



Written Comprehension Text

GRADE 9

Subtler Forms of Discrimination

- 1 While society has not completely discarded racism, sexism, and homophobia, at least there's some public awareness of those issues; other forms of discrimination occur every day and are recognized only by the victims.
- 2 Bias against bald people started early. Ovid in AD 1 said "Ugly are hornless bulls, a field without grass is an eyesore/So is a tree without leaves, so is a head without hair". Premature baldness in teen boys and hair loss for women were social catastrophes, and cause for profound depression.
- 3 In the late nineties, white men copied African American style and began shaving their heads. It took some time, but now there are plenty of bald film stars like Bruce Willis, Vin Diesel, and Patrick Stewart, and sports icons Michael Jordan and Shaquille O'Neill. Bald is so cool now that men who aren't bald buzz their hair so short, they might as well be.
- 4 So bald men can be sexy now. Bald women, however, are still at the 'extreme fashion choice' stage. They still get treated differently, even by other women (who often ask about their health). But Demi Moore (GI Jane) and Sigourney Weaver (Aliens III) have made successful films with shorn scalps, and Sinead O'Connor was bald for her entire singing career.
- 5 There are scores of underlying prejudices that redheads must deal with. Idioms such as "beaten like a red-headed stepchild" or "there's something about the red ones" and stereotypes of feisty tempers contribute to an ostracism of people with red hair.
- 6 In the United Kingdom, ginger discrimination is all too real. There are more redheads in the United Kingdom than anywhere on earth. Even the royal family isn't safe: Prince Harry's army unit refer to him as the 'Ginger Bullet Magnet'. At the Memorial Concert for Princess Diana, in 2007, Prince Harry asked 14-year-old Maxine Broadfoot – winner of the Princess Diana award for peer counselling – if she could advise him on the bullying he received for his red hair. The young girl thought the Prince was joking, but he later went on record saying he was serious.
- 7 Some redheads, like Sarah Primmer, have been awarded cash settlements (£18,000) for workplace harassment of their hair colour. She has since died her hair blonde and is 'so glad' her children don't have red hair.
- 8 "Discrimination against redheads seems to be getting worse," says Simon Cheetham, founder of www.redandproud.com. "In this politically correct world, you can't say anything about people's religion or sexuality, but it's still OK in Britain to portray redheads negatively," he said.

Adapted from: <https://listverse.com/2011/09/24/top-10-subtler-forms-of-discrimination/>