

Teacher's Guide: Introduction to Social Justice



A product of the Social Justice Project Lecture Series

Lesson Description:

This is an introduction to the concepts of social justice, diversity, and the importance of being culturally sensitive. The goal of this lesson is prepare students for a healthy transition to discuss four topics: ***sexism, racism, ableism, & bullying.***

Grade Level: High School (can also be used with Middle School)

Estimated time: One full class (60 minute) period

Standards Met: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for High School

United States History Studies Since 1877 TEKS (113.41):

C.17 Culture. The student understands the distribution, patterns, and characteristics of different cultures. The student is expected to:

C.17A Explain actions taken by people to expand economic opportunities and political rights, including those for racial, ethnic, and religious minorities as well as women, in American society;

Sociology TEKS (113.46):

5 Culture and social structure. The student differentiates and recognizes examples of subculture and counterculture. The student is expected to:

- .5A** Compare cultural norms such as ethnicity, national origin, age, socioeconomic status, and gender among various U.S. subculture groups;
- .5B** Describe **stereotypes** of various U.S. subcultures;
- .5C** analyze social problems in selected U.S. subcultures;

Lesson Objectives

The goals for this lesson are to:

- Introduce some of the terminology surrounding *social justice*.
- To help make the classroom a safe, comfortable, and hate-free space.
- Examine students' assumptions as well as giving them the opportunity to examine different perspectives.

Materials

What you will need:

- Video: **Introduction [8 min. 40 sec.]**
- Lecture/Power Point:
 - **IntroSJPLS_Lecture.ppt**
- Activity:
 - **TheLineGame.ppt, Line_Game_Instructions.pdf**
- Laptop or computer with PowerPoint

Activities

There are several activities that can be done to help students build trust in the classroom. One activity that we have included in this Lesson Plan is called the Line Game. Most of the questions in this game were created by students in the Freedom Signers video. The Activity instructions are included in **Line_Game_Instructions.pdf** and the questions are listed in **TheLineGame.ppt**.

Adaptations

Make sure students are facing each other during discussion. Ensure that all students have support and are not targeted or picked on when sharing their experiences. Ensure all film and materials are accessible via subtitles and ASL.

Evaluation

Vocabulary concepts taught: **Cultural Sensitivity, Diversity, Discrimination, -isms, Justice, Oppression, Marginalization, Perception, Prejudice, Stereotyping, Respect & Tokenism.**

Lesson Procedure:

1) Introduction Activities- (10 mins. TOTAL)

Have students view Lecture Video **“Introduction”** on ERCOD’s YouTube page. Use **TheLineGame.ppt** for the activity.

2) Discussion- (15 mins. TOTAL)

To give students a chance to share what they know about social justice and the importance of diversity, show the PowerPoint

IntroSJPLS_Lecture.ppt to review the video and expand discussion of each lesson point. Explain the discussion questions below and allow students to come up with their own answers.

Pre-Activity Discussion Questions:

1. Why is social justice important?
2. What do you think about the changing population of Americans? The earth’s “village” population?
3. What do you know about these four topics: Sexism, Racism, Ableism, and Bullying?
4. Which of these 4 topics were brought up in The Freedom Signers video?

3) Activity #1- Line Game (30 mins. TOTAL)

Switch over to the PowerPoint, **TheLineGame.ppt**, to play the LINE GAME. For specific instructions, please look at instructions in

Line_Game_Instructions.pdf. You may need to arrange the classroom so students have space to walk and view the Power Point. There are more than 10 questions in this activity- you can modify these questions or find more questions in the **Line_Game_Instructions.pdf**. Make sure students know that they don’t need to explain their life story when questions are brought up.

Optional Activities:

SJPLS_ListOfFilms.pdf has a collection of videos and documentaries that focuses on social justice- depending on the time you have to view the documentaries/films, you may encourage students to watch these films on their own. Talk with parents and/or dorm supervisors to see if they are willing to support by providing access to these films. Most of the films listed in the list provided are accessible via. Netflix, Blockbuster, video rental locations, and even your hometown library.

Note to the Teacher before starting this Lesson Plan:

Included in the **Resources** section of the *Social Justice Lecture Series*, you will find articles (SJPLS_Getting_Started.pdf and SJPLS_ArticleForTeacher.pdf) explaining how to facilitate safe, yet productive, classroom discussion on social justice issues. Please take the time to read all the Teacher's Guides carefully and prepare ahead of time so you can give your full attention when students are engaged in activities and discussions.

The intent of these activities is to examine the students' assumptions as well as giving them the opportunity to examine different perspectives.

It may be helpful for this exercise to set up some ground rules that the students can help to establish. Because this may be a contentious issue for some students in the class, perhaps the teacher can make it clear that students are free to use whatever terminology they feel the most comfortable with unless that terminology becomes offensive. Worrying about political correctness should not get in the way of fostering an understanding of the issues in all of the students.

Evaluation:

There are several ways to evaluate student's understanding on this topic. One is to give a vocabulary quiz, another is for students to do an essay based on the Discussion Questions. It is up to the teacher to choose which method to use for evaluation.

Option #1- Vocabulary Quiz

Encourage students to look up definitions and study for the quiz. You can create your own quiz from these words:

List of Vocabulary Words:

Diversity, Discrimination, -isms, Cultural Sensitivity, Justice, Oppression, Marginalization, Perception, Prejudice, Respect, Stereotyping, & Tokenism.

Option #2- Essay Prompt

Essay Questions:

1. What exactly is diversity?
2. What can we do to reduce the existence or expression of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination?

Additional Resources:

Sources:

- 1) *Helping Teens Stop Violence, Build Community, and Stand for Justice*. 20th Anniversary Edition. Allan Creighton, Paul Kivel. 2011. Hunter House, Inc.
- 2) Culture Learning: Simulations & Exercises. CARLA, Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition. University of Minnesota: <http://bit.ly/YFqox5>
- 3) The Freedom Writer's Diary Teacher's Guide. Erin Gruwell and the Freedom Writers Foundation. Published by Broadway Books. 2007.
- 4) Michael Cummings. Diversity & Sensitivity. PowerPoint was downloaded from the internet: <http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/>
- 5) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, OPHS. National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health Care, March 2001
- 6) SAMHSA, Office of Minority Health, and Health Resources and Administration, *Quality Health Services for Hispanics: The Cultural Competency Component*, 2001.
- 7) U.S. Department of Labor, Futurework: Trends and Challenges for Work in the 21st Century. Washington, D.D. (Labor Day 1999).
- 8) Parasnis, I. Cultural identity and diversity in deaf education. (1997) *American Annals of the Deaf*, 142(2), 72-79.