

Truth, Justice, Peace, and Mercy

Goal: to understand the complexities of conflict resolution and reconciliation

General Concept: students take on the roles of Brother Truth, Sister Peace, Brother Justice, and Sister Mercy and engage in dialogue about their role in conflict and what concerns them in conflicts.

Process:

1. Break the students up into four equal sized groups.
2. Each groups is assigned to take on one these of these roles: Brother Justice, Sister Peace, Brother Mercy, or Sister Truth. In their groups students must answer these two questions: what am I important in conflict? What concerns me most in the midst of conflict? As the groups discuss these answers they must treat their role as if it were a person and speak about their role in the first person. For example, “as Brother Justice, my role in conflict is to make sure the offending parties are held responsible for their actions,” or “as Sister Truth, my role is to make sure that people’s voices are heard and that the facts of what happened are exposed,” etc.
3. Once each groups has sufficiently personified their role and delved into the initial questions, each group selects a member to stand up and introduce their character to the other groups. That student speaks in the first person as their role.
4. Once each groups has introduced themselves, ask them the question, “which of your friends do you fear the most in conflict.” Students may then respond with something like, “As brother mercy, I fear brother justice because he wants to make sure someone is punished or pays for what they did and oftentimes this just makes people even angrier and communities even more divisive,” or “as sister peace I fear sister truth because sometimes the truth opens up old wounds and can prevent people from building community,” etc.
5. Let the conversation continue encouraging other students to jump in for their group and take on the role.

Ideal for: verbal-linguistic learners because the activity asks students to express themselves

Important for peace education because the activity exposes the tensions that can surface during peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts. It also helps students understand more deeply and personally what these concepts mean.

Modifications:

- Facilitate the conversation using the “Way of Council” dialogue process (thank you Ashley!).
- Have students draw their character/role and use it as a puppet or a foil through which they can express their answers to the questions and engage in the conversation.