



Agricultural Sciences
Education and Communication

National FFA Organization

Lesson 3

Understanding Being “The Other”

Learning Objectives

As a result of this lesson, the learner will . . .

1. Define the term “the other”.
2. Explore the emotions resulting from being the other.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of being the other.

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Tools and Equipment

Computer, Projector, Student laptops, Paper, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and YouTube.

References

National FFA Organization. (2004). BLAST-OFF training: Building relationships. Indianapolis, IN: Author.

Talbert, B. A., Croom, B., LaRose, S. E., Vaughn, R., & Lee, J. S. (2022). Foundations of agricultural education (4th edition). Purdue University Press.

Interest Approach

Students who are members of the majority group seldom realize the privileges that result from being a majority member. This exercise helps them realize those privileges and prepares them to experience things through the eyes of someone from a different group.

- This exercise is best done with the students in pairs or groups or as a whole class.
- Have students developed a list of privileges that result from being a part of the majority group.
- Examples for the list include seeing people who look like yourself in all occupations and salary ranges, seeing people like yourself on media, going to a store and not being followed, not being looked at suspiciously if you are on the street with friends, and having people like yourself spoken about in positive terms.
- Debrief the lists at the end of the exercise.

We will do an exercise to explore how people in the majority typically have privileges in society that they do not even realize they have. Please develop a list of happenings, images, etc., that show privilege for the majority. For example, if someone from the majority is accepted to a prestigious college, no one wonders if they got accepted because of affirmative action. Another example is that it is easier for White males to believe they can grow up and be the United States President because most U.S. presidents have been White males. It will be engaging in 20 years to see if this changes due to Barack Obama's election as President and Kamala Harris' election as Vice President.

This exercise has helped you to realize that just by being in the majority, those people have certain privileges whether they earned them or not. This lesson will help you explore what it is like to be "the other."

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Methods/Content

Objective 1

Define the term “the other”.

The other is defined as someone different from the majority. The majority can be the numerically larger group and/or the group with the most power and privilege. This person may differ in race, ethnicity, disability status, gender, socio-economic class, and other observable or unobservable characteristics. People who are not “the other” treat “others” differently. This treatment is often unintentional or unconscious, but just the same, it is hurtful. The best way to gain empathy for “others” and learn to confront discrimination and injustice is to simulate being the other. This will be accomplished in Objective 2.

Objective 2

Explore the emotions resulting from being the other.

The following activities will help students get a sense of being the other.

- Have a group of high school seniors go to a car mechanic or tire shop and ask to have the car serviced. Upon returning, students can compare the price they were quoted and the way they were treated. Expected differences are that females will get higher prices and be treated differently, people of color will be treated differently, and people dressed poorly will be treated differently.
- Have students dress in different ways, such as some in nice clothes, some in shabby clothing, some in alternative-style clothing, etc. Have the students go to a “big box” store such as Target or Best Buy, a clothing store, or another retail store. Upon returning, students can compare how store personnel, security, and other store patrons treated them.
- Students can go to a public location and use a device such as a wheelchair. Upon returning, they can compare how easy it was to get around and how they were treated.
- Have students construct posters on “Americans.” Students will need to research demographics of the U.S., such as age, race/ethnicity, gender, rural/urban, and other characteristics. The U.S. Census Bureau website at <https://www.census.gov> will be helpful. Students can then construct posters depicting the diversity in the U.S. by states, geographic regions, or other areas as appropriate.

Objective 3

Demonstrate an understanding of being the other.

The activities in Objective 2 can be used as discussion starters for exploring how people from different groups are treated in the U.S.

Now that we have experienced what it is like to be the other, we will discuss the implications of this.

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The following discussion should help facilitate student dialogue.

- What are the implications for an individual or family when paying more for items such as automobiles or housing? Possible answers include less money for other items, less wealth accumulation (savings, home equity, investments, etc.), lost opportunities, and an attitude of hopelessness or frustration.
- Students can explore various ways in which equality and equal treatment have been implemented. Examples include the Fair Housing Act (The Fair Housing Act (<https://www.justice.gov/>), Equal Employment Opportunity (<https://www.eeoc.gov/>), Affirmative Action (<https://www.aaed.org/>), and possibly state or local policies or statements such as non-discrimination statement.
- Students can discuss why and how clothing and accessories influence your treatment. Topics could include style of clothing, style of hair, religious items/symbols, professionalism/dressiness (especially for job interviews), condition of clothing (worn, torn, or dirty), jewelry, piercings, and tattoos. Students should also discuss how people experiencing homelessness (<https://nationalhomeless.org/>) are treated.
- Students can research and discuss how those with disabilities (<https://www.usa.gov/disability-rights>) (<http://www.aamr.org>) are treated and what policies, laws, etc. are in place.

Conclusion of Lesson 3

Agricultural Education and students in Agricultural Education should promote diversity and work for equality and justice.

An e-Moment from the LifeKnowledge curriculum could be used here to emphasize what it is like to be the other and what happens when the majority treats others discriminatorily or with injustice. Here is the URL: e-moments Archives | National FFA Organization: https://www.ffa.org/resource_tag/e-moments/. This book has more on e-Moments.

Reardon, M., & Derner, S. (2009). Strategies for excellent teaching: Maximize learning moments. Prufrock Press.

A Bob the Weather Guy Moment may work well here.

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