## SCENARIO (to be read aloud to students and/or displayed on screen):

You are going on holiday abroad with two of your friends and arrive just in time to board at the gate. You hand your boarding pass to the person at the gate, and then rush to get to your seat on the plane. As you put your bag into the overhead locker you hear the couple seated in front of you discussing the fact that it is their 15 year anniversary.

You put on your headphones and settle in for the short hop over to the continent. The weather during the flight is terrible, and it is a very rough flight. You have to circle the airport for a long time before you make a heavy landing, and the as everyone disembarks, the pilot is on-hand to apologise for the turbulence, delays and rough landing.

But you don’t mind too much because you discover that the resort has sent a driver to pick you up and take you to your hotel.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SCENARIO:

1. Where were you going on holiday? (Get students to state this to see if there any similarities in their answers).
2. What gender was the person who took your ticket at the gate? Did anyone think of a male gate attendant?
3. What about the couple celebrating their anniversary? Were they a heterosexual couple? Did anyone think of two men? Or two women?
4. What gender was the pilot? Were they white?
5. What about the driver? What gender were they? Ethnicity?
6. Did anyone you think of have a disability? Were any of them trans? Were any of them wearing a religious head covering? Were any of them pregnant?

## EXPLANATION:

People tend to think automatically of others that are similar to themselves, and that fit with their own experience, even when in a more international context, such as an airport or international flight. People are also more comfortable with things that are familiar to them, and rely on stereotypes to fill in for real experience; this is why almost everyone would have thought of a middle-aged white male as the pilot.

Our experience (and not all of it real – media accounts for a LOT of what we think of as experience) tells us that the majority of pilots are white and male. That doesn’t mean they ALWAYS are, or that the best pilots are middle-aged white men, but people who fit this stereotype are usually judged to be more competent, even when people have no further information on which to base this decision.

This is unconscious bias.