

IT GETS BETTER®



LIVING YOUR ✦ TRUTH

AN ORIGINAL EDUGUIDE
FEATURING 6 VIDEOS FROM "IT GETS BETTER WITH..."




TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Letter From The Writer	3
EduGuide Overview	4
Discussion Protocols	8
Launching the EduGuide	10

EPISODES / LESSONS

Episode / Lesson #1: Political Action – Olivia Julianna	11
Episode / Lesson #2: Super Powers – Thaddeus Coates	14
Episode / Lesson #3: Symbols & Self-Care – April Kae	17
Episode / Lesson #4: Community Support – Dee Trannybear	20
Episode / Lesson #5: Perspective – Chella Man	23
Episode / Lesson #6: Curiosity – Nneka Onuorah	26
Culminating Activity	29

STUDENT HANDOUTS

Ticket to Learning	30
Action Plan	31
Shaping Reflection	32

CONCLUSION	33
-------------------------	-----------



LETTER FROM THE WRITER

Hello, and welcome to the EduGuide for Living Your Truth. When I think about living authentically, I think about the importance of acknowledging, understanding, and celebrating intersectionality. While the term intersectionality is being used more and more frequently these days, I often find that people do not fully understand what it means. The concept is quite simple. We all have numerous different identities that make up who we are. We are teachers, students, siblings, teammates, and chocolate chip cookie lovers, to name a few. These identities come together and overlap in unique ways for each of us. Those overlaps are the root of intersectionality: how identities work together. Taken in the context of society, these overlaps often coincide with unique combinations of discrimination and privilege. The purpose of this EduGuide is to empower students to understand how overlapping identities might function, both in themselves and in others. As with all of our EduGuides, the overwhelming message is one of empathy and authenticity.

This EduGuide consists of six videos and an accompanying lesson for each, bookended by a unit launch and a culminating activity. The six videos were originally created as part of It Gets Better's ongoing work highlighting queer voices. These stories, from inspiring LGBTQ+ individuals that prioritize activism in their work in various fields, resonated so deeply that we wanted to build a curriculum around them. When I was approached to work on this EduGuide, I was overjoyed. The team at IGB works selflessly to spread their message of hope to as many young people as possible, and I am honored to play even a small role in that shared mission.

Part of what we have done in recent years, notably with EduGuides for [Writing Our Own Dictionary](#) and [Fearless](#), is to create units and activities that will meaningfully engage students of all backgrounds, genders, and sexual orientations. These videos and accompanying lessons may highlight the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) community, but they are absolutely not designed for an exclusively LGBTQ+ audience. Our hope is that students will not only dig deeper into their own identities, but also develop empathy for those whose experiences may be different from their own. The future is inclusive and intersectional, and we are proud to be a part of that conversation. Now let's learn and explore together!

Andrew Wailes, M.Ed.

ABOUT THE WRITER

My mission in life is always threefold: to educate, to inspire, and to spread joy. I spent the first decade of my career as a special education teacher and school leader, and have made it my mission to uplift those for whom society has not afforded a loud enough voice. From public schools in New York City, to private education in Hong Kong, to educational consulting in Los Angeles, I have learned that students across time and borders have much more in common than some may initially expect. When it comes down to it, students want to be heard, seen, and valued.

I firmly believe that everyone has something to offer, a story to tell, and I work hard to create environments in which students are educated holistically, are empowered to make their own decisions, and have fun doing it. For a learning environment to be holistic, it must be both inclusive and supportive, balancing high expectations with an understanding that a one-size-fits-all approach simply does not work. Fairness, after all, is not everyone getting the same thing; it is everyone getting what they need in order to be successful.

EDUGUIDE OVERVIEW

This EduGuide consists of six lessons, each of which corresponds to one video highlighting a member of the LGBTQ+ community. These lessons can come together to form a unit of study in and of itself, or they can serve as supplements to larger units on career readiness, future planning, civil rights, the LGBTQ+ community, identity, etc. We recommend using this guide to inspire larger conversations about queerness and acceptance.

The series includes:



Political Action – Olivia Julianna (she/her)

A political activist from Texas who has advocated for issues including abortion rights and climate change.

WATCH VIDEO ▶



Super Powers – Thaddeus Coates (he/him)

A dancer, cartoonist, athlete, and artist from NYC who creates graphics that amplify Black and queer voices.

WATCH VIDEO ▶



Symbols & Self-Care – April Kae (she/her)

A bass guitar player and activist who uses social media to share her love for music.

WATCH VIDEO ▶



Community Support – Dee Trannybear (they/them)

A hairstylist and makeup artist who co-founded a company that tailors to trans and nonbinary clients.

WATCH VIDEO ▶



Perspective – Chella Man (he/him)

An artist who navigates his identities through art, community, and more recently a transgender boxing collective.

WATCH VIDEO ▶



Curiosity – Nneka Onuorah (she/her)

A director and producer whose directorial debut explored gender roles in the Black lesbian community.

WATCH VIDEO ▶

Time Needed

Each video and accompanying lesson can be taught in a single class period (about 45 minutes), though you may want to factor in an additional 30 to 60 minutes for any extension activities or more in-depth discussions.

Age/Level Appropriateness

This EduGuide is intended for middle and high school students between the ages of 13–18, though we welcome you to adapt it for younger and older audiences if you believe it's appropriate to do so. We hope this guide is inviting for both LGBTQ+ people and allies alike.

Participant Support

We encourage you to make these workshops absolutely voluntary. We think a basic agreement for the space of these workshops should be that everyone is here because they have decided to be here and anyone can choose not to participate in a part of the lesson.

Remote Capability

While we encourage in-person discussions, all activities included below can be conducted in a virtual environment. Facilitators will want to make use of break-out rooms for smaller group activities, with shared documents or online boards to facilitate collaboration.

Individual Student Follow-up

Depending on the experiences shared by students during the lesson, individual follow up may be needed. As students share challenges they currently face or anticipate facing, they may need to have individual discussions for support and intervention. If a school counselor is facilitating the lesson, plan an individual session to follow-up with the student to determine the level of support needed for the student. If a teacher or other educator is facilitating the lesson, report the concern to a school counselor who can follow-up with the student individually. If the student has an IEP or receives any additional support, be sure to include special education teachers or support systems in the conversation. Let the student know you are sharing the concern so trust is not broken.

Common Core Standards

- Production and Distribution of Writing – CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6–12.4–6
- Range of Writing – CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6–12.10
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge – CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6–12.7–8
- Comprehension and Collaboration – CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6–12.1–3
- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas – CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6–12.5–6

ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success

Category 1: Mindset Standards: School counselors encourage the following mindsets for all students:

- **M 4.** Self-confidence in ability to succeed
- **M 5.** Belief in using abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes
- **M 6.** Understanding that postsecondary education and lifelong learning are necessary for long-term success

Category 2: Behavior Standards: School counselors provide culturally sustaining instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counseling to help all students demonstrate:

- **Learning Strategies**
 - **B-LS 1.** Critical thinking skills to make informed decisions
 - **B-LS 7.** Long- and short-term academic, career and social/emotional goals
- **Self-Management Skills**
 - **B-SMS 5.** Perseverance to achieve long and short-term goals
 - **B-SMS 6.** Ability to identify and overcome barriers
- **Social Skills**
 - **B-SS 8.** Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary

Social Justice Standards – The Learning for Justice Anti-Bias Framework

6–8 Grade Level Outcomes

Identity 1 ID.6–8.1 I know and like who I am and can comfortably talk about my family and myself and describe our various group identities.

Identity 3 ID.6–8.3 I know that overlapping identities combine to make me who I am and that none of my group identities on their own fully defines me or any other person.

Identity 5 ID.6–8.5 I know there are similarities and differences between my home culture and the other environments and cultures I encounter, and I can be myself in a diversity of settings.

Diversity 7 DI.6–8.7 I can accurately and respectfully describe ways that people (including myself) are similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.

Diversity 9 DI.6–8.9 I know I am connected to other people and can relate to them even when we are different or when we disagree.

Justice 14 JU.6–8.14 I know that all people (including myself) have certain advantages and disadvantages in society based on who they are and where they were born. we are different or when we disagree.

Action 16 AC.6–8.16 I am concerned about how people (including myself) are treated and feel for people when they are excluded or mistreated because of their identities.

Social Justice Standards – The Learning for Justice Anti-Bias Framework

9–12 Grade Level Outcomes and Scenarios

Identity 1 ID.9–12.1 I have a positive view of myself, including an awareness of and comfort with my membership in multiple groups in society.

Identity 3 ID.9–12.3 I know that all my group identities and the intersection of those identities create unique aspects of who I am and that this is true for other people too.

Identity 5 ID.9–12.5 I recognize traits of the dominant culture, my home culture and other cultures, and I am conscious of how I express my identity as I move between those spaces.

Diversity 7 DI.9–12.7 I have the language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including myself) are both similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.

Diversity 9 DI.9–12.9 I relate to and build connections with other people by showing them empathy, respect and understanding, regardless of our similarities or differences.

Justice 14 JU.9–12.14 I am aware of the advantages and disadvantages I have in society because of my membership in different identity groups, and I know how this has affected my life.

Action 16 AC.9–12.16 I express empathy when people are excluded or mistreated because of their identities and concern when I personally experience bias.

Additional Resources

It Gets Better – [Videos](#)

It Gets Better – [LGBTQ+ Glossary](#)

Journal of College Access – [Over the Rainbow: A Career Development Group for LGBTQ+ Teens](#)

Youth.gov – [How to Improve School Experiences for LGBTQ+ Youth](#)

American Psychology Association (APA) – [Toolbox to Promote Healthy LGBT Youth](#)

DISCUSSION PROTOCOLS

As this is a discussion-based unit, we have also provided nine different protocols below. You can use these protocols in your classrooms or learning environments to encourage students to think more deeply and collaboratively about the questions that are provided here. Feel free to use these protocols as you wish, and in any particular order. You do not need to use one per lesson – we just wanted to provide you with some options to facilitate productive discussion.

Protocol	Implementation
Silent Conversation	<p>For in-person learning: Break students into groups and assign each member a color. Give each group a question to consider, preferably on chart paper. For the first round, ask students to answer the question their group has been assigned. For future rounds, students can visit other questions and agree, disagree, or expand upon their classmates' responses. By the time they return to their original question, they will have a record of a silent conversation to engage with and reflect on.</p> <p>For virtual instruction: Create Google Docs or virtual discussion boards with each question and ask students to choose their own color/font combination for their response. Ask students to start with one question, then move to others after each round. When they encounter questions that have already been answered, they can agree, disagree, or expand upon their classmates' response. By the end, they will have a record of a silent conversation to engage with and reflect on.</p>
Collaborative Note-Taking	<p>Break students into groups and assign each group a question. Allow group members to brainstorm together either on a separate sheet of paper (for in-person learning) or on a shared document (for virtual learning). Groups will then present their findings to the class.</p>
Gallery Walk	<p>Gallery walks work well with diverse documents for students to reflect on. When leading these, we would recommend supplementing the discussion questions with relevant pictures or even videos. It Gets Better's website, specifically the Stories page, has a host of videos and resources to choose from.</p> <p>Post questions or images around the room for in-person learning, and break students into groups that start at each document. For virtual learning you can organize students into breakout rooms. Give students time to visit each question and note their responses. By the end, students should have visited and engaged with every document.</p>
Think-Pair-Share	<p>Students begin by reflecting independently on a discussion question. Once they have had time to gather their thinking, they join a partner and listen, share, and question each other's thinking. After sufficient time has passed, the teacher (or certain pairs) may lead the class in a share-out discussion.</p>

Protocol	Implementation
Fishbowl Discussions	<p>For in-person learning: Set up two tables facing each other in the center of the room. And rearrange all other tables or desks in a circle around them. Invite students to sit at the tables, maybe two or four at a time, and engage with their classmates about the questions. Build in time between questions, or even more frequently as you see fit, to give students on the outside of the fishbowl the opportunity to tap in, replace one of their classmates at the center table, and engage in back-and-forth discussions.</p> <p>For virtual learning: Rather than using tables, invite a set number of students to begin the discussion while the rest of the learners observe in a whole-class meeting. Students may virtually raise their hands or type in the comment box when they are ready to tap into the conversation.</p>
Affinity Mapping	<p>This strategy works best with broader, open-ended questions. The teacher will lead this discussion one question at a time. For each question, students will answer individually on post-it notes (or on a virtual discussion board). Once the class has amassed a collection of ideas, students may work together to group responses into similar categories or themes. They then work together to label these categories and discuss not only how the ideas within each category relate, but also how the categories themselves are in conversation with one another.</p>
Speed Dating	<p>Arrange students in two circles, once circle on the inside of the other, facing each other. You may alternatively organize this as two straight lines, also facing each other. Each student should be facing one of their peers. The teacher then poses a question to the group, and allows the pairs to discuss. At intervals, either between questions or part way through a discussion, the teacher gives a signal and the students in one circle (or along one line) move one chair to the left to continue the conversation.</p> <p>This protocol works best with in-person instruction, though can be adapted to virtual environments with the use of breakout rooms.</p>
Conver-Stations	<p>Break the students into groups of 4-6 students to discuss one of the discussion questions. After the groups have had time to unpack their thinking, ask 1-2 students from each group to move while the others remain. In their new groups, students will be able to discuss a different question and share their previous group's thinking about theirs. For the next rotation, all students who have not yet moved will go to a new station, and the cycle will continue. This protocol works well in both in-person and virtual environments.</p>
Snowball	<p>Students begin in pairs and are posed a question by the teacher. Once both members have had the chance to share their thinking, each group joins another group, where they share again. This cycle will continue with groups of 2, 4, 8, etc. until you build to a whole-class discussion.</p> <p>This protocol works best with in-person instruction, but can be adapted to virtual environments with the use of breakout rooms.</p>

LAUNCHING THE EDUGUIDE

Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrap paper • Pens/markers
Community Agreements	<p>Conversations in this and all It Gets Better EduGuides will require maturity and sensitivity. Staying curious, while keeping all comments respectful, will be the key to a successful learning experience. If you have not already established these or similar guidelines in your learning environment, consider soliciting student ideas for community guidelines and agreeing to and writing down shared expectations. Please then be mindful and remind students of these agreements before each lesson.</p>
Overview & Activation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce unit and establish community agreements (see above). 2. Distribute paper (1 sheet per student). 3. Instruct students to write 3 facts about themselves on their piece of paper. 4. Guide the group in crumpling up their pieces of paper and having a "snowball fight". 5. After several minutes, ask students to pick up a "snowball" and uncrumple it to read the 3 facts. Go around the room and ask each person to read the facts and guess who wrote them. NOTE: This works best if all students use the same writing color/style writing utensil.
Extension / Virtual Option	<p>The previous activity does not translate well to a virtual setting. Use this activity as the activation if teaching this unit online or as a second introduction activity if doing this work in person.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write down your name. 2. How is it pronounced? How would you describe the sound of it? 3. Where does your name come from? Who gave it to you? 4. What does your name mean? Do you resonate with the meaning? 5. Do you go by any other names? What are they? Why are they used? How do you feel when people use these alternative names? <p>After guiding participants through the questions, invite them to share their answers with a partner or table groups/virtual breakout rooms. Consider opening this up to a whole-group discussion. The idea here is to introduce participants to this unit as one that will deal with their identities and the intersections between different parts of themselves.</p>
Total Time	30–45 minutes

EPISODE / LESSON #1: POLITICAL ACTION

OLIVIA JULIANNA

Objectives	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a political cause that they are passionate about. Construct a plan to make their voices heard. Begin to act on that plan.
Relevant Concepts/ Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activist – refer back to the shared definition from the Unit Launch activity. Social justice – the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities. Heteronormative – relating to a world that promotes heterosexuality as the norm or preferred sexual orientation.
Teacher Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch the episode in advance to see if there are any areas or concepts you may need to clarify for your students. Gather materials (below) if possible.
Materials/ Supplies Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Olivia Julianna – https://youtu.be/siWdcAOHX7k?si=D9mWSTdstQggQQjo Post-it notes Laptops, tablets, or notebooks & writing implements for students Chart paper (if available)
Total Time	45 minutes



Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
5 min	Welcome and Agreements	Welcome participants to the space and ask a student to review group agreements that have been established. Share the lesson plan's objectives and key concepts/vocabulary from above.	Whole group
5 min	What matters to you?	<p>Distribute post-it notes.</p> <p>Say: <i>On your post-it note, jot down 2-3 political issues that you are most passionate about. Some ideas may include: abortion rights, prison reform, climate change, LGBTQ+ rights.</i></p> <p>Gather post-it notes and conduct a short discussion about overlaps and differences in students' passions.</p>	Individual activity with partner or whole-group share-out, as appropriate.
7 min	Let's Learn	<p>Have the group watch the Olivia Julianna video together.</p> <p>NOTE: An optional handout, Ticket to Learning, is available at the end of this EduGuide to help facilitate participant thinking during the video and discussion.</p>	Whole group
5 min	Quick Discussion	<p>Lead a whole-group discussion to check in after viewing the video.</p> <p>Say: <i>In the video, we met Olivia Julianna, an activist whose career began with posting TikTok videos about issues she was passionate about. Within a few years, she then became Director of Politics for Gen-Z for Change and was working alongside national leaders. What resonated with you while watching Olivia's video? What questions do you still have?</i></p>	Whole group
15 min	Self-Guided Activity	<p>Explain to participants that their task for today is to identify a cause they are passionate about and make an action plan for how they can use their voice to inspire positive change.</p> <p>Say:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Revisit your initial answers from the beginning of this lesson. Determine an issue that you would like to focus on.</i> 2. <i>Brainstorm ways that you might be able to use your voice to advocate for change.</i> 	Individual, pairs, or small groups

Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
-	Self-Guided Activity (Continued)	<p>3. <i>Create a plan. Maybe you want to start a club on campus. Maybe you want to promote higher voting rates in your community. The goal here is to move beyond a simple social media post. If social media is involved in your plan, make sure that you are strategic in how you utilize it.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Give students chart paper on which to capture their plans, if available.</i> • <i>Encourage students to include specifics (i.e. timeline, action, and impact) to help their plans come to life.</i> <p>4. <i>Time permitting, begin to put your plan into action.</i></p> <p>If students interested in the same causes would like to work in pairs or small groups, feel free to allow them to do so.</p> <p>NOTE: For students that may benefit from differentiated support, a printable Action Plan template is available at the end of this EduGuide.</p>	-
8 min	Share-out & Debrief	<p>Invite participants to share their action plans with the group. Invite the group to provide feedback. The purpose of this activity is to work together as a learning community to inspire change locally and beyond.</p>	Whole group
-	Further Resources	<p>If you're interested in learning more about Olivia's path, check out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gen-Z for Change is a collective of Gen-Z activists that leverage the power of social media to drive progressive change. • Follow Olivia Julianna on TikTok for up-to-date information on her activism and the causes she is promoting. • Check out this resource, A Guide to Being Politically Engaged in High School, from CollegeVine. 	Whole group

EPISODE / LESSON #2: SUPER POWERS

THADDEUS COATES

Objectives	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify elements of their identities that bring them joy. Create alter egos to express themselves and their super powers.
Relevant Concepts/Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cartoonist – a visual artist who specializes in both drawing and writing cartoons. Alter ego – a person's secondary or alternate personality, or sense of self. Black queer joy – this means something different to everyone, but ultimately comes from carving out joy and happiness in the face of oppression.
Teacher Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch the episode in advance to see if there are any areas or concepts you may need to clarify for your students. Gather materials (below) if possible.
Materials/Supplies Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thaddeus Coates – https://youtu.be/FkYumU0Z3bk?si=i0ucabl_AF3tx5vk Post-it notes Laptops, tablets, or notebooks & writing implements for students Colored pencils, markers, etc.
Total Time	45-60 minutes



Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
5 min	Welcome and Agreements	Welcome participants to the space and ask a student to review group agreements that have been established. Share the lesson plan's objectives and key concepts/vocabulary from above.	Whole group
10 min	Activate your inner child	<p>Distribute 2 post-it notes to each student, preferable in different colors.</p> <p>Say: <i>On one post-it, write down what your super power would be if you could have one. On the other post-it, list animated characters that you most related to when you were younger.</i></p> <p>When students are done, gather post-it notes and lead the class in a discussion about overlaps and differences in students' answers. Encourage students to dive deeper into why they chose their superpowers and why they related to the characters they identified.</p>	Individual activity with partner or whole-group share-out, as appropriate.
7 min	Let's Learn	<p>Have the group watch the Thaddeus Coates video together.</p> <p>NOTE: An optional handout, Ticket to Learning, is available at the end of this EduGuide to help facilitate participant thinking during the video and discussion.</p>	Whole group
5 min	Quick Discussion	<p>Lead a whole-group discussion to check in after viewing the video.</p> <p>Say: <i>In the video, we met Thaddeus Coates, a dancer, cartoonist, athlete, and artist who creates graphics that amplify Black and queer voices. What resonated with you while watching Thaddeus' video? What questions do you still have?</i></p>	Whole group
15 min	Self-Guided Activity	<p>Explain to participants that their task for today is to create their own alter egos, similar to Thaddeus' creation of Hippy Potter.</p> <p>Say:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Revisit your answers from our discussion at the beginning of the lesson.</i> 	Individual, pairs, or small groups

Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
-	Self-Guided Activity (Continued)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <i>Create a character, inspired by your lived experience, that lives their best life. You may do this on paper or using a virtual design tool. Be sure to create an image of your character and give them a name.</i> 3. <i>As you create, consider: What overlaps does this character have with you? How do you wish you could be more like that character?</i> 4. <i><u>Optional Extension:</u> Similar to Thaddeus' collaboration with Pop Tarts, design a special edition of a favorite snack brand that might feature your alter ego.</i> 	-
10 min	Share-out & Debrief	Invite participants to share their alter egos with the group. The purpose of this activity is to help students begin to dive into their identities and the elements of themselves that bring them radical joy.	Whole group
	Further Resources	<p>If you're interested in learning more about Thaddeus' path, check out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Art of Hippy Potter is Thaddeus' website, featuring more of his drawings and products for purchase. • Follow Thaddeus Coates on Instagram for up-to-date information on his work and the influx of joy he provides. • What Black Queer Joy and Liberation Mean This Juneteenth from Lambda Legal 	Whole group

EPISODE / LESSON #3: SYMBOLS & SELF-CARE

APRIL KAE

Objectives	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify elements of their identities and symbols that represent them. Find ways to bring self-care into the daily spaces they inhabit.
Relevant Concepts/Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multitudes - in this context, the term refers to having many different occupations, identities, or facets to one's being. Intersectionality - a sociological framework that studies how different social and political identities can lead to unique combinations of privilege and discrimination.
Teacher Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch the episode in advance to see if there are any areas or concepts you may need to clarify for your students. Gather materials (below) if possible.
Materials/Supplies Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April Kae - https://youtu.be/QCwHfO2_CVU?si=f8k_El3pQ0c3j3wX Post-it notes Laptops, tablets, or notebooks & writing implements for students Colored pencils, markers, etc.
Total Time	45 minutes



Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
5 min	Welcome and Agreements	<p>Welcome participants to the space and ask a student to review group agreements that have been established. Share the lesson plan's objectives and key concepts/vocabulary from above.</p> <p>NOTE: This lesson will ask students to dive a bit deeper into their own identities and experiences. Ensure that students are primed to be respectful and open with each other.</p>	Whole group
5 min	Identify your Identities	<p>Distribute a post-it note to each student.</p> <p>Say: <i>On your post-it note, write down 5 different identities that you have.</i></p> <p>Possible answers, if students need prompting: student, sibling, cat lover, etc.</p> <p>Have students share their identities with a partner or in small groups. What overlaps and differences exist?</p>	Individual activity with partner or whole-group share-out, as appropriate.
5 min	Let's Learn	<p>Have the group watch the April Kae video together.</p> <p>NOTE: An optional handout, Ticket to Learning, is available at the end of this EduGuide to help facilitate participant thinking during the video and discussion.</p>	Whole group
5 min	Quick Discussion	<p>Lead a whole-group discussion to check in after viewing the video.</p> <p>Say: <i>In the video, we met April Kae, a bass guitar player and activist who uses social media to share her love for music. What resonated with you while watching April's video? What questions do you still have?</i></p> <p>Say: <i>April shared that seeing others be confident in their sexuality helped her be confident in hers. What is something that you see other people do that helps you feel more confident?</i></p> <p>Say: <i>How do you think people see you when you enter a room? Does this reflect how you see yourself?</i></p>	Whole group

Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
15 min	Self-Guided Activity	<p>Explain to participants that their task for today is to identify symbols that celebrate their identities and to infuse those symbols in their daily lives.</p> <p>Say: <i>April always has fresh flowers in her space, which she sees as a sign of abundance. She uses music and flowers as ways to express her creativity. These also may be seen as representing two cultures that she feels are often pitted against each other. We all have different identities, some related to our families, some related to our other communities, some related to our interests.</i></p> <p>Say:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Revisit your five identities from the beginning of the lesson, and extend your list if you have more.</i> 2. <i>Brainstorm symbols that represent some of your identities.</i> 3. <i>How can you harness these symbols into the daily spaces you inhabit?</i> 4. <i>Begin to gather these symbols so that you, too, can brighten up the spaces you inhabit and feel strength in your identities.</i> 	Individual, pairs, or small groups
10 min	Share-out & Debrief	Invite participants to share their identities and symbols with the group. The purpose of this activity is to help students celebrate their own and their peers' identities.	Whole group
-	Further Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you're interested in learning more about April's path, check out the following: • Follow April Kae on TikTok for up-to-date information on her work and collaborations. • Queer Artists Who Shaped Music History from Berklee College of Music. • LGBTQIA+ and Queer Community Resources from Songtrust. 	Whole group

EPISODE / LESSON #4: COMMUNITY SUPPORT

DEE TRANNYBEAR

Objectives	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify communities they are a part of. Develop a plan to create safer spaces within their own communities.
Relevant Concepts/ Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-binary - a person whose gender identity does not conform to the gender binary, which is the erroneous idea that only two distinct and opposite genders exist, male and female. Bias-free company - a company founded on a commitment to supporting marginalized groups, being cognizant of unconscious biases, honoring diverse perspectives, and promoting a culture of equity.
Teacher Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch the episode in advance to see if there are any areas or concepts you may need to clarify for your students. Gather materials (below) if possible.
Materials/ Supplies Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dee Trannybear - https://youtu.be/KsWitMVgXiQ?si=b6MXt9YGvrfsbllm Post-it notes Laptops, tablets, or notebooks & writing implements for students Colored pencils, markers, etc.
Total Time	45 minutes



Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
5 min	Welcome and Agreements	Welcome participants to the space and ask a student to review group agreements that have been established. Share the lesson plan's objectives and key concepts/vocabulary from above.	Whole group
5 min	Consider your Communities	<p>Distribute a post-it note to each student.</p> <p>Say: <i>On your post-it note, write down at least three different communities that you are members of. Some possible answers could include a family, a sports team, a club, etc.</i></p> <p>Say: <i>Once you're done, draw a star next to the community in which you feel the most comfortable being yourself.</i></p> <p>Have participants share their thoughts with a partner or in small groups. What is it about the starred communities that create feelings of comfort and authenticity?</p>	Individual activity with partner or whole-group share-out, as appropriate.
5 min	Let's Learn	<p>Have the group watch the Dee Trannybear video together.</p> <p>NOTE: An optional handout, Ticket to Learning, is available at the end of this EduGuide to help facilitate participant thinking during the video and discussion.</p>	Whole group
5 min	Quick Discussion	<p>Lead a whole-group discussion to check in after viewing the video.</p> <p>Say: <i>In the video, we met Dee Trannybear, a hairstylist and make-up artist who creates safe spaces in the beauty industry. What resonated with you while watching Dee's video? What questions do you still have?</i></p> <p>Say: <i>Dee shared that they use make-up to "enhance more of who I really am and who I see myself as." What is something that you do to enhance who you see yourself as?</i></p> <p>Answers to this question could be as simple as changing one's hairstyle or picking an outfit to go hang out with friends. The idea here is to help students see that we all do things, in our own ways, to help us feel good in our own skin.</p>	Whole group

Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
15 min	Self-Guided Activity	<p>Explain to participants that their task for today is to find ways, like Dee did in opening their company, to create more bias-free spaces in communities they inhabit.</p> <p>Say: <i>Dee talks about creating a bias-free company in the typically exclusionary beauty industry. In doing so, they are creating safe-spaces for communities that have traditionally been overlooked. We all inhabit different communities, some safer than others. Today you are going to develop a plan to use your influence, whatever that may be, to create safe spaces.</i></p> <p>Say:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Revisit your list of communities from the beginning of the lesson, and extend your list if you would like to.</i> 2. <i>Think back to your conversation about what makes a community feel safe. Think about what makes a community feel unsafe.</i> 3. <i>How can you harness the qualities of your safer communities and bring those into other communities you inhabit?</i> 4. <i>Make a plan for using your voice to make the space you inhabit feel more inclusive. Maybe part of your plan will include having a conversation about changing acceptable language. Maybe you'll share resources you've learned about in this unit.</i> <p>NOTE: For students that may benefit from differentiated support, a printable Action Plan template is available at the end of this EduGuide.</p>	Individual, pairs, or small groups
10 min	Share-out & Debrief	<p>Invite participants to share their plans with the group. If the culture of your space allows, invite students to give each other feedback on supporting their various communities to become more inclusive.</p>	Whole group
-	Further Resources	<p>If you're interested in learning more about Dee's path, check out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow Dee Trannybear on Instagram for up-to-date information on their work and collaborations. • Check out DDPro, the company Dee co-founded. • 21 LGBTQIA+ Owned Beauty Brands from Byrdie. • The Art of Community: Creating Inclusive and Welcoming Spaces from LinkedIn. 	Whole group

EPISODE / LESSON #5: PERSPECTIVE

CHELLA MAN

Objectives	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use art as a way to express freely. • Discuss strategies to appreciate the present and positively anticipate the future.
Relevant Concepts/ Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genderqueer – someone whose gender identity and/or gender expression expands beyond, actively resists, and/or does not conform to the current cultural or social expectations of gender, particularly in relation to male or female. • Transmasculine – a person whose birth sex was female but whose gender identity is aligned with or characterized in some way by masculinity.
Teacher Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch the episode in advance to see if there are any areas or concepts you may need to clarify for your students. • Gather materials (below) if possible.
Materials/ Supplies Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chella Man – https://youtu.be/j3ImDJfhMwM?si=VA0G9iie-0kda4XI • Post-it notes (two per student, in different colors) • Loose leaf paper (one per student) • Colored pencils, markers, etc.
Total Time	45–50 minutes



Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
5 min	Welcome and Agreements	Welcome participants to the space and ask a student to review group agreements that have been established. Share the lesson plan's objectives and key concepts/vocabulary from above.	Whole group
10 min	Freedom through Expression	<p>Distribute a blank sheet of paper to each student along with colored pencils or markers.</p> <p>Say: <i>You have 5 minutes to use your papers and materials to answer a question however you would like. You can include words, drawings, poetry, anything! The goal is to spend the entire 5 minutes creating. Let your ideas flow freely. The question is: <u>What does it mean to you to feel free?</u></i></p> <p>Have participants share their pieces and their meanings in small groups. If your classroom culture allows, consider a gallery walk so students can engage with and celebrate one another's work.</p>	Individual activity with partner or whole-group share-out, as appropriate.
5 min	Let's Learn	<p>Have the group watch the Chella Man video together.</p> <p>NOTE: An optional handout, Ticket to Learning, is available at the end of this EduGuide to help facilitate participant thinking during the video and discussion.</p>	Whole group
5 min	Quick Reflection	<p>Lead a whole-group discussion to check in after viewing the video.</p> <p>Say: <i>In the video, we met Chella Man, an artist who navigates his identities through art, community, and more recently a transgender boxing collective. What resonated with you while watching Chella's video? What questions do you still have?</i></p> <p>Say: <i>Chella shares: "It can be tiring to live in a world that is continuously gendering things." What do you think he means by this? Can you provide examples of how our world genders things?</i></p> <p>Answers to this question can vary, from gender reveal parties to expectations about how boys and girls are supposed to act, to the way we associate colors with femininity and masculinity.</p>	Whole group, with individual reflection

Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
-	Quick Reflection (Continued)	<p>Say: Chella shared about realizing that he didn't need permission from other people to live his truth. All he needed was permission from himself. Take a moment and consider, privately. What have you not yet given yourself permission to do?</p> <p>As this is a highly personal question, students do not need to share their thoughts publicly. If some would like to volunteer their answers, please make them feel safe to do so.</p>	-
20 min	Appreciation & Anticipation Guided Discussion	<p>Distribute post-it notes, in two different colors, to each participant.</p> <p>Say: In the video, when asked what "it gets better" means to him, Chella responded: "Why can't it be good now? Why does it have to get better?"</p> <p>On one color post-it note, answer the following: What are you looking forward to when you imagine your life 10 years from now?</p> <p>On the other color post-it note: What aspects of your life today will you be envious of 10 years from now?</p> <p>Gather post-it notes in two designated places, either on the board or on pieces of chart paper. Ask two volunteers to come read the responses to the whole group.</p> <p>Say: What do you notice about what we are looking forward to in the future and what we will miss from today? Are there themes that stand out?</p> <p>Lead a whole-class discussion. The goal of this is to promote appreciation of the present and optimism for the future.</p>	Individual reflection & whole group discussion
3 min	Exit Ticket	<p>As an exit ticket, ask participants to answer the following: After today's discussion, what is one thing about your life now that you will appreciate more moving forward?</p>	Individual
-	Further Resources	<p>If you're interested in learning more about Chella's path, check out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check out Chella Man's website and follow him on Instagram for up-to-date information on his art and collaborations. Check out Queer Art, a non-profit arts organization serving LGBTQ+ artists across generations and disciplines. 5 Ways You Can Support The Local LGBT Artists from Arts to Hearts Project. 	Whole Group

EPISODE / LESSON #6: CURIOSITY

NNEKA ONUORAH

Objectives	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider stereotypes they have faced, identities they haven't explored, or norms they'd like to challenge. Identify and gather available resources to facilitate exploration of unanswered questions or unexplored passions.
Relevant Concepts/ Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two-spirit - a modern umbrella term used within Indigenous communities of North America that bridges Indigenous and Western understandings of gender and sexuality Heteronormativity - an assumption that the "default" or "correct" sexual orientation is straight. It assumes that "normal" relationships exist only between a man and a woman.
Teacher Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch the episode in advance to see if there are any areas or concepts you may need to clarify for your students. Gather materials (below) if possible.
Materials/ Supplies Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nneka Onuorah - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bwkUX98fktI Post-it notes Laptops, tablets, or notebooks & writing implements for students Colored pencils, markers, etc.
Total Time	45 minutes



Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
5 min	Welcome and Agreements	Welcome participants to the space and ask a student to review group agreements that have been established. Share the lesson plan's objectives and key concepts/vocabulary from above.	Whole group
5 min	Physical Activation	<p>Say: <i>Exercise is an often overlooked yet crucial element to mental health.</i></p> <p>Lead the class in brief physical warm-up. This may include jumping jacks, stretches, or a quick dance to your favorite song this week.</p> <p>NOTE: It is important to be inclusive in this activity, and only ask students to move in ways they are both physically capable and comfortable doing.</p>	Whole group
5 min	Let's Learn	<p>Have the group watch the Nneka Onuorah video episode together.</p> <p>NOTE: An optional handout, Ticket to Learning, is available at the end of this EduGuide to help facilitate participant thinking during the video and discussion.</p>	Whole group
5 min	Quick Discussion	<p>Lead a whole-group discussion to check in after viewing the video.</p> <p>Say: <i>In the video, we met Nneka Onuorah, a director and producer whose directorial debut explored gender roles in the Black lesbian community. What resonated with you while watching Nneka's video? What questions do you still have?</i></p> <p>Say: <i>Nneka uses exercise as a time to visualize her future and next steps. When do you experience the most clarity? How can you increase your opportunities for that?</i></p>	Whole group
15 min	Self-Guided Activity	<p>Direct participants to a blank sheet of paper, either loose leaf or in their notebooks.</p> <p>Say: <i>In the video, Nneka talks about how she needed to explore questions she had about her community. At the top of your page, begin by brainstorming some stereotypes you have faced or might face, identities you haven't explored, or norms you'd like to challenge.</i></p> <p>Once students have brainstormed, give them time to share with an elbow partner.</p>	Individual, with partner discussion

Time	Activity	Description	Group Configuration
-	Self-Guided Activity (Continued)	<p>Say: Now that you've had some time to brainstorm, let's narrow it down. What questions or passions would you like to explore further?</p> <p>Encourage students to write down their responses.</p> <p>Say: What is preventing you from exploring? What would you need to change in order to make it possible?</p> <p>Give students time to reflect and write.</p> <p>Say: Are there resources available to you? Do some research and make a plan for yourself so you can pursue your curiosities and passions.</p> <p>Give students time to research available supports and create their plans. These plans may take any form, whatever will best support each individual in their own learning style.</p> <p>Students may choose to work with their elbow partners if they would like, supporting each other in visualizing the future and determining next steps. Some students benefit from a thought partner.</p> <p>NOTE: For students that may benefit from differentiated support, a printable Action Plan template is available at the end of this EduGuide.</p>	-
10 min	Share-out & Debrief	Invite individuals and/or pairs to share their plans with the group. Encourage other students to share ideas and resources with each presenter. It is always important to support fellow community members!	Whole group
-	Further Resources	<p>If you're interested in learning more about Nneka's path, check out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check out Nneka's website and follow her on Instagram for up-to-date information on her work and collaborations. • Free Production Resources for Film Students from The Los Angeles Film School. • Check out Outfest, an LGBTQIA+ arts, media and entertainment organization that celebrates diverse stories and empowers storytellers, building empathy to drive meaningful social change. 	Whole group

CULMINATING ACTIVITY

Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laptops, tablets, or notebooks & writing implements for students Magazines and newspapers for collages, if available Colored pencils, markers, etc.
Community Agreements	Welcome participants to the space and ask a student to review group agreements that have been established.
Overview & Activation	<p>Congratulate students on reaching the culminating activity for this unit and thank them for engaging in the previous reflection and discussion activities.</p> <p>Distribute a piece of paper and direct students to draw a square, triangle, and a circle.</p> <p>Say: <i>Inside the square, write down one thing we've covered that squares with your thinking. Inside the triangle, write down three important points to remember. Inside the circle, write down a question still going around in your mind.</i></p> <p>Give students time to share their answers with partners or in small groups.</p> <p>NOTE: An optional handout, Shaping Reflection, is available at the end of this EduGuide to help facilitate participant engagement during this reflection activity.</p>
Celebrating Your Intersectionality	<p>Say: At the end of April Kae's video, she lists 21 different identities she inhabits, from bass player to flower lover to a person who deals with mental health challenges. Take a couple of minutes and list as many of your identities as you can.</p> <p>NOTE: When students have done this (consider using a timer to gamify the activity), give them the chance to share their listed identities with a partner before continuing.</p> <p>For this culminating activity, students will choose one of three ways to engage with their identities and explore the intersectionalities that exist among them. Present the group with the following three options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Collage – Begin with a core image that represents at least 3 of your identities, then build off of that with symbols, photos, etc. that express your identity. Most students will choose to do this virtually, though ideally they will have the option to do this on paper. Playlist – Create a playlist that expresses different elements of your identity. When you're done, create an album or vinyl booklet that contains an explanation of each song's significance or relevance to a particular identity. Write – Craft a written narrative or your choosing (i.e. letter, short story, poem/song) that explores the intersections of your various identities. Maybe you'll send this to a future roommate. Maybe it's for a parent. Maybe it's for your future self. <p>Give students sufficient time to make their final products meaningful. Encourage students to celebrate their work in small groups or with the whole group.</p>
Final Thoughts	As a final note, ask students to share one positive change they will make in their lives after engaging in this unit. Maybe they'll become more politically engaged. Maybe they'll recommit to self-care. Celebrate these commitments and thank students for their participation in this unit.
Time Needed	45–60 minutes

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

TICKET TO LEARNING

Instructions: Use this TQE sheet to guide and organize your notes during today's video and discussion.

Thoughts

What stood out to you from today's video?

Questions

If you could meet this person, what questions would you ask them?

Epiphanies

Did anything surprise you about today's discussion?

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

ACTION PLAN

Instructions: Use this template to help organize your action plan for today's lesson objective. Optional for Episodes/Lessons 1, 4, & 6.

Goal
What are you hoping to achieve?
Resources
What resources are available to help you achieve this?
What more help do you need? How can you find it?
Tasks
Break your goal down into meaningful, step-by-step tasks (i.e. "gather a team" or "enroll in an organization"). Underneath each, write down what that might look like in practice. Also, consider setting a deadline to hold yourself accountable.
1.
2.
3.
Manifest
Why is this goal important?
How will you feel when this goal is met?

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

SHAPING REFLECTION

Instructions: Use the graphic organizer below to help guide your reflection on the activities you completed in this unit.

The graphic organizer consists of three shapes arranged in a triangular pattern. The top-left shape is a square with the text "Something that squares with your thinking." inside. The top-right shape is a circle with the text "A question still circling around in your mind" inside. The bottom shape is a triangle with the text "3 Points to Remember:" at its top vertex. Along the left side of the triangle, there are three numbered points: "1)", "2)", and "3)".

Something that squares with your thinking.

A question still circling around in your mind

3
Points to Remember:

1)

2)

3)



WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS EDUGUIDE AND THE VIDEO SERIES IT ACCOMPANIED!

This resource is part of a growing portfolio of materials that help ensure that the uplifting stories crafted and collected by It Gets Better reach LGBTQ+ youth wherever learning takes place. Learn more at www.itgetsbetter.org/education, and for inquiries, email us at education@itgetsbetter.org.

About It Gets Better	It Gets Better is a nonprofit organization based in Los Angeles, California. Its mission is to uplift, empower, and connect LGBTQ+ youth around the globe.
Connect with the Organization	Website: www.itgetsbetter.org Email: info@itgetsbetter.org Get Help: www.itgetsbetter.org/GetHelp
Follow the Organization	Facebook: www.facebook.com/itgetsbetter Instagram: www.instagram.com/itgetsbetter TikTok: www.tiktok.com/@itgetsbetter Tumblr: www.itgetsbetter.tumblr.com Twitch: www.twitch.tv/itgetsbetter Twitter: www.twitter.com/ItGetsBetter YouTube: www.youtube.com/itgetsbetter

IT GETS BETTER is a registered trademark of Savage Love, LLC, licensed for use by It Gets Better.
© 2024 It Gets Better. All rights reserved.

IT GETS BETTER®