

# Rethinking Disadvantage

## Box Instructions for use

### Overview

This rethinking disadvantage 'research in a box' tackles one of society's major problems: the radical inequalities which prevent young people from accessing, and taking advantage of, opportunities to further their, and their communities', interests.

The 'box' contains a series of electronic resources, including PowerPoint decks, associated videos and a PDF reading stimulus, intended to enable teachers to run a university-style five week module on the subject.

These workshops stimulate students to examine the part played by social, political and economic processes in the shaping of their family's circumstances. This reflexive process is intended to assist students to understand the ways in which they may be disadvantaged by historical events and to consider means of dealing with disadvantage, particularly through participation in Higher Education.

The resources use stimulus video material taken from 'A Cross-Cultural Working Group on "Good Culture" and Precariousness', a project involving community participants from Ashington, Northumberland and Aboriginal communities around Brisbane, Australia. While these groups experience particular forms of disadvantage, their cases can help students consider their own circumstances.

The 'box' has an associated YouTube archive containing a range of relevant video content:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFYnoCKbEDJAliUeJgBhQ1g/videos>

These videos, which are searchable within the project channel, can be used by teachers to examine issues of disadvantage. Teachers can amend the PowerPoint slides to better fit the interests of their students or their learning objectives by substituting videos and revising text. All YouTube videos can be embedded using embed codes.

The materials are hosted on Lancaster University's designated Rethinking Disadvantage Open Learning site: <https://openlearning.lancs.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=166>

### Subject areas

This series of workshops is applicable to a number of different subject areas, such as Politics; Sociology; Geography (Human); History; Citizenship Studies and Media Studies. However, it is specifically aimed at the Widening Participation agenda and can be deployed outside of subject area sessions.

### Requirements

- A projector and PC for the PowerPoint decks
- Unrestricted access to YouTube and Facebook
- A printer to print out materials, such as the Daily Mail article on accentism

### Participants

There is no minimum or maximum number of students, but a group of at least six will ensure meaningful discussion.

### Teachers/facilitators

At least one teacher will be required to lead the sessions.

Students will also need to speak to family members with regard to their family histories in order to complete their homework.

### Activity duration

The materials support facilitation of five sessions of two hours in duration spread over five weeks.

## Sessions

### *What is disadvantage?*

This deck introduces the problem of disadvantage and tries to highlight the ways in which public perceptions of disadvantage differ from reality.

### *Why are people disadvantaged?*

This deck tries to explain disadvantage by drawing on several different examples in which people are disadvantaged by virtue of their racial, ethnic or cultural identity. Shifting from the case of racial discrimination in Australia and the UK to the case of accentism, the decks demonstrate the way in which people can be disadvantaged by events in the distant past. This workshop uses an online article on Accentism from the Daily Mail Article as a stimulus. This can be found here: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2684637/Too-workers-posh-accent-avoid-accentism-discrimination-claimed.html>

### *How can we challenge disadvantage economically?*

This deck identifies the economic basis of disadvantage and explores a range of political means of challenging inequalities. The session engages with issues that lie at the heart of discontent which has contributed to recent results in the EU Referendum and US Presidential Election. The materials do not suggest a simple or single response to the issues presenting, instead, several different approaches with different perspectives on government involvement in the market. There is an extended guide for facilitators which outlines in detail the substantive content of the session and provides a glossary of key terms.

### *How can we challenge disadvantage politically?*

This deck explores a number of political approaches to dealing with disadvantage. Drawing on the work of A Cross-Cultural Working Group on 'Good Culture' and Precariousness, the slides explore the importance of institutions, such as the NHS, and the possibility of developing new approaches, such as Basic Income, that attempt to deal with the challenges posed at a time in which traditional forms of employment are threatened by automation. The session is not exhaustive in its coverage of policy options, but contrasts approaches to institutions over the past several decades and introduces approaches that are beginning to receive attention in policy circles.

## *How can education challenge disadvantage?*

This deck explores means of individuals challenging disadvantage, highlighting the importance of respect and recognition of interdependence to people's self-esteem and examining the role of Higher Education in enabling people to improve circumstances and change perceptions of what being successful looks like.

## Resources

Each PowerPoint deck facilitates one two-hour workshop. It is intended that one workshop should be held per week over five consecutive weeks.

The decks contain a combination of teaching slides to introduce issues and tasks to enable individual and group work. Individual or group tasks should lead to class discussions, with links drawn between different contributions. Scope has been intentionally created for flexibility in how group discussions are organised in order to enable teachers to teach in ways which suit their classes.

## Credits

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