

Sample Questions for a Discussion About “ASSIMILATION”

1. How would you define assimilation?
2. Share some examples of when you have felt positive and/or negative about your personal experiences with assimilation.
3. Talk about a part of your identity that you feel strongly about not changing. Why?
4. Is there an “American identity or culture” that can be defined? If so, how would you define it? Who might be missing from this definition?
5. What are the benefits and drawbacks of assimilation - on the target group and mainstream group?
6. What are some examples from history/present time of ‘forced’ assimilation?
7. Brainstorm some current attitudes, programs, or policies that ‘force’ assimilation in our schools (organizations, etc.)
8. Talk about some examples of what acculturation (balancing learning about mainstream culture and maintaining a piece of personal identity) might look like?
9. What is ONE thing you can do to help your students, families (clients) acculturate?

Want an article or two to supplement your discussion? Check out:

- The New York Times article, *Education and Assimilation* (<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/15/us/15immig.html>)
- NPR article, *Keeping the Native Nipmuc Language Alive* (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=103028551>)

These articles are focused on the role of language in assimilation.

Need support facilitating discussion around equity and cultural competency? Contact ReachOut for more information about our services and resources: info@reachoutfornewfutures.org.