

SPRINGBOARDS FOR DISCUSSING PREJUDICE

Student Instructions: This page contains an assortment of springboards for you to dive into a discussion of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. Feel free to discuss the questions in any order or create springboards of your own. The key thing is not to answer all the questions, but to have a good discussion in which everyone participates fully.

1. Is it possible to be free of prejudice? Have you ever met anyone who was?
2. Are *you* prejudiced? If so, what are some recent instances in which you behaved in a prejudiced way? If not, how do you know that you're not prejudiced?
3. If you've behaved in a prejudiced way, what caused the prejudice, and what might reduce it? How did other people respond to your behavior?
4. If a close friend or family member were to make a prejudiced comment, would you protest? Why or why not? What about a stranger or acquaintance -- would you respond in that situation?
5. If you were to make a prejudiced comment at a party or among a group of friends, would your friends say something?
6. Does the categorization of people always result in prejudice? What about categorizing people in a positive way -- does that result in prejudice?
7. Are stereotypes ever a good thing? Have you ever tried to get people to stereotype you, either positively or negatively?
8. Does the very categorization of people -- for example, as female, a college student, African-American, or Texan -- necessarily rob them of individuality?
9. At a psychological level, what are the common denominators that link all forms of prejudice?
10. In general, which forms of prejudice seem to be declining over time, and which forms seem to be persisting or increasing?
11. Which forms of prejudice most socially acceptable, and which are least acceptable? Why are some forms more acceptable than others?
12. When, if ever, is it best to remain colorblind to race and ethnicity? When, if ever, is it best to celebrate multicultural differences? Do the goals of colorblindness and multiculturalism conflict with each other?
13. What do you think the most difficult aspect is of being a racial, ethnic, or religious minority member? What is the most difficult aspect of being a majority group member?