



Writing for Change

RAISING AWARENESS OF DIFFERENCE, POWER, AND DISCRIMINATION

1.12 Challenging Your Assumptions

Objectives

Identify and challenge assumptions based on factors such as age, ability, appearance, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

Rewrite each sentence in neutral terms (to avoid the assumption).

Materials needed

Copies of the handout

Time needed

Ten to twenty minutes, depending on depth of discussion

Instructor directions

In pairs or small groups, have your students identify the assumptions related to the above factors that are inherent in each sentence.

Identify the “norm” (a standard of conduct that should or must be followed; a typical or usual way of being or behaving, usually said of a certain group) and discuss how the assumptions reflect this norm.

Have your students rewrite each sentence in neutral terms to avoid the assumption.



Writing for Change

RAISING AWARENESS OF DIFFERENCE, POWER, AND DISCRIMINATION

1.12 Challenging Your Assumptions Handout

Directions

Read the following sentences and identify the assumptions inherent in each regarding age, ability, appearance, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic power or status.

Identify the “norm” (a standard of conduct that should or must be followed; a typical or usual way of being or behaving, usually said of a certain group) and discuss how the assumptions reflect this norm.

Discuss how these assumptions operate in your cultural situation. How are you affected by cultural assumptions about the “norm”?

Our founding fathers carved this great state out of the wilderness.

Mrs. Imoto looks remarkably good for her age.

Fashion Tights are available in black, suntan, and flesh color.

Someday I intend to visit the third world.

We need more manpower.

Our facilities all provide handicapped access.

I'm just a person.

The network is down again. We'd better get Kevin in here to do his voodoo on it.

Our boys were having a rough time of it, and the black regiment was, too.

How Neandertal man existed for so long is a mystery. He must have had the ability to adapt to his environment.

I see she forgot to sign her time sheet. She's acting a little blonde today.

Mitochondrial DNA testing should help us determine when our race split off from the lower creatures.

Confined to a wheelchair, Mr. Garcia still manages to live a productive life.

Pat really went on the warpath when the budget figures came out.

I won't be associated with you and your pagan behaviors!

The Academy now admits women and other minorities.

We have a beautiful daycare center where women can leave their children while they work.

See if you can Jew him down to \$50.

Personally, I don't think it's right that the foreign students come in here before term and buy up all the insignia bags. Our kids don't get a chance at them.

I completely forgot where I put my car keys. I must be having a senior moment.

Win a fabulous lovers' weekend in Hawaii! Prizes include a day at the spa for her and a relaxing game of golf for him.

That is not a very Christian attitude.

We welcome all guests, their wives, and their children.

May I speak to Mr. or Mrs. Williams?