

## Prompts for Sparking Discussions Around Anti-Black Racism

### **Prompt 1: Place yourself in history**

**What was happening at the time of your birth in the history of the subject of this course? What were major political concerns?**

**Details:** To answer these prompts, you will need to do some research to learn; what was going on socially at this time? What recent discoveries had been made in our field? Dig a little deeper...talk to some family members about how they felt about the key events, social movements, and discoveries you uncover. How have attitudes changed over time?

**Why this prompt?** This activity helps students see themselves as part of history, and reflect on the recency of key historical events that may feel like the distant past.

**Prompt 2: Myth-busting with data** (to prepare, share a 'shocking' statistic that involves anti-Black racism which is relevant to your course)

**What are your immediate preconceptions of this statistic? What biases do you have? Using the statistic as a starting point, perform an analysis using academic data sources to determine the full narrative behind the information.**

**Details:** What biases are perpetuated through this statistic without further research into the whole picture? What does the data actually tell us? What other factors exist that may have led to this perception? Were there any special interest groups that stood to benefit from furthering this specific narrative? Use reliable, academic sources for sourcing data to build your analysis.

**Why this prompt?** Nearly every field will have stereotypes, biases, and statistics that do not tell a whole story. This prompt is a tool for challenging preconceptions with data. It is also a useful exercise for students to investigate raw data using reliable sources to form independent conclusions which is particularly helpful in our current climate of information overload and fake news.

**Prompt 3: "How could we...?" employ a generative hypothetical**

**Re-frame a question that would ask for the morality or validity of an idea, and practice converting the question into a constructive hypothetical starting with, "how could we..."**

**Details:** For this prompt, select a common "ethical" question involving race, and reframe as a "tactical" hypothetical questions instead. For example, rather than "Should affirmative action exist", ask students, "How could higher education institutions improve the long-term and short-term diversity of their student body? Think creatively!"

**Why this prompt:** A morality-based opinion-focused discussion tends to lead to both parties digging in their heels. By reframing discussion questions to focus on a "how could we..." question, it forces

students into problem-solving, rather than a debate. This prompt is to help students practice the art of re-framing questions to focus on imagining an alternative future, rather than debating current reality.

Adapted from Chen, S., Houston, A., & Cooper, A. (n.d.). *The anti-racist discussion pedagogy: An introductory guide to building an anti-racist pedagogy in any discipline through instructor reflection, clear communication guidelines, and inquiry-based discussion*. Packback.

[Anti\\_Racist\\_Discussion\\_Pedagogy\\_1.pdf \(unc.edu\)](#)