

WHAT DOES 'DISCRIMINATION' FEEL LIKE?

Fold a piece of paper down the middle. On one side, write about a time you were treated unfairly. Describe how you felt and how you wanted to act. On the other side, tell about a time you or your friends treated someone unfairly. Why did you do this? How did you feel? How do you think the other person felt?

Discrimination is more than treating someone meanly or unfairly. The treatment has to be tied to a quality the targeted person cannot control. Look at the definition of discrimination. Was the way you were treated, or the way you treated someone, discrimination?

ARE YOU 'PREJUDICED'?

Designate one side of the room as "Agree" and the other side as "Disagree." Have your teacher read each of the following statements. After each one, have every student move to the side of the room that is closest to how they feel. There are no right or wrong answers. Sometimes you will have to pick a side even if you don't completely agree or disagree with the statement.

- Boys are smarter than girls.
- Old people are grumpy.
- Poor people just do not want to work.
- Women care about their appearance more than men do.
- Healthy children should not go to school with handi-



Old people: Grumpy?



Japanese: Smart?



Jocks: Dumb?



Racists: Only whites?

capped children.

- Jocks are dumb.
- Japanese people are smart.
- All people deserve a safe place to live.
- It's better to be rich than poor.
- Racists are always white.

Note that the groups are constantly changing. Does everyone ever agree on something? Where is the greatest difference of opinion?

DEIVERSITY OF HOLIDAYS

Pick three holidays from different cultures—like Kwanzaa (African American), Chinese New Year and Divali (the Hindu Festival of Lights).

Talk to classmates who celebrate these holidays and do some research in the library. Then make a list of how the holidays are different from each other. Differences may range from decorations to gifts, from length of holiday to what each celebrates.

Now, find some similarities in each of the three holidays, and list those. Some similarities might be that families get together, with traditional foods. There might be no gifts, or lots of gifts, or that everyone lights candles. See what you can find.

Last, compare these three holidays to *your* favorite holiday. What are some differences? What are some similarities?

DEFINITIONS

1. Prejudice —A feeling for or against something without any good reason. For instance, if you believe that a certain group of people is inferior because of their religion, gender, physical characteristics or race, and you don't really know anything about them, then you are prejudiced against them.
2. Tolerance —Recognizing and respecting the beliefs and practices of others.
3. Discrimination—Treating someone badly or unfairly because of the person's race, age, sex or handicap.
4. Immigration—Moving permanently into a country where you and your family were not born and living in that country permanently.
5. Melting Pot—Term often used to describe a place, like America, where people of different cultures, races and social groups come to live and work together. Today's interest in diversity has made the term somewhat out of date. Instead of melting or blending together totally, different groups seek to keep their identities as they blend with other groups. America today is more like a quilt or a salad—each item recognized while being part of something bigger.
6. Assimilation—When different cultural traditions blend until they are all very similar.
7. Multicultural—Relating to, or designed for, different cultures.
8. Affirmative Action—A government policy for creating special opportunities in jobs or education for people who might otherwise suffer from discrimination.
9. Stereotypes—An opinion you form about ALL people in a group, based on things you have heard about SOME people in that category.