

Missing Stories Activity

Introduction

What is it?

Missing stories is an activity for helping to notice when someone else's perspective is missing from a conversation or concept. It explores examples where we visualize a story or narrative, and then consider how that narrative may not create a complete understanding of the circumstances.

Why use it?

This activity can help us to see when important perspectives or voices are missing when we are trying to understand how we might serve or create solutions for others. By noticing those stories that are missing, we can create solutions that meet the needs of all those we serve, leading to more equitable outcomes for everyone.

This activity employs the use of stories and spaces to explore where we see and experience bias in our schools. It can be used with students in a classroom setting, or adapted for other participants. *The YouTube Video provides context for the activity, but it could also be adapted for use without the video utilizing personal experiences.*



What you need:



30-40 minutes

- **Video:** [TED Talk: A Tale of Two Teachers by Melissa Crum](#)
- The attached instructions
- 3 or more people
- Pen and notepad (optional)

Missing Stories

Instructions

Step 1: Watch

Take some time to watch the TED talk linked in the video above.

Step 2: Explore similar ideas

Building on the speaker's use of museums, explore a literal or figurative "museum"—e.g., the ASU Art Museum or a set of textbooks—and discuss whose faces and stories are most visible.

Step 3: Reflect

Consider the following questions:

- Whose stories does this "museum" represent well?
- Is anyone's story missing or underrepresented?
- What might account for these missing or underrepresented stories?
- What cultural roots are most present or assumed in the stories that are presented or in the way those stories are told?
- What could be gained by including missing or underrepresented stories or sharing those stories in a different way?

Step 4: Discuss

Discuss the questions above with each person taking turns to speak and listen. Ask participants to listen without interrupting or contradicting their peers and to share their own perspectives, explaining that truly attempting to adopt others' perspectives is the first step in transformative dialogue. Explain that the way someone shares their own perspectives can be difficult for others to hear, so it is important to share one's own thoughts in a co-constructive manner that seeks to build bridges to the lived experiences of others.