

# Throughlines

## JUSTICE SEEKING

### Justice Seeking

*Learners pursue restorative transformation, seeking to bring wholeness where there is brokenness.*

### Greeting

Invite learners into an opening circle. Remember to have students position themselves so that everyone can see everyone. Moving by turns, have learners greet each other by name "Good morning [name]! We're glad you're here!" and then share a reflection on justice seeking, based on one of the prompts below:

- Share a time when you saw someone treated unfairly. What did you do, or what do you wish you could have done?
- Have you ever changed your mind about what's fair after hearing someone else's story? What helped you see things differently?
- Describe a small action you've taken—or want to take—that can make your community more just or kind.
- Who is someone you admire for standing up for justice? What did they do that inspires you?

For a more expanded opening circle (almost a mini lesson!) consider a conversation like [this](#).

### Initiative

Below are two different initiatives for exploring the Throughline of justice seeking. Both seek to invite students into considering topics of justice and injustice that are close and personal; exploring topics that are relatable to students gives them an opportunity to imagine themselves, in the scene, justice seeking.

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## Justice Lenses

Invite learners to brainstorm a list of topics related to justice. Then, create a collection of everyday objects, and invite learners to brainstorm possible topics of justice related to each object.

Possible examples include:

1. Backpack or pencil (connect to access to education, homelessness, etc.); Prompt: Who has easy access to education? Who doesn't?
2. Water Bottle (connect to clean water access, pollution, drought, etc.) Prompt: Who gets clean water easily? Who doesn't?
3. Bandage (connect to healthcare access, who gets care first, inequities in hospitals, etc.) Prompt: Who has easy access to medicine and care?
4. Book (connect to literacy rates, banned books, access to libraries, representation in stories. (Prompt: Whose voices appear in stories? Whose are missing?))
5. Grocery Bag (connect to access to food, food deserts, grocery affordability, fair farm labor, hunger, etc.) Prompt: Who grows, sells, and can afford the food inside?
6. Light Bulb (connect to energy access, climate justice, affordability of utilities, sustainability, etc.) Prompt: Who has access to reliable power?
7. Blanket (connect to safe shelter, housing insecurity, warmth in winter, refugee support, etc.). Prompt: Who has safety and warmth? Who doesn't?
8. Key (connect to access (or lack of access) to safe and affordable housing, inequity in property ownership, etc.) Prompt: What does this open for some—and close for others?
9. Mirror (connect to belonging, bias, representation, dignity, racism, etc.) Prompt: Who sees themselves reflected in our community?
10. Reusable Shopping Bag (connect to creation care and stewardship, access to sustainable choices, cost of "green" alternatives, etc.) Prompt: "Who gets to be eco-friendly without added cost?"
11. Piggy bank or paycheck stub (connect to wage-fairness, minimum wages versus living wage, gaps in wages related to gender or racism, pay transparency, dignity at work, etc.). What systems shape how much someone gets paid?"

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Learners can brainstorm justice topics in a whole group or in small groups, followed by whole group discussion. To extend the activity, consider one of the reflection prompts below:

- What topic related to justice do you see now that you hadn't thought about before?
- How do small, everyday things show bigger systems of fairness and unfairness?
- What "real people" do you find yourself thinking about during this activity?
- Now that you've identified new topics related to justice, what do you think about justice seeking? How have your ideas about justice seeking grown or changed through this activity?

### Freeze Scenes

Gather learners and introduce the initiative with something like, "Today we're practicing what it looks like to see injustice and imagine how we might move toward restoration." Group students into pairs or groups of three and assign each group a prompt. Each group will create a tableau or "frozen scene" that shows their prompt. Possible prompts include:

- "Someone is left out of a game."
- "A rule affects some people more than others."
- "Food is not shared equally."
- "One student receives all the attention while others are ignored."
- "A younger child is blamed for something an older child did."
- "Someone's ideas are taken without credit."
- "A person is interrupted every time they speak."
- "Two people do the work, but only one gets the reward."
- "A worker is paid less than others for the same job."
- "Someone is teased because of something they cannot change."

Encourage students to make a quick plan and decide on a **frozen moment** that captures the injustice. Each group can take their turn presenting their freeze scene. As each group is in their scene, the rest of the class responds using the following prompts;

- "What do you notice?"
- "Where is the unfairness happening in this scene?"

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Allow students to *interpret* the scene before the group explains it.

After discussion, the group briefly describes their prompt and what they were trying to show. After identifying the injustice, invite further reflection, using the following questions:

- What would justice look like here?
- What is one restorative action that could change this moment?"
- If you could unfreeze this scene and rewrite it, what would happen next?

Invite final reflection on the initiative by asking students to share, using one of the prompts below:

- Which freeze scene is standing out to you most? Why do you think that is?
- Thinking about the different examples, what ideas do you have about justice seeking in everyday life?