

Plan on a Page

Lesson 5: The Dangers of Being an Outsider

Guiding Questions:

- What are the potential dangers of being outside the boundaries of a group?
 - What can happen when we sacrifice our values or change aspects of who we are in order to fit in? In what situations might it be beneficial or even necessary?
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Activities:

Activity 1: Make Predictions about Today's Poem

- Let students know that today's lesson will focus on a poem called "Rehearsal for the New World" by poet Hazem Fahmy. Record the title of the poem on the board and have students do a quick pair share to predict what the poem may be about. Solicit a few ideas from the class.

Activity 2: Listen to Ada Limón's Introduction

- Explain to students that the poem was recorded by poet Ada Limón for a podcast called *The Slowdown*. Before reading Hazem Fahmy's poem, students will listen to Limón's introduction, where she reflects on the question, "How can we thrive if we do not know where we belong?"
- Pass out copies of the reading: **Rehearsal for the New World Transcript**. Let students know that for this activity, they will focus on the first part of the episode. Play the three-minute introduction section of *The Slowdown* [Episode 508], **Rehearsal for the New World, with Introduction by Ada Limón**.
- Then have students reread the introduction on their handouts, adding annotations, which are explained at the top of the handout. If time allows, have students do a quick pair share or ask for a few volunteers to share ideas from their annotations.

Activity 3: Read and Discuss the Poem, “Rehearsal for the New World”

- Play the second part of the audio, **Rehearsal for the New World, with Introduction by Ada Limón**, two times so students can hear the poem by Hazem Fahmy read aloud.
- Have students read the poem a third time to themselves. Project the following questions for a quick **journal** reflection. Let students know that they will share their responses in small groups.
 - How does this poem make you feel?
 - What does this poem remind you of?
 - What’s going on in “Rehearsal for a New World”? In other words, what is the story of the poem?
- Move students into small groups of 3-4. Instruct students to start by sharing ideas from their journal responses. Circulate to get a sense of how they are thinking about the poem. Then invite students to discuss the first two connection questions on their handouts. Let them know that they will be discussing questions 3-4 as a class, so they should just focus on the first two for now.
- Bring the class together and project the poem on the board. Have a few students share their ideas for the first two questions. Then discuss questions 3-4 as a whole class. If needed, define the word “thrive” together before discussing question 4. Capture students’ ideas by annotating the text on the board when they provide evidence, post questions, or share insights.
 - **Question 3:** When reflecting on the challenge of “thriving in the in-between,” Ada Limón explains: *“It is not that we try on the essential American culture simply to fit in, but it is also about safety. The more we blend, the more we don’t cause a scene, the more we quietly stay out of the way, the safer we might be.”*
 - What are the potential dangers of being outside the boundaries of a group? How do Ada Limón and Hazem Fahmy’s poem help you answer this question?
 - What can happen when we sacrifice our values or change aspects of who we are in order to fit in? In what situations might it be

beneficial or even necessary? How do Ada Limón and Hazem Fahmy's poem help you answer these questions?

- How do other texts you've read recently, for example "Chameleon by David L," "The Importance of Belonging," or Julio Noboa Polanco's poem "Identity," help you answer these questions?
- **Question 4:** In the introduction to the podcast episode, Ada Limón asks: "How can we thrive if we do not know where we belong?"
 - How do you think Limón and the speaker of the poem would answer this question? Do you agree or disagree with their perspectives?
 - How do you answer this question?

Activity 4

Assign Pages 1-5 of "Where I'm From" for Homework

Let students know that for the next two lessons, they will be reading and discussing the short fiction piece "Where I'm From" by Misa Sugiura to consider how the desire to belong can impact a young person's decision-making process. Instruct students to read and annotate the first half of the story (see Homework on the Lesson Plan).