

Implicit Bias (HS)

Student Learning

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STRENGTHENING OUR DEMOCRACY Civic Participation in the 21st Century



Implicit Bias

Understanding bias and discrimination are integral to civics education because they relate to people's civil rights. Our institutions, from schools to law enforcement to the court systems, need to treat its people fairly. In order to do so, an understanding of our own implicit biases is imperative. In the activities below you will explore implicit bias and reflect on everyday bias.

Connections

About this Lesson

Essential Questions: What is bias? What is Implicit Bias?

The U.S. Constitution embodies ideals of equal opportunity and fair treatment for all and are reinforced by laws like the Civil Rights Act and Title IX. Yet, marginalized people have experienced discrimination and unfair treatment, historically and in the present day. There are a surge of stories in the news and social media that makes it seem like racism, sexism and other forms of bias and discrimination are becoming more pervasive. Why? Part of the answer is because people discriminate based on factors they're not even aware of, implicit biases. Explore the resources and activities below to learn more about bias.

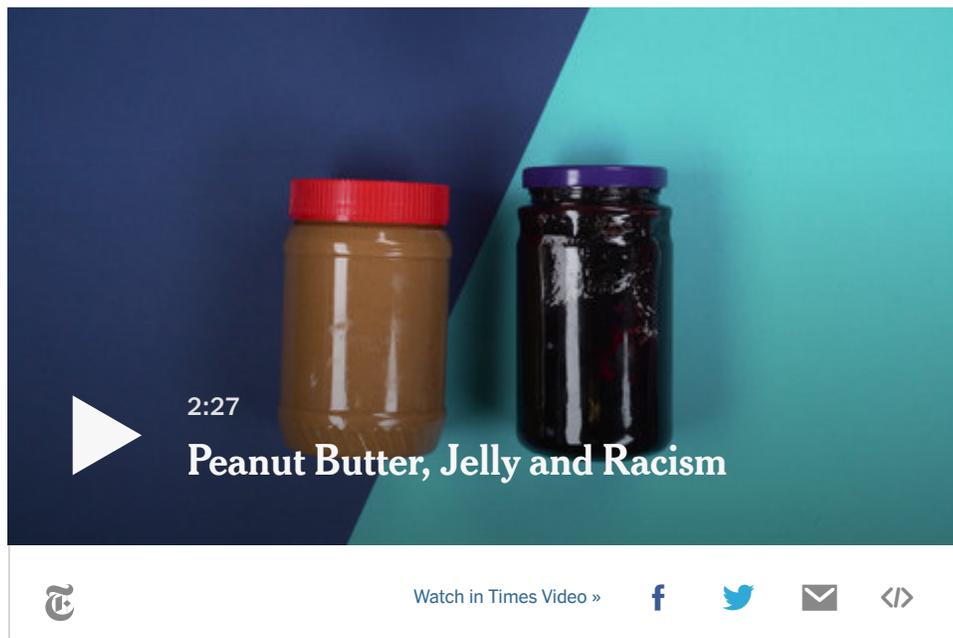
Curriculum: Strengthening Our Democracy: Civic Participation in the 21st Century

Grade Level: High school

Lesson Plan: [Implicit Bias](#)

Theme(s): A Civic Mindset, Power & Privilege

Practicing Discourse



- What is implicit bias?
- How is implicit bias different from racism?
- Does the difference matter?
- What does implicit bias have to do with peanut butter and jelly?

Examples of Implicit Bias

Select one of the examples of Implicit bias below and explain what the unconscious thought pattern that might be at work.

Example: A counselor is reading a college



Example: A counselor is reading a college application. After seeing that the student participated in robotics club, the counselor uses male pronouns for the review.

Thought pattern: *Because robotics clubs are often male-dominated, the counselor thought the student applying was male.*

A high school student is door-knocking for their favorite politician. When the homeowner answers the door, he says, "I was expecting someone much older than you!"

A jury is deliberating the evidence of a crime. Jury member number one says, "...of course it's a young black boy."

When assigning students to specific jobs at the election booth, the election judge assigned all the Asian students to count the ballots.



Did you know?

It is not always possible to distinguish between explicit and implicit bias. If implicit bias is unconscious, only the individual engaging in biased behavior knows what is going on in their mind and they may not even be aware of their bias.

Understanding Terminology

Explicit Bias

- Aware
- Voluntary
- Intentional

Example: A teacher says, "I need two boys to help me lift this desk because boys are strong!"

Implicit Bias

- Unaware
- Involuntary
- Unintentional

Example: A teacher asks for two students to help lift a desk. Before any volunteers could raise their hands, the teacher picked two boys from the class.

Match the word to the definition.

Implicit Bias

is an inclination or preference either for or against an individual or group that interferes with impartial judgment.

Explicit Bias

is the unconscious attitudes, stereotypes and unintentional actions (positive or negative) towards members of a group merely because of their membership in that group.

Bias

is the conscious attitudes, stereotypes and overt intentional actions (positive or negative) toward members of a group merely because of their membership in that group.

Gaining Perspective



Extend your Learning

Use the following [Bites Media](#) article(s) for extending learning to include more current events. Bites articles

present two points of view on an issue as a starting point for exploring multiple perspectives.

- [Hollywood Whitewashing](#)
- [Cultural Appropriation](#)



Reflection Questions

- What is the difference between implicit and explicit bias?
- Does the difference matter in cases where bias is shown? Does it matter if a person is unaware that they

are doing something wrong due to implicit bias versus knowing outright that it's wrong due to explicit bias?

- How can implicit bias affect your Civic life?



*ADL's curriculum [Strengthening Our Democracy: Civic Participation](#) in the 21st Century is designed to help students deepen their civic participation by understanding and challenging the biases that perpetuate social injustice. While utilizing ADL Education's anti-bias framework, the 80-lesson curriculum focuses on six major themes: *Civic Participation, Structures of Democracy, Social Justice and Civil Rights, Power and Privilege, Identity and Membership and Media and News Literacy.**

The goal of the curriculum is to facilitate productive discussion of controversial or difficult topics while enabling students to explore their civic engagement and identities through an **anti-bias and social justice lens**.

