OWNERSHIP OF LEARNING

LESSON 6-24 ▲ CREATING A SAFE SPACE FOR LEARNING

**LEARNING GOALS/OUTCOMES**

* Comprehend the concept of creating a safe space in the classroom/community
* Possess a stronger sense of the importance of self-advocacy
* Initiate a safe space for themselves and others as a classroom community

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

* **Student Handouts:**
* Creating a Safe Classroom
* Journal Page
* **A large model or projection of the Students’ Creating a Safe Classroom Handout** for display purposes

**CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

1. **Talk with students about what they think makes a classroom a safe place** or makes a classroom community welcoming to all. Record their ideas for the closing.
2. **In the middle circle of the *Creating a Safe Classroom* Handout, have students place their name or descriptor** (main way they think about themselves). In the outer circles, ask students to place different descriptors or identifiers. Examples include race/ethnicity, mother/father actor/actress, educator, athlete, religion.
3. **For each circle, ask students to reflect on an experience or story where you were especially proud to identify with that part of themselves**.
4. **Now, ask students to reflect on a time where it was especially painful to be a part of that identify.**
5. **Have students share their story with a partner.** Remind them that the “Circles of Me” activity is most effective when you share your thoughts with others and invoke conversation around your identify.
6. **Bring the entire class back together to have a discussion about what they have learned about personal identity.** What value does the identity have to the person, especially a teenager? What challenges do teenagers experience in the increasingly diverse and sometimes very polarized society they live in?
7. **Transition into a discussion about stereotyping.** Move from the idea of developing a strong person identity to the issue that many people react quickly to others based on components of their identity. Ask students to reflect individually on the question of where was it painful to be a part of a particular identity. Was it because others perceived that part of them negatively.
8. **Share the idea that stereotyping is one of the first things that can decrease the level of safety in any group or any community.** Tell students that you are going to conduct three rounds of discussion. Students are to fill in the blanks on the student worksheet, first with an adjective that can be misconstrued or has been socially viewed as a stereotype. The second blank debunks the first. For example, I am Asian, but I am not a math whiz. Be prepared to give some examples from your own perspective.
9. **Once students have completed a Round One statement,** have them share their statements. Give them a minute as a group to discuss what they learned. Round Two and Round Three repeats the process. Encourage students to go deeper in each succeeding round.
10. **In closing, ask students individually and as a class to reflect on what they have learned.** Go back to the opening chart. As students to respond to the following question on their *Journal Page*:

* Are there things as an individual or as a group that students and the teacher can do to make this a safe classroom community?

**STUDENT PRODUCTS**

* **Completed *Creating a Safe Classroom* Handout**
* **Complete *Journal Page***

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND OTHER INFORMATION**

* **FACILITATOR NOTES**

Creating a safe place and a safe classroom community can be challenging. This lesson can stand alone or can be used as a warm-up for other activities. The lesson has two distinct activities, Circles of Me, and Stereotypes. They can be used in the same lesson or if time is limited they can be used separately.

* **ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES**

A follow-up activity to this lesson would be to give students an opportunity to write and publish their own norms for their advisory

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LESSON 6-24 STUDENT HANDOUT

CREATING A SAFE CLASSROOM

**CIRCLES OF ME**

1. In the middle circle below, place your name or main identifier. In the outer circles, place different parts of your identify or descriptors important to you or that define your identify. Examples include race/ethnicity, mother/father actor/actress, educator, athlete, religion.
2. For each circle, reflect on an experience or story where you were especially proud to identify with that part of you.
3. Now reflect on a time where it was especially painful to be a part of that identify.
4. Prepare to share your story with a partner. The Circles of Me is most effective when you share your thoughts with others and invoke conversation around your identities.

**STEREO-TYPING**

Name a stereotype associated with one of your self-identified groups that is inconsistent with whom you are. The class will complete three rounds of the process stopping to discuss what people wrote in each round.

Round One:

Fill in the blanks:   
I am (a/an) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

but I am NOT (a/an) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Round Two:

Fill in the blanks:   
I am (a/an) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

but I am NOT (a/an) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Round Three:

Fill in the blanks:   
I am (a/an) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

but I am NOT (a/an) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**CIRCLES OF ME WORKSHEET**