

Power Shuffle Activity¹

Goals

- To demonstrate the diversity that exists among all of us.
- To reveal how neither our differences nor our similarities are always obvious or visible.
- To explore the feelings, both positive and negative, that can surface when we identify with a particular category or group of people.
- To show that in our society some differences are accepted and approved of while other differences are not.

Senior 1-4 Education Curriculum Connections

This activity contributes to the following Student Specific Learning Outcomes:

Guidance Education GLOs under Personal/Social Component.

Family Studies

- **S1 6.2.1** Identify issues facing families/self in a multicultural and global society, e.g., sexual tolerance, religious tolerance, racial tolerance.

Physical and Health Education

- **K.4.S1.B.2b** Identify appropriate social behaviours (e.g., use inclusive language, treat others with respect...) for developing meaningful interpersonal relationships.
- **K.4.S2.C.1a** Describe the behaviours necessary for providing others with support and promoting emotional health and well-being.
- **K.4.S1.B.3b** Examine effects of conflicts and the importance of seeing diverse sides of issues in developing meaningful personal and/or team relationships.

Social Studies

- **9 & 10-S-105** Recognize and take a stand against discriminatory practices and behaviours.
- **10 S-303** Reconsider personal assumptions based on new information and ideas.
- **9 & 10-S-400** Listen to others to understand their perspectives.
- **9& 10-S-401** Use language that is respectful of human diversity.
- **9 & 10-S-404** Elicit, clarify, and respond to questions, ideas, and diverse points of view in discussions.
- **9 & 10-S-406** Debate differing points of view regarding an issue.
- **9-VI-004** Be willing to consider diverse social and cultural perspectives.
- **9-S-102** Make decisions that reflect fairness and equality in their interactions with others.
- **9-S-400** Listen to others to understand their perspectives.

¹Adapted from Harrison Simms' Power Shuffle in *Breaking Barriers Through Education: A Guide for Facilitators* by Rainbow Resource Centre. 2000.

- *10-S-106 Propose options that are inclusive of diverse perspectives.*
- *10-S-107 Make decisions that reflect social responsibility.*
- *10-S-303 Reconsider personal assumptions based on new information and ideas.*

Have Ready

- A space to walk back and forth from (this can also be done by sitting down and standing up.)
- Power Shuffle statements.

Activity Introduction

- Explain to youth that you will read a series of statements and that they should feel free to walk to the other side of the room if they identify with that statement.
- Let youth know that this is a silent activity and that they do not have to cross the floor if they do not want to, even if they do identify with the statement read.

Power Shuffle Statements

- You are of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit heritage
- (Note more specific options could include: “You are Ininiw,” “You are Anishinaabe,” “You are Oji-Cree,” “You speak Dene,” “You speak Michif” etc.).

Choose at least three of the following continent-specific statements (you may choose more if time allows):

- You or your ancestors are from Europe (e.g. England, France, or Germany).
- You or your ancestors are from Asia (e.g. China, India, Korea, the Philippines).
- You or your ancestors are from Africa (e.g. Ethiopia, Eritrea, Nigeria, South Sudan).
- You or your ancestors are from a Central or South American Country (e.g. Argentina, El Salvador, Cuba).
- You or your ancestors are from the Middle East (e.g. Iraq, Egypt, Jordan).
- You or your parents are newcomers (immigrants or refugees) to this

country.

- You were raised by a single parent.
- You or someone close to you identifies as Two-Spirit.
(Define Two-Spirit if necessary: It can mean a person from an Indigenous culture who walks between genders; one who carries the gifts of males and females, or one who is gender unique, (not specific to any gender) and or as a way to identify as 2STLGBQ+.)
- You or someone close to you is lesbian, gay, or bisexual.
- You or someone close to you identifies as transgender.
(Define transgender if necessary: If someone who identifies with a gender other than the one they were assigned at birth, they may use the word “trans” or “transgender” to describe their gender.)
- You or someone in your family has a physical disability (e.g. someone uses a wheelchair, or someone lives with a chronic illness).
- You or someone you know deals with a drug or alcohol addiction.
- You were raised poor, or without a lot of money.
- You speak a language other than English at home.
- You identify as or were raised with Indigenous Sacred Ceremonies/Teachings. (Note: This could include the 7 Sacred Teachings, or ceremonies such as Sundance, Sweat Lodge ceremonies.)
- You were raised or identify as _____ (Note: If you are short on time, use three of these options. Read one at a time.) (Jewish, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, raised without religion)
- You were raised by many people (e.g. grandparents, adopted parents, foster parents, biological parents etc.).
- You have lived outside of Winnipeg (for groups in Winnipeg).
- You, or someone you know lives with a mental illness (e.g. depression or anxiety).
- (Last) You have ever been made fun of because of the way you look (your body size, height, weight, etc. Grade 3 counts!).

Debrief

- **Why do you think we do this activity?** To learn about each other i.e. the things we have common and how we are different even when

those things are not obvious. To show that things are valued differently in society.

- **How does it feel to cross the floor? Was it easier when alone or with others? Why?** If someone answers alone: yes we sometimes feel proud of our differences because it can mean we are unique or special. Easier to walk with others: it can be helpful and powerful to have a community of people with similar experiences and feels less isolating. Being different is not always valued or celebrated in our society. **It can really depend on what the difference is as to whether we'll be treated like it is something to be proud of or something to be ashamed of, or even hide. How we feel can depend on the way we are treated by others.**
- It is normal to feel a variety of emotions while walking. **Were any of the statements easier to walk for? Why?** (Validate and normalize their responses.) Often the statements that have less stigma or judgement attached to them are the statements that are easier to walk for. **Which statements were hard to walk for?** (Note: Below are three statements that could be addressed. Choose one of the three to debrief unless there was more than one issue that arose during the activity.)
- Below are some responses to statements that youth may identify as being more difficult to walk for:
- **Why could it be hard to walk for the “raised poor” question?** We live in a culture that often measures success by how much money someone has. Does anyone know what it is called when someone is discriminated on based on how much money someone has, what neighborhood they come from or what their family does for a living? **Classism.**
- **Why would someone not want to walk for the “lesbian, gay, bisexual” question?** We know that because of homophobia people who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual are often judged or treated badly in our society (especially in school).
- **Why might it be difficult to walk for the transgender statement? How are people who are transgender treated in our society?**

Trans and non-binary people face a particular type of discrimination called **transphobia**. We know that especially in school, people who are transgender can often face harassment or even violence.

- **How could it feel to walk for Two-Spirit statement?** It might feel difficult, as Two-Spirit people often experience homophobia or transphobia that is also connected to racism and colonialism. European ideals of being straight and cisgender were forced onto many nations here in Canada (and throughout the world). That said, many Two-Spirit people are reclaiming their teachings, gifts and ceremonies. People can feel really great walking for two spirit if they have people in their life who support them.
- **Why might it be difficult to walk for the religion statements? Not all religions are valued equally in our society. Some people experience racism based on other people discriminating against their religion or spirituality. People may experience discrimination because of their religious beliefs. For example, Christian holidays are the only ones that everyone has off from school and work.**
- FYI: Rates of hate crimes against Muslims has increased by 60% in Canada since 2015. Some of this is attributed to rhetoric around banning the burqa during a former federal election.² Over the past 3 years Bill 60 and 62 were put forward in Quebec, which would prohibit government workers, educators, and healthcare providers from wearing religious symbols, this bill was introduced to target Muslims who wear the burqa, hijab, and niqab, as well as Sikhs who wear turbans.³ This did not include symbols like the cross as it was deemed to be subtle. In October 2017, Bill 62 passed, banning anyone giving or receiving public services from covering their face.⁴ This statement can also refer to the colonial history of Canada and the imposition of Christianity, particularly upon Indigenous people.

² www.cbc.ca/news/politics/hate-crimes-muslims-statscan-1.4158042, accessed September 20, 2017.

³ www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/debate-over-wearing-religious-symbols-returns-to-quebec-one-week-after-mosque-shooting/article33948284/, accessed September 20, 2017.

⁴ www.cbc.ca/beta/news/canada/montreal/quebec-niqab-burka-bill-62-1.4360121, accessed September 20, 2017.

- **Are all differences valued equally in our society? No, if they were, no one would have a hard time walking for any of the questions. Sometimes it may be hard for us to see discrimination if we are not directly experiencing it.** We get used to some types of discrimination because they are so much a part of our day-to-day lives.
- **If there were statements no one walked for: For the statements where no one crossed the floor, does that mean those types of differences do not exist? No. It shows us those differences are simply not identified in the room with us.**

Note to Facilitators

- If not doing the Feelings Brainstorm ask the group, “How can it feel to be different?” Alone, sad, mad, anxious, scared, happy, proud, strong, unique, resilient, etc. **The way we treat people can impact how they feel about a difference.** For any statement that could be difficult to walk for, does not mean that people always feel bad about that difference. People can feel proud, strong, powerful, or resilient in the face of discrimination and from having overcome hard times. No one deserves to experience discrimination and it can be helpful to talk to someone for support.

Ideally, this activity should be followed by:

- Feeling Different Brainstorm
- Taking Action Brainstorm
- Body Image Boosters