

# Nationalities and Their Stereotypes

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## Activity A

Get the pupils to, individually and spontaneously, write down on a piece of paper the typical characteristics of a set of nationalities. The exercise is, of course, a matter of personal opinion. For example,

- The French are proud ...
- The Irish are talkative ...
- The Italians are loud ...
- The Spanish are passionate ...
- The Dutch ...
- The Germans ...
- The Swiss ...
- The Swedish ...
- The Americans ...
- The Japanese ...
- The Indians are ...
- The Swiss ...

## Activity B

Now get them to reveal their choices and see how many people got similar descriptions. You can debate the correctness or truth of the choices,

## Activity C

This is simple but goes down very well. Show them a list of the stereotypical characteristics (now a bit out of date) of the "typical Englishman". Then, get the students to write in their corresponding stereotypes (or perceived ones) alongside the English ones and under the heading "You". (For example, in the Basque country the typical person would wear bright clothing, and does not have a garden; they have plants instead). Later, you can compare the "facts".

This topic can be quite interesting if you have many different nationalities in class. Get the L2s to explain their choices.

	English	Basque	You
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Works:	In a bank	Factory	
Lives:	In a house	In a flat	
Hobby:	Gardening	Watch TV, hill-walking	
Carries:	An umbrella	-	
Drinks:	Tea	Coffee	
Eats:	Plain, simple food	Elaborate	
Newspaper:	The Times (The Star?)	-	

Favourite part of paper:	Crossword	Sport section
Wears:	Dark suit/clothes and a bowler hat	Colourful
Talks about:	The weather	Family, friends, weather ...
Loves:	The Royal Family	-
Has:	A garden A pipe A Morris Minor	Plants A cigar Opel Kadett
Pets:	A tiny dog	Canary
Sport:	Cricket	Football
Behaviour:	Reserved	Gregarious
Emotions:	Cold	Can be serious.
Etc...		

(Once again, the above are surely only applicable to the middle class in England, but it does not matter if the headings are not completely factual; the idea is to get the L2s thinking about approximate correspondences-and talking).

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