

SITUATE YOURSELF: *Lesson Plan*

DISCRIMINATION AND BULLYING are seemingly neverending issues that arise in schools across the country. It is difficult for students to manage these situations on their own, just as it is challenging for faculty, staff, and administrators to address these issues with students individually and as a class.

The goal of this curriculum is to introduce students to issues related to LGBT bullying and discrimination and begin to break down the issues that surround this topic (stereotypes, rights, discrimination), understand what causes them and how people in those situations feel, and, ultimately to begin to formulate ideas about how to prevent these issues from happening in the future.

Activity 1 & 2 are preliminary activities that introduce students to LGBT-related issues such as stereotypes, laws, and rights. Activity 3, the game (Situating Yourself) is an interactive, decision-making game that encourages empathy in students as they are forced to make decisions as if they were an LGBT person facing different issues throughout life. Activity 4 is a followup to the game, encouraging students to pull from their imaginations and personal experiences to create their own scenarios that could be used in their own version of the game.

ACTIVITY 1: *Stereotypes*

Present your students with 10-15 words that stereotypically define LGBT people. Your students will place these words into any or all categories (LGBT). Your students will also be encouraged to think of their own words and place them in the categories. Your students will share the words with the rest of the class.

Sample Words:

Vain	Partier	Radical	Attention-seeking	Polyamorous	Masculine
Dramatic	Predatory	Unkempt	Nonchalant	Confused	Emotional
Sensitive	Feminine	Intelligent	Indecisive	Depressed	Experimental
Outgoing	Accepted	Intimidating	Manipulative	Angry	Anti-social
Friendly	Visible	Experimental	Naïve	Socially Unaccepted	Nurturing
Promiscuous	Social	Angry	Inexperienced	Non-monogamous	Ignored

Discussion Questions:

- Why do these stereotypes exist for each group?
- What may have brought about the stereotypes associated with each group?
- How may these stereotypes be incorrect or hyperbolized?

Learning Outcomes:

Students will highlight, analyze, and disseminate stereotypes associated with LGBT people.

ACTIVITY 2: *Laws*

Ask your students to list United States laws that specifically affect LGBT people. Write this list (as well as the laws that your students missed) on the board. Then explain the laws in basic terms. Then, distribute blank U.S. maps to each of your students (this can also be done in pairs or groups). Your students will then write on maps where they believe these laws are banned/prohibited. This doesn't have to be accurate for each state; it can cover areas or regions instead.

LGBT-Related National Laws:

Safe Schools - laws/rules dealing with bullying, harassment, and in-school discrimination. These protections can be in the form of statutory law, regulation or ethical codes of conduct for teachers.

Housing Discrimination - laws dealing with discrimination in relation to sale, rental, and financing of dwellings and other housing-related transactions.

Employment Discrimination - laws dealing with discrimination in private employment.

Hate Crimes - laws dealing with crimes based on the offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity/national origin.

Marriage - laws dealing with the legality of the union between same-sex couples.

Adoption - laws dealing with the adoption of children by same-sex couples, or one member of a same-sex couple adopting the child of his or her partner.

Hospital Visitation - laws dealing with the rights of a member of a same-sex couple who wishes to visit or make medically-related decisions with his or her partner in the hospital.

Discussion Questions:

-Do you think these laws are the solution to homophobia and other forms of discrimination?

-What is the difference between laws and rights?

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be introduced to U.S. laws related to LGBT rights and will begin to question their views on laws and rights in general.

ACTIVITY 3: *Game*

Show the Situate Yourself introduction video that explains how to play the game. Your students will play the game (they can play as a class, in groups, or alone). They should be encouraged to play the game more than once in order to experience different results. If the game is played as a class, time should be taken to discuss issues and information provided in the game (the discussion can be structured around the Follow Up questions included at the end of each round. Feel free to add your own questions if you feel they are relevant to the round and the class discussion). As students play the game, they should fill out the handout that accompanies the game. This will allow them to make decisions as a class or a group, but also make their own personal decision and explain why they chose that particular route.

Discussion Questions:

ROUND 1:

- What are some reasons for staying in the closet while you're in school? Do you think it effects school life?
- What could schools/teachers be doing to prevent bullying other than fight for these laws to be passed?
- Are laws useful to prevent bullying?
- Have you learned about diversity and acceptance in school? What lessons have been successful?

ROUND 2:

- Have you stood up for yourself in a situation like this?
- What do you do when you aren't getting the help you deserve?
- Have you been in a situation where you know someone is homophobic? How have you reacted?

ROUND 3:

- What does it mean to be an "Equal Opportunity Employer"?
- What are some situations in which you would not come out at work?
- What are the different protections for transgender people vs lesbian, gay, and bisexual people in a workplace?

ROUND 4:

- What constitutes a hate crime?
- Should there be different levels of punishment for different types of hate crimes (physical, emotional, virtual)?
- What can you do as a bystander of a hate crime (particularly on Facebook and other social media sites)?

ROUND 5:

- What are the legal differences between marriage, civil unions, and domestic partnerships?
- Why do some couples choose not to get married? Do you agree? Disagree?
- What are some arguments against same-sex marriage? Do you agree? Disagree?

ROUND 6:

- What is artificial insemination?
- What is in vitro fertilization?
- What is a surrogate?
- Do you know any lesbian or gay couples that have chosen to use any of these methods?

ROUND 7:

- What does being a "legal stranger" mean?
- How would you react if a doctor said you couldn't see your partner?

Learning Outcomes:

Through play, students will understand and become more empathic towards LGBT-related issues. They will engage in conversation with their teacher and fellow classmates in order to break down the issues and examine them further.

ACTIVITY 4: *Scenarios*

Your students will create their own scenarios that imitate the scenarios in Situate Yourself.

Format of Scenarios:

Intro: A short description of the person's life that leads into the scenario. The rounds are age as well as issue specific (e.g.: Round 1 - 15 years old - School-related discrimination). Follow the format of Situate Yourself to pair the age with the appropriate issue. Remember to include age!

Scenario: The conflict that arises in each round. The scenario should provide the game-player with a decision that they must make relating to the issue. The decision must have two options, which will lead to different (positive or negative) results. Each option must have both a positive and negative result.

Result (negative): A result that lowers the well-being meter of the game-player.

Result (positive): A result that raises the well-being meter of the game-player.

Discussion Questions:

- What was the most difficult part of creating your own scenarios?
- Did you draw your examples from your imagination or from real-life situations?

Learning Outcomes:

Students will add their own interests/experiences to the game in order to become more invested in the issues addressed in the game.