

What Does Power Look Like?

1. Gather your students into groups (a minimum of three and a max of five)
2. Each group is then asked to define power. After some time supply the following prompts for further exploration:
 - a. Possession of control, authority, or influence over others (Merriam-Webster)
 - b. The ability or capacity to perform or act effectively (Free)
 - c. Can power be measured without comparing it to something or someone else? For example, that team is stronger than the other, or that battery is the most powerful of them all.
 - d. Is power negative or positive? To which is it often attributed?
 - e. How can a person's power shift according to situation?
 - f. Can there be power without OPPRESSION?
3. Ask each group to define oppression. After some time supply the following prompts for further exploration:
 - a. Only doing what another wants you to do who has power over you due to their social position, rewards and coercions, their technical expertise that you lack.
 - b. How can someone be their own oppressor?
 - c. Not being able to VOICE what you want because you do not believe in your voice
 - d. Can a person not be conscious of their oppression?
4. Introduce the process.

Two students volunteer to be statues. The two volunteers would position themselves in poses as directed by the rest of the group. The group poses the statues in a way that best demonstrates the "look" of power and oppression within the situation they will choose in a moment. Each group shares their sculpture with the class and facilitates any comments or questions regarding their statue.
5. Looking at the world around you, power shows up in many ways. You can actually SEE power in how people physically relate to each other. Choose a situation: classroom, home, work, school hallway, a first date, in a car, or create your own.
6. Talk through the process again. Once you've addressed any questions give the groups about two minutes to create their statues. Once all groups have shared their statues with the class, ask the groups to choose another situation and another two volunteers and then repeat the process.
7. When you've felt there has been a rich experience of power physicalizations, shift into examples from Measure for Measure.
 - a. If your students have not seen the play yet, you have two options:

- i. From your reading, ask students to identify specific moments within the play where power is clearly at play.
- ii. If students have not read the play, have them choose from this list:
 1. Being arrested
 2. Being granted authority
 3. Pleading for leniency
 4. Judging a court case
 5. Refusing to obey directions

Using the same technique from above and have each group create statues of those moments.

- b. If your students have seen the play, ask students to identify moments where the physicalization of power was quite clear and where it was muddy or unclear. Using the statue technique, invite them to restage any moment from the play and explore the power dynamics at work.
8. At the conclusion of the exercise, we strongly suggest that you as an educator end by discussing possible positive and peaceful means of dealing with and changing power dynamics within your students' world.