



Writing for Change

RAISING AWARENESS OF DIFFERENCE, POWER, AND DISCRIMINATION

1.2 Generating a Description

Objectives

Specify the characteristics that learners think define a person as homosexual.

Discuss and challenge assumptions about the components of that definition.

Materials needed

Pen and paper, or copies of the next page

Time needed

Five to ten minutes

Instructor directions

Have students do a “write and pass” exercise creating a description of the chosen term. (One student writes a specified amount or for a specified length of time on an assigned topic, beginning an exercise, then passes the writing to the next student, who continues writing on the assigned topic for the specified amount or length of time.)

Ask the contributors to each definition to form groups and discuss the definitions, examining elements that are stereotypical.

Variation

Have your students follow the directions, creating a definition of the term “Christian,” “hearing impaired,” or “old.”



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1.2 Generating a Description Handout

Directions

Write the first sentence in a description of the term “lesbian.”

Pass the paper to the person seated beside you, who will write the next sentence.

Continue for one minute.

Discuss the description generated by the group. Answer the following questions:

How does this description reflect a stereotypical view of the term?

How does it challenge it?

Is there anything in your experience that supports this description? If so, what?

Is there anything in your experience that challenges it? If so, what?

Variation

Follow the above directions, creating a definition of the term “Christian,” “hearing impaired,” or “old.”