

Discussion Guide for Module 13: Race Today: What Kids Know as They Grow

Module run time: 25 minutes

Estimated time to complete the module with discussion guide: 45-60 minutes

Below are recommended stopping points and suggested questions to use in your group's discussion. Please feel free to follow your group's lead and discuss topics and questions that are of greatest value to the group!

Key points:

- Race is meaningful in our social world and racism still exists today.
- Racism is like a conveyor belt and we are all on it. It is our responsibility to work actively to recognize and work against racism in our society. Otherwise we will continue to live as a member of a racist society.
- Kids are aware of race and observe and integrate ideas about race from those around them and reflect it in their own attitudes and behaviors.
- Kids form racial identities. They recognize that their race and racial group is part of who they are and how others see them.
- Research suggests that not talking about race with kids increases racist thinking and racism. Racial silence will never create racial equality, but talking about race can!

Module synopsis:

Page 1: *Title Page – Race Today: What Kids Know as They Grow*

Page 2: *Acknowledgments*

Page 3: *Introduction*

Page 4: *The Stories of Our Children*

⊗ Recommended stopping point

- Take a moment to reflect on these two videos. Write down your reactions – any feelings or thoughts in response to what you just heard.
- In what ways do these stories resonate with your own experiences? Can you think of a person (friend, family member, co-worker) in your life who may have a story that is similar to these?
- Have you noticed your children, or the children you work with grappling with ideas related to race and racism? What have you heard them say? What have you said?

Page 5: *Inequities Still Exist (1)*

Page 6: *Inequities Still Exist (2)*

Page 7: *Inequities Still Exist (3)*

⊗ Recommended stopping point

- We just went over several different examples of inequities that still exist today. Is any of this surprising to you? Why or why not?
- What are some other examples of inequities in our society that you have noticed or personally experienced?

Page 8: *Defining Race and Racism*
Page 9: *Racism is a Social Product of Race*
Page 10: *Systemic Racism*
Page 11: *The Conveyor Belt*
Page 12: *The Consequences of Inaction*

☉ Recommended stopping point

- Racism is a social product of race. It can happen between individuals, but also be built into systems, such as schools. Racism can be explicit and obvious, or implicit and subtle. Implicit racism can be harder to identify. Can you think of examples of implicit racism? Think about things people do or say that they might not even be conscious of. For example, crossing the street when you see a Black man walking towards you on the sidewalk.
- Many people believe that racism is over, that it doesn't exist in today's society. What do you think? Why do you think it is difficult for some people to believe racism still exists?
- Take a moment to reflect on Dr. Tatum's conveyor belt of racism metaphor. What are some of the challenges that we all face living in a racially unjust system? What are some ways that we can actively move in the opposite direction of the conveyor belt?
- How might observing or experiencing implicit racism and unconscious bias affect children?
- How might our own unconscious biases affect our work or our interactions with children?

Page 13: *What Do Children Understand About Race*
Page 14: *The Doll Experiments*
Page 15: *The Doll Experiments (video)*

☉ Recommended stopping point

- Children are mirrors, they observe and integrate ideas about race from those around them and reflect it in their own attitudes and behaviors. Have you noticed children reflecting ideas about race?
- Reflect on how you felt while watching the video clip of the "doll test." What thoughts and feelings came to mind?
- What insight does the "doll test" give us about how children form ideas about race, and racial identities?

Page 16: *Children's Evolving Understanding of Race*
Page 17: *Children's Evolving Understanding of Race (2)*
Page 18: *Setting the Stage for Social Identity*

☉ Final discussion points

- Think about your own social, or group identity or identities.
 - What benefits do you gain from this identity? What challenges?
 - What benefits and challenges might a child face growing up with similar social and racial identities?
 - How about a child growing up with very different social and racial identities?
- Children's beliefs, attitudes, and experience are still growing and malleable. Children use the information provided by those around them to fill in the blanks. This is where educators, parents and peers come in to play. What are some ways that we can help and support children as they form their own understanding of race, and racial identities?

- Think of one action step you can take this week to facilitate more positive and open conversations about race. Share it with your group!

To learn more about race and how kids learn about race, take a look at these resources:

This article discusses how Black preschoolers are more likely to get suspended from preschool
<http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/03/21/292456211/black-preschoolers-far-more-likely-to-be-suspended>

Read more about how the US funds our public schools:
<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wherewestand/reports/finance/how-do-we-fund-our-schools/?p=197>

Read more about the implicit bias test:
<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/blog/implicit-test/>

Take the Implicit Bias Test yourself:
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

Read more about unconscious privilege in Peggy McIntosh's article, 'White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack'
<http://nationalseedproject.org/white-privilege-unpacking-the-invisible-knapsack>

We are constantly working to improve our materials. Do you have suggestions about topics to add to this guide? Did your group discuss something we didn't suggest? We'd love to hear from you! Please email your thoughts to us at ilabsout@uw.edu.