



Borders, Boundaries, Barriers, and Bridges: An Alliteration for Equity and Sociopolitical Consciousness

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Participants engage with an alliterative framework to support their development of sociopolitical consciousness across various contexts. Using the *borders, boundaries, barriers, and bridges* (4B) framework, participants capture images that reflect their experience with and understanding of these concepts towards deepening their understanding of how they relate to sociopolitical contexts in education.

NAME Learn Learner Learning Outcome(s)

- Developing Positive Academic Identities
- Developing Social Justice Consciousness

Level

ALL – Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced, or Expert.

Goals

- To conduct a learning environment (e.g., classroom, school, or community) analysis using the 4B (borders, boundaries, barriers, and bridges) framework
- To engage in discussion regarding the politics of language, policy, and practice
- To apply and practice the skills of inquiry, critique, and dialog (not debate) in the process of defining and noting examples of BBBB within a sociopolitical context
- To develop or deepen sociopolitical consciousness

Assessment or deliverables

- Each group produces a statement or visual representation of one or more of their shared understandings of a border, boundary, barrier, or bridge.
- Group members are able to connect their thinking to aspects of power, sociopolitical contexts and consciousness.
- Individuals demonstrate shifting from a neutral stance to heightened critical consciousness by asking more questions and challenging presumptions - their own and others.

- As a result of engaging in dialog, individuals broaden their perspectives on how a border, boundary, barrier, or bridge might be interpreted within particular contexts towards a deeper understanding of equity.

Materials

- **Narrated Power Point:** Borders, Boundaries, Barriers, & Bridges: An Alliteration for Equity – Four Ways to Critically Examine Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (8 slides)
- **Handout** – Definition of terms borders, boundaries, barriers, & bridges
- **Article** - Stenhouse, V L, & Bentley, C. C. (2018). Picturing borders, boundaries, barriers and bridges and sowing seeds of sociopolitical consciousness through alliteration and analogy. *Action in Teacher Education*, 40(4), 408—427. DOI: 10.1080/01626620.2018.1503980

Process: The process moves recursively across four phases:

- Phase I: Defining, identifying, and dialoging about the definitions of the 4Bs -borders, boundaries, barriers, and bridges;
- Phase II: Overlaying of power through dialog as notions of power became evident as interpretation, perspectives, and examples of 4B are shared;
- Phase III: Overlaying of theories allow for personal and sociopolitical frameworks for noticing, naming, and addressing why and how of 4B are applicable; and
- Phase IV: Revisiting the established definitions of 4B addressing the questions: do the definitions of 4B as defined stay consistent or change? Why or why not?

Phase I

Show narrated PPT (10 minutes)/Introduce the 4B framework

Review definitions handout of Borders, Boundaries, Barriers, and Bridges (4Bs) (2mins):

Border: An imposed political or physical demarcation, designed intentionally (or not) to separate, exclude, enclose, insulate, isolate, and/or displace.

Boundary: A boundary is similar to a border but may be nature-made or may be human-made. Boundaries can be affective and internalized.

Barrier: A barrier is an animate or inanimate obstacle. Barriers are positioned (politically, socially, culturally, economically, structurally) to be surmounted towards achieving some anticipated goal and/or outcome.

Bridge: Bridges traverse borders, boundaries, and barriers. Bridges facilitate or grant access to a place, person, situation, or opportunity.

Group participants in teams of 2-5 (1min)

Group Task (15mins to 90mins):

Expectation: In a given amount of set time, from 15 to 90 mins, groups work together (with little input from the facilitator) staying in one place or moving about their immediate environment/

community thinking, identifying, observing, and discussing what they perceive as a *border*, *boundary*, *barrier*, or *bridge*, then capture their understanding with pictures/photographs with captions or descriptive narrative.

First, each member of the group should consider the 4B framework and name examples from their own personal, educational, or work/professional experience. In the process they may argue for or against how author of 4B framework has defined the framework.

Second, after some time being in group discussion, participants are given the option to examine their environment and take pictures (or capture in writing what they notice) of what they feel is representative of what they define as a border, boundary, barrier, or bridge.

Phases II - IV

Whole group share and debrief (allow for 5-10 minutes per group to report back).

This portion of the activity should be predominantly participants talking and sharing about their images, process, group dynamic, and anything learned. Focus on what and why prompts. Encourage participants to explain and make connections. Ask questions and allot time for responses.

Conceptual analysis: Prompt questions include, why did your group take this picture? What are the circumstances that led to an outcome captured in a picture? Were there any disagreements, “new” or affirmed understanding in the group discussion of the terms? If and how did the provided 4B framework shape your thinking? What are people noticing across groups and what is being shared?

Conceptual analysis application: What do you know that helps understand the broader context of this picture? (Here is where you’d seek to notice any concepts, theories, or practices being taught/learned; any shifts in understanding the relevance of power and the non-neutrality of what a border, boundary, barrier, or bridge might mean OR understanding the various sociopolitical contexts that shape the 4Bs).

During the process of analysis and application, listen for and notice, if and how participants connect their thinking and understanding to aspects of power, sociopolitical contexts and consciousness; and demonstrate shifting from a neutral stance to heightened or deeper or expanded critical consciousness by asking more questions and challenging presumptions - their own and others.

Wrap Up: (15 minutes)

Action: All respond to and document - With what you have learned, will you do next?

In sharing these next steps and intentions, allow individuals to speak to their perspectives on how a border, boundary, barrier, or bridge might be interpreted within particular contexts towards a deeper understanding of equity as they relate to power and their sociopolitical awareness. Given what you hear as a facilitator, will support what next steps you and/or the group needs to take to continue to grow in this work.