

LITTLE BROTHER: Things Fall Apart

Discussion Guide

TEACHER QUESTIONS

Purpose: To have direct, honest, open conversation about African-American male students among teachers and other staff members.

Note: This exercise is intended to encourage dialogue among the teachers. Instruct them to stand on one side of the room if they agree and on the other side if they disagree with the following statements.

- 1.) As a teacher, I feel respected by my students.
- 2.) Teaching is hazardous to my health.
- 3.) Students deserve to have their voices heard in the classroom.
- 4.) All students are basically good.
- 5.) Parents are concerned about their child's education.
- 6.) I enjoy teaching.

Note: THESE QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ANSWERED BEFORE VIEWING THE VIDEO. Have participants in small groups, preferably with people whom they are not acquainted. Be sure each person has paper and pencil. Ask them to answer the survey questions honestly. Allow participants to share their answers within their groups. Pick and choose the questions or break them into groups. Some people may not want to share and that's okay.

READ THE QUESTIONS TO THE PARTICIPANTS. YOU MAY DISTRIBUTE THE LIST AT THE END OF THE SESSION.

- 1.) On a scale of 1 (lowest) - 10 (highest), rate yourself as an educator. **Pause and allow teachers to answer before you ask the second part of this question.** Would you rate yourself differently if you taught African-American young men?
- 2.) Using one word, describe yourself.
- 3.) Describe yourself in one sentence.
- 4.) What do you think your coworkers say about your teaching skills?
- 5.) Write a few brief statements about the area in which you teach.
- 6.) Write a few brief statements about the area in which you live.
- 7.) What is your opinion of African-American boys (specify age group according to staff).
- 8.) Do your African-American students trust you enough to share their problems with you?
- 9.) Do you refer to African-American students as 'them'?
- 10.) Are your expectations the same for all students you teach, or do you lower the bar for African-Americans?

THESE QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ANSWERED AFTER THE VIDEO.

- 1.) Did any of the answers given by the young men surprise you? Which ones and why?
- 2.) Which child seems to reach out and touch you in some way? Explain.
- 3.) What do you do when you can't seem to reach an African-American young man?
- 4.) Are there African-American students that you would like a 'do over' with? (Maybe you didn't respond to them correctly or said something totally inappropriate and you regret it, etc.)
- 5.) Do you encourage **all** children in your classroom or just the ones who resemble you?
- 6.) After viewing the video, has your opinion changed concerning African-American young men in any way (positive or negative)?
- 7.) What has been the most challenging experience you have had while teaching African-American young men? How was it handled?
- 8.) What has been your most rewarding experience you have had teaching African-American young men?
- 9.) Do you think your students care for you?
- 10.) Do you allow your students to shine? Explain.
- 11.) After viewing the video, would you change how you rate yourself as a teacher?
- 12.) Based on your teaching style and how you relate to African-American students, would you want **your** child/grandchild in your classroom?
- 13.) What did you learn about yourself from this session?
- 14.) Do you grade African-American male students based on their academic ability or on your opinion of them?
- 15.) Do your students know that you care for them?
- 16.) Are your classroom rules written by you or by you and your students?
- 17.) Did you see any similarities between White males and the African-American males in this video?
- 18.) Does it matter to you if your co-workers speak negatively about you if you show love towards African-American students?
- 19.) How are you going to incorporate what you have learned from the video and the discussions into your teaching?
- 20.) Do you know of others who could benefit from this training?

PARENT QUESTIONS

DISPLAY QUESTIONS ONE AT A TIME (POSTER BOARD / SMARTBOARD / ETC.), DISTRIBUTE PAPER AND PENCILS, AND GIVE AMPLE TIME FOR PARENTS TO ANSWER EACH QUESTION. ALLOW THEM TO SHARE ANSWERS, ALSO. EXPLAIN THAT THESE QUESTIONS ARE NOT MEANT TO POINT A FINGER.

- 1.) Tell me something positive about yourself in one word.
- 2.) Tell me about yourself in a few sentences.
- 3.) Describe how you see your neighborhood.
- 4.) Who were your role models when you were growing up?
- 5.) Do you agree / disagree that children under twelve years old should date?
Defend your answer.
- 6.) What kind of fun things do you do with your children?
- 7.) Is respect for others / teachers important in your household?
- 8.) How do you show love to your children?
- 9.) How do your children show love towards you?
- 10.) Do you check your children's homework on a regular basis?
- 11.) Do you attend parent-teacher meetings on a regular basis?
- 12.) Do your children have a voice/opinion in your home?
- 13.) Do any of the students in the video remind you of any of your children?
Which one(s) and how?
- 14.) How are you helping your child to prepare to be a successful part of society?
- 15.) Create a daily schedule of how you think your child spends his/her day.