



## Role models

Cultural phenomena (30)

15:00 minutes  
Two-track audio

**00:00** Youngsters have many different role models – friends, music stars, or actors. Young wrestler Remo Zosso's role model is Kilian Wenger. Kilian is regarded as Switzerland's up-and-coming wrestling talent. Role models are useful in that they help us learn certain things. They also act as huge motivators.

**03:54** Role models change with age. Early in life, parents are children's most important role models, as the young learn basic behavioural patterns from them. Later, when teens get ready to leave home, their role models tend to be outside the family.

**07:32** In ancient Egypt, the pharaohs were revered as divine beings. In Greek culture, scholars would often come from far away to learn from philosophers such as Aristotle. And in the Middle Ages, knights, kings and popes were society's main role models. In those times, such models had to distinguish themselves by exemplary behaviour or by masterful skills. In contrast, modern stars are often manufactured products, to be sold at the highest possible price.

**09:33** Role models may also be dangerous – stars, for example, who hit the bottle too often, or anorexic fashion models. During early adolescence, it can be very difficult to see the problematic sides of a role model. Hitler is an extreme case of a bad role model. Blinded by his charisma, many supporters refused to see his horrific work.

**11:38** Young people may themselves act as role models – for their younger siblings, their peers, or as leaders of youth clubs. But being a role model can also be a burden. Celebrities like Britney Spears break under the pressure. Others, like Roger Federer, cope well.