



# COLOMBIA

LESSON PLAN

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## TREAT OTHERS WITH RESPECT





## COLOMBIA: PARADISE FOR NATURE LOVERS AND HELL FOR TEENAGE MOTHERS

### On the two sides of the equator

Colombia, officially the Republic of Colombia, is a country in the north-west of South America. Spread over an area of 1,139,825 km<sup>2</sup>, it is almost four times larger than Poland. It has a population of around 47.6 million people. The capital city is Bogota, located in the central part of the country. Colombia shares borders with Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and Panama. It is the only country on the continent that has access to both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean.

Although the climate of Colombia is equatorial, there is no shortage of mountains here. In the regions situated along the coast and the equator, the average annual temperature exceeds 25 °C and precipitation varies between 1000 and 2000 mm per year. In mountain areas, temperatures drop with altitude (from 24 °C to -12 °C) and annual rainfall varies greatly.

Colombia's main rivers are: the Magdalena, which flows into the Caribbean Sea, and the Orinoco, which forms a short part of the border with Venezuela. In the south of the country we will find the tributaries of one of the longest rivers in the world: the Amazon.

### Between the peaks of the Andes and Amazonian lowlands

In terms of terrain, Colombia can be divided into three large regions. In the west, the landscape is dominated by the majestic Andes, and in the east it is made up of two large plains: the Amazon Basin and the Orinoco Basin. The country is characterised by a great variation of heights, with the lowest point being the shore of the Pacific Ocean at 0 metres above sea level and

the highest peak being Cristobal Colon (Christopher Columbus) at 5,775 metres above sea level. Due to such large differences in relative altitude, it is not possible to distinguish a single typical landscape of Colombia.

The areas along the equator are covered by a lush rainforest with a thicket of trees and lianas, home to innumerable species of birds and insects. The Orinoco Basin is dominated by a savannah landscape with tall grasses, low trees and plants capable of storing water, called llanos. In the mountains, the vegetation is characterised by altitudinal zonation.

Due to the fact that the country is located at a junction of three tectonic plates: the South American Plate, the Cocos Plate and the Caribbean Plate, it is often devastated by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis. The Caribbean Sea area is rife with destructive hurricanes that threaten the insular part of the country, whereas both high mountain and lowland areas are prone to flooding. Colombia regularly suffers from natural disasters that often claim scores of human lives, animals and households.

### Country of the white powder

Colombia's landscape is characterised by distinctive coca plantations. This is the plant used to make cocaine. In South America, leaves of this bush have long been used as a stimulant to ease fatigue and hunger. Today it is primarily a source of millions of dollars for drug cartel bosses.

Colombia is the world's largest cocaine producer. How did it come to this? One figure that should be mentioned here is Pablo Escobar, the man who made this terrible business thrive in Colombia. Looking at him, you could say that he went "from zero to a millionaire", but unfortunately in a negative sense. In the 1980s, Escobar became the world's most notorious drug lord. He controlled a significant portion of the drugs traf-





ficked to Mexico, the Dominican Republic and then to the USA. He had no difficulty finding potential employees in a country where hunger and poverty are commonplace and money is hard to come by. And even though Escobar was shot dead in December 1993, cartels are still running strong in Colombia.

### Living in a macho culture

The word macho means 'male', as in a male animal. The term *machismo*, meaning a strong sense of masculinity and pride, is derived from it. Simply speaking, *machismo* is all about restricting the freedom of women, who should only take care of the home and children and have no right to their own opinions. Violence is ubiquitous and constantly exacerbated by the civil war between the drug cartels, which has been going on for over 50 years. Ruthlessness, threat to life, death of loved ones – this is the daily reality of millions of Colombians.

People whose relatives worked for drug lords often find themselves in a hopeless situation. They leave their homes in the countryside, fearing revenge from the cartels, but when they end up in the city, the only accommodation they can find are slums. And all the slums have to offer, instead of education for children or clean water, are gangs and shootings. Here, a pregnant 13-year-old does not surprise anyone.

It is good that Catalina Escobar and her Juanfe Foundation are present in such a brutal world. Although she shares her last name with the infamous drug lord, she's here to fight evil. It is thanks to her help that young mothers get a chance to have a normal life again and work for a better future for themselves and their children. With Juanfe, they learn a profession, can be sure their children are looked after, have a hot meal and get help with finding a job. Catalina also gives them psychological support and makes it clear that no one can beat or exploit them. It's a big step towards a new life.





Duration:  
45 minutes

## SUBJECT

# Treat others with respect

Arrange the classroom for group work. Print the materials from the appendices. Show the students fragments of the film available as an appendix to this lesson plan. Before the class, watch the full episode available at [www.kulczykfoundation.org.pl](http://www.kulczykfoundation.org.pl).

## WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Respect for human beings is the basis of their dignity. People need to be respected so that they can undertake different tasks, take on new challenges and be ready to overcome difficulties. Experiencing disrespect makes a person lose motivation to go on and self-develop; they can't see the point, the purpose in everyday activities, often in their whole life.



Issues



Objectives



Introduction

Film  
– Introduction,  
screening and  
reflection

## OBJECTIVES

Maybe you can take just one step with your students, maybe two, or maybe even all three. It will always be a success for both you and your students!

- Step 1 – KNOW:** The student knows that experiencing disrespect from others lowers one's self-esteem.
- Step 2 – FEEL:** The student can describe how a disrespected person feels.
- Step 3 – HELP:** The student is willing to build relationships with other people based on respect.

## INTRODUCTION

Tell the students to imagine the following situation: you enter a small shop because you want to buy a few things. You're in a bit of a hurry, so you want to do some shopping fast. You open the door. You can't go inside because something is blocking the door from the inside. You wrestle with the door and finally it gives way. Now you can see that a big package is blocking the entrance. You have to jump over it because otherwise you won't be able to get inside and you don't have the strength to move it as it is very heavy. You say hello... but nobody answers. You say hello again, this time louder. A lady comes out of the back room with a plate in her hand. She sits behind the counter and starts eating without paying you any attention. You stand there patiently and wait for her to notice you. Meanwhile, she takes out her phone and starts talking as if you weren't there at all. You're standing there and keep waiting...

Ask the students:

- What do you want to do? Why?
- How do you feel about this situation?
- What is respect for another human being?
- How do you express respect for another human being?

### Hint:

Pay attention to the signs of disrespect for the other person, the customer, in the shopkeeper's behaviour. Draw their attention also to the emotions experienced by a person who is being disrespected. Emphasise that a person in such a situation feels helpless, humiliated, "absent", feels that they are not respected, that their needs are not respected. Point out that respect is expressed through paying attention to the other person, looking them in the eye, listening to what they have to say, interacting with them, reacting to what they communicate and responding to their needs.

## BEFORE THE FILM

Ask the students imagine situations in which people are treated without the respect they deserve. The consequences of a life without respect from others are long-lasting and disastrous. Make sure that the students listen carefully to what the young protagonist of the documentary is saying.

## FILM SCREENING



## AFTER THE FILM

Talk to the students immediately after watching the film. Here are some questions that may help you:

- What was the life of the girls in Catalina's care like before they were taken in by her foundation?
- Why do people who are not respected by others often do worse in their lives?
- What do the girls in Catalina's care need to learn first?

### Hint:

Point out that mutual respect and kindness are the basis for creating bonds in social situations. If there is no mutual respect between people, their relationships are wrong, harmful. They lead to humiliation. Repeated situations of disrespect make it difficult for those who experience them to cope with everyday life because they have never had their needs respected or their feelings taken into account; they have simply been treated like objects. Point out that this is how the girls taken in by Catalina's foundation were (or still are) treated by those around them.

## TASK

### When there's no respect

Divide the students into teams. Go back to the situation from the beginning of the lesson. Ask the students to prepare a role-play. Suggest that the students work in teams of four. Two students from each team will role-play the situation described at the beginning.

After the role-play, give the students some time to summarise the exercise. Let them share their thoughts.

Now move on to the next part of the task. Each team member should choose a role: a customer, a salesperson, an extra person or an observer. Ask the students to choose the "extra person" themselves and to define what their role will be. E.g. this could be someone who reacts to a situation of disrespect.

### Hint:

Make sure that your students are emotionally safe. Consider the situation in the classroom, e.g. take care of any child that is excluded, shy, etc. Divide the students into teams in such a way that every student feels comfortable.



Task



## CONVERSATION

Ask the students:

- How did they feel in their roles?
- What did they experience?
- How did the customer's situation change?
- What caused this situation to change?

## CONCLUSIONS

Guide your students through the following steps:

1. **Making them aware of what they know about the situation of another human being (KNOW);**
2. **Drawing their attention to the role of understanding another person's problem in emotional terms and relating to that person (FEEL);**
3. **Making the decision to help in an active way (HELP).**

### KNOW:

Point out to the students that respect for others is necessary to give them a sense of dignity and self-esteem. A person who experiences disrespect may lose not only self-respect but also respect for others.

### FEEL:

In the summary phase, emphasise that if someone does not show us respect, we feel humiliated.

### HELP:

It is difficult for a person being humiliated to break out of this situation. It is often necessary to have an outside person ("an extra person"), like Catalina Escobar in the documentary, who can change the relationship between people and teach them how to treat others with respect. We show our respect for others in various ways. Draw the students' attention to the way Catalina approaches the girls, looks them in the eye, hugs them, listens carefully to what they have to say. Tell the students that each one of them can be an "ambassador of respect". Ask them how they show respect for the people they meet in their everyday life. The students should write down their own ways of showing respect on pieces of paper. Tell them that the cards will remain anonymous. Before the next lesson, make a list of the suggestions contributed by the students. You can discuss them next time.



Conversation



Conclusions

# COLOMBIA

## APPENDIX

### Appendix to the task “When there’s no respect...”

Based on the following text, prepare a scene that will be role-played by two people from your group. Then talk about the following situation.

*You enter a small shop because you want to buy a few things. You're in a bit of a hurry, so you want to do some shopping fast. You open the door. You can't go inside because something is blocking the door from the inside. You wrestle with the door and finally it gives way. Now you can see that a big package is blocking the entrance. You have to jump over it because otherwise you won't be able to get inside and you don't have the strength to move it as it is very heavy. You say hello... but nobody answers. You say hello again, this time louder.*

*A lady comes out of the back room with a plate in her hand. She sits behind the counter and starts eating without paying you any attention. You stand there patiently and wait for her to notice you. Meanwhile, she takes out her phone and starts talking as if you weren't there at all. You're standing there and keep waiting...*