

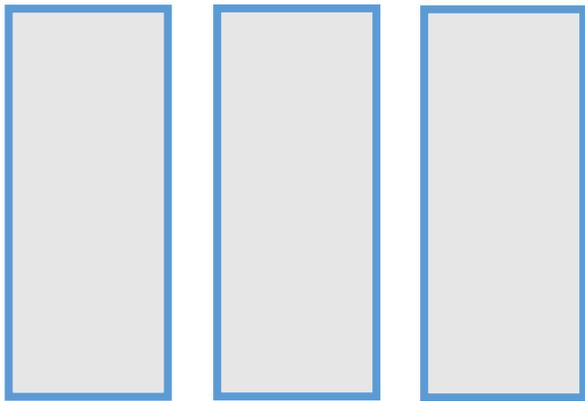
Understanding “The Game of Educational Access”

Worksheet to use with “Equality vs. Equity” meme

The field/the game is the standards and the learning opportunities teachers create in the classroom.

The fence is/are the barriers to accessing the learning.

Name some “fences”:

Three vertical rectangular boxes with blue borders, arranged horizontally. These boxes are intended for students to write down various barriers or 'fences' that might impede educational access.

The “height” of the students represents their abilities and identities that relate to educational access.

The “boxes” are the privileges that help students access the learning and close the gaps. Let’s focus on the boxes. What are some opportunities that help students access the learning?

Three square boxes with blue borders, arranged horizontally. These boxes are intended for students to write down various opportunities or 'boxes' that can help students access learning and close educational gaps.

Thoughts:

“Understanding Privilege”

From Teaching Tolerance: Anti-Bias Framework

<http://www.tolerance.org/module/anti-bias-framework-understanding-justice>

Learn:

In addition to looking at systemic discrimination, we cannot discuss justice without talking about how privilege affects justice. Who we are, where we come from and what we have access to impact our success. That privilege, or lack thereof, should not define who we are or what we accomplish in life. Understanding how our position of privilege can affect our access to success is important.

Let’s revisit privilege and consider how privilege impacts social justice.

Go Deeper:

The following activity will help determine how privilege can affect a person’s life. **Total your points at the end.**

Statement	Score
If you are a white male, give yourself 3 points.	
If there have been times in your life when you skipped a meal because there was no food in the house, subtract 1 point.	
If you have visible or invisible disabilities, subtract 1 point.	
If you attended (grade) school with people you felt were like yourself give yourself 2 points.	
If you grew up in an urban setting, subtract 1 point.	
If your family had private health insurance, give yourself 2 points.	
If your work holidays coincide with religious holidays that you celebrate, give yourself 1 point.	
If you feel good about how your self-identified culture is portrayed by the media, give yourself 1 point.	
If you have been the victim of physical violence based on your gender, ethnicity, age or sexual orientation, subtract 2 points.	
If you have ever felt passed over for employment based on your gender, ethnicity, age or sexual orientation, subtract 1 point.	
If you were born in the United States, give yourself 1 point.	
If English is your first language, give yourself 2 points.	
If you have been divorced or impacted by divorce, subtract 1 point.	

If you came from a supportive family, give yourself 3 points.	
If you have completed high school, give yourself 1 point.	
If you were able to complete college, give yourself 2 points.	
If you have always been able to easily buy clothes in your size, give yourself 1 point.	
If you took out loans for your education, subtract 1 point.	
If you had more than 20 books in your house while growing up, give yourself 1 point.	
If you have ever felt unsafe walking alone at night, subtract 1 point.	
TOTAL	

Reflect:

The closer to 20 your score, the more opportunities you have had in your life, i.e. you have experienced privileges that others have not.

Reflection questions—Take a few minutes to reflect individually and then discuss with your team. You do not need to “answer” every question. What is important is that you have time to “think about” this activity and what it means to you.

(I have modified the reflection questions from the website for the purposes of our training. –AmyBith)

- What are your initial reactions to your score? Are you feeling resistance to this information/activity?
- What do you understand/what questions do you have about privilege and justice after completing this exercise?
- Based on what we discussed about identity—how might these issues of privilege impact identity development in the classroom for teachers and students?
- How can this exercise impact your life, your relationships or your teaching?

“I Am Poems” with a focus on Social Justice Identity

You are going to begin with a brainstorm activity that is for your eyes only. You will not need to share anything you write down with your team, your facilitator or administration. This is just a time for you to brainstorm and think freely.

When we are done with the brainstorming/free writing activity you will be asked to construct a poem about yourself that is meant to introduce who you are to your team from your perspective on social justice issues. These will be shared, copied or turned in. (Facilitators can share some of or show their poem as an example before you begin. This is up to you.)

We will begin with reflections on childhood and teenage years.

I am from...

- The geography of where you grew up. Think about your home or homes, the neighborhood, the landscape.
- The food you ate—family meals, going out to eat, holidays
- The music you listened to
- What did you do for fun? With your friends, with your family
- Who did you come from? Who are your people? Family, faith community, friends, neighbors

Now to the present: Let’s consider the identity categories that you fall into that are related to issues of justice, power, privilege and oppression. Remember most of these are not choices you made. Many of them may make you feel uncomfortable emotions—guilt, shame, anger—the point is for you to remember that our students experience these same feelings everyday too. If we are going to focus on issues of human rights and social justice to help close the achievement gap then we need to be prepared to discuss our own positionality in personal and professional ways.

I am...

- **Physical Identity**—this is about your body—how are you made? How do you look to yourself or to others? What can your body do well and what are your weaknesses or disabilities?
- **Racial Identity**—this is how others categorize you racially—people don’t get to choose their race
- **Ethnic Identity**—this is more your choice. How do you identify with your ancestry, your family heritage, your geographical heritage (I am Italian, Southern American, country girl)
- **Religious/Spiritual/Belief Identity**—How would you categorize or define your belief system, do you have one? If so, what are your practices around those beliefs? Are you a member of a particular faith community?
- **Economic/Class/Work Identity**—past and present, especially if they differ, blend and/or overlap
- **Gender Identity**—remember there are more than two—this may seem simple to you but it is not to many of our students
- **Mental, Emotional and Intellectual Identity**—How would you describe your mental and/or emotional health? Do you have a diagnosis? Have you ever sought treatment? How would you describe your mental/intellectual abilities? What are your intellectual strengths and weaknesses? What are your learning styles/needs/differences?
- **Sexual Identity**—not the same as gender identity—this is who you are attracted to and/or in relationship with

(This is a handout we used to situate our arts theme of “Social Justice” at RJ Reynolds for the 2014-2015 school year. This includes most of the resources mentioned in our presentation.)

**SOCIAL JUSTICE IDENTITY FRAMEWORK
(excerpts from Dr. Harlee’s dissertation)**

**We make our way in the world—whether we are carpenters or researchers—according to the stories we tell each other. We could call them illusions. And in the academic world we call the discussion of these stories theoretical debates.
(L. Neilsen, *Aesthetics and Knowing*, 2004, p. 45)**

Defining social justice

Social justice is a commonly used term that can stir up a lot of emotion when used; for example, two women in my study made it clear that this was not a word they used or even liked. I find it imperative to share some definitions of social justice that relate to my use of the expression, so that the reader can better understand my analysis and implications. Shriberg, Bonner, Sarr, Walker, Hyland, and Chester (2008) wrote an article focused on social justice in school psychology in which they argued that:

Social Justice is a term that is not easily defined, but is associated in education with the idea that all individuals and groups must be treated with fairness and respect and that all are entitled to the resources and benefits that the school has to offer. (p. 455)

Adams, Bell, and Griffin (1997) also define social justice as the fair distribution of resources, but they also incorporate the idea of each person having agency and being a social actor in the process of democracy toward social justice. Specifically Bell (1997) defines social justice as:

full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. (p. 3)

Social Justice Identity Development: Living Out A Commitment to Social Justice

Developing a social justice identity allows one to name as an essential part of oneself a commitment to the work of social justice. This identity would also imply that others would respond to the individual as a member of a group that is committed to the work of social justice. There is also an implication here that the individual critically reflect and observe how this identity is reflected back by others in the group and from outside the group.

As Huebner (2005) puts it “to be in the company of co-journeymen is to be enabled to identify personal and collective idols, to name oppression, and to undergo the continuing transformation necessary in the vocation of teaching”(p. 322). Developing a

social justice identity would help one recognize other co-journeymers who are also committed to social justice and transformative learning. Huebner also points out that “all activity in school has moral consequences” (p. 322). I would expand that to argue that all education has moral consequences; therefore, the educator who identifies with social justice must consider the moral and ethical perspectives of teaching and learning.

What is Social Justice? From the Women in my Study

I spent a whole chapter breaking down my theories and definitions of social justice and SJID. But the women only spent fifteen minutes discussing and writing about their ideas. Thus, I think it is important to give voice to what they feel and think about the term partly in reverence to the complexity of the concept itself, and partly out of respect for the women in the group allowing me to ground this research in my theories, even though they have their own intellectual and emotional take on social justice, which may or may not be in line with mine. This topic does not appear to be new to them. It is not something they just heard but haven’t considered. Social justice has meaning in their lives and a few of them have passionate feelings about the term. I will let them speak for themselves; not all of the participants were able to complete this entry; I have included all that did. This is what they wrote:

Pat: I hate that term—it sounds so PC [politically correct]-I think people use it and never really live it. It means to be being Jesus in my world---plain and simple. As I look as what he did while here, if we all lived that way...would we need this term?

Margaret: My faith and interest in “social justice” are all rolled up together. I put that in quotes because I think it’s such a buzz word these days, when I really just think it’s being a thoughtful, loving human being and, for me, a faithful Christian. I don’t use the term “social justice”. I have an idea of what it means, but I’m just trying to be a good person, to live like Jesus lived, to help others feel as loved and confident and whole as I was raised to feel. Because I don’t believe that should be reserved for a chosen few.

Becky: All people deserve and demand the right of equality in all aspects of life. No one person or group is better than others. Equality for all both governmental and interpersonal. Seeing and acknowledging the individuality of others. Enforcing equal treatment of students.

Ellen: I believe a commitment to social justice should mean that a person lives their life in a way that always makes everyone feel accepted and welcome.

Clara: To act with a commitment to this would be to treat my neighbor as I would be treated, but it requires faith, courage, and love. Also it is not blind.

Sally: a commitment to love and to the idea that everyone deserves that. The

actual commitment is the work of transforming your whole life and mindset around it. It involves striving on a daily basis to think more clearly and justly. To constantly be examining your own prejudices.

Human Rights

What are human rights?

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible.

Universal human rights are often expressed and guaranteed by law, in the forms of treaties, customary international law, general principles and other sources of international law. International human rights law lays down obligations of Governments to act in certain ways or to refrain from certain acts, in order to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals or groups.

Universal and inalienable

The principle of universality of human rights is the cornerstone of international human rights law. This principle, as first emphasized in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948, has been reiterated in numerous international human rights conventions, declarations, and resolutions. The 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, for example, noted that it is the duty of States to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems.

All States have ratified at least one, and 80% of States have ratified four or more, of the core human rights treaties, reflecting consent of States which creates legal obligations for them and giving concrete expression to universality. Some fundamental human rights norms enjoy universal protection by customary international law across all boundaries and civilizations.

Human rights are inalienable. They should not be taken away, except in specific situations and according to due process. For example, the right to liberty may be restricted if a person is found guilty of a crime by a court of law.

Interdependent and indivisible

All human rights are indivisible, whether they are civil and political rights, such as the right to life, equality before the law and freedom of expression; economic, social and cultural rights, such as the rights to work, social security and education, or collective rights, such as the rights to development and self-determination, are indivisible, interrelated and interdependent. The improvement of one right

facilitates advancement of the others. Likewise, the deprivation of one right adversely affects the others.

Equal and non-discriminatory

Non-discrimination is a cross-cutting principle in international human rights law. The principle is present in all the major human rights treaties and provides the central theme of some of international human rights conventions such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The principle applies to everyone in relation to all human rights and freedoms and it prohibits discrimination on the basis of a list of non-exhaustive categories such as sex, race, colour and so on. The principle of non-discrimination is complemented by the principle of equality, as stated in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

Both Rights and Obligations

Human rights entail both rights and obligations. States assume obligations and duties under international law to respect, to protect and to fulfil human rights. The obligation to respect means that States must refrain from interfering with or curtailing the enjoyment of human rights. The obligation to protect requires States to protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses. The obligation to fulfil means that States must take positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of basic human rights. At the individual level, while we are entitled our human rights, we should also respect the human rights of others.

United Nations. From the Office of the High Commissioner of the United Nations,
<http://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/pages/whatarehumanrights.aspx> retrieved 9/17/14.

Simplified Version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

From Human Rights Education Associates

Summary of Preamble

The General Assembly recognizes that the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, human rights should be protected by the rule of law, friendly relations between nations must be fostered, the peoples of the UN have affirmed their faith in human rights, the dignity and the worth of the human person, the equal rights of men and women and are determined to promote social progress, better standards of life and larger freedom and have promised to promote human rights and a common understanding of these rights.

A summary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1. Everyone is free and we should all be treated in the same way.
2. Everyone is equal despite differences in skin colour, sex, religion, language for example.
3. Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.
4. No one has the right to treat you as a slave nor should you make anyone your slave.
5. No one has the right to hurt you or to torture you.
6. Everyone has the right to be treated equally by the law.
7. The law is the same for everyone, it should be applied in the same way to all.
8. Everyone has the right to ask for legal help when their rights are not respected.
9. No one has the right to imprison you unjustly or expel you from your own country.
10. Everyone has the right to a fair and public trial.
11. Everyone should be considered innocent until guilt is proved.
12. Every one has the right to ask for help if someone tries to harm you, but no-one can enter your home, open your letters or bother you or your family without a good reason.
13. Everyone has the right to travel as they wish.
14. Everyone has the right to go to another country and ask for protection if they are being persecuted or are in danger of being persecuted.
15. Everyone has the right to belong to a country. No one has the right to prevent you from belonging to another country if you wish to.
16. Everyone has the right to marry and have a family.
17. Everyone has the right to own property and possessions.
18. Everyone has the right to practise and observe all aspects of their own religion and change their religion if they want to.

19. Everyone has the right to say what they think and to give and receive information.
20. Everyone has the right to take part in meetings and to join associations in a peaceful way.
21. Everyone has the right to help choose and take part in the government of their country.
22. Everyone has the right to social security and to opportunities to develop their skills.
23. Everyone has the right to work for a fair wage in a safe environment and to join a trade union.
24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure.
25. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living and medical help if they are ill.
26. Everyone has the right to go to school.
27. Everyone has the right to share in their community's cultural life.
28. Everyone must respect the 'social order' that is necessary for all these rights to be available.
29. Everyone must respect the rights of others, the community and public property.
30. No one has the right to take away any of the rights in this declaration.

Human Rights Education Associates,

http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=104&language_id=1&erc_doc_id=5211&category_id=24&category_type=3&group= retrieved 9/17/14

(Example agenda for working with facilitators in your school)

Cross Curricular PLT Meeting with Facilitators

Sept. 5

- Welcome and snacks
 - Thank you for stepping up. We know you didn't sign up for this, but we are really hopeful about what your leadership can mean to this school.
- Community Contract
 - This process is meant to foster a safe psychological space. To do that we need to honor the ways in which engage with one another. We also need to have a process for holding people accountable to the work and to creating a safe and trusting team culture. This "contract" is meant to be a tool for building positive group identity and also a contract for the facilitator to get the support they need from team members, coaches and administration.
- Quick look at agenda
 - Acknowledge the "long-term process" we are embarking on. It is all new. We are here to support you and we hope this structure will positively impact our teachers and our students
 - Our goal is that during the meetings we do the activities with the facilitators that we need for facilitators to lead in their teams. Some activities will have more flexibility. We don't want facilitators to have to "plan" for PLT meetings. But we encourage your feedback, input or ideas about what can be done in groups. Again this is a process and we want you to have an active part in it.
- I Am Poems
- Review goals and focus of Cross Curricular PLTs and Schedules
 - Reminder that you will have staff meeting and PLT meeting at the same time. You are supposed to devote 45-60 minutes to PLT. Thus team members need to be prepared that the entire planning period may be used for Staff Mtg. and PLT work. This shouldn't be the norm, but since it may happen sometimes teachers need to be prepared for that eventuality.
- Response/Reflection
 - What is one thing you hope to accomplish in/with your PLT?
 - What concerns you about facilitating this process?
- Any last questions?
- Adjourn