

Name: _____

Date: _____



CLB 5/6: Stories of Intersectionality

In this module, you will listen to and read about the stories of LGBTQ+ individuals. You will be asked to look at the world through the eyes of LGBTQ+ refugees and reflect on their experiences. And you will have a chance to examine your own identity and tell your own unique story.

Activity 1: Warm-up – Listening/Speaking

1. Before you watch the video, read the vocabulary below.

Vocabulary

intersectionality (n)	One's combination of identities; often refers to minority identities that are oppressed
oppression (n)	Not having the rights or freedoms that others have
privilege (n)	Having rights or freedoms that others do not have
endure (v)	To remain strong when suffering
discrimination (n)	Treating a group unfairly based on some characteristic
poverty (n)	The state of being poor
assumption (n)	Something that is believed to be true but may not actually be true
identity (n)	The qualities and beliefs that make a person who they are
marginalized (adj)	In a powerless or unimportant position within a society or group
characteristic (n)	A quality or trait that makes something different from others
racial (adj)	Related to the race (common characteristics) of a group

Word Families

Instructions: Write the parts of speech missing from the chart below.

	Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
1	intersection intersectionality	_____	intersectional	
2	_____	oppress	oppressive	oppressively
3	race	racialize	racial	_____
4	assumption	_____	assumed	assumingly
5	characteristic	_____	characteristic	characteristically
6	marginalization	marginalize	_____	
7	discrimination	_____	discriminatory	discriminatingly
8	_____	endure	enduring	enduringly
9	identity identification	identify	_____	identifiably
10	_____	impoverish	impoverished	
11	privilege	privilege	_____	
12	affluence		_____	

Fill-in-the-Blank: Using the Vocabulary in Context

Instructions: Fill in the blank with a vocabulary word from the list above. Make sure to change the word to fit the sentence if necessary.

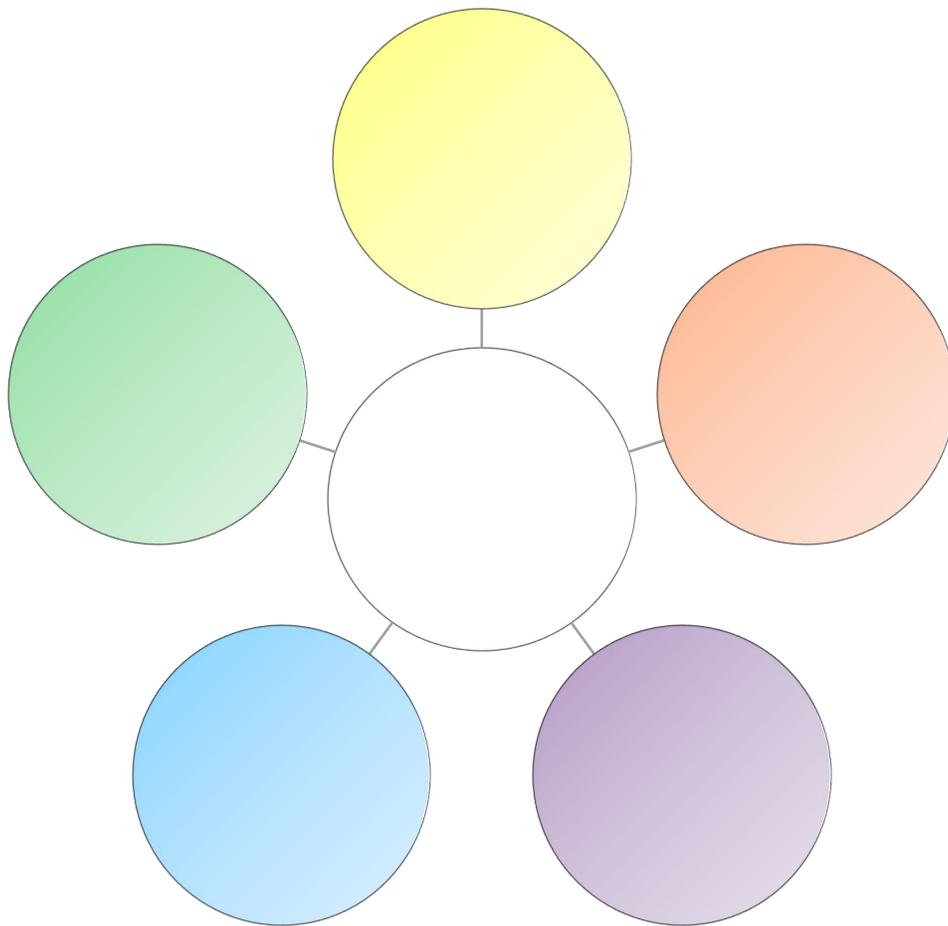
1. Refugees often _____(v) hardship because of war, poverty, or other life-threatening situations.
2. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer are _____(adj) identities in society.
3. "Partner," "friend," "student," and "immigrant" are all pieces of one's _____(n).
4. People who are transgender often face _____(n) when looking for jobs or housing, even though their rights are protected by law.
5. Mental illness can lead people to live in _____(n) and even experience homelessness.
6. It is unfair to make _____(n) based on what clothes people wear.
7. People who grow up in rich families often experience _____(n) in life.
8. _____(adj) discrimination is still a significant problem in many countries today.
9. Citizens in many parts of the world suffer political _____(n) at the hands of their leaders.
10. Politeness is sometimes seen as a national _____(n) of Canadians.

11. There are more opportunities available to people from
_____ (adj) families.

12. _____ (n) describes the many pieces of our identity
that come together to make us who we are.

Activity 2: Empathy: The Key to Connection – Speaking

Instructions: On the diagram below, choose five aspects of your identity (parts of who you are) and write them in the circles below. You will share these with a partner.



Discussion

Empathy is the ability to imagine that you are someone else and experience their feelings as they would.

1. Using the diagram above, share these aspects (parts) of yourself with a partner and discuss the following questions:
 - Are these aspects equally valued in society?
 - Which are the most valued? Which are the least valued?
2. Now, imagine that you had to erase one of these aspects of yourself and it would no longer be a part of you. You could never share this aspect of yourself with anyone.
 - Which one would you choose?
 - How would you feel?
3. Next, what if others chose only ONE of these pieces to know about you. Whenever you met someone, this is all they would know about you.
 - How would you feel?
4. After you have discussed these questions with a partner, join another pair to make a group of four and discuss the questions again.

Activity 3: LGBTQ+ Stories – Reading/Speaking

Instructions: You will share the stories of LGBTQ+ refugees in this activity. You will read one of four stories, then retell it to a small group of your classmates. Before you read, see how many of these words you know.

gay (adj): _____

transgender (adj): _____

lesbian (n): _____

advocate (n): _____

Pride (n): _____

persecution (n): _____

make fun of (v): _____

LGBTQ+ (adj – acronym): _____

UNHRC (n – acronym): _____

After sharing and listening to the stories, discuss the following questions with your group:

1. Which story was the most interesting? Why? _____

2. What did you learn about the challenges that LGBTQ+ individuals face in other countries?

3. What are some fears that LGBTQ+ people might still feel here in Canada?

4. If these individuals were your friends or classmates, what could you do to help them feel safe?

Activity 4: In the Place of Another – Listening/Speaking

Instructions: Your instructor will ask you to imagine that you are one of the individuals from the stories you just read. As your instructor reads a list of places, try to imagine how you would feel if you were that person. One side of the room will be “very safe” and the other side will be “very unsafe.” Position yourself in the spot that best fits how you think the individual would feel. Then discuss your reasons.

Discussion

1. Did you move locations based on the situation? How did that feel?
2. Which situations felt the most unsafe? Why?
3. Which situations felt the safest? Why?
4. What did you learn about being LGBTQ+ in common settings or places?

Activity 5: A Refugee Story – Reading/Grammar

Instructions: Read the following true story of a gay refugee named Nor, who now lives in Edmonton.

From a very young age, Nor knew that he was different. When other boys talked about liking girls, he knew that he preferred boys. Nor’s parents sent him to a boarding school, where he lived and attended class with the other kids his age. The other kids could sense that Nor was different, and they made fun of him, called him names, and told him he was like a girl.

When he was in university, Nor met a classmate named Ahmed. Nor and Ahmed spent all their time together, and they realized that they loved each other. Other people found out about their relationship and reported it to the authorities, who tracked them down. A friend tried to help them to escape. Nor escaped, but the authorities caught Ahmed. Nor saw the authorities kill his boyfriend.

After this traumatic experience, Nor feared that his life was also at risk. Nor decided to go to Turkey to escape and try to live safely. When he arrived in Turkey, the United Nations Human Rights Commission helped Nor find safe housing and connected him to other LGBTQ+ refugees. It was during this time that Nor finally discovered the words to describe who he was—he knew that he had been born gay—that was his “difference.” He shared some common experiences with others in his community and realized he was not alone. He learned about other gay and lesbian people, as well as those who were transgender. He read books and studied about sexual orientation and gender identity to better understand his own identity. Finally, he even began to hope for a life where he was free to be himself.

Nor applied to come to Canada as a refugee, and his application was eventually approved. Although Nor is happy here in Edmonton, he still faces many challenges. It’s difficult to make friends who will accept him as a gay man and to find the courage to live without worrying about what other people think. People in his own ethnic community talk behind his back and say unkind things. Nor doesn’t want anyone from his own country to know that he is gay. His religious community isn’t welcoming, so he isn’t connected to that group, either.

Nor is studying English so that he can find a good job and have a good life in Canada. Even in his English class, Nor hasn't made any close friends because he is afraid his classmates will reject him if they find out that he is gay. He feels invisible sometimes because teachers don't talk about LGBTQ+ people or issues, and he often has to lie when sharing information about his life during classroom activities.

Nor hopes that by telling his story, more teachers will talk about LGBTQ+ issues in class and will realize that there are gay, lesbian, and transgender students in the classroom. He also hopes that students will be more aware of their classmates who might be LGBTQ+, and that they will be more kind, open, and accepting after hearing his story.

Reading Comprehension

Instructions: Answer the following questions based on the information provided in the reading.

1. How did Nor know that he was different from other kids at his school?

2. In paragraph 3, what does "traumatic" mean? _____

3. In paragraph 4, what does "talk behind his back" mean? _____

4. How did Nor realize that his life was at risk? _____

5. List three challenges that Nor faces:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

6. What do you think "he feels invisible" means? Why might Nor feel this way?

7. Why do you think Nor has to lie in class? _____

8. Why did Nor agree to tell his story? _____

Read for Verb Tense

Instructions: First, underline all the verbs you can find in the reading. Then scan the reading again for verb tenses and find five examples of each tense. Write the examples in the correct columns below.

Simple Past	Simple Present	Future

1. Where in the story is the simple past used? Why? _____

2. What is the difference between a regular simple past verb and an irregular simple past verb?

3. Where in the story is the simple present used? Why? _____

4. Where is the future aspect used? Why? _____

Activity 6: A Refugee Story – Listening

Instructions: You have already read Nor’s story. Now you will hear him share his story in his own words. Listen for more details about his life and answer the questions below.

****Trigger warning:** Section B contains the story of a gay man witnessing the murder of his boyfriend. This may be upsetting to some students who have experienced violence in their past. You have the option to skip this listening activity if you are worried that you may be upset by this story.

A. Nor’s Identity

1. What is Nor’s sexual orientation? _____
2. What is Nor’s gender identity? _____
3. List three words he uses to describe different aspects of his identity:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

B. Nor’s Youth

4. What happened to Nor at his school when he was a child? _____

5. How old was Nor when he met his boyfriend? _____
6. Where did he meet his boyfriend? _____
7. What terrible event did Nor witness? _____

8. What did Nor do after this event happened? _____

9. What does the interviewer say to express empathy to Nor after he shares that he still remembers everything about that event even now?

10. How would you describe the interviewer's tone as she expresses empathy?

C. To a Safer Country

11. How did Nor feel once he arrived in Turkey? _____

12. At first, how did Nor decide to live his life? _____

13. Why did he change his mind? _____

14. Why did Nor decide to leave Turkey? _____

15. Who helped Nor travel safely to Canada? _____

D. Search for Community

16. Why was it difficult for Nor to make friends when he arrived in Canada?

17. Where did Nor finally meet some friends in the LGBTQ+ community?

18. What happened when Nor went to church?

E. In the Classroom

19. How often did Nor's teachers talk about LGBTQ+ identities?

20. What does Nor mean by "even in the 'Pride' time, they didn't explain to the people what it means"?

21. Nor said that his teacher shared a personal story about her kids. What do you think her story was about?

22. How did students react to the personal information that Nor's teacher shared?

23. Why did Nor trust his teacher?

24. List three ways Nor mentions that we could help LGBTQ+ individuals in our classrooms feel safer:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

25. Why do you think Nor is telling his story? _____

Activity 7: A Refugee Story – Cloze

Instructions: Write in the verbs that are missing from Nor’s story without looking back. Once you are done, check your answers using the original story.

1 From a very young age, Nor knew that he _____ different. When other
2 boys _____ about liking girls, he _____ that he liked
3 boys. Nor’s parents _____ him to a boarding school, where he
4 _____ and _____ class with other kids his age.
5 The other kids _____ sense that Nor _____ different, and
6 they _____ fun of him, _____ him names, and told
7 him he _____ like a girl.

8 When he was in university, Nor _____ a classmate named Ahmed.
9 Nor and Ahmed _____ all their time together, and they
10 _____ that they loved each other. Other people _____
11 out about their relationship and _____ it to the authorities,
12 who tracked them down. A friend _____ to help them to escape.
13 Nor escaped, but the authorities _____ Ahmed. Nor
14 _____ the authorities kill his boyfriend.

15 After this traumatic experience, Nor _____ that his life _____
16 also at risk. Nor _____ to go to Turkey to escape and try to
17 _____ safely. When he _____ in Turkey, the United
18 Nations Human Rights Commission _____ Nor find safe housing,
19 and _____ him to other LGBTQ refugees. It was during this
20 time that Nor finally _____ the words to describe who he was—
21 he _____ that he had been born gay—that _____ his “difference.”
22 He _____ some common experiences with others in his
23 community and _____ he was not alone. He _____
24 about other gay and lesbian people, as well as those who were transgender.

25 He _____ books and _____ about sexual orientation and
26 gender identity to better understand his own identity. Finally, he even began
27 to _____ for a life where he was free to _____ himself.

28 Nor _____ to come to Canada as a refugee, and his application
29 was eventually _____. Although Nor _____ happy
30 in Edmonton, he still _____ many challenges. It's difficult to meet
31 friends who will _____ him as a gay man and to find the courage to
32 _____ without worrying about what other people think. People in
33 his own ethnic community _____ behind his back and _____
34 unkind things. Nor doesn't _____ anyone from his own country to
35 _____ that he is gay. His religious community isn't welcoming, so he
36 isn't connected to that group, either.

37 Nor is studying English so that he can _____ a good job and
38 _____ a good life in Canada. Even in his English class, Nor doesn't
39 _____ any close friends because he _____ afraid his classmates will
40 _____ him if they find out that he is gay. He _____ invisible
41 sometimes because teachers don't _____ about LGBTQ people or
42 issues, and he often has to _____ when sharing information about his
43 life during classroom activities.

44 Nor _____ that by telling his story, more teachers will _____
45 about LGBTQ+ issues in class and will _____ that there are gay,
46 lesbian, and transgender students in the classroom. He also _____
47 that students will be more aware of their classmates who might be LGBTQ+,
48 and that they will _____ more kind, open, and accepting after hearing
49 his story.

Activity 8: Share Your Own Story – Writing

Instructions: Choose one aspect (part) of your identity (for example: student, worker, friend, sibling, parent) to write about.

In your paragraphs, answer the following questions. Make sure to use the simple past when talking about events that happened at a particular time in the past, simple present for the statement of facts or repeated activities, and both simple present and future tenses to talk about hopes. Write one paragraph to answer each of the following questions:

- What was your life like before coming to Canada?
- What is your life like now?
- What do you hope will happen in the future?

Extension Activity 1: Read about other stories of LGBTQ+ refugees at <http://www.sogica.org/en/life-stories/>. Read and summarize one of these stories.

Extension Activity 2: Go to ilga.org to learn more about LGBTQ+ human rights laws around the world. Give a short presentation to a small group about the laws in your country of origin.

Extension Activity 3: Listen to Kimberle Crenshaw TED talk about intersectionality at https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality. As you listen, take notes and try to identify the main idea and some details from her talk.