

# Let's talk about prejudice



An elementary teacher's guide to challenging prejudice with *Let's Talk About Race* by Alison Bromley

## About this guide

This guide was developed to help elementary-level teachers engage students in meaningful conversations about prejudice, identity, and privilege through *Let's Talk About Race*.

Divided into three thematic sections, this guide can be used for stand-alone activities, or a whole unit on prejudice.



## Teacher considerations

Before engaging with anti-racist practice make sure you've examined your own *positionality*, classroom context, and level of comfort with tough conversations.

## Let's Talk About Race

**Grades:** 2 to 6

**Subjects:** Language, Social Studies

**Themes:** racism, identity, prejudice, privilege

**How to Use:** To start class discussions about what makes up identity, who is privileged by prejudicial assumptions, and the 'stories' we tell about others.

question sequence

**Low level:** Why do people tell stories that make them feel better than others?

**High level:** How do we decide what race means?

**Convergent:** What are some reasons besides race that people think they're better than others?

**Divergent:** Would it be a good idea to pretend race doesn't exist at all? Why or why not?

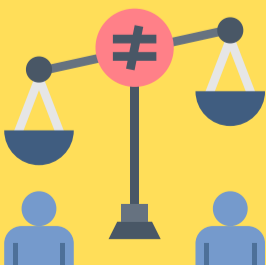


## Explore identity

The true 'story' we know about ourselves is also known as our identity— and it's based on a lot more than just race.

## What is prejudice?

Allow students to explore the mechanisms of prejudice with these activities.



## What is privilege?

Racial 'stories' lead to an unequal distribution of power.

# Teacher considerations



Before you engage in anti-racist teaching:

## Prepare for tough conversations

When handling sensitive issues like prejudice, uncomfortable conversations are an eventuality.

Learn how to embrace the discomfort from articles like [Talking to kids about race](#) or [Children Are Not Colourblind](#).

Read about the dos and don'ts of hard conversations from Give Racism the Red Card— in the [Background Information](#) section.



## Consider class context



Think about the racial, cultural, and gender diversity in your classroom.

Are any students personally impacted by the content?

Do your students have the necessary vocabulary and skills to be successful in this lesson?

## Prepare deep questions

Group discussions are necessary, but are often stilted by surface-level questions.

Close-read your materials before class to write deep questions that will keep the conversation going.



## Diversify materials



All students should see themselves reflected in both the classroom and curriculum.

Add diverse books to your class library.

Post materials in the classroom that celebrate diversity.

## Read, read, read!

Avoid deferring to people of colour as 'experts' on racism or prejudice by reading up on issues like: police violence, student achievement gaps, and economic racism.

Do some professional and personal development by reading more about prejudice, privilege, and pedagogy.



# Explore identity



Help kids learn about identity through *Let's Talk About Race*

## Connection to *Let's Talk About Race*

When we make prejudicial assumptions about others, we ignore their real cultural, racial, and familial identity.

Help students think about their own identities with these activities and resources.



## Create identity posters (one lesson)

Grade Level: 2 to 5

Subjects: Language, Social Studies

**What to Discuss:** How names can connect us to who we are/ be part of our identity; Variety of identities within the same classroom.



## Discover your identities (one lesson)

Grade Level: 3 to 5

Subjects: Language, Social Studies

**What to Discuss:** How certain identities are written (or not written) about in literature; Everyone has multiple identities.



## Write about your identities (one lesson)

Grade Level: 3 to 6

Subject: Language

**What to Discuss:** Identity is more than race/ gender; We are all products of our lived experiences.



## Books: identity

*The Proudest Blue: A Story of Hijab and Family:* religious/ cultural identity

*The Name Jar:* cultural identity

*Hair Love:* cultural identity, family identity

*My Princess Boy:* gender identity



# What is prejudice?



Help kids understand prejudice through *Let's Talk About Race*

## Connection to *Let's Talk About Race*

The 'stories' we tell about people who look different from us are a form of prejudice.



## Explore prejudice and stereotypes (one lesson)

Grade Level: 2 to 6

Subjects: Social Studies, Art

**What to discuss:** How stereotypes lead to misunderstanding one another; what stereotypes apply to students in the class.



## Examine prejudice (unit)

Grade Level: K to 6

Subjects: Language, Social Studies

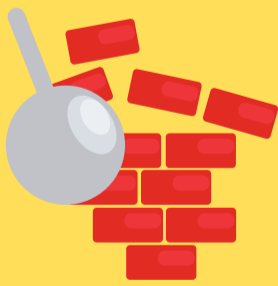
**What to discuss:** How prejudice works to keep marginalized identities down; do these barriers still exist in the same way?



## Check your bias, wreck your bias (video)

Grade Level: 4 to 6

**What to discuss:** How names can be subject to prejudice; how prejudice works to oppress certain groups.



## Books: prejudice

*Viola Demond Won't be Budged!*

*Africville*

Use a book list, like Social Justice Starts with Me to find more books on prejudice.



# What is privilege?



Help students understand privilege through *Let's Talk About Race*

## Connection to *Let's Talk About Race*

The 'stories' we tell about other races reinforce privilege for some, and oppression for others.

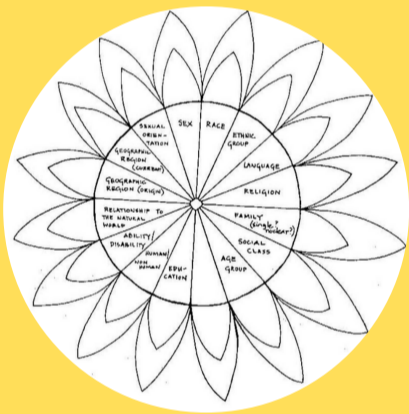


## Create power flowers (one lesson)

Grade Level: 4 to 8

Subject: Social Studies

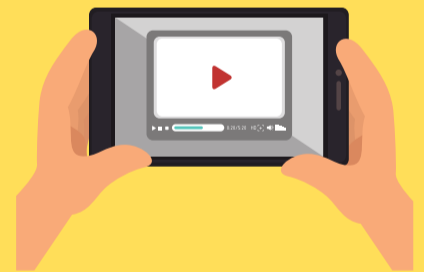
**What to Discuss:** Components of identity that are privileged/ oppressed; the relationship between different forms of oppression.



## Watch a demonstration (video)

Show your students a real-world demonstration of how privilege works to get certain people ahead, while leaving others behind.

**What to Discuss:** Who students notice are at the 'back'; do students think privilege can have this dramatic an effect on life chances?



## Act out privilege (activity)

**Note:** The *Wastepaper Basket Exercise* is on page 17

Grade Level: K to 12

**What to Discuss:** How does the exercise relate to privilege; Why is it harder for people with lots of privilege to notice its effects?



## Books: Privilege

Not My Idea: A Story About Whiteness: white privilege

A Day in the Life of Marlin Bundo: heterosexual privilege

Privilege Book List

