

Rawah Arja: Breaking Down Stereotypes

Secondary School, Years 8–10

- 'The outside world needs to connect with you on a human level and see past the stereotypes of the Angry Arab or the gang affiliations in Punchbowl.' (*The F Team*, page 226)

Discuss & Respond: A stereotype is an oversimplified and unfair belief that a group of people has certain qualities, or that all members of a group are the same. Can you give some examples of stereotypes?

- 'I blinked a few times to see my forearms covered in flowers. 'Really? The boys are going to kill me when I get back to school.' (*The F Team*, page 216)

Discuss: What are some of our ideas about how people of different genders 'should' be or act? Try to think of as many gender stereotypes as possible.

- **Think & Respond:** Do you think gender stereotypes affect boys as much as girls? Explain your opinion.
- **Writing Prompt:** How might stereotypes affect people as they grow up?

Key Curriculum Areas

Learning Areas: English, Humanities & Social Sciences, Health & Physical Education

Capabilities: Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding, Intercultural Understanding

About the Session

Rawah Arja, author of *The F Team*, explores the nature of conflict in her writing and uses themes of cultural difference and masculinity as a lens through which to test her characters.

She reveals the inspiration behind her novel, discusses the craft of writing conflict, and shares how she creates engaging and nuanced stories that speak to the power of leadership, teamwork, and bridging differences.

About the Author

Rawah Arja is a member of the Western Sydney women's writing collective Finishing School. Her work has featured in *Arab, Australian, Other* (Picador, 2019), Sydney Review of Books, SBS Voices and at the Sydney Writers' Festival. She is a WestWords Varuna Emerging Writers' Fellow, and teaches creative writing at schools.

