

COMMON GROUND

MATERIALS |

Common Ground statements

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OBJECTIVES | The objectives of this activity are to help participants build community by identifying how much they have in common and to help them practice engaging in dialogue with one another.

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS |

Ask participants to stand or sit in a circle. Read the list of Common Ground statements (or create your own). If the statement is true for participants ask them to step into the center of the circle (alternatively you could ask participants to raise their hands). Invite everyone to take a moment to notice who is standing in the circle after each prompt before returning to the full group.

Claim common ground if...

- you've worn mismatching socks in the past week.
- you don't have a favorite color or have changed it multiple times.
- you prefer the winter over the summer.
- you have ever felt pressured to play with certain toys or games.
- you have ever been teased.
- you have ever felt ignored or left out.
- you have had friend who said a joke that offended you and you couldn't tell them how you felt.
- you have ever felt discriminated against or treated unfairly by a school administrator or teacher.
- you have ever been made fun of because of something about who you are like your race, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, age, how much money your family has, etc.
- you have ever felt pressure to pretend you are someone you aren't or lie about who you are or what you believe.
- you have ever felt unsafe.
- you have ever posted something on social media that you regretted.
- you have ever made fun of someone because of who they are.
- you have ever been misunderstood by someone from a different background.
- you have ever been dismissed or ignored because of your age.
- you wish you did better in school academically.
- you ever became friends with someone you did not like at first.
- you have ever changed your thinking after listening to another person share their perspective.
- you are excited about this school year.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS |

- How did it feel to do this activity?
- Was there anything surprising about what you had in common?
- Does this cause you to see your classmates any differently?
- How can recognizing our commonalities help us navigate conflict?



SUPPORTING MEDIA |

<https://www.michiganlearning.org/recognizing-commonalities/>

NOTES |

This activity can be low, medium, or high vulnerability depending on the types of prompts you choose.