

Secondary | Year 8 +

Diversity Role Models Teachers Resource

Theme: LGBTQ+ History and
Rights (Section 28)



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Overview

How To Use This Resource

This resource accompanies a video or series of videos from one of our inspiring Role Models sharing their personal story. Each resource covers a different topic area and comes with discussion questions, challenge questions, suggested activities and challenge activities. Further notes for teachers are written in italics or in boxes.



Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain what Section 28 was, and analyse at least two ways it negatively impacted LGBTQ+ people.
- Recall key historical developments affecting LGBTQ+ rights.
- Define human rights.
- Analyse some ways people can challenge unfairness and human rights violations.

Notes

The activities suggested in this resource can be adapted to add more complexity and depth to suit more advanced year groups.

Curriculum Links

- **Citizenship:** Democracy and justice, rights and responsibilities, identities and diversity.
- **History:** Society, economy and culture, political power, a local history study.

Suggested Age

All materials should be reviewed by teaching staff to ensure they are appropriate and can be adapted to suit your class' needs.

Diversity Role Models recommend this resource for Year 8 and above.

Overview

Summary of stories

Ferhan's Story

Ferhan is a non-binary gay Muslim. They 'came out' while Section 28 was in effect, a law which made it illegal to 'promote' LGBTQ+ identities in school, and then later on national television. His family did not accept him at first, and friends condemned his faith. Ferhan joined an inclusive mosque where he found a more welcoming environment.

This story discusses faith-based and homophobic discrimination.



[**▶ Watch Here**](#)

Emma's Story

Emma experienced homophobic bullying in school. Because of Section 28, her teachers were not able to support her. After joining the Royal Navy, Emma was 'outed' and discharged from her work. She initiated court proceedings against the UK government in the European Court of Human Rights, and won.

This story discusses institutional homophobia and 'outing'.



[**▶ Watch Here**](#)

Top Tips

For facilitating positive discussions in your classroom

1. Working Agreement

As a group, set some simple agreements for how to engage with the lesson. This could include:

- The importance of listening to each other and respecting all of our views
- Taking turns and not having to answer if you don't want to
- Using appropriate and respectful language
- Trying to build dialogue not debate

Cover the importance of confidentiality, but be sure to explain the school's safeguarding policy and explain when, why, and with whom you may need to share something that is said in the lesson.

2. Facilitate: Basketball Not Tennis

Create space for young people to explore and express their views with each other, not just with the teacher.

- Consider including small group or pair discussion, plenary, role play or creative approaches.
- Consider the layout of the room and how small groups or circles can help build dialogue between students. We're aiming for ideas to be bounced around the room like a basketball, not back and forth with the teacher like tennis!

Be sensitive to the needs of each individual and share clear ways young people can get support if they have been impacted by any of the issues discussed. Be wary about sharing your personal views but ensure that you reflect the school values, policies and laws in relation to equality and inclusion.

3. Managing Questions

It's important that young people feel empowered to ask the questions that are important to them. Consider some techniques that could give young people the confidence to ask questions, such as by writing them down rather than asking them aloud.

Not all questions need a whole class answer on the spot. If you need more time to think, or feel that a question would be better answered outside of a whole-class setting then say: *'That's a brilliant question and deserves a good answer, let me take some time and get back to you with an answer'*.

4. Distancing Techniques

Our videos are a great way of sharing an engaging and impactful narrative, that is relevant to pupils' lives while not making the issue too personal for pupils. This allows young people to engage in an objective way, avoiding defensive reactions, while still exploring ideas around empathy, allyship, and identity. It will also help you manage challenging questions as you could suggest some of the ways others might feel rather than having to share your view or your personal experiences.

5. Questions For Dialogue And Deep Engagement

Ask open and stretching questions, or better still, get the young people to come up with their own. You could ask young people to generate questions for the role models featured and then consider how each might answer.

We've compiled some questions aimed at building empathy and encouraging discussion on the key themes. Remember to ask probing questions to draw out more depth and reflection from pupils such as *'That's brilliant, could you expand and tell us why you think that?'*. Consider asking philosophical questions such as *'Why do you think that is right/ wrong?'* too.

Suggested Questions

See Appendix 2 for a worksheet featuring these questions.

Ferhan's Story

1. What was the purpose of Section 28 of the Local Government Act?

Section 28 was introduced to stop local authorities from 'promoting' homosexuality in schools and local authority run institutions and services.

2. When did Ferhan realise he was attracted to men?

Ferhan realised he was attracted to men during puberty, around the age of 14.

3. Where did Ferhan find a sense of community, with people going through similar things to them?

Ferhan found a sense of community at a gay and lesbian youth group in Glasgow, and later at an inclusive mosque.

4. How did Ferhan's 'coming out' on national television impact his parents' perception of his sexuality?

Ferhan's parents did not have the option of trying to get him to go back in the closet and get married.

5. What is Ferhan's message to those watching their video?

Ferhan's message is 'to choose love'. Ferhan says that there is nothing shameful about being LGBTQ+. He also encourages allies to show acceptance to their friends.



Suggested Questions

See Appendix 3 for a worksheet featuring these questions.

Emma's Story

1. Why was school not particularly kind to Emma?

Emma experienced homophobic bullying. There was also a law in place, Section 28, which meant that teachers could not support gay children or talk about homosexuality in any kind of positive way.

2. Why did Emma want to join the Royal Navy?

Emma had been sailing with her parents for years. She wanted to be somewhere she felt she belonged, pursuing a career she valued.

3. What happened after Emma 'came out' to her roommate?

Emma's roommate phoned the military police and forcefully 'outed' her. Emma was arrested and interrogated for a few hours.

4. How did Emma's parents react to her being gay?

Emma's parents were really supportive.

5. What did the European Court of Human Rights say about the UK's ban on being gay in the armed services?

The European Court ruled that it was illegal. It is against our human rights to force people to stop working for the Royal Navy because of being gay.



Content Notes:

This video discusses institutional homophobia and forced 'outing'. This topic could prove sensitive for some students and care should be taken to ensure students can access further support if needed.

Challenge Discussion Questions

Secondary

1. Ferhan decided to 'come out' on national television. Why do you think this was important to Ferhan? Why could this be important to other LGBTQ+ people watching?
2. Both Ferhan and Emma talk about Section 28 (of the Local Government Act) that aimed to 'prohibit the promotion of homosexuality'. It was said to have had a negative impact on LGBTQ+ young people and teachers. Can you think of other laws which were used unfairly towards different kinds of people in the past? What impact did they have?
3. Every person in society has universal human rights. What do you think this means, and why are they important? *See p. 14 for definition.*
4. Ferhan mentioned going to a protest against Section 28. Can you think of any famous people who challenged harmful laws or unfairness? What did they do?
More information on people who demonstrated against Section 28.
5. How might bullying impact a person's social life, relationships, and friendships?
6. Is bullying a human rights violation? Why/Why not? *Remind students that bullying must be reported in line with the school's policy.*
7. Thinking of Ferhan's and Emma's stories, why do you think supportive friends and community are important? Where can one find a sense of community?
8. Because of people like Emma, the European Court of Human Rights pressured the UK government to remove the ban on gay people in the armed forces. In what other ways can people challenge harmful laws or unfairness?

Activities

1. Watch [this video](#) about Section 28. In it, Baroness Knight, who helped pass Section 28, says: *"All I was trying to do was acting on what [...] the papers said."*

Share some newspapers and work in small groups to cut them into pieces and create a collage. Work creatively to express messaging showing support to LGBTQ+ communities. Discuss the importance of positive messaging in the media and analyse some articles discussing LGBTQ+ topics today. You could compare them to some coverage of LGBTQ+ issues at the time of Section 28 such as those in this radio [piece](#).
2. Pair students up to undertake research about Section 28. Put them in larger groups to come up with ideas on what effects could Section 28 have had on; 1) pupils, 2) teachers, and 3) LGBTQ+ families or parents/carers of LGBTQ+ children. [This article](#) maybe of use in student's research.
3. While it is necessary to repeal harmful laws, it was also important to create new laws such as the Equality Act 2010 to protect LGBTQ+ people. Work with your students to create their 'perfect laws'. Answer questions *"What is the name of the law?", "Who does the law protect?", "What does the law do?", "Why is the proposed law needed?", "Who has legal duties/responsibilities under this law?"* (i.e. teachers, healthcare professionals, etc.) Students can present their projects verbally, through a PowerPoint presentation, a role play, or other means.
4. Share with students LGBTQ+ Rights and Section 28 Timeline worksheet included in the Appendix. Allocate students time to do independent research (or in pairs) to write the correct dates for events described in each card. Stonewall Scotland have a [useful timeline](#) which students could use.
5. Before the UK Government lifted the ban on LGB+ people serving in the armed forces, they could not be open about who they were at work. Brainstorm a list of pros and cons for being able to be open about your LGBTQ+ identity at work. For example, a pro could be 'improved mental health', and a con could be 'losing friends'. Then, divide students in two groups and write fictional 'a day in the life' diary entries for someone who is not open about their identity at work, and someone is. Students can base their diary entries on the pros/cons lists they had created.

Challenge Activities

1. One way to challenge unfair laws like Section 28 is through raising public awareness. Browse through Amnesty International's [blogs](#) for examples. Create a student-led Human Rights blog and write entries.

2. Complete a mock trial (moot court) exercise with your students. Divide students in groups:

1. Complainant
2. Defending government
3. Non-governmental organization (this can be multiple groups representing different perspectives)
4. Think tank (*optional*)

Tell students that the complainant Smith has taken her government, UK, to the European Court of Human Rights in the case *Smith v United Kingdom*. Smith, who is a teacher, argued that the government's law Section 28 made it extremely difficult for her to do her job because she was not allowed to freely talk about LGBTQ+ identities, and express hers. Smith argued this violated her human right to freedom of expression and her right to not be discriminated against, and negatively impacted her mental health.

Explain to student groups their tasks:

- **Complainant group:** come up with evidence to support Smith's argument. Students should be able to explain how/why Section 28 violated Smith's rights, and what mental health difficulties she may have experienced as a result. Students can be given testimonial examples for ideas.
- **Defending government:** defend the UK government. Find evidence for as to why Section 28, in the government's opinion, could not have harmed Smith and her rights could not have been violated.
- **Non-governmental organization & think tank:** these groups are there to help the Court (teacher) arrive at its judgement. These groups should decide if they are siding with the complainant, the defense, or whether they are taking up a neutral position. They can provide additional evidence and information to support their argument, such as true or made up human rights reports. A teacher can print out research examples from [Amnesty International](#) or other campaigning groups.

After coming up with ideas, groups have 5min each to present their arguments. The Court (teacher) may allow the complainant and the defendant groups to engage in a rebuttal (extra 4min each). The Court will decide the outcome of the case based on the validity of evidence presented.

Organisations

Organisations that provide further support and resources for staff and students on Bullying.

These links are to support teachers to access further information, lead discussions or to signpost to students for research and support. Diversity Role Models can take no responsibility for the content hosted on other organisations platforms or shared directly, and we recommend that all signposted resources be checked for suitability by staff before use.

NSPCC

The NSPCC understands how difficult it is for children to talk about bullying. Professionals can contact the NSPCC Helpline by calling **0808 800 5000**, **emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk** or **completing their online report abuse form**.

ChildLine

0800 1111



Childline can be contacted 24/7. Calls to 0800 1111 are free and confidential.

Childline has lots of advice about **different types of bullying** and about **dealing with peer pressure**.

Children can also contact **Childline online** here: **www.childline.org.uk**

SWITCHBOARD

Switchboard is the national LGBTQIA+ support line for anyone, anywhere in the country, at any point in their journey.

They have a text, email and phone service to discuss anything related to sexuality and gender identity, in addition to information on their website:

<https://switchboard.lgbt/>

The Mix is the UK's leading support service for young people.

They offer young people a free, confidential helpline and a counselling service, as well a whole host of information and advice on a range of topics (including LGBTQ+) via their website: **<https://www.themix.org.uk/>**



Useful Definitions

Bullying

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online and could constitute abuse.

Coming out

When a person first tells someone/others about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Outing

Disclosing an LGBTQ+ person's sexual orientation and/or gender identity to someone else without their consent.

Gay

A man who is attracted to men, or a woman who is attracted to women.

Lesbian

A woman who is attracted to women.

Heterosexual

A man who is attracted to women, OR a woman who is attracted to men.

Homophobia

A prejudice or discrimination towards people who are homosexual.

Useful Definitions

Non-binary

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities.

Human rights

Universal and inalienable rights that every person has simply because they are human, regardless of their age, sex, gender identity, race, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic status, or other status. Human rights are part of international law, and it is the governments' legal responsibility to make sure that everyone has their rights protected. When governments do not protect human rights, people can take their governments to international courts to seek fairness.

Repeal

The action of removing a law or act of parliament.

Section 28

A clause of the Local Government Act 1998 that prohibited the "promotion of homosexuality" by local authorities. It was introduced by Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government and had a negative impact on the lives of many LGBTQ+ young people and teachers.

Stereotype

A fixed, over-generalised belief about a particular group or class of people.

Appendix

Print out the following pages to use in your classroom

1. LGBTQ+ Rights and Section 28 Timeline
2. Suggested Questions (Ferhan's Story)
3. Suggested Questions (Emma's Story)

Note: All resources can be printed out in greyscale to save on coloured ink.

LGBTQ+ Rights and Section 28 Timeline

Year:

Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 was introduced. It banned schools and local authorities from teaching or providing materials on being gay.

Year:

Section 28, the law which made it illegal for schools and councils to educate young people about what it means to be gay was removed.

Year:

The Department of Education issues guidance that will make Relationships Education compulsory for all primary school pupils, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all secondary school pupils.

Year:

The Sexual Offences Act decriminalises sex between two men over 21 and 'in private'. It does not extend to the Merchant Navy or the Armed Forces.

Year:

The first Pride is held in London, attended by approximately 2,000 participants.

Year:

Sex between two men over the age of 21 'in private' is decriminalised in Scotland.

Year:

The UK Government repeals the ban on lesbians, gay men and bi people serving in the armed forces.

Year:

The UK Government lifts the ban on lesbians, gay men and bi people serving in the armed forces.

Year:

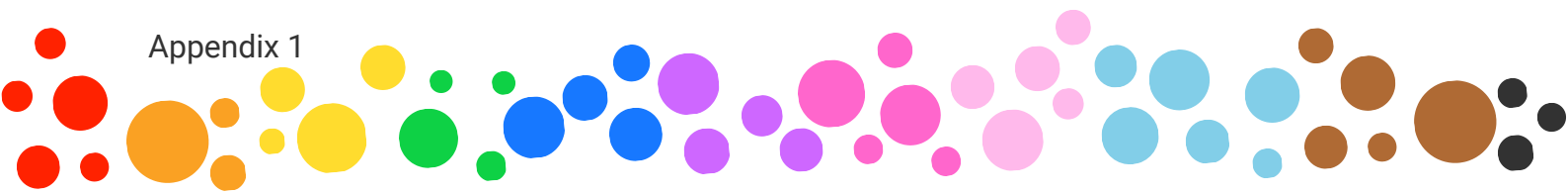
The Gender Recognition Act is passed giving trans people legal recognition in their correct gender. The Act allows trans people to acquire a new birth certificate.

Year:

The Government issues an apology to all gay and bi men who were convicted under harmful sexual offences laws in the last century.

Year:

Same-sex marriage becomes legal in the UK.



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Contact Details


Get in touch

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 Contact us via email at: education@diversityrolemodels.org

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