

# Black Lives Matter at School Theater Workshop

*A workshop designed for Black  
Lives Matter at School Week of  
Action 2019*

mlaqui@teaneckschools.org  
tmurphy@teaneckschools.org

# Session Objectives

Participants will:

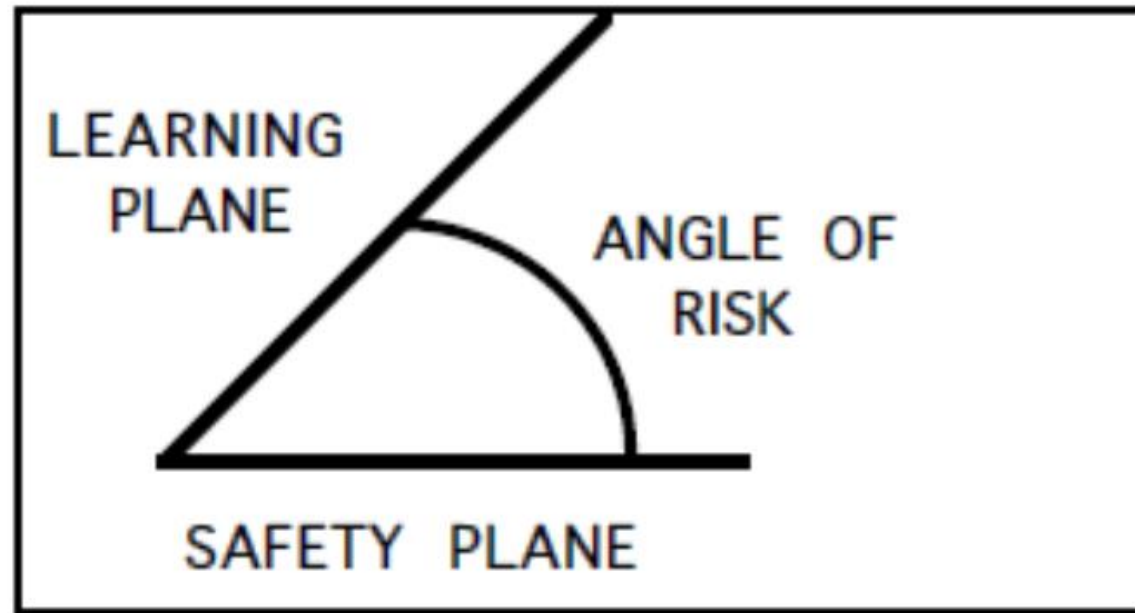
- Establish a group agreement
- Reflect on their own socialization process
- Review research on race as a quality of life indicator
- Understand the Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action National Demands
- Engage in small group discussion and generate scenarios
- Participate in Forum Theater

# Welcome

- Who's in the room?
- Group Agreement

# Were Schools Every Really Designed For Liberation?

The Meaning of Trust and Mutual Support



# Can We Challenge Ourselves?

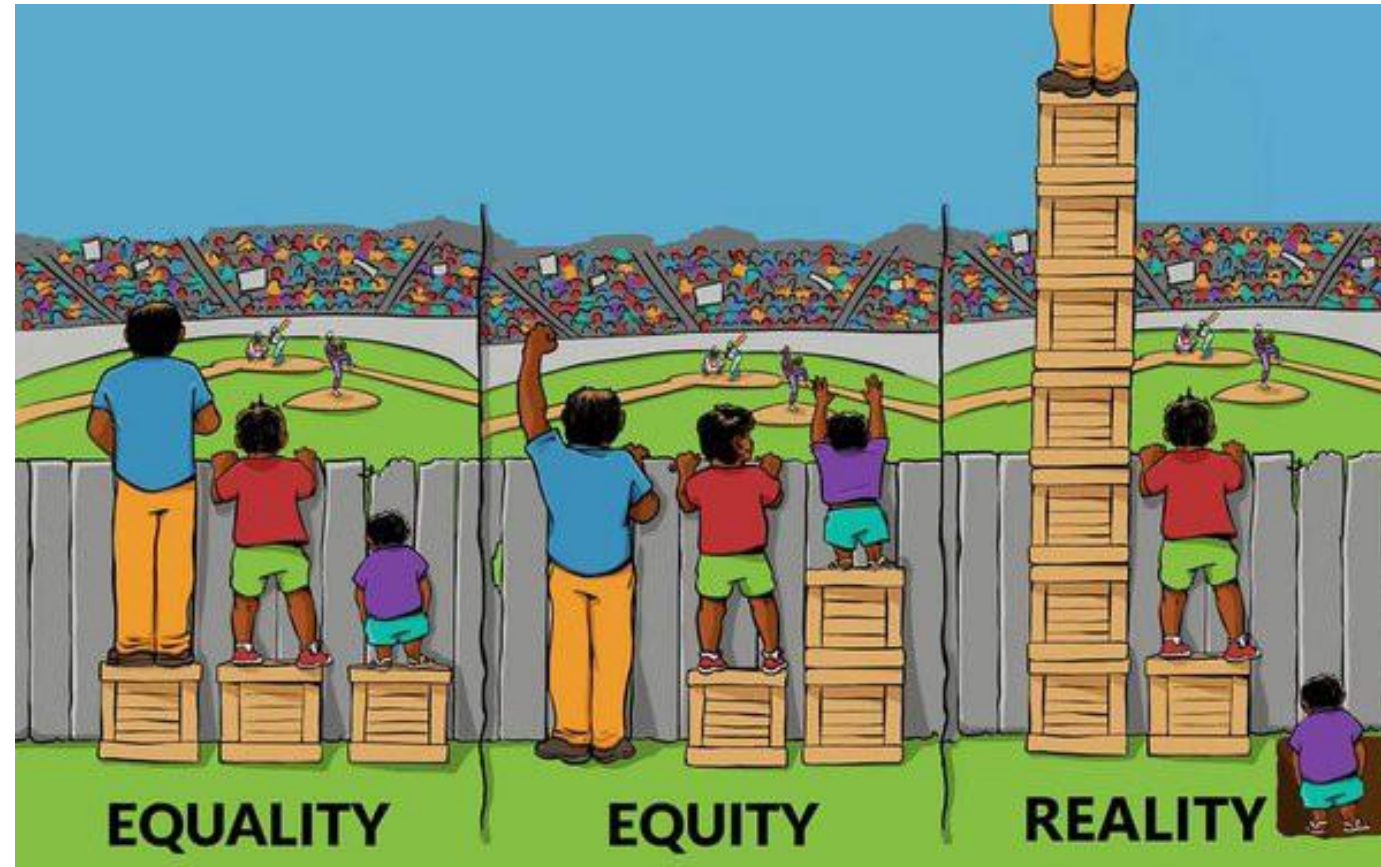
- Expand how we think about outcomes, organizational structure and institutional power
- Create schools rooted in practices that resonate with the nature of life itself
- Make sense of the dynamic and nonlinear interconnectedness of life
- Acknowledge the human component

# Society is Socially Stratified

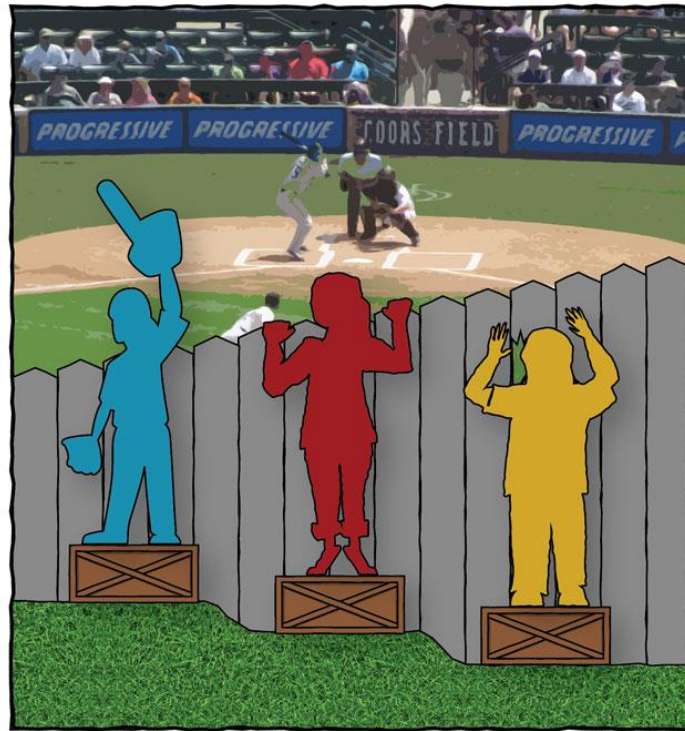
- Dominant groups
- Minoritized groups
- Created and reinforced with institutional power
- Identify factors that contribute to disparate outcomes
- Rip A Piece of Your Heart Activity



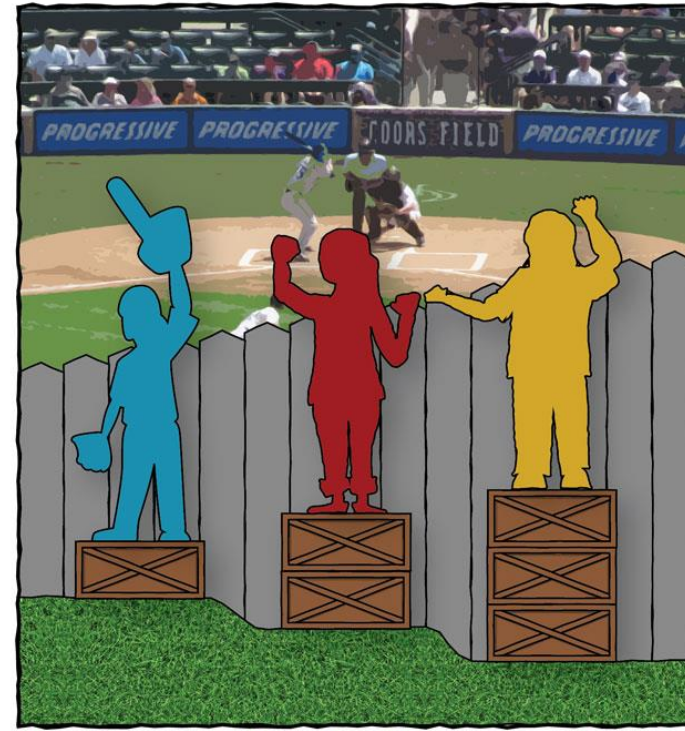
# From Symptoms to Root Causes (1 of 3)



# From Symptoms to Root Causes (2 of 3)



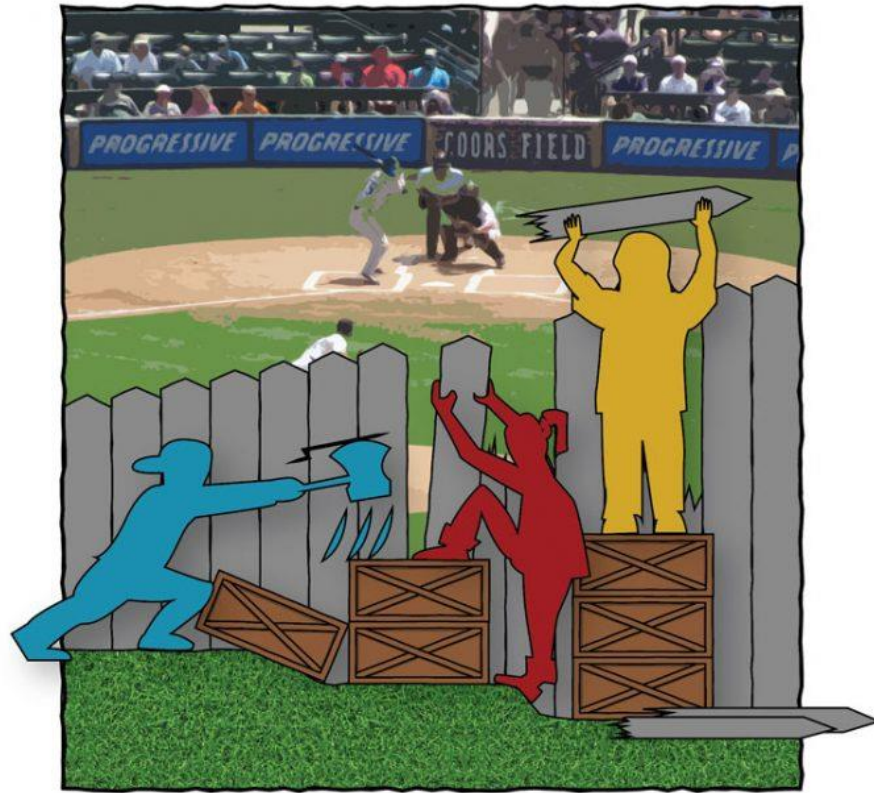
**EQUALITY**



**EQUITY**



# From Symptoms to Root Causes (3 of 3)



**JUSTICE**



**LIBERATION**

# What's Race Got to Do With It? (1 of 3)

- U.S. is a race-constructed nation
- U.S. has legitimized a system of advantages and disadvantages based on race
- Ever-evolving racial U.S. classification system
- Those considered white have historically been afforded legal privileges that others did not receive

# What's Race Got to Do With It? (2 of 3)

- Race has a profound effect upon life experiences in our society
- Race is undeniably implicated in quality-of-life indicators:

Life Expectancy

Healthcare

Infant Mortality

Income & Wealth

Graduation Rates

Incarceration rates

Social Services

# What's Race Got to Do With It? (3 of 3)

- Relationship between race and academic outcomes in U.S. is highly relevant
- Stereotypes propagated in the media and popular culture
- Schools generally reflect the larger values and beliefs of society
- Stereotypes between race and intelligence are often reinforced within the structure and culture of schools

# Black Lives Matter at School

- Early February – Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action
- Inspired by the guiding principles of the Black Lives Matter Movement
- National demands focus on improving the school experience for students of color

# Black Lives Matter at School

## National Demands

- Ending zero tolerance discipline for students
- Hiring and retaining teachers of color
- Mandated Black studies, and ethnic studies in the curriculum
- Fund Counselors Not Cops

# Carousel Activity

- Racism is more than bad actions of individual people. What, then, is racism?
- How does anti-Blackness show up inside and outside of school?
- What does the Black Lives Matter at School movement mean to you?
- Pick a social group and describe how that group is represented

# Forum Theater

- Origins of Theater of the Oppressed
- Paulo Freire & Augusto Boal
- Scenario brainstorm
- Improvisation rules



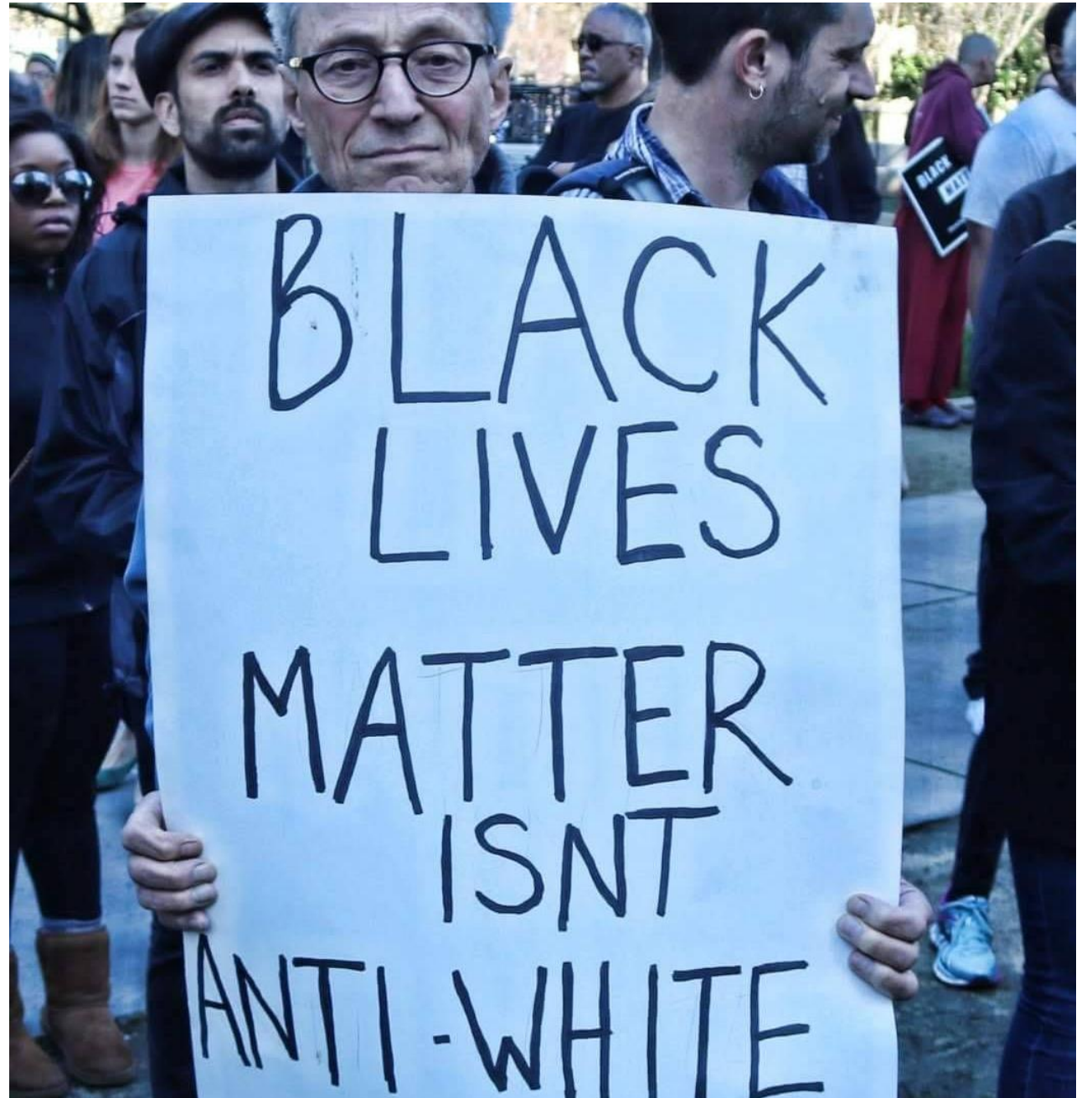
# A Picture is Worth... (1 of 6)

What scenario  
could we explore  
in Forum Theater?



# A Picture is Worth... (2 of 6)

What scenario  
could we explore  
in Forum Theater?



# A Picture is Worth... (3 of 6)

What scenario  
could we explore  
in Forum Theater?



# A Picture is Worth... (4 of 6)

What scenario  
could we explore  
in Forum Theater?



# A Picture is Worth... (5 of 6)

What scenario  
could we explore  
in Forum Theater?



# A Picture is Worth... (6 of 6)

What scenario  
could we explore  
in Forum Theater?



# References

- Barndt, J., (2007). *Understanding & Dismantling Racism: The Twenty-First Century Challenge to White America*. Minneapolis; Fortress Press
- Boykin, A., Noguera, P., (2011). *Creating the Opportunity to Learn: Moving From Research to Practice to Close the Achievement Gap*. Alexandria; ASCD
- Caine, G. (2004). *Living Systems Theory and the Systemic Transformation of Education*. Paper presented at the symposium on Theoretical Foundations for Systemic Transformation of K-12 Education.