

Observing for Racially Equitable Questioning and Discussion Teaching Practices: A Few Examples

CEL Indicators SE1, SE4, CEC2 & CEC4; Danielson Component 3b, Marzano Components 2.4 & 2.5

Racial equity exists when race is no longer a predictor of outcomes for students. Equitable practice is not a strategy; it is the outcome.

- **Equitable** –Teacher understands and recognizes that there is explicit and implicit bias in their practice and that they can work to design their way out of it by taking specific steps to address biases. There is no longer an imbalance of participation but the same robust participation from students of color that we have been seeing from white students.
- **Equal** – Teacher doesn’t recognize his/her implicit and/or explicit bias and thus treats all students exactly the same.

The purpose of this document is to guide observers in what to pay attention to while in a classroom. The examples may also be used to support principals, teachers and coaches to recognize bias and address it in their practice. *It is not an exhaustive list.*

Teacher does not recognize and/or address explicit and implicit bias.	Teacher inconsistently recognizes and/or addresses explicit and implicit bias.	Teacher has systems and structures in place to address explicit and implicit bias.	Students seek to maintain structures that address explicit and implicit bias.
<i>Teacher calls on students of color at a less frequent rate than white students.</i>	Teacher calls upon the same small group of white students and inconsistently calls upon students of color.	Teacher uses one or more strategies to ensure that all voices are heard, including students of color.	Teacher and students use multiple strategies to ensure that all voices are heard, including students of color.
<i>Teacher ignores suggestions or questions from students of color.</i>	Teacher inconsistently acknowledges suggestions or questions from students of color.	Teacher responds to and builds upon suggestions or questions from students of color.	Teacher and students respond and build upon suggestions or questions from students of color.
<i>Teacher does not notice when white students leave students of color out.</i>	Teacher inconsistently notices when white students leave students of color out of group discussion or ignores suggestions or questions from students of color.	Teacher does not allow white students to leave students of color out of group discussion or ignore suggestions or questions from students of color.	Teacher and students do not allow white students to leave students of color out of group discussion or ignore suggestions or questions from students of color.
<i>Teacher asks recall questions of students of color and more complex questions of other students.</i>	Teacher asks recall and complex questions of students of white students and inconsistently asks recall and complex questions of students of color.	Teacher asks recall and complex questions of students of color and white students with equitable frequency.	Teacher and students ask recall and complex questions of students of color and white students with equitable frequency.
<i>Teacher differentiates wait time based on student’s race.</i>	Teacher gives inconsistent wait time to white students and students of color.	Teacher gives wait time based on student learning needs regardless of race.	Teacher and students give wait time based on student learning needs regardless of race.

Racially Equitable Questioning and Discussion: Possible Examples

These examples are designed to spur your thinking as you plan and teach units and lessons. Additionally, these examples may be used by a teacher to monitor the desired effect of the strategy, paying specific attention to students of color. In the third column, add specific examples that support the learning of all students in your classroom, paying attention to students of color.

	Systems and structures in place to address explicit and implicit bias.	Students seek to maintain structures that address explicit and implicit bias.	My Grade Level and Content
Calling on students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher utilizes multiple participation strategies like ‘no opt out,’ ‘elbow partners,’ and ‘popsicle sticks’ in order to ensure a balance between the needs of students of color and white students. _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Norms for learning include students monitoring equitable access or student voice. Students facilitate a modeled strategy in a way that includes students of color. _____ 	
Students’ questions and suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher uses sentence stems (academic conversations) during classroom discussion, such as, “I agree with ____, and ____” or in addition to what ____ said, I want to add ____” to increase equitable participation of students of color. Teacher initiates topics and questions for discussion and encourages students of color and white students to participate. _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use sentence stems (academic conversations) during classroom discussion, such as, “I agree with ____, and ____” or in addition to what __ said,” to increase equitable participation of students of color. Students of color and white students initiate topics and questions for discussion and all voices participate. _____ 	
	Systems and structures in place to address explicit and implicit bias.	Students seek to maintain structures that address explicit and implicit bias.	My Grade Level and Content

<p>Student participation in discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students are explicitly taught interactive strategies to ensure that all voices are heard (discourse strategies/sentence stems). ● Cooperative learning roles are rotated to ensure students of color experience each role. ● _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In a Socratic Seminar, students pay attention to the participation and contributions of students of color. Students invite the participation of all classmates. ● _____ 	
<p>Complexity of questioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher plans and models for all students to craft Level 1, 2, & 3 questions. ● Teacher probes with, “Who can build on that?” with attention to students of color. ● _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All students can and do use question stems to build on each other’s thinking. ● All students, including students of color, use content-specific vocabulary in order to engage in complex questioning (“What is your theory?... What evidence supports that claim?...”). ● _____ 	
<p>Wait time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Based on an understanding of each student, the teacher differentiates wait time for students of color and white students. ● _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students allow wait time in order to ensure meaningful participation and equity of voice for students of color and white students. ● _____ 	