

America to me *real talk*

EPISODE GUIDE 04

Agency Among Different Racial Groups

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TOPIC

Agency Among Different Racial Groups

Episode 4 offers a vivid example of the impact of agency. When an individual feels a sense of agency - like Ke'Shawn in his theater class - they feel like they have control over their choices and actions, and the ability to advocate for themselves. Agency impacts our self-image, our sense of belonging and contribution, and our ability to succeed. So when Ke'Shawn's agency is taken away by school's security, it impacts much more than just his ability to participate.

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



ANALYZE

- Where is agency present in the student experience at OPRFHS and where is it absent? Where is it present and absent in the experiences of teachers and administrators of color?
- How does race play out in the choices that students make and how they are defined (e.g. Kendale's trip to Disney vs. wrestling responsibilities, and his choice in the lunchroom about where he sits)?
- What is it about Jessica Stovall's and Aaron Podolner's racial identity that prevents them from having an authentic conversation about race?

WHAT IS AGENCY?

Agency is the ability to feel empowered to take control of your own choices and actions, and advocate for yourself. Race can have a strong impact on a person's agency.

REFLECT

- How does race inform your sense of agency around your racial identity?
- How does your sense of agency shift depending on who you are or who you are with?
- Where in your school, institution, or community do you see agency around racial identity? Is it specific to only certain racial identities?

ENGAGE

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

- ☑ **Finding Agency** [15 min.]
Make a list of the places where you find agency around your racial identity. Are there places where it's lacking? In the places where you find the most agency, are you creating agency for other racial groups?
- ☑ **The Mask You Wear** [1 hour]
Using a blank face mask or a piece of paper with holes for eyes, create a visual representation / mask of your identity. On the inside of the mask, represent who you are and how you self-define, including words, images, and phrases that describe your racial identity. On the front of the mask, create a representation of how the world perceives you, including words, images and phrases that describe how others perceive your racial identity. Consider how the two sides differ or look similar.

RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Share an experience when someone else's perception of who you are racially differed from how you define or view yourself. How did that affect your sense of agency?

- **If this has never happened to you, share an experience of when you had a perception of someone's racial identity that turned out to be different from how they themselves identified. How might that have affected their sense of agency?**

