

## LESSON PLAN

# The N-Word: Its History, Use, and Impact

*Compelling Question: How can we minimize the harm the N-word causes to people and society?*

Grade Level		Time	Common Core Standards
K-1	2-5	90 minutes (2 class periods)	Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Language
6-8	9-12		



## Web Related Connections

### Lesson Plans

[Intent vs. Impact: Why Does it Matter?](#)

[Slurs, Offensive Jokes and How to Respond](#)

[When You are the Target: How to Respond and Challenge Bias](#)

[Words that Can Hurt, Help and Heal](#)

### Other Resources:

[A Guide for Responding to School-Based Bias Incidents](#)

[Challenging Biased Language](#)

[Establishing a Safe Learning Environment](#)

[Identity-Based Bullying: Listening to Young People](#)

[Incident Response Resources for K-12 Schools](#)

[Race Talk: Engaging Young People in Conversations about Race and Racism](#)

[Slurs and Biased Language](#)

## LESSON OVERVIEW

The N-word, a racist and offensive slur, has been used throughout history to demean, humiliate and degrade Black people. Learning about its history, use and harm is critical—especially in schools today. The use of the N-word is a fraught, yet important, issue for schools. Race-based hate and bias incidents often originate with the N-word. “N-word passes” (in which non-Black students ask permission of Black peers or friends to use the N-word) are cropping up in schools. Educators sometimes bring the N-word into the classroom when discussing literature or history, but don’t always consider the impact on others and the school often lacks a policy about how to approach this. Seemingly private conversations in the lunchroom and hallway take place between Black students who may be using the N-word and non-Black students don’t understand why they cannot use it too. The N-word is used as a hate symbol when written on school walls, desks, lockers and bathrooms.

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to understand the history and usage of slurs in general and the N-word specifically, reflect on their own thoughts, feelings and ideas about the N-word, and explore and address the impact and harm caused by the N-word.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will examine the several decades’ history of the N-word.
- Students will reflect on their experiences, thoughts, feelings and ideas about the use of the N-word in current times.
- Students will explore the impact of the N-word on different people and what can be done to address the impact and harm.
- Students will consider what they used to think versus what they now think about the N-word by writing a short reflective essay.

## MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

- [Establishing Classroom Guidelines](#) (for teacher’s use)
- [White and wondering why you can’t use the N-word? Watch this](#) (Video: 2 min., 26 sec.)

- **How the n-word became the ‘atomic bomb of racial slurs’** (one copy for each student)
- **N-word Scenarios** (one copy for each student)
- Signs to create on large pieces of paper to place around the room: (1) Targeted Students and Staff, (2) Other Students and Staff, (3) Our School/Community and (4) Society

[Note to Teacher: Because this lesson explores slurs and specifically the N-word, it is important to consider the level of trust and maturity among your students to discuss this sensitive and potentially fraught topic. Before proceeding, assess your students’ ability to participate in this lesson in a productive way. If you haven’t had discussions in your classroom about race and racism, this is not the lesson plan to start with. It would not be productive for the first lesson on race/ racism in your classroom to be about the N-word.

This would be a good time to review classroom guidelines or rules if you have already created them. If not, take 15–20 minutes to establish classroom guidelines using [Establishing a Safe Learning Environment](#) guidelines or use [Establishing Classroom Guidelines](#). Throughout the lesson, remind your students that your discussion of this term is designed to help them understand the impact of slurs and in no way indicates approval or grants them permission to use them now or in the future.

Because the N-word is an anti-Black racial slur, be mindful of the Black students in your classroom, and prioritize their emotional safety, protection and support. Consider talking with them in advance to explain why you are teaching this lesson and allow them to share their thoughts, questions and concerns. During the lesson plan, do not put any of the Black students in the position of having to explain the N-word, the harm it causes or the reasons why people of different races may or may not use it, unless there are Black students in the class who want or choose to share their thoughts. If they do, remind the class that those students do not represent the position or perspective of all Black people.

**It is critical that you never use the actual N-word during the course of the lesson plan. It is also important to remind your students that the N-word can never be used in your classroom, for this lesson plan or any other time. When explaining this to students, you can use language to this effect: “The N-word is a highly offensive racial slur against Black people and can cause a great deal of harm to hear it out loud or see it in writing, even when that’s not the intention. We will never use the actual N-word in this classroom and only use ‘N-word’ when referring to it.”]**

## ? PART 1

### What is Biased, Offensive and Harmful Language?

1. Begin the lesson by asking students: *What is biased, hateful or offensive words or language?* Have some students share their thoughts aloud.
2. Explain that in this lesson, we will discuss slurs, which is one type of biased and offensive language. Share that we will specifically be talking about the N-word, which is a racial slur. Ask: *What is a slur?* Elicit and explain that a slur is: “an insulting, offensive or degrading remark, often based on an identity group such as race, ethnicity, religion, ethnic, gender/gender identity or sexual orientation.”

### Key Words

analogize  
contentious  
degrade  
derogatory  
endearment  
humiliate  
inferior  
ironically  
analogize  
contentious  
degrade  
derogatory  
endearment  
humiliate  
inferior  
ironically  
kinship  
malevolence  
oppress  
prudence  
reappropriate  
slur  
subhuman  
trauma

[Note to Teacher: If you want to provide an anonymous option for students to share their thoughts about what biased language and slurs are, use notecards or [Mentimeter](#) to collect their thoughts rather than having students shared aloud.]

3. Ask students: *Where do we see and hear slurs and other biased/offensive language?* Record their responses on the board, which could include the following:
  - Music lyrics
  - Movies and TV
  - Online/digital spaces, social media and texting
  - Books/literature
  - Said out loud to someone to demean and insult them
  - Said out loud to show connection to others in same identity group
  - Written out in public or private places as a hate symbol
  - Private conversation we're in or ones we overhear
  - Public conversations: celebrities, comedians, politicians, other famous people
4. Ask students: *What are the main qualities of a slur? How do you know something is a slur?* Depending on your classroom climate and sense of emotional safety, you can have students respond in one of three ways: (1) brainstorm verbally and record their responses on a list or semantic web on the board/smartboard, (2) distribute a few post-it notes to each student and have them write words and phrases which they return to you to place on a wall or board/smartboard or (3) use a digital polling app like [Mentimeter](#) or [google jamboard](#) and have students share their responses anonymously.

After capturing and sharing their responses, engage students in a brief discussion by asking: *What patterns do you see in the responses? How would you explain the main qualities of a slur?*

5. Ask students: *When you see or hear slurs, what thoughts and feelings come up for you?* Again, use one of the three suggested response options as outlined in step #4 above, depending on classroom climate. As results come in and they are shared with the class, engage students in a brief discussion by asking: *What do you notice? What do you wonder?*

### ☆ What is the N-Word?

1. Elicit and explain that the "N-word" is an abbreviation for a racial slur that is demeaning and racist toward Black people. Remind students that we will use "n-word" to describe the word and **never** use the word itself.
2. Ask students: *What are some of the reasons why people, or why do you, use the N-word?* Allow students to share their thoughts anonymously by having them use notecards (to turn into you anonymously), a [Mentimeter](#) or [google jamboard](#) (or another polling app that allows for original responses) in order to get open and honest responses. Group together their responses (or do that together as a class) and share their responses. Create a list that may look something like this:
  - To hurt, insult, put down, humiliate someone.
  - To make themselves seem cool or "in the know."
  - To connect with others in that same identity group.
  - To shock or surprise someone.
  - To feel powerful, and take the slur back.
  - To show superiority to another person.

- Engage students in a brief discussion by asking what they notice about the responses of the class as a whole. Ask: *What are some of the overall reasons that people, or you, use the N-word?* Then ask: *Do you think people think about the impact of using the N-word?* Have students raise hands if they think people (1) never, (2) sometimes, (3) often or (4) always/almost always think about the impact of using the N-word? Ask some students to share why they choose their response.



### History and Use of the N-Word

- Ask students: *What do you know about the history and use of the N-word?* Invite a few students to share their thoughts. Then, share some or all of the following information:
  - Language is one tool that reinforces systems that discriminate against, harm and oppress groups of people. Slurs are harmful language designed to degrade targeted individuals and groups. The N-word, dating back to seventeenth-century colonial America, is directed at Black people and has been used over time to justify disrespect, discrimination and violence.
  - Kidnapped from Africa, enslaved Black people were often stripped of their native language and names. While “new” names were sometimes given by enslavers, the N-word was frequently used to call or refer to enslaved Black people. This word was also used by white Americans regardless of their status as enslavers or property owners to communicate that Black people were inferior and undeserving of basic human dignity and respect.
  - Following Emancipation, or the freeing of Black people from enslavement after hundreds of years, it was acceptable for white people to treat Black people as subhuman and deny them equal access to resources and humane treatment. The N-word continued to be used broadly for decades and was a socially acceptable term among mainstream society in the U.S.
  - While most people in the U.S. now reject the use of the N-word and recognize its harm, there are several current examples of its use to talk about or attack Black people. For most Black people, the N-word invokes immense trauma, pain and grief. Use of the word perpetuates a violent history and reinforces anti-Black racism, a system that marginalizes and oppresses Black people.
  - Throughout history, groups that have been targeted with oppressive language have, at times, decided to adopt and shift the meaning of slurs. The act of reappropriating words that were once used to cause widespread harm is a way that targeted groups sometimes choose to take back the power that is lost when outside groups define them in harmful ways. One example of this is the reappropriation of the N-word by the Black community. After centuries of mistreatment, many people in the Black community decided to take back the slur and adopt an alternate definition to convey kinship.
  - Not all members of the Black community choose to use the N-word in this way or support this act of reappropriation. Each individual Black person can decide whether they want to use the reappropriated term.
- Show the video: [White and wondering why you can't use the N-word?](#) Watch this (2 mins, 26 sec.). Engage students in a brief discussion by asking:
  - What did you learn that you didn't know before?
  - What is your biggest takeaway? How would you summarize what the video is saying?
  - What questions do you have?
- Distribute a copy of the article (which is a transcript of an interview with Randall Kennedy, a law professor at Harvard University) [How the n-word became the 'atomic bomb of racial slurs'](#) and provide 10 minutes for students to read it silently, or read aloud together with different students taking turns reading. After reading, engage students in a discussion by asking:

- What thoughts and feelings emerged as you read the interview article?
- What did you learn that you didn't know before?
- What surprised you that was in the reading?
- Does what you learned from the reading shift or impact your point of view about the use of the N-word? If so, how?
- What is your biggest takeaway from after reading the article?

## PART 2

### Small Group Work: Scenarios

1. Explain to students that they are now going to work together in small groups to discuss scenarios that involve the N-word.

[Note to Teachers: Read the scenarios in advance and decide to what extent your students have the maturity and whether your classroom climate has the emotional safety for students to engage with these scenarios. You may choose to eliminate some of the scenarios if they do not resonate or if they are too similar to recent events in your school community and may cause harm. You may also choose to have all students focus on only one of these scenarios.]

The scenarios are:

- **N-word Pass:** In a school community, there are a variety of incidents involving an “N-word pass.” An N-word pass in schools is when non-Black students ask permission of Black peers or friends to use the N-word in certain situations and gatherings (i.e., as a “joke,” with other Black people who agree, etc.). If granted permission, this person can seemingly only use the N-word during these times and situations and it won't be seen as a racial slur. If a Black person agrees to let the person use the N-word, it's seen as a joke or it makes it seem like it's acceptable.
- **Song Lyrics:** There's a party that takes place with many young people from the same school attending. The party is mostly white teenagers and there are also a few Black and other young people of color there. A song comes on that uses the N-word and a group of the white kids start singing along. When the N-word comes on, they continue singing, very loudly at times. Later someone posts a video of this on social media.
- **Overheard Conversation:** In the cafeteria at lunch, there is a group of all Black students sitting a table together. They are talking about a lot of different things, joking, etc. And several use the N-word at different times during their conversation. A white student comes to the table and the Black students immediately go silent and give each other a look as if to say, “don't use the N-word around him.” One of the Black students at the table says, “He's cool. You can say it around him.”
- **Group Text:** There's a regular group text chat that takes place between a group of friends and others who are outside the main friend group; some in the chat are closer than others. One of the non-Black members of the group chat refers to another student using the N-word. This Black student is not in the group chat. No one says anything about the N-word being used. However, someone who is part of the group chat takes a screenshot and shares it with the person to whom it was directed.
- **In the Classroom:** In English class, the teacher has assigned students to read *To Kill a Mockingbird*. There are some chapters students are assigned to read on their own and other chapters where the book is read aloud in class. As the teacher reads a particular section that includes the N-word, she reads the passage with the N-word, saying the actual word. She then later talks about the use of the N-word, and again says the actual word. Some students in the class are visibly uncomfortable but no one says anything.

- **Non-Black Students:** Two students, who are good friends, neither of whom are Black, see each other in the hallway. They start talking at their lockers, engaging in a long conversation about a variety of topics and people. As they talk about other people (also non-Black students), they often refer to them using the N-word. Other students, both Black and non-Black, overhear their conversation and don't know what to say.
  - **Hate Symbol:** The N-word has begun to appear in different places around school. It was first found sprawled on a wall in the bathroom, using soap, water and paper towels to write out the word. The N-word was also seen written on the side of two desks. In the most recent incident, the N-word was written on a student locker and that student is Black. The school has removed the hate symbols, informed parents and families and engaged students in an assembly program.
2. Divide students into groups of 4–5 students each. **Distribute a copy of the N-word Scenarios** handout to all students. Then, for each small group, assign one of the scenarios, or you may choose to have all groups work on the same scenario.
  3. When students are situated, have them read their scenario silently and then discuss the scenario, guided by the following questions. Explain to students that the questions are to be used as a guide and don't have to all be answered if the conversation goes in another direction.
    - What's happening in the scenario?
    - What thoughts and feelings come up with you as you read this scenario?
    - To what extent can you relate to this scenario? Have you ever experienced or witnessed something like this?
    - If you experienced something this scenario, how did you feel? What did you do or wish you had done?
    - What is the impact of this scenario on the targeted person/people? What is the impact on others who are part of that identity group?
    - What other thoughts and ideas do you have about this scenario?

Have each small group assign someone in their group to take notes (recorder) and someone to report back to the larger group (reporter). Give them 10-15 minutes for this task.

4. Reconvene the class and invite each group to share some highlights or a summary of their small group discussion. If time is limited, invite a few responses to the question: *What is your biggest takeaway from doing this activity? What did you learn?*
5. Then ask students to share their responses to this question: *What is the impact of this scenario on the people targeted? What is the impact on others who are part of that identity group?* Record their responses on the board/smart board and then use for the following activity.

### Impact of the N-Word

1. Remind students about the prior discussion about the impact and harm caused to individual students and staff targeted by the N-word, as well as others who are part of the same identity group.
2. Place the previously made signs around the room that read: (1) Targeted Students and Staff, (2) Other Students and Staff, (3) Our School/Community and (4) Society. Explain to students that they are going to reflect on the impact and harm of the N-word for different people and groups. Explain that the harm and impact may be felt by those targeted by the N-word (Black students and staff), non-Black people, our school/community and society as a whole.

3. Invite students to move around the room and record on each of the sheets the impact and harm of the N-word on each group. When completed, give students a few minutes to move around the room one more time and notice what's been written on all of the sheets.
4. Explain to students that they are now going to move to one of the sheets they'd like to discuss in more depth. Give students a minute to decide where they want to go and then invite them to move to that place. When students are situated, have them (1) review what's on the sheet and discuss any clarifying questions, (2) add other examples of harm and impact that may be missing from the sheet and (3) brainstorm possible solutions to address the impact of the N-word on that group.
5. Reconvene the class and have each group share their possible solutions with the rest of the class.

### Writing Activity: I Used to Think... But Now I Think...

1. Share with students that they are going to write short essays about if and how their thinking has shifted or changed as they have learned more about the N-word. Explain that when we began this lesson, they may have had some thoughts, ideas and feelings about the N-word: its history, use, who can use it, who should not, and why, your feelings and experiences about it, etc. Explain that we are now going to reflect on what we used to think versus what we now think about the N-word by writing a short essay.
2. Invite students to share, in a few sentences or a paragraph, what they used to think and what they now think about the N-word. Explain that it's possible they think something different as a result of talking and learning about the N-word and it's also possible that they think similarly to how they thought before. Invite students to write a few sentences in response to the prompt: "I used to think...." and have them write their responses to what they used to think about the N-word. Next, invite them to write about how their ideas, thoughts or feelings have changed about the N-word by responding to the prompt, "But now I think...." and have them write their responses to what they now think about the N-word (or other slurs).
3. Give students 10-15 minutes to write their responses and then have them share what they wrote with a partner or a small group of three. After students have shared with some peers, ask if anyone would like to share what they wrote—or parts of it—with the whole class.

### Closing

Have students read aloud a sentence of two from their short essays: "I Used to Think..., But Now I Think..."

### Additional Reading and Resources

- [If Your Kids Aren't Black, Here's How To Talk To Them About The N-Word](#) (Romper, February 28, 2022)
- [N-word: The troubled history of the racial slur](#) (BBC News, October 5, 2020)
- [Straight Talk about the N-Word](#) (Learning for Justice, Fall 2011)
- [The N-Word in the Classroom](#) (Ted)
- [When 'Just Joking' is No Joke: How to Respond When Students' 'Jokes' are Biased or Offensive](#) (ADL Education, March 2023)

# Common Core Anchor Standards

CONTENT AREA/STANDARD
<p>Reading</p> <p>R1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</p> <p>R2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.</p> <p>R7: Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue</p>
<p>Writing</p> <p>W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>W4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</p>
<p>Speaking and Listening</p> <p>SL1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <p>SL3: Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.</p>
<p>Language</p> <p>L3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.</p> <p>L4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.</p> <p>L5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p>

# CASEL's SEL Competencies

COMPETENCIES
<p>Self-Awareness: The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.</p>
<p>Social Awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, &amp; contexts.</p>
<p>Relationship Skills: The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups.</p>
<p>Responsible Decision-Making: The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations.</p>



## Establishing Classroom Guidelines

1. Write CLASSROOM GUIDELINES on the top of a piece of chart paper or on the board/smart board.
2. Ask students: *Why are classroom guidelines essential for fostering a safe, respectful and inclusive environment, for class discussions on difficult topics?* (For example, to have safe discussions, to encourage learning, to minimize negative and unproductive conflicts, to hear different perspectives respectfully, to prevent causing harm to others, especially students in marginalized identity groups.)
3. Develop a web of student responses, and ask students to add additional words or ideas that come to mind when thinking about guidelines for respectful discussion.
4. Divide the class into small groups of 4–5 students and provide each group with a piece of chart paper and markers. Have each group select a recorder.
5. Explain to the class that each group should develop 1–2 guidelines that they believe are important for each of the following three areas:
  - What does respectful discussion sound like?
  - What does it look like?
  - What does it feel like?

In addition to developing these classroom guidelines, students should be prepared to explain why they think each guideline is important.

6. On a piece of poster board, write GUIDELINES FOR RESPECT at the top.
7. After all groups have had time to develop two guidelines for each area, have a recorder from each group share the guidelines with the rest of the class. Discuss any guidelines that are unclear, clarify their meanings, and offer examples. Post each guideline on the GUIDELINES FOR RESPECT poster board. If a group shares a guideline that has already been shared, put a check mark (✓) by the guideline to acknowledge agreement.
8. Engage students in a discussion using the following questions:
  - How can these guidelines be used to help make our classroom a safe, respectful and inclusive space?
  - How can we ensure that all members of the class follow the guidelines?
  - What happens if someone does not follow the guidelines?
  - How should we amend or add to the guidelines, if needed?
9. Ask for consensus on abiding by each of the guidelines. Place the GUIDELINES FOR RESPECT poster board (permanently) in a visible area of the classroom.

## N-Word Scenarios

### Scenario #1:

**N-word Pass:** In a school community, there are a variety of incidents involving an “N-word pass.” An N-word pass in schools is when non-Black students ask permission of Black peers or friends to use the N-word in certain situations and gatherings (i.e., as a “joke,” with other Black people who agree, etc.). If granted permission, this person can seemingly only use the N-word during these times and situations and it won’t be seen as a racial slur. If a Black person agrees to let the person use the N-word, it’s seen as a joke or it makes it seem like it’s acceptable.

### Questions for Discussion:

- What’s happening in the scenario?
- What thoughts and feelings come up with you as you read this scenario?
- To what extent can you relate to this scenario? Have you ever experienced or witnessed something like this?
- If you experienced something this scenario, how did you feel? What did you do or wish you had done?
- What is the impact of this scenario on the targeted person/people? What is the impact on others who are part of that identity group?
- What other thoughts and ideas do you have about this scenario?

### Our Thoughts:

### Scenario #2:

**Song Lyrics:** There's a party that takes place with many young people from the same school attending. The party is mostly white teenagers and there are also a few Black and other young people of color there. A song comes on that uses the N-word and a group of the white kids start singing along. When the N-word comes on, they continue singing, very loudly at times. Later someone posts a video of this on social media.

### Questions for Discussion:

- What's happening in the scenario?
- What thoughts and feelings come up with you as you read this scenario?
- To what extent can you relate to this scenario? Have you ever experienced or witnessed something like this?
- If you experienced something this scenario, how did you feel? What did you do or wish you had done?
- What is the impact of this scenario on the targeted person/people? What is the impact on others who are part of that identity group?
- What other thoughts and ideas do you have about this scenario?

### Our Thoughts:

### Scenario #3:

**Overheard Conversation:** In the cafeteria at lunch, there is a group of all Black students sitting a table together. They are talking about a lot of different things, joking, etc. And several use the N-word at different times during their conversation. A white student comes to the table and the Black students immediately go silent and give each other a look as if to say, “don’t use the N-word around him.” One of the Black students at the table says, “He’s cool. You can say it around him.”

### Questions for Discussion:

- What’s happening in the scenario?
- What thoughts and feelings come up with you as you read this scenario?
- To what extent can you relate to this scenario? Have you ever experienced or witnessed something like this?
- If you experienced something this scenario, how did you feel? What did you do or wish you had done?
- What is the impact of this scenario on the targeted person/people? What is the impact on others who are part of that identity group?
- What other thoughts and ideas do you have about this scenario?

### Our Thoughts:

#### Scenario #4:

**Group Text:** There's a regular group text chat that takes place between a group of friends and others who are outside the main friend group; some in the chat are closer than others. One of the non-Black members of the group chat refers to another student using the N-word. This Black student is not in the group chat. No one says anything about the N-word being used. However, someone who is part of the group chat takes a screenshot and shares it with the person to whom it was directed.

#### Questions for Discussion:

- What's happening in the scenario?
- What thoughts and feelings come up with you as you read this scenario?
- To what extent can you relate to this scenario? Have you ever experienced or witnessed something like this?
- If you experienced something this scenario, how did you feel? What did you do or wish you had done?
- What is the impact of this scenario on the targeted person/people? What is the impact on others who are part of that identity group?
- What other thoughts and ideas do you have about this scenario?

#### Our Thoughts:

### Scenario #5:

**In the Classroom:** In English class, the teacher has assigned students to read *To Kill a Mockingbird*. There are some chapters students are assigned to read on their own and other chapters where the book is read aloud in class. As the teacher reads a particular section that includes the N-word, she reads the passage with the N-word, saying the actual word. She then later talks about the use of the N-word, and again says the actual word. Some students in the class are visibly uncomfortable but no one says anything.

### Questions for Discussion:

- What's happening in the scenario?
- What thoughts and feelings come up with you as you read this scenario?
- To what extent can you relate to this scenario? Have you ever experienced or witnessed something like this?
- If you experienced something this scenario, how did you feel? What did you do or wish you had done?
- What is the impact of this scenario on the targeted person/people? What is the impact on others who are part of that identity group?
- What other thoughts and ideas do you have about this scenario?

### Our Thoughts:

### Scenario #6:

**Non-Black Students:** Two students, who are good friends, neither of whom are Black, see each other in the hallway. They start talking at their lockers, engaging in a long conversation about a variety of topics and people. As they talk about other people (also non-Black students), they often refer to them using the N-word. Other students, both Black and non-Black, overhear their conversation and don't know what to say.

### Questions for Discussion:

- What's happening in the scenario?
- What thoughts and feelings come up with you as you read this scenario?
- To what extent can you relate to this scenario? Have you ever experienced or witnessed something like this?
- If you experienced something this scenario, how did you feel? What did you do or wish you had done?
- What is the impact of this scenario on the targeted person/people? What is the impact on others who are part of that identity group?
- What other thoughts and ideas do you have about this scenario?

### Our Thoughts:

### Scenario #7:

**Hate Symbol:** The N-word has begun to appear in different places around school. It was first found sprawled on a wall in the bathroom, using soap, water and paper towels to write out the word. The N-word was also seen written on the side of two desks. In the most recent incident, the N-word was written on a student locker and that student is Black. The school has removed the hate symbols, informed parents and families and engaged students in an assembly program.

### Questions for Discussion:

- What's happening in the scenario?
- What thoughts and feelings come up with you as you read this scenario?
- To what extent can you relate to this scenario? Have you ever experienced or witnessed something like this?
- If you experienced something this scenario, how did you feel? What did you do or wish you had done?
- What is the impact of this scenario on the targeted person/people? What is the impact on others who are part of that identity group?
- What other thoughts and ideas do you have about this scenario?

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