

**Learn. Disrupt. Rebuild@HWDSB: BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF CARE  
Module 2 - Understanding Identity and Intersectionality**

**Lesson #13 - Intersectionality & Privilege**

**Learning Goal:** To understand how our multiple identities impact how we experience the world, and what that means as we work to build inclusive schools, organizations, workplaces, and communities.

**Key Vocabulary**

- **Discrimination** - Discrimination occurs when a person is unable to enjoy his or her human rights or other legal rights on an equal basis with others because of an unjustified distinction made in policy, law or treatment. Reasons such as race, age or disability, also called grounds, are protected under the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#).
- **Intersectionality** - Intersectionality refers to the social, economic, and political ways in which identity-based systems of oppression and privilege (such as gender, gender expression, race) connect, overlap, and influence one another.
- **Learning Disability** - “Learning Disabilities” refers to a variety of disorders that affect the acquisition, retention, understanding, organisation or use of verbal and/or non-verbal information. These disorders result from impairments in one or more psychological processes related to learning in combination with otherwise average abilities essential for thinking and reasoning. Learning disabilities are a life-long condition – they do not go away – but can be coped with successfully by using areas of strength to compensate and accommodations such as technology.
- **Oppression** - The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group.
- **Privilege** - Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely based on a single characteristic. Privilege can be due a number of different attributes – race, gender, age, sexual orientation, education, status, ability.
- **Race** - Refers to the categories into which society places individuals on the basis of physical characteristics (such as skin color, hair type, facial form and eye shape). Though many believe that race is determined by biology, it is now widely accepted that this classification system was in fact created for social and political reasons. There are actually more genetic and biological differences within the racial groups defined by society than between different groups

**Educator Pre-Reflection**

**Modification for Remote Learning:** PowerPoint will include visuals and modifications needed for teaching this lesson remotely. Students will use whatever supplies they have at home if needed.

**YouTube:** Log into YouTube using your HWDSB account and play videos in safe mode.

**NOTE:** This lesson may be delivered over two days to give students and yourself enough time to engage in the content and discussion of Intersectionality and privilege.

Before engaging in this lesson, consider/think about...

What is intersectionality?

Intersectionality refers to the social, economic, and political ways in which identity-based systems of oppression and privilege (such as gender, gender expression, race) connect, overlap, and influence one another.

For example, a Black woman in *Canada* does not experience gender inequalities in the same way as a white woman, nor does this same Black woman experience racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. A queer woman does not experience oppression the same way as a cis-gendered woman. Each race and gender intersection produces distinct levels of power and privilege in life/society and individual experiences that create unique world views based on layers of oppression.

Teacher Resource: [Kimberle Crenshaw: What is Intersectionality \(1.54 mins\)](#)

In learning about intersectionality, consider the following:

- How does looking closely at ourselves help us understand others?
- What aspects of our identities give us advantages? Or disadvantages?
- How does intersectionality relate to identity and justice?
- How can intersectionality be applied within the framework of anti-bias education to teach about multiple identities and oppression?

### Student Pre-Reflection

Before you begin, think about...

Consider how different students in our school might experience things differently than you do, depending on certain aspects of their identities.

- What aspects of our identities give us advantages? Or disadvantages?
- What situations are we sometimes in where one part of our identity is at the forefront over other parts?

### Provocation/Minds On

The following video presents how intersectionality influences how three individuals experience privilege and oppression.

[Kids Explain Intersectionality \(2:14 mins\)](#)

Things to think about while you are watching:

- What aspects of our identities give us advantages? Or disadvantages?
- How do we put others in “boxes”?
- Are there things you do not understand – like the young person in the video?

### Learning Task/Activity

#### PRIVILEGE

Teacher Prompt: What are privileges you have / enjoy?

- For example, being given digital technology by the school board is a privilege. (Discuss why)

#### Intersectionality:

The teacher should complete a *My Intersectional Self worksheet* in advance to serve as a model for students. Share your *My Intersectional Self* with the class.

Example:

Mrs. Fattori

Woman - Mother – Teacher – Buddhist – Biracial – Marathon Runner - daughter of immigrants

Share how each of your identity bubbles is a lens through which you see and interact in the world. Mrs. Fattori might share, for instance, that when she became a mother, she became stronger and more sensitive, stronger for having made and given life as well as knowing she would do anything to protect her child. But she also became more sensitive to young life of all kinds around her, whether it be other children, nature or a student just learning to love a certain academic subject. She may have also become aware of limitations on moving ahead in her career because she was a woman, a mother who was biracial (gender and racial oppression)

1. Distribute a *My Intersectional Self worksheet* to each student and give the following directions: "Place your name in the center figure. Use the identity bubbles to name aspects of yourself that are important in defining who you are." Allow students time to silently reflect on what they have written. Invite them to form pairs and share why the descriptors they chose are important to them. If time permits, invite pairs to introduce one another to the class.
2. Have students reflect on how each individual identity intersects and shapes the way they view and interact with the world. The teacher can use her own *My Intersectional Self* to illustrate this concept. Mrs. Fattori, for example, might share how being biracial allows her to be a part of two worlds, but also means she may experience two oppressions of racism and sexism.

To help you think about the statistics below, consider using the following strategy:

- SIT strategy = students can draw a SIT chart or use the one provided to think about what is most surprising, what is interesting, and what is troubling about the information

- Students can record their thoughts on the statistics and the teacher can engage the class in a follow up discussion.

Here are the statistics:

If possible, project them or read them aloud to your class. You may wish to choose which statistics to highlight based on your student body, interest, prior discussions, and connection to your subject curriculum.

- 1 in 5 Canadians will experience a mental illness or problem this year
- 1 in 4 students with a disability have been bullied in school because of their disability.
- 45% of Canada's homeless have a physical or mental disability.
- Nearly five million people in Canada (1 in 7) live in poverty
- Nearly 15% of people with disabilities live in poverty - 59% of whom are women.
- 99 First Nations communities have had a boil water advisory in place for more than a year.
- 4.5 times higher: the murder rate of Indigenous women compared to other women in Canada.
- 48% of children in foster care are Indigenous
- 1 in 4 federal inmates are Indigenous
- 70% of trans youth in Canada have experienced discrimination because gender identity
- 36% of trans youth report being physically threatened or injured at school
- 70% of trans youth report experiencing sexual harassment.
- 50% of federal female inmates in solitary confinement are Indigenous.
- 10% Black inmates make up 10% of the population in federal prison
- 36% of women in federal custody are Indigenous
- Racialized Canadians also earn an average of 81 cents to the dollar compared to other Canadians.
- Black males living in Toronto are 3 times more likely to be stopped and asked for identification by police.
- Employers are about 40% more likely to interview a job applicant with an English-sounding name despite identical education, skills and experience.

Statistics from: <https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng>

### Ideas for Follow-up/Discussion

- **Transforming Statistics:** Think about what has to happen for these statistics to change. What are small things an individual can do to help to start to make these changes? What are some ways to make changes might include, community service (volunteer); amplifying the voices of others; not tolerating bullying behaviour; standing up against hate speech, racism, ableism; inviting those who are often 'othered' to participate in your group or conversation or outing.
- **Get Involved:** As a class, determine civic action and inclusive groups that are working to changing these statistics. What groups and community partners exist in Hamilton to support this change? How can you involved as a volunteer or contributor/voice?

### Educator Post-Reflection

The main idea I want to remember or take away from this lesson is...?  
Thinking about what my students noticed in the SIT activity, I would like to follow up with...  
Reflect on the quote in the Student Post-Reflection below.

### Student Post-Reflection

Reflect on this quote:

*"In the words of Helen Keller: Alone we can do little; together, we can do so much. I believe that our country and our economy will be stronger when Canadians embrace diversity to its fullest. That means ensuring that everyone has equal opportunity to fully participate in society – and it means recognizing that our Canada includes everyone." ~ Chief Commissioner Landry*

<https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca>

### Further Resources:

[YouTube Video: Intersectionality 101\(3:03 mins\)](#)

[YouTube Video: Tiq Milan - There is enough room for ALL OF US. \(1:28 minutes\)](#)

[YouTube Video: Labels are Boxes \(1:08 minutes\)](#)

[Understanding Intersectionality PBS Lesson Plan](#)

### Possible Curriculum Connections

#### The Arts

**ADA 10** - B2.4 Drama and Society: identify ways in which dramatic exploration promotes an appreciation of diverse cultures and traditions (e.g., describe what they learned from experiencing different perspectives on reality through drama works based on Aboriginal and/or international sources). C3. Responsible Practices: demonstrate an understanding of safe, ethical, and responsible personal and interpersonal practices in drama activities. C3.1 Responsible Practices: identify and follow safe and ethical practices in drama activities (e.g., find ways to ensure the emotional safety [trust] and physical safety of themselves and others, both onstage and offstage;

**AVI 10** - B2.3 identify ways in which c Art, Society, and Values: creating and/or analysing art works has affected their personal identity and values (e.g., with reference to their self-perception, their level of empathy, their awareness of stereotypes, their awareness of their emotions and their ability to express them). C3.1 Responsible Practices: identify some legal and ethical issues associated with visual arts, and demonstrate legal and ethical practices when creating, presenting, and/or promoting art works.

#### Business Studies

**BBI10, BBI20** – Business Fundamentals • demonstrate an understanding of ethics and social responsibility in business; Business Ethics and Social Responsibility

Functions of a Business • explain the role of human resources in business

**BDI3C Enterprising People and Entrepreneurs** By the end of this course, students will: • analyse the characteristics and contributions of enterprising people;

**BMX3E Retail and Service Operations:** describe the role of the human resources function in retail and service businesses. – explain the importance of ensuring diversity in the workplace in retail and service businesses

### **Canadian and World Studies**

*CGC1D: Livable Communities:* E1.The Sustainability of Human Systems: analyse issues relating to the sustainability of human systems in Canada

*CHC2D/P: The E Strand: Identity, Citizenship and Heritage:* E3. Identity, Citizenship, and Heritage: analyse how various significant individuals, groups, organizations, and events, both national and international, have contributed to the development of identity, citizenship, and heritage in Canada from 1982 to the present

*CHV2O: B3.Rights and Responsibilities:* analyse key rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship, in both the Canadian and global context, and some ways in which these rights are protected. C2. Inclusion and Participation: assess ways in which people express their perspectives on issues of civic importance and how various perspectives, beliefs, and values are recognized and represented in communities in Canada

### **Computer Studies**

**ICS2O:** Computers and the Society C1. describe key aspects of the impact of computers and related technologies on society

**ICS 3C:** Computers and the Society. D3: explain key aspects of the impact that emerging technologies have on society

**ICS 4U:** Topics in Computer Science. D3. analyse the impact of emerging computer technologies on society and the economy

**ICS 4C:** Computers and the Society D3. investigate and report on emerging computer technologies and their potential impact on society and the economy;

### **Cooperative Education**

**DCO3O:** B2. Skills for the Future: demonstrate the skills and knowledge developed or refined through the cooperative education experience, including skills and knowledge related to health, safety, and well-being and to relevant expectations from the related course or courses, and explain how they might use what they have learned in other aspects of their lives, now and in the future

## English

**ENG1D, ENG1P, ENG2D, ENG2P, ENG3U, ENG3C, ENG3E, ENG4U, ENG4C, ENG4E**

The applicable overall expectations for the above courses are listed below:

**Oral Communication:** Listening to Understand: listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes;

**Reading and Literature Studies:** Reading for Meaning: read and demonstrate an understanding of a variety of literary, informational, and graphic texts, using a range of strategies to construct meaning;

**Writing:** Developing and Organizing Content: generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience;

**Media Studies:** Understanding Media Texts: demonstrate an understanding of a variety of media texts;

## English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development

**(ESLAO, ESLBO, ESLCO, ESLDO, ESLDO)**

**Socio-Cultural Competency:** demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship, and of the contributions of diverse groups to Canadian society;

## French as a Second Language

**FSF1D - B1.2 Speaking to Communicate: Producing Oral Communications:** produce prepared and spontaneous messages in French to communicate information, ideas, and opinions about matters of personal interest and familiar and academic topics, with contextual, auditory, and visual support as appropriate (e.g., express ideas and opinions about current events and issues)

**FSF1D - B2.2 Speaking to Interact: Interacting:** exchange information, ideas, and opinions with the teacher and their peers in structured and guided spoken interactions about matters of personal interest and academic topics, with teacher modelling as appropriate.

**FSF1D - B3. Intercultural Understanding:** in their spoken communications, demonstrate an awareness of aspects of culture in diverse French-speaking communities and other communities around the world, and of the appropriate use of French sociolinguistic conventions in a variety of situations.

## Guidance and Career Education

**GLC20 B2. Preparing for Future Opportunities:** develop a personal profile based on an exploration of their interests, values, skills, strengths, and needs, and examine the range of factors that can influence their future education and career/life opportunities

**GLD20** • identify their interests, strengths, and needs, and describe how these influence their decisions about education and work.

### **Health and Physical Education**

**PPL 10** C1.5 demonstrate an understanding of factors (e.g., acceptance, stigma, culture, religion, media, stereotypes, homophobia, self-image, self-awareness) that can influence a person’s understanding of their gender identity (e.g., male, female, two-spirited, transgender, transsexual, intersex) and sexual orientation (e.g., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual), and identify sources of support for all students

**PPL20** - C3.4 describe some common misconceptions about sexuality in our culture, and explain how these may cause harm to people and how they can be responded to critically and fairly

**PPL 40** C3.4 analyse the portrayal of different relationships in the media (e.g., movies, song lyrics, television, print media, Internet) with respect to bias and stereotyping, and describe how individuals can take action to encourage more realistic and inclusive messaging

### **Interdisciplinary Studies**

**IDC30/IDP30.** Perspectives and Approaches By the end of this course, students will: – analyse and describe how each of the subjects or disciplines studied views the role of personal experience in gaining knowledge (e.g., “How does our personal experience affect our perception of things?”, “What personal responsibility does claiming to ‘know’ something carry for the ‘knower’?”, “What roles do culture and language play in our perceptions, understandings, and beliefs?”)

### **Mathematics**

Mathematical Process Expectations

*Reflecting* - demonstrate that they are reflecting on and monitoring their thinking to help clarify their understanding

*Connecting* - make connections among mathematical concepts and procedures, and relate mathematical ideas to situations or phenomena drawn from other contexts (e.g., other curriculum areas, daily life, current events, art and culture, sports)  
*Representing* - create a variety of representations of mathematical ideas (e.g., numeric, geometric, algebraic, graphical, pictorial representations; onscreen dynamic representations), connect and compare them, and select and apply the appropriate representations to solve

*Communicating* - communicate mathematical thinking orally, visually, and in writing, using mathematical vocabulary and a variety of appropriate representations, and observing mathematical conventions.

### **Social Sciences and Humanities**

**HIF10/20** B1. Adolescent Development: describe important changes that are associated with adolescent development, and explain their influence on the behaviour and needs of young people; **D1.** Personal



Responsibilities: demonstrate an understanding of their responsibilities related to their personal well-being and that of their family, and of how they can maintain their health and well-being;

**HSP3C D2.** Explaining Social Behaviour: use a sociological perspective to explain how diverse factors influence and shape social behaviour;

**HSP3U D2.** Explaining Social Behaviour: use a sociological perspective to explain how diverse factors influence and shape individual and group social behaviour;

**HSB4U D1.** Global Inequalities: demonstrate an understanding of how various social structures and conditions support or limit global inequalities.

### **Technological Education**

**TGJ 20 - C2.** demonstrate an understanding of social effects and issues arising from the use of communications media technologies and the importance of representing cultural and social diversity in media productions.

**TXJ 20 - C2.** demonstrate an understanding of trends and social issues in relation to the hairstyling and aesthetics industry. **D2.** describe career opportunities in hairstyling and aesthetics, including relevant secondary and postsecondary educational pathways, and identify key knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits that are important for success in the industry.

**TPJ 20 - A2.** describe factors that affect personal health and well-being. **C1.** demonstrate an understanding of environmental issues related to health care and personal well-being. **C2.** describe social trends and health care issues relating to children and adolescents.