



# A' ADAMS' BAIRNS?

An Introductory Self-Learning Tool on  
Anti-racist praxis for teachers and educators



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Erasmus+



**National Library of Scotland**

Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

## Titilayo Farukuoye

Titilayo Farukuoye is an organiser, anti-racist educator, youth worker and writer based in Glasgow. Titilayo is passionate about issues of identity, social justice, and the climate. Continuously building their decolonial practice, Titilayo aspires to dismantle oppressive structures and to transcend race and gender constructs. Titilayo organises in Black and PoC led communities like The Anti-Racist Educator collective, the Scottish BAME Writers Network and Intercultural Youth Scotland, among others. Titilayo has led anti-racist campaigns and initiatives nationally and received international recognition for their journalistic work.

Image description: Titilayo is a light-skinned Black person standing in a park while smiling at the camera. Titilayo's big afro blows in the wind, they are wearing a white jacket with blue and orange prints and a black t-shirt which says "Refugees welcome"



# CONTENTS

## 8 Introduction

Things to consider before going into the classroom.

## 13 Section 1: Fragility

Common patterns and behaviours of white fragility.

## 18 Section 2: Brave Spaces

Understanding fragility, building towards allyship and change.

## 24 Section 3: Creating a safe(r) space

Classroom activity: how to create an environment where constructive conversations can happen safely.

## 27 Section 4: Power

Considering my own position of power and my role within the structure.

## 33 Section 5: Social identity

Considering how our social identity informs our view of the world and how we act and react in it.

## 37 Section 6: A world without race

Understanding that the current world order is 500 years old, this is not the only way humans have lived.

## 40 Section 7: Race, a social construct

Where does race come from? And whom does it serve?

## 43 Section 8: Taking action

Questions to consider for your own practice and questions to consider for your school.

	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b>	<b>Classroom / exercise for children and young people</b>
<b>Before we start</b>	Things to consider before going into the classroom	Educators will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be confident about using the right terminology.</li> <li>• Be aware of the need to proactively prevent harm.</li> <li>• Recognise that they need to put extra care in supporting Black and PoC pupils in their classroom.</li> </ul>	
<b>Fragility</b>	Common patterns and behaviours of white fragility	Educators will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define white fragility.</li> <li>• Identify white fragility.</li> <li>• Practice overcoming white fragility.</li> <li>• Practice how to centre the person who has experienced harm.</li> </ul>	
<b>Brave spaces</b>	Understanding fragility, building towards allyship and change	Educators will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn tools on how to address and tackle issues and causes centring people who experience marginality and oppression.</li> </ul>	

	Topic	Learning outcomes	Classroom / exercise for children and young people
Building a safe(r) space	How to create an environment where constructive conversations can happen safely	<p>Educators will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how to build a space where it is safe for everyone to express their views and be themselves</li> <li>• Understand why it is important to create this safety net before engaging in discussions on race and oppression</li> </ul>	Classroom student exercise Safer Spaces
Power	Considering my own position of power and my role within the structure	<p>Educators will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider their own power in the classroom.</li> <li>• Reflect on their own (racist) thinking with which they have been socialised.</li> <li>• Will consider gaps in their knowledge and experience that might differ from their pupils, or the people and stories they teach about.</li> </ul>	

**A world without race**

**Topic**

Understanding that the current world order is 500 years old, this is not the only way humans have lived. It's not "just the way it is"

**Social identity**

How does power work in a student teacher relationship scenario? What can you do to even out this imbalance?

**Learning outcomes**

Educators will

- Become aware of pre-colonial histories and narratives.
- Recognise the vastness of the human story and that the European/Western lens is just one perspective of many.

Educators will

- Become aware that all people are made up of a wide/ endless number of things that make them who they are.
- Recognise that people are made to think about and consider certain factors that make them themselves a lot more than others.

**Classroom / exercise for children and young people**


Classroom student exercise  
 Social Identity

	<p style="color: #c00000; font-weight: bold;">Topic</p>	<p style="color: #c00000; font-weight: bold;">Learning outcomes</p>	<p style="color: #c00000; font-weight: bold;">Classroom / exercise for children and young people</p>
<p style="color: #006666; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">Race, a social construct</p>	<p>Where does race come from?            And whom does it serve?            Questions to consider for your own practice.            Questions to consider for your school.</p>	<p>Educators will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise the myth of white supremacy and white superiority.</li> <li>• Learn about Eugenics and the origin of race pseudo-science.</li> <li>• Recognise race as a system that serves to enable capitalism and the current world order.</li> </ul>	
<p style="color: #006666; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">Taking action</p>	<p>Questions to consider for your own practice.            Questions to consider for your school.</p>	<p>Educators will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how to implement anti-racism in their daily practice.</li> <li>• Consider critically prevalent structures in their educational structures as well as their institution.</li> <li>• Think about how to continue their anti-racist journey beyond this resource.</li> </ul>	

## Before we start

This unit is for all educators who want to make a start at understanding what anti-racism is and how we as teachers and pupils, allies and individuals with lived experience of racism can start our anti-racist journey, as individuals, communities and wider society.

Before you start, it is vital to understand that anti-racism is a praxis, a verb that has to be actively pursued, it is a decision we have to make anew, every step of the way. Anti-racism is not about perfection or completing a number of tests. You won't be awarded an anti-racism certificate at the end. Instead, anti-racism is about learning, unlearning, reflection and the ability to recognise oppressive structures, to take on feedback and experiences from people who are racialised as Black and as People of Colour (PoC) and our ability to take new input on board, translate it into improving our praxis and to envision new and non-oppressive ways of being.





## Key principles

### Language

A lot of the terminology that is used by authorities about race, and people who are racialised as Black or as PoC perpetuates the very ideologies that marginalise Black and PoC people. Many names that are used to group people racialised as non-white have a colonial legacy, have not been chosen by the groups themselves, or eradicate cultures, history, and identity narratives. Often terminology can be a distraction from actual issues or unveiling the complexity of it, the wrong terminology can eradicate traces of heritage, identity and culture, it can portray people suffering from racism as the problem, rather than exercising active critique of the systems that perpetuate it. It is therefore incredibly important to listen to Black, PoC and East Asian people and use the terminology that they use to describe themselves, rather than assuming what they would like to be called. When preparing your lesson, pay close attention to who has written materials, if they centre the perspectives of Black and PoC people and inform their work with an anti-racist praxis. *(please familiarise yourself with their meaning through the [Anti-Racist Educator Glossary](#))*

### Key terms

#### White supremacy

The belief that white/European/Western cultures are superior and therefore destined to rule and regulate over other people who are not white.

#### Whiteness

The system that privileges white people and their actions.

#### Race

A power structure based on the belief in inherent difference between people of different phenotypes, where white (European) is treated as most superior group.

*Find the full definitions on the Anti-racist Educator website on [www.theanti-racisteducator.com](http://www.theanti-racisteducator.com)*

## Racial Trauma

People racialised as non-white experience racism every day. This is a fact. If you don't know this or have not noticed it, it is because you are not experiencing it. One of the main strategies and ways racial oppression has managed to prevail is by undermining these experiences. Instead of looking where it comes from and who is perpetuating racism, we, as society ask Black and PoC people over and over again to tell us about their experiences without looking at the problem's source, if we ask them at all. In even less fortunate scenarios attention is often redirected to white people and the guilt they feel about racism. Everyday examples range from "... oh I didn't mean it to, but there just was no Black/Asian/Caribbean/... person otherwise we would have asked/invited them", etc. Instead, we need to educate ourselves about the structural root causes of racism and actively tackle them.

While it is vital to create spaces where Black and PoC people can share experiences and reflect on what racism is and the effects it has on us, please note that your classroom, might not be a safe space for a person of colour to do so. This is independent to how knowledgeable on the subject or good of an ally you might have been (or are) to other people.

No one should ever be forced to share their experiences of race and racism with you for your or anybody's learning experience.

## Before you start teaching about anti-racism/lead equality and diversity initiatives in your setting

We strongly suggest that you attend and seek out anti-racism training before you teach and engage your pupils in the topics of race and oppression. It is vital that you have thought about and considered your power and privilege in the context of the class discussions and materials before you teach them. Ask yourself: What makes my identity? What power do I hold in certain situations? What power and decisions do I hold over other people and why? What cultural contexts, knowledge, experiences do I know nothing about and why? Please feel encouraged to work through this self-learning guide to deepen your understanding and initiate first encounters with anti-racism. Perhaps there is a group of teachers at your school/institution that would like to go through the resource together? Please be aware that this self-learning resource, does not substitute any certified training and that we encourage you to take up facilitated learning opportunities about anti-racism alongside this tool.

## Safeguarding Black and PoC people in your classroom/education setting

It is vital that you put extra care and support into safeguarding children and young people who are racialised as Black or PoC. It is essential that you create avenues for feedback and opportunities to opt out of sourcing their experiences for the benefit of the whole class learning. Please communicate with your pupils before you engage the entire class on the topic of race, explain that you will be talking about racism and inequality and that it might be particularly difficult or awkward for them. Emphasise that they don't have to share personal experiences and are allowed to correct you if you have said something that does not sit right with them.

Particularly for younger age groups, it is helpful to reach out to the children's parents and guardians of Black and PoC children to explain that you will be engaging in the topics of race and racism in the coming classes, don't give care takers extra work by asking them to share resources, or present on your behalf, but make yourself available for any feedback, comments or reflections they might have. Remember, all of your pupils have an equal right to this learning experience, how can you now facilitate different levels of knowledge and expertise in the classroom without putting the young people of colour on the spot and at risk of harm?

Importantly, be ready to make mistakes, accept that you could reinforce racism or perpetuate racist ideology without noticing or being aware of it. If this is the case it is important to listen, to not make it about yourself, but to ensure you do everything in your power to make the person who has experienced racism feel safe and supported.

Finally, don't do this work on your own. There are charities, community groups and organisations who centre their work on anti-racism and safeguarding the people who experience it. Look at their many resources, and refer especially Black and PoC young people to their services, wherever you can.

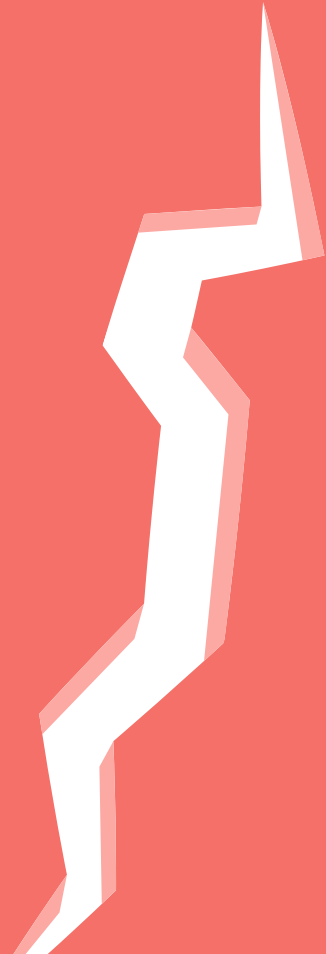
 [The Anti-Racist Educator](#)

 [Intercultural Youth Scotland](#)

 [Saheliya](#)

# FRAGILITY

A' Adam's Bairns



## First, define in your own words...

- What is fragility?

.....  
.....  
.....

- Where can we observe fragility in social situations?

.....  
.....  
.....

- What role might fragility play when it comes to bias and discrimination?

.....  
.....  
.....

- What is white fragility?

.....  
.....  
.....

- Watch this video: [How 'white fragility' reinforces racism](#). Pay close attention to the points DiAngelo raises. How does the scholar describe white fragility and how does it manifest?

.....

.....

.....

- What is the overall function of white fragility?

.....

.....

.....

- Can you recognise and describe a moment where you yourself were defensive or otherwise exhibited white fragility?

.....

.....

.....



*Recognising and tackling white fragility is a key skill that you must continuously develop and practice.* While it might be a common response to defend and justify our actions, particularly when we become aware of their implications, and especially when we have not intended harm, it is important to recognise that this defensive behaviour is disruptive and draws attention away from the original issue. Suddenly the conversation is about whether you are good or bad, guilty or innocent, instead of the harm that the Black person has experienced.

White fragility and defensiveness are the fundamental reasons why conversations about race are so difficult. Survivors of racism don't often choose/feel safe to come forward while racism and white supremacy remain topics associated with stigma, taboo and judgment.

- In the video, DiAngelo asked you to make your personal list of what can be done. What are your personal steps to tackle your (white) fragility?

.....

.....

.....

*Think about your own life, cultural habits, family, the life decisions, and choices you make.* If you are socialised as white, you grew up in a world where you were consistently told/fed by the culture around you, that your way of life is the right, sophisticated, enlightened way to be. Of course, it is painful and disappointing to hear that some of these choices cause someone else harm. Fragility is the urge to justify your actions, to have a defensive reaction and to fight off any accusations (to reason and explain your actions and why you made this decision... I am a good person, I didn't know)... *When we have caused other people harm/other people are not afforded the same opportunities, and hence experience marginalisation in our presence, it is crucial that we actively step away from our own feelings of fragility.*

Instead, consider what the person must have mustered up in courage and internal turmoil to tell you this. What can you say to acknowledge what they have shared with you, to acknowledge their courage, emotional labour, etc. instead of making it about you? How can you ensure this person continues coming to you and feels safe to bring up these issues?

Carefully write a list of what you might feel in this situation (initially) and what you might feel like saying to the person who has voiced the issue to/against you.

Your list may look like this...

- I feel uncomfortable.*
- I feel called out.*
- I feel attacked.*
- I didn't mean it in a bad way.*
- I might feel like saying: "Don't worry about it they didn't mean to hurt you"*
- I don't think it was that bad.*
- I am confused.*
- I don't think they are capable of doing such a thing.*
- This was probably a misunderstanding.*

Make a second list of actions and steps you want to take when you make the active choice to consider this issue in an anti-racist way.

Your list may look like this...

- Take a deep breath!*
- Thank the person for raising this with you.*
- Ask yourself: What is the person trying to communicate to me?*
- If I take myself out of the equation what do I hear?*
- My intentions are irrelevant in this situation.*
- What does this person need from me?*
- How can I ensure this doesn't happen again?*
- Have they got the support they need? Or where can I secure it for them?*
- Where can I educate myself to find out more without placing the burden on them?*
- How can I make them feel valid and ensure there is a positive outcome to the situation?*

## Group discussion

Share with fellow teachers and colleagues. What might be some common patterns and behaviours of white fragility that come up? Particularly in a school environment/ the teacher-pupil relationship might make things difficult. What are some of the strategies you intend to apply from now on? How can you give Black and PoC pupils the authority and safety to speak to you about or even point out issues and challenges of race without negative repercussions for them? (Share your lists and reflections and add things to your own ideas as you learn from each other!)

## Take away

White fragility is a common reaction to confrontation with racism/awareness of or acknowledged presence of race. It is the feeling of guilt, anger, fear, argumentativeness, shame, stress, etc. white people are likely to experience when confronted with race and their stake in the structure.

White Fragility upholds white supremacy. It gaslights Black people and People of Colour who have undergone the emotional labour of speaking up about racism they experience. White fragility safeguards a person's privilege and directs support to the offender, instead of protecting/extending support to the survivor of racism. It is important to continuously try your best to overcome and resist white fragility, to put your feelings of blame, frustration, distress etc aside and get to work. What was the feedback actually about? And how can you honour it?

# BRAVE SPACES

A' Adam's Bairns



## Building Brave Spaces

Now that you are familiar with white fragility, the next step (and once more this is an ongoing process) is to build brave spaces where these conversations about race, and interlinking systems of oppression and their impact, can be talked about constructively. The goal is to engage with these topics beyond blame and guilt, and to transform them into something productive - a step towards positive change. This is important for your personal practice, but particularly relevant when teaching or otherwise facilitating a space where you are responsible for other people's learning and well-being.

Tackling racism means challenging the status quo. For people who benefit from our world order and racial hierarchy, stepping out of that system, challenging or undermining it can be at the very least intimidating, easily appear threatening or feel like loss or uncertainty. Challenging racism and being anti-racist is never easy or comfortable, it requires you to step outside of your comfort zone and to persist especially when these conversations feel difficult or uncomfortable.

Inevitably there is lot at stake. Ultimately racism costs lives, so do not expect this to be easy or straight forward for anyone.



Familiarise yourself with these two materials on brave spaces and facilitating conversations about race before you answer the questions below, in a group of teachers or as self-reflection points.



Check out this video by a teacher and anti-racist practitioner on building brave spaces in the classroom.



Méline Valdelièvre, co-founder of the Anti-racist Educator collective, organiser and teacher based in Scotland outlines this framework for productive communication about race in the classroom.

Discuss with your group or take reflective notes:

- What should I consider when building brave spaces? How can I ensure that conversations about race can be constructive?
- What is the difference between calling someone in and calling someone out?
- What role does accountability play in a brave space?
- What ideas do you have to foster conscious decision making, agency and accountability in your school community?
- Consider both relationships between learners as well as relationships to authority figures in the school. Could there be collaborative approaches to accountability? How do we prevent a merely top-down approach? How can pupils also be empowered to evoke the principles of a brave space with their teachers and school staff?



## Valdelièvre outlines the key steps towards building brave spaces:



Acknowledge emotions - there is a lot at stake in conversations about race. Recognise that is the case, recognise initial impulses, defensiveness and urges to proclaim innocence, even if they might be counter-productive. Supporting each other to deal with those feelings, without diverting from the topic, is key. Here it is important to centre the person who has experienced racism, the person who was able to speak up and raise awareness about an injustice, not the person who feels guilty about the harm they have caused. It can be useful to provide a space for the perpetrator, but not in the first instance. Generally, most energy needs to go to the survivor and their bystanders. The initial reaction to such an incident sets the precedent and determines if the survivor can feel supported/heard, while it also sends signals to the rest of the group and community. Is racism tolerated here? Can I be myself here? Will speaking up cost me more energy than staying quiet? What are the consequences for me if I say something? While centring a Black person or a person of colour communicates that you and this space is concerned with their well-being, it also sends important signals to the rest of the group/community.



White tears are the specific phenomenon, where a white person starts crying in response to an accusation of racism that they have committed. While the committer might feel sad/guilty/ashamed, focus should not be with them, but with the person who has experienced harm.



Accept that there will be discomfort and fragility in the space. Participants need to be aware of its implications. (See the previous exercise for reflections and conveying their meaning).



Recognise the emotional labour these conversations cost Black people and people of colour. It is extremely tiring and exhausting to engage in these conversations. Remember that racism happens daily and is a persistent issue in a person's life when they are racialised as a Black person or person of colour. Remember that though this conversation might also be exhausting for you, conversations about race are fundamental discussions about a person's livelihood, basic right to exist, life/death. Nobody should have to defend their right to live, never mind doing so daily.

## Building brave spaces and engaging in brave conversations is a process.

This journey will never be finished and there will always be more to learn. It will get better and easier with practice. Not only will you get to know your own “triggers”, but also find good strategies to avoid deflecting and other defensive mechanisms. Understand that there is no one who has completely mastered these techniques, we are all learning together! We have all been socialised in a racist world and need to unlearn our behaviour, so there is no need to negate or hide this fact. It's simply one of many realities we work with.

Diversity and representation are key. All humans are unique, individual beings, not all outcomes will work for everyone. In fact, just because you have established some rules with one person, does not guarantee that it works for the next. This is why it is important that representation is a given, a diversity of people involved will allow for more stakes being considered and discussed, outcomes and ideas are more likely to serve more marginalised groups and people. Still diversity does not solve all issues. Racism cannot be overcome with diversity and representation alone. Please see the section on power to understand why.

Listen! We need to hear each other and make participants feel valued. Will you/the group appreciate the feedback, ideas, worries and concerns a person of colour brings forward? Do you convey gratitude for the people's investment and faith in your/the group/organisation/institution's ability to hear them and change something about it? Can you actually hear what the person is raising or are you redirecting your thoughts to the moral things you have done, the successes your institution is recognised for, other Black and PoC people who have conveyed more positive experiences to you...?

Create safer spaces. What are the rules for speaking and listening to each other? What are the group's thoughts on confidentiality in your space? How do people engage and interact with each other? Is the space accessible? What does accessible mean? Who is part of the space? Who would you like to invite into the space (who is not here, yet)? How does accountability work in the space? Continuously answering and contemplating these questions will be a helpful start to building such spaces.





## Further Reading



[White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism, Robin DiAngelo \(2018\)](#)



[Dr. Robin DiAngelo discusses 'White Fragility'](#)



[Me and White Supremacy, Layla Saad \(2020\)](#)



# CREATING A SAFE(R) SPACE

A' Adam's Bairns



## Classroom activity: Safe(r) spaces

### Lesson plan

#### Step 1

*(This works really as a meditation/breathing exercise)*

In person, sit on the floor in circle/dim lights/ensure there are no loud noises next door etc.

Online, allow learners to turn off their video/invite them to get into a comfortable position before you start/close eyes/or lower gaze.

Playing calming music can also work really well. While taking deep breaths:

Think about places and situations where you can fully be yourself. (Encourage learners to think of neutral spaces; a bedroom/home isn't always a safe space for everyone, where friends, family or role models are mentioned, encourage learners to think of these people's attributes and qualities: How do they make you feel safe? Where are you safe? What does being safe mean to you?)

#### Step 2

Discuss ideas in pairs. (Encourage learners to share in pairs and take notes of the feelings and physical attributes of their safe space. Explain 'people I can trust', 'a place I am familiar with', etc.) Ask each pair to add their list to the whiteboard/placard visible to everyone.

#### Step 3

Discuss the following in small groups of approximately 4 students. Ask each group to appoint a scribe to take notes. Based on our reflections and the list on the whiteboard we know what makes us feel safe individually. What does this mean in a group setting? Whom did we miss? Encourage learners to discuss how what was brought up during Step 2 can be realised in the classroom setting they are in. What is needed to make this safe for everyone in the group? Before you move on, bring in your personal reflections on brave spaces: Sure, we all need to feel safe to participate. What would we like to see if someone causes harm, makes someone feel unsafe, even if it wasn't intentional? How can they be held to account? (Discuss in pairs)

We need to make sure everyone in the group can take part. How can we ensure we centre those who experience feeling unsafe and even discrimination most often? People who are not white, people who are disabled, people who are LGBTQIA+, etc... (Discuss in pairs)

#### Step 4

Class discussion. Each group shares key discussion points with the rest of class. Together, write a community safer space agreement. It is important that everyone in the class feels confident and keen to fulfil the established rules/guidelines. Leave scope for further discussions and consensus making if some things need to be clarified. Ensure the document remains permanently accessible by the class, hang it up on a classroom wall/pin it to the learner's page online etc.



# POWER

A' Adam's Bairns



## This next segment is about power.

To start you off take the White Privilege Test by the Anti-Racist Educator Collective. Try to take the test as a group (perhaps among your colleagues). If you are ethnically, racially, religiously diverse then you are good to go! If you are a more homogeneous group, consider filling out the test from the perspective of yourself as well as picking up the test for some of the fictional people outlined below.



### Person A

Ismaila is a 25-year-old woman from Pakistan. She wears a hijab and comes from a family of doctors and professors. She has never been to Scotland, or Europe for that matter before she came to the University of St. Andrews to study for her doctorate.



### Person B

Alasdair is a 15-year-old boy from North Lanarkshire. He is white and recently told his family and friends that he is gay. His immediate circle is very supportive, but he is looking forward to going to university because he has heard that he will be able to connect with and meet other LGBTQIA+ people there. He is a bit nervous about going to university because he would be the first in his family to do so.



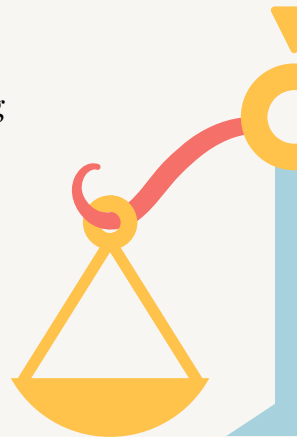
### Person C

Yemi is a 17-year-old Glaswegian girl. Her parents are from Nigeria and Ghana, they met in Scotland in the early 90s. Yemi is proud of her multicultural, West-African heritage and like her three younger siblings speaks both Twi and Yoruba (along with English, of course) and the French she picked up in school.



### Person D

Tom is from Ayr. He has brown skin, and his hair would grow in lush curls if he didn't always wear it at 2mm. Tom was adopted as a baby and doesn't know his biological family or anything about Sri Lanka, the country where he was born. He loves football and recently applied for an electrical apprenticeship so he can join his father's business as soon as he gets his Electrician's Licence.



## After taking the test, discuss:

- What is your score? Did you expect it? What struck you about it?
- What was it like to take the test? How do you feel? What reactions, emotions did you observe from the others? How did different people with different backgrounds feel about the test? If you took the test from the perspective of one of the fictional people listed, how did that feel different to your own identity?
- After taking the test, how would you explain white privilege? Has your understanding of it changed?
- Write your definition here:

---

---

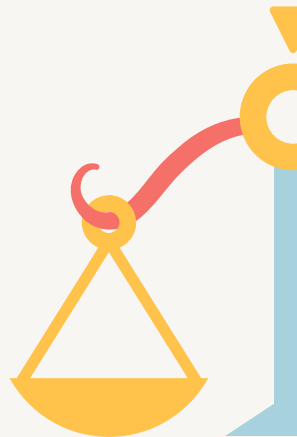
---

So, what does power have to do with all of this?

While we can clearly see that different aspects of our identity afford us certain privileges, other identities can often mean that we experience disadvantages and discrimination. However, this does not reflect the value (or not) or rightfulness of the specific identity, but rather that in the society we live in certain identities and thereby people are valued and granted power over others. Hence certain identities are attributed privileges/powers over others.

You might consider:

- Cleaners and those who grow food earn less money than those who manage companies and people. Aren't hygiene and food more fundamental to our livelihood than management?
- Coffee beans and a farmer's wage for cultivating them makes up a small percentage of what is paid for packaged and roasted coffee. Who decided that the coffee bean should be less valuable than the packaged coffee that is made from it?
- Who decided that roasted coffee should cost so much more than the raw coffee beans? Or that a manager is more important than a cleaner? In any given situation if you are towards one end of this chain you will have power that others do not have. Similar with race...



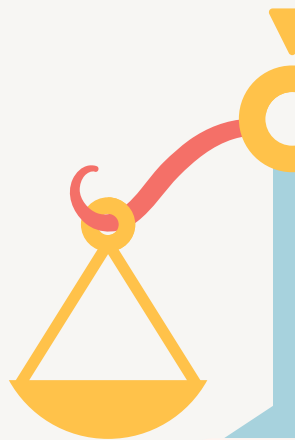
If I am in a space, a staff meeting or seminar for teachers and I look like the people that are expected in this space, I wage more power than a person who is racialised as Black or a person of colour, who might be mistaken as a cleaner in the very same space. This of course does not say anything about a person's ability or determine if they are actually supposed to be here, instead it just highlights the power a white person holds if they do not have to defend their existence.

DiAngelo famously emphasises white people's ability to be recognised as individuals whilst Black people and PoC represent entire groups of people, faith groups, continents, etc. Similarly, white people's perspectives are understood as universal truth and ideal, rather than one of many ways of living and understanding the world.

There is a need to recognise and address this power and privilege that is a white person's blending in, knowledge or access to certain things. It takes practice to start seeing and acknowledging your power.

[The Anti-Racist Educator's Glossary entry on power](#) is a good place to continue this line of thought.

For now, start with thinking about in what situations you might recognise power playing out and how might you use your power and privilege in an anti-racist way?



In your work and every day, where might you have power that is not afforded to a Black person or person of colour in the same position? (If you are Black/a person of colour you can list the privileges you might have over other Black and PoC people and how you might use them)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

In your work and every day, how might you use your power to tackle racism and injustice?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

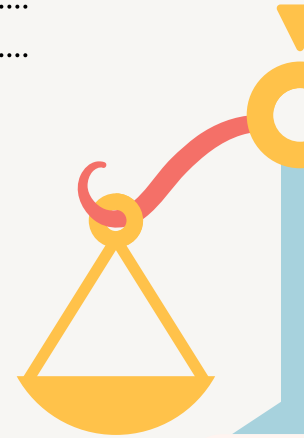
.....

.....

.....

Discuss your ideas and reflections with fellow teachers and educators.

If you feel ready for a challenge, consider these questions in respect to Black and PoC young people in your school/setting, who beyond racial power that comes with your whiteness, also have less power in your student teacher relationship, due to their status as children and young people. How does power work in this scenario? And what can you do to even out this imbalance?





## Further Reading



[What White People Can Do Next by Emma Dabiri \(2021\)](#)



[The Weaponization of Whiteness in Schools](#)



[Deconstructing White Privilege with Dr. Robin DiAngelo](#)



# SOCIAL IDENTITY

*A' Adam's Bairns*



If you feel ready for a challenge, consider these questions in respect to Black and PoC young people, who beyond racial power that comes with your whiteness also have less power in your student teacher relationship, due to their status as children and young people. How does power work in this scenario? And what can you do to even out this imbalance?

Use Box 1 and 2 for younger age groups. For teenagers and adults it might be more appropriate to use the original Social Identity Wheel. Instructions for this activity are still the same, please ensure learners fill out Box 1 or the outer circle of the identity wheel first, and then follow with the discussion of Box 2/the questions listed inside the identity wheel. Regardless of what age group your learners are in, please ensure that they understand all the categories listed in Box 1 before you start and that whatever they put in Box 1 remains confidential!

### Box 1

- Race (colour of my skin and more!)
- Ethnicity (my culture and beliefs)
- Religion
- Disability
- My first language
- My nationality (what it says on my passport/where you were born or grew up)
- Age
- Gender (How I identify myself)
- Sexuality (Who I fall in love with)
- Class (money and resources your family has to live)

### Box 2

- Identities I think about most often:
  
- Identities I think about least often:
  
- Identities I would like to learn more about:
  
- Identities that have the strongest effect on how I see myself:

*Activity instructions on next page*

## Activity Instructions

### Step 1

Learners fill out Box 1 privately. Please ensure to express to the learners that there are no right or wrong answers, and that their answers are to remain private and will not be shared with anyone. A lot of these categories are fluid: What you say today does not need to be true to you tomorrow.

### Step 2

Discuss in pairs:

What does it feel like to answer these questions? Have you thought about these categories before? Why so?

What situation brought up those conversations? (still there is no need to disclose what you actually wrote down)

### Step 3

Answer questions in Box 2

### Step 4

Discuss Box 2 in groups of approx. 4 people

### Step 5

Class discussion, hear feedback from each group, share with the rest of the class.



## Learning outcomes to draw out as the educator

- All people are made up of a wide/endless number of things that make them who they are.
- Some people are made to think about and consider certain factors that make them themselves a lot more than others.
- These factors themselves are not the problem, we need to be different, if we were all the same the world would be a boring place, but unfortunately in the way that society is structured not everyone is given the same support and opportunity. Also, the amount of recognition and support that is given to a person is unfairly based on their identity.
- The fault is then not with those that don't fit a specific image or idea, or don't get to do or be certain things but with the system that favours some over others.

### Tip



Anti-racism here means knowing and accepting that the system is unjust and actively choosing to dismantle, overcome and rethink a racist system, instead of accepting it as a reality that simply is as it is.



# A WORLD WITHOUT RACE

*A' Adam's Bairns*

Before we look at race, we need to build a basic understanding of the legacy of racialised peoples. Humans did not always categorise themselves according to race. Race was not always how we described population group, in fact it's a structure that has been in place for around 500 years, it's a structure that has been invented with ill-intentions in mind, but is nothing in comparison to the 300.000 years we have existed as a species of homo sapiens sapiens. Can you think of any civilisations, people, achievements, practices that are important in world history that were not European or Western?

## Take a look at some examples:



Mansa Musa (Musa I of Mali) was the ruler of the kingdom of Mali from 1312 C.E. to 1337 C.E. During his reign, Mali was one of the richest kingdoms of Africa, and Mansa Musa was among the richest individuals in the world.



Zeinab Badawi's documentary series on the Kingdom of Kush, Kingdom of Kush - History Of Africa. If this caught your interest, have a look at the whole documentary series



University of Al-Karaouine, The oldest known university in the world is in Fez, Morocco.



Africa's looted art | DW Documentary. Sheds light on the dilemma of looted artefacts that are held in Western museums and cultural institutions. As this colonial legacy continues its footing, the audience can only begin to imagine the power, knowledge and vastness of culture and influence African nations, to which these looted objects are testimony, existed in pre-colonial Africa, and is present to this day.

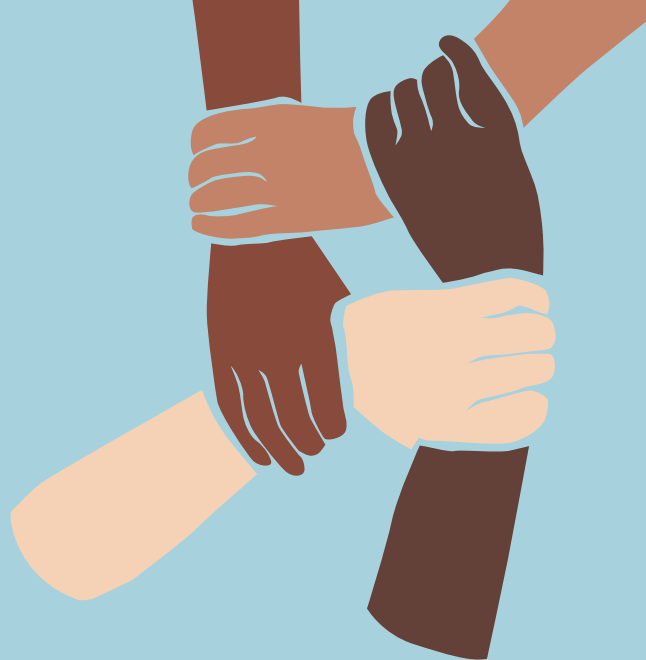


As a group pick one or several of the resources to read/watch before discussing the following questions:

- What was new? What was surprising about this information? What did you learn?
- Reflect back: What comes to mind when you hear the word Africa? What do you think about those initial images now that you learned more about the continent?
- How are your associations different from what you learned in the resources?
- What other great inventions, cultures, artifacts, etc do you know?
- And how do they stand in contrast to the narratives and images that you hear about these regions in the media?
- Name a great civilisation that was led by a non-white person (if nothing comes to mind, please do your research)
- Have you noticed that in most depictions the Egyptians as well as Jesus are white? What might that have to do with our distorted view of the non-Western world?







# RACE, A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT

A' Adam's Bairns

Race is a social construct, which was invented to justify the murder, exploitation and brutalisation of the peoples, lands and resources of the Global South for centuries. Race is a theory constructed and upheld by a white European elite who used the narrative to further and justify the West's accumulation of wealth and power, by the means of continuous centuries long crimes. These crimes against humanity were committed against indigenous, African and Asian populations, and form a system upon which our world structures are built to this day.

Race is the effect of racism.

Racism was a means to justify the decision to go with the economically vastly more profitable option of selling people into death camps (chattel slavery) rather than continuing trading amongst groups who recognised each other's shared humanity. Today when chattel slavery is outlawed, and formerly colonised countries have gained political independence, racism is what continues to hold the established power structures in place and race/whiteness (the belief of being universally true, sophisticated, developed, enlightened, superior etc. more than others who aren't racialised white) motivates and upholds racism.





Watch Alok Vaid-Menon's interview with Dr. Kyla Schuller about her book "The Biopolitics of Feeling: Race, Sex, and Science in the 19th Century" (2018, Duke University Press)

## Take notes on how they define:

Sex

.....  
.....  
.....

Race

.....  
.....  
.....

Civilisation

.....  
.....  
.....

Gender

.....  
.....  
.....

What else comes to mind that is important and/or new to you?

.....  
.....  
.....

## Discuss your notes as a group:

- Why is this believed superiority so dangerous?
- What impact does this ideology have on society today?
- Where do we see the legacies of this dehumanisation today?



## Further Reading



[How the Bible was used to justify slavery](#)



[The classification of man, Swedish Botanist Carl Linnaeus. 18th century roots of modern \(pseudo\)scientific racism](#)



[Was David Hume racist? Here's the Scottish philosopher's racist comment in full, The National \(2020\)](#)



[On Scotland's involvement and connections](#)



[Black and British Part 1: First Encounters by David Olusoga](#)



# TAKING ACTION

*A' Adam's Bairns*





Well done for putting in the hard work! You are at the end of this resource!  
Now there is one key question left:

## What will you do about all of this?

How can you take forward what you learned? How can you take forward an anti-racist approach? Find below a set of questions/interrogations as a starting point that you could base your research and thinking on. Hopefully you will also have identified gaps in your knowledge about anti-racism from earlier sections in the resource or have become curious to find out more. Continue asking questions, reflecting, learning and engaging in those conversations. It's worth it.





## In school

Is there a network for Black and PoC staff at your school?

What efforts are you making to diversify the curriculum?

How are you embedding anti-racist praxis in your curriculum?

Are your school recording numbers on the attainment gap in relation to race? And what are you doing to breach it?

How are you supporting school-leavers of colour and Black school leavers?

What cultural events are celebrated, represented or receive attention at your school? (For which holidays do you extend greetings in your school communities, which events are celebrated, which events are allocated resources, time, prepared for at the school)

Are there accessible prayer spaces available for staff and students?

Does the school appropriately facilitate all students' and staff cultural and religious practices?

Are Black and PoC parents involved in the school community?

Is language support available for families?

Do you report racist incidents at the school? How are they reported/captured? What is done about them?

Do you debunk the myths around race in your school? What could be done to raise awareness and stop/prevent racism and racist incidents?

Particularly if you have very few staff of colour in your school, are you bringing Black and PoC role models into your school?

This is not an extensive list! After considering the anti-racist approach, what other initiatives come to mind? What ideas come out of conversations with other members of the school community? What do Black and PoC members of your school community want to see?



## In your classroom

Do you talk about race and injustice in your classes?

Can young Black students and students of colour use their cultural knowledge and expertise to their benefit in your class?

Who are the people and stories that feature in your class materials?

Do you consider the impact of language and what language is used in your class resources?

Do you build in narratives, cultures and identities of people who are underrepresented in the mainstream?

Are you available for feedback and conversations about race and intersecting topics with your students?



## In your personal realm

Practice recognising white fragility in yourself.

Practice your “brave” mind-set to engage in difficult conversations.

Consider the power you have in a situation and how you might use it to redistribute this power.

Consider reading and watching more media and creative work by Black people and people of colour.

Continue to inform and educate yourself.

Speak up. If something does not sound right, it likely isn't. Trust your gut. As a white person, you are likely to hear racist things from white people, who would usually watch what they say more carefully with Black and PoC people present. Don't stay quiet. Make them aware of what they have said and why they should not do so.



## What not to do

There are endless examples of what not to do.

This is not to scare you off but to emphasise that you are likely to get it wrong at times. Therefore, it is key that you remain open, that you listen to people with lived experience and that you continue to learn from and expose yourself to work by Black and PoC thinkers. This is a journey.



Scottish Council Used Scientific Racism to Deny Racist Allegations - Institutional Racism Uncovered  
([theantiracisteducator.com](http://theantiracisteducator.com))

## Continuous learning

This learning resource is a first step. We all need to do more and continue to challenge ourselves. Racism is learned and can therefore be unlearned. We live in a racialised world, where people racialised as white mainly get away with thinking race is not about them. We live in a world where our advancements, technologies and standard of living are entirely based on race and the exploitation of the people and their lands who are racialised as Black, Brown and East Asian. The Western world fails to acknowledge this ongoing imbalance, yet recognising this system and actively dismantling it, is necessary.

Tackling racial injustice and overcoming the social construct that is race, will benefit all of us and needs all of our work. Please continue having these conversations, form communities around these conversations, listen!, attend trainings, read and ask questions, anti-racism is a lifelong commitment!



[21 day challenge](#)



[Interrupting Racism: Equity and Social Justice in School Counselling](#) by Rebecca Atkins and Alicia Oglesby



[The Anti-Racist Educator School Resources](#)



[The Anti-Racist Educator Podcast](#)



[Signposts for Global Citizenship - Anti-Racist Education](#)

# A' ADAM'S BAIRNS

An Introductory Self-Learning Tool on  
Anti-racist praxis for teachers and educators

