



Beyond a Single Story

Grade 7-12 Workshop





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Workshop Outline

Purpose

In this activity, students will explore the ways that intersecting identities can affect a person's reality and quality of life. By considering the diverse viewpoints within a community, students will gain an understanding of the complexities of analyzing a community's challenges and strengths.

Estimated Time Required

90 minutes

Outcomes: Alberta Program of Studies

This activity helps achieve Outcomes of Learning as described in Alberta Education's *Guiding Framework for the Design and Development of Kindergarten to Grade 12 Provincial Curriculum (Dec 2020)*.

Knowledge Development

- Approach the world with intellectual curiosity and humility.
- Engage new ideas and diverse viewpoints.
- Question assumptions and evaluate sources of information with discernment.

Character Development

- Exercise compassion and empathy when analyzing a diverse society.

Community Engagement

- Understand the needs, beliefs, and expectations of diverse communities.
- Identify connections that transcend differences.

Competencies: Alberta Program of Studies

This activity supports the development of the following competencies:

Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking:

- Considering the complexities involved in attempting to identify the needs of another community and its diverse members.

Decision Making and Problem Solving

- Considering diverse viewpoints when making community decisions.
- Analyzing the successes and shortcomings of responses to community challenges.

Support Materials

- Community Information Sheet
- Profile Cards
- Organization Response
- Discussion Guide

Community Case Studies

The Community Case Studies provided in this activity were created in partnership with the organizations and their international partners. Some individual Profile Cards are based on real community members and some are fictional, but the challenges the communities face are all real. Each organization has developed the Community Information Sheet, Profile Cards, and Organization Response based on their many years of experience working in solidarity with communities facing the challenges outlined.

Qabi Bay, Afghanistan | Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan | www.cw4wafghan.ca

Years of conflict and war in Afghanistan has meant that Afghan people, especially women and girls, are often not free to live their lives, work, or attend school. Many parents in Qabi Bay are reluctant to send their daughters to school.

Rampur, India | Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology | www.cawst.org

Many community members suffer from water-borne and water-washed illnesses due to unsafe water and sanitation. Sickness results in medical bills and reduced work time, leading to economic poverty for many families.

San Andrés, Nicaragua | Change for Children Association | www.changeforchildren.org

Due to responsibilities within the family, many children do not continue their studies past grade 6. Girls are even less likely to continue to junior high.

Hamburg, South Africa | Keiskamma Canada Foundation | www.keiskammaCanada.com

The village of Hamburg has extremely high rates of HIV/AIDS. For those living with HIV/AIDS, and experiencing poverty, managing their health can be very challenging.

Sigilai Village, Kenya | Operation Eyesight Universal | www.operationeyesight.com

High rates of preventable eyesight loss and vision impairment exist in Sigilai Village. Vision impairment seriously affects childrens' progress in school and adults' ability to earn a living.

Note

This activity is focused on using a strength-based model rather than a deficit model when reflecting on communities. Though these communities face challenges, they also have abilities, capacities, and cultural practices that are worthy of deep admiration. Furthermore, discussions should extend to the root causes of community challenges, rather than framing challenges as isolated issues in the control of community members. Every effort should be made to remind students that, though they may do their best to extend their understanding and empathy, they will likely never know what it is truly like living in these same life situations.

Set-Up

Choose a *Community Case Study* and print out its corresponding materials.

Split students into small groups of 5 or 6, depending on the number of *Profile Cards* for the case study.

Print out enough materials so that each small group will eventually receive: 1 *Discussion Guide*, 1

Community Information Sheet, 5-6 *Profile Cards*, 1 *Organization Response*.

Cut the *Profile Cards* in order to hand out individual profiles later.

Follow the instructions below to find out when to hand out each material.

Pre-Activity Discussion

Hand out the **Discussion Guide** (page 7 of this guide).

Ask students to work individually and write down the answers to the following questions based on their own lived experience. Ask students to compare and discuss their answers with their small group.

1. Optional: Write a list of what makes you happy.
 - a. Write a list of what makes you unhappy.
 - b. Circle any answers on both lists that are dependent on other people or the availability of certain services offered by your community.
2. Write a list of what your community offers that makes your life better.
3. Write a list of what your community lacks that could make your life better.
4. Compare your answers to those in your group. Are they the same or different? Why are your answers different than others?

Activity

Hand out **Community Information Sheet** and **Profile Cards** to each small group. Each member of the small group should receive a different individual *Profile Card*.

Ask students to read their *Profile Card* and summarize it to the small group.

Ask small groups to read the *Community Information Sheet*, while keeping the perspective of their *Profile Card* in mind.

Ask students to discuss the following questions in their small groups.

1. What opportunities are available in the community?
 - a. Are these opportunities available to everyone? Why / Why not?
2. How do women and girls experience life in this community?
 - a. Is there a difference in their lives compared to boys' and men's lives?
 - b. Optional: How do LGBTQ2SS+ folks experience life in this community?
3. What are the primary challenges facing the community?
 - a. Are these challenges faced by everyone? Why / Why not?
4. What might help to improve the lives of those in the community?

Hand out the **Organization Response** to each small group.

Ask small groups to read the *Organization Response*, then answer the following questions.

1. What was the organization's response?
2. How do you think the response might affect the life of the person in your profile card?
 - a. Are there ways you would change the response to better support the person in your profile card?

Debrief

Discuss the following questions as a large group.

1. How did considering the person in your profile card affect the way you answered questions?
2. In what ways is this community similar to your own?

Extension Activity

Estimated Time Required: 45 minutes

Before beginning the activity, watch *The Danger of a Single Story*, 18-minute Ted Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en

Ask students to answer the following questions.

1. What could be the issues of portraying one single story of a community?
2. What are some of the different stories of your community?
3. Do you feel like you know multiple stories of the community we're talking about today?

Discussion Guide

Pre-Activity Discussion

Work individually and write down the answers to the following questions based on your own lived experience. Then, compare and discuss the answers with your group.

1. Optional: Write a list of what makes you happy.
 - a. Write a list of what makes you unhappy.
 - b. Circle any answers that are dependent on other people or the availability of certain services offered by your community.
2. Write a list of what your community offers that makes your life better.
3. Write a list of what your community lacks that could make your life better.
4. Compare your answers to those in your group. Are they the same or different? Why are your answers different than others?

Activity

Choose a Profile Card. Read your Profile Card independently, then summarize it for your group. Next, read the Community Information Sheet, independently or as a group. Keep the perspective of your Profile Card in mind as you read about the community. After reading the Community Information Sheet, discuss the following questions in your group.

Discuss:

1. What opportunities are available in the community?
 - a. Are these opportunities available to everyone? Why / Why not?
2. How do women and girls experience life in this community?
 - a. Is there a difference in their lives compared to boys' and men's lives?
 - b. Optional: How do LGBTQ2SS+ folks experience life in this community?
3. What are the primary challenges facing the community?
 - a. Are these challenges faced by everyone? Why / Why not?
4. What might help to improve the lives of those in the community?

Read the Organization Response and discuss the following questions in your group.

Discuss:

1. What was the organization's response?
2. How do you think the response might affect the life of the person in your profile card?
3. Are there ways you would change the response to better support the person in your profile card?

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Workshop Outline

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Additional Resources

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