

TITLE: EXPLORING ISSUES OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Rational

Today's youth are interacting daily in multicultural societies. It is the goal of the Yukon Human Rights Commission to increase awareness of the racial discrimination issues that young people face today. Educators and community organizations have responsibility to work together to teach acceptance and to achieve the goal of eliminating discrimination in society. This will make a healthier community.

Key concepts

- Present and explore with students the terminology as defined in the glossary
- Define racial discrimination (Brain storm)
- Teach students about the Yukon Human Rights Commission
- How is racial discrimination defined under the Yukon *Human Rights Act*?
- Prevent racial discrimination and promote personal, school and community well-being. See IRP Personal Development (Mental Well – Being)

General Ideas

- Choose 1-3 of the five objectives to provide students with a greater understanding of the topic. Two 45minute classes are suggested.
- Present and discuss terminology. Ask students to take notes if the terminology and definitions are not on hand outs
- Students participate in a brain storm to define racial discrimination
- The Yukon Human Rights Commission - who are they and what is their role in the Yukon? (Student resource: YHRC pamphlet "Promoting and Protecting Human Rights")
- Play Public service announcement "Human Rights are everyone's business" clip on racial discrimination
- Compare the in class brainstorm defining racial discrimination and definition under the Yukon *Human Rights Act*
- Class discussion providing examples of racism behaviors. On a flip chart have students come up with ideas on how racial discrimination can be prevented. What are some things that school bodies can do to help prevent racism? What can you do if you experience or witness racism?
- Students complete a group poster or collage

IRP Connections

Grade 8 Personal Development (Mental Well Being)

- Identify factors that contribute to emotional health and well-being
- Describe the characteristics of personal autonomy
- Examine the influence that friends have on individuals' attitudes and behaviour

Grade 9 Personal Development (Mental Well Being)

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- Show respect for others
- Relate their accomplishments to their sense of personal worth, potential, and autonomy
- Design and implement a plan to promote personal, school, and community well-being

Grade 10 Personal Development (Mental Well Being)

- Propose strategies for enhancing and maintaining emotional health and well-being
- Encourage respect for others

Grade 11 and 12

- Relate emotional health and well-being to personal productivity and to the work place
- Design, implement, assess and evaluate to promote personal, school, and community well-being

Additional resources

<http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/>- Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission

www.march21.com March 21 Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination

www.crr.ca Canadian Race Relations Foundations

www.tolerance.org Southern Poverty Law Center

www.chrc-ccdp.ca Canadian Human Rights Commission

Lesson 1

Racial Discrimination and the Yukon Human Rights Commission

Rationale: (the overall purpose for teaching the lesson in relation to the curriculum expectations and overall educational value)

Today's youth are interacting daily in multicultural societies. It is the goal of the Yukon Human Rights Commission to increase awareness of racial discrimination and ways that it can be addressed by young people and those working with young people. Educators and the community organizations can work together to teach principles of inclusion and respect in order to achieve the goal of eliminating discrimination in society. This will support healthier relations in the community.

- IRP Personal Development Grade 8-10(Mental Well Being) Grade 11-12 Personal Development

The instructor can select one to three of the five objectives listed below. Two 45minute classes are the suggested time frame. The additional resources are provided for the educator to investigate the issues at a greater depth.

Objectives: (knowledge, skills and attitudes)

Knowledge

- Describe the role of the Yukon Human Rights Commissions
- Define terms related to racial discrimination in relation to the Yukon *Human Rights Act* (race, racism, ethnicity, linguistic background, national origin, ancestry, discrimination, racial discrimination, harassment, bullying)
- Describe and provide historic examples of racial discrimination in Canada
- Describe examples of racially motivated bullying and harassment and other kinds of discrimination on young people. What effect does this have?
- Recommend print, video, website and community resources on racial discrimination

Skills

- Recognize behaviour and actions that are racial discrimination. Describe appropriate strategies for preventing and dealing with racial discrimination.

Attitude

- Express willingness to support and empathize with those who are victims of racial discrimination
- to understand, accept and respect that the community in which we live is multicultural

As a result of this lesson the students will have:

- Greater understanding of the terminology associated with racial discrimination.
- An increased awareness of the Yukon Human Rights Commission and their role
- Greater ability to prevent and respond to racial discrimination they may experience

Materials and equipment needed:

- Handout from the Yukon Human Rights Commission "Promoting and Protecting Human Rights" (plain language version is available)
- Flip Chart/black board/white board

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- Yukon *Human Rights Act*
- Class dictionaries
- Handout on Historical time line
- T.V.
- DVD player
- DVD “Human Rights are Everyone’s Business” (Racial Discrimination)

Activities

Brainstorm a definition of racial discrimination
Introduction to Yukon Human Rights Commission

Procedures: lesson 1

A. Information Base

Using the Jigsaw Strategy to introduce terminology:

Divide students into groups. Assign each group with terminology word to define (using dictionaries). Write definition on flipchart paper. Each group will present their definition to the class.

Terminology - race, racism, ethnicity, linguistic background, national origin, ancestry, discrimination, harassment, bullying

As the class presents the terminology the teacher compares and corrects if necessary using the teacher’s glossary.

B. Brainstorm activity

On the flip chart write racial discrimination. Brainstorm definition as a class

What do you think the terminology that we have learned has in common with racial discrimination? What is the connection between the words described in activity “A” and the class definition of racial discrimination?

- Ask probing questions using the terminology examined in activity “A”. For example, how could linguistic background relate to racial discrimination? (Possible answer from class: some one may not get a job that they are qualified for because they speak with an accent.)

C. Yukon Resources

Using the Jigsaw Strategy divide students into groups provide each group with materials from the Yukon Human Rights Commission. Ask the students what is the role of the Yukon Human Rights Commission? Each group will provide the class with a brief presentation of what their group discussed. Compare the group responses and note any major differences in understanding.

YHRC ‘s role includes:

- promoting the principle that every individual is free and equal in dignity and rights;
- promoting the principle that cultural diversity is a fundamental human value and a basic human right;
- promoting education and research to eliminate discrimination
- promoting settlement and resolution of complaints of discrimination

D. Closure

Comprehension check - instruct students to write down racial discrimination and to choose five

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additional words from the terminology list. Use them in sentences which describes a situation that they have seen, heard or experienced. Due next class.

Evaluation of Student Learning: (products, process, skills level)

Participation in discussions and group work.

Students are able to use six concepts from the terminology examined in activity “A”.

Lesson 2

Activities

Review the role of the YHRC from last class. Collect student sentences

Play video clip on Racial Discrimination from “Human Rights are Everyone’s Business”

Compare class brainstorm on racial discrimination and the definition under the *Human Rights Act*

Class discussion about how racial discrimination can be prevented.

Procedures:

A. Information Base

Review the class notes on the flip charts. Speak about the role of the Human Rights Commission if obvious information was missed. Key concepts to be discussed:

YHRC ‘s role includes:

- promoting the principle that every individual is free and equal in dignity and rights;
- promoting the principle that cultural diversity is a fundamental human value and a basic human right;
- promoting education and research to eliminate discrimination
- promoting settlement and resolution of complaints of discrimination

B. Video Presentation

DVD “Human Rights are Everyone’s Business” – Racial Discrimination class discussion questions

- Play video clip without sound. Stop before the Human Rights Commission logo and message comes up at the end
- What groups did you see in the video?
- What different ethnic groups were represented in the clip?
- Use some of the terminology that you defined in the last class to explain the main message in this video?
- Play clip again with sound
- After hearing and seeing the full clip what do you think the main message is in this video?
- Why do we need a public service announcement like this? What do people learn from it? How might it help us to understand the groups in our country?
- What role does the Yukon Human Rights Commission play in dealing with racial discrimination?

C. Human Rights Act definition of racial discrimination

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Use the flip chart from last class of the brainstormed definition of racial discrimination. Compare the class definition to the definition under the Human Rights Act.

- Why is it important to you to understand racial discrimination?
- Brainstorm some examples of racial discrimination related to your life experience as a young person – such as racially motivated bullying and harassment
- If you have never been a victim of racial discrimination, Do you think it is still important for you to understand the meaning of racial discrimination under the Human Rights Act? Explain your answer.
 - ◆ All of us have a responsibility to support people, no matter what their ethnicity race, color or culture. If someone is singled out, it creates a negative environment and an unwelcoming place to learn or to live in our community.
- What are other kinds of discrimination that you or people you know have faced? (Age, sex, disability.) How would the experience or feelings be similar or different from those who have experienced racial discrimination?
 - ◆ People would have similar feelings of rejection, anger, depression, although people may all react differently depending on the situation. People facing discrimination feel put down. Those facing racial discrimination may feel isolated from others, especially if there are no others of their ethnicity or culture.

D. Closure Preventive Measures

Using the Jigsaw Strategy students will return to their assigned groups. Each group will provide an example of racism or racial discrimination (provide 5-7mins)

Bring the students back together. With each example have the class identify the discrimination. Does racism or racial discrimination happen at school? What can students or school bodies do to prevent it? (Possible responses: Increase awareness of how it feels to be discriminated against, make posters, be proactive, school policies in place to support victims, educate students and teachers)

Are you experiencing racism if you are witnessing it?

When someone makes a statement that creates a “poisoned environment” what result does it have on the group as a whole? (Possible responses: People who are hearing or seeing harassment can be negatively impacted by it even if it isn’t directed at them. It creates a “poisoned” work or learning environment that makes it uncomfortable for everyone.)

What can you do if you experience or witness racism?

- Ask the bully or harasser to stop.
- If they don’t stop or you do not feel safe in asking them to stop, talk to a responsible adult and ask for assistance.

Each group will make one collage or a poster that represents respect and inclusive environments at school, home, or in the community. Students can choose to use magazines or draw a picture to add to the group’s collage. Students will share the collage or a poster with other groups.

Evaluation of Student Learning: (products, process, skills level)

Participation in discussions and group work. Completion of group poster or collage.

Additional recommended resources for teachers

Videos

National Film Board of Canada

Journey to Justice - Powerful testament to the contribution of Black people to the evolution of Canadian democracy and civil rights 2000

Bamboo, Lions and Dragons – racism in Chinese community in Vancouver B.C. 1981

In the Shadow of Gold Mountain – stories from survivors of Chinese Head Tax and Exclusion Act, 2004

Bronwen & Yaffa Moving Towards Tolerance- two Halifax women raising money with rap music to fight against racism

Colour Blind- impact of subtle racism on teenagers 1999

Websites

Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission <http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca>

Aboriginal Peoples Television Network- <http://www.aptn.ca/>

Canadian Human Rights Commission www.chrc-ccdp.ca

Canadian Race Foundation – www.crr.ca

March 21 Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination www.march21.com

National Film Board of Canada – teacher guide for additional web based activities:
<http://www.nfb.ca/?v=h&lg=en>

Search Society Southeast Alberta Racial & Community harmony society-
<http://www.memlane.com/nonprofit/search/VIDEOS.htm>

Southern Poverty Law Center www.tolerance.org

Books

Agger-Gupta, Niels. (1997). *Terminologies of Diversity* 97. Alberta Citizenship Service Branch, Alberta Community Development.

Coloroso, B. (2002). *The bully, the bullied, and the bystander*. Harper Collins ISBN: 0002006480 .

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Coloroso,B.(2006). *Just Because It's Not Wrong Doesn't Make It Right*. Harper Collins ISBN 0670044393 .

Giroux H.A.(1998). *Channel Surfing Racism the Media and the Destruction of Today's Youth*..Published by: Griffin ISBN- 0312214448

Yaconelli.M.& Koenigaecker.S. (1990).*Get 'E.M Talking 104 discussion Starters for youth groups*. HarperCollins Canada, Limited ISBN – 1863350691

Glossary of terms (Teacher reference)

Ancestry: self-classification by people according to ancestry group(s) with which they most closely identify their inherited properties, shared with others of their bloodline or ancestors; belonging to a group of people related by a common heritage.

Culture: Patterns of learned behaviours and values that are shared among members of a group, are transmitted to group members over time, and distinguish the members of one group from another. Culture can include: ethnicity, language, religion, and spiritual beliefs, race, gender, socio-economic class, age, sexual orientation, geographic origin, group history, education and upbringing, and life experiences. (Terminologies of Diversity 97, p,32)

Discrimination: unfair treatment of an individual or group based on their ethnicity, gender, disabilities, religion, age, skin colour, or other aspects of their identity

Ethnicity: ethnicity and race are related concepts. The concept of ethnicity refers to social groups, shared nationality, tribal affiliation, religious faith, shared language, or cultural and traditional origins and backgrounds. Race is the idea of a biological classification.

Harassment: unwanted behavior in any form that is directed at or is offensive to someone, and consists of objectionable conduct, comments, or that demeans, belittles, intimidates or humiliates another person. Harassment includes the misuse of authority, intimidation, threats, coercion and blackmail; it may be either personal or sexual in nature. Bullying is a type of harassment.

Linguistic background: involves a distinction between variations in language according to the user and defines variables such as social background, geography, sex and age, variations according to its use

National origin: a person's birthplace, ancestry, culture, or linguistic characteristics common to a specific ethnic group.

Race is difficult to define when speaking in terms of diversity. Thomas Gossett stated that "the fact that 'race' has no precise meaning has made it a powerful tool for the most diverse purposes." He also included the following quote the "word 'race' has probably been abused in modern times more than any other", so that "even to use it was virtually a confession of ignorance or evil intent" Francis Lieber, 1871 (Terminologies of diversity 97, p,61)

Race: any one of the groups into which the world's population can be divided on the basis of inherited physical characteristics such as skin or hair color. Ontario Human Rights Commission states that: "There is no legitimate scientific basis for racial classification. It is now recognized that notions of race are primarily centered on social processes that seek to construct differences among groups with the effect of marginalizing some in society."

(See www.ohrc.on.ca/english/publications/racism-and-racial-discrimination-policy_2.shtml)

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Racism: opinions and actions resulting from the belief that one group is superior to another. Referring generally to prejudicial attitudes against people who belong to other races mainly based on skin colour and ethnicity or nationality.

Racial discrimination: any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or ethnic origin which has the sole purpose of preventing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and freedoms in the economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life

Reference: Agger-Gupta, Niels. (1997). *Terminologies of Diversity* 97. Alberta Citizenship Service Branch, Alberta Community Development.

Historical time line

Although many Canadians today view Canada as a multicultural nation, its history is one of racial discrimination. This timeline provides some examples of racial discrimination in Canada's history and is intended as a guide for educators. The references are provided for the educator to investigate the issues at a greater depth.

1600's- mid 1800 Black Slavery

Under French Rule

- 1628 New France (today Quebec) The first recorded slave purchased from Madagascar, was a young boy and whose given name was Oliver Le Jeune.
- 1759 there were more than 1000 African slaves in Quebec

Under British Rule

- 1779 – In an effort to win the American War of Independence (1775-1783), the British invited all Black men, women and children to join the British cause and win their freedom for doing so. Ten percent of the united Empire Loyalist coming into the Maritimes were Black
- 1783 at the end of American Revolution, the British brought over approximately 2000 African slaves to Canada from the United States
- 1793 - 1834 legislation passed in Upper Canada (Today -Toronto/Georgia Bay/Lake Superior) to slowly eliminate slavery. Slaves already in the province would remain slaves until they died. No new slaves were to be brought into the province and children born to female slaves were free when they were 25 years old. Upper Canada became a safe haven for run-away slaves.
- 1833- British Imperial Act abolished slavery in all British colonies
- Between 1800 and 1865 approximately 20,000 Black people escaped to Canada via the Underground Railway. Former slaves who came to Canada faced racial discrimination. They could not own property, were in segregated schools, and business establishments refused to serve them. These practices continued into the 1950's. See *Journey to Justice* National Film Board of Canada for information on the civil rights movement in Canada.
- Historian Marcel Trudel has recorded that there were 4092 slaves throughout Canadian history, of which 2692 were aboriginal people, owned mostly by the French, and 1400 were Black people owned mostly by the British. There were approximately 1400 slave owners..(<http://today.answers.com/topic/slavery-in-canada>)

Aboriginal Relations

In 1876 the Indian act was put in place by the Canadian government. Its goal was to assimilate Canada's aboriginal population. Some of the key points were:

- Many Aboriginal children were taken away from their families and sent to residential schools which (operated until 1970's). This was enforced by the Indian agents.
- In the Yukon the first mission school was established in 1894 at Forty Mile and was called Buxton School and was mainly for orphans. The school was later relocated to Carcross Yukon. There was also the Lower Post Mission School that Yukon and northern B.C. aboriginal students attended.
- While attending residential schools children were prohibited from speaking their aboriginal language.
- The 50% Policy (1968 Kwiya Report). During the early years of integrating Yukon aboriginal students into the mainstream of public schools, concerns were raised by non-aboriginal parents that the aboriginal students lacked skills, particularly spoken English skills appropriate for their grade levels. Yukon Department of Education agreed to keep all classes at Selkirk Street School to a minimum of 50% aboriginal. To achieve this some aboriginal students were bussed to Whitehorse Elementary school.
- Many aboriginal societies that were traditionally nomadic societies were forced to move onto reserve land.
- Traditional ceremonies such as potlaches and dances were prohibited
- Status Indians could not vote, purchase liquor, or leave the reserve without their band cards (Indian status cards).
- All the laws under the Indian Act were enforced by the Indian agents

Asian Relations

In 1885 the Chinese Immigration Act was put into place. Chinese that came to work on the railroads faced many challenges and racial discrimination.

- They were prohibited from joining white unions. They could not vote and they were restricted from entering the professions.
- They earned less than their white co-workers
- They had to pay a head tax of \$50 to enter Canada. This was increased to \$500 in 1903.
- From 1923 to 1947- Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited all but a few Chinese from entering Canada. Men were not allowed to bring their wives to Canada.

World War II (see www.crr.ca-publications/factsheets/2000 on Japanese Canadian Experience)

- 1941 World War II Japan bombed Pearl Harbor
- 1942 Japanese Canadians suffered the consequences of Japan's actions. The Canadian Government confiscated property, separated Canadian Japanese family units and approximately 22,000 individuals were relocated and to camps.
- 1949 Four years after the war was over the War Measures Act was lifted and Japanese Canadians were permitted to travel freely in Canada

- 1988 Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement was signed. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney acknowledged the government's wrongful actions regarding Japanese Canadians.

Jewish Relations

- Canada restricted the immigration of Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany during the Second World War to 8000 people. This represented only 1% of the refugees admitted by other countries in the world. (www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org)
- Jews faced racial discrimination in employment and education.

1971- Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau introduces the Multiculturalism Act

1977- Canadian Human Rights Commission formed

1982- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms enacted

1987- Yukon Human Rights Commission formed

References

Black History – www.candianheritage.gc.ca

Canadian Journal of Communication 1971 Multicultural Act
<http://info.wlu.ca/~wwwpress/jrls/cjc/BackIssues/23.4/roth.html>

Chinese Immigration Act 1885. c. 71 - <http://www.asian.ca/law/cia1885.htm>

Chinese Canadian history- www.collections.ic.gc.ca/generations/index2.html

Emancipation Act - <http://www.africanhertour.org/story/timeline.html>

History of Yukon Land claims - <http://www.theyukon.ca/dbs/cyfn/>

Indian Act – <http://www.bloorstreet.com/200block/sindact.htm>

Japanese Canadian History- www.crr.ca

[Jewish history - \(www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org\)](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org)

Multiculturalism- http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/respect_e.cfm

NAARR Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations <http://www.naarr.org/>

Yukon mission schools CYFN - <http://www.theyukon.ca/dbs/cyfn/index.cfm>