

Introduction to ABE: Responsiveness and Action

Resources

- [Responsiveness and Action \(Lesson Slideshow\)](#)
- [Stepping Up: The Band Leader](#) (2:35)
- [Stepping Up: The Social Justice Activist](#) (3:06)
- [Dot Exercise - Unlearning: Breaking Bias, Building Community](#) (2:16)

Identities & Themes

- Friendship
- Identity affirmation
- Standing up for self/others
- School success
- Racial bias/racism
- Bias, prejudice, and stereotypes
- Privilege
- General diversity
- Black/African American
- Latinx/o/a and/or Hispanic
- Bi/Multiracial identity
- Immigration/Migration

Summary of Resources

The [Responsiveness and Action \(Lesson Slideshow\)](#) introduces students to the Anti-Bias Education tenet of Responsiveness and Action.

[Stepping Up: The Band Leader](#) (2:35) - This video is part of KQED's "Stepping Up" series, which features young people working for change in their communities and explaining what moved them to take action. In this video, Walter Diaz, an immigrant from El Salvador, talks about starting a Latino marching band with his classmates to bring awareness and attention to the issues immigrants face, to celebrate culture through music, and to spread resources about legal rights to immigrants.

[Stepping Up: The Social Justice Activist](#) (3:06) This video is also part of KQED's "Stepping Up" series. Naudika, a multi-racial teen, talks about how her work with Californians for Justice, a social justice group fighting for equity in schools, and how it connects to her identity.

Dot Exercise - Unlearning: Breaking Bias, Building Community (2:16) - This video illustrates how perceived differences contribute to the social dynamics of exclusion and isolation.

Before You Teach

Anti-Bias Education

Anti-bias education teaches students that their decisions have the ability to affect positive change within themselves, their families, their schools, and their community. They can make responsible decisions around the things they say, the way they behave, and how they interact with others. When students feel confident with themselves and can respect the identities and differences of others, they will be better equipped to call out instances of mistreatment and stand up to injustice against themselves and on behalf of others.

Taking action against injustice starts with awareness and self-reflection. Taking action can be small - it doesn't have to mean protesting or writing letters. It can start with mindfulness and thinking before we speak or act, or inviting someone new to have lunch, or telling someone that their joke is offensive and asking them not to tell it again. Taking action for students can also mean creating an inclusive school climate where people feel safe in their identities and a sense of belonging. It is important that students don't feel like they must take on the world in order to make change because that can feel overwhelming and disempowering.

- “Anti-bias education is a critical approach to teaching and learning that recognizes that change is needed.”
- “Anti-bias educators actively challenge prejudices and injustices. They engage in critical thinking and problem solving, supporting all children in developing a fuller understanding of themselves and their place in the world.”
- “Anti-bias teaching helps children strengthen their identities as capable and empowered human beings.”
- “Through anti-bias education, children identify issues and inequities in their lives, ask questions, consider multiple perspectives and thinking about their lives critically, growing to actively resist prejudice and discrimination.”
- “Anti-bias education acknowledges that while education is a human right, in today's classrooms, schools, and society, biases are shaping the experiences and very futures of children.”

(Source: Derman-Sparks, Louise, et al. *Leading Anti-Bias Early Childhood Programs: a Guide for Change*. Teachers College Press, 2015.)

Teacher Reflection Questions

- Did you ever try to stand up to unfairness or bias as an adolescent? If so, how did your peers around you respond? How did the adults respond?
- What issues or causes do you feel most passionate about? What would it mean for you to take action in regards to these issues or causes?
- Think about situations when you decided to take action and when you decided to stay back. What was different about the times you stepped forward versus the times you didn't? When you took action, what was the result? How did this impact you moving forward?

Materials Needed for Lesson

- [Responsiveness and Action \(Lesson Slideshow\)](#)
- Ability to project a video and slideshow
- Journal or notebook

Process of Implementing

- Project the [Responsiveness and Action \(Lesson Slideshow\)](#).
- **Slide 1: Responsiveness and Action**
 - Ask: *What do you think it means to take action against injustice?*
 - *What is injustice?*
 - *What's the difference between fairness and justice? (Unfairness and injustice)*
- **Slide 2: Journal Questions:**
 - *What are examples of injustice that you see in your own life (in school, in the community, in the larger world)?*

- *What feelings, thoughts, reactions, and actions do you have when you witness or learn about an injustice?*
- Discuss students' answers.

- **Slide 3: Stepping Up: The Band Leader Video**

- Introduce the video to students by explaining they will watch two videos in which two teens share about their experiences in activism, what motivated them to action, and who inspired them along the way.
 - **Note:** This video is in Spanish, with English subtitles. We suggest reading the subtitles out loud for students as they follow along.
- After showing the video, check for understanding by asking the following questions: (Adapted from the [Stepping Up Classroom Guide](#) by Rachel Robertson)
 - What motivated Walter to step up and take action?
 - What specific actions did Walter take?
 - Who supported Walter? What allies and organizations did he draw on?

- **Slide 4: Stepping Up: The Social Justice Activist Video**

- After showing the video, check for understanding by asking the following questions: (Adapted from the [Stepping Up Classroom Guide](#) by Rachel Robertson)
 - What motivated Naudika to step up and take action?
 - What specific actions did Naudika take?
 - Who supported Naudika? What allies and organizations did she draw on?

- **Slide 5: Dot Exercise - Unlearning: Breaking Bias. Building Community Video**

- Explain to students that being responsive and taking action can look many different ways. Taking action against injustice starts with awareness and self-reflection. Taking action can be small - it doesn't have to mean protesting or writing letters. It can start with mindfulness and thinking before we speak or act, or inviting someone new to have lunch, or telling someone that their joke is offensive and asking them not to tell it again. Taking action for students can also mean creating an inclusive school climate where people feel safe in their identities and a sense of belonging. It is important that students don't feel like they must take on the world in order to make change because that can feel overwhelming and disempowering.
- Introduce the video by explaining that they will watch one more video today that also showcases teens taking action but in a different way than the teens in the first two videos.
- After showing the video, ask students, *How is this video an example of students taking action?*

Discussion Questions

- *What keeps people from taking a stand when they see or feel something that is wrong?*
- *How can becoming aware of one's own bias, prejudice, and stereotypes be a form of taking action? Is this enough?*

Condition for Belonging: Responsiveness

ABE Connection

Empathy and Understanding

You as an adult learner will:

- Expand your capacity to understand, name, and process your own emotions.
- Increase your ability for perspective-taking by being responsive to another person's feelings and frames of reference.
- Foster positive social connections between students and their families across all differences.

Students will:

- Expand their capacity to understand, name, and process their own emotions.
- Increase their ability for perspective-taking by being responsive to another person's feelings and frames of reference.
- Foster positive social connections with peers across all differences.

Notice, Name, and Reject Bias

You as an adult learner will:

- Identify how you have been advantaged or disadvantaged by the "isms" (racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, etc.) and the stereotypes or prejudices you have absorbed about yourself or others.
- Foster each child's capacity to critically identify bias.
- Nurture each child's empathy for the hurt bias causes.

Students will:

- Increasingly recognize unfairness (injustice) and understand that unfairness hurts.
- Have the language to notice, name, and reject bias, prejudice, and stereotypes.

Responsiveness and Action

You as an adult learner will:

SEL Connection

Self-Management

Demonstrate & practice:

- Regulating one's emotions & compassion for self & others
- Pause between stimulus & response
- Healthy boundaries
- Setting & monitoring personal & academic goals
- Resilience in the face of obstacles

Social Awareness

Demonstrate & practice:

- Empathy & understanding
- Awareness of strengths in self & others
- Reflective listening
- Recognizing family, school, community resources & cultural competence

Responsible Decision-Making

Demonstrate & practice:

- Considering the well-being of self & others
- Recognizing one's responsibility to behave ethically
- Basing decisions on safety, social, & ethical considerations
- Evaluating realistic consequences of various actions
- Making constructive, safe choices about self & relationships

- Explore the mindset, behaviors, skills, and tools that foster responsiveness for self and others in the face of bias and discrimination.
- Cultivate each child's ability and confidence to stand up for self and others in the face of bias.

Students will:

- Demonstrate the mindset and skills to act against bias and discrimination.

*Language borrowed and adapted from Derman-Sparks et al. *Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves*. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2020.