



Racial Justice and Advocacy (RJA) Curriculum

Sample Lessons for Grades 1-4

Grades 1-2¹: Students learn about differences in identity, both hidden and exterior characteristics. Students learn that people are sometimes treated differently because of their racial identity.

Sample Lesson		Learning Objectives
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p>Defining Race, Justice, and Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the first lesson, students in grade 1 hear from students in grades 2-4 on their RJA experiences in first grade. For example, the older students speak about activities and games they enjoyed, reflect on the purpose of RJA, and highlight the safe, supportive environment of affinity spaces. In the next lesson, teachers facilitate a discussion on the meaning of the words "race," "justice," and "advocacy." For example, students learn that advocacy means being an ally and standing up for yourself or others. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the purpose of the RJA curriculum Define the concepts of race, justice, and advocacy
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p>Exploring Different Skin Tones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers read aloud the following books that recognize and name different skin tones, such as <i>The Colors of Us</i> by Karen Katz, <i>All the Colors We Are</i> by Katie Kissinger, and <i>Shades of People</i> by Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly. Students mix paints to create a spectrum of skin tones. Each student chooses a swatch they feel matches their skin tone and chooses a name that describes their skin color. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that skin tone represents one physical characteristic of identity

1) Students in grades 1 and 2 experience a two-year RJA curriculum sequence. In one year, all students in grades 1 and 2 experience the year 1 sequence. In the following year, all students experience the year 2 sequence, and so on and so forth.

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Grade 3: Students investigate race as a social construct and analyze the impact of race and racism in the country.

Sample Lesson

Learning Objectives



Examining Race Through the Census

- Students study U.S. Census questions from the 1800s, 1900s, and 2000s and observe how categories for race have changed over time. Students discuss the implications of legitimizing specific groups while marginalizing others.

- Describe the purpose of the U.S. Census
- Investigate how identifying as white has evolved over the last century

Grade 4: Students examine how racism manifests in systems, laws, and policies that disenfranchise specific groups of people.

Sample Lesson

Learning Objectives



Analyzing Freedom in the 1700s

- Students study how laws created in the 1700s preserved freedom for white Europeans and denied freedom for Africans and First Nations. Students rotate among activity stations to analyze New York City's slave laws from the 1700s, reflect on why Europeans created a racial hierarchy, and learn about methods of resistance.

- Discuss the concept of freedom
- Analyze how laws may preserve freedom for some groups while denying freedom for others
- Define different forms of resistance and recognize examples of changemakers