

Why Differences Matter

Central Questions

- How does our identity shape the way we see ourselves and others?
- To what extent does our identity influence the choices we make?

Background Information

The word *prejudice* comes from the word *pre-judge*. We pre-judge when we have an opinion about a person solely because of a group to which that individual belongs. A prejudice has the following characteristics:

- It is based on real or imagined differences between groups.
- It attaches value to those differences in ways that falsely assume that one's own group is superior to others.
- It is generalized to include all members of a target group.

Not all prejudices result in discrimination. Discrimination occurs when prejudices are translated into action.

Activity: Analyzing an Experiment

- Who in the film determined which differences mattered?
- Who do you think decides in real life?
- What is the lesson Janet Eliot wanted her students to learn?
- What lesson did you learn from the film?

What other questions do you have about this film?

Writing Suggestions

- What would you like Jane Eliot's students to know about the way you and your friends think about differences? Who decides which differences matter today?

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