If You Asked Me What Race I Was, I Would Ask You What Year?

Final PowerPoint

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The NEA Strategic Goal and NEA Organizational Priority this session addresses:

- NEA Strategic Goal
  - Empowered Educators for Successful Students

- NEA Organizational Priority
  - Institutional Racism/Racial Justice in Education
COMPETENCY: ADVOCACY

- NEA Leadership Competency progression level(s)
  Level 1: Foundational and Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building

- NEA Leadership Competency themes
  Interprets and acts on social justice initiatives
Introductions:

In 30 seconds, introduce yourself and share:

- Your Name
- Your State Association
- The type of work you do and
- Why you chose this workshop?
Workshop Learning Outcomes

Workshop participants will:

- explain how concepts of race are created and changed over historical periods
- distinguish between “race” and “phenotype”
- employ an identity activity, which will enhance their interactions with their students
How to Talk About Sensitive Topics so That People Will Listen
Four Rules to Guide our Dialogue

The four agreements: A practical guide to personal freedom by Miguel Ruiz

1. Be Impeccable with Your Word

Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love.
Four Rules to Guide our Dialogue

2. Don't Take Anything Personally

Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own dream. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering.
Four Rules to Guide our Dialogue

3. Don't Make Assumptions

Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness, and drama. With just this one agreement, you can completely transform your life.
Four Rules to Guide our Dialogue

4. Always Do Your Best

Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse, and regret.
Let’s begin with a one minute Serial Testimony:

• Where do you get your information about individuals and groups related to “race”?
• How do you process the information you have obtained from these sources?
• Is your understanding of “race” informed by your own experiences or world view?
• What narratives on “race” would you share with us today?
What Serial Testimony Looks Like:

• It requires participants to speak for themselves.
• Participants speak about their own experiences, rather than their opinions.
• It prevents single individuals’ views from becoming the focus of discussion.
• It brings each person into the conversation, if they wish.
• It establishes a predictable order for people to speak in.
• It provides the opportunity for everyone in a group to hear a wide variety of perspectives in a comparatively short time.
• It allows matter of difference and commonality to be seen side-by-side.
• It prevents disagreement and argument.
• It interferes with familiar pecking orders or patterns of domination and subordination in speaking.
• It respects freely chosen silence.
Race is a socially constructed concept.
Race has no genetic basis.
Race does not exist.

What is Race?
Phenotype Defined:

- Phenotype is a biological construction; a way to describe the physical expression of the genes a person possesses. The phenotype is how genetic and environmental influences come together to create an organism’s physical appearance and behavior.
Phenotype

Physical attributes that make us different.

Eye Color

Skin Color

Hair Color
Human Evolution Sequence
We’re all from Africa

The colored dots are a measure of genetic variation--where you see more color, there is more variation.

Approximately 200,000 years ago
Some people from northeast Africa moved into southwest Asia.
The migrants into southwest Asia came from one part of Africa, and they carried with them only part of the genetic variation found in Africa.
Asia continued

The colored dots are a measure of genetic variation—where you see more color, there is more variation.

The southwest Asian population grew and spread across Europe, Asia and into Australia.
Hello Europe

The colored dots are a measure of genetic variation—where you see more color, there is more variation.

Not much new genetic variation arose, and some was even lost as people spread into far East Asia.
The colored dots are a measure of genetic variation—where you see more color, there is more variation.

What pattern do you see in the variation?
• Shared identity based on shared values, culture, language and sometimes religion.
The Story of Race

• How did the idea of race begin in America?
1680: White appears in Colonial Laws

• Before 1680 early colonial laws refer to Christians or Englishmen, making a distinction of their religion or nationality, rather than the color of their skin.

Around the time of Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, new laws begin to appear to make distinctions of color, for example separating Black slaves from European indentured servants.

http://www.pbs.org/race/003_RaceTimeline/003_01-timeline.htm
The U.S. Constitution mandates that "an actual enumeration" be conducted every 10 years.

- From the beginning, race categories are included, but in 1790, who is Black or white is less important than who is free or enslaved.

http://www.pbs.org/race/003_RaceTimeline/003_01-timeline.htm
1899: Europeans not quite white

- After 1889, immigration to the U.S. from southern and eastern Europe swells dramatically.
  - Many new arrivals are "ethnics" employed in undesirable low-wage jobs and living in the urban ghetto.
  - They are deemed inferior, seen as not fully white.

http://www.pbs.org/race/003_RaceTimeline/003_01-timeline.htm
In 1705, Virginia defines any child, grandchild, or great grandchild of a Negro as a mulatto.

In 1866, the state decrees that every person having one-fourth or more Negro blood shall be deemed a colored person.

- In 1910, the percentage is changed to 1/16th

- Finally in 1924, the Virginia Racial Purity Act defines Black persons as having any trace of African ancestry - the infamous "one-drop" rule

http://www.pbs.org/race/003_RaceTimeline/003_01-timeline.htm
1930: Mexicans Added to Census

- Mexicans, like other minority groups, are defined differently at various times.
- In 1930, nativists lobby to classify them separately on the census, to limit their immigration and reinforce their distinctness from whites.
- During World War II, as demand for Mexican labor grows, Mexicans are again classified as whites.
- In the 1970s, they are reclassified as "Hispanics."

http://www.pbs.org/race/003_RaceTimeline/003_01-timeline.htm
1977: Government defines race/ethnic categories

- The categories are meant to aid agencies, but they are arbitrary, inconsistent, and based on varying assumptions.

- "Black" is defined as a "racial group" but "white" is not.

- "Hispanic" reflects Spanish colonization and excludes non-Spanish parts of Central and South America.

- "American Indian or Alaskan Native" requires "cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition" - a condition of no other category.

- The categories are amended in 1996, and "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander" is added.

http://www.pbs.org/race/003_RaceTimeline/003_01-timeline.htm
The decision is controversial. "Multi-racial" advocates want to be distinct from traditional constituencies.

The public's increased interest reflects the census' changing role since the civil rights movement - from one of exclusion to inclusion.

http://www.pbs.org/race/003_RaceTimeline/003_01-timeline.htm
2010: Census Asked Two Questions About Race & Ethnicity

• First, are you Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?
• Then you were to choose one or more of 15 options that make up five race categories.
2010 Census Questions

☐ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
☐ Yes, Puerto Rican
☐ Yes, Cuban
☐ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin — Print origin, for example: Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on.

What is Person 1’s race? Mark X one or more boxes.

☐ White
☐ Black, African Am., or Negro
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native — Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.

☐ Asian Indian
☐ Japanese
☐ Native Hawaiian
☐ Chinese
☐ Korean
☐ Guamanian or Chamorro
☐ Filipino
☐ Vietnamese
☐ Samoan
☐ Other Asian — Print race, for example: Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.
☐ Other Pacific Islander — Print race, for example: Fijian, Tongan, Samoan, and so on.
10 things everyone should know about “Race”

1. Race is a modern idea

2. Race has no genetic basis

3. Human subspecies don’t exist

4. Skin color really is only skin deep

5. Most variation is within, not between, “races”
6. Slavery predates race

7. Race and freedom evolved together

8. Race justified social inequalities as natural

9. Race isn’t biological, but racism is real

10. Colorblindness will not end racism
How does our knowledge about “race”, ethnicity, and phenotype help us learn about students?
Race as cultural representation

• **Problem:** How do we transform racial differences so as to eliminate their negative effects on the educational experience of our students?
Teachers Are Actors Within and Across Multiple Racial Projects

• “Racial formation is an outcome of the interaction of racial projects on a society wide level” – Omi & Winant (p. 60)

• A teacher is a prominent agent within the social structure who influences cultural representations of race.
“If we are ever to get beyond the issue of racism as an impediment to social justice in our society... we have to be able to talk about it...”
– Beverly Daniel Tatum, author of “Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?”

• What have you become aware of from this presentation, that you were not previously aware of?

• What does it mean to “know your students” in relation to their “race”, ethnicity, and phenotype?
• The way we understand and experience race will continue to change and evolve. 
• Our social structures will change in response. 
• The core problem of race lies in the negative impact it has on the lives of people, and on society as a whole. 
• The solution to that problem lies in the hands of individuals who actively engage to promote equity in the ongoing process of racial formation. 
• Public school teachers can play a particularly critical role in that process. 
• Knowing your students does not mean knowing what “race” they are, it means coming to know their experience of race.
• Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session!
• Please visit the Leadership Development Resources website at www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment