

Creating a Safe Space for Anti-Racism Education

Conversations about racial and other injustices can be difficult. It is not easy to predict how students will respond to this challenging content and visual graphics. We recommend creating a safe space for students, both in your class and remotely, that allows them to have and voice a range of reactions and emotions and to be heard and acknowledged. A safe learning environment will permit your students to:

- Have a **sense of ownership** during the conversation
- **Express their emotions** in a respectful way
- Have a **sense of belonging**
- Have **equal time to voice** their thoughts and **be heard**
- **Process** at their own pace

Here are **5 guiding principles** that help you create a safe learning environment:

1. Structure classrooms to **make space for anti-racism work**
2. Create a **brave space** for conversations about inequity and (racial and other) injustice
3. **Work with colleagues** to build a school culture that supports racialized students
4. Give students space to **process injustices** in the world
5. **Continue** the conversations

Find more details about the 5 principles with useful examples here:

Difficult but Necessary: How 2 Educators are Facilitating Conversations About Injustice, by Mariam Hazhir and Lindsay Hutchison, October 6, 2020, <https://facingcanada.facinghistory.org/difficult-but-necessary-facilitating-conversations-about-injustice>

Additional resources

Preparing Students for difficult conversations:

<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/facing-ferguson-news-literacy-digital-age/preparing-students-difficult>

Five Ways to Create a Safe Classroom Space, by Stephanie Carrillo, August 6, 2014

<https://lanetwork.facinghistory.org/five-ways-to-create-a-safe-classroom-space/>

How to create safe classrooms? <https://www.facinghistory.org/using-bully-classroom/watch/how-do-we-create-safe-classrooms>

Student Contracting: <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/contracting>

Student Journals: <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/journals-facing-history-classroom>

To find more, visit: <http://facinghistory.org>