

In A School Where Black Lives Matter, We Talk About Black Lives Matter

Upper Elementary/Secondary Video Lesson

Video

[Black Lives Matter Co-Founder: Our Goal is to Make All Lives Matter](#)

Video Summary for Students

This short video features Black Lives Matter co-founder, Alicia Garza. She addresses the response “All Lives Matter” to “Black Lives Matter.” She also talks about some misconceptions of the Black Lives Matter movement and how the movement has evolved. As you watch the video, think about what it looks like when Black Lives Matter at school.

Reflection Questions for the Teacher

- How familiar are you with the Black Lives Matter movement? What might you need to learn more about before discussing it with your students?
- What is your response when you hear “All Lives Matter” in response to “Black Lives Matter”?
- How do you show that Black Lives Matter in your classroom? How does your school show that Black Lives Matter? How could your school do better?

Teacher Notes

The Black Lives Matter At School movement began with one school in Seattle, WA in 2016 as a way for educators to advance the goals of the Black Lives Matter Movement in schools. It inspired educators across the country, and by 2018, the National Black Lives Matter Week of Action in Schools was born. The demands are to:

1. End “zero tolerance” discipline, and implement restorative justice
2. Hire more Black teachers
3. Mandate Black history and ethnic studies in K-12 curriculum
4. Fund counselors, not cops

This lesson is meant to encourage more classroom discussions about Black Lives Matter. If you have not talked about the movement with your students before, you may want to start with some more information about the movement in order to provide more context (see the Resources section below).

Classroom discussions about Black Lives Matter are a start, but we encourage you to continuously work to affirm all Black identities and empower all of your students of color and indigenous students. Educators can do some of this through curriculum and practice in the classroom, but also by becoming more involved in making structural changes in their school.

Resources

For more information, ideas, and inspiration, check out the following resources:

- [Black Lives Matter](#) website
- [Black Lives Matter At School Week of Action](#) website
- Book: [Teaching for Black Lives \(Rethinking Schools, 2018\)](#)
- [Black Lives Matter At School Resources](#) from Edjustice
- [January Discussion Guide: “How can we ensure our schools value black lives?”](#) from BARWE (Building Anti-Racist White Educators)

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning and Anti-Bias Education

SEL

Self-Awareness

Self-Management

Social Awareness

Relationship Skills

Responsible Decision-Making

ABE

Empathy and Belonging

Healthy Complex Identities

Respect Across Differences

Understanding Bias, Prejudice, and Stereotypes

Taking Action

This lesson helps students build social awareness of the importance of the Black Lives Matter movement and what it means for schools to show Black Lives Matter. This creates empathy through a deeper understanding of and appreciation of differences in identity and lived experiences. For Black students and staff, they can see themselves positively reflected, which helps to foster healthy complex identities. Discussions with students around bias, prejudice, and stereotypes in a present context are essential, and they shouldn't be limited to units on slavery or the Civil Rights Movement. AMAZEworks encourages students and teachers to go beyond this one discussion and take meaningful action together.

Discussion Questions

- What does Alicia Garza mean when she talks about disparities?
- What are some of the ways the dominant system (society) has created disparities for Black individuals and communities?
- What are some of the misconceptions about the Black Lives Matter movement?
- How has the Black Lives Matter movement evolved since 2013?
- At the beginning of the video, Alicia Garza talks about how she hopes people will “lean in to try to hear what’s going on.” What does it look, sound, feel like when people lean in to hear you? How can you lean in to hear others?
- What does it mean when people respond to “Black Lives Matter” with “All Lives Matter?”
- What are ways people can organize to advocate for change?
- At the end of the video, Alicia Garza says, “We can build a world where all lives matter together if we acknowledge the ways today in which all lives don’t matter.” What does she mean by this?

Activity

Join the Black Lives Matter at School Creative Challenge by getting your school community to respond to the prompt, “Schools Show Black Lives Matter When...” using words and artwork.

Visit <https://blacklivesmatteratschool.com/student-creativity-challenge/> to get involved. Consider posting a gallery on social media, using #BlackLivesMatterAtSchool and tagging @BLMATSchool.

Credit

Adapted from [“Intergenerational Discussion for Parents, Students, Educators, and Community”](#) from Black Lives Matter in #PHLed, School District of Philadelphia.