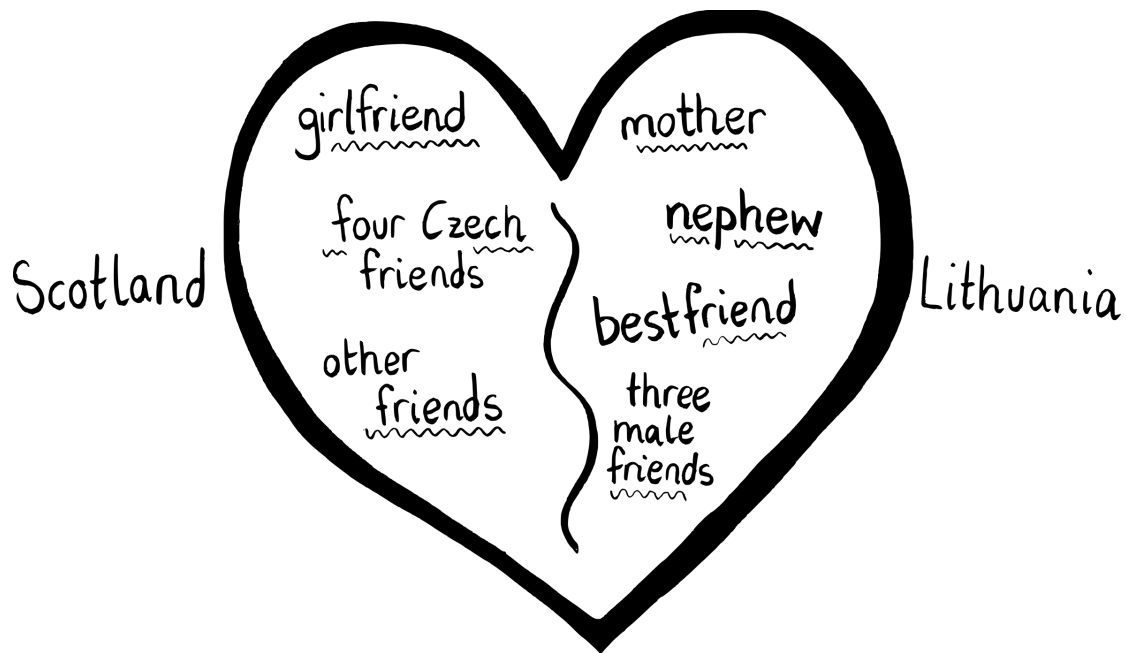
Students read and answer the questions in the handout. Check in pairs and then as whole class. Discuss points students are interested in.

Post reading Task: Speaking and Discussion

These example questions could be used as a springboard for discussion after the reading task. Students can discuss the questions in small group; teacher can then take feedback from groups discuss interesting comments/thoughts on the theme. Teachers can adapt and extend to suit the needs/level of their own students.

- *Have you ever read or heard about someone coming out as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender before? Has this text made you more aware of issues that LGBT people face when they come out?*
- *What attitudes towards homosexuality have you encountered? Do you think that attitudes towards homosexuality are different in Scotland compared to your home country?*
- *Have your attitudes changed in any way since coming here? If yes, how and why do you think this is the case?*
- *How important is it to have your personal identity recognised and understood? Why do you feel this way?*
- *Have you ever experienced conflict with your 'nearest and dearest' because of who you are or something you did?*

Student Resource 1 - Vita: my nearest and dearest



My name is Vita and I come from Lithuania. I moved to Scotland to study, and have been here for many years now. Below is a drawing of the people closest and dearest to me: my girlfriend, my mum, and my close friends. Some of these people live in Scotland, others in Lithuania.

Section A - Mother

My mum is perhaps the most difficult person I have met in my life but she is also the dearest to me. We do not share our deepest secrets but she knows me so well that we don't even need to talk. She is the most important person in the world to me. On the one hand, she has me - her daughter. On the other hand, for sixty years she was told the complete opposite of what I tell her about homosexuality. She didn't grow up thinking being a lesbian is normal. When I came out to her, she told me that I'm her child and she would never stop loving me. She took the news very calmly. But when she started to think about it, it was horrible. It still isn't easy for us, even though years have passed. She told me that homosexuality is a disease, that it isn't normal. We used to have a very close relationship, I used to tell her literally everything. Now it's not like that. Now we talk, but there is a big elephant in the room. But I'm happy I live openly. Whether she likes it or not, this is who I am.

Section B - Girlfriend

If I'm going out with someone, this person is my universe. My girlfriend is Scottish, and we've been together for 10 months. We met by chance - she didn't like me at first, and I didn't like her. We were in a café with common friends and we started talking. She liked that I was opinionated, and we both had strong views on politics. Other people left and we sat and argued the whole evening. She said that we should

meet again, and little by little we started seeing each other.

Section C - Nephew

My nephew, my little boy. I was there when he was born. I don't want kids myself but I really love other people's children. I often looked after him when he was a baby because my sister worked a lot. He's like me, smart. Nobody in our family likes reading or going to the theatre, but he does. I bought him his first Harry Potter book. We chat on Skype. My sister doesn't want me to tell him anything, I'm not allowed to tell him that I have a girlfriend. I think that if he grew up knowing about his aunt, he would think it is normal. But he isn't my child, so what can I do?

Section D - Three male friends

I have three male friends. I grew up with them in Lithuania, in the same city, in the same neighbourhood. These guys are like brothers to me. They were the only ones who weren't surprised when I came out. I always talked about girls with them. They're my close friends.

Section E - Best friend

My Lithuanian friend is my best friend. We grew up together and our mothers are best friends. We're practically like sisters, because our mums were so close. Even now, sometimes I call my mum on Skype and I see my best friend sitting there, drinking tea. Our families are very, very close.

Section F - Four Czech friends

I met my Czech friends in Scotland – I call them my gay sisters. I went to see a flat - it was huge and had many rooms. By chance it turned out that all my flatmates were lesbians. I was observing them and it was so... it was amazing, to see that they were just ordinary, lovely girls, because I hadn't met many lesbians before, and you hear horrible things about gay people being sick and weird. It made me feel normal. I've known them for four years, they were with me during the most difficult times, when I came out. They're very close to me. Now that I'm moving to a different part of Scotland, I know we will always keep in touch.

Reading Task

Read the text and discuss the questions for Sections A – F.

Section A

- Why is it difficult for Vita's mum to accept that Vita is a lesbian?
- How do we know that she cares about Vita?
- How does Vita's relationship with her mum change when she comes out to her?

Section B

- What did Vita's girlfriend like about her when they first met?

Section C

- How does Vita feel about her nephew?
- Why is Vita not allowed to tell her nephew that she has a girlfriend?

Section D

- What were her Lithuanian male friends' reactions when she came out to them?

Section E

- Why are Vita's Czech friends important to her?

9. Personal Stories

Teacher notes

The following resources can be used in the ESOL classroom in a variety of ways.

The personal stories could be used individually or more than one could be used in a lesson to compare and contrast the lives and the issues faced by different people living in Scotland today.

The first story, **Daniel's story**, includes a full suggested lesson plan. This provides teachers with a model of how they might exploit the subsequent stories.

The notes provided for the other stories offer some suggestions of how teachers could exploit the material in the classroom. However, these suggestions need not be followed and teachers should feel free to exploit the materials in ways they feel suit the level, needs and interests of the students.

It would be useful to include some of the more general activities (**Families and Diversity, Home is where the heart is, Equality and Diversity**) into the teaching, either as lessons before or after using personal stories.

9.1 Daniel's Story

Teacher notes

Topic themes:

- Gender identity and gender transitioning
- Bullying
- Being socialised into gender roles
- Attitudes towards transgender people and gender transitioning

This resource provides opportunities to explore the above themes in the ESOL classroom. The resource also develops students' reading and discussion skills.

This is a real account and it is worth drawing students' attention to the use of the first person and the fact that an individual is writing about a deeply personal experience.

Some of the themes may have to be handled sensitively and you should also take account of the level and cohesion of your group. As well as providing awareness raising activities, the text and activities allow for students to explore issues around personal identity, and, therefore, space should be given for students to talk about their own experiences, where they wish to do so.

Sample Lesson Plan (Suggested level: Intermediate and above)

Introduction

Tell students they are going to read a text about a transgender person who has transitioned from female to male.

Potential Language Work

The vocabulary to be included in the lesson should be tailored towards the level and interests of the students. Some potential key terms to pre-teach or check understanding of are:

Gender, transgender, feminine/masculine, transition, to come out, identity, fresh start

Pre-reading task/prediction task

Hand out **Student Resource 1**. Ask students to work in pairs/groups and discuss the two questions. Ask for feedback and take on board any interesting ideas.

Reading Task 1 (Check predictions)

Hand out reading text (**Student Resource 2**). Students read the text and check if Daniel had any of the problems they predicted.

Reading Task 2 (Reading for gist)

Students read text and put the headings in the correct places. Students check with each other in pairs. You could deal with any language difficulties here or leave this till later.

Answer key: 1-A 2-D 3-C 4-F 5-B 6-E

Reading Task 3 (Reading for detail)

Students read and answer the questions. Check in pairs and then as whole class. Discuss points students are interested in.

Post reading Task: Speaking and Discussion

Students discuss the questions in small groups. Take feedback and discuss interesting comments/thoughts on the theme.

Optional Post reading activities:

- Students create a poster to highlight issues of identity and gender. For example, they could make a poster on do's and don'ts of working with transgender people (at work/college). If the focus is more on identity in general, students could consider how they as students could ensure inclusivity in the classroom, where all identity differences are valued.
- Students write a letter to Daniel, describing how they feel about his story. Students could choose to write this as themselves or take on the role of his mother, sister or boss, explaining how they felt about his transitioning.
- Students take part in a role-play to explore attitudes towards transgender issues. One student could be Daniel, and others, people in his life (e.g. his teacher, mother, classmate from Poland, colleague). This could be done in pairs or in groups.

Student Resource 1 - Daniel's story

You are going to read a text about a transgender person who has transitioned from female to male.

Pre-reading Task

Work in pairs/small groups to discuss the questions.

- What would it be like if someone had to live as a gender they felt uncomfortable with?
- What problems do you think they would face in their life?

Reading Task 1 (Check predictions)

Read the text quickly to check if Daniel had any of the problems you predicted.

Reading Task 2 (Reading for gist)

Read the text again to select the headings (1 – 6) for sections A - F

1. Daniel is a young transgender man and comes from a small town in Poland.
2. Daniel started to think about transitioning when he was 18.
3. Daniel thought that moving to Scotland would be a fresh start for him.
4. Daniel has now been living as a man for two years.
5. Daniel moved to Scotland as a teenager; as a single mother with three children, his mum struggled to make ends meet in Poland.
6. There were different reactions from people to Daniel transitioning.

Reading Task 3 (Reading for detail)

Read the text again and find the answers to the questions for Sections A – F.

Section A

1. What examples of bullying are mentioned?
2. What 3 examples of his mother's indifference or negativity does Daniel talk about?

Section B

3. How do we know that Daniel's mother really does care?

Section C

4. How do we know that Daniel cares for his mother?
5. What are his hopes for his new life?

Section D

6. What outward signs do we see of Daniel starting to become the person he wants to be?

Section E

7. What different attitudes can we see here? Who changes? Who doesn't?

Section F

8. Does Daniel know what he wants or hopes for the future? How does he feel about this?

Post Reading Task (speaking and discussion)

Work in small groups to discuss the following questions.

1. Have you ever read or heard about someone transitioning before? Has this text made you more aware of issues that transgender people face?
2. In what ways do you think that attitudes towards transgender people are different in Scotland compared to your home country?
3. Have your attitudes changed in any way since coming here? If yes, how and why do you think this is the case?
4. What types of difficulties do you think transgender people encounter – personally and with other people (colleagues, friends, family etc)?
5. Think about the attitudes that people have towards transgender people. How can individuals and organisations support people who are transitioning.
6. How important is it to have your personal identity recognised and understood? Why do you feel this way?
7. Have you ever felt that people did not understand an aspect of your identity (for example, this could be about sexual identity, religious, physical appearance or other aspects).



Student Resource 2 - Daniel's story (reading text)

A

Growing up in my hometown was very hard, especially because I was different from others. I wasn't a 'girly' girl, and most of the time people thought I was a boy. One of the teachers at primary school used to make fun of me in front of the other children, and that encouraged them to do the same. She even locked me in the classroom, I was only seven at the time. Of course, some people were more understanding, but most weren't.

When I was ten, or maybe thirteen, my friend and I used to go to parts of our town where no one knew us. My friend came up with the idea that we could call me Przemek, a boy's name in Polish. Everyone welcomed me as Przemek so from then I started introducing myself as Przemek. Someone said to my mum, 'Oh, I know your son'. She replied, 'I don't have a son'. 'Yes you do, his name is Przemek'. My mum said, 'I know who you're talking about. It's not a boy, it's actually a girl. Her name is Daniela'. Then my mum and her friend started to make fun of me.

At the start of secondary school, my mum tried to force me to wear feminine clothing to school, because she knew I would get into trouble for wearing masculine ones. So I dressed like that on the first day but didn't feel comfortable at all. The next day she did exactly the same thing, but I had packed my masculine clothes in my bag, and when I got to the school I went to the bathroom straight away and got changed. My mum gave up after a few days.

B

At first, my mum's job was picking berries, and at the same time she worked in a restaurant, washing the dishes. When the berry season finished she worked in a laundry, and saved cash to pay for our tickets, so that we, her children, could join her. Before we came, she rented a flat for us. It was better after we moved to Scotland, because we weren't going hungry at the end of the month. In Poland I used to go to my grandparents' before my mum got paid at the end of the month, because they were able to feed us.

C

Before my mum decided on Scotland, she asked us if we wanted to move. I was happy because coming here was going to be a new start for me. I could leave all the bad experiences behind and come and start a new life, not a bad one, a good one. There was nothing to miss from my old life, as the only good relationships I had were with my family.

D

I started doing research on how to do it, and found videos made by other trans people on You Tube and other sources. I started to understand more about how I had felt all my life and why I felt ashamed of my chest and body. I bought a binder, which is like a t-shirt you put on to flatten your chest, and started binding. I asked for a male uniform at work. I spoke to my friend at work, who is also LGBT, and we chose the name Daniel together. I insisted that my workmates use my new male name and male pronouns.

E

I went to my boss, asking him for a new uniform, and, as I have an allergy, he even got a long-sleeved one - so that was perfect. He was very supportive all the way. Some people continued to use my old name, so he put me in the back room so they would have to shout my name and the pronouns, to teach them to use my name. Sometimes they got it wrong, but when that happened I just ignored it.

I am a Catholic, but the church was not supportive at all. When I started transitioning to my new gender, I was a youth leader in the church. They said 'I think it's better if you take a break for now and then come back'. When I did try to go back they ignored my request. So I felt that they don't want me there anymore, and I'm okay with that right now because I'm in other charity groups and volunteer there.

At first, mum wasn't supportive either. She hardly ever used my new name. Maybe it was because I didn't give her time to get used to things, and that was bad of me. I visited her soon after I came out. I had transitioned at work and got rid of all my feminine clothes. I wore a shirt and tie and used my male pronouns, and this was a shock for her. My sister says she's very happy about what I did because she always perceived me as a brother, not a sister. But mum says that she felt she was losing a daughter. My mum, she's there for me right now. She even came with me to the first doctor's appointment about my transition.

F

Well I'm just happy right now where I am, and I'm really happy that I took these steps towards my transition. Because if I still felt ashamed of my body, I would still be where I was - I would be doing just what people wanted me to do, I would be afraid that I wouldn't find myself. Now, because I have transitioned, I'm more myself, and discovering what I really want to do. Life now makes sense.

9.2 Nadya and Marta's Story

Teacher notes

Topic themes

- Same-sex families and parenting
- Family rights for LGBT people in different countries
- Discrimination and prejudice
- Coming out and family relationships

Suggested level: Intermediate and above

This resource provides opportunities to explore the above themes in the ESOL classroom; it could be a good follow-up to the **Families and Diversity** or **Equality and Diversity** activities. The resource also develops students' reading and discussion skills.

Notes on the material

There is huge variation in how individual countries and states deal with LGBT people. Some governments violate the rights of LGBT people: for example, there may be laws that make same-sex relationships illegal (in some countries this is punishable with the death penalty), or discriminating against LGBT people (for example, by banning LGBT people from donating blood or joining the army). Others have laws that actively protect LGBT people from discrimination (for example, by recognising prejudice-motivated violence against LGBT people as a hate crime punishable with severe sentences) and give legal recognition to same-sex couples, including the rights to have children or adopt.

Useful information about the uneven recognition of LGBT rights across different countries can be found at the links below:

<http://ilga.org/what-we-do/ilga-riwi-global-attitudes-survey/>

<https://www.ilga-europe.org/resources/rainbow-europe/rainbow-europe-2017>

The text that follows focuses on family rights for LGBT people, and it is worth bearing in mind the following definitions:

Civil partnerships were introduced in the UK in 2004 to legally recognise same-sex couples. This gave same-sex couples essentially the same rights and responsibilities as civil marriage (including property rights, social security, pension benefits and parenting rights), although there are slight technical differences between civil partnership and civil marriage.

Same-sex marriage was introduced almost a decade later (2013 in England and Wales, 2014 in Scotland) to give full marriage equality to same-sex and opposite sex couples. Civil partnership also remains available (to same-sex couples only), although same-sex couples can convert their partnership into a marriage.

Introduction

Introduce a context for the reading. Tell students they are going to read a text about a same-sex couple from Poland who have moved to Scotland to get married and have children. Explain that in Poland there is no legal recognition for same-sex families, while in Scotland same-sex couples can get married or enter a civil partnership and have children.

Potential Language Work

The vocabulary to be included in the lesson should be tailored towards the level and interests of the students. Some potential key terms to pre-teach or check understanding of are:

Sexuality, legal status, secure, birth certificate, parental leave, paternity leave, HR – human resources, circle of friends

Pre-reading task/prediction task

You could ask students to predict:

- what kind of challenges Nadya and Marta may face as a same-sex couple
- how different their life may be in Poland and Scotland

Reading Task 1 (Reading for gist)

Students can read the text for the first time to discover how close their predictions are.

Reading Task 2 (Reading for detail)

For a second, closer reading, students could read the text again, and work in pairs/small groups to answer questions about the text. Sample questions:

- *Why did Nadya and Marta decide to move to Scotland?*
- *What family rights does being in a civil partnership give them?*
- *Why does Marta's boss get angry with staff from Human Resources?*
- *Why has Marta never told her parents that she is married and has a child?*
- *What effect did Nadya's 'coming out' letter have on her relationship with her mum?*
- *What impact did the birth of her son have on Nadya's relationship with her parents?*
- *What makes Nadya and Marta feel at home in Scotland?*

Check in pairs/groups and then as whole class and discuss points students are interested in.

Post-reading

A focus on vocabulary could be included here.

Use the following questions to generate discussion around the reading:

- What do you learn from the text about attitudes towards same-sex families in Poland and Scotland?
- In what ways do you think that attitudes towards same-sex families people are different in Scotland compared to your home country?
- Have you ever heard about or met same-sex families? Has this text made you more aware of issues that same-sex families may face?
- What would it be like to hide something about yourself or your family on a daily basis?

Follow-up activities

These could include a writing task, where students write a letter from Marta's perspective:

Imagine you are Marta and you have decided to tell your parents in Poland about your family in Scotland. Write a letter from Marta's perspective.



Student resource - Nadya and Marta's story

Marta and I have been together since 2000 after meeting at university in Poland. We decided to move to Scotland in 2005 after finishing our studies. We weren't prepared to hide our sexuality any longer, and so couldn't continue to live in Poland where we often had to pretend we were just friends, where only our close group of friends knew that we were actually in a relationship.

We knew very little about Scotland before moving here. We packed whatever we could, and travelled by bus for 45 hours. We didn't decide to move to Scotland for money or jobs - issues to do with sexuality were the main motivation. We heard that in 2005 civil partnership was legalised in Scotland and that's why we chose Scotland. We got our civil partnership in 2009. One of the main reasons we wanted to register our civil partnership was that we were planning to have children at some point, and we wanted our family to be secure in terms of our legal status. We knew that we wanted to have a child and that it would be impossible in Poland. So, we came here. To be honest, we moved to Scotland to be able to start a family, to be together, without having to hide.

Following our son's birth, we were happy to find out that we had the same rights as any other new parents. Both our names are listed on the birth certificate, and we both got parental leave from work to look after our new baby. It was funny, Marta's boss scanned a paternity leave form - which is usually meant for the father - and sent it to the head office. Marta looked at the e-mails later and someone from HR had asked whether there was a mistake, because Marta is a woman and she was applying for paternity leave. Marta's boss wrote back: 'No, there is no mistake, please find the form attached'. Her boss got angry at the HR people.

Both of our families found it difficult to come to terms with our sexual orientation. In fact, Marta's parents and extended family still don't know that she's a lesbian, and that she's married and has a child. We think that this is how it's always going to be because they are very religious. Marta's sister knows, but no one else does. Marta's not in touch with her family apart from sending them Christmas cards, but her sister is supportive of us. I told my mum I was a lesbian after we moved to Scotland. I sent my mum a letter, explaining the situation. My mum wrote back saying that she was not stupid, and that she already knew. She took the news very badly and we didn't speak for the next five years. This was difficult because we used to be so close. We invited my parents to our wedding but they didn't come. Since the birth of our son, my relationship with them has improved - their grandson is the most important thing for them. However, my mum will never accept us as a couple or family.

We feel at home in Scotland and have created our own circle of friends. For sure, it's been people's acceptance of our sexual orientation that's helped us feel this way. My boss and colleagues thought us being lesbians was completely normal. We're happy that we're able to be together openly and that we can have a life together. Pretending was the worst. We aren't judged here and we can be who we are. Home is where people you love are, and where you can be yourself.

9.3 Agnieszka's story

Teacher notes

Topic themes

- Discrimination and prejudice
- Equality and diversity, Multi-ethnic families
- Race, ethnicity and racism

Suggested level: Elementary and above

This resource provides opportunities to explore the above themes in the ESOL classroom; it could be a good follow-up to the **Families and Diversity** or **Equality and Diversity** activities. The resource also develops students' reading and discussion skills.

Introduction

Introduce a context for the reading. Tell the class that they are going to read a text about Agnieszka and her son, who are from Poland, about their experiences of prejudice and discrimination both in Poland and Scotland. Explain that Agnieszka is white Polish while her son's father is from a Middle Eastern background. Agnieszka and her son's father are no longer together; she is currently raising her son with her Scottish partner, Anna.

Potential Language Work

The vocabulary to be included in the lesson should be tailored towards the level and interests of the students. Some potential key terms to pre-teach or check understanding of are:

To raise a child/family, to be offensive / make offensive comments, racism/racist, prejudice, a pram, to hug so., tone (of voice), to handle a situation

Pre-reading task/prediction task

You could ask students to predict:

- the kind of challenges Agnieszka and her son might face
- how different their lives could be in Poland and Scotland

Reading Task 1 (Readings for gist)

Students can read the text for the first time to discover how close their predictions are.

Reading Task 2 (Reading for detail)

For a second, closer reading, students read the text again, and work in pairs/small groups to answer questions about the text. The following example questions could

be used for group and then whole class discussion:

- *What issues did Agnieszka and her son have to face (in Poland / Scotland)?*
- *Why do you think they were treated like this?*
- *Which are the most serious? Why?*

Post Reading Task

Students discuss the themes around the text. The following could be used to initiate the discussion:

- *Have you encountered/ been a victim of prejudice or behaviour like this? How would you react if it happened to you?*
- *Have you ever witnessed other people being treated in this way? If so, how did you react? Did you do anything?*
- *What would you do if you saw something similar happening to a stranger? Would you try to help? How? If not, why not?*

Follow up activities could include role play – where students relate an event they witnessed (or were a victim of) to a friend or person in authority (e.g. police officer).

Student resource - Agnieszka's story

I come from a small village in Poland, and I moved to Scotland in 2005. I currently work in a caring profession. I have a son, Kasper, who was born in Poland but moved to Scotland with me when he was small. For the past nine years I have been in a relationship with Anna, who is Scottish. We live together, and we raise Kasper together.

Experiences in Poland

An important reason why I decided to leave Poland and migrate to Scotland was the racism my son experienced in Poland. Kasper's dad comes from a Middle Eastern background and my son experienced racism and prejudice in my home country because of the way he looks. The colour of his skin was darker than other kids'. When Kasper was born the nurses made racist comments and treated him like a circus attraction. We lived in a small town, and our neighbours also made offensive comments about Kasper. Fortunately, my family was brilliant at handling the situation. My stepfather used to push Kasper around in a pram. Whenever people made racist comments he'd say that Kasper was his grandson and that they wouldn't be welcome to his house unless they stopped making offensive comments.

Experiences in Scotland

We've also encountered racist attitudes in Scotland. Once I was on a bus with my son still in a pram when a man started to make aggressive comments about my son being 'black'. I couldn't speak English that well at the time so I didn't fully understand what the man was saying. However, it was clear from his tone that he was being offensive. Luckily another passenger on the bus helped us. She was Scottish, and she spoke to the bus driver. She asked the driver to phone the police, and she hugged me and made sure I was OK.

At school, Kasper got upset when two of his best friends were laughing at his new Polish friend Piotr. Piotr had recently moved to Scotland and couldn't speak much English, so Kasper often translated for him. I remember Kasper coming home and being really quiet. I asked what was wrong, and he told me what had happened. The boys had said to Piotr: "We don't need more Polish people here. Go back home". Piotr had asked Kasper what the boys had said, but my son didn't want to translate it to him. Kasper asked me, "mum, we are Polish, do we need to go back as well? But this is my home". For him, this is home.

9.4 Tomek's story

Teacher notes

Topic themes

- Discrimination and prejudice
- Equality and diversity (sexual orientation)
- Different forms of homophobia

Suggested level: Intermediate and above

This resource provides opportunities to explore the above themes in the ESOL classroom; it could be a good follow-up to the **Equality and Diversity** activity. The resource also develops students' reading and discussion skills.

It may be useful to refer to resources on the different levels of violation/protection of LGBT rights, and to definitions of civil partnership and same-sex marriage.

Introduction

Introduce a context for the reading. Students are going to read a text about Tomek, a gay man from Poland who has experienced prejudice and discrimination in both Poland and Scotland. Tomek moved to Scotland with his partner Piotr, who is also Polish.

Potential Language Work

The vocabulary to be included in the lesson should be tailored towards the level and interests of the students. Some potential key terms to pre-teach or check understanding of are:

Homophobia, homophobic, gay, to bully, to attack, to come out, to go out with someone, to cut someone off, to spell out, civil partnership, to have nothing to do with someone, to bother, therapist, rumour, gossip, to threaten, to consult, to abuse, to call someone names, offensive

Pre-reading task/prediction task

You could ask students to predict:

- what kind of challenges Piotr and his partner might face
- how different their lives might be in Poland and Scotland

Reading Task 1 (Readings for gist)

Students can read the text for the first time to discover how close their predictions are.

Reading Task 2 (Reading for detail)

For a second, closer reading, students could read the text again, and work in pairs/ small groups to answer questions about the text. The following example questions could be used for group and then whole class discussion:

- What issues did Tomek (and his partner) have to face (in Poland / Scotland)?
- Why do you think he was treated like this?
- Which are the most serious? Why?
- Have you encountered/ been a victim of prejudice or behaviour like this? How would you react if it happened to you?
- Have you ever witnessed other people being treated in this way? If so, how did you react? Did you do anything?
- What would you do if you saw something similar happening to a stranger? Would you try to help? How? If not, why not?

Follow up activities could include students working on a poster to highlight issues around sexual orientation, identity and prejudice/discrimination. For example, they could make a poster on do's and don'ts of working with gays, bisexuals and lesbians (at work/college). If the focus is more on identity in general, students could consider how they as students could ensure inclusivity in the classroom, where all identity differences are valued.

Tomek's story – classroom resource

Poland

I'm from a small city in Poland and moved to Scotland ten years ago with my partner Piotr, who is also Polish. I've experienced homophobia in both Poland and Scotland. In Poland, I hid being gay for a long time. At college, I heard people making homophobic comments, and knew that if I came out, they would make these comments about me, too. I saw people being bullied and attacked for being gay, and was afraid of what might happen to me. So, I only came out to a very small number of people. I started going out with a man called Piotr; when Piotr and I decided to move in together, I had to tell my parents that Piotr was my boyfriend. I was still living with my parents and I thought my father would react badly and I had everything prepared in case my father told me to get the hell out of my parents' home. But when I started to tell my parents, my mum cut me off. She said I didn't have to explain. We all went to the new apartment, my parents saw our double bed, and my mum bought us some things - that was it. They visited us. I never had to spell out that Piotr was my boyfriend, I thought it was all understood and accepted.

Scotland

Piotr and I entered into a civil partnership after moving to Scotland. We'd been together for seven years at that point, and lived together for five. We sent invitations to the ceremony to family and friends. My parents accepted the invitation, but next day my sister called and said: "Listen, something bad is going on here. Something's happened. Mum's crying all the time." So, I called home, and it was a nightmare. My father wouldn't come to the phone to speak to me. But I could hear him shouting about Piotr and me in the background. It was terrible. He said I'd never see him alive again, that he wanted nothing to do with me. My mother kept on crying. She said they weren't coming to Scotland. They came to visit in the end, but they didn't attend the civil partnership ceremony. This still bothers me to this day.

I've also experienced homophobia at work. I was working as a therapist, and someone from another organisation began to spread rumours about my sexual orientation. He questioned whether someone like me, a gay man, would be suitable to help other people. This gossip was made public, with comments posted on a website a lot of Polish people used. Eventually, we threatened to report him to the police and we actually consulted the police, the special department that deals with LGBT issues.

Another time I was driving home with Piotr and some gay Polish friends, after spending the evening in a gay bar. Two drunk girls were standing in the middle of the road, so I stopped the car. One was shouting something. I beeped the car horn, and she got really angry. She vandalised my car, and started to shout and call us names - they were using offensive words about gays. We called the police - and it was natural to speak Polish. The girl then started abusing us because we were Polish, saying we take jobs from British people and so on. The police came and they were arrested. Eventually the case went to court.

9.5 Megan and Lydia's story

Teacher notes

The stories included in the booklet so far are drawn from research on LGBT migrants from Central Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, and does not reflect the diversity of ESOL learners in terms of their ethnic background or their migrant status.

The story of Megan and Lydia, who fled Uganda to claim asylum on sexual orientation grounds in the UK, is an example of how media stories can be used and adapted for the ESOL classroom to better reflect this diversity. For more advanced students, teachers may want to use the original article: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/27/back-home-we-cant-kiss-the-gay-badminton-star-forced-to-flee-uganda>

Topic themes

- Human rights violations/protection
- Asylum and refuge
- Homophobia and hate crimes

Suggested level: Pre-Intermediate and above

This resource provides opportunities to explore the above themes in the ESOL classroom; it could be a good follow-up to the **Equality and Diversity** activity. The resource also develops students' reading and discussion skills.

You could draw on suggested resources from **Nadya and Marta's story** to highlight the huge disparity in the ways in which different states treat their LGBT citizens (from criminalisation and tacit endorsement of human rights violations to positive legislation protecting LGBT people from discrimination).

Introduction

Introduce a context for the reading. Tell the class that they are going to read a story about two asylum seekers from Uganda. Megan and Lydia are a couple who fled their country because they feared for their lives; they applied for asylum on grounds of being persecuted because of their sexual orientation.

Potential Language Work

The vocabulary to be included in the lesson should be tailored towards the level and interests of the students. Some potential key terms to pre-teach or check understanding of are:

Homophobia, homophobic, gay, to bully, to attack, to come out, to go out with someone, to cut someone off, to spell out, civil partnership, to have nothing to do with someone, to bother, therapist, rumour, gossip, to threaten, to consult, to abuse, to call someone names, offensive

Pre-reading task/prediction task

You could ask students to predict:

- What led Megan and Lydia to flee Uganda?
- What were their experiences of the asylum system in the UK?

Reading Task 1 (Readings for gist)

Students can read the text for the first time to discover how close their predictions are to reality.

Reading Task 2 (Reading for detail)

For a second reading, students could read the text again, this time considering how this story makes them feel. Are they surprised/shocked by what Megan and Lydia experienced or do they feel this is quite common? Provide opportunities for discussion.

Post Reading Task

The following example questions could be used for group and then whole class discussion:

- What issues did Megan and Lydia have to face in Uganda?
- Why do you think they were treated like this?
- Have you encountered/ heard of behaviour like this?
- What are Megan and Lydia's experiences of the UK asylum system? Do you think they are common?
- Do you know of anyone who has applied for asylum in the UK? Did they experience any difficulties? On what grounds would people apply? (NB As there may be asylum seekers in the classroom, this may have to be handled sensitively)
- What conditions are necessary for someone to feel safe, and that their human rights and dignity are respected?

Follow up activities could include students working on a poster on human rights. For example, they could develop a poster around the necessary conditions for human beings to feel safe and to have their human dignity respected.

Megan's and Lydia's story – classroom resource

Megan Nankabirwa is a badminton star who competed at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014, and she is famous in her home country of Uganda. However, when it became public in Uganda that she was gay, Megan had to escape as she feared for her life. There is no tolerance of homosexuality in Uganda. It is illegal, with a potential penalty of life imprisonment. It is also common for LGBT people to be victims of hate crimes. “Back home we can’t kiss, we can’t hug, we can’t show love,” says Lydia Nabukenya, who is Megan’s partner and fled Uganda with her. When they lived in Uganda, Megan and Lydia had to keep their relationship a secret. However, when a neighbour caught them in bed together, she started yelling and the neighbours came running. Megan and Lydia escaped and were chased by an angry mob. They knew Uganda would never be safe for them again, and fled to the UK, where they claim asylum on sexuality grounds. They are not alone: it is estimated that several hundred LGBT people claim asylum on similar grounds in the UK every year – some who are newly arrived, some who have been here for years.

Megan and Lydia’s claim was initially refused, and Lydia was detained by the Home Office. She was eventually let go, and the couple appealed against the decision. Fortunately, the couple’s appeal was successful and they have now been granted refugee status. They now have the right to settle, work, live together and marry in the UK.

Lydia explains that “when I came to Manchester, the gay village, we thought, OK, this is not a crime, no one is attacking them.” However, Megan and Lydia know homophobia still exists in the UK. They also realise that although LGBT people are sometimes physically and verbally abused, there are organisations that stand up for LGBT people’s rights and who will provide help and support if they are harassed or discriminated against. And more importantly, the law is there to protect them.

Megan and Lydia’s refugee status gives them security, and they are feeling more comfortable about being open about their relationship: “Although it takes a lot of bravery, we say it out [proudly].”

Adapted with permission from the author from:

Lyons, K. “‘Back home we can’t kiss’: the gay badminton star forced to flee Uganda”. The Guardian, 27 July 2017. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/27/back-home-we-cant-kiss-the-gay-badminton-star-forced-to-flee-uganda>

10. Further resources

ESOL Teaching resources on LGBT issues and Equality and Diversity:

Breaking the ice: addressing LGBT issues in the ESOL classroom (British Council resource). Available at:

<http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/continuing-professional-development/teacher-educator-framework/understanding-teaching-context/breaking-ice-addressing-lgbt-issues-esol-classroom>

ESOL citizenship material – the UK as diverse society (section 4)

<http://www.esoluk.co.uk/niace.html>

Queering ESOL: Towards a cultural politics of LGBT issues in the ESOL classroom

<https://queeringesol.wordpress.com/>

Macdonald, S., El-Matoui, L., Baynham, M. and Gray, J. (2014) Exploring LGBT Lives and Issues in Adult ESOL. Final Report. British Council/ESOL Nexus. Available at

https://esol.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/attachments/informational-page/Exploring_LGBT_Lives_Issues_Adult_ESOL.pdf

Macdonald, S. (2014) 'Out in the classroom?: Exploring LGBT lives and issues in adult ESOL', in Mallows, D. (ed.) *Language issues in migration and integration: perspectives from teachers and learners*. British Council. Available at https://esol.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/Language_issues_migration_integration_perspectives_teachers_learners.pdf

Smith, J. (2012) *Exploring British Culture*. Cambridge, Cambridge UP. Unit 5 (Society, family and class) and unit 8 (Religious and non-religious festivals)

Cosgrove, A. (2017) *English at Work: Practical Language Activities for Working in the UK*. Cambridge, Cambridge UP. Unit 8 (Equal opportunities)

Conversation questions on gay rights http://www.esldiscussions.com/g/gay_rights.html

Resources on LGBT asylum:

Unity Centre Asylum Seekers' Helpline: <https://www.equality-network.org/lgbt-directory/unity-centre-lgbt-asylum-seekers-helpline/>

UKLGIG – charity promoting LGBTQI+ people who seek asylum in the UK: <https://uklgig.org.uk/>

UKLGIG stories from LGBT asylum seekers: https://uklgig.org.uk/?page_id=623

Stonewall (2010) 'No going back: Lesbian and gay people and the asylum system', <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/no-going-back-2010>

Stonewall (2016) 'No safe haven: Experiences of LGBT asylum seekers in detention', https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/no_safe_refuge.pdf

Film on lesbian asylum seeker from Zimbabwe: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qz2rodintb0&feature=youtu.be>

Resources from LGBT organisations:

LGBT Youth Scotland (<https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk>)

- Anti-bullying week <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/news/anti-bullying-week-resources-for-teachers-challenging-homophobic-biphobic-transphobic-bullying-in-schools>
- Human Rights Day <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/news/human-rights-day-resources-for-teachers>
- International Day Against Homophobia <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/news/international-day-against-homophobia-biphobia-and-transphobia-teachers-resources>
- LGBT History Month <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/news/lgbt-history-resources-for-schools>
- Transgender Day of Visibility <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/news/transgender-day-of-visibility-resources-for-teachers>
- Bi-visibility https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/news/bivisibility_education

Equality Network (<https://www.equality-network.org>)

- Guidance on including intersectional identities: <http://www.equality-network.org/resources/publications/intersectional/>
- Scottish LGBT Equality report: <http://www.equality-network.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/The-Scottish-LGBT-Equality-Report.pdf>

Schools Out UK (<http://www.schools-out.org.uk/>)

ILGA – International Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Association (<http://ilga.org/>)

- State-sponsored homophobia report, and maps on sexual orientation laws in the world: <http://ilga.org/state-sponsored-homophobia-report>
- Report on attitudes to sexual and gender minorities around the world: <http://ilga.org/ilga-riwi-global-attitudes-survey>
- Trans legal mapping report: <http://ilga.org/trans-legal-mapping-report>

