

Cross the Line Directions & Statement list

Explain that you will conduct a powerful activity called *Cross the Line*. This activity will allow students to both acknowledge and address ways they are similar and unique from each other. The activity might make people feel a bit uncomfortable or awkward, so there will be special ground rules to help students feel more at ease.

These are the instructions for your students/classmates from you.

Ask everyone to gather on one side of the room/line and face towards its center.

Instructions (you read these to your students/classmates)

I will call out specific categories/labels/descriptions, and ask that all of those to whom this applies, walk to the other side of the room/line. For example, I might request that anyone with glasses please cross the room. If this describes you and you feel comfortable acknowledging it, you would walk to this side of the room/line. Once there, turn and face the crowd you just left. Get in touch with your feelings and think about those people on both sides then return to the side you started from. After a few seconds, I will continue with a new question. **Remember, there is no pressure to cross the room/line if you don't feel comfortable doing so.** You will need to make that decision. At the conclusion of the activity, we will discuss what we felt and what we learned.

Explain that for the *Cross the Line* activity, the following ground rules will be added to the usual set of ground rules you use in your class. They are:

Listening - This is a silent activity to allow everyone to experience the activity fully. This means no talking, snickering or giggling throughout.

Respect - Each student deserves to be treated with dignity and respect at all times, and particularly during this activity.

No Pressure - No one should feel under pressure to reveal anything about themselves that they don't want to.

Cross the line if:

****teachers/OLWEUS Ambassadors: you may want to print this page or you could read it from your computer****

- you play a sport
- you have traveled to a country that speaks a language other than English
- you have been picked on in school (even back in elementary school)
- you are a leader
- you have ever done the Chicken Dance
- you have grandparents that were born outside of the United States
- you have a step parent
- you have broken someone's heart
- you have caught yourself judging someone before you even met them
- you have been the target of a racist comment
- you like Fruity Pebbles
- you've ever been picked last in games or sports or left out of an activity all together.
- you've ever been called a mean name or put down just because you're a girl.
- you've ever been judged or teased because of the color of your skin.
- you've ever been teased because of your religious background.
- you've ever been teased about your accent or your voice.
- you've ever had dinner at the Olive Garden
- you or anyone in your family or a friend has a disability that you cannot see.
- you're a boy and you've ever been told you shouldn't cry, show your emotions or be afraid.
- you've ever felt alone, unwelcome or afraid.
- you have intentionally hurt someone's feelings.
- you've ever felt pressure from your friends or an adult to do something you didn't want to do and felt sorry for it afterwards.
- you've ever stood by and watched while someone was hurt and said or did nothing because you were too afraid.
- people routinely mispronounce your name.
- you have ever been the only person of your race/ethnicity in a classroom.
- like mint chocolate chip ice cream.
- your biological parents have divorced, separated or never married
- you were raised by a single parent
- you know someone that has a physical or developmental disability
- you have personally experienced or witnessed a homophobic action or statement
- you feel that homophobia is an issue in this school or community
- you feel there is a double standard or different expectations for guys versus girls
- you would actively support the rights of people who are different from you

Processing Questions (These are suggested discussion questions for after the activity. It is not necessary to get through all of them.)

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- What kind of feelings did you have as you participated?
- How did you feel when there were very few of you on one side of the room?
- What does this activity have to do with leadership?
- Did you find yourself making judgments of others?
- How did the movement of others influence you?
- What did you learn through this activity that can make our environment more welcoming? What did you learn through this activity that will make you a better person or leader? Through this activity, intentionally or not, did you share your values?
- Through this activity, intentionally or not, do you think that you learned about the values of others?