

Teacher Learning Activity: Understanding and Interrupting Implicit Bias

In order to provide equitable outcomes for a growing diverse student population, it's important that we truly examine our beliefs, actions and instructional practices. Culturally Responsive Teaching is more than simply celebrating diverse cultures or building strong relationships. It's identifying our students' varied perspectives and experiences in order to build bridges toward rigorous learning. It's knowing yourself, your own assumptions and biases, and how these impact interactions with others.

If you are interested in learning strategies to interrupt systems of bias and inequity, and exploring methods for making learning more relevant and rigorous for students, this activity will serve as a pathway towards that goal. It will also serve as a pathway towards that goal. It will also create a greater sense of self-awareness and a renewed focus on inclusivity and equity for all students.

Activity Objectives:

It's a fact that we all have biases. A series of videos will present the research behind what bias is and why we all have it. Reflect on the impact that biases have on our thoughts and actions. Finally, review and select strategies that help to intervene and interrupt our biased thoughts.

- To learn what implicit bias is and what it isn't
- To understand how implicit bias impacts our thinking and actions
- To learn strategies for interrupting and reducing biased thoughts and actions

Watch / Read / Reflect:

Video 1: [Peanut Butter and Jelly, and Racism](#)

Watch this video to better understand implicit bias. After watching the video, reflect on the following:

- What's the difference between implicit bias and racism?
- How did the video use PB & J to explain implicit bias?
- What is blindspot bias?
- Prof. Dolly Chugh suggests that the "fog" of bias and cloaked associations comes from sources such as media, news, conversations we hear at home, and our education. What messages about race and racism have you absorbed from these sources?
- Anything else you consider noteworthy (or that you want to be sure to remember)?

Video 2: [Check Our Bias to Wreck Our Bias](#)

This video will teach participants how to identify and change implicit bias. Watch, then reflect:

- What was your reaction to learning that, “Research shows that our racial biases are often more about who we choose to help than who we don’t. And we tend to help people who are similar to us”? What are some examples of this that you have seen or experienced in your own life?
- How might this new information impact your teaching?

Video 3: [The Life-Changing Magic of Hanging Out](#)

After learning about bias, this video offers suggestions to overcome it. After watching the video, reflect on the following:

- The video says that “spending significant time hanging out across lines of difference is backed by science as a way to start tackling bias.” Why do you think this approach works?
- What connections can you make between this research and the results of the [Diversity Profile Matrix](#) from the activity, ‘How Diverse is Your Universe’?

Article 1: [Four Tools for Interrupting Implicit Bias](#)

Author Zaretta Hammond (Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain), details 4 strategies for interrupting and reducing implicit bias. Read the article, then reflect:

- Describe diversity, cultural competency, and/or equity training that you’ve participated in the past. How effective was it?
- Review each of the intervention strategies. Identify specific examples of each one.
- Goal-setting time! Select one or more strategies and commit to practicing them daily.

Debrief

- What was it like to do this series of activities?
- What surprised you about your learning?
- What are your major takeaways?
- Reflect on your goals around interrupting and reducing implicit bias.

Notes

Record goals for interrupting bias. Keep a daily journal to reflect on progress and share your insights with your friends and colleagues.

Adapted from Who, Me? Biased?, PBS Learning Media

Learners Edge offers a full facilitation guide on [Culturally Responsive Teaching for Districts](#).