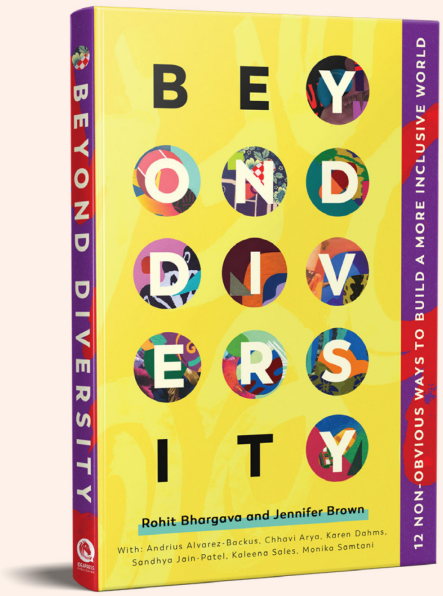


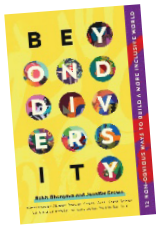
BEYOND DIVERSITY

A First Year and Common Reading Resource Guide

UNIVERSITY EDITION

IDEAPRESS PUBLISHING ACADEMIC

FEATURING CONVERSATION GUIDES AND 8 NEW STUDENT ACTIVITIES!



BEYOND DIVERSITY

FIRST YEAR & COMMON READING RESOURCE GUIDE

I. INTRODUCTION

As today's young people transition into adulthood and enter postsecondary environments, most are experiencing a crisis of connection. They are leaving a high school experience shaped by the global pandemic, remote learning, anxiety and isolation. All this in a world reeling with concerns about climate change, social injustice and economic instability. The only way this next generation can build a better future is by understanding, accepting, and respecting one another. We all need a more inclusive world and this journey will be largely led by students in college today. Our responsibility is to ensure they are ready for the challenge. Humanity's future depends on it.

– Rohit Bhargava and Jennifer Brown

Beyond Diversity: 12 Non-Obvious Ways to Build a More Inclusive World was written to spark conversation and inspire action. The book explores some of today's biggest societal challenges. weaving together research findings, insights from experts, and the personal stories of courageous individuals on the front line of social change. It takes an ambitious look at issues related to social justice, diversity, equity and inclusion through the lens of twelve themes, including storytelling, identity, culture, education, technology, and government.

Beyond Diversity prompts students to interrogate their biases, think critically about their beliefs, and examine the role institutions and systems play in perpetuating inequities and injustices. Throughout the book, students will encounter reflection prompts and short vignettes that illustrate the power of diversity, equity and inclusion in vivid and practical ways. By recognizing and exploring the differences that exist among us, Beyond Diversity invites students to view the world in a new way and to open themselves to all that is possible when we stand in solidarity with one another and allow our differences to become our strengths.

This guide will provoke reflection and promote critical thinking. It includes discussion questions designed to challenge assumptions and biases and foster more inclusive mindsets and behaviors. Suggested classroom activities were designed and curated to spark conversation and help students build relationships and find common ground. The classroom activities can be easily modified and scaled, as they were constructed with flexibility in mind. Each section is applicable to multiple curricular areas, and as such, this document has an interdisciplinary focus.

Beyond Diversity and this teaching resource support the overall purpose of the First Year Experience (FYE) to fuse rigorous classroom study with immersive, communal learning experiences. It will help prepare students for the diverse and complex future that awaits them and equip them with simple tools and actions they can take to become more inclusive citizens and peers.

II. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions can be posed to an entire class or shared with smaller groups to facilitate discussions either in-person or through virtual sessions.

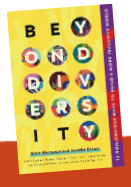
1. **"The problem is that the one-sided media we consume can end up confirming our perspectives rather than challenging them." (pg 29)** Why is it more comfortable to seek out viewpoints that support our beliefs than to expose ourselves to perspectives that contradict them? What emotions and fears hold us back? What can we do to break out of our echo chambers?

2. **"What we choose to share, particularly on social media, can become a thoughtless reflex. Research shows the majority of social media users share stories they have never read." (pg 34)** Have you shared links you haven't read just because of the headline? What drives that thought process? What is the impact of amplifying stories that reinforce stereotypes - not only on the stories being amplified, but the stories that aren't amplified and remain untold?

3. **"All too often, the stories we hear aren't being told by the people who have truly lived them. When people's stories are told from the perspective of an outsider, they can reinforce negative stereotypes." (pg 19)** Share statistics provided in the book regarding the lack of representation in media sectors. How does the lack of diversity in the organizations and people telling the stories of the world influence our perceptions? Why is it important to think about who is doing the actual telling of the stories we consume?

4. **"When vulnerable groups are scapegoated by the news media, it becomes dangerously easy to blame those groups for society's problems." (pg. 21)** Are there other examples of how the media may have distorted or skewed a news story or depicted a film to promote a particular point of view? Can you recall a time when the media focus weaponized an issue that had a negative impact on you or other people's community or identity group?

5. **"What we teach, how it is presented, and who is teaching all play a critical role in how students understand the world. Shielding them from the truth of history or shying away from difficult topics does not prepare students for reality." (pg 95)** Do you agree or disagree with this? How was culture discussed in your home growing up or in your school? What was missing? How many teachers did you have in K-12 who were people of color, or people with a disability, or people from a non-majority identity? Why do you think history is taught the way it is?



6. **"In order to build a more inclusive future, each of us must confront our own biases … we each have moments in our professional and personal lives when we can choose to show mutual respect and open mindedness toward people" (pg 235 - 236)** Are you aware of your biases? Do you stop and think about how your biases impact your behaviors, actions or the relationships you form?

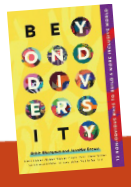
7. **"Identity is the lens through which all of us experience our lives. It also shapes the way the world sees us." (pg 46)** In what ways does society reward and/or marginalize different identities? How do media and advertisements promote some identities as 'better' than other identities? Have you or someone you know either personally benefited from or been disadvantaged because of belonging to a certain identity group?

8. **"Code switching (also referred to as covering or masking) is a common way of describing the way some people have become adept at changing their language, mannerisms, style of speech or expressions to blend in with the dominant culture. What code switching often reveals is situations where people don't feel like they can truly be themselves." (pg 80)** Has there ever been a time where you hid or covered something about your identity to fit in? Why did you do that? How did it make you feel?

9. **"[There is] a rise in biracial marriages, same-sex unions, multi-generational households, intentionally childless couples, caregivers and stepfamilies." (pg 57) Despite the growing evidence of this evolution of family structures, there continues to be a societal bias toward the 'traditional' family structure." (pg 60)** Does your family structure fall into the 'traditional' category? How have you seen gender roles play out in your family in both 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' ways? How would you define an inclusive family structure?

10. **"For years, Crayola labeled its peach-colored crayon "flesh" …. Band-Aid only produced bandages in one color—meant to match the skin of White people—until very recently. Fashion brands to this day continue to promote shoes and pantyhose in a "nude" color, which only matches lighter skin tones." (pg 115)** Why do you think companies get this wrong? How does this impact customers? Do you think it is a company's responsibility to be more inclusive in their design process? Why or why not?

11. **"While Joy Buolamwini (a Ghanaian American computer scientist) conducted an engineering project, facial analysis software struggled to detect Buolamwini's face … until she put on a White mask. Right away, she knew this was more than a technical blunder." (pg 153)** Humans design AI algorithms and humans are biased. What are the consequences of bias on the part of algorithm creators? Have you thought about why stories that appear at the top of your social media or Google searches rise to the top?

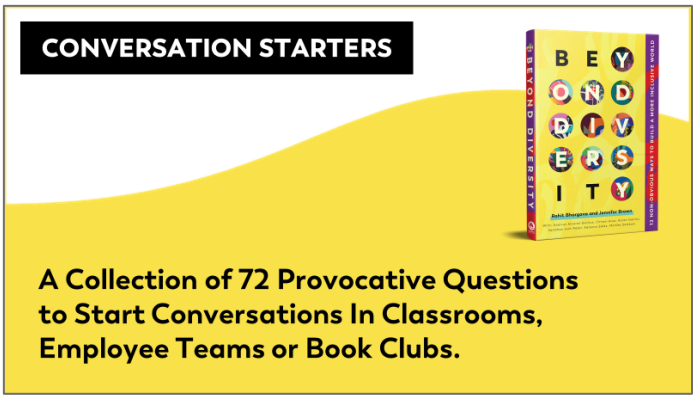


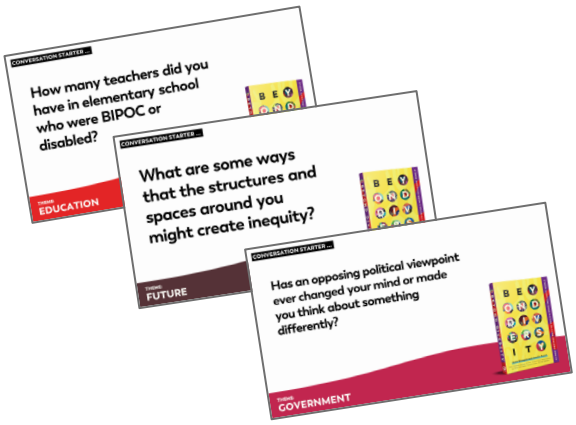
12. **"Governments have immense potential when it comes to building a more diverse and inclusive society, whether through necessary policy shifts like granting women the right to vote or the implementation of landmark legislation protecting the LGBTQ+ community and those with disabilities from discrimination. At the same time, governments can also be barriers to progress by keeping inequities in place to maintain the status quo." (pg 207)** How does who holds office influence the policies and laws that are passed? Can you think of examples of this in society today? How can you change this reality?

13. **"Based on who we see celebrated in the media, our perception of successful entrepreneurs tends to be skewed toward young, tech-savvy white males. Ironically, this is in spite of the fact that the data regularly offers evidence that the assumptions behind these biases are flawed" (pg 171)** What examples of diverse entrepreneurs do you know about? Why does representation matter so much in this sector?

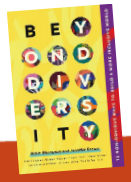
14. **"In the fight for equity, there have always been three parties. There are the oppressors, who benefit from inequity and leverage their power to maintain the status quo. And there are the oppressed who fight back—sometimes successfully and sometimes not. Yet there is, and has always been, a third regularly overlooked group. These are the bystanders, and their willful silence has also contributed to and shaped human history." (pg 10)** Have students reflect on the following statements and questions: Silence is actually saying something. Inaction is still an action. How does being a bystander condone and perpetuate bad behavior? Are there times where you were a bystander? What held you back from speaking up? What could you do differently in the future?

WANT MORE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS?





Download our Powerpoint file with 72 insightful and provocative questions to inspire more dialogue and debate.



III. CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

This section includes ideas for custom activities that can be used with student groups and in the classroom environment to foster even further learning. In many cases, these efforts are built around various multimedia content offered as free bonus materials to the Beyond Diversity book on **www.nonobvious.com/diversity**.

Activity #1 - Do we have more in common than we think?

"The focus on the similarities we share is sadly missing in many conversations happening about diversity, equity and inclusion today. It is a rarely spotlighted irony that so much of the dialogue about diversity and inclusion ends up focusing on what sets us apart instead." (pg 2)

One way to set the tone of respect and civility and help students create connections in the classroom is to show how people who seem very different can find common ground. This Danish TV ad video "All That We Share" does that.

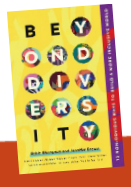
Objective: Change the paradigm by having students focus on what they share and have in common, versus what makes them different and sets them apart.

Instructions: Have students watch the All That We Share video and discuss what they learned.

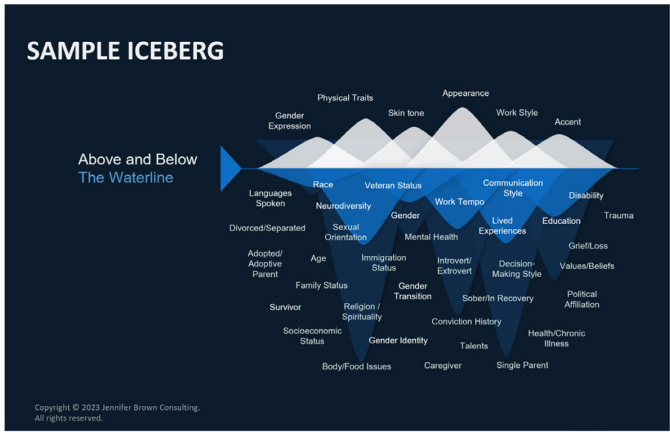
Reflect on the following questions:

- Why do we put people in boxes? What boxes do you feel placed in sometimes?
- Do you think it is true that there is more that brings us together than we think?
- What questions about your identity do you wish you were asked more often?

Watch this video at www.nonobvious.com/diversity



Activity #2 – Diving Into Identity: What part of your identity do you keep under the waterline?



See next page for printable version of this ieberg illustration.

Objective: Use the metaphor of an iceberg to spark conversations about what it means to cover or hide aspects of your identity to blend in with others.

Instructions: Imagine an iceberg floating in water with only certain diversity dimensions evident above the water—for example, physical traits like the color of our skin, our accents or the languages we speak, how we dress, and so on . These are often what are viewed as "acceptable" per society's dominant culture norms. But many other parts of personal identity can remain invisible and unshared below the waterline.

Here are just a few:

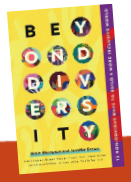
- Why I don't talk about my sibling who has a disability.
- My classmates don't know I have a family member who is transitioning.
- I don't attend events where there is alcohol because I have a family member in AA.
- I don't join peers for lunch because I don't want them to know I have an eating disorder.
- My peers don't know I have a parent in prison.
- I don't share my pronouns or dress the way I'd really like to.
- My classmates don't know that I am in a same-sex relationship.
- No one knows that my parents entered the US by crossing the border and that they don't speak English.
- I don't tell people I am the first one in my family to go to college.
- I get treatment for a chronic medical condition.
- I have intense social anxiety and that's why I don't speak up in class.

Reflect on the following questions:

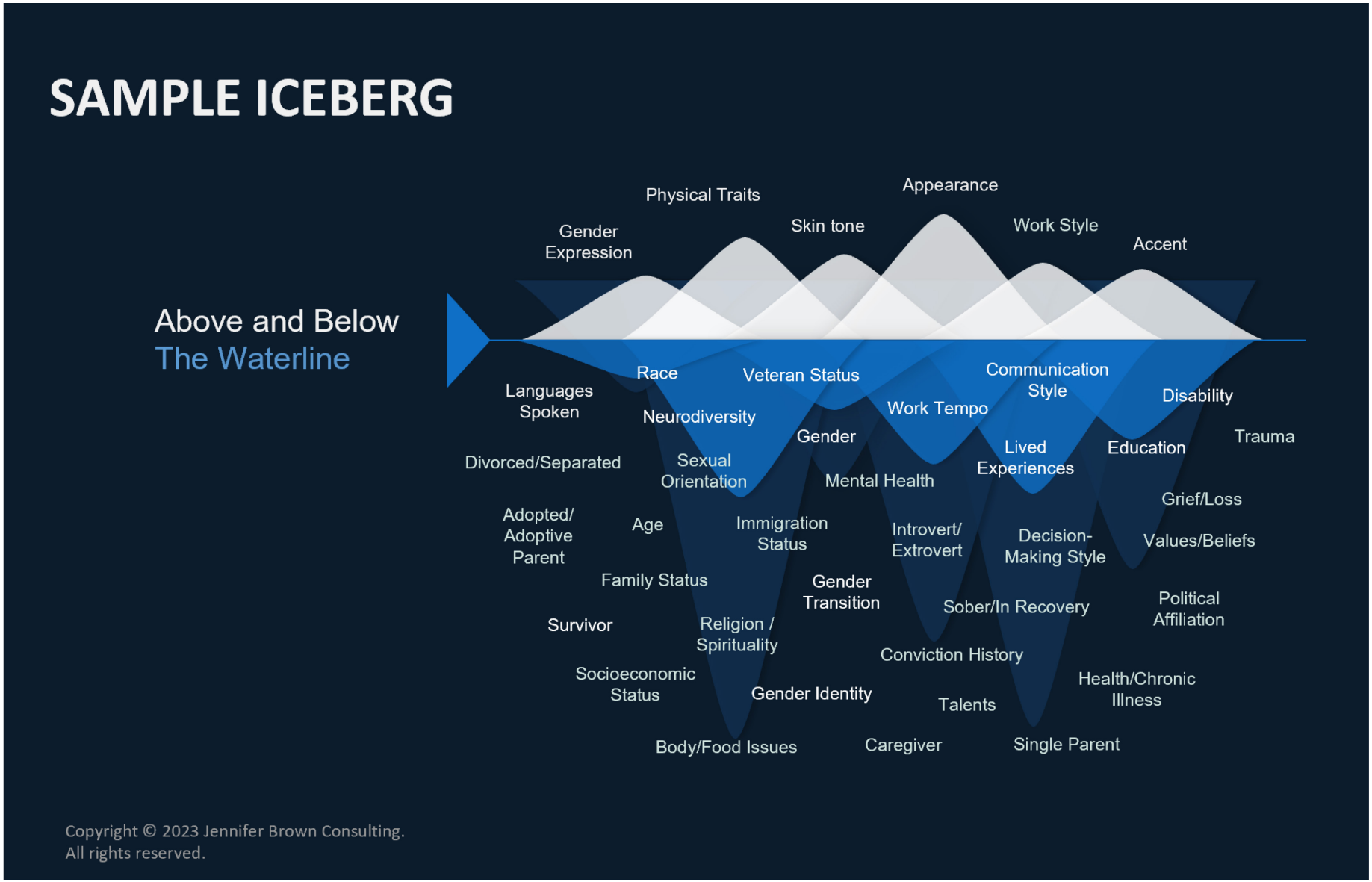
Q: Which aspects of your identity do you make visible?

Q: Which aspects of your identity do you keep concealed beneath your waterline?

Q: What would make you feel comfortable and safe enough to lower your waterline?



Activity #2 – Diving Into Identity – Printable Sample Iceberg
What part of your identity do you keep under the waterline?



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Activity #3 – Who Is In Your Inner Circle?

Objective: The simple exercise of inventorying our inner circle forces us to look for patterns in our relationships and better understand our tendency to seek comfort in sameness, and our discomfort with, and avoidance of, the unknown and the unfamiliar.

Instructions: Follow the example in Figure 1. Write down the names of your trusted inner circle in the first column of a grid. Next, fill in the top row with various diversity dimensions (e.g., ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disabilities, political beliefs, socioeconomic background, etc.) Then, place an X for each person where their identity differs from your own in any given category. You can even total up the X marks to get a birds-eye view of where there is a lack of representation, of difference, in your life.

Example

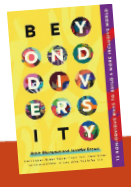
	DIVERSITY DIMENSIONS					
INITIALS OR FIRST NAMES (NO FAMILY MEMBERS)	ETHNICITY	SEXUALITY	GENDER	ABILITY	Etc.	**TOTAL Xs**
Person 1	X		X	X		3
Person 2	X	X	X			3
Person 3			X			1

Reflect on the following questions:

Q: Were you surprised by the findings when you created your inventory?

Q: Did you discover more homogeneity than diversity?

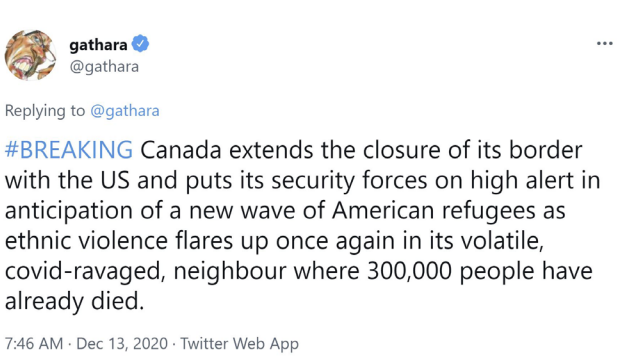
Q: Why do you think your exposure is so limited?

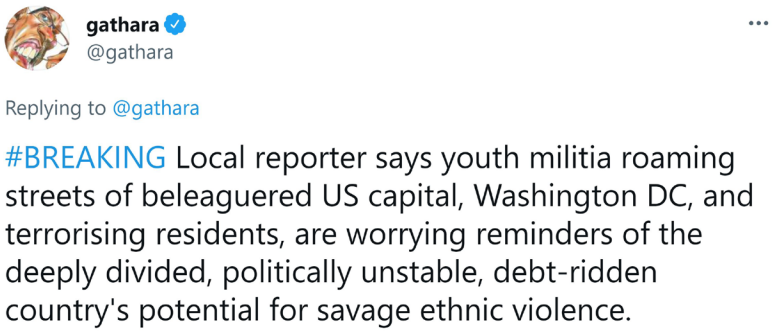


Activity #4 – Uncovering Bias In The Media

"The impact of inadequate representation in news reporting can result in biased headlines and coverage until they are exposed by someone with a more balanced perspective. A perfect example can be seen in the tweets of Patrick Gathara—a Kenyan journalist who cleverly uses Twitter to rewrite the headlines for American news stories with the same inherently biased and judgmental language that Western media has used for years when reporting on Africa." (pg 22)

Here are two examples:





Objective: Help students understand how who is telling the story influences how the story is perceived and reported..

Instructions: Have students work in pairs. Instruct each pair to find three recent headlines that promote a particular perspective and point of view. Have them identify words or phrases in the headline that indicate bias for or against a particular issue, community, or identity group. Instruct them to rewrite each headline from an opposing viewpoint, one that also promotes a particular perspective or point of view. Then have them rewrite the headline from an objective, factual point of view.

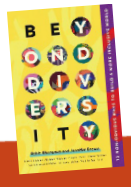
Reflect on the following questions:

Q: Was this exercise difficult? What part was the hardest?

Q: What did you learn from this exercise?

Q: Is there always bias in any media content?

Q: What role do advertisers play in how and what is reported?



Activity #5 – I Believe (Source: Sapro/Modern Campus)

Objective: By being challenged to share their beliefs on controversial topics, this activity helps students examine their unique perspectives and consider why their fellow participants may feel differently.

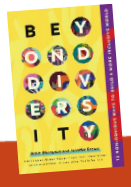
Instructions: Hang up three sheets around the room (or create three columns on a white board) — labeled "always true", "sometimes true" and "rarely true" — with space for students to gather nearby. Then, ask students to respond to statements (which you'll read one at a time) by moving closest to the sheet that represents their opinion. The statements can address a variety of inclusion topics or be narrowed to fit your goals or the students involved. (For example, you can adapt this to be only about race or gender.)

Here are some possible statements:

- (Your institution's name) seems to be welcoming to people of all racial backgrounds.
- People assume I am here on a scholarship.
- Most students in my classes are of the same race as me.
- People are basically good.
- A hardworking person can overcome their lack of privilege.
- Sexism is a problem at (your institution's name).
- (Your institution's name) is a diverse community.
- After each statement, ask volunteers if they would like to share why they responded the way they did.

Key Debrief Question:

Q: Which statements were the hardest to respond to? Why?



Activity #6 – What Labels Do We Carry?

Labels can easily become shorthand for how we describe people. Each of us must resist the tendency to categorize people in this limiting way. It harms their potential and creates an environment where others may feel forced to live inside a single, outside perception of who they are.

To illustrate how damaging the labels we assign to others and that we carry ourselves can be, we can use a powerful short film titled "The Labels We Carry" created by writer and director Beecher W. Reuning. The film explores the idea of toxic labels and forces us to confront not only how they can affect each of our self-worth, but how one small action can make a difference in someone else's life.

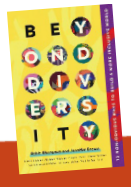
Objective: Use a powerful short film to get students to consider the labels they assign to others or carry themselves and how they might shed them or rethink their actions to show more kindness toward those unlike themselves.

Instructions: Have students watch the Labels We Carry Video and discuss what they learned.

Reflect on the following questions:

- What situations might you judge someone around you unfairly?
- How do you think your biases might affect the way you label others?
- What is a label that seems innocent or non-offensive to you, but may be hurtful to others?
- What label might have been assigned to you when you were younger that you are happy to leave behind now that you're in college?

Watch this video at www.nonobvious.com/diversity



Activity #7 – The Non-Obvious Diversity Summit Video Collection

During the research process for the book, we hosted an ambitious gathering of more than 200 experts in nearly every field imaginable to discuss the realities of trying to build a more inclusive world in each of their spaces.

The participants included stand up comedians talking aboutwhether diversity could be funny, entertainers sharing the struggle of breaking into Hollywood, government officials trying to enact more equitable legislation, how food can help bring people together, lingering biases in sports and lots more.

Altogether there were more than 50 panel discussions and they are all available online for viewing. On the following page, you'll find a full list of the sessions we recorded and published. This activity uses this collection of videos as a starting point for an engaging discussion between students on all the dimensions of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging across industries.

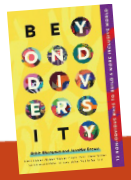
Objective: Use the panel discussions recorded from the Non-Obvious Beyond Diversity Summit to spark a discussion on various topics with students.

Instructions: Divide students into groups or individuals and have them choose one panel discussion to watch. As they watch, have them record key themes, questions raised and the various perspectives shared from the panelists

Reflect on the following questions:

- What was the "big question" that this panel discussion aimed to address?
- In your opinion, did the discussion adequately explore the topic? Why or why not?
- What was the biggest difference of opinion or perspective among the panelists?
- What other aspects of the topic do you wish the conversation had addresses?
- If you were part of the panel, what perspective would you have shared?

Watch videos at www.nonobviousdiversity.com



FULL LIST OF SESSIONS FROM THE 1st NON-OBVIOUS BEYOND DIVERSITY SUMMIT

STORYTELLING

- Sharing the Stage: #manels and More Inclusive Conference Speakers
- How to Own Your Creative Vision – Interview with Aneesh Chaganty
- Casting Calls: How to Include Underrepresented Voices in Film & TV
- Flipping the Script: Monika Samtani with Meera Menon + Deniese Davis
- Backstage: Lifting the Curtain on Theater's Diversity Problem
- Changing the Narrative: The Fight for More Diversity in Book Publishing
- Bigger Stories: Supporting More Diversity in Journalism + News Media

IDENTITY

- Just Be You: Embracing Our Bodies and Ourselves, Just as We Are
- Our Body is Power: Creating a Positive Representation of Ourselves
- Work It Out: Making Health and Fitness More Inclusive
- Shady Choices: Colorism and the Shifting "Face" of Fashion Brands

FAMILY

- Cultural Confidence: Teaching Youth to Be Proud of Their Heritage
- Ending Gender Based Violence: Interview with Indrani Goradia
- Anti-Dad? The Persistent Bias Against Fathers in The Workplace
- Shared Parenting: How the Pandemic Shifted Family Life Balance
- How To Talk to Racists: Interview with Dr. David Campt

LEADERSHIP

- Leading Diversity: How to Make Large Organizations More Inclusive
- Breaking Through: How to Mentor & Champion More Women at Work
- Lost In Translation: How to Lead a Diverse & Inclusive Team
- How to Lead Diverse Teams: Rohit Bhargava with Beth Comstock
- Supporting Female Executives – Interview with Deepa Purushothaman

CULTURE

- How To Create a More Inclusive World: Rohit Bhargava w/ Maysoon Zayid
- Rethinking the Way Muslims Are Portrayed in Media & Entertainment
- Now United: How a Global Pop Music Group Brings the World Together
- New Flavors: The Role of Food in Creating a More Inclusive World
- Is Diversity Funny? How Comedians of Color Navigate a Sensitive Topic
- Remembering The Past: How Museums Amplify Diversity Conversations
- How Rock Stars Build Their Ensemble: Interview with Stacy Campbell

Watch videos at www.nonobviousdiversity.com

EDUCATION

- Starting Early: Why Creating Diverse Content for Kids Matters
- Diversity at College: How to Make Higher Education More Inclusive
- How To Teach Racial Literacy with Priya Vulchi and Winona Guo

RETAIL

- Bringing More Diverse Perspectives into Marketing, PR and Advertising
- Diversity In Retail: Creating More Welcoming Experiences for All
- Visualizing Diversity: How the Marketing Imagery Is Changing

WORKPLACE

- Master Collaborators: Leadership Lessons from Disabled Trailblazers
- Hire Equity: Transforming the Recruiting Process to Be More Inclusive
- Unique Talent: Neurodiversity in The Modern Workplace
- Never Too Old: Ageism + Integrating Older Talent into The Workforce
- How Men Can Be Better Advocates for Gender Equality

TECHNOLOGY

- Women in Tech: How to Get More Women into the Tech Industry
- Everyone Welcome: Using Tech to Create More Inclusive Workplaces
- Technically Biased: Solving the Plague of Algorithmic Bias in Technology
- Safe Havens: What Gaming Communities Teach Us About Inclusion

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Getting Funded: How Investors Support Diverse Startup Founders
- Main Street 2.0: Building Equitable and Inclusive Economic Engines
- The Rural Renaissance: How Rural Communities Get Connected

GOVERNMENT

- Represented: How Politics and Government Is Becoming More Diverse
- Social Impact and Racial Justice in the Age of Diversity
- How Diversity Fuels Bright Ideas for the Federal Government
- Health Equity: Why Diversity Matters in Public Health

FUTURE

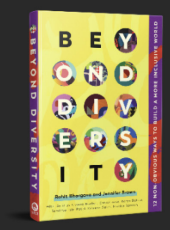
- Toward the Future Normal: Futurists Share Diversity Predictions
- Diverse City: How to Create More Inclusive Cities of the Future
- Robot Citizens: How Artificial Beings Will Challenge Our Perceptions

Activity #8 – The Beyond Diversity Challenge (A Nudge Campaign (powered by ProHabits)

Our team has partnered with pioneering behavioral science firm ProHabits to offer an exclusive experience for students to help them take action on diversity after reading the book. In this activity, students sign up for the mobile-first experience and then receive questions and prompts designed to encourage action throughout the semester.

Experience 3 days of Beyond Diversity Nudge Curriculum

Support students by helping them turn learning into action



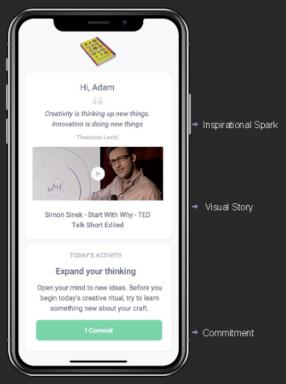
prohabits

ProHabits combines the best of behavioral science and technology to support students throughout their higher education journey.

1-click actions. Email or text.

No app downloads.
No passwords.
Delivered email and/or text.

Tailored to the organization



Branded to your organization
Emotionally rewarding
Visual & engaging

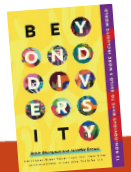
Interactive safe space for growing together

Social motivation, newsfeed, stories, and leaderboard and various gamified elements promoting engagement & celebrations of ones action

Gain insight through human experiences

Gain valuable insights about top performers, discover your untapped motivatables, and build sustainable nurturing programs to retain and develop talent.

- Students receive prompts (via text or email) to complete brief activities.
- Participants can access a user dashboard with personal growth information.
- Educators access real-time reports that track student progress and provide tangible insights.

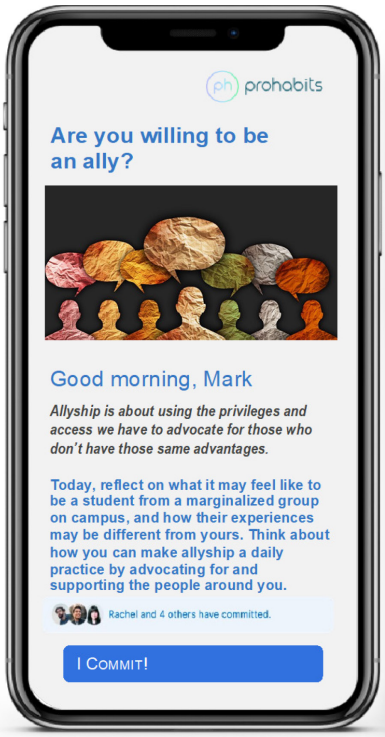
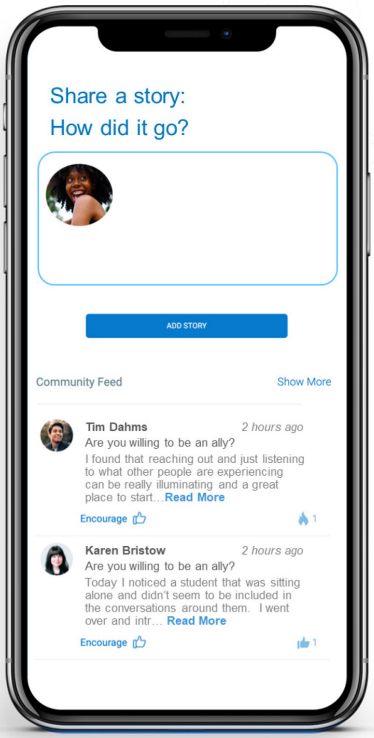
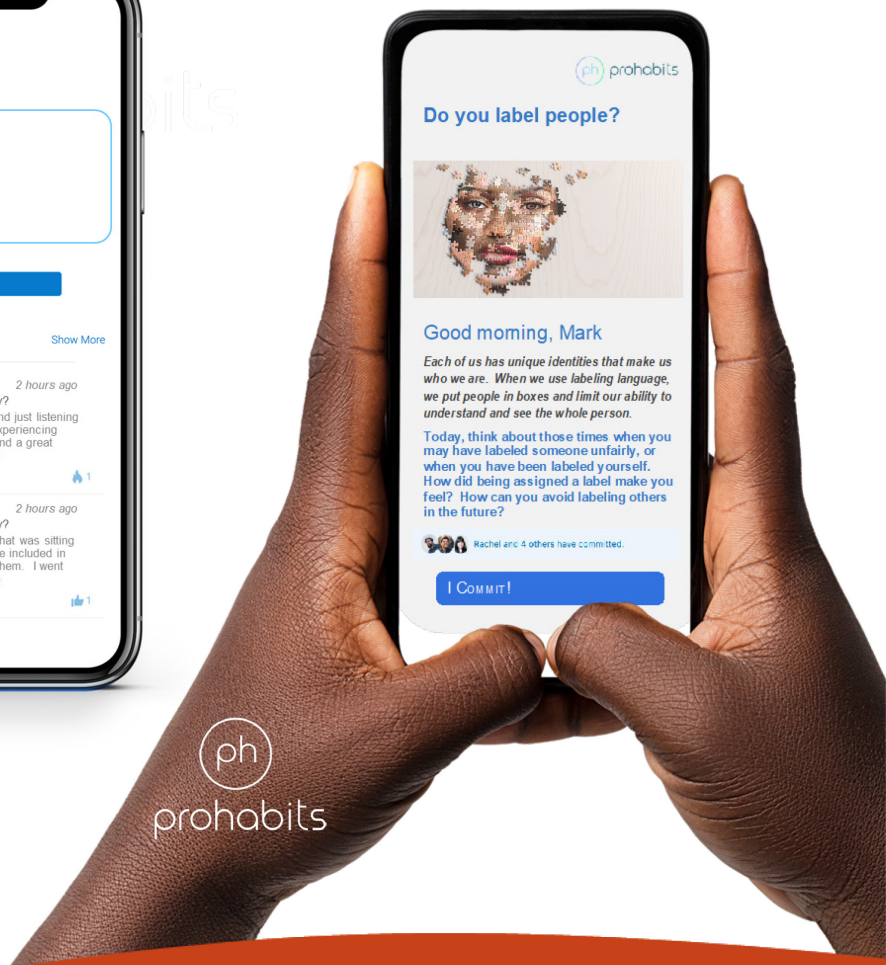
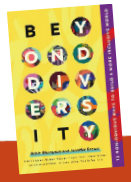


Activity #8 – The Beyond Diversity Challenge
How The Nudge Campaign Works ...

Experience 3 days of Beyond Diversity Nudge Curriculum

2-minute activities. Delivered via text or email. No downloads or passwords.

Research shows that small actions create impactful changes that transform how we work and interact with one another.

Nudges are the perfect delivery mechanism to inspire small, actionable steps that build to meaningful change.

They promote learn-by-doing experiences that ripple well beyond the individuals performing the activities.