

**HOUSING AND THE LAW: LESSON PLAN 1**

**LESSON 1**  
**TRANSACTIVE DISCUSSION PRACTICE**  
**2-3 DAYS<sup>1</sup>**  
**(30-45 MINUTES EACH DAY)**

**Objectives**

- Students practice engaging in transactive discussions
- Students will examine photos related to race, housing, and the law within the U.S. context

**Standards**

- **Common Core:** CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1.b; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1.c; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1.d; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.3

**Materials**

- Handout 1: Transactive Discussion Practice Activity
- Handout 2: Sample Dilemmas
- Housing and the Law Photoset Power Point

<p><b>Housing, Race, and the Law</b> <b>Photo PowerPoint</b> (15-20 minutes) <i>In pairs, small groups, or whole group</i></p>
<p>Electronically share the Housing, Race and the Law Photo PowerPoint with students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have students view photos using laptops, tablets or phones, if possible. Otherwise use projector to show to whole group</li> </ul> <p>Do not give a lot of detail about the photos prior to showing them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have students discuss the following questions amongst themselves or in whole group while viewing the photos:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What do you think these photos represent?</li> <li>○ Are any of these images familiar to you?</li> <li>○ What do these photos make you think about?</li> <li>○ Which photos are resonating with you the most?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>After discussion, explain to students that the following lessons will be focused on the events covered in these pictures. First, they will learn a new discourse style for discussing the implications of these events.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Depending on your timeframe/ student ability you can stretch the practice runs over several lessons. The lesson material will be most effective when students are well versed in communicative discussion style.

### Transactive Discussions

Research has shown the most effective discussions are ones where students are actively working to transform the arguments they hear their peers making. When a student is transforming an argument they hear, they are do one of three things:

- Extending the logic of the argument
- Refuting the assumptions in the argument
- Finding a place of commonality between two conflicting positions

This approach will allow students to engage in communicative discourse, in which they work together to create the best argument or position. This style of discourse develops students' understandings of fairness or justice.

### Probing for Prior Knowledge (10 minutes)

Ask students what experience they have had with debate. After probing prior experience, explain the following:

In future class sessions we will be engaging in discussion on some complex topics. We will be using small-group discussion to think about and process this information. Unlike traditional debate, these discussions will focus on listening and collaborating. The goal is to come to the best solution for complex dilemmas, which means there must be give and take in outcomes. As with any compromise, you may not achieve your "ideal" solution. This process is much easier said than done, and it can sometimes be difficult to effectively listen to different perspectives. Listening in order to understand and collaborating rather than simply responding is a key part of our activities; therefore, we are going to do some practice runs in this communication style before we start these lessons.

Go on to explain there are 9 tips they should keep in mind when engaging in this process **(if possible, have these displayed on the room somewhere):**

1. *Think before you speak*
2. *Listen carefully to what others have to say*
3. *Do not interrupt*
4. *Make use of what others have said when it's your turn to speak*
5. *Only say what you truly believe*
6. *Don't stay silent; make sure to contribute to discussion*
7. *Let other people speak*
8. *Support good ideas even if they are different from your own*
9. *Search for the best solution even if it is different from the way you thought at first.*

**Whole Class Activity  
(20 minutes)**

Explain the three key components of the type of discussion technique they will be engaging in:

- *Extend the logic of the argument*
- *Refute the assumptions in the argument*
- *Find a place of commonality between two conflicting positions*

Explain to students they will be playing one of three games for practice:

- Elaboration
- Rebuttal
- Integration (*See Handout 1 for instructions*)

Model playing each type of game with a few volunteers.

**Small Group  
(30-45 minutes)**

Break students into small groups (4-5 students) and give them Handouts 1 & 2. Give them the ability to pick a topic from Handout 2 and engage in the elaboration, rebuttal, and integration games.

**Wrap Up  
(10 minutes)**

Bring class back together. Have class share out their experience with the activity:

- What did you find difficult when listening to and paraphrasing your group members?
- What helped you integrate arguments?

Gauge their need for more practice and adjust accordingly. You can extend this lesson for as long as needed and continue to revisit and practice these techniques. Explain that this communication style is the approach you want students to bring to their discussion questions for the following activities.

## Standards

### Common Core

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1.b
- Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1.c
- Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1.d
- Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.3
- Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.