Navigating Difficult Conversations: Strategies for Engaging Students in Social Issue Discussions

Part 2

Welcome!

Please use the chat box to introduce yourself and where you teach.

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Two-Box Induction or Find My Rule

- I am going to sort a number of statements into either category "A" or category "B"
- It will be your job to define the pattern
- Why are some statements in "A" and others in "B"?

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What is the pattern?

- Collaborative
- Enlarges one's point of view
- Searches for agreement

- Oppositional
- Re-affirms one's point of view
- Searches for differences

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What is the pattern?

- Collaborative
- Enlarges one's point of view
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- Calls for temporary suspending one's own beliefs

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- Invests wholeheartedly in one's own beliefs

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- Oppositional
- Re-affirms one's point of view

- Searches for differences
- Invests wholeheartedly in one's own beliefs
- Listen to respond

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What is the pattern?

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- Listen to understand

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- Invests wholeheartedly in one's own beliefs

- Listen to respond

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What is the pattern?

- Collaborative
- Enlarges one's point of view

- Searches for agreement
- Calls for temporary suspending one's own beliefs
- Listen to understand
- Open-ended

- Oppositional
- Re-affirms one's point of view

- Searches for differences
- Invests wholeheartedly in one's own beliefs

- Listen to respond

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What is the pattern?

- Collaborative
- Enlarges one's point of view

- Searches for agreement
- Calls for temporary suspending one's own beliefs

- Listen to understand
- Open-ended

- Oppositional

- Re-affirms one's point of view

- Searches for differences

- Invests wholeheartedly in one's own beliefs

- Listen to respond
- Conclusive

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Causes introspection on one's own implicit biases

Column A or Column B

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What is the pattern?

- Causes introspection on one's own implicit biases

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Assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and together, a workable solution can be found.

Column A or Column B

What is the pattern?

- Causes introspection on one's own implicit biases

- Assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and together, a workable solution can be found.

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Causes a critique of other positions

Column A or Column B

What is the pattern?

- Causes introspection on one's own implicit biases

- Assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and together, a workable solution can be found.

● Causes a critique of other positions

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"Winning" is the goal.

Column A or Column B

What is the pattern?

- Causes introspection on one's own implicit biases

- Assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and together, a workable solution can be found.

● Causes a critique of other positions
● "Winning" is the goal

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One submits their best thinking and defends it against challenges.

Column A or Column B

What is the pattern?

- Causes introspection on one's own implicit biases

- Assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and together, a workable solution can be found.

- Causes a critique of other positions
- "Winning" is the goal
- One submits their best thinking and defends it against challenges.

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Tries to understand and empathize with the lived experiences of others.

Column A or Column B

What should we title the columns?

- Causes introspection on one's own implicit biases

- Assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and together, a workable solution can be found.

- Tries to understand and empathize with the lived experiences of others.

- Causes a critique of other positions
- "Winning" is the goal
- One submits their best thinking and defends it against challenges.

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Student Voice Dialogue vs. Debate

- Causes introspection on one's own implicit biases

- Assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and together, a workable solution can be found.

- Tries to understand and empathize with the lived experiences of others.

- Causes a critique of other positions
- "Winning" is the goal
- One submits their best thinking and defends it against challenges.

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Two-Box Induction or Find My Rule

- Artifacts (primary vs. secondary courses)
- Quotes (Tesla vs. Edison)
- Examples and Non-Examples (fact vs opinion)
- Manipulatives

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What does an engaging and productive social issue discussion look like, feel like and sound like?

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Planning for a Successful Current and Societal Issue Discussion

1. **Create the climate for discussion**
2. **Give students tools collaboration and cooperation**
3. Pick an open issue
4. Pick the right strategy
5. Craft your prompt
6. Use a formative assessment to reflect and set new goals individually and as a class

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Reflect on the Past to Inform the Present

*Take time to have students **reflect** on their experiences, have a voice in **recalibrating** classroom practices to create routines for success and engage in a collective **renewal** of goals for the year. Then, **repeat** throughout the year.*

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Create a Safe Space in Troubling Times

When current events take center stage, help students process, curate information and answer questions. It is NOT the time for debate.

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Engage Students Voice in Creating Norms

How should we live together?

Dialogue vs. Debate

Build Your Classroom Community with Intention

#MaslowBeforeBloom

Teach for and with Cooperation & Collaboration

COOPERATION VERSUS COLLABORATION
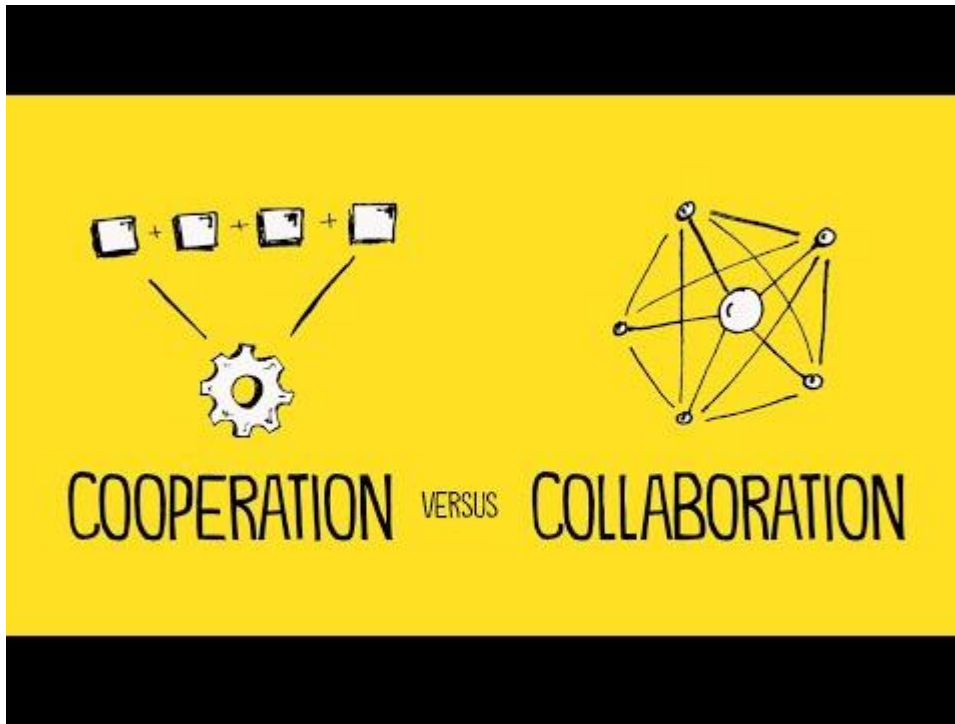
- Question Starters
- Transitions Statements
- Active Listening
- Sentence Starters
  - Corroborate
  - Counterclaim
  - Dig Deeper

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Engaging Student Voice with Formative Assessment is IMPERATIVE

Planning for a Successful Current and Societal Issue Discussion

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Start with an Open Issue

Open Issue	Settled Issue
● Matters of live controversy with multiple competing views ● Experts disagree on what conclusion to draw from competing evidence.	● There is broad-based agreement that a particular decision is well-warranted. ● There is sufficient evidence to support the agreed upon answer. ● The current policy is considered non controversial to rational people.

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Start with an Open Issue

Open Issue Examples	Settled Issue Examples
- Should the voting age be lowered to 16 for local elections? - Should we arm teachers to keep students safe? - Should the federal income tax be replaced by a national consumption tax? - In the system of federalism, who is best situated for mitigating climate change (local, state, federal)?	- Should women be allowed to vote? - Was Japanese Internment justified? - Did the Holocaust occur? - Is climate change occuring?

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Reasonable Disagreement

"In this space, this is a settled issue."

Wayne Journell
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

00:08   06:27 HD CC

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Where to start...

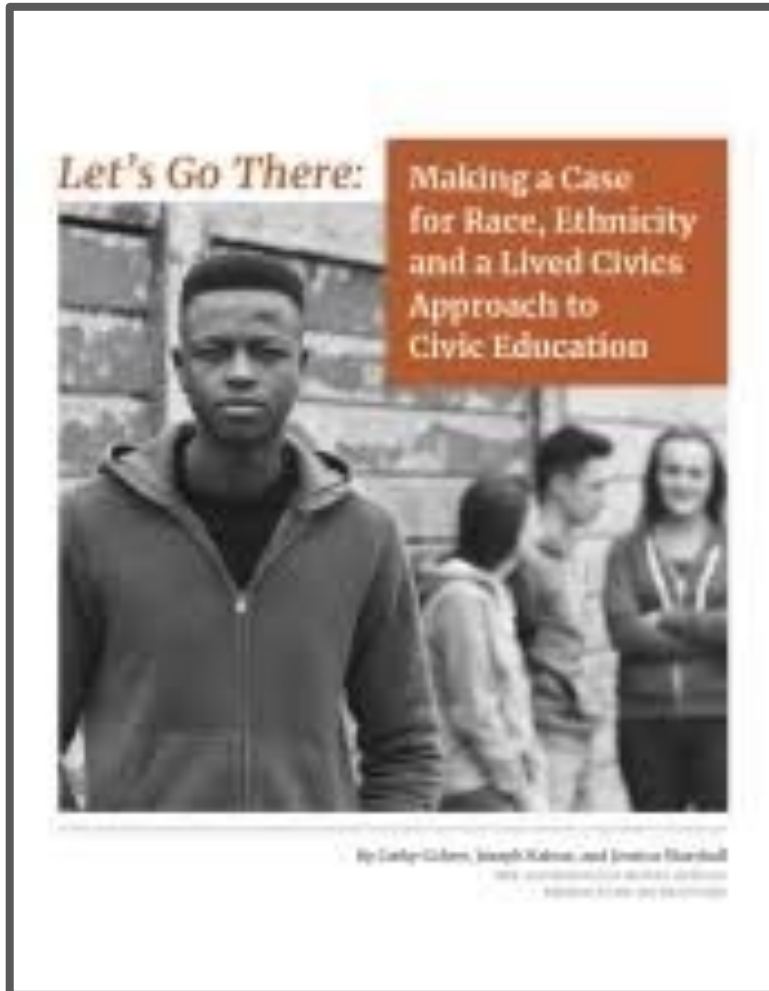- Do not seek out controversy for the sake of controversy.

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Providing Structure to Achieve Your Goal

Matching Your Issue and Objective with the Right Strategy

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Be clear on the goal of the discussion

Let's Go There: Making a Case for Race, Ethnicity and a Lived Civics Approach to Civic Education

By Cathy Cohen, Joseph Kahne, and Jessica Marshall

Discussion can be used to build consensus, clarify understanding, promote exploration of complex issues, and build empathy for the lived experiences of others.

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Teacher Disclosure

To what extent should teachers share their views on current and societal issues being deliberated in the classroom?

Consistently
Sometimes
Not sure
Rarely
Never

Briefly explain your view in the chat box

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Human Barometer

1. Give students individual think time to respond to the prompt
2. Students "Take a Stand"
   a. physically move to take a position
   b. use post it notes or digital tools
3. Students share perspectives, acknowledging the comments of others
4. Students are encouraged to be flexible thinkers and move if position changes
5. Debrief

Iterations: Four Corners or Philosophical Chairs

Variations: Forced Perspective, Assign a Perspective, Human Barometer Online

Rules of Engagement

- Listen to understand. This is NOT a debate, but a discussion.
- Summarize point of previous speaker before contributing your own view.
- When you speak, address ideas, not the people stating them.
- Use academic language to agree, disagree, ask a question, clarify an idea or add a new idea.
- If someone says something you agree with, or your position changes as the discussion progresses, you may change locations.
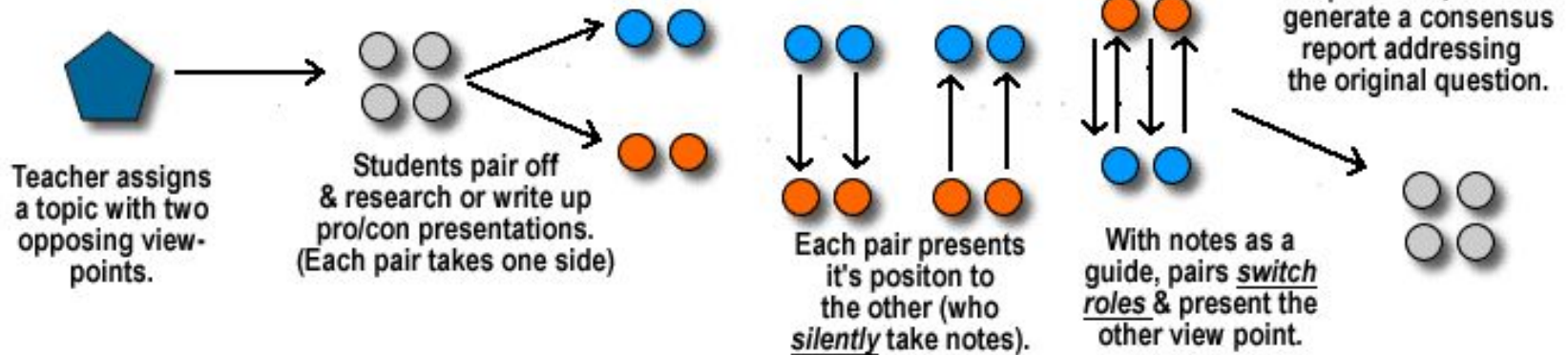
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Human Barometer

Works best when:

- There are clear choices.
- The claims students use are based on evidence (logos).
- Students do not have a personal connection to the issue (ethos), as students may confuse the attempts of their peers to persuade them as attacks on their lived experience.
- The issue will not be emotionally charged for participants (pathos), so that they will not be upset by the persuasion of others.

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Structured Academic Controversy

STRUCTURED - CONTROVERSY (diagram by Jesse Gentile)

Teacher assigns a topic with two opposing view-points.

Students pair off & research or write up pro/con presentations. (Each pair takes one side)

Each pair presents it's positon to the other (who silently take notes).

With notes as a guide, pairs *switch roles* & present the other view point.

Pairs drop their positions, and generate a consensus report addressing the original question.

Rules of Engagement

- You do not have to agree with the perspective your are representing. Your role is to convey what you perceive to be their strongest points.
- When you are listening, take notes and jot down clarifying questions to ask at the end. Listen to understand, not respond.
- When positions are dropped, seek areas of agreement in consensus building. This is not a debate.

Structured Academic Controversy

Works best when:

- There are two clear perspectives, but room for compromise to build consensus.
- When building consensus, students can use text based evidence (logos) and their own lived experiences (ethos).
- Neither of the assigned perspectives would be morally objectionable for students to defend (pathos).
- Should NOT be used to deliberate settled issues (slavery, Japanese-Internment, separate but equal).

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Big Paper Talk

- Students in small groups are given a text, prompt or image as a stimulus (could be the same or varied)
- Students silently reflect on the prompt and simultaneously provide questions, comments and observations.
  - post it notes
  - different color text
- Students silently respond to others in their small group
- Students then comment on other group's "Big Paper"
- Students return to their paper and silence is broken
- Debrief as a large group

Variations: Gallery Walk, Small Paper Talk, Big Paper Talk Online

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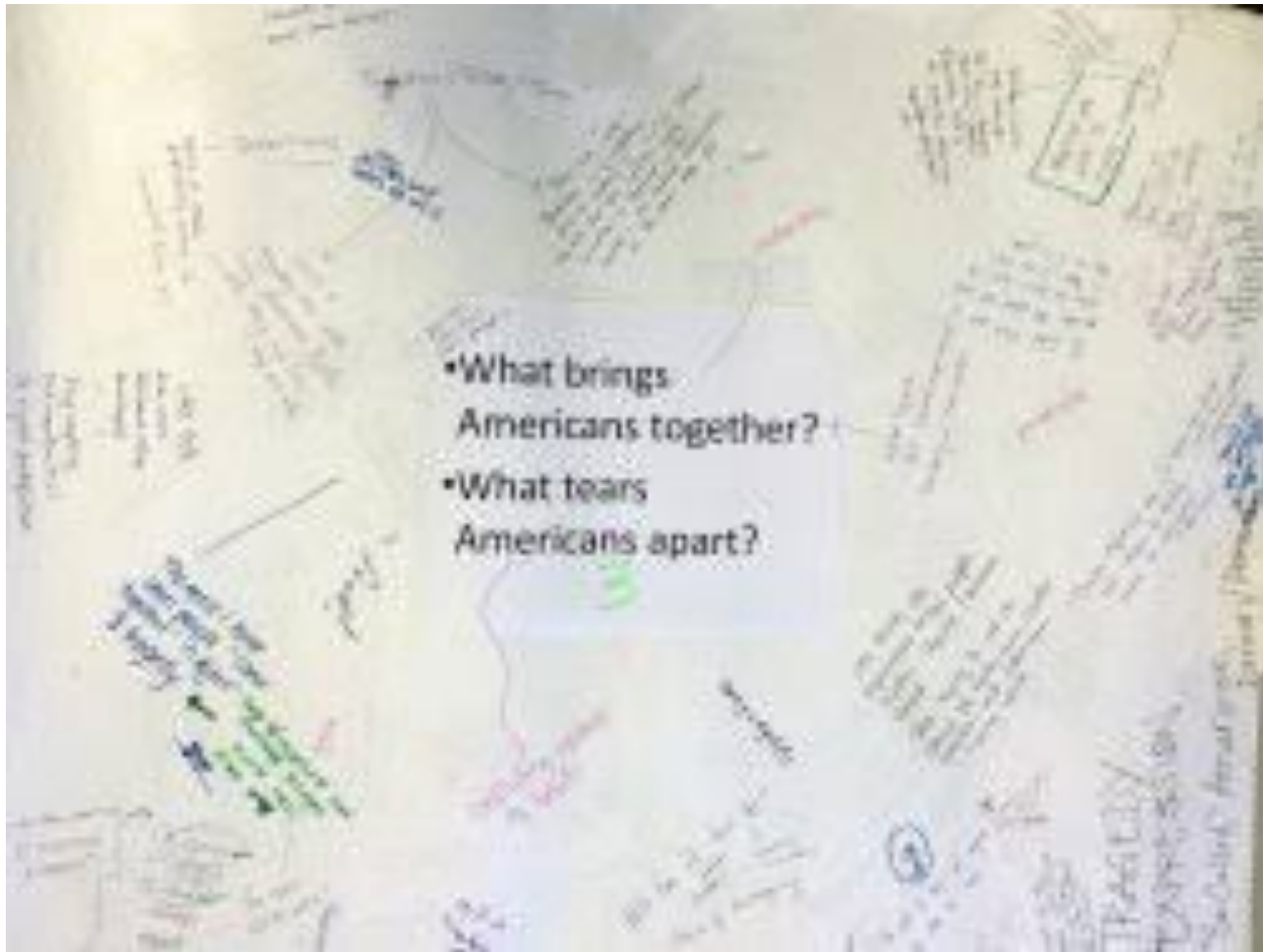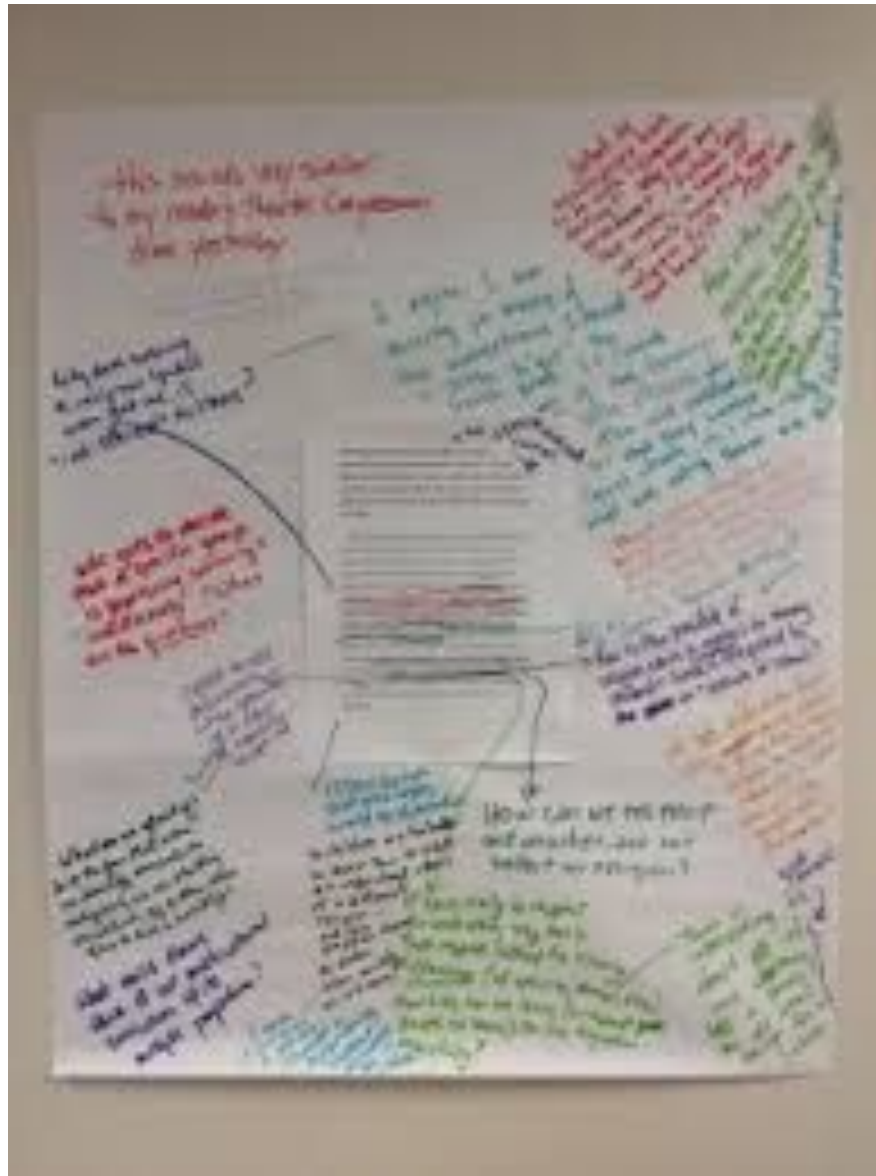
Big Paper Talk- Teacher Disclosure

1. What is to be gained by teachers sharing their views in current and controversial issue discussions?
2. What are some of the potential pitfalls of teachers sharing their views in current and controversial issue discussions?
3. Are there some guidelines that teachers should follow if/when contributing their views on current and controversial issue discussions?
4. When should a teacher ABSOLUTELY intervene in a current and controversial issue discussion?

Big Paper Talk

Works best when:

- There are a wide array of perspectives
- Students can discuss and question the text/prompt to clarify their own understanding of the issue (logos) and how it relates to the lived experience of others (ethos) to build empathy (pathos).
- The topic may be more emotionally charged, as no one is attempting to persuade or compromise with others.

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Crafting Your Prompt

Human Barometer	The prompt should provide a binary choice to facilitate students to choose if they agree or disagree, supporting their choice with evidence.	Should the federal minimum wage be raised to $15 per hour?
Structured Academic Controversy	The prompt should allow the participants to explore two sides to an issue, but have room for students to reach consensus.	To what extent should the federal minimum wage be changed?
Big Paper Talk	The prompt should be open and allow participants to provide textual evidence and experience to address the prompt and offer additional questions for discussion.	What responsibility does the federal government have to guarantee a living wage?

Quick Tip...

- Build "the muscles" before swimming into "deeper waters."

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# Engaging Student Voice with Formative Assessment is IMPERATIVE

PROJECT ZERO

Teacher Disclosure

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on current and
societal issues
being deliberated
in the classroom?

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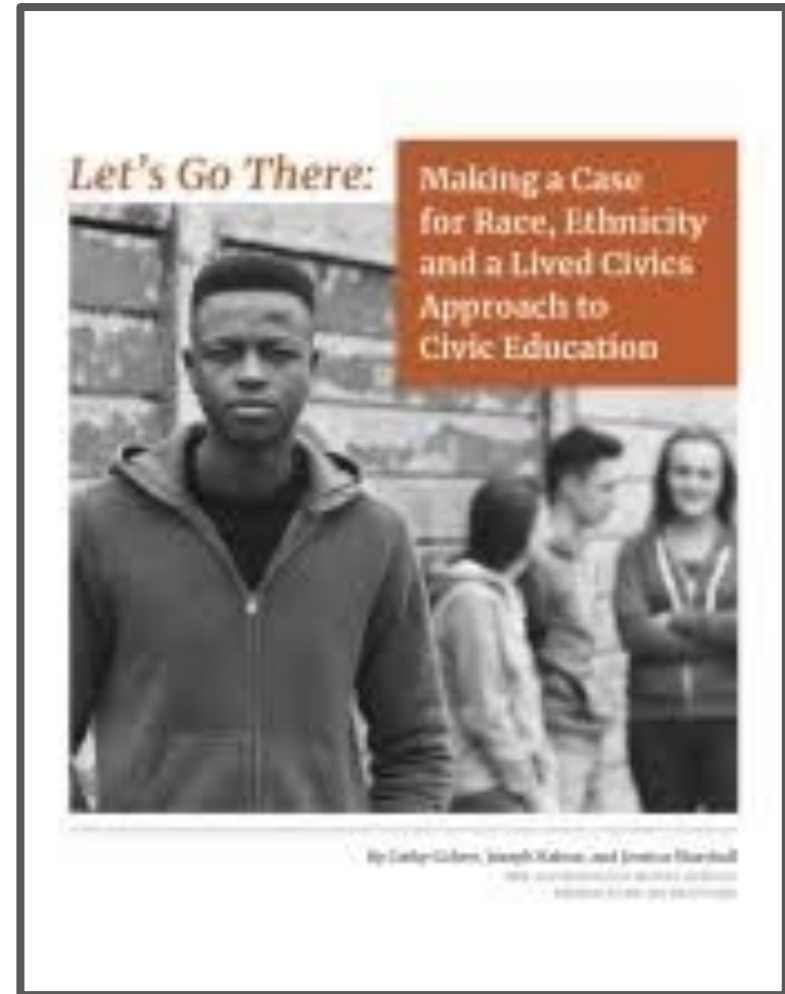for Environmental Education
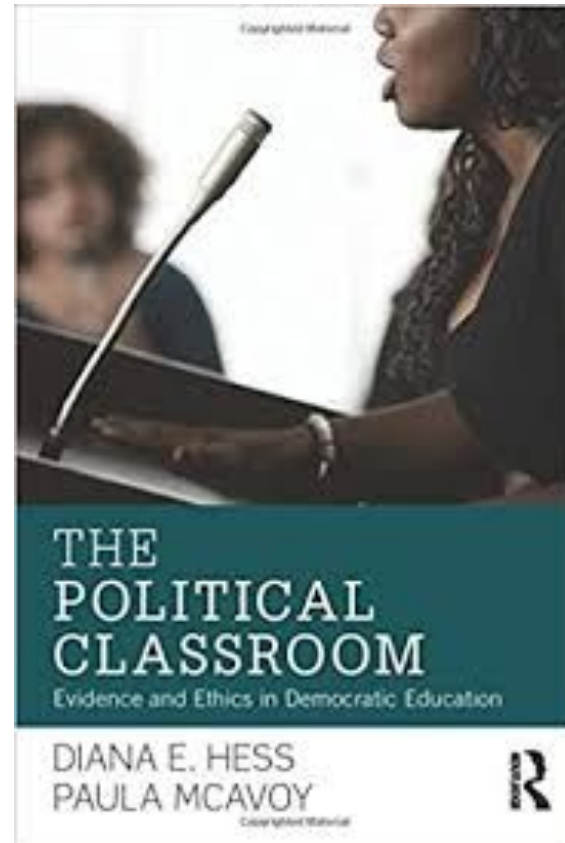
How does a teacher address her own privilege and prejudices on race and share those uncomfortable insights with students?
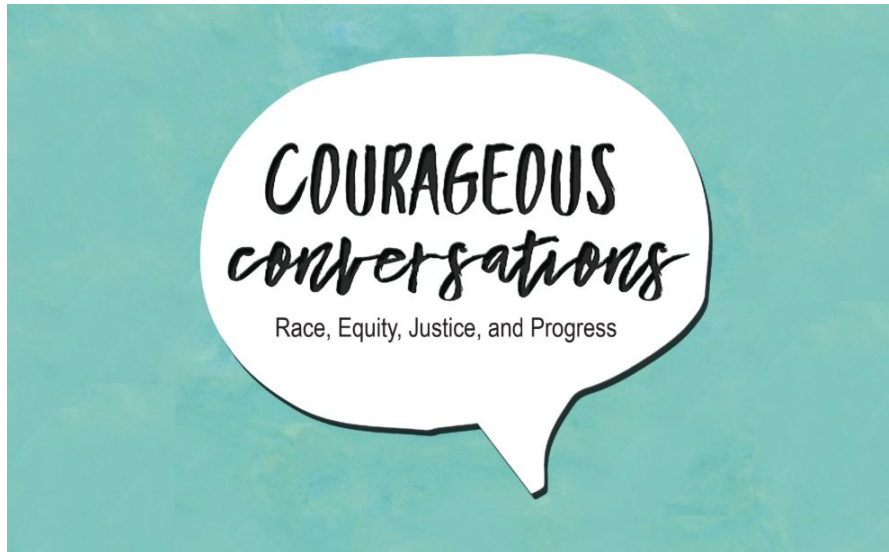
- [Anti Racism ToolKit for Parents](#)
- [Anti-Racism Toolkit for Classrooms](#)
- [Blog recapping series and links to webinars.](#)

How does a white teacher introduce these conversations among African American students from disadvantaged backgrounds?

Let's Go There: Making a Case for Race, Ethnicity and a Lived Civics Approach to Civic Education

By Carly Gilson, Joseph Kahne, and Jessica Marshall

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How can we engage 8th graders in community-based research about local environmental racism? What resources for middle school? Citizen Science?

L.E.A.D.

Learn
Explore and Engage
Authentic Action
Digest and Demonstrate

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How can we engage 8th graders in community-based research about local environmental racism? What resources for middle school? Resources for Citizen Science?

- [IllinoisCivics.org Curriculum Design Toolkit-](#) [Service Learning with Infomred Action](#)
  - [What Kind of Citizen During a Pandemic?](#)
- [PBL Works](#)
- [National Geographic Geo-Inquiry](#)
- [National Youth Leadership Council](#)

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★ **Current and Controversial Issue Discussions**

    ★ Module 1- Orientation
    ★ Module 2- The What and Why
    ★ Module 3- The How
    ★ Module 4- Overcoming Obstacles
    ★ Module 5- Create a Plan of Action

★ Model Best Practices in Online Learning

CERTIFIED EDUCATOR

DISTINGUISHED EDUCATOR

GUARDIAN EDUCATOR

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Lingering Questions?

Navigating Difficult Conversations: Strategies for Engaging Students in Social Issue Discussions

Part 2

http://bit.ly/naeeadiscussions2

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