



Equity Talks

A conversation and resource guide for:

How Identity Is Formed

Conversation Starters

First memory of identity:

- What is your first memory of realizing your own identity? Is it different if you do not have a "starkly different" identity?
- What is your oldest memory of realizing you were different? Or your oldest memory of witnessing bias/racism?
- What is the impact of those memories on you today? How have you grown from those memories?

Conversation starters after Graci's story (at 3 minutes):

- What is your overall reaction after watching the video?
- What could Graci's teacher have done differently? And why?
- What are your wonderings/first reactions after listening to Graci's story?
- What were the missed opportunities here?

How children understand differences - racial and other, how they act on those understandings:

- What opportunities do we have as educators to teach children about differences among their peers?
- What opportunities do we have as educators to promote the important understanding of differences to children, parents?
- What action can you take after watching the video?

How constructs of difference can become negative, and how children can find pride in their heritage to combat that negativity:

- What sorts of things can we do to support children as they're exploring their social identity?
- What can happen if we don't talk to children about the differences they're noticing?
- What do you think the red flags would be if someone is being unsupportive during this time in a child's development?
- What are ways that we can break down those barriers as we work with/relate to the adults in our lives - Family, colleagues, teacher prep institutions, Early Childhood Education at the system level?

How teachers can approach uncomfortable or even harmful situations involving racism and use them to truly teach and lift affected students:

- Imagine you were this brand-new teacher. How would you react to a similar situation? Who in your circle will you debrief the experience with and why?
- Can you think of a time when you've said the "wrong thing"? How did you recover? What could you have done differently? And why?
- How can teachers and parents open their eyes to these "teachable moments" when it comes to race?
- What opportunities do we have as educators to promote understanding of differences?
- What opportunities do we have as educators to promote the important understanding of differences to children, parents?

Terms & Understanding

Terms mentioned in the film:

- **Constructivist:** Constructivist is a theory that argues that humans generate knowledge and meaning from an interaction between their experiences and their ideas.
- **Identity:** Knowing who we are
- **Social Identity:** Social identity is an individual's knowledge of belonging to certain social groups. This knowledge comes with some emotional and values of that group membership. Thus, while one's personal identity refers to self-knowledge associated with unique individual attributes, people's social identity indicates who they are in terms of the groups to which they belong.
- **Diversity:** Varieties
- **Diversity, Equity Inclusion**
 - **Cultural Diversity:** The variety of culture or ethnic groups within a society
 - **Diversity** is the presence of differences within a given setting in the workplace that can mean differences in race, ethnicity, gender etc.
 - **Inclusion** is about how well the contributions, presence and perspectives of different groups of people are valued and integrated into an environment/any setting.
 - **Equity** in our context recognizes that each has different circumstances and that we must allocate the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.
 - **Equality** however means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities
- **Social Markers**
- **Racism** is the belief that different races possess distinct characteristics, abilities, or qualities, especially so as to distinguish them as inferior or superior to one another
- **Colorblindness:** In this context means that one does not treat people differently according to their race or nationality.
- **Color Blind:** A term in sociology, is one in which racial classification does not affect a person's socially created opportunities

Studies mentioned in the film:

- Brain Construction (Heckman Equation) where to find that information.
- Paul Connolly Study. Where to find that information.

**“People will not remember the words that you say, but they will remember how you made them feel.”
- Maya Angelou**

Resources for Continued Conversation

Children's Books about Identity to get the Conversation Started:

- 30 of the Best Children's Books about Identity
- <https://childrenslibrarylady.com/books-about-identity/>

Adult Books and Resources:

- Nwaenyi: Child of an Elephant: Lessons Learned From My Father, a Nigerian Chief, About Child Development and Affirmations
- <https://nwaenyi.com/>
- Talking to your kids about racism - How to start the important conversation and keep it going.
- <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/talking-to-your-kids-about-racism>
- Talking to Kids About Race: An Introductory Guide to Building Foundations for Racial Equity in Early Childhood
- <https://www.amazon.com/Talking-Kids-About-Race-Introductory-ebook>

Online Resources:

- Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education Position Statement
- <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/equity>

Equity Talks is brought to you by:



Early Investment. Lifelong Success.

It is the intention of First Steps Kent that you view and consider the whole of the films, rather than selected parts. While some stories may resonate with you more than others, we hope you consider each story and viewpoint as unique and important in its own right.

These films were intended to foster discussion and create a springboard for more meaningful conversation within the classroom and the home.

Beyond these films, we hope your own sharing of experiences will be the most fruitful of all. By discussing and sharing, you can help evolve the conversation and improve an equitable experience for ALL children for generations to come.