
Localising anti-racism: what you can do in the classroom

Webinar handout

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This handout is aimed to reinforce the ideas discussed in the webinar about anti-racism in the classroom.

Key strategies to adopting an antiracist approach to language teaching

1. Get the buy-in of your school leaders and colleagues:

Antiracist teachers can get creative in swapping texts and adapting resources, especially when they are constrained by textbooks or a curriculum. However, there are other matters such as racial-based bullying that can't be addressed solely by the teacher in their classroom. Involving the school's leadership and other colleagues in your antiracist journey means that the collective can be more efficient in establishing systems and processes for reviewing resources, organising events, identifying and addressing problematic behaviour, reframing assessment, etc. Antiracist teachers need antiracist institutions. Whole school antiracist approaches take time but are more sustainable (Badu, 2023).

2. Honour contributions of Black and Global Majority scientists, thinkers, sportspeople, artists, but also acknowledge systemic barriers when relevant:

A story about an African American grandmother who obtained her PhD at the age of 83 is celebratory. It shows Black people in contexts of success, especially academic success. However, including a statement that her parents would never have had the possibility to study and graduate is an acknowledgment of the systems of oppression that have historically and systematically been implemented in the U.S. education system, for example.

3. Empower with language: naming the painful can be empowering to students and to yourself. It is important that students know how to say that they have experienced racial-based discrimination.

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4. Involve your students in analysing the books they read, the video clips and cartoons they watch, and the adverts they see. You can watch the British Council TeachingEnglish webinar with Amanda Hawthorne (see full reference below).

References/additional resources:

- Anna Freud Mentally Healthy Schools. (2024). Anti-racism and mental health resources: Supporting students who have experienced racism. Retrieved from <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/anti-racism-and-mental-health-resources-supporting-students-who-have-experienced-racism/>
- Anna Freud Mentally Healthy Schools. (2024). Supporting students who have experienced racism. Retrieved from <https://www.annafreud.org/resources/schools-and-colleges/supporting-students-who-have-experienced-racism/>
- Badu, O. (2023). *How to build your antiracist classroom*. Sage Publications Ltd.
- Council of Europe. (2024). Tackling discrimination. Retrieved from https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn/tackling-discrimination/-/asset_publisher/4a3esYbkstv9/content/improving-well-being-at-school
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- Hawthorn, A. (2022, May 5). Seeing Black: How to build anti-racism into teaching English publications. British Council TeachingEnglish Webinar. Retrieved from <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/news-and-events/webinars/webinars-teachers/seeing-black-how-build-anti-racism-teaching-english>
- Respectme (2024). Prejudice-based bullying. Retrieved from <https://respectme.org.uk/bullying/prejudice-based-bullying/>

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