

PROPUESTA A

STEREOTYPES

A stereotype is a fixed idea that people have about what specific social groups or individuals are like, especially an idea that is wrong. They are used to make generalizations about groups of people and are often discriminatory. Other terms that are associated with the term stereotype are *prejudice* and *cliché*. The term has a Greek origin: *stereos* means *solid* or *firm* and *typos* mean *blow*, *impression* or *mark*. The term was first used in the printing business. The first English use of the term was around 1850, meaning "image perpetuated without change."

Stereotypes are standardized and simplified ideas of groups. Because of this, they are not derived from objective facts, but rather subjective and often unverifiable ideas. Sociologist Charles Hurst states that the lack of personal familiarity that individuals have with persons in other ethnic groups encourages stereotypes and therefore racial discrimination. There are not only racial stereotypes. Unfortunately, sexual and gender stereotyping is also common in today's society.

The existence of stereotypes may be explained by the need of groups of people to view themselves as superior to other groups. Consequently, stereotypes may be used to prevent people of stereotyped groups from entering or succeeding in various fields. The stereotyping group are, generally, reluctant to reconsider their attitudes and behavior towards stereotyped groups.

Stereotypes may affect people negatively. This includes forming inaccurate and distorted images and opinions of people. Stereotypes usually make general erroneous judgments about people. Some stereotyping people feel comfortable because it prevents themselves from emotional identification with the stereotyped group, which leads to xenophobic or racist behavior. Finally another serious consequence of stereotypes is the feeling of inferiority that stereotyped people may have and which may impair their performance.

Adapted from: <<http://www.myenglishpages.com>>

Answer the following questions using the information given in the text.

1. Can stereotypes accurately describe social groups or individuals?
2. What is the purpose of stereotypes?
3. Are stereotypes always used to insult or denigrate people?
4. When was the word *stereotype* first used in English?
5. Why are stereotypes considered as subjective?
6. What are the effects of lack of familiarity with people from other races, according to Hurst?
7. What are the main sources of stereotyping?
8. How can the existence of stereotypes be explained?
9. Why do stereotyping people feel comfortable when they give a distorted image of people?
10. What does the lack of emotional identification with the stereotyped group lead to?

PROPUESTA B

THE SCALE OF AMERICA'S GUN PROBLEM

There have been too many school shootings in the United States since the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre on 14 December 2012. That's an average of more than one shooting per school week.

Unfortunately, US school shootings may be even more frequent than you think. In the fourteen months between December 2012 and June 2014 there have been at least 74 school shootings in the United States. In the first six weeks of 2014 alone, there were 13 school shootings, including one eight-day period in which there were four shootings in K-12 grade schools in which students and staff were murdered. In 70% of cases the shooter was another kid. These school shootings resulted in 28 deaths and 37 non-fatal gunshot injuries. In 49% of these incidents at least one person died.

Many of the students who perpetrated these shootings had easy access to guns at home. The researchers say that in several cases investigators declined to comment on how the child obtained a firearm because the incidents were still under active investigation. However, in the eight incidents where the source of the firearm was known, three-quarters of the shooters used a gun they obtained from home.

Nicholas Atkinson, who works as a substitute teacher, said: "Some under age 18 people are not children but thugs in training; there is no real discipline for these people. These are the kids who need to be shown that violence and unpleasantness does not work because it is offensive to the majority of people. These are the people who take guns to school in order to impose their will or just show how tough they are. The majority of kids obey the rules, do their work and get along reasonably well with their peers. Weapons of any kind are not the problem, the wielders of the weapons are the problem!"

Adapted from <<http://ampp3d.mirror.co.uk>>

Answer the following questions using the information given in the text.

1. What happened in Sandy Hook Elementary School on 14 December 2012?
2. What is the average of shootings in US per school month?
3. How many school shootings have there been between December 2012 and June 2014 in US?
4. Who was the shooter in over two thirds of the cases of school shootings?
5. Did school shootings result in deaths in most cases?
6. Where did most of the kids obtain the guns?
7. Why are there so many violent youngsters in schools in Atkinson's opinion?
8. According to Atkinson, why do some youngsters take guns to school?
9. Do most kids behave well in school, according to Atkinson?
10. Is Atkinson against weapons?