



Teaching Students About Diversity and Bias

The student activity flows the same as you did it at the start of the lesson. First, give each student the graphic organizer and have them start to think about their own biases. However, to be most effective, have students flush out their reactions to each scenario before you teach them the forms of bias. If you are doing this with younger students, you may want to use biases that are age appropriate. For example, young girls and boys tend to be biased against each other, having an open discussion of why is key to helping them eliminate such biases. For older students, you can push the envelope and talk about biases against sexual orientation, appearance, race etc. You can use the graphic organizer to help structure the activity.

For part 1, the feeling bank and adjective bank have been left blank. Fill in your own set of adjectives and feelings that are most appropriate for your students. The scenario column has also been left blank to save the sentence starter. Just as with the other banks, create your own scenarios that you feel are most appropriate for your students.

For part 2, a scenario will be given. You can fill in the different student choices based on what you feel would be most appropriate for your students.

Part 1

Directions: Below are two-word banks, one with adjectives and one with actions. In the scenarios below, choose at least three to five adjectives to fill in the blank. Then, write how you would feel based on the list of provided feelings for the time being, ignore the third column My bias is _____. Be honest in this activity and I challenge you to choose the adjectives that make you the most uncomfortable and think about how you would feel in each situation as if you were there.

Adjective Bank	Feelings Bank	
Scenario	I would feel:	My bias is:
A _____ boy _____ _____		
A _____ girl _____ _____		



A _____ boy _____ _____		
A _____ girl _____ _____		

Part 2

Directions: read each scenario and choose the option you would feel most comfortable with. In the choice column write your choice from the list provided. Ignore the third column for now.

Scenario	Choice	My bias is:
<p><i>You go to lunch, there are four new students who are sitting alone. who would you invite to sit with you and your friends?</i></p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>		



<p><i>You walk into the classroom; you don't know anyone. All of the tables have people sitting in them and there is one chair open at each table. Which table do you choose?</i></p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>		
<p><i>You are the last into the school assembly, there are four seats open, which one do you choose?</i></p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>		
<p><i>You can choose between four teachers, who do you choose?</i></p> <p>1</p>		



2		
3		
4		

Next, discuss with students each kind of bias and have them create a vocabulary sheet to help them remember each kind. As you discuss each form of bias, give students plenty of examples of each form so that they have a strong understanding of how each works in the real world. It is important that students write their own definition. This does not mean they make one up, but this means that they put it in words that are meaningful to them. Then, have them develop an example from their own life, either a bias they have or a bias they have experienced or seen.

Word	My Definition	Example from my life
Implicit Bias		
Explicit bias		
Confirmation bias		
Actor-observer bias		
Anchor bias		
The halo effect		
Availability heuristic		



Part 3.

For part 3, have students identify in the 3rd column of each graphic organizer the kind of bias that is directing their thinking. This is a challenging task so you may want to group students together so they can discuss each kind of bias and how it may be impacting their decision. Once they have identified and written down the kind of bias that is impacting them, give each student 2 highlighters. Have them designate one as implicit and one as explicit. Then, have them highlight which of their biases they feel are implicit and explicit.

As a wrap up, discuss with students what they can do to change their mindset and combat their bias. You can have them reflect in a journal for this or have them write ideas on a sticky note and post them on the bulletin board. The key, however, is that once the biases have been brought into the open, it is time to brainstorm ways to diminish their impact on how the student sees the world. Doing so will help the student to also start to become culturally responsive.