

# YHDESSÄ ILMAN RASISMIA

## Lesson 1.

**Topics:** Racialization, cultural and structural racism, representations

**Time:** 45min

**Goals:** Think critically about racialization and its impact in the learning material images.

**Materials:** PowerPoint presentation, speakers, internet connection, (students' own) textbooks or other learning materials.

### Task 1. How racism starts video

**Time:** 5:30min

**Materials:** The video is in the PowerPoint presentation, you will need an internet connection.

#### Objectives:

- Introduce and orient students to the topic
- Understand factors that affect how racism begins
- Understand the concept of racialisation

#### Implementation:

- Watch together in class.
- If you wish, you can discuss any thoughts the students have at the end of the video.

**Notes:** (excerpt from the video) "During the course of history, people began to make different assumptions about people solely based on appearance. For example, when Europeans wanted to conquer other countries, they justified this by saying that the others were less advanced and less intelligent than they were. At the same time, taking people from Africa to America as slaves was justified. White Europeans have benefitted from others being considered inferior. When certain characteristics are associated with groups that are formed based on appearance, this is known as racialization. The process of racialization, treating people unequally, causes racism. We cannot know what kind of person someone is based on their appearance or superficial characteristics."

### Task 2. Takas mestoil music video

**Time:** 10min

**Materials:** The video is in the PowerPoint presentation, you will need an internet connection.

#### Objectives:

- Note that everyone determines their own self-image (identity).

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- The task encourages students to consider what Finnishness is, and what factors comprise a person's identity.
- Challenge prejudices about people who are racialized as non-white.
- Challenge the concept of Finnishness.

## Implementation:

- Watch musician NaharY's music video "Takas mestoil" together in class.
- **The video is in Finnish with no subtitles!** You can go straight to the first task after the first video.
- **Content warning!** The lyrics use the English version of the n-word. The word is used by the singer/songwriter NaharY, who is black. He uses the word to mean "friend". The word is commonly heard in e.g. black hip-hop and rap, and black people have adopted this word among themselves and have changed its meaning. When used by others, however, the word is racist, and should not be said. The word encompasses lots of historic black oppression and the word is used to treat black people as inferior. The teacher should explain this before watching the video. The teacher should not say the n-word. **If you suspect or notice that watching the video may cause one or more people to feel uncomfortable, do not show the music video and go straight to the first task after the first video.**
- Before the music video, you can show the supporting questions on the PowerPoint slide to help you discuss the video:  
What do you think the video is about?  
What did you feel when you watched the video?  
How does the music video relate to topics we have dealt with before?
- Finally, discuss general observations and thoughts about the video.

**Notes:** NaharY also calls himself a "mamu". Note that people can call themselves or define themselves (and sometimes their own group) how they want, but calling someone else e.g. "mamu" can be othering, especially if you aren't a part of that group yourself. Everyone can also ask to be called what they want.

Growing up between two cultures can be challenging with regard to forming your own self-image (identity), but on the other hand, two cultures can be twice as fun and rewarding! For example, people who speak more than one language are able to adapt quickly to new environments and to think creatively. Familia ry's guide (2021) states: "Bicultural children have many advantages, but they also face challenges trying to balance between two different cultures. A bicultural child nevertheless has to form two different cultures as a new way to view the world. The child determines what kind of identity they create for themselves.")

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## Task 3. Examining learning materials

**Time:** 20-30min

**Materials:** PowerPoint slide + learning materials that students have with them or which are found in the classroom

### Objectives:

- By critically examining representations in learning materials, note how (structural) racism acts around us through how people are shown and presented, and how they are described.
- Understand that the world is built so that racialization still happens and that this can be seen in the world around us, in the media, and even in textbooks.

### Implementation:

- Students examine materials in pairs or groups, and discuss their observations. The presentation slide contains supporting questions to help the students to find answers in the materials. Students can choose what supporting questions they use, and it is not necessary to find answers to all of the questions.
- Finally, you can discuss thoughts and observations that came up during the task together.
- In the "Observations" section (below), it is good to discuss highlighted factors with students, as well as whether diversity is visible in a different way now than it perhaps was before.

**Tip!** Students can be given homework to look for depictions of diversity in their environment in e.g. advertisements, TV series, films, newspapers and magazines, books at home, etc. Students can examine the environment using the same supporting questions.

### Notes:

Nowadays, we may see very diverse people in textbooks. In addition to appearance, we should also note the roles that the people are depicted in (e.g. active or passive), who is the main character, whether pictures contain characters that everyone can identify with, whether people are found in roles that are not purely stereotypical. Who is depicted as a Finn, and who isn't? How are minorities dealt with? Are they excluded? For example, depicting immigrants as a labour resource makes them objects that can be exploited by society rather than subjects with human value. (Lampinen 2013, p.32.)

And in what contexts are minorities presented? If e.g. different religions, festivals or languages are given as an example, are they described outside of Finland and therefore as non-Finnish, or are they described as being part of Finland? In the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman's (2013) examples, for example, religious education textbook series for children in the 5th grade describe Islam from different perspectives: One textbook explains Islam in the context of Finland, while paragraphs about Islam in other textbooks mainly describe Muslims living elsewhere in the world and their lifestyles.

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How is history described, who is the actor, and who do we relate to? For example, according to Pia Mikander's research (2015) on textbooks, when children are taught about Columbus they are encouraged to relate to Columbus and his crew, while the stories of locals adversely affected by Columbus' travels are rarely presented. White Europeans are usually in the main role, and indigenous peoples may only be given a background role in the adventures of white, "rational" Europeans. Who is considered to be the ideal reader, and who is the "other"?

Exercises:

Takas mestoil music video exercise is from the task pack from Yhteiset Lapsemme ry's Startti rasisminvastaiseen viikkoon (in Finnish)

<https://www.yhteisetlapsemme.fi/ole-rohkea-ja-reilu/aineistoa-opetukseen/startti-rasisminvastaiseen-viikkoon-tallenne-ja-aineisto/>

The Examining learning materials exercise is adapted from Yhteiset Lapsemme ry's Rohkea ja Reilu kaupunki learning material exercise and Seta ry's Älä Oleta – Normit Nurin! book's task: "Ketkä näkyvät kuvissa?" (Who is shown in the pictures?) (p.49):

<https://www.yhteisetlapsemme.fi/ole-rohkea-ja-reilu/aineistoa-opetukseen/rohkea-ja-reilu-kaupunki-opetusaineisto/>  
[https://www.dropbox.com/s/bfgw8cddd30vtkp/NORMIT\\_NURIN.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/bfgw8cddd30vtkp/NORMIT_NURIN.pdf?dl=0)

NaharY explains his thoughts behind the song (6.10.2020):

[NaharY explains his thoughts behind the song](#)<sup>OBJ</sup>

Other sources:

Eid, M. (ed.) (2020). Rasismi, mielenterveys ja koulu. Guests Michaela Moua and Irene Omwami. (Episode 3) Kaikkien Koulu? podcast series *Ruskeat Tytöt*.

<https://www.ruskeattytot.fi/rtmedia/kaikkienkoulu>

Familia ry (2021) *Kuinka puhua rasismista ja syrjinnästä - Opas kasvattajille ja ammattilaisille*.

[https://www.familiary.fi/uploads/7/1/8/2/71825877/rasisminvastainen\\_opas\\_nettiin.pdf](https://www.familiary.fi/uploads/7/1/8/2/71825877/rasisminvastainen_opas_nettiin.pdf) (in Finnish)

Referenced 14.2.2022.

Keskinen, S., Mkwesha, F., Seikkula, M. (2021) *Rasismi, valta ja vastarinta – Rodullistaminen, valkoisuus ja koloniaalisuus Suomessa*. (in Finnish) Tallinn: Gaudeamus.

Lampinen, J. (2013) *Vähemmistöt oppikirjoissa – erilaisuutta etäältä tarkasteltuna? Etnisten ja kansallisten vähemmistöjen sekä alkuperäiskansojen huomioiminen peruskoulun 5., 6., ja 7. luokan äidinkielen ja kirjallisuuden, historian, maantiedon, uskonnon ja elämänskatsomustiedon oppikirjoissa 2000-luvulla* (in Finnish).

Report by the Finnish League for Human rights 1/2013.

[https://ihmisoikeusliitto.fi/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Oppikirjaselvitys\\_Ihmisoikeusliitto\\_2013.pdf](https://ihmisoikeusliitto.fi/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Oppikirjaselvitys_Ihmisoikeusliitto_2013.pdf)

Referenced 15.2.2022.

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Mikander, P. (2015) Colonialist "discoveries" in Finnish school textbooks. *Nordidactica – Journal of Humanities and Social Science Education*. 2015:4:48-65.

