

Multicultural Awareness Quiz

This activity requires 20-30 minutes.

Purpose:

The Multicultural Awareness Quiz illustrates how our perceptions of reality, and the "facts" we are taught through the media, the education system, and other sources of information, are often limited in depth or simply wrong. Students take a multiple choice quiz with questions relating to race, gender, and socioeconomic class, then discuss the correct answers and their own misperceptions.

Preparation:

Distribute copies of the [Quiz in Word Format](#).

Print a copy of the [Answer Key in Word Format](#) for yourself.

Instructions:

Ask participants to individually and silently answer the quiz questions to the best of their ability. Give them 5 or 6 minutes. After everyone has completed the quiz, follow these steps:

1. Allow participants to take turns reading the questions and offering their answer. After somebody has read a question, ask, by a show of hands, how many other students agree with their answer. Go through each other answer to the question, also inquiring about who chose each one. After you have polled the class on each answer, give the correct answer, and move on to the next question.
2. After polling the class on every question, and providing the correct answer, ask if anyone scored perfectly on the quiz. Begin counting backwards: "Who answered 19 correctly? 18? 17...?" In most cases, nobody will have answered more than 10 of the questions correctly, and most people will have answered only 3 or 4 correctly.
3. Probe the group with general questions: "How many of you feel misled or misinformed about these issues? Why did we struggle with these questions?" Most participants will be fairly stunned by their lack of knowledge about the issues, but be prepared to field some challenges about the questions and wording.
4. Ask if there are any specific questions that jump out at them, or any answers that surprise them. Ask why those particular answers surprised them where they had received information that led them to believe something different. Broaden this question, asking where people generally get information about race, gender, and socioeconomic class.
5. Several questions can be used to process this activity:
 1. Where do you get information about individuals and groups related to race, gender, socioeconomic class, and other social or cultural identities?

2. How do you process information that you get from these sources? Is your understanding of the information informed by your own experiences or worldview?
3. How can misinformation about these issues contribute to stereotyping and oppression?
4. What is your role as an educator in challenging these stereotypes or providing fuller understandings of these issues?

Facilitator Notes:

There may be some temptation to process each question separately. I strongly suggest going through all the questions and answers first, as it can be very powerful for someone to be reminded over and over how little they know about these issues in a short span of time.

It will also be effective if you take the quiz beforehand and share how you did before polling the students.

Some students may want to challenge particular questions or how they are phrased. This is a common defensive tactic individuals use to relieve themselves of dealing with the actual content of the quiz. It will be important not to feed into their defensiveness, but instead to affirm their critique. Explain that part of the purpose of the quiz is to learn to be more critical about ALL information we hear or read, and the information from this quiz is no different. (Remember, most participants will be fairly embarrassed or ashamed of their score on the quiz, so the building-back-up process is important to the success of this activity.)