

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

TITLE: Cross the Room

DURATION: 30 minutes

MATERIALS: none

PROCEDURES:

1. Ask the entire class to move the desk and chairs along the sides of the wall.
2. Make a line across the room using masking tape.
3. State that they must cross the room IF they agree with the following statements:
4. Teacher's tips and responses are provided below (R: Response)
5. Thank participants for their honesty and participation.

Cross the room if...

1. You have ever met someone who is homosexual.
2. You think you can tell when someone is gay.

R: Some people believe that all gay men are effeminate and all lesbians women are tomboys. While there are some people who fit these stereotypes, they are not representative of all homosexual people.

3. You think homosexuality is an illness.

R: Homosexuality was once classified as a mental illness however this was removed as a diagnosis many years ago. Numerous studies have shown that homosexuality is not linked with any psychological disturbance. This is a harmful and hurtful stereotype.

4. You think that gay people have many sexual partners and don't develop long term relationships.

R: Studies show that most gay and lesbian people want long term partners and that a large majority are involved in stable long-term relationships.

5. You think that a gay or lesbian couple would be bad parents.

R: Some people believe that children of gay or lesbian people are more likely to grow up homosexual, in fact homosexuality has been shown to be something that you are born with as a preference. In fact being the victims of hate and discrimination make homosexual parents more committed to teaching their children the values of kindness, compassion and charity.

6. You think most homosexuals are infected with HIV/AIDS.

R: In the early 80's when the outbreak was first reported it was initially identified in a group of young gay men. While HIV/AIDS is now a pandemic that affects all genders, ages, ethnicities, of people

around the world, there still exists a false belief that gay men are the most at risk. In fact statistics

show that the fastest growing group being infected today are youth (people under 25) and straight women.

7. You think all parents would be ashamed if their child told them they were homosexual.

R: While some parents might have strong religious views opposing homosexuality, the overwhelming majority of parents still love and accept their child for who they are. In general, parents always want their children to be healthy and happy.