Demystifying the “Safe Space”

**Right Now**
- Write name on label
- Wear name tag
- Ask someone, “how’d you get your name?”

**Learning Targets**
- Explore ways to make room for conversations that explore the many facets of different cultures.
- Learn about the practices to encourage students to be reasonable and deliberative while engaging controversial subject matter.
Demystifying the “Safe Space”
Good Morning

- David Barnes, GHS
- Jacquetta Thayer, GHS
- Kip Harmon, Secondary Social Studies Coordinator
- Lola Jobi, GHS Student
Survey

Have you ever...?

Sholder Speak

Dear 12-year old me... Future me...
Demystifying the “Safe Space” Recap

- Name Tag Talk
- Survey Data
- Grouping
- Low-risk share
- Shoulder Speak
“In order to nurture hard conversations about race, first we must commit to building conversational safe spaces, not merely declaring them. The foundation of such spaces is listening.”

Matthew Kay

Not Light, But Fire
Defining a “Safe Space”

What it is not

▪ Magic words that gets rid of all bullies and troublemakers
▪ A place where there is no fighting and Maslow’s Hierarchy is addressed
▪ A reference to ideological safety

What it is

▪ A conversational safe space established with the guidelines of listening patiently, listening actively, and policing your voice

Tip

▪ Practice at home
3 Keys of Listening

- Listen *Patiently*: Hands down while someone is talking and no interrupting.
- Listen *Actively*: Use notebooks or whiteboards to collect ideas, thoughts, and quotes that intrigue us.
- Police *Your Voice*: Shift focus from teacher to students; Speak succinctly

Resource
- **Discussion Rubric** - pdf
...Understanding our Own Biases...
Getting to a Conversational Safe Space

- Know yourself and your own biases
- Help your students know themselves
- Build relationships and set up classroom structures that create successful conversations

Tips
- Add to your circle, digitally and in person daily
- Culture-building daily
Understanding Unconscious Biases

- Microaggressions - toolkit
- Perceptions/Expectations
- Intent vs. Impact
- Implicit Bias - video, test

Resources

- Social Identity Groups - Google Slides
- “My Namesake” - video & PDF
...Leading Race Conversations in the Classroom
Race Conversation: Personal Catalysts

- We have the race conversation to assuage our *guilt*
- We have the conversation to be *cool*
- We have the conversation to point out the *elephant* in the room
- We have the conversation for the status that comes with *raising an army*
- We have the conversation because we just like *talking* to them

**Tip**
- In the classroom, it’s *not* about you
Race Conversation: Propositions to Ensure Purpose

- If the race conversation is about a hard problem, provide *space* and *time* for students to locate spheres of *influence* and explore personal pathways to *solutions*.
- Design race conversations that encourage students to follow *new* lines of inquiry.
- Students should be encouraged to “publish” whenever they *feel* ready. This opportunity must be built into the culture of the classroom.

**Tip**

- Risk-taking: Be cautious but let the students lead.
Race Conversation: Pop-up Conversation

- Don’t demand personal sharing without re-establishing clear discussion protocols
- Publicly own that it’s a pop-up
- Give time to get to some conclusions
- Pay special attention to summary and reflection

Tip
- Ease students in and out of tough conversations
Beyond Demystifying

- **Community Tool Box** - community building lessons, tools
- **Teaching Tolerance** - teaching strategies, lessons, PD
- **Facing History** - guides, webinars, lessons
- **Not Light, But Fire** by Matthew Kay
- **Race Dialogues: A Facilitator’s Guide to Tackling the Elephant in the Classroom** by Donna Rich Kaplowitz, Shayla Reese Griffin, Sheri Seyka
- **Twitter**
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