

Social Justice

Workshop 3B | Wednesday, May 30 St. Peter's: 10:00-11:00am | Louisiana Gov. School: 2:00-3:00pm

Objective

In this session, we will begin to apply our perspectives of self and community in much more real and tangible ways. The intention of the opening group activity is to encourage the students' attention to specificity and detail in stories that someone might be sharing or in a reality that they themselves are experiencing. The icebreaker will warm the students up in their skills for "paying attention." This will serve them in deducing the problems at hand in the skit series, "Is THIS Right?" Through the Bonners' devised skits that reenact a multitude of social injustices, students will be asked denote "what is wrong" in each scenario and to brainstorm a possible solution to the conflict. Ultimately, our aim is to prime the Belizean students' perception of inequities and their articulation of solutions for ending the problems at their source.

After this workshop, the students and facilitators will:

- confront societal stereotypes in a very real (but safe) and "make-believe" space
- be poised to recognize "injustice" in common, everyday situations
- begin to brainstorm ways for deconstructing the roots of social injustices

Credits

-- The "Two Truths and a Lie" activity included in this session has been adapted and modified from *Amigos de Las Americas: 2011 Program Guide* for our purposes in Belize. This resource was written by the administrative staff of this international, non-profit, non-governmental, cultural exchange and student leadership immersion organization.

-- The "Is THIS Right?" activity and handout included in this session originate from my own conception of what a useful facilitation on Social Justice might look like for our purposes in Belize.

Materials

- "Is THIS Right?" Skit Series and Conversation Handout (attached)

How to Prepare

In addition to including this workshop in the agenda of the "Belizean Curriculum Review" discussion, facilitators should prepare by devising three different skits that "problematize" the daily routine. These skits must be able to be accomplished by a group of 3-4 people and should touch on various scenarios. For example, "a person who speaks only Spanish is confronted by an intolerant and ignorant store owner that speaks English only" (language barriers) or "a woman enters a sporting goods store and a group of men make crude and degrading comments about her "being in the wrong place"" (gender constructions). Also, facilitators should decide among them who will lead the opening icebreaker.

Brief Outline

The agenda of this one-hour workshop is as follows:

1. “Two Truths and a Lie” Icebreaker | 20 minutes
2. “Is THIS Right?” Skit Series & Conversation | 30 minutes

Facilitator Guidelines

1. “Two Truths and a Lie” Icebreaker | 20 minutes

After the mid-time snack, everyone should return to the circle of desks/chairs to begin this activity. The Bonner facilitating this activity should give the following instructions:

1. “In this activity, one person must stand up and tell us two things that are true about themselves and one thing that is false. You can put these things in any order and it is our job to guess which of these three things is false. Once we guess the correct thing in your list, you may sit down and we will all give that person a round of applause.”

Here, the Bonner facilitator may want to give an example and have the other Bonners play along in order to show the Belizean students how to play.

Once everyone who wants a turn has played, or after twenty minutes has elapsed, the students should give a final applause for all the participants and then be instructed to move their chairs into a semi-circle.

The space on the inside of the semi-circle will be used as the “stage” for the next exercise.

2. “Is THIS Right?” Skit Series and Conversation | 30 minutes

The facilitation of this section is a group effort made by all of the Bonners in the classroom. The flow for the program should go as follows:

1. One Bonner should be responsible for connecting (with a brief talk) our study of diversity and life stories to today’s goal of protecting the value of difference. Explain that part of social justice is having an awareness of inequity in the communities of which we live—our families, our classrooms, and our towns. Explain that, “While we know it is important to be part of a team of different people that look and think differently than we do, sometimes there are times when we forget that our lives are all connected and a part of the same flowing river.” Explain that the next three scenes we Bonners pull act out for you students are examples of when people treat others disrespectfully and forget to celebrate one another’s River Stories and Identity Circles.”
2. After this brief introduction, a Bonner should distribute the handout that accompanies this activity to the Belizean students. Explain to the students that while they watch the skit, they should be thinking about what the problem is, and, how it might be fixed.

They can follow along with their responses to these skits via the handout.

3. To begin the cycle of the skits and conversations, introduce the title of the first skit (something that might clue the students in on what the problem might be), and proceed to act the skit out. This performance should take no longer than five minutes. After the skit is over, turn to the student audience and ask if anyone was able to identify the problem in the scenario the Bonners just acted out.

Help the students reach the conclusion if they seem to be having trouble.

4. After the students have answered the first question, go on to brainstorm as a group what possible solutions for fixing this problem might be.

Again, coach the students in conversation if they seem “stumped.”

This conversation as a whole is also brief and should take no longer than five minutes.

5. After conclusions and possible solutions have been drawn, continue with the second and third skits in the same fashion—alternating skit, conversation, skit, conversation, just like before.

After the students have finished processing the three scenarios with the Bonners, it will be time to return them to their seats in order to continue work on their “Build Yourself, Build Belize” handouts. As the Bonners distribute the worksheets back to the students, explain to them that they will have half of an hour to make additions to their path to a vision for their community’s future.

Encourage the students to make iconic additions to these worksheets that symbolize what they have learned in the two most recent sessions (Community Building and Social Justice). Bonners can briefly demonstrate how to make the additions before they take a passive role in the space and allow the students to work on their own.

“Is THIS Right?” Skit Series and Conversation

Skit #1:

Where is the inequality?
(what is the problem?)

How could this be fixed?
(*identify root of issue*)

Skit #2:

Where is the inequality?
(what is the problem?)

How could this be fixed?
(*identify root of issue*)

Skit #3:

Where is the inequality?
(what is the problem?)

How could this be fixed?
(*identify root of issue*)
