

**Learn. Disrupt. Rebuild@HWDSB: Building a Community of Care
Module 3 – Exploring Human Rights, Equity & Anti-Racism**

Lesson # 19 – What is Racism? What is Anti-Racism?
(Primary)

Learning Goal: To understand racism and explore ways to engage in anti-racism.

Key Vocabulary

Anti-Racism: Anti-Racism is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

Racialized identity: are identifications with “groups of people that have been socially and politically constructed as “racially” distinct... [They] have notable cultural dimensions, but they are primarily a manifestation of unequal power between groups” (Baum, 2006: 11).

Racism: The definition of racism offered here is grounded in [Critical Race Theory](#) a movement started in the 1970s by activists and scholars committed to the study and transformation of traditional relationships of race to racism and power. CRT was initially grounded in the law and has since expanded to other fields. CRT also has an activist dimension because it not only tries to understand our situation but to change it. The core concepts of CRT are:

1. Racism is ordinary, the "normal" way that society does business, the "common, everyday" experience of most People of Color in this country.
2. Racism serves the interests of both white people in power (the elites) materially and working-class white people psychically, and therefore neither group has much incentive to fight it.
3. Race and races are social and political constructs, categories that society invents and manipulates when convenient. Our differences as human beings are minimized by what we have in common and have little or nothing to do with personality, intelligence, and morality.
4. Society chooses to ignore this and assigns characteristics to whole groups of people in order to advance the idea of race and the superiority of whiteness.
5. The power elite racializes different groups at different times to achieve their economic agenda, continually and repeatedly prioritizing profit over people.

Curriculum Connections

Kindergarten

Belonging and Contributing.

This frame encompasses children’s learning and development with respect to:

- their sense of connectedness to others;
- their relationships with others, and their contributions as part of a group, a community, and the natural world;
- their understanding of relationships and community, and of the ways in which people contribute to the world around them.

The learning encompassed by this frame also relates to children’s early development of the attributes and attitudes that inform citizenship, through their sense of personal connectedness to various communities.

As children progress through the Kindergarten program, they:

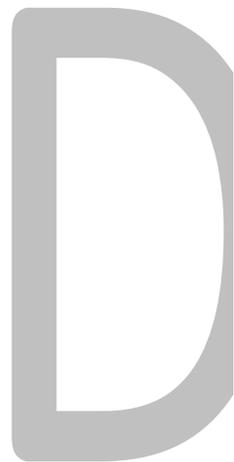
OE 5. demonstrate an understanding of the diversity among individuals and families and within schools and the wider community.

Language - Grades 1-3

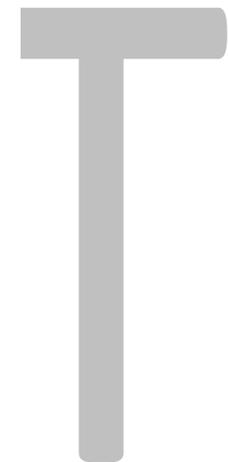
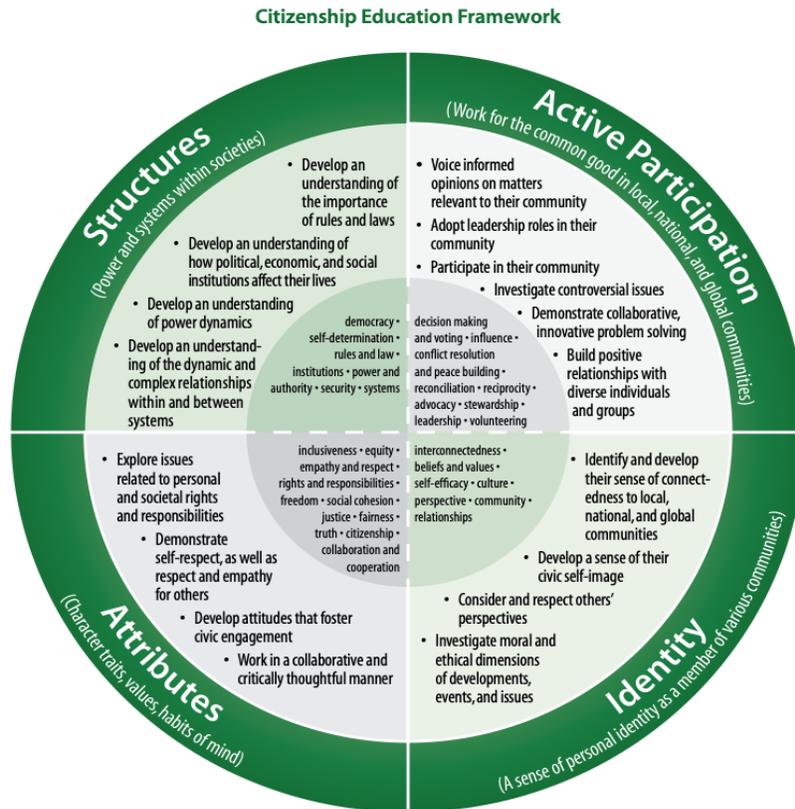
Writing

1. generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience

Social Studies Curriculum, Grades 1-8



Social Studies, Grades 1 to 6; History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8



The combination of the citizenship education framework and the knowledge and skills in the curriculum expectations brings citizenship education to life, not only in social studies, history, and geography, but in many other subjects as well.

The Citizen Education Framework in the front material of the Social Studies/ History and Geography curriculum outlines the information and skills a learner needs to understand in order to study History and Geography. One quadrant focuses on Identity, and one’s place within their local and the global community.

This lesson is a component of students acquiring the knowledge necessary to understand themselves, and their role as citizens of Canada.

“The social studies program in Grades 1 to 6 develops students’ understanding of who they are, where they come from, where they belong, and how they contribute to the society in which they live. Students develop a sense of who they are by exploring their identity within the context of various local, national, and global communities in which they participate.” (Ontario Social Studies Curriculum, 2018, p.11)

Prior Knowledge Required:

Students should understand various aspects of identity, in particular racial identity (see Lessons 12/13 on Identity and Race). Students should also have a basic understanding of what racism looks like based on their own experiences.

Tools and Materials

- Chart Paper
- Video – *What is Racism?* <https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/the-power-of-we-media-gallery/sesame-street/>
- Video - *Addy Cadabby Shares a Personal Story* from the CNN/Sesame Street town hall regarding racism (<https://youtu.be/A4PHc1Vrh6A>)
- Read aloud – *A Kid’s Book About Racism* (<https://youtu.be/LnaltG5N8nE>)
- Book – *Antiracist Baby* by Ibram X. Kendi (available on eMax/Sora) or https://youtu.be/_Gezd_Y_Kqc
- Video – *How to be an Upstander to Racism Song and Listen, Act, Unite Song*
<https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/the-power-of-we-media-gallery/sesame-street/>

Educator Pre-reflection

Before engaging in this lesson, consider:

Tips for talking about race with students (<https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/race-talk-engaging-young-people-in-conversations-about>) The article linked with give you some tools and support in facilitating these conversations.

Familiarize yourself with the 3 forms of racism: <https://www.racialequitytools.org/fundamentals/core-concepts/racism>

Recognize that you are a learner too, and that you are also working towards becoming an Anti-Racist Ally

This lesson uses the “Think/ Pair/ Share Strategy.” If you are not familiar with this strategy, read about it here: <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching-support/active-learning-pedagogies/active-learning-adapting-techniques/think-pair-share/>

Even though this lesson focuses on racism, this concept applies to other forms of oppression (sexism, heterosexism, ableism, classism etc.) in intersecting ways. The focus on racism is to guide learners toward an understanding of oppression as bigger than interpersonal conflict and to show the myriad of ways in which oppression affects people.

*Please be aware that race is a heavy burden many racialized students carry even at a very early age due to their lived experiences. If a racialized student is unwilling to share, participate, or even be present for these conversations, it may be due to personal triggers. Thus, forcing them to participate in a conversation about race where they do not feel safe may cause added harm to such students. As the expert on your students' background history, triggers, body language, and classroom dynamics, please make informed and empathetic decisions to ensure a safer and inclusive setting to engage in these brave conversations.

Student Pre-reflection

Before you begin, think about...

What do you know about the word "racism"?

Provocation

Show students the video – *What is Racism?*

<https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/the-power-of-we-media-gallery/sesame-street/>



Ask students what they learned about racism from the video. They can use the Think/Pair/ Share strategy with an elbow partner to reflect on their thoughts or can share with the whole class.

Show students the video - *Addy Cadabby Shares a Personal Story* from the CNN/Sesame Street town hall regarding racism

<https://youtu.be/A4PHc1Vrh6A>



Using a similar strategy as above, invite students to share any further ideas they learned about racism from this video. Monitor discussions closely to get a sense of students' depth of understanding, possible misconceptions, hesitation and/or inappropriate or racist reactions.

Learning Task/Activity

Part A – WHAT IS RACISM?

Read aloud: *A Kid's Book About Racism* (<https://youtu.be/LnaltG5N8nE>).

On a chart paper, write the word “Racism” in bold letters as the title. Divide the paper into quadrants and write the questions below in each quadrant.

As a class, discuss the following questions to understand student’s conceptualization of racism from the provocation and read aloud:

1. *What does racism look like? (i.e., pushing, hitting, tears, fighting, protesting)*
2. *What does racism sound like? (i.e., yelling, making fun of, crying, mean words)*
3. *What does racism feel like? (i.e., sadness, anger, fear, hatred)*
4. *How can we be anti-racist and take action to stand up against racism? (i.e., say something, tell others their words or actions are racist, get help from adults, not ignore or walk away, not stand by, not join in)*

Use a four different colours to record student responses in each quadrant. For now, focus on the first three questions. Students will explore the fourth question further during the next section of the lesson.

PART B – HOW CAN WE BECOME ANTI-RACIST?

Say: Becoming Anti-racist means taking action to stand up against racism.

Why is it important to learn ways to be anti-racist?

What are some actions we can take to stand up against racism and work towards being anti-racist?

Add students’ responses to the fourth quadrant.

Say: Let’s discover some more ways that we can be anti-racist.

Read/Watch the book – *Anti-racist Baby* by Ibram X. Kendi (available on eMax/Sora)

[https://youtu.be/ Gezd_Y_Kqo](https://youtu.be/Gezd_Y_Kqo)

Show students the video – *How to be an Upstander to Racism Song and Listen, Act, Unite Song*

<https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/the-power-of-we-media-gallery/sesame-street/>

Consolidation

After viewing the resources in Part B, add more ideas to the fourth quadrant of the chart and post in the classroom for future reference. Consider sorting the ideas based on things we can do as individuals, things we can do as a class or sort in some other way.

Educator/Student Post-Reflection

Choose one of the following:

The main idea I want to remember or take away from this lesson is...

My next step is...

I need to learn more about...

I am feeling _____ after this co-learning experience.

Ideas for Going Deeper/Further Resources

1. Learn the words and actions to ***Listen, Act, Unite Song***. Create a song or poem with actions based on the list of ideas that the class created on the anchor chart.
2. Use the list of anti-racist actions that the class came up with to create a song of your own. Be sure to include actions.
3. Divide the class into 5 groups and give each group the [Understanding Racism – Story Writing worksheet](#). In their groups, with the ideas on the anchor chart as guidance, students will create a short story about how they can stand up to racism in their school environment. The story should have the following details:
 - An act of racism in the school context
 - A racialized person (student or teacher) as the victim who stands up to the racist behaviour
 - A third party who decides to support the victim of racism (ally or upstander) rather than to remain a bystander.
 - The story could have a happy, sad or angry ending.

Each group can share their story with the class or act it out if all members of the group are comfortable with this.

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