How to Talk About Race
Denise LaForce and Amrita Patel

- The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library’s mission is to improve lives and build a stronger community, and our vision is to be the essential connector of a thriving community of readers, leaders and learners.

**Denise LaForce**  Independence Regional Library
704-416-4800  dlaforce@cmlibrary.org

**Amrita Patel**  Outreach Services
704-416-4621  apatel@cmlibrary.org
The Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services drives activities supporting equity and inclusion as fundamental values of the association.

**Jody Gray** - Director, Office of Diversity and Inclusion

University of Minnesota College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences

**Kristin Lahurd** - Interim Director for Office of Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services

1.800.545.2433 ext 3275 - klahurd@ala.org
Goals for Today

1. Explore race & racism
2. Understand microaggressions
3. Understand the power of literature & storytelling to explore themes relating to race
4. Prepare participants for conversations/book discussions about topics relating to race
Intersectionality

The belief that we must consider all the intersections of identity, privilege and oppression that people face.
Identity Wheel
Race is not biological. It is a social construct.

Resource to explore:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disproportionality in Systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare/Mental Health/Substance Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lived Experiences

“Drawing on lived, first-person experience, phenomenology is the attempt to analyze and understand the very structures of human experience and consciousness.” - Michael Stevenson, Goethe-Institute New York
FOR PEOPLE WHO STILL DON'T THINK
Framing refers to the ways that we use elements of worldview to give meaning to an issue or social problem.

- Why is it relevant to frame things? How does this help move a conversation forward?
Using Ground Rules

- **Post**
  - Post the ground rules somewhere visible.

- **Agree**
  - Obtain agreement from the group - add to the rules as needed.

- **Challenge, Enforce and Revisit**
  - Challenge, enforce and revisit ground rules during discussions/conversations.
“Thank you for sharing. Would anyone else like to share or comment?”

“Let’s unpack that.”

“What I’m hearing is ______________. Is that correct?”

“In the interest of time we are going to move on.”

• ...It’s okay to sit in the silence and give people space.
Scenarios

While discussing *The Hate U Give*, the conversation turns to the character Khalil and how he is portrayed by the media as “dangerous”. Someone in the group brings up the fact that Khalil did have a connection with “gangstas”.

- ...how do you manage the discussion?
Program Opportunities

- Community Read
- Community Conversations
- Teen Summit
- Guest Speakers and Presenters
- Book Discussions
- Displays
- Film Series
Helpful Reminders

- Try to link discussion points to the systems of racism and oppression
- Acknowledge your privilege
- Don’t expect a person of color to be your personal race resource
- Respect confidentiality
- Facilitate with another person
- Own up to mistakes and do not focus on “fixing” everything
Questions? Concerns?

Denise LaForce
dlaforce@cmlibrary.org
Independence Library

Amrita Patel
apatel@cmlibrary.org
Outreach Services