

## **A Look at Power and Privilege: Reflecting on Power and Privilege Parkdale Project Read Tutor Training**

### **1. Naming what oppression looks like in everyday life**

- Ask participants to name some oppressions they face or are aware of
- Define racism, sexism, heterosexism, ablism, classism, (and others)
- Move from personal experiences with oppression to systemic
- Talk about personal and collective responsibility when it comes to power and privilege

We are all implicated in structures of oppression. Incorporating a social justice approach or perspective to working with learners and bringing that perspective into our own lives is important in creating a safe, nurturing environment to learn and live in. We believe it is important to avoid a charitable approach to our work and learning in the literacy field. We don't need to take individual responsibility for historical oppression but we do have a collective responsibility in the here and now.

Give participants an opportunity to think about their roles and responsibilities in addressing systemic violence that often takes the shape of racism, classism, heterosexism/homophobia, sexism and other forms of intolerance and injustice around religion and other social factors. Take this time to share, consider and understand the impact of systemic violence in our lives.

### **2. Power and Privilege Pitfalls for tutors *See handout***

Write various statements on flipcharts, posted around the room. Ask participants what they think of these statements, request that they record their thoughts right on the flipchart sheets. Discuss as a group (referring to handout).

### **3. Reflecting on why is it important to practice anti-oppression when we educate? *See handout***

*Break (10 min.)*

### **4. A History Lesson about Canada (game) *Refer to lessons about Frontier College, Residential Schools and the Toronto District School Board.***

Break the participants into three groups. When possible, ensure that participants who may identify as a person of colour or racialized group are in Group 1. Begin the history lesson. Group 1 will intentionally receive preferential treatment throughout the lesson, be given positive encouragement, their questions will be answered, rewarded openly etc. Groups 2 and 3 will be treated the opposite, they

will be reprimanded for not listening, have their learning materials taken from them, etc. Group 3 will receive the harshest treatment and will have their learning continually interrupted throughout the lesson. Stop the game when the lesson is over, or the group becomes aware of how they are being treated differently from the others or begin to question why this is happening.

#### **5. Debriefing from the History Lesson experience**

Ask the three groups to share how they felt during the lesson. Talk about why this happened. Why does this, or has this (based on the history lesson), happened and how does it affect learning? Continue this discussion and ensure that participants move from a negative learning experience to a positive one.

#### **6. Moment of self-reflection**

Allow participants a moment to reflect on their experience. Consider the following questions moving forward:

- *Do you think that you play a role in the perpetuation of systemic oppression? If so, how?*
  - *Do you see it as your role to engage and educate decision makers regarding issues of race and oppression? Why or why not?*
  - *Do you believe that oppression within systems can be changed? If so reflect on a historical and current example illustrating this.*
  - *Are you afraid of challenging systems and decision-makers? If so, what small steps can you take to strategize with others and overcome your fear?*
- (Personal Audit, Jay Pitter, 2006)*

Moving reflection to action is a key component of this training and participants are encouraged to think about an action plan in their lives and their tutoring to work towards social justice in the area of anti-oppression.