

Miranda (BBC) - "Teacher" (Series 1, Episode 2)

National Stereotypes

Here is a list of the top five stereotypes about American people (from USA) found on the internet. What are your opinions about stereotypes? What do you think people would say about your country? Are the stereotypes sometimes true?

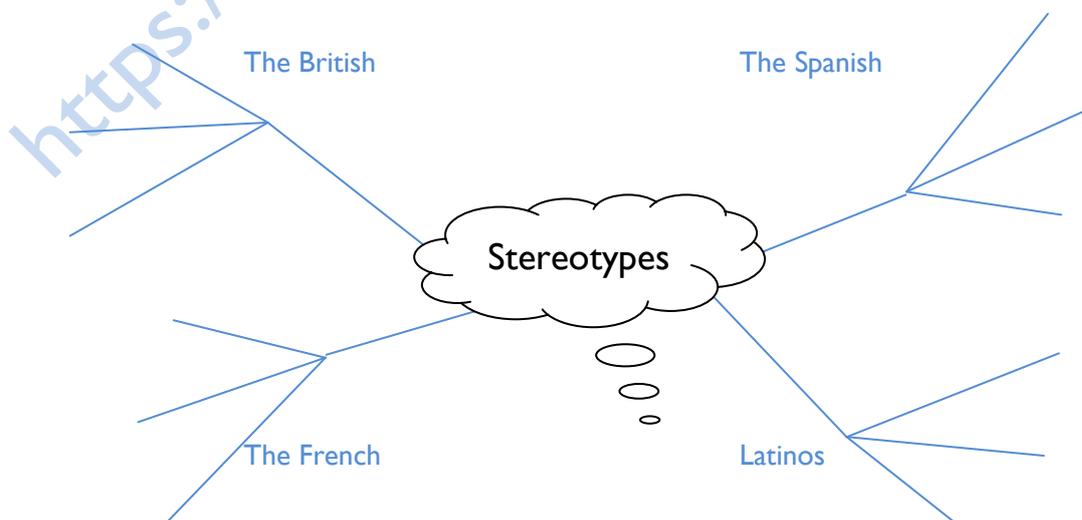
Top 5 Stereotypes: USA	Top 5 Stereotypes: My Country
1. Americans love guns.	1.
2. Americans are competitive.	2.
3. Americans love eating junk food.	3.
4. Americans are obsessed with celebrity.	4.
5. Americans never stop working.	5.

Passive Constructions *it is said that..., they are thought to...*

Active	Passive
1. People say that Americans are very loud. People think American food is very bad for you.	It is said that Americans are very loud. It is thought that American food is bad for you.
2. Everyone thinks Americans love guns. People say Americans have terrible diets.	Americans are often thought to love guns. A lot of Americans are said to have terrible diets.

- These formal passive constructions are often used to make information sound more impersonal.
- The first construction is as follows: **It is said, thought, believed etc. + that + clause.**
- The second is constructed like this: **Subject + is said, believed, thought etc. + infinitive.**

You are going to watch an episode of the sitcom *Miranda* (BBC). The show is British and the episode contains various stereotypes of the following nationalities; British, Spanish, French and Latinos. Using the grammar above, talk about some of the typical stereotypes you expect to see. Use the mind map below to note down your ideas.



Part One, 1:00 - 6:45

First predict why the characters in the sitcom might find themselves in the following situations, then watch to see if you were correct:

An older woman looking through personal ads.

Two young people going to Paris.

Two women planning to take a French course.

A woman eating a free meal in a restaurant.

Grammar Spot: Predicting

"They **might** be..."

"They **could** be..."

"She **must** be..."

Tricky Vocabulary

Match the word to the definition. In what context are the words used?

To woo someone	Your ideal husband/partner
A (middle class) tic	To reserve a space for an event e.g. a wedding
To book a venue	A person who you agree to marry if two people don't find the perfect partner before a specific age e.g. 40 years old.
To propose to someone	To try to romance someone
A safety wife	To ask someone to marry you
Mr. Right	A personal habit/a strange and personal piece of behaviour

Part Two, 7:00 - 13:30

Here are some more situations to make predictions about:

A friend staying at another friend's house.

A woman inviting a man to a tango class.

A woman trying to leave a room without anyone noticing.

Tricky Vocabulary

Match the word to the definition. In what context are the words used?

An Autumn range	To have an intense feeling of embarrassment
To strangle someone	A collection of clothes for a specific season
To cringe	To stop someone breathing by putting your hands around their neck

Part Three, 13:30 - 19:35

Another situation to make a prediction about:

A woman throwing a glass of orange juice over a man

Tricky Vocabulary

Match the word to the definition. In what context are the words used?

Camp (adjective)	A client in a shop
To be heading off	A party in which people put on clothes to look like something else e.g. Halloween
Uptight (adj.)	A school in which pupils live as well study
Boarding school	To get over-excited
A wig	Exaggerated, theatrical behaviour
A fancy dress (party)	Small pants worn for school PE classes
"the birds and the bees"	A piece of false hair
A customer	A euphemism for sex
To get carried away about something	To be in the process of leaving
Gym knickers	The opposite of easy-going

Part Four, 19:35 - End

Some final situations:

Two people throwing food over each other

A woman running to the sink to get water

Tricky Vocabulary

Match the word to the definition. In what context are the words used?

Stodgy (adj)	A colloquial expression meaning really good
"the dog's bollocks"	Heavy, filling food usually high in carbohydrates
To mind something	To object to, be worried or angry about

After viewing the episode

- 1) What stereotypes did you see in the episode?
- 2) Do you think the idea of a "safety wife" is a good idea?
- 3) Are there lots of euphemisms in your language like "the birds and the bees"?
- 4) Have you kept in contact with any of your old school teachers?
- 5) How would you feel if one of your best friends started dating one of your old teachers? Would it make you cringe?