Our brains have been engineered to process information in a certain way by our upbringing, societal norms, and media. We are not aware of this invisible lens that is constantly affecting the way we perceive things. The task of drawing a scientist makes us conscious of this invisible lens. When told to draw a scientist, the men predominantly drew male scientists while the women predominantly drew female scientists. This shows that we like to imagine ourselves in character whether fictional or not. Most drew scientists with lab coats and glasses although scientists in the real world are unlikely to wear a lab coat during working hours and have poor vision. Drawn with lanky and nerdy characteristics, we imagine a scientist to be an unenjoyable and uninteresting person. Real scientists are not bound by these stereotypes. Thus, one can say that we unconsciously see the world through a forced perspective without free will.

The TED talk on ‘The danger of a single story’ by novelist Chimamanda Adichie beautifully described the invisible lens and how this lens is created in individuals from an early age through storybooks and later by our upbringing, social circles, and media.

For the final task, the class was split into pairs and each pair was told to write down at least three things that one assumed about the other person solely based on appearance. We later switched our notebooks and assessed the assumptions that we had made about each other. This task makes us conscious of the invisible lens that we create about strangers which in real life might stop us from approaching or interacting with each other.

To break the stereotypes and view the world through an unfiltered raw perspective one must interact with the stereotypes on their own, thus shattering the invisible lens, creating a more complex and clearer picture of the story.