

Hunger Skit

Adapted From: Katherine Murphy, Hunger Educator, Washington, DC

Overview

Students will be placed in a situation where they can witness a staged performance of someone victimized by inequality. The students are expected to critically assess the situation and its possible solutions, as well as the part they play in the injustice, as well as discuss their reactions to the staged performance.

Goals

The students will:

- Build conceptions of what it means for a person to be victimized by inequality and remain victimized even after the issue has come to the attention of others
- Be able to define systemic inequality
- Understand and (be able to identify a few) systemic consequences
- Know how to frame the issue of hunger in terms of injustice and not merely charity

Materials Needed

- The students
- Open space

Instructions

Identify five young adults and take the young adults away from the other young adults. Away from the rest of the group, teach them the skit and explain the importance of fully acting out their parts. For the actual play, sit one of the young adults in front of the classroom before the rest of the class. This student actor will be roped to a chair (prior to the other students entering the room). The student actor should be roped before the other students enter so that the students do not have a conception of how the student actor became roped. After the class is settled, have the other student-actors enter one by one. Each will dramatically pass before the roped up student and perform the appropriate action. These actions are listed below in order:

1. First person comes by and gives him a dollar.
2. Second person comes by and gives him food.
3. Third person comes by and says, "God bless you."
4. Fourth person comes by and mumbles "Get a job."

End the play. Allow the young adults to process it through individual writing or small groups. A brief lecture on the systemic causes of hunger should follow. Leader can then lead a class debate or a class discussion on the implications and reality of the situation. If no student asks the question, "How did the young adult-actor get tied up?," use this as an opportunity to explore why they didn't ask that question and why citizens have an obligation to explore that question.

Together, as a class, have the students engage this topic critically.

Read aloud the definition of systemic inequality. (Consider having the students research the definition independently.) After explaining how the definition applies to the current situation of the student tied up, have students come up with other examples of systemic inequality.

Evaluation Questions

1. What have you learned about inequality?
2. What is systemic inequality?
3. What are some consequences of systemic inequality?
4. Why is helping stop hunger not just an issue of charity but also an issue of justice?