

“Responding to Bias” Teachers Guide

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Unit Overview: This is a series of middle grade (5-8) lessons designed to help students understand and confront bias. By the end of this four lesson unit, students will be able to:

- identify types of bias
- explain how bias can be harmful
- identify the role of bias in the Pyramid of Hate
- identify the role of power dynamics in stereotypes
- acknowledge shared responsibility for identifying and confronting stereotypes
- describe and identify microaggressions
- explain why and how microaggressions are harmful

Prior to teaching the lessons, educators will go through training to prepare them to teach and discuss the questions that may arise in each lesson.

Two key components in this unit are student feedback and teacher vulnerability. Student input will take the form of in class responses, as well as two anonymous surveys. Teachers need to be willing to go through the learning process *with* students. It is OK for educators to feel as though they are not experts. Educators should be willing to acknowledge that they too hold biases and prejudice. Overcoming our biases is a never ending process that takes active commitment and practice.

Each lesson corresponds to slides in the [Responding to Bias Slideshow](#). In addition to the lesson plan, there are notes on individual slides with tips for the teacher.

Lesson 2: Stereotypes

Lesson Objective	<p>Objective: SWBAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explore our own biases - identify the role of power dynamics in stereotypes - acknowledge shared responsibility for identifying and confronting stereotypes <p>NOTE: This lesson has two main parts. It begins with an activity to help students see that they hold biases based and stereotypes. DO NOT TELL THE STUDENTS WHAT THE LESSON IS ABOUT prior to completing the first activity.</p>
Estimated Time	30-40 minutes
Materials	Responding to Bias Slideshow , a copy of the “Hiring Chart” for each student, and pen/pencil/marker for each student
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the Hiring Premise 2. Begin Hiring Process 3. Review the Guidelines for Discussions 4. Discussion 5. Stereotypes and Prejudice 6. Are Stereotypes Harmful? 7. Clarification 8. Stereotypes and Power 9. Lesson Closer
Lesson Plan	<p><u>Activity 1</u> (~10 minutes)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the Hiring Premise <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Present Slide 3 (pencil image) on the board and distribute hiring charts. 2. Begin Hiring Process <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Go through all 7 “Choose Your Principle” slides rapidly. Do not allow students to consult each other during the selection process. 3. Review the Guidelines for Discussions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Present slide 11, and have students read each item aloud. 4. Discussion <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Now that each student has “hired” someone, discuss the questions on slide 12. b. If students don’t mention it, explain how this process is similar to real life because people hiring first see an applicant’s name before knowing anything about them. At this stage, many applicants are ruled out based on a bias/prejudice of the interviewer. 5. Stereotypes and Prejudice. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Present slides 13 and 14. Stop to make sure that students understand the lesson objectives, and the definitions of stereotype and prejudice.

Activity 2 (~15 minutes)

6. Are Stereotypes Harmful?

- a. Present slide 15 (Are Stereotypes Harmful?). Allow students one - two minutes to think about the question (first item) on their own.
- b. Put the students in groups of three - five students (no pairs!) to discuss their ideas.

7. Clarification

- a. After student discussion wanes, click slide 15 to show the remaining points.
- b. Tell students that in addition to denying individuality, positive stereotypes put pressure on individuals to fit a particular mold in order to be seen as “belonging” to a particular group. It can be upsetting to feel (or be told) that you aren’t really _____ (a member of a group to which you belong) because you don’t _____ (meet a particular stereotype).

8. Stereotypes and Power

- a. Display slide 16 and instruct students to flip their hiring chart over. Students may feel reluctant to do this activity. Please emphasize that this is a thinking activity. They don’t have to believe a stereotype is true in order to write it, and they should work independently. Allow students 1-2 minutes to complete each column, but give them the same amount of time for each. *You may decide to have all students select the same descriptor to change, or allow them to make their own decisions. However, don’t tell students what to change the descriptor to.*
- b. Display slide 17. Give students 1-3 minutes to formulate ideas before taking responses.
- c. Display the explanation on slide 18. Read it to the class. Pause for students to absorb the meaning.
- d. Read the information that appears after a click.
- e. Read the question in red, “Did your first sticky note have fewer stereotypes on it?” Ask students which sticky note had the most stereotypes. Ask if their results match the information presented on slide 18.

9. Lesson Closer

- a. Ask students to discuss the questions on slide 19 in pairs/small groups.