

Worksheet 2

The Real Mother of Harry Potter

Studying Stereotypes

They were nervously prepared to take a chance on a strange novel by an unknown writer. However, they wanted the author to change her name. They believed that boys (only boys would be interested in this tale, they reasoned) would not buy a book by a woman.

It's incredible to think that the story of Harry Potter was thought by its original publishers to be only appealing to boys, how wrong they were! As for their belief that boys would only read books by male authors, it just goes to show that a well-told story can be successful regardless of the author's gender! These types of generalisations are known as stereotypes. Stereotypes are assumptions that are made about particular groups of people based on someone's opinion of what they think about the people in that group. Stereotypes can be based on **gender** e.g. only boys like football, **physical appearance** e.g. overweight people are lazy, **race, religion; age**; and even **income** e.g. having lots of money makes you happy. Stereotyping can be harmful to society because it is wrong to judge others and in extreme cases can result in bullying, segregation and even war.

Task 1: Recreate the table below using a word processor. Complete the table by studying how different groups of people are represented in advertisements found in magazines and on TV. Write about the possible negative effects of each stereotype.

Advertising Stereotypes

	How are they stereotyped in magazines?	How are they stereotyped in TV commercials?	What are the possible negative effects of this type of stereotyping?
women			
men			
little girls			
little boys			
teenagers			
families			
the elderly			
babies			

Extension Activities:

- Write an expository text about how fairy tale stereotypes. Include how certain characters like princesses, princes and step-mothers are represented. Identify examples of movies you have seen where traditional stereotypes have been dispelled e.g. unlikely 'heroes' (e.g. Tangled, Shrek).
- Have you ever been stereotyped a certain way? Write about this situation and how it made you feel. Have you ever stereotyped a group of people a certain way? Write about why you made this assumption and how you now feel about it.