

Racial Profiling Curriculum Guide

Categorized By Topic

Racial profiling has devastating effects, from daily harassment of individuals to unfair treatment on the street, in schools and communities; all the way to illegal imprisonment and murder. Racial profiling not only harms a person's confidence, but harms entire groups and ultimately the sense of justice in a democratic society. It is important that racial profiling is clearly defined so that people become aware of what it is and how it affects their lives and/or the lives of those around them. To end racial profiling, the first step is developing awareness of the issue, followed by reducing prejudice and bias, while building intercultural understanding together with developing and implementing policies to ensure fair treatment of all citizens.

Racial profiling is the suspicion of people based on race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or other immutable characteristics, rather than on evidence-based suspicious behavior. Racial profiling is often paired with potentially negative action. Each of us *can* engage in stereotyping and profiling. However, when those with power and/or authority engage in this behavior, there can be devastating consequences - as we saw in circumstances surrounding the killing of Trayvon Martin. Although profiling is often associated with law enforcement policies and practices, it occurs in many different settings. For example, in schools, profiling is evidenced by the disproportionate number of Black and Latino students who are suspended and expelled. Often students who don't fit gender stereotypes are profiled as "gay" and bullied; Muslim students and their families are profiled as "terrorists;" and Spanish-speaking students and their families are profiled as "illegals."

This Racial Profiling Curriculum Guide provides a set of resources for educators to introduce, discuss, and examine the negative impact of racial profiling on youth and on our society as a whole. These lessons can be integrated into English language arts and social studies curriculum as well as character education, and life skills. The activities can be included as part of school wide diversity initiatives and as part of advisory period awareness-building activities. They form an important part of culturally responsive practices that strengthen student identity development, an appreciation of diversity, and an understanding of racism and intolerance.

Lessons about racial equality, stereotyping, and racial profiling are taught differently depending on the grade levels. Students in K-3 can be taught about fairness, appreciating differences, and getting along. Starting in fourth grade, students can learn about the negative impacts of stereotyping and unequal treatment. Starting in upper elementary, social studies curriculum covers the history of treatment of Native Americans and slavery. They are able to understand the negative impacts of racial profiling. In Middle School, students become acutely aware of identity many have begun to experience profiling themselves, by their peers, teachers, and adults in the community. Middle and High School students need to learn to have meaningful dialogue about issues of identity, stereotyping, and racial profiling. Students at all levels need opportunities for meaningful dialogue, self-reflection, and activities that help them learn to speak up and stand up for equitable societal change.

We have included a variety of resources with lesson plans, articles, and videos that teachers can draw from to teach about stereotyping, racial profiling, and ways to take action for an equitable schools and society. We have included lessons at a variety of grade levels and organized this curricular resource into the following areas:

1. *Introducing Students to Racial Profiling*: definition and rationale
2. *Remember and Honor the Past: Historical Racial Profiling*: Historical overview
3. *Contemporary Racial Profiling*: Current examples of racial profiling
4. *Racial Profiling Denies Basic Human Rights*: Impact of profiling on rights
5. *Recognizing and Valuing Differences/Uniqueness of Individuals*: Appreciating and valuing ourselves and others
6. *Taking Action to End Racial Profiling*: Action Tools for Students

1. Defining Racial Profiling

It is important that racial profiling is clearly defined so that people become aware of what it is, and how it affects their lives and/or those around them. To end racial profiling, there first needs to be an awareness of what the issue is, so in turn there will be a counter effect. These lessons introduce students to explore the definition of racial profiling and come to understand its effect on individuals and society.

Teaching Tolerance. Racial Profiling. Retrieved May 23, 2012 from <http://www.tolerance.org/activity/racial-profiling>

(Grades 6-12)

- Summary: A lesson plan which specifically defines what racial profiling is and examples of it in society, so that students will be able to identify racial profiling in their own lives.

Facing History and Ourselves (2009, Sept. 23). Profiling and Prejudice. Retrieved May 22, 2012 from <http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/facingtoday/profiling-prejudice>

- Summary: A lesson which answers common questions about racial profiling using an editorial in *The Boston Globe*, titled "[Profiling a no-no – except for ‘those people.’](#)" Will help students to identify what racial profiling is so that they can recognize and better understand it in their own lives as well as those around them.

Starr, L. (2009) The Problem With Profiling. Retrieved May 31, 2012 from http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/02/lp252-05.shtml

(Grades 6-12)

- Summary: Students are taught about what racial profiling is and given examples of it. Then they are given resources to explore to gain further understanding and to formulate their own response with the pros and cons of racial profiling and their opinion on it.

2. Remember and Honor the Past (Historical Racial Profiling)

The best way to understand current racial profiling and racial discrimination is to use occurrences in history from which we can learn. By teaching about what has happened in the past, along with what is now happening, students will then be able to understand what needs to be done in the future to change for the better.

Zimbalist, A.; Bird, K.; & Levine, J. (2000, June 5). Gaining Perspective. *The New York Times*. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from <http://tv.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20000605monday.html>

(Grades 6-12)

- Summary: Students will examine Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I have a Dream" Speech to see what aspects of this "dream" have been fulfilled, they will also discuss the integration of a church in Georgia. In conclusion, the students will share their own opinions on and experiences with race and racism in America today.

Teaching Tolerance. International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Retrieved May 23, 2012 from <http://www.tolerance.org/activity/international-day-elimination-racial-dis>

(Grades 6-12)

- Summary: This lesson is in celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, it uses the example of the Sharpeville Massacre in South Africa to compare "To draw parallels between the historical event and their own lives" and take further consideration on the question "What does law enforcement's use of racial profiling say about race relations in this country?" This lesson uses a historical example from another country to compare with the unfair treatment that is now occurring in our own country.

Teaching Tolerance. Latinos and the Fourteenth Amendment: A Primary Document Activity. Retrieved May 31, 2012 from <http://www.tolerance.org/activity/latinos-and-fourteenth-amendment-primary-document-activity>

(Grades 6-12)

- Summary: A lesson which has students analyze the supreme court's ruling in Hernandez vs. Texas, with an overall emphasis placed on the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The lesson posed such questions as "How can individual rights be protected within the context of majority rule? Why do we have laws? What could happen if we didn't? How does the past influence current generations?" These questions help to encourage students to consider protections given by our constitution as well as the events which have helped to shape our lives. The lesson could be extended further to ask the students how the Fourteenth Amendment and its equal protection clause are applicable to them.

Stoskopf, A. (2012) Emmitt Till: A Series of Four Lessons. *Facing History and Ourselves*. Retrieved May 23, 2012 from <http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/units/emmett-till-a-series-four-lessons>

(Grades 8-12)

- Summary: This Four part series of lessons are all about the wrongful death of Emmet Till and the history surrounding it. Part four is especially relevant, because it's learning objective is that "Students will make informed connections between past events and issues today, as well as creatively express historical understanding through multi-media. In addition, students will critically reflect upon the role historical memory plays in promoting informed civic practice." By using the example of Emmet Till, students will increase their own understanding of what the effects of racial profiling has been in the past, and then look at it in comparison with contemporary examples.

Starr, L. (2012) Is Racism Dead? Retrieved May 31, 2012 from http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/02/lp252-04.shtml

(Grades 9-12)

- Summary: Lesson in which students "will explore Little Rock (Arkansas) Central High School in 1957-1958 and today, and then learn about the experiences of students in their own school in relation to racial interaction." This lesson will help students to not only recognize past disparities but also then learn about the ongoing presence of racism and the perpetuation of stereotyping even in their own school.

Amnesty International. "Where Do You Stand?" And "Never Again. " Retrieved June 5, 2012 from http://www.amnestyusa.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/where_do_you_stand_and_never_again.pdf

(Grades 9 & Up)

Summary: This lesson is a two-part activity, which teaches the difference between moral, legal and human rights. As well as a section which uses the atrocities against Jews by Germany during the Holocaust, pointing out that the laws established went against basic human rights, so that the Nazis were not actually breaking the law by their horrible actions.

3. Acknowledging Disparities of Current Social Structures

(Contemporary Racial Profiling)

Students need to become aware and recognize the inequalities in our society and learn from the contemporary examples of racial profiling. This section highlights these occurrences, which happen every day to a wide variety of people, and will allow students to recognize occurrences of racial profiling in their own lives.

Zimbalist, A. (2000, July 13). Poll Position. *The New York Times*. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from <http://tv.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20000713thursday.html>

(Grades 6-12)

- Summary: Students use the results of a national poll done by the New York Times about race in the United States and then poll their local community to see how the results compare.

Zimbalist, A. (2000, July 10). To Protect and Serve. *The New York Times*. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from <http://tv.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20000710monday.html>

(Grades 6-12)

- Summary: In this lesson students use contemporary examples of racial profiling by exploring “race issues that exist in the police force and in police actions through sharing opinions and researching and presenting related statistical and historical information.”

Zimbalist, A.; Bird, K.; & Levine, J.(2000, July 3). Tackling Race Issues on the Field. *The New York Times*. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from <http://tv.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20000703monday.html>

(Grades 6-12)

- Summary: A lesson in which students are given an opportunity to see what it is like to be “in the minority.” As the overview states, “Students then experience what it feels to suddenly be treated differently by peers by participating in an activity in which they are 'labeled' with statements that determine how others in their groups will relate to them.”

Zimbalist, A.; Bird, K.; & Levine, J.(2000, June 29). Race to the Presses. *The New York Times*. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from <http://tv.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20000629thursday.html>

(Grades 6-12)

Summary: This lesson has students examine the role which media plays in conveying information about certain racial groups. Students also will reflect on “the responsibilities of the news media in covering race-related topics.”

Dow, W. , & Williams, M. (Producers).(2003, Jan. 22). *Two Towns of Jasper* [Television Broadcast]. PBS Video.

Additional Information:

<http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/publications/two-towns-jasper>

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/twotownsofjasper/>

<http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/library/two-towns-jasper>

Lesson Plan: http://www.pbs.org/pov/twotownsofjasper/lesson_plan.php

(Grades 7-12)

- Summary: A documentary about a modern day hate-crime against a Black man in Texas. The reactions of both the white and black communities of the area and the results of the subsequent trial. Could be used to recognize the ongoing persistence of racial prejudice and the profiling

which goes on within modern society. Lessons can help students to understand that stereotypes are something which have become engrained in our culture creating divides and disagreements between those of different races, and in this case sometimes resulting in crimes against people of color. Lesson 1 examines prejudice teaching student to uncover hidden biases as well as “research the struggles of people who are discriminated against.” Lesson 2 explores the “contributing factors to racism in America” as well as examining “the legacy of white privilege and the unspoken ways in which it touches their lives, using 26 scenarios from daily life.”

Amnesty International. Racial Discrimination and the Death Penalty. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from http://www.amnestyusa.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/racial_discrimination_and_the_death_penalty.pdf

(High School Level)

- Summary: Students examine how race places a role in cases involving the death penalty. The lesson includes historical examples as well as more contemporary examples of how racial bias is heavily involved in the selection of jurors and the rulings.

Craig, D.; Perales, A.; Quagliaro, H.; & Valdez, R. Weighing the Pros and Cons of Racial Profiling. The Choices Program. Retrieved May 31, 2012 from http://www.choices.edu/resources/supplemental_tah_race7.php

- Summary: This lesson focuses on the new form which racial profiling has taken as a result of the terrorist attacks on September 11th. Students will “Examine the emergence of distinctly new pros and cons of racial profiling in America as a result of terrorism.” And “Evaluate the evolution of racial profiling since the September 11th terrorist attacks.”

4. Racial Profiling Denies Basic Human Rights

As AFT said in a resolution condemning Arizona’s S.B. 1070 “President Barack Obama has stated that SB 1070 threatens “to undermine basic notions of fairness that we cherish as Americans, as well as the trust between police and their communities that is so crucial to keeping us safe.” Racial profiling denies individuals basic human rights to life, liberty and property. They are denied these basic rights through the stereotypes which are perpetuated by racial profiling, as well as the incorrect accusations and actions which are made against them by law enforcement and government legislation.

Amnesty International, USA. Who Has Rights & Who Are Defenders of Human Rights?. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from http://www.amnestyusa.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/who_has_rights_who_are_defenders_of_human_rights_.pdf

(Elementary Level)

- Summary: A lesson which develops an understanding of what basic human rights are, by using image examples and whose responsibility it is to protect rights. The lesson ends with a specific

example of violation of human rights outside of the U.S. of Iqbal Masih from Pakistan and following up his account by asking the students questions such as “What might happen if people did not protect human rights? What happens when all people defend human rights? How could the participants take action to protect human rights?”

Amnesty International. Rights and Responsibilities. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from http://www.amnestyusa.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/rights_and_responsibilities.pdf

(Grades 2-5)

- Summary: This lesson introduces elementary age students to the idea of what rights everyone is entitled to, while comparing the similarities and differences of rights and responsibilities, and what distinguishes them from each other.

Mangiardi, L. Human Rights for All?. The Institute for Humane Education. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from http://humaneeducation.org/sections/view/human_rights_activities

(Grades 9-12 & College/Adult)

- Summary: This lesson provides an outline for a discussion on human rights through use of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as helping individuals be aware of what rights and freedoms they have available to them that many other people are denied.

5. Recognizing and Valuing Differences/Uniqueness of Individuals

When we teach students to recognize and value the differences in themselves as well as all those around them, it will help them appreciate their own identity and to value and treat everyone equally. Students need to be taught to recognize that we each have our own unique experiences and backgrounds. When differences are recognized and valued students come to appreciate their own backgrounds and identities and build intercultural understanding. As a result of this, negative attitudes will change, prejudice will be reduced and ultimately it will lead to a decrease in the prevalence of racial profiling.

Corragio, S. We Are One Family. Amnesty International. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from http://www.amnestyusa.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/we_are_one_family.pdf

(Grades K-3)

Summary: This lesson helps to introduce to children at a young age the importance of being tolerant of one another and understanding of differences. As the lesson clearly points out, there is a need for students to be taught while still young tolerance of everyone. “Intolerance can be learned from a very early age and adult attitudes can be difficult to change. It is therefore very important to begin a good multicultural human rights education as early as possible. It is only through exposure, familiarity, and safe and open discussions that students can feel sameness and appreciate differences of the many cultures our society needs to embrace in an effort to promote unity and aid in conflict resolution.”

Patterson, K. Dare to Be Different. Institute for Humane Education. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from http://humaneeducation.org/sections/view/human_rights_activities

(Grades 3-5)

- Summary: The teacher will “introduce the word “prejudice” to the students. Discuss with students the meaning of prejudice and what it means to “pre-judge” another person.” This lesson gives students the opportunity to have a glimpse at what it might feel like to be the target of prejudice because of differences.

The Institute for Humane Education. Judge Not, Lest Ye Be Judged. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from http://humaneeducation.org/sections/view/human_rights_activities

(Grades 4 & Up)

- Summary: This lesson is an activity which has students consider their first impressions of people and how stereotypes and prejudice “limit our openness and receptivity to others.” It also poses questions which help students to recognize why it is incorrect to allow prejudice or stereotypes to influence our perception of others. One of the questions included, which was thought-provoking, stated: “Do we really know anything about people based on our stereotypes?”

Not In Our Town (2011). Dissolving Stereotypes. Retrieved June 8, 2012 from <http://www.niot.org/nios/lesson/activity-guide-stereotype-pool-0>

(Upper Elementary-Adult)

Summary: Gunn High School students literally dissolve common stereotypes, when they participate in a Not In Our School lunchtime activity.

Ladd, C. (2010) Exploring Identity Lesson Plan. Retrieved May 31, 2012 from http://www.pbs.org/pov/offandrunning/lesson_plan.php

(Grades 9-12)

- Summary: This lesson can be used to help students identify and recognize “how factors such as race, religion and family shape a person's personal identity.”

Teaching Tolerance. *Moving beyond Cultural Competence to Cultural Proficiency*. Retrieved May 31, 2012

(Professional Development)

Part 1- Assessing Culture: Who am I?

<http://www.tolerance.org/activity/assessing-culture-who-am-i>

Part 2- Assessing Culture: Moving Beyond Cultural Competence

<http://www.tolerance.org/activity/assessing-culture-moving-beyond-cultural-competence>

- Summary: A three part series by Teaching Tolerance, which “helps education professionals engage their colleagues around issues of culture and how it manifests in the classroom.”

Teaching Tolerance. Mutual Learning Through Conversation. Retrieved May 31, 2012 from <http://www.tolerance.org/activity/mutual-learning-through-conversation>

(Professional Development)

- Summary: A professional development piece for teachers, which emphasizes how to “help young students develop values and virtues that open spaces in their minds and hearts so they can see the world and its people in broader terms.” This lesson demonstrates the importance of helping to give your students opportunities to learn from people of different backgrounds so that they can gain a greater understanding of those who are not like themselves.

Not In Our Town (2011). Students Shattering Stereotypes. Retrieved June 8, 2012 from:

Video and Discussion Questions: <http://www.niot.org/nios-video/students-shattering-stereotypes-0>

Activity Guide: <http://www.niot.org/nios/lesson/activity-guide-student-led-assembly-shatter-stereotypes>

(Middle School Level)

- Summary: At West Middle School in Rockford, IL, student council members organized a Not In Our School campaign with skits that challenge stereotypes and other intolerant behavior.

Facing History and Ourselves (2009, July 28). Talking About Race. Retrieved May 22, 2012 from <http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/facingtoday/talking-about-race>.

Warner, J. (2009, July 26). A Lot Said, and Unsaid, About Race. *The New York Times*.

Retrieved May 22, 2012 from

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/07/26/a-lot-said-and-unsaid-about-race/?emc=eta1>

- Summary: This lesson combined uses the New York Times opinion column which makes a case for the need for discussion and understanding of differences. Using a contemporary example of Henry Louis Gates Jr. and his arrest outside his own home, the writer expresses the need for better understanding. She says that “Obama warned that for America to move forward, both blacks and whites need to listen to each other’s narratives, and stop reflexively dismissing them either as paranoia or simple prejudice.” The use of this article as well as the accompanying discussion questions will help to broaden students understandings and destroy paranoia while building understanding, which will lead to less stereotyping, the key factor in racial profiling. As the website points out, “rather than siding with Gates or Crowley, Warner suggests that we should listen to one another and try to understand one another's perspective.”

6. Taking Action to End Racial Profiling

After developing awareness of stereotypes, racism and racial profiling, students need tools to take action for change. Action to end racial profiling in our country includes taking steps to guarantee that law enforcement, government, school leaders, *all* members of our society ensure that all citizens are treated fairly. As individuals and communities take action to create and implement policies that protect against the negative impact of stereotyping and profiling, there will be recognizable success in bringing an end to racial profiling and unfair treatment of people of all races, ethnicities, religions, and all types of differences.

Teaching Tolerance. Freedom's Main Line. Retrieved May 31, 2012 from <http://www.tolerance.org/activity/freedoms-main-line>

(Grades 6-12)

- Summary: Using historical examples, this lesson will help students to recognize the efforts made to end segregation and how they can make similar efforts to end racial injustices. One of the key questions asked, was "How did—and do—citizens (both individually and collectively) influence social change?" This lesson will help students to make connections between past and present events and the changes that they themselves are capable of instigating or participating in.

Not In Our Town (2011) Youth Lead Fight Against Hate in Olympia, WA (with Activity Guide).

Retrieved June 8, 2012 from:

Video and Discussion Questions: <http://www.niot.org/nios-video/youth-lead-fight-against-hate-olympia-wa-0>

Activity Guide: <http://www.niot.org/nios/lesson/activity-guide-student-leadership-against-hate-ideas-active-participation-0>

(Grades 6-12)

- Summary: When the white supremacist group National Socialist Movement began organizing in Olympia, student leaders decided to take action by organizing a school wide assembly.

Not In Our Town & Facing History. (2012) No One Is Born Illegal. Retrieved June 8, 2012 from:

Video: <http://www.niot.org/nios-video/no-human-being-was-born-illegal>

Lesson Plan: <http://www.niot.org/nios/lesson/lesson-idea-%E2%80%9Cno-human-being-was-born-illegal%E2%80%9D>

(High School Level)

- Summary: Students conduct a lunchtime demonstration to draw attention to the use of the word "illegal" to describe undocumented immigrants, and start a school-wide conversation about the way immigrants are perceived in their community.

Not In Our Town & Facing History. (2011) Not In Our Town: Light in the Darkness. Retrieved June 8, 2012 from:

Documentary Trailer: <http://www.niot.org/nios-video/not-our-town-light-darkness>

Lesson Plan: <http://www.niot.org/nios/lesson/facing-history-discussion-guide-viewing-not-our-town-light-darkness-your-classroom>

Additional Video (High School Students Reactions): <http://www.niot.org/nios-video/high-school-students-react-not-our-town-light-darkness>

(High School Level)

- Summary: Not In Our Town: Light In The Darkness follows a community in crisis after the fatal attack of a local immigrant resident.

Rakestraw, M. More Than A Label. The Institute for Humane Education. Retrieved June 5, 2012 from http://humaneeducation.org/sections/view/human_rights_activities

(Grades 9-12 & College/Adult)

- Summary: Using photos of a wide variety of individuals, students are asked to record their initial response/impression of the person. This activity “inspires students to think about their own areas of bigotry and to identify how we develop our attitudes about others” while it also “empowers them to take action to reduce bigotry in their own lives and in society.” At the conclusion of various activities and discussion which help students to recognize bigotry in their lives and understand what needs to be done, students are asked to write down what steps they can take to reduce bigotry in their own lives as well as what can be done on a larger scale in the community.