

America to me *real talk*

EPISODE GUIDE 06

Racial Identity Development

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TOPIC

Racial Identity Development

By spring semester in Episode 6, the students of color at Oak Park and River Forest High School (OPRFHS) encounter a fresh set of opportunities and obstacles along their paths to developing their racial identities. Kendale achieves a big goal, while Tiara's dreams are dashed. Charles's voice is validated with a team victory, but Jada's attempt to express her voice through film is challenged for being too provocative.

Organizing a Group Discussion?
Be prepared! Before you start, read the Organizer Guide.



ANALYZE

- How is Jada's identity development impacted by the feedback on her film and the conversation she has with her teacher? Why does Jada feel she needs Veronica in her film?
- What did Grant learn about himself from his father's story?
- What do you learn from Charles's poem about his racial identity development?

WHAT IS RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT?

It's the process through which people explore and express their racial identities, and look for validation of their identities from society, family, and peers.

REFLECT

- Why are stories important and what can we learn from them about racial identity? What can we learn from a personal narrative?
- What have you learned about yourself while watching the stories of the students and teachers at OPRFHS? Has your perception of yourself or those around you changed?
- Why is racial identity development work in the classroom important?

RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Describe a time when the personal racialized narrative or story of someone else challenged your racial understanding of yourself.

ENGAGE

These can be group or individual activities. Encourage participants to share their findings with the whole group.

- ☑ **Invisible Knapsack** [30 min.]
Ask your group to unpack their invisible knapsacks by comparing themselves and their lives against the 26 statements of Peggy McIntosh’s “Invisible Knapsack.”
- ☑ **Identities** [30 min.]
In small groups, name 3-5 pieces of your racial identity that you carry with you every day or brought with you today (e.g. physical features, material possessions, etc.). What do these things look like, feel like? Are they the same as yesterday? Will they be the same tomorrow?

