

THE MAGIC OF THE MOVIES

SOCIAL STUDIES

Stereotypes in Movies

Movies are the end result of the creativity of the writer, the director, and numerous other professionals. However, these people are only human, and carry stereotypes as all humans do. Unfortunately, when their stereotypes are distributed on big screens to a mass audience, they are easily picked up by others. In this activity, you will think about stereotypes you have seen in movies. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. Use a dictionary to find a definition of a stereotype.

2. In your own words, what do you understand a stereotype to be?

3. Have you seen young people of about your age depicted in movies? Are they often depicted using stereotypes?

4. What kinds of stereotypes of young people have you noticed in movies that you feel are inaccurate and hurtful?

5. Can you think of a movie that depicted young people accurately? How were they portrayed?

6. What other harmful stereotypes of people have you noticed in movies?

ANSWER KEY

- 1.** Definitions will vary. Sample: a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, affective attitude, or uncritical judgment
- 2.–6.** Accept all reasonable answers.