

Time to Talk About Race



Grade Level: High School



DU Theme: America's Future



SEL Competency: Social Awareness

Essential Question: How can we better understand the effects of racism on relationships between people of different backgrounds?

Facilitator may wish to use reflection questions with students individually or in groups. Below is a possible adaptation for a group activity.

ACTIVITY

Remind students of norms for the group, in particular speaking respectfully and in ways that do not accuse individuals in the room. It may be necessary to remind students that racial problems in the United States were here long before anyone in the room was born and that issues regarding racial equity should be discussed without blaming individuals.

Ask students the following questions:

- We saw in the video that Students of Color are more likely to be incarcerated and/or drop out of school. Why do you think this occurs?
- Describe how you think People of Color are portrayed within this community.

Time to Talk About Race

Based on your knowledge of students, split students into groups of 2, 3 or 4. Assign each group a conversation starter.

Have each group consider the conversation starter that they received. Remind students that the goal is not necessarily to solve the problem that is presented, but to consider how the situation could make a Person of Color feel. This is not designed to be a policy debate but an opportunity for people to respectfully discuss racial bias. For example, if students are discussing a Confederate military statue, students should be discussing how that affects people not how best to remove the statue.

Have students write down lists of emotions or examples of why this particular issue can negatively affect some people in the community. Have students focus on the more local effect toward their own friends and neighbors to keep the discussion from morphing into a discussion regarding national politics.

Once groups have developed their lists have each group present to the larger group. Ask probing questions as students present to further discussion.

[10-20 minutes]

CONCLUSION

Debriefing questions.

What kinds of stories should be shared in the media about People of Color?

Why do you think there are so many untold positive stories?

What can everyone do to promote positive dialogs about race relations?

[2-3 minutes]