

Stance Warm-Up: “Are You More Like...”

Description:

A series of pairings are presented to participants one at a time such as “mountain or valley,” “dog or cat,” and “day or night.” For each pair, participants are asked to share with each other which one they are more like and why.

Goals and Purpose:

This activity aims to help students explore the PoP stance statement, “**Just as I want to be understood, so too do my partners, the text, and my peers**” and provides the opportunity to engage in the PoP practices of **Listening and Articulating**. If you choose objects from the curricular content, it can also help students see themselves in the content connect with the content creatively.

Stances:

- “Just as I want to be understood, so too do my partners—the text and my peers.”
- “The text may have multiple meanings and may need my peers and me to bring them to light.”

Framing:

“In PoP we say that ‘Just as I want to be understood, so too do my partners—the text and my peers.’ Today we are going to take some time to understand ourselves and each other a little bit better.

Introduction:

I am going to ask three questions in the form of ‘Are you more like this or that?’ After each one, you’ll have a few moments to write your answer. Write your answer in large print. When I say so, everyone will hold their answer up for others to see and so they can see others’. At the end, I’ll ask some of you to share why you answered one of the questions the way you did.

Activity: “Are You More Like ...?” (based on an activity from playmeo.com)

- 1 Each student answers the following questions in large letters:
 - Are you more like drums or a guitar?
 - Are you more like a singer or a dancer?
 - Are you more like a rock & roll or rap?
- 2 Students hold up what they wrote.
- 3 Two – three students share why they wrote what they did for each question. *OR*, students share in havruta why they wrote what they did to practice listening and articulating skills.

Variation:

You can and should substitute other objects for those listed here. This warm-up is amazing for having students connect to their curricular content and show understanding of it in a different way. For example, “Are you more like a proton or an electron?” “Are you more like a real or imaginary number?” “Are you more like a sonnet or a prose essay?” The possibilities are endless!

Reflection: (select two-three of these to ask your students)

- What was it like to listen to your peers' answers?
- What was it like to share your answer with your peers?
- If a peer gave an answer that was similar to yours what did that feel like?
- If a peer gave an answer that was different from yours what did that feel like?
- What was it like having to choose between two options?
- What did you learn about yourself through this activity?
- What did you learn about our content through this activity?
- What did you learn about your havruta/ about our class through this activity?

Wrap-up Language:

- “This experience of sharing a part of who we are with one another is really powerful for building relationships. As we know, havruta work is not “just” reading and talking about a text, but it is really trying hard to understand what the text is trying to express and what our human partner is trying to express.”
- “In this activity, we had the opportunity to really think about who we are and share that with one another while others listened and contemplated what we said. As some of you shared just now, you might have been nervous to share or uncomfortable, but we created this safe and brave space where we can do exactly that—share something about ourselves and feel understood and accepted by our community. When we are in havruta, we want to feel safe to take those risks as well. We aren’t all the same, we don’t all understand the text in the same way, and that is not only okay but wonderful. So when we are in havruta, we should always strive to listen carefully to what the text is trying to say, what our human partners are trying to say and really work hard to understand them and help them feel understood.

Jewish wrap-up language:

There is a verse in Tanakh that helps us remember one reason why it is important to understand one another. The last chapter of Psalms 150 (Tehilim:150) lists individual instruments used in praise, such as the horn, harp, timbrels, and cymbals. However, it concludes with the verse ‘Let all breath praise Yah’ putting them all together. It reminds us that we all might be like different instruments or artistic styles, and at the same time, we make the most beautiful music together when we understand each other and give the space to be ourselves. This is how we should strive to be when we work in havruta and in our class community.

