Final Project: Diversity in the Classroom

Background:

Diversity training is an important tool for teachers to have regardless of the location of their schools. Students need to be taught that differences in appearance, beliefs, religion, customs, and cultures are okay. Teachers should create learning opportunities for students to realize the importance of diversity in their own way. High multicultural schools are especially in need of teachers who can recognize their own biases and address any misconceptions they may have. One effective way to combat these issues is to offer regular training in diversity that will give teachers the opportunity to learn about each other, practice viewing situations from their students' perspectives despite any cultural differences, and assist teachers in reflecting on any biases they may possess that would hinder their effectiveness in the classroom.

Target Audience:

This training program is designed to assist teachers in creating an inclusive environment in their classrooms that welcomes diversity and educates students on the importance of tolerance. While all teachers can benefit from this program, it is especially aimed at those teachers teaching in high multicultural environments.

Intercultural Issues:

Many different intercultural issues require the need for diversity training. Children who have not previously been exposed to new cultures may be frightened, confused, or intolerant of those who are different from them. Aspects of culture such as dress, behavior, communication styles, language, and other issues such as physical appearance, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic status, disability, and gender identity can cause some students and teachers to treat those who are different in negative ways. Even when both teachers and students are tolerant of cultural differences, these differences can still lead to misunderstandings and communication issues that can hinder the academic success and personal development of students.

Behavioral Objectives:

The behavioral objectives for the teachers taking this course are to produce teachers who are tolerant and aware of intercultural issues and how these differences in culture can affect the students' learning and participation. These aspects of cultural differences and personal differences should be embraced. Teachers should strive to understand these differences and learn how to adapt to differing cultures in the classroom. It is the teacher's responsibility to create a classroom environment that is inclusive, tolerant, accepting, and willing to make appropriate accommodations to the cultural, social and personal needs of all students. Therefore, the goal of this program is to address these aspects of diversity and work with teachers to be aware of how these differences can affect the student's ability to learn, socialize, and grow as a person.

Course Outline:

- Module 1: Becoming Aware of Our Biases
- Module 2: Guiding Students to Become Aware of Their Own Biases
- Module 3: Collaborating with Parents
- Module 4: Collaborating with Teachers
- Module 5: Creating an Inclusive Classroom

Timeline:

Monday	Module 1:	9am-12pm: Introduction;
		Activities; Case Study
		12pm-2pm: Lunch
		2pm-3pm: Quizzes; Quiz
		Discussion
		3pm: Feedback; Q&A and
		Open Discussion
Tuesday	Module 2	9am-12pm: Introduction;
		Activities; Case Study
		12pm-2pm: Lunch
		2pm-3pm: Quizzes; Quiz
		Discussion
		3pm: Feedback; Q&A and
		Open Discussion
Wednesday	Module 3	9am-12pm: Introduction;
		Activities; Case Study
		12pm-2pm: Lunch
		2pm-3pm: Quizzes; Quiz
		Discussion
		3pm: Feedback; Q&A and
		Open Discussion

Thursday	Module 4	9am-12pm: Introduction;
		Activities; Case Study
		12pm-2pm: Lunch
		2pm-3pm: Quizzes; Quiz
		Discussion
		3pm: Feedback; Q&A and
		Open Discussion
Friday	Module 5	9am-12pm: Introduction;
		Activities, Case Study
		12pm-2pm: Lunch
		2pm-3pm: Quizzes; Quiz
		Discussion
		3pm: Feedback; Q&A and
		Open Discussion

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Content Module: Becoming Aware of Our Biases

Objectives:

- Acknowledging unconscious biases
- Recognizing the trials associated with language and communication
- Understanding the struggles of those who are disadvantaged or have less privileges
- Knowledge of stereotypes
- Knowledge of microaggressions
- Knowledge of intersectionality

Outline:

- Class Size: 30 people
- Introduction: Introduction by instructor with PowerPoint slides.
- Activities: Name Game, Story Game, Privilege Game
- Case Study
- Lunch Break
- Quizzes
- Quiz Discussion
- Feedback
- Q&A and Open Discussion (if desired by participants)

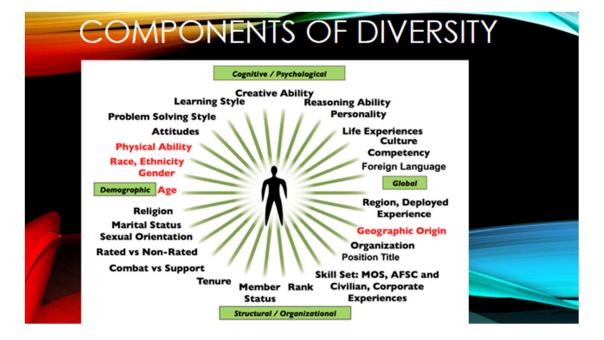
Materials:

- At least **31 copies of all handouts** listed below in "Handout" section
- At least 31 writing utensils (If pencils are used provide at least 1 pencil sharpener; extra writing utensils/sharpener advised in case of malfunction)
- At least **62 index** cards
- 31 clipboards
- At least **100 sheets of notebook paper**
- 31 chairs that can easily be rearranged
- 3 small waste baskets
- Colored Tape
- At least **3 small balls** (tennis balls, stress balls, or something similar)

Handouts:

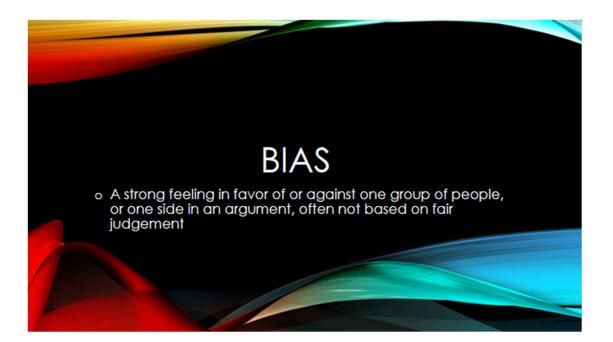
• Introduction PowerPoint Slides:

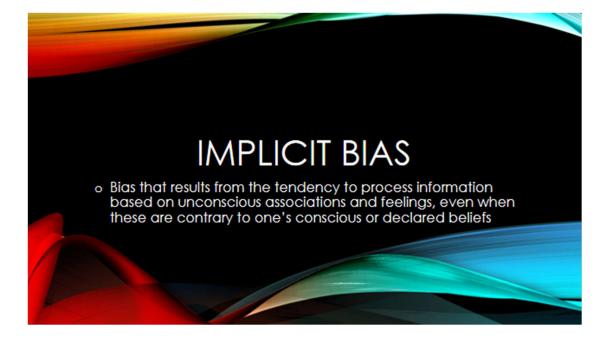




BECOMING AWARE OF OUR BIASES

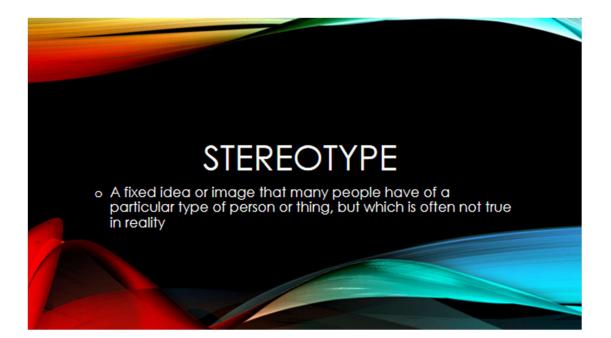
- Everyone has biases which can be either conscious or unconscious
- Failing to acknowledge our biases can have harmful effects on others
- Acknowledging biases is first step to creating an inclusive classroom

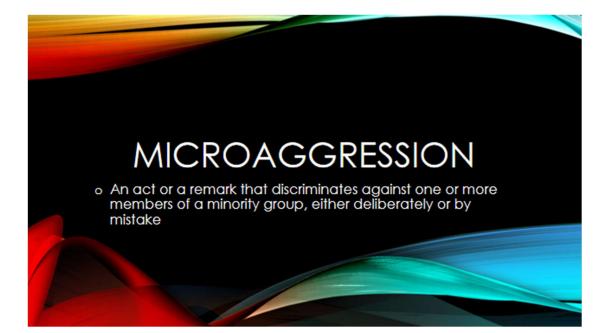


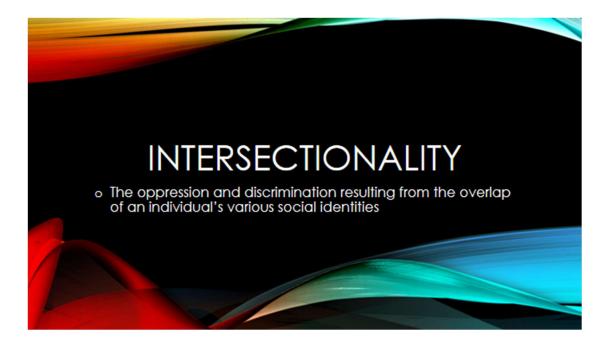














PARA 1

Acababa de amanecer un día gris y frío, enormemente gris y frío, cuando el hombre abandonó la ruta principal del Yukón y trepó el alto terraplén por donde un sendero apenas visible y escasamente transitado se abría hacia el este entre bosques de gruesos abetos. La ladera era muy pronunciada, y al llegar a la cumbre el hombre se detuvo a cobrar aliento, disculpándose a sí mismo el descanso con el pretexto de mirar su reloj. Eran las nueve en punto. Aunque no había en el cielo una sola nube, no se veía el sol ni se vislumbraba siquiera su destello. Era un día despejado y, sin embargo, cubría la superficie de las cosas una especie de manto intangible, una melancolía sutil que oscurecía el ambiente, y se debía a la ausencia de sol. El hecho no le preocupaba. Estaba hecho a la ausencia de sol. Habían pasado ya muchos días desde que lo había visto

PARA 1

Day had broken cold and gray, exceedingly cold and gray, when the man turned aside from the main Yukon trail and climbed the high earth-bank, where a dim and little traveled trail led eastward through the fat spruce timberland. It was a steep bank, and he paused for breath at the top, excusing the act to himself by looking at his watch. It was nine o'clock. There was no sun nor hint of sun, though there was not a cloud in the sky. It was a clear day, and yet there seemed an intangible pall over the face of things, a subtle gloom that made the day dark, and that was due to the absence of sun. This fact did not worry the man. He was used to the lack of sun. It had been days since he had seen the sun, and he knew that a few more days must pass before that cheerful orb, due south, would just peep above the skyline and dip immediately from view.

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• The Story Game Follow-Up Questions:

1) Was this assignment fair to all students?

2) Were those who spoke the language of the story given an advantage over the students who could not understand the language?

3) Could this assignment have been different if students were required to finish the story verbally instead of through writing?

4) What kind of emotions did you experience while working on this assignment? (Anxiety, confusion, anger, excitement, etc.?)

5) Can you think of a student you have had in the past who may have had a similar experience due to communication issues? If so, explain.

6) If so, what communication issues do you think played a role in the student's experience at school? Language, culture, disability, etc?

7) What steps were taken either by yourself or other teachers to address these issues?

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• Case Study:

"Maria is a junior at Middlebury High School. Her family moved into the school district at the beginning of the academic year. Her family is one of a few Latinx families in town, all of which moved to Middlebury in the past few years. Maria is frequently late to or absent from first period so her teacher, Mr. Jacobs, is worried about her. She misses important material when she is absent. When she is late it causes a disruption for the entire class since the lesson has to be paused. Mr. Jacobs asks Maria why she is often late or absent and she says that she just cannot seem to wake up on time because she is always tired. Mr. Jacobs tells Maria that all high school students are tired but that the other students still manage to make it to class on time. He encourages her to stop staying up so late at night so that she can come to school well rested and invites her to talk to him any time about how she can become more motivated in school.

Little does Mr. Jacobs know that Maria is exhausted because she works two part-time jobs in order to save money for college. She knows that she is not eligible for most scholarships and financial aid because she is undocumented, so she has to make sure she saves money to follow her dream of attending a university. Maria is disheartened by the conversation. She feels that Mr. Jacobs—like many other teachers she has had before—does not understand what it is like to work two jobs on top of doing homework. She feels that Mr. Jacobs would not take her seriously even if he knew she was working two jobs and she does not dare explain further for fear of anyone finding out that she is undocumented.

Maria tries hard to get to school on time after the conversation with Mr. Jacobs but eventually she has missed enough school that the counselor's office sends a letter to her parents. In the letter they warn Maria's parents about the possible consequences of truancy. Maria's

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parents do not speak English, but the staff figures that Maria can translate the letter for her parents.

Maria starts to feel unwelcome at her school. One morning during class, Maria and a fellow student got into a small argument. In response, Mr. Jacobs verbally reprimands Maria to "stop being so dramatic and so loud." Because of Mr. Jacobs' phrasing, Maria feels stereotyped. Maria has heard comments about Latina women being loud and dramatic before and feels it is a stereotype too often associated with her and other Latina women. Maria walks out of the class in frustration.

Maria becomes increasingly frustrated with Mr. Jacobs and the school. When Maria expresses this frustration to the few other Latinx students at Middlebury, they all say that they feel similarly. One student even says that another Latinx student was suspended twice for disrupting classes by being too loud and acting defiant toward a teacher. The student also says that a White student who is always loud in the exact same class has only ever been sent to the office to calm down and asked to write an apology letter to the teacher for being rude. Maria had not heard about this situation before but it seemed like proof that the teachers at Middlebury treat her and the other Latinx students differently than the White students."

Reference

Implicit bias in k-12 education case study and scenario workbook: Putting theory into practice. *The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity*.

http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/resources/K12-scenario-workbook.pdf

• Case Study Questions:

1) What assumptions does Mr. Jacobs make in this scenario?

2) What assumptions do Maria and the other Latinx students make?

3) In what ways is implicit bias potentially operating in this scenario?

4) How do you believe educators could address the feelings of Latinx students at Middlebury?

* Questions taken directly from "Implicit Bias in K-12 Education Case Study and Scenario Workbook". Retrieved at http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/resources/K12-scenario-workbook.pdf

• Quizzes:

Stereotype Quiz

1) Stereotypes are usually learned from family, friends, and the media.		F
2) Stereotypes are not used by everyone.	Т	<u>F</u>

3) Being the victim of a stereotype can cause anxiety, hinder self-confidence, and negatively affect academic performance. \underline{T} F

4) Using stereotypes does not usually lead to prejudice or discrimination. T \underline{F}

5) Those people who do not conform to their stereotypes are often targeted and criticized.

<u>T</u> F

Microaggressions Quiz

1) Microaggressions can be interpreted as both physical and non-physical aggression.				
	Т	<u>F</u>		
2) People who display microaggressions are usually aware of what they are doing.				
	Т	<u>F</u>		
3) Microaggressions are often subtle and unconscious comments or action	IS.			
	<u>T</u>	F		
4) Microaggressions reinforce stereotypes.	<u>T</u>	F		
5) Microaggressions can only be race-based.	Т	<u>F</u>		

Intersectionality Quiz

1) Most individuals have multiple social, cultural, and political identities. \underline{T} F

2) Intersectionality is a framework that considers the many identities that individuals have and how these affect various levels of power and privilege. \underline{T} F

3) Intersectionality only considers physical characteristics such as race and sex. T \underline{F}

4) Intersectionality does not typically consider religion or class to be important aspects of identity. T \underline{F}

5) Intersectionality considers categories such as gender, sex, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, caste, religion, physical appearance, weight, height, and disability to be important aspects of identity that overlap \underline{T}

F

• Feedback:

- 1) Was the training program engaging?
- 2) Did the training program accommodate your own learning style?
- 3) Did you feel comfortable communicating with the instructor?
- 4) What was the biggest strength of the training program?
- 5) What was the biggest weakness of the training program?
- 6) What would you change about this training program?
- 7) What would you change about the instructor?

8) Do you have any other thoughts, suggestions, criticisms or advice for the instructor?

• Directions:

- Introduction with PowerPoint Slides
 - The instructor should briefly introduce themselves to the participants and explain the goal of this training program in Diversity is to help teachers address the needs of all students by creating an inclusive classroom environment. Module 1 will cover the topic of becoming aware of our own biases. This is an important first step to embracing diversity and creating an inclusive classroom for the benefit of all students.
 - The instructor will go through each slide with the participants. Handouts of the slides, clipboards, and a writing utensil should also be given to each trainee individually so they can follow along and make notes if they desire. The instructor should be sure to respectfully pass out all handouts and materials throughout the program to each participant individually to communicate respect and convey the seriousness of the course material. The majority of the slides are definitions of important terms related to diversity that this program will be addressing. The instructor must communicate to trainees that each of these terms are important to understand in order to acknowledge and identify our own biases.
 - The instructor will read each slide aloud to the trainees. Ask participants to write down personal examples of each slide that they have experienced either in the classroom or in other situations. Then ask the class for an example to be shared aloud. If the group is not talkative, the instructor should offer an example

themselves to ensure the group is understanding how to relate each term discussed to real life situations.

Activities:

- Introduce activities as active learning experiences meant to assist learners in understanding diversity and the experiences of others. Participating in these activities will help trainees to begin thinking about their own cultural identities as well as those of others. Emphasize that teachers can also use these activities in their own classrooms to help their students become aware of their own biases and the importance of embracing diversity.
- Depending on the personality of group members and how much they are participating, instructors may want to hand out pieces of notebook paper to each trainee and instruct them to write down their answers to questions asked during the activities. Many questions will already be printed on handouts throughout this program, but there will also be questions the instructor should ask during activities. Typically these questions are asked casually during activities and at least a few trainees volunteer to answer verbally. However, if the trainer feels there is not enough group participation, requiring trainees to write their answers instead of speaking aloud will help them to feel more comfortable and ultimately make their learning more productive.
- ♦ If the group is quiet and not comfortable actively participating, the instructor can ask questions aloud, allow time for students to write their responses and then the instructor can volunteer their own opinions. Continuing to ask the questions to the group, even if there are not many participating, will still help trainees to think about

these questions. The instructor offering their own answers to questions may also encourage apprehensive trainees to respond.

• The Name Game:

- Ask students to help position chairs in a large circle and have everyone take a seat.
- Next, give two index cards to each trainee.
- Instruct trainees to write their name on the front of one of the index cards.
- On the back of the same index card, have participants write information that they know about their name. Instruct them to write the meaning, cultural significance, and to describe whether they think their name is suitable to their personality. Also allow students to write any other information that they think is important about their name. Then have trainees write three facts about themselves that they feel are most important but are also comfortable sharing with others.
- Next, have participants pass their index card to the person sitting to their left.
 Tell trainees to take note of the name on the front of the index card but not to look on the back yet.
- Positioning students in a circle will allow them to easily view the person whose index card they are holding. This is important to the activity as participants should see the individual whose name they are reading about to better replicate the experience of first impressions that we encounter on a daily basis when meeting new people.

- As index cards are being passed, ask trainees to mentally acknowledge their first impressions of the person sitting next to them (whose index card they now possess).
- Next, on the second index card that is currently blank, have participants write a few of their first impressions of the person sitting next to them as well as additional impressions they had when reading that person's name.
- Now, have participants flip the other person's index card and read the information they wrote about their name and their three facts.
- Ask trainees to acknowledge any similarities or differences in their first impressions that they wrote down verses the information provided by the owner of the first index card.
- Emphasize that this exercise is meant to help us become aware of our own implicit biases. Stress that first impressions are not only formed based on physical appearances and demeanor but also by our names. Note the information we learned about the other person's name and think about whether we expected the information we learned or if it was a surprise to us. Mention that everyone has biases and that is okay. However, it is important to be aware of our biases so that we can be mindful of how our own actions brought about by these biases may be affecting others.
- If the instructor feels comfortable with their group, ask students to share their experience with the game. Did they notice significant differences between their first impressions and the reality of the person depicted on the index card? Did the activity spark any recognition or parallels to real life experiences either

inside or out of the classroom? Some trainees may be uncomfortable with this exercise and may not want to discuss the activity further. If this seems to be the case, skip the questions and discussion for this activity. Simply experiencing their own impressions privately will still be helpful to the majority of students.

• The Story Game:

- In preparation for this activity, the instructor should cut "The Story Game" handouts in half, separating the Spanish and English paragraphs from one another. If Spanish is not an appropriate language for the group, a different story and language may be used. As long as the language is expected to be foreign to most of the participants, it will be suitable for this activity. Also ensure that stories are socially appropriate and do not touch on uncomfortable or offensive topics.
- Pass the Spanish (or preferable foreign language of the trainer's choice) half of the handout to each participant.
- Explain to trainees that the text in front of them is part of a story.
- Instruct trainees to do their best to read the story on their own.
- Next, tell trainees to attempt to write the next part of the story in the original (foreign) language on their own underneath the text on the handout provided.
- Remind trainees that they have the option to refuse to write anything. However, if they do not try they will fail the activity.
- After a few minutes, when it is apparent all students are done writing, ask for volunteers to share aloud what they have written.

- It is expected that most participants will either fail or struggle with this activity. If there are learners who are successful, ask them how they were able to accomplish the assignment.
- If those who are successful reveal that they know how to speak the language of the story, ask them if they felt this knowledge helped them to successfully complete the activity.
- Ask the rest of the group who was not able to complete the activity if they feel it is fair that they failed the activity while those who knew the language passed.
- Next, pass out "The Story Game Follow-Up Questions" handout and ask trainees to write their responses underneath the questions. Give participants plenty of time to thoroughly write their answers before moving on.
- Go over each question with trainees. Read the question aloud and ask for their thoughts. If there is no participation, the instructor should offer their own honest thoughts about each question to encourage critical thinking and contemplation.
- Next, pass out the other half of the handout (the half in English) to the trainees. Ask them to read the paragraph and take note of any revelations or emotions they are experiencing. Does the story make more sense now that they are seeing it in a language they are more comfortable with?
- Ask students to finish writing the next part of the story either in English or the language they are most comfortable with.

- When participants are finished writing, ask them to think about the contrasts between their experience with the assignment in the foreign language versus English. Possible questions include:
 - Was the assignment easier to complete?
 - How did your emotions change when you were able to read the story in English?
 - Would you have continued to struggle with this assignment if you had still been required to write the rest of the story in the original (foreign language) even while being able to read the English version side by side?
- Next, explain the purpose of the assignment and relate the experience of this activity to that of speakers of foreign languages. Emphasize that students in classroom environments who do not speak the dominant language of a school experience the same emotions, stresses, and fears that the trainees experienced for this activity. However, students' experiences in a real-life school environment are even more uncertain and stressful as their grades, well-being, and future are directly and substantially affected by their academic success.
- Ask participants if this activity has helped them to better understand the struggles of those from other cultures who do not speak the dominant language of their schools.

• The Privilege Game:

■ Introduce the activity as a form of basketball meant to help us contemplate the causes and effects of privilege. Explain that many different factors can affect

the amount of privilege someone has. And privilege can be increased or decreased based on the environment.

- Separate trainees into groups of 10 so there are three groups.
- Set up three "lanes" with a wastebasket at each end.
- Assign each group to a lane.
- The instructor should use colored tape to mark the spots each trainee will stand. This can be done ahead of time or during set up. The use of tape is advised so participants do not forget which spot they are standing on as they retrieve the ball. Marking the floor with tape will also make it easier for participants to switch places during the second half of this activity.
- The instructor should be mindful of where tape is placed. The intention is to set up each of the three lanes so some spots will be easier to throw a ball into the wastebasket than others. Try to place some trainees in front of others so their view is obstructed. Also, place some tape directly in front of the basket while other tape will be placed at angles.
- It is advised to use at least three small balls for this activity, such as a tennis ball or a stress ball. Each lane (group) will share one ball. More balls can be used if desired but only using three will cut costs while also allowing each group to complete the activity at the same time.
- Explain to trainees that they will be standing on a piece of tape and taking turns throwing the ball into the wastebasket. After they throw their ball they should retrieve it, hand it to the next person, and then return to their original spot marked with tape.

- The trainer can either assign each person to a piece of tape or instruct trainees to simply choose a spot to stand on for convenience.
- After everyone has had an opportunity to throw the ball, have participants pick a different piece of tape to stand on and complete the activity again.
- Ask participants to compare their experiences. Did they notice a difference in the ease of making a basket between the two trials? Ask them to think about their position and how this affected the outcome of their shot. What other factors impacted their success? Did they have to struggle to see the wastebasket? Was their experience affected by the other people in their group? For example, was someone taller placed in front of them obstructing their view? Would their experience have been different had they been put behind a shorter person?
- The purpose of this activity is to help trainees think about the many factors of privilege. It is important to be mindful of differences and social dynamics that occur based on the culture of the environment which can influence the advantages or disadvantages that people experience. Having teachers who are aware of the reality of privilege will increase chances of developing meaningful relationships with students and will assist teachers in looking deeper into any behavioral or academic problems a student may be having. Striving for awareness and understanding of how these differences may affect privilege is a necessary skill for creating an inclusive classroom. Discuss these issues with trainees at the end of the activity.

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- Ask trainees for examples in the school environment that they have either witnessed themselves, heard, or read about from others. The instructor can also offer their own examples.
- Possible examples: Disability related issues in which a student is not properly accommodated and suffers either socially or academically, culture related issues such as when a student does not feel comfortable completing certain assignments due to their religious beliefs, race or ethnicity related issues such as when certain groups are not offered the same educational opportunities as other groups. Other examples could include physical appearance, sexuality, gender identity, language, economic status and instances of bias which result in teachers or administration not properly supporting or accommodating students who are struggling. For example, simply placing blame on the student and considering their issue purely behavioral instead of looking at other cultural or social factors that could be influencing the situation.

• Case Study:

- Pass the "Case Study" handout to each trainee.
- Read the case study aloud to the class.
- Next, pass out the "Case Study Questions" handout to each trainee.
- Instruct students to write their thoughts to each question on the handout provided.
- When trainees are finished writing, read each question aloud and ask for volunteers to read their answers aloud and share their thoughts.

If the group is quiet, the instructor should offer their own thoughts about each question and explain reasoning.

• Lunch Break

• Quizzes:

- Introduce quiz as quick activity to help trainees think about the meaning and importance of three important terms: Stereotypes, Microaggressions, and Intersectionality.
- Learning about each of these terms will assist teachers in creating an inclusive classroom environment by helping them to be aware of implicit bias and think about any biases they may possess. Understanding and discussing these terms will also help trainees to think about the implications of bias such as how it affects others and what social factors contribute to a person's experiences.
- Pass out "Stereotype Quiz" handout, "Microaggressions Quiz" handout, and "Intersectionality Quiz" handout (ensure answers are not underlined)
- Assign trainees to a partner and have each group of two complete the quiz together. Instruct them to use the blank space below each question to write their reasoning for their answers. Encourage participants to discuss each question with each other and offer their thoughts before writing their explanations.
- When trainees have finished, go over each question with them. Tell them the correct answer and clarify why the answer is correct.
- Ask for each group to share their thoughts such as what they had written, discussed with each other or their thoughts on any confusions they may have had such as if they

originally had given an incorrect answer. For this part of the assignment, require each group to share their opinions on one of the questions aloud. There are 15 questions between the three quizzes so each group will be able to answer one question. This part of the assignment is meant to encourage participation and communication. Requiring trainees to have a partner will hopefully ease any discomfort they may have of speaking aloud on these subjects as they would have previously been able to discuss their answers one on one with a partner and will be talking to the class as a unit instead of individually.

• Feedback:

- Thank trainees for being here today and ask them to fill out the "Feedback" handout. The instructor should communicate that they would appreciate honest feedback as this will help them make necessary adjustments so that the program can improve and be of better help to both teachers and their students. Ensure trainees that you will not be offended by any criticisms and truly appreciate the time spent with the trainees today.
- Pass out the "Feedback" handout to each trainee.
- When they are finished, collect all "Feedback" handouts.

• Q&A and Open Discussion:

Offer to answer and discuss any questions, concerns, objections, opinions, or insights trainees may have. Giving trainees designated time to voice anything on their mind will be helpful to some individuals. This will give trainees the opportunity to lead the conversation. Listen attentively and genuinely engage in discussion. Do not be afraid to

stay quiet and simply let participants discuss among themselves if they desire. If a specific question is posed to the instructor, the instructor should answer but also be sure to be open minded and listen to trainees' opinions.