

## Plan on a Page | Lesson 5: Finding One's Voice

### Guiding Questions:

- What factors can influence an individual or group's agency in moments of decision-making?
  - Why do people so often do nothing even when they know something happening around them is wrong?
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### Activities:

#### 1. Discuss Ebony's Final Decision

Use the **Barometer** teaching strategy for a discussion about whether or not students understand Ebony's decision to reject Josiah's homecoming proposal.

#### 2. Play Musical Shares<sup>1</sup>

Follow the steps of Musical Shares as explained in the lesson plan.

- **Round 1:** There is an old saying: "You can't understand someone until you've walked a mile in their shoes." What do you think it feels like to walk in Ebony's shoes? What do you think she would want you, the reader, to understand about her? What makes you say that?
- **Round 2:** What character did you focus on for last night's homework: Ebony, Josiah, or the police officer? How might your character's identity influence the choices available to them and the choices they ultimately make in the second part of the story? How does their identity impact how much power and agency they feel like they have?
- **Round 3:** What role do the two police officers play in the outcome of the story? Why do people so often do nothing even when they know something happening around them is wrong?
- **Round 4:** Bethany Morrow, the author of "As You Were," doesn't disclose the racial identity of the main characters until page 10. Why do you think she chooses to wait to reveal their racial identities? How might their membership in different racial groups impact how Ebony and Josiah view and experience the events in the second half of the story?

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<sup>1</sup> Rosie Reid, "[9 Strategies for Getting More Students to Talk](#)," *Edutopia*, April 25, 2019.

- **Round 5:** What injustice or injustices have occurred in “As You Were”? For there to be justice for Ebony, what do you think needs to happen? Who should be held responsible? Who needs to be involved?

### 3. Facilitate a Class Discussion

Facilitate a class discussion of the Musical Shares questions. Here are some additional questions to consider for the discussion if you have time or if you teach the lesson over two class periods:

- **Power:** What are the different ways that characters or groups of characters have or experience power in “As You Were”? How might their proximity to power influence their choices, decisions, and actions?
- **Agency:** Review the reading **Introducing Agency**. How does “As You Were” confirm or challenge the ideas presented in the reading about the factors that can impact a person’s, especially a young person’s, agency? How might characters’ identities influence the decisions they make in the story?
- **Personal and Contemporary Connections:** How might reading fictional and real-life stories help us to better understand other people in our communities and the world? How might they help us understand human behavior, why people do what they do? How can reading fictional and real-life stories challenge us to consider our choices and role in creating a more fair and just society?

### 4. Engage in a Final Reflection

In journals or on paper you collect, invite students to reflect in writing on one or more of the Personal and Contemporary Connections questions.