

## Additional Resources: Power and Privilege

*We understand for some educators that leading lessons on the topic of oppression and privilege can at times be incredibly challenging, uncomfortable, and personal. We also acknowledge how critical it is to discuss privilege honestly and openly in order to create truly inclusive and equitable communities. This document includes resources for teachers to assist them in this process, with the hopes that they would feel equipped to engage in these conversations meaningfully with their students.*

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### Peggy McIntosh: *'White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack'*

This excerpt from McIntosh's article consists of a list that identifies areas of white privilege in daily life that operate in sometimes invisible ways.

<https://www.deanza.edu/faculty/lewisjulie/White%20Priviledge%20Unpacking%20the%20Invisible%20Knapsack.pdf>

### Twenty Two Words

Explains the privilege paper throwing game in depth and with illustrations.

<http://twentytwowords.com/what-will-you-do-with-your-privilege/>

### Peel District School Board

Outlines the 'isms', including a paper on creating inclusive learning environments.

[http://www.gobeyondwords.org/The\\_Future\\_We\\_Want.html#the\\_isms](http://www.gobeyondwords.org/The_Future_We_Want.html#the_isms)

### Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

GLSEN is an organization for parents, students and teachers that works towards positive changes in schools focusing on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. Think b4 you speak resource and activity ideas:

<http://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Guide%20to%20ThinkB4YouSpeak.pdf>

### Everyday Feminism

Everyday Feminism is an online platform that aims to dismantle oppression, discrimination and everyday violence through intersectional feminism. This link takes you to a list of ways to be a better ally.

<http://everydayfeminism.com/2014/01/30-ways-to-be-a-better-ally-in-2014/>

### Lynn Gehl

Lynn Gehl provides a list of readings on 'allyship' with a focus on settler and Indigenous relationships.

<http://www.lynngehl.com/black-face-blogging/3>

### The Rainbow Resource Centre

The Rainbow Resource provides support, education, and resources to foster a proud, resilient, and diverse LGBT2SQ+ community.

[www.rainbowresourcecentre.org](http://www.rainbowresourcecentre.org)

## Teaching Tolerance

Teaching Tolerance is a place where educators who care about diversity, equity and justice can find news, suggestions, conversation and support.

<http://www.tolerance.org/>

## Sexism Comic Strip

A comic titled “Next time someone says women aren’t victims of harassment, show them this” that outlines the ways in which casual sexism is a pervasive problem in our society, and how men can stand up as allies. *Note: the comic includes graphic language.*

<http://www.tickld.com/x/next-time-someone-says-women-arent-victims-of-harassment-show-them>

## Privilege Comic Strip

A short comic that tells the story of Richard and Paula, who navigate the world with different levels of privilege, affecting their access to success. This is a great visual representation of how privilege influences people in different ways.

<http://thewireless.co.nz/articles/the-pencilword-on-a-plate>

## Everyone Belongs

The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women developed this 44-page toolkit to assist groups in applying intersectionality effectively.

[http://www.criaw-icref.ca/sites/criaw/files/Everyone\\_Belongs\\_e.pdf](http://www.criaw-icref.ca/sites/criaw/files/Everyone_Belongs_e.pdf)

## Accomplices not Allies

An Indigenous perspective on ways in which allies take on the label of ‘ally’ yet fail to meaningfully embody it in their lives. A good article for those seeking to deepen their work when it comes to ally-ship and supporting marginalized communities.

<http://www.indigenouaction.org/accomplices-not-allies-abolishing-the-ally-industrial-complex/>

## Privilege Cards Activity

*Time:* 10 minutes

*Age:* Grades 5-12

*Materials:*

About 5 'privilege slips' for each student

*Instructions:*

Hand out about five slips of paper ('privilege slips') to each student. These will be cut out from the boxes on the following sheet – multiple copies of this page may need to be printed in order for each student to receive at least five slips. Ask each student to take a few minutes to read over the statements. After reading each of them, they must hold onto the ones that apply to their lives, and put down the ones that do not. Explain that this can be a personal activity, so students do not need to be sharing with their peers sitting near them which slips they identify with or not. Allow students to self-reflect on how many pieces of paper they identified with.

*Debrief:*

**Ask:** How did it feel to read the cards and identify with some and not others? Did any of the cards surprise you? Did any of the cards not make sense to you?

Some of the slips might have been hard for students to understand how they could have been considered a privilege. Be sure to read over the slips beforehand so that you are comfortable explaining all of the privilege slips.

If I get a small cut, I can use a band-aid that closely matches the colour of my own skin.	I can go on an airplane, to a movie or ride in a car without worrying about if there is a seat that will accommodate me.
When attending class or other events, I do not need to worry about having an interpreter present to understand or participate.	When I speak, people do not make assumptions about my intelligence based on my style of speech.
I do not worry about walking alone.	If approached by a police officer, I can be sure that I haven't been singled out because of my race.
I can choose the style of dress I am most comfortable in and feel is reflects my personality and identity	When filling out forms for school, I am represented in the boxes I am asked to check for identification.
I can usually afford, without much trouble, to do the things my friends do for fun.	When I am with others of my race, people do not think we are causing trouble.
When I strongly state my opinion, I'm seen as a good leader and not as bossy or pushy.	People do not make assumptions about my intelligence or my work ethic based on the size and/or shape of my body.
I can go to an event and be fairly certain that there will be people of my race present.	If I go out with friends, I don't have to worry about whether the building is accessible to me.
In my family, getting a college/university degree is seen as normal or expected.	I can easily find hair products and people who know how to cut my hair.
When expressing my opinion, I am not automatically assumed to be a spokesperson or representative of my race.	When I am angry or emotional, people do not say it's because I'm a girl.
When someone is trying to describe me, they usually don't mention my race.	Most of the religious and/or cultural holidays celebrated by my family and I are recognized with days off from school.
I can use a public washroom without much thought and feel safe.	I can go into stores/ shopping malls and be fairly certain that I will not be followed or harassed by security guards or sales people.
As I grow up, I know I will always have a house or apartment to live in.	Most everywhere I go, I could hold hands with someone I am dating without fear of name-calling and/or violence.

## What I See Activity

*Time:* 15 minutes

*Age:* Grades 5-8

*Materials:*

None

*Instructions:*

Ask the students to stand in a large circle, or stay seated (depending on layout of the room).

Explain that you are going to read out scenarios to the class, and if it applies to them or is true for them, they should step back outside of the circle, or stand up (depending on group layout).

Remind them that these are things that could have happened at school, at home, on sports teams, with friends, out in public, or anywhere else that they can think of. Ask them to really think about the scenarios that come to mind, because we are going to talk about them in more detail after the activity.

1. I have heard people make jokes about other people for the way they look
2. I have heard people make jokes about other people because of the colour of their skin or the language they speak at home with their parents
3. I have seen people treated differently because they are poor or homeless
4. I have witnessed people making fun of people who live with disabilities
5. I have heard girls get called too sensitive or overly emotional
6. I have seen people be excluded from activities because they have a disability
7. I have witnessed somebody calling people out (\*you may need to explain what it means to call someone out) when they hear a racist joke
8. I have seen somebody calling people out when they felt they were being sexist
9. I have seen somebody genuinely apologize after realizing something that they did or said was offensive (racist, ableist, etc.)
10. I have seen somebody being made fun of for trying to stand up for what is right
11. I have some ideas of what I could say if I heard somebody making a racist joke
12. I feel comfortable stepping in if somebody is making fun of people because of a disability, the colour of their skin, their gender expression, or their sexual orientation.

After you have read through all of the scenarios, ask the students to get into small groups (they can pick their groups). Ask them to discuss the following questions:

1. What are the most common ways that you see different isms happening?
  - a. Words? Actions? Rules set out by adults?
2. What is the biggest barrier to people standing up to these things?
  - a. Fear? Awkwardness? Not caring enough? Uncertainty?
3. If you or people you've seen stood up for isms before, what did they do?

- a. Not laughed at jokes? Told the person what they were doing is racist/sexist etc?  
Defended the victim?

Explain to the students that the kinds of isms we witness might seem very small, but they can really hurt. They also are the underlying beliefs that can lead to way more serious actions/crimes, so it is important to call it out when it is a small action or comment, so that it does not have the chance to grow.

*Suggestions for what we can do if we see or hear discriminatory behavior happening:*

Speak up if you feel safe

- “Why don’t you just leave them alone?”
- “How is that funny?” – puts person in awkward position
- Say that the action/thing said was racist/ableist/sexist etc. not the person themselves. People are more likely to be defensive and not actually listen to you if they are feeling targeted

Make it personal so that people understand the impact

- If you were to explain that you find their language offensive because it actually hits really close to home, they might understand the impact.
- Ask them if they would make the same joke or comment if there was somebody in that room who identifies with the group they are making fun of

If you don’t feel safe, or don’t know what to do, you can still help

- Check in with the victim of the comment/action, sit with them, see if they need anything, tell them that you saw what happened and want to support them

If you’re the victim, talk to someone

- Even just sharing your experience with someone, a friend, teacher, sibling, can feel better than keeping it in, even if you don’t come up with specific solutions.

## Small group scenario discussions

Divide students into small groups and provide each group with a scenario to discuss together.

### Scenario 1:

Your class has a substitute teacher. This teacher has an accent, and people start snickering and making rude comments when they hear him speak.

*How does this make you feel? What do you do?*

### Scenario 2:

Your friend invites you and some others over for a sleepover. He tells you that his younger sister has autism, and when you're at his house you see her making a lot of repetitive noises and movements. Some of your other friends won't stop staring at her, and you know your friend is feeling awkward.

*What do you want to do to make the situation better?*

### Scenario 3:

Your older cousin likes to wear short dresses and skirts in the summertime. You start hearing people at school talking about her, saying judgmental things about how she must have dated a lot of guys because of the "slutty" way that she dresses.

*You know the way she dresses is not nearly as important as her personality and character, so how does hearing those comments feel? What do you do?*

### Scenario 4:

You're heading to the movie theatre with your older brother, and a man comes up to you and asks if you have any spare change. Neither of you do, so you keep walking. A few steps later your brother comments how that man should "just get a job" and stop asking for money.

*You feel uncomfortable because you don't think it is that simple, but what do you say to your brother?*

Scenario 5: Rumours start going around that your volleyball coach is gay. You hear your teammates making jokes about him during practice, and you can tell your coach hears them, even though he doesn't say anything.

*How does this make you feel? What do you do?*

## Facilitating with Privilege Notes

When discussing privilege and oppression, it is very important for the facilitator to acknowledge their own position of knowledge and experience, and that even as adults we are often still in the process of learning about whatever topic we are facilitating on. It is important to be open about the fact that you know members of the group/class hold new and different knowledge than you, so you hope to learn alongside them. This can often be clarified by discussing how the learning that you hope will happen during the workshop will be reciprocal. If topics are brought up or questions are asked that you do not feel equipped to answer, it is okay to state that and be honest about what you feel it is your place to answer.

If you do not have lived experience with the topic that you are presenting on, acknowledge this at the start as well as throughout the course of the whole workshop, where it is fitting. Remember and acknowledge that it is important to value the lived experience of individuals alongside any academic experience that we may have gained through formal education.

When discussing the role of allies and supporters in the workshop materials, this provides a good opportunity to model for the students the role that you can play as somebody who might embody a place of privilege within society.