



DISCUSSIONS
ACROSS
DIFFERENCES



WITH
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TEACHING FOR INCLUSION

Facilitator Guide

Description

“Teaching For Inclusion”, brings audiences to a traditional classroom in an urban setting as seen through the eyes of a young, Jewish teacher. By looking into the everyday life of an educator, who is committed to supporting students through the lens of personal experiences, archetypes and stereotypes; participants will be encouraged to challenge assumptions regarding learning environments and opportunities and develop a space where all students will feel welcomed and celebrated.

Objectives

Participants will be challenged to:

- Evaluate different learning environments
- Understand how experiences shape perspectives and biases
- “Think outside of the box” when looking for ways to be accepting of differences and breaking through stereotypes.
- Do more to help shape and support youth through diversity and inclusion

Target Audience

This program is intended for groups, organizations and people interested in building inclusive communities through dialogue and discussion regarding race.

Background

Within this series there are two assumptions that can be made that support stereotypical thinking. First, individuals from suburban communities would steer clear of those in urban communities, if given a choice. Second, students in urban educational institutions are less interested in learning. The featured educator is deliberate in debunking the stereotypical assumptions and works through personal and professional challenges to deliver the desired results for her students.

Tips for Facilitating

Considering the opinions and points of view presented in this video, facilitators will need to focus discussion on those conversations and thoughts that affect inclusion, respect, and valuing others. To best facilitate the discussion, facilitators should **carefully review the video and prepared materials in advance of presentation.**

Suggested Guidelines:

- Review all presentation materials and the video in advance of your session.
- As you begin the session, establish ground rules for sharing opinions. Stress the need to be respectful of others.
- Set expectations for the session by sharing the objectives and agenda before the video is shown.
- Provide instructions for capturing discussion outcomes and observations.
- Actively manage time to allow sufficient discussion of each section and capture observations without judgment.
- Anticipate distractions or off topic comments in your session and have statements ready to steer the conversation back on topic. An example includes “That is an interesting comment. Let’s discuss it further after the session to allow time to cover discussion items more directly related to the video”.
- When the session concludes, thank everyone for his or her participation and courageous conversations.

Materials and Equipment Needed

- Video: “Teaching For Inclusion”
Click on link: <https://youtu.be/qSE2NP4gADk>
Wi-Fi or data connection is needed to view video
- Laptop with Video Screen, or Room with Projector and Screen for showing video
- Flip Chart & Easel, Blackboard, Smart board, or paper to take notes
- Markers or writing instrument
- Facilitator Guide

Time Requirements

- Room Set-Up: 5 minutes
- Video: 11:06 minute runtime
- Discussion Time: 30 - 40 minutes

Teaching for Inclusion

Introducing the Program

Welcome participants. Inform participants that the video they are about to view is one that challenges assumptions about teaching and learning, while considering stereotypes and archetypes that may impact the education of students. Encourage thinking of ways to be courageous and make a difference.

Give advanced notice that there will be questions following the video for discussion and learning.

Give audience “thinking time” after asking a question. Be prepared to give an example, should there be no responses.

View Video (Run Time: 11:06)

Group Discussion

As each question is discussed, make note of key points on a flip chart or paper. For large audiences (more than 10-12 people), consider dividing into smaller groups to discuss questions. Key points from each small group can be shared with the larger group and captured on the flip chart at the conclusion of their discussion.

Discussion Questions

1. *How do you teach young people about diversity and inclusion?*

Possible Answers:

- Make it part of the school curriculum.
- Encourage dialogue about differences.
- It is the parent's responsibility. Educators are there to provide support.
- Young people emulate what they see other's do – particularly peers. That is why it is important to make sure you create settings where there are open-minded, diverse individuals.

2. *How do you encourage students to operate in an environment that is unfamiliar to them?*

Possible Answers:

- Encourage them to have an open mind.
- Ask them to share their fears or concerns.
- Establish a relationship with a "buddy."
- Allow students to "test the waters" by trying an activity or having an experience that is new and follow up with discussion.

3. *What are your observations regarding the school swap between an urban, minority school and a suburban, predominantly white high school?*

Possible Answers:

- Schools with privilege have more resources, even if they are public.
- I am surprised that all public schools do not have the same level of resources.
- The privileged are always going to have more resources and access.

4. *Do you believe that race plays a factor in terms of how children are educated? Why or why not?*

Possible Answers:

- Race does not play a role in terms of how children are educated.
- Children have a desire to learn and many do so against all odds.
- This is not a new phenomenon. Race plays a factor in all segments of education.
- Typically students of color do not fair well on standardized tests, simply because they have not had adequate preparation, as well as, their white counterparts.
- Urban schools will not perform at the highest levels without the infusion of significant resources that will support the interests of the students.
- It's about rich versus poor school districts, not race.

5. *Does teaching diversity and inclusion require someone to be from a different race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, or socio-economic class than the participants to have the maximum impact on learning and understanding?*

Possible Feedback:

- Yes, in order to get different perspectives and experiences shared that would otherwise be unknown, diverse teachers are required.
 - Yes. It would be difficult for a person who has not experienced a certain behavior or stereotype to be completely credible.
 - No. I do not have to be of a certain group, to speak with authority on the group.
 - No. This is the way that we will truly become a diverse community—when individuals of different races, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religious preference, and socio-economic class can understand and articulate the experiences and challenges of each group.
6. *How can you make a difference towards teaching for diversity and inclusion when a school and the children that attend it have so many challenges?*

Possible Feedback:

- I will volunteer time as a tutor or mentor.
- I cannot give up on trying to influence early behavior towards inclusion!
- I will meet students where they are, instead of imposing my beliefs upon them.
- I will believe from the onset that every student is capable and interested in learning.
- I will connect with community organizations that offer individual and family support outside of the classroom.
- I will partner with administrators and offer collaborative initiatives that support diversity and inclusion.
- There is nothing one person can do. The problem is too big.

Review Objectives

Participants will be challenged to:

- Evaluate different learning environments
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- Do more to help shape and support youth through diversity and inclusion

Closing Comments

Conclude the session by sharing your organization's or group's policy statement or position on diversity. Be sure to thank the participants for their contributions to discussions and for their time.

Survey

Please take a few minutes to complete a brief survey on the *Discussions Across Differences* video series:

Click on link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DiscussionsAcrossDifferences>

Let's keep the dialogue going.