

A Skills-Based Curriculum for Building Inclusion in HS

Table of Contents

Overview.....	2
Module 1: Civility.....	3
Module 2: Self-Esteem.....	5
Module 3: Identity.....	7
Module 4: Personal Experience.....	10
Module 5: Skills Practice.....	13
Module 6: Actions Speak Louder.....	16

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A Skills-Based Curriculum for Building Inclusion in HS

Purpose

This is a skills-based curriculum designed to improve inter-group relations and teach students to value inclusion. We believe young people need skills and opportunities to put their beliefs into practice. The teaching notes and student worksheets help educators equip students to promote respect for diversity in their classrooms, schools and communities. This curriculum is designed to help young people accept themselves and their peers while they work together to move the United States towards a more inclusive society.

Format

The curriculum is based on six distinct modules based on different themes. In the first module, “Civility,” rights and responsibilities for how we talk to one another are established. “Self-Esteem” encourages students to explore their sources of strength and self-worth by creating their personal shield. In “Identity,” students learn about each other’s backgrounds and the values important to themselves and their families. The module “Language” challenges students to examine name-calling and to identify strategies to conflict resolution. “Skills Practice” gives students a non-threatening opportunity to play out concerns they may have about situations involving prejudice. These worksheets and activities will help to enable students to identify specific steps and strategies for building inclusion in their schools and neighborhoods.

Instructions

Each module includes directions for the instructor, suggested times and materials, and handouts for duplication. Most of the exercises include discussion questions to help teachers process student experiences and impressions. Every exercise concludes with suggestions for further development and exploration. Each module is complete in itself and can be used separately to meet specific needs of different classrooms. However, they are arranged in an order which allows them to compliment and to build upon one another. This structure can be used at any time during the school year.

If the modules are to achieve their purpose, educators must observe the instructions which accompany them. When properly conducted, each exercise allows participants to explore sensitive issues in a non-threatening environment which minimizes the risk of discomfort for both participants and facilitators.

Module 1: Civility

How Can We Talk to One Another?: Teaching Notes

Purpose

To create a supportive climate in the classroom so that students feel accepted, valued and comfortable expressing ideas and feelings to one another. A supportive climate must be set and maintained if students are to learn, understand and respect multiple points of view.

Participants: Any size group

Time: 15 minutes to review; 10 minutes to sign and post

Materials: One “How Can We Talk to One Another?” handout per participant; pens, pencils, pushpins

Instructions

Distribute a “How Can We Talk to One Another?” handout to each student. Explain to the students that in order for the class to begin to talk with and learn about one another, it is essential that we set a climate where people feel safe in sharing their opinions.

Place students in small groups and give each group a section to read aloud. Explain the exercise to the class and then offer some examples of its application. (You may prefer to have the class generate their own list of Rights and Responsibilities.) Once the class understands their rights and responsibilities in creating a safe climate in the classroom, each student is to sign her or his handout. When the sheets are signed, they can be posted on the bulletin board to remind students of their personal commitments to themselves and others.

Summary

Establishing ground rules that create a safe climate in the classroom is essential before beginning any type of conversation. When the conversation is centered on inter-group relations, the establishment and maintenance of ground rules is critical to the success or failure of future activities. The rights and responsibilities outlined in the “How Can We Talk to One Another?” handout can also be used as the ongoing “Code of Behavior” for the classroom.

How Can we Talk to One Another?

My Rights

I have a right to be treated with respect in this room: This means that no one will laugh at me or hurt my feelings.

I have a right to be myself in this room: This means that no one will treat me unfairly because of my personal appearance, gender, or personality.

I have a right to be safe in this room: This means no one will threaten me or cause me bodily harm.

I have a right to hear and be heard in this room: This means that no one will yell, scream, shout, or make loud noises when I am speaking.

I have a right to learn about myself in this room: This means that I will be free to express my feeling and opinion without being interrupted or punished.

My Responsibilities

Everyone has a right to be treated with respect in this room: This means I will not laugh at anyone or hurt anyone's feelings.

Everyone has a right to be her or himself in this room: This means that I will not treat anyone unfairly because of her or his physical appearance, gender, or personality.

Everyone has a right to be safe in this room: This means I will not threaten anyone or cause her or him bodily harm.

Everyone has a right to hear and be heard in this room: This means I will not yell, scream, shout, or make loud noises when others are speaking.

Everyone has the right to learn about themselves in this room: This mean that everyone is free to express feelings and opinions without being interrupted or punished.

I understand **My Rights and My Responsibilities** as outlined. I am willing to follow these ground rules in the classroom.

Signed

Date

Module 2: Self-Esteem

My Personal Shield: Teaching Notes

Purpose

This activity affirms one's own life experience regardless of age. By allowing participants an opportunity to validate self first, teachers encourage students to validate another's unique life experience.

- Participants:** Any size group (up to 50)
- Time:** 10 minutes to complete the personal shields; 20 minutes to share with classmates
- Materials:** One "Personal Shield" worksheet per participant; pens, pencils, colored markers, crayons

Instructions

Distribute a personal shield to each student. Explain that this is their own personal shield. Then tell them that the first step toward learning how to get along with other people is to identify what is important about ourselves and to share that with others. Invite students to draw what ever they want, using symbols or words to best express their personality. Encourage them to be as creative as they wish. After everyone has completed the task, ask the students to share something they felt particularly good about including the shield. You may wish to use the following questions for discussion:

- * Do you see any similarities between your personal shield and the shields of other students?
- * Is there anything you would add to your shield now? A few years from now?

Summary

The shield is a portrait of how we see ourselves at this point in our lives. No two are alike, and just as each of us has the power to change over time, the information in our shields may change as our ideas and experiences change. You may choose to collect the shields for a classroom display, or allow the students to keep them. Explain how the classroom environment is enhanced when diversity is acknowledged and appreciated.

Module 3: Identity

Who Are We?: Teaching Notes

Purpose

This activity is designed to help students learn about themselves and one another by sharing information in an interactive format.

Participants: Up to 30 students with 10 students assigned to each wall chart

Time: 10 minutes to complete wall chart(s); 20 minutes to share responses in small groups; 10 minutes to debrief the exercise with the entire class

Materials: A strip of banner paper (approximately 10 feet long) for each wall chart; prepared wall charts with “Who Are We?” questions; a copy of the “Who Are We?” worksheet for each student; water-based markers or colored pencils for writing on wall charts

Instructions

For every 10 students in your class, cut a strip of banner paper 10 feet long. Using the chart, diagram that follows, draw the chart and questions on the banner paper. When you’ve finished creating the chart, hang it on the wall. We suggest that you complete the first chart entry to provide an example for the students.

When your students arrive, explain that the class will use the charts on the walls to learn more about themselves and each other. Distribute the “Who Are We?” worksheet, read the instructions and invite students to complete the questions on the chart. When the charts are completed, form small groups of the students who signed the same chart. They may wish to bring the chairs up the charts so they can read easily. Once in a small group, each student should have an opportunity to share her or his chart entries. Small groups have 20 minutes to discuss. When the small groups have finished, conduct a brief discussion using the following questions:

- * What similarities or differences did you notice among yourselves?
- * Did you learn anything new about yourself or your classmate?
- * What does this chart tell us about the people who are in this class?
- * Do you think this chart reflects the diversity in our community?

Summary

These charts should be posted each day of the activity; they provide a powerful reminder of the diversity present in your classroom, and can support and inform the rest of this curriculum. If you had two or more groups in your class, conduct a brief “walk through” so that students can see the responses of all their classmates. This exercise can spur further exploration about diversity and community, particularly if these questions guide class discussion:

- * Is it important for us to develop an understanding and respect for our own cultures, languages, beliefs/religious and ethnic origins? Why or why not?
- * Is it important for us to develop an understanding and respect for the cultures, languages, religions/beliefs and ethnic origins of other people? Why or why not?
- * What holds us together as a school? As a community? As a country?

“Who Are We?": Worksheet

The following questions are are printed on the chart(s) you see posted around your classroom. These questions are designed to help you think and talk about who you are, what’s important to you, and how you see the world. When you have completed the chart, you will have an opportunity to talk about your answers with the other students who have signed your chart. Answer only as honestly and directly as you wish. If you prefer not to answer a particular question, simply skip it and move on to the next one.

_____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 _____

My full
Name....._____

The name I prefer
to be called....._____

Cultural meaning
of my name....._____

My cultural
identity....._____

Where my Grand-
parents were born....._____

My religion, faith
or belief system..._____

The language(s)
I speak....._____

My favorite song
or type of music..._____

A person I admire
Greatly....._____

Something I’d like to
Achieve in my life_____

Module 4: Personal Experience

Sticks and Stones and Names that Hurt: Teaching Notes

Purpose

To allow students the opportunity to explore alternatives to name calling and to develop critical thinking that will encourage them to identify various strategies for conflict resolution.

Participant	Any size class
Time	40-60 minutes
Materials	One worksheet for each participant

Instructions

Assure the class that everyone has called someone a name and has been called a name. This exercise can be conducted in several variation to use based on the way students act with each another.

First variation: Distribute the worksheets as a homework assignment to be completed in private. Students will not put their names on the worksheets and you will not know which worksheet is whose. Collect the handouts and tabulate all of the responses. Conduct a discussion about the differences and similarities of the responses to help students decide what behaviors they would like to change in how they treat each other. The students then discuss the ways that they would like to be supported in their efforts to change behaviors and what they are willing to do to support others.

Second Variation: Divide the students into small groups of 5 or less. Distribute a worksheet to each student and point out that there are three sections. Ask the students to fill out the first section only; allow a minute or two. Students will first share their responses in their small groups, after which you will ask for at least one volunteer to respond from the group. The discussion should center around the feelings created by the name calling incident and possible alternative behaviors.

Repeat the same process with the next section on the worksheet. During the discussion with the entire class, compare the responses to those given in the first section. For example, students are likely to report a good reason for calling someone else a name. Finally, repeat the process with the third session. Focus on real-life student experiences. Emphasize alternatives that the participants, particularly third party witnesses who may instigate or inflame a situation. Move the students to take responsibility for their behavior in all the various roles of name calling. Do they see a place for intervening? What skills are needed to intervene?

Summary

“Sticks and Stones and Names that Hurt” is intended to demonstrate that name calling can indeed hurt as much as sticks and stones. In many ways, name calling can leave permanent damage. Helping students to connect the hurt that they have experienced to the hurt ta others have experienced begins to create empathy and desire to support others.

Sticks and Stones and Names that Hurt: Worksheet

Section One

When was the last time you called someone a name or “put someone down?” _____

Why did you do that? _____

What else could you have done to express your feelings? _____

How did “putting someone down” make you feel? _____

How do you think it made the other person feel? _____

Section Two

When was the last time you were called a name or “put down?” _____

Why do you think that person treated you that way? _____

How did it make you feel? _____

How did you react? _____

Could you have done something differently and if so what? _____

Section Three

When was the last time you heard someone called a name or “put down?” _____

How did it make you feel? _____

What did you do when you heard someone called a name? _____

Could you have done something else and if so what? _____

Model 5: Skills Practice

Role Play: Teaching Notes

Purpose

Role plays provide practice in responding to prejudice, and develop skills for use in real life situations. These role plays reflect conflicts readily found in the schools of this culturally diverse nation. It is crucial that the role plays be analyzed critically by the students to ensure that the stereotypes and fear are not perpetuated.

Participants:	Any size class
Time:	Per role play – 10 minutes preparation; 5 minutes to perform; 10 minutes discussion
Materials:	Copies of role plays for each group

Instructions

Divide the class into four groups and assign each group a grade-appropriate role play. Alternatively, students may design their own role play situations by asking themselves, “What would I do if...?” Teachers should only use the role plays with which they are comfortable. Have the groups spend about 10 minutes preparing their role plays, and allow each group to present. After each presentation, have the class discuss the effectiveness of the response. Referring to the “Guidelines for Interrupting Prejudice” in this curriculum, you may want to ask the class: Does the response presented by the students encourage the person to change his or her behavior? Does it address what the person did and not the person him or herself? Does it provide information to correct the prejudice?

Summary

After the role plays have been presented and discussed, have the students create their own list of techniques for responding to prejudice. You may wish to refer to guidelines on the following page, and ask students to identify and address the underlying prejudice that sets the stage for discrimination. Students can problem-solve and learn from one another how to best respond.

NOTE: When doing role plays, students are reluctant to play the character displaying prejudice for fear that others will think they would do this in real life. Remind the class that students are playing roles; the actions they portray are not their own but those of the role play. **TO AVOID THE PERPETUATION OF CONCIOUS OR UNCONCIOUS STEREOTYPES, WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THE STUDENTS PORTRAY CHARACTERS OF THEIR OWN RACIAL OR CULTURAL BACKGROUND.**

What Would You Do If...?: Guidelines for Interrupting Prejudice

The following techniques for effectively interrupting prejudice are not the only techniques which can be used, and are not necessarily appropriate for every situation. These guidelines are not rigid; we suggest them as tools which can be incorporated into a student's current ways of responding to prejudice and discrimination.

Explain to students that they have a choice about whether or not to respond to a situation involving prejudice and discrimination; these are some tools to help them if they choose to respond. Explain that if their physical safety would be jeopardized by interrupting prejudice, students should do whatever would keep them most safe.

- * Ask for information. For example, "Can you tell me why you think that about _____?"
- * Try to respect the person's ideas- don't speak judgementally. For example, "That was a stupid thing to say." People will not listen to you if you have made them feel bad.
- * Give information and correct inaccurate information. For example, "I don't think _____ behaves that way."
- * Tell the other person how you feel about what he or she has said. Focus on what the person said, not on the person. For example, "I feel hurt when you call that person a _____."
- * Ask the person not to repeat the behavior. For example, "Even though I am not _____, it hurts me to hear that word. Please don't use it again."

Important Points to Remember

- * Avoid public, highly visible interaction.
- * Start small, build on your skills
- * Discuss the situation with an adult you trust-run your ideas by a teacher, parent, coach...
- * You have a choice not to say anything.
- * Start with yourself, be sure your behavior and language are respectful.
- * Don't become frustrated. Change takes time- every step you take makes a difference.

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What Would You Do If...?: Role Plays

Play #1

Setting: Informal meeting

Scene: Your school is in an uproar. A racial slur was discovered spray painted on a student's locker. Some concerned students call for a meeting to discuss the incident. You are at this meeting.

What do you do?

Play #2

Setting: Near the lunch area

Scene: One of your friends has just shared a mean-spirited stereotype about _____.

What do you do?

Play #3

Setting: The hallway

Scene: One of the students in your English class was not born in the United States. Several of your classmates make fun of the student because of his or her accent. Today, you see another student imitating the "foreign" student in the hallway.

What do you do?

Play #4

Setting: The classroom

Scene: One student is constantly making jokes about gay people and calling another student a name. The student being made fun of has confided to you that he can't take it anymore and will stop coming to class if this continues.

What do you do?

Module 6: Actions Speak Louder

A Blueprint for an Inclusive Community: Teaching Notes

Purpose

This activity is designed to help students make a commitment to behaviors which support inclusion and diversity. It compliments the “How Can We Talk to One Another” exercise by providing students with a document for reflection and discussion after the formal class activities are ended.

Participants: Any size group

Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials: One “Blueprint” worksheet and one “Glossary of Terms” for each student

Instructions

A working glossary of terms is included with this activity and should be distributed with the “Blueprint” worksheet.

Distribute a copy of the “blueprint” and the “Glossary” of terms to each student. Ask them to read the definitions in the glossary and then answer the questions on the Blueprint. Allow the class 10 minutes to complete this process. Then divide the class into small groups of no more than five students, and invite students in the groups to discuss the answers with each other. Ask them not to judge but encourage them to question each other about the reasons for their answers. Allow 10-15 minutes for the small group discussions.

The following questions can be used to help the whole class process the activity together:

1) Which items do you think will be the easiest for you to do? Point out that some are internal-low risk, while others are external-high risk. **2)** Which items will be most difficult for you to do? Why? **3)** As you completed the Blueprint, what questions or issues were brought up for you? **4)** How do you feel about making this kind of plan for yourself? **5)** What is the first action you are planning to take? **6)** What are some of the actions you plan to take later and why did you put them off into the future? **7)** What actions have you committed to take to work toward ending oppression? **8)** What application does your plan have to this classroom, this school and your community?

Summary

This activity brings the intent of the curriculum “Actions Speak Louder” to life. It allows students to take personal responsibility and make a tangible commitment to work towards building an inclusive community.

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A Blueprint for an Inclusive Community Worksheet

Each of us has the ability to work toward an inclusive community in which every person has the opportunity to belong, to achieve and to contribute. Because actions speak louder, below is a list of some things you can do to help create and maintain an inclusive community in your school, your neighborhood, your place of work or your place of worship. Change rarely happens all at once, so think about those actions you want to commit yourself to now, those you wish to pursue in the future and those you may not chose to pursue at all. Circle your response underneath each question. Remember, as you grow, so too will your thoughts and feelings about the role you will play in creating an inclusive community. Sign and date your form and refer to it periodically to assess the progress of your actions and attitudes.

1. I will challenge others when they make negative comments or jokes based on a person's race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability or religion.
NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

2. I will learn more about prejudice and discrimination and their effects on me and my community.
NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

3. I will check my own attitudes and behaviors for bias and prejudice.
NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

4. I will think carefully about the words and phrases I use because they may be degrading or hurtful to other people.
NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

5. I will openly disagree when I hear someone humiliating another person because of that person's race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, ability or religion.
NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

6. When I plan meetings, recreational activities or group gatherings, I will be sure that people of all races, ethnicities and genders, sexual orientation, ability or religion.
NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

7. I will treat people fairly and I will confront my friends and classmates who don't treat each other fairly.
NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

8. I will praise and support others who behave in ways that support cultural diversity and inclusion in my community.
NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

9. I will take time to notice the subtle ways in which I or others treat people differently based on their race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, ability or religion.
NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

10. I will avoid using language or repeating statements which reinforce negative or positive stereotypes.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

11. I will learn to be aware of subtle forms of prejudice and discrimination an television programs, advertising, news broadcasts, musical performances and will protest (examples: by writing a letter, boycotting a product) when a book, newspaper, television program or musical performance reinforces or celebrates prejudice and discrimination.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

12. I will learn to appreciate the other cultures which are present in my community and respect their holidays, celebrations and events.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

13. I will not let a person's physical characteristics influence my judgment about his or her competence or ability.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

14. I will learn about the politics and views of political candidates to find those who value and support an inclusive community.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

15. I will volunteer to work with an organization or program that actively confronts prejudice and discrimination in my community.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

16. I will make a real effort to get to know people who are different from me.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

17. I will be certain that any club or organization to which I belong actively recruits and welcomes participation from people of all different backgrounds, perspectives and beliefs.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

18. I will support stores, companies and businesses which reject discriminatory practices and treat all customers with respect.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

19. I will try to make my actions and words a positive example of inclusion and respect.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

20. I will continue to educate myself and my communities (school, workplace, neighborhood, worship) about inclusion and the eradication of prejudice and discrimination.

NOW FUTURE UNDECIDED

Signed _____ **Date** _____