

How to talk about/teach difficult subjects related to race, racism and racial history.

- People are more willing to talk about issues when conversations unite around “opportunity” and “community”.
- Focus on situations that anyone might find themselves in (e.g., loss of a job).
- Move from personal to institutional/societal. Before examining how race affects institutions or society, students should first explore the impact of race on a personal level.
- Avoid criticizing people instead of policies, practices, and proposals (e.g., It’s better to focus on Policy X rather than Senator Y).
- Use a rhetorical rather than practical tone (e.g., up-front accusations of racist intent make people defensive and unwilling to reason with you).
- Learn more about the issues by studying history, following current events and brushing up on anti-racism work.
- Commit to accepting that you don’t have all the answers and embracing the opportunity to learn with your students.
- Keep calm during dialogue and conversation; assess the situation to identify if the room is tense or unsafe, otherwise allow the learning to continue.
- Plan ahead and create a safe environment and build resilience to take risk during dialogue.
- Encourage participants to take responsibility for their own learning and interactions and to respect each other.



Sources: <http://www.aecf.org>; <http://www.nea.org>; <http://www.teachingtolerance.org>