Tool for Identifying Bias in Sources

Many sources you will want to use for curricular purposes have bias in them because they have been created by individuals within society who are influenced by systems of power. Keep in mind, bias is a normal part of our existence as individuals within a society. While a normal part of our existence, biases cause harm when they perpetuate social norms that present a specific identity as the sole perspective, standard, or norm and exclude historically and widely marginalized people or groups of people. To disrupt the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes, we need to understand how specific identity biases have been constructed, reflect on our lived experience, critically examine these biases within our lives, and seek out counternarratives to society's stereotypes and systems of power.

Understanding that unpacking society's system of power is an ongoing process, we offer this tool as a reflective process to support educators with disrupting patterned ways of selecting curricular resources, so they make curricular decisions that affirm, respond to, and sustain students' cultural and linguistic identities. The process begins with deepening our understanding of the identity marker. This will help us in engaging in our self-reflection about our own social and cultural identities as these influence the biases we have. With this, we have greater awareness for examining bias in our curricular resources.

How To Use This Tool: (*We highly recommend using this tool in communities of practice.)*
1. Create a community of practice to engage in reflective dialogue with this process, if possible. If working alone, be sure to engage in reflective writing.
2. Select a curricular resource (e.g., text, task, instructional materials, assessment) to critically examine.
3. Briefly review the twelve (12) identity markers listed below.
4. Identify 1-3 identity markers that are present in the selected curricular resource.
5. For each identity marker, complete the following process:
    a. Read the prompts in the section and write reflectively to the prompts.
    b. Use this list of external resources to deepen your learning about the identity markers.
    c. Share your reflections within your community of practice. As each person shares, colleagues engage in constructivist listening. Rotate.
6. Finally, use the flow chart on pg. 3 to determine whether or not the resource can be used (1) as is, (2) remixed/edited/modified and used to prevent continued marginalization/exclusion of specific social groups,or (3) select a different curricular resource that will affirm, respond to, and sustain cultural and linguistic identities within a pluralistic society.

Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Sexual Orientation	Disability
→ Have you considered your own beliefs about race/ethnicity? → Does this source present Whiteness as the sole perspective, standard, or norm? → Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about race/ethnicity for complete understanding of the content? → Does this source leave out concepts of race and ethnicity when it could be added for deeper context? → Does this source demonstrate positive racial identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of this identity?	→ Have you considered your own beliefs about gender? → Does this source present gender binary as the sole perspective, standard or norm? → Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about gender for complete understanding of the content? → Does this source leave out concepts of gender when it could be added for deeper context? → Does this source demonstrate positive gender identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of this identity?	→ Have you considered your own beliefs about sexual orientation? → Does this source present heteronormativity as the sole perspective, standard or norm? → Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about sexual identity for complete understanding of the content? → Does this source leave out concepts of sexual identity when it could be added for deeper context? → Does this source demonstrate positive sexual identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of this identity?	→ Have you considered your own beliefs about disability or neurodivergence? → Does this source present able-bodied, neurotypical people as the sole perspective, standard or norm? → Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about ability for complete understanding of the content? → Does this source leave out concepts of disability when it could be added for deeper context? → Is the source accessible for people of differing abilities? → Does this source demonstrate positive neurodiverse and disabled identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of the identity?

Social Class	Religion/Faith/Spirituality	Citizenship	Family/Home Life
➔ Have you considered your own beliefs about social class? ➔ Does this source present middle class or upper class experiences as the sole perspective, standard, or norm? ➔ Does this source depend on stereotypical ideas of affluence for complete understanding of the content? ➔ Does this source assume that people experiencing poverty or involved with the criminal justice system are at fault or guilty? ➔ Does the source demonstrate positive social class identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of the identity?	➔ Have you considered your own beliefs about religion? ➔ Does this source present Christianity as the sole perspective, standard, or norm? ➔ Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about religion/faith/spirituality for complete understanding of the content? ➔ Does this source leave out concepts of religion/faith/spirituality when it could be added for deeper context? ➔ Does the source demonstrate positive religious/faith/spirituality identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of the identity?	➔ Have you considered your own beliefs about citizenship or immigration status? ➔ Does this source present US Citizenship as the sole perspective, standard, or norm? ➔ Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about citizenship and legality for complete understanding of the content? ➔ Does this source leave out concepts of citizenship when it could be added for deeper context? ➔ Does the source include a conversation or example of non-citizens that normalizes other forms of residency? ➔ Does the source demonstrate positive citizenship or immigration identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of the identity?	➔ Have you considered your own beliefs about family/home structures? ➔ Does this source present two-parent, birth families as the sole perspective, standard, or norm? ➔ Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about family/home life for complete understanding of the content? ➔ Does this source leave out concepts of varied home lives when it could be added for deeper context? ➔ Does this source assume gender binary families as the standard or norm? ➔ Does the source demonstrate positive family/home structures identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of the identity?
Language	**Age**	**Body type/shape**	**Geographic Setting/Location**
➔ Have you considered your own beliefs about language? ➔ Does this source present English as the sole perspective, standard, or norm? ➔ Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about non-English speakers for complete understanding of the content? ➔ Does this source leave out concepts of multilingualism when it could be added for deeper context? ➔ Does this source demonstrate positive linguistic identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of the identity?	➔ Have you considered your own beliefs about age/aging? ➔ Does this source present adulthood as the sole perspective, standard, or norm? ➔ Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about a person's age for complete understanding of the content? ➔ Does this source leave out concepts of aging when it could be added for deeper context? ➔ Does the source demonstrate positive age-based identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of the identity?	➔ Have you considered your own beliefs about body type/shape? ➔ Does this source present thinness as the sole perspective, standard, or norm? ➔ Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about weight or physical shape for complete understanding of the content? ➔ Does this source leave out concepts of body image when it could be added for deeper context? ➔ Does this source demonstrate positive body identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of the identity?	➔ Have you considered your own beliefs about setting/location discrimination? ➔ Does this source present certain areas of the world (geographic locations) as the sole perspective, standard, or norm? ➔ Does this source depend on a harmful stereotype about specific regions or locations for complete understanding of the content? ➔ Does this source leave out concepts of diverse locations (ex: rural, south, colonized lands) when it could be added for deeper context? ➔ Does this source demonstrate positive regional/geographic identities for historically marginalized people by highlighting the genius and joy of the identity?

As you consider your above self-reflection and critical analysis, consider three important questions:
1) Can this resource be presented to students in a way that raises criticality of existing bias without harming students?
2) Is my class capable of participating in critical analysis independently or with scaffolding?
3) Will using this resource truly advance academic achievement for my students?

YES	NOT SURE		NO

YES

Does this resource do no harm?

Can students identify the bias with minimal support?

Present to students with critical lens.
- I notice…
- I wonder…
- Strong Essential Question

NOT SURE

Does this resource have bias that is worth addressing and can be easily remixed?

- Model remix process for students
- Curate a "before & after" collection
- Find complementary resources

Does this resource have bias that is worth addressing, but it is not easily remixed?

- Use only excerpts and be clear with students about why.
- Present with critical lens and scaffolds..

NO

Is there too much harmful bias to address?

Reject the resource.
Find another.

TEACHER MOVES