

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

BREAK

THE BOX

Week

HELLO BREAK THE BOX WEEK ORGANIZER!

Thank you for doing your part to challenge gender stereotypes in Texas. This Activity Guide will explain what Break the Box Week is all about. It will be a useful tool in planning and organizing a successful week and will guide you in collecting meaningful data that measures the impact of your activities.

We feel it is important for you to determine how you will make the week happen. Each school and each organizer will do it a little differently and that is just fine. We have provided a scaffolding to build upon. It is up to you to make it awesome!

If you have questions about planning your Break the Box Week, feel free to contact Ted Rutherford at trutherford@taasa.org or call 512-474-7190 x34.



photo taken from <http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/sites/District4/Resources/PublishingImages/DiverseYouth.jpg>

WHAT'S WRONG WITH "BOXES"?

Being in a "box" is to be trapped in by stereotypes and expectations set on us by societal norms around gender. Common examples are that "girls can't be good at sports" or "men can't be sensitive". We hear these stereotypes about men and women virtually every day, sometimes in the media, sometimes by the people around us. They limit our freedom and stifle our potential.

When defining ourselves as men or as women is more important than defining ourselves as people, our whole community loses. When looking at gender stereotypes, certain themes begin to emerge – in particular, the idea that men are expected to be strong, dominating, and physical while women are expected to be weaker, submissive, and often seen as objects to fulfill the needs of men. These generalizations put us all in boxes and create inequality between men and women, highlighting the idea that men need to be in control and women are "less than" men. When this imbalance of power is tolerated in society, inequity emerges. The absence of fairness and justice, when it comes to gender, creates conditions where sexual violence – including gender-based bullying, harassment, and rape – can thrive. We call this a "rape culture".

WHAT IS RAPE CULTURE?

IT IS A COMPLEX SET OF BELIEFS THAT ENCOURAGES MALE SEXUAL AGGRESSION AND SUPPORTS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. IT IS A SOCIETY WHERE VIOLENCE IS SEEN AS SEXY AND SEXUALITY AS VIOLENT. IT IS AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE SEXUAL VIOLENCE, RANGING FROM SEXUAL REMARKS TO SEXUAL TOUCHING TO RAPE ITSELF, IS MORE LIKELY TO OCCUR. ¹

In Texas, 2 in 5 women and 1 in 5 men are sexually assaulted at some point in their lives. That translates to 6.3 million Texans. Additionally, 65% of victims report multiple victimizations. While sexual violence takes many forms, it is important to remember that a common thread is the abuse of power of the perpetrator over the victim.²

It is clear that we need to change the culture so that fewer acts of sexual violence are committed. This starts with breaking down the boxes of gender inequity that marginalize women while encouraging dominance and aggression in men. These polar opposites in gender expectations lead to our imbalance as a society and create an environment that tolerates and even subtly propagates sexual violence against our friends, partners, co-workers, neighbors, parents, children, and more than 33% of all Texans.

WHAT IS BREAK THE BOX?

Break the Box is a public awareness initiative, launched in March of 2013, which is all about identifying and breaking free from gender stereotypes that can lead to sexual violence. The initiative consists of a collection of materials, including a short video, resource guide, and posters, that is designed to empower users with tools and resources needed to “break the box” of gender stereotypes and prevent sexual violence.

In the beginning, we also set goals of obtaining 10,000 pledges to challenge gender stereotypes through Causes and getting 30,000 YouTube views for the video. To date, we have surpassed 15,000 pledges and our video has been viewed an astounding 6 million times and counting.

The success of Break the Box tells us that Texans recognize the harm of gender stereotypes and are primed and ready to challenge them. This inspired us to develop and build additional components of the initiative. Our first addition was to create a new version of the video. The original version, while being successful at challenging gender stereotypes, unintentionally reinforced some stereotypes around race and gender expression. Next, we wanted to create an opportunity for Texans to make good on their pledges to challenge gender stereotypes on a large scale, so we created Break the Box Week.



photo taken from http://efdreams.com/data_images/dreams/box/box-02.jpg

WHAT IS BREAK THE BOX WEEK?

Break the Box Week takes place the third week of November. It is an opportunity for groups of middle and high school-aged youth across Texas to challenge gender stereotypes and break the boxes that limit us all. Ultimately, Break the Box Week will look a little different from school to school and community to community. That is okay. In fact, that is exactly how it should be as the most important component of Break the Box Week is the buy-in and direction of the participants. That is to say that the participants should ultimately shape and drive what the week looks like in their community. In this toolkit we will provide some sample actions designed to help achieve the objectives of Break the Box Week, but participants are not limited to our examples. We simply ask that you choose actions that meet the following objectives:

The objectives of Break the Box Week are as follows:

Participants will...

1. Identify some ways in which gender stereotypes are formed and solidified.
2. Understand how gender stereotypes limit people.
3. Take some collective action to challenge gender stereotypes in their community.

Each sample activity included in this guide is designed to meet one or more of the week's objectives and is labeled as such. If you decide to use activities not included in this toolkit, please be sure to choose ones that clearly meet the objectives.

Given the limited amount of time participants will have to dig into gender stereotypes, it is important to focus on only these objectives. It is not necessary to try and make the connections between gender stereotypes and sexual violence specifically. However, Break the Box week certainly helps lay the foundation for those discussions to happen moving forward.

FOR THOSE OF YOU THAT RECEIVE FEDERAL RAPE PREVENTION EDUCATION (RPE) FUNDS, BREAK THE BOX WEEK CAN BE PART OF THE WORK YOU DO IN PHASE 2 OF THE STATE PREVENTION PLAN. SPECIFICALLY, IT FITS NICELY WITH THE PHASE 2 - YOUTH DEVELOPMENT TRACK. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON INCLUDING BREAK THE BOX WEEK AS A PART OF YOUR PHASE 2 WORK, PLEASE CONTACT THE TAASA PREVENTION TEAM AT PREVENTION@TAASA.ORG.

FIRST STEPS

Partnering with students is essential to Break the Box Week having a significant impact in the school. Students are the experts when it comes to engaging their peers. They will know best what will and what won't work. In addition, it is their energy and enthusiasm that will carry over to their peers when it comes to participation during the week. If you are already working with a group of students in the school, Break the Box Week would be an excellent add-on to that work. Some other good options for youth partners might be Student Council, Key Clubs, PALs classes, Communities in Schools Groups, etc.

You may also find it necessary to have an adult point of contact on campus – perhaps a counselor, group sponsor, administrator, or parent volunteers. This person can help make things happen like getting the Break the Box Week activities added to the school website, calendar, or morning announcements. They will also have more regular contact with the student group you are partnering with. This will be handy during the event planning stages.

You will want to make sure you have obtained permission from the school to do each of the activities during the week. Make sure you have clearance and approval from the school administration before getting into the planning details. It is recommended that you work with the student group to put together a proposal for the administration to review. Allow the students to make the proposal to the principal (or whomever is making the decision) as this will give them a sense of ownership of the week and it will let the decision maker know that the students are serious about making the week happen.

Sample Activities

Monday

- Break the Box Video and Discussion - Objectives 1 & 2

Tuesday

- "A Critical Lens" Group Mural/s creation – Objective 1

Wednesday

- "A Critical Lens" Group Mural analysis – Objective 1

Thursday

- "Don't Box Me In" photo booth – Objective 3

Friday

- Unity Day – Objective 3

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

Activity 1: Break the Box Video and Discussion

MATERIALS:

Break the Box video from YouTube
Discussion Questions

The Break the Box campaign features a short video that shows different characters dealing with gender stereotypes in their own lives. These victims of gender stereotyping are shown with boxes surrounding their heads that contain the put downs and labels they have put on them by “boxers” over time. “Boxers” are those who actively, aggressively, or sometimes unknowingly impose rigid gender stereotypes on others. This often takes the form of teasing (“you play like a girl”) or limit setting (“Football is a man’s game”).

The video is meant to be the first step in starting a dialogue. For this activity, define gender stereotypes to the participants using this definition:

“A gender stereotype is a simplistic generalization about gender attributes, differences, and roles of individuals and/or groups.”³ Stereotypes of what it means to be a man or woman – for instance, boys are expected to be strong and assertive and girls are expected to be beautiful and accommodating – can diminish our worth and potential, and create an imbalance of power that perpetuates bullying, harassment, and violence (including sexual violence).

Then show the Break the Box video (school-wide if possible) found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWvXal1L5U4&feature=youtu.be> and follow it with a discussion using these questions:

1. Have you witnessed people enforcing these gender boxes? How would you or how might you intervene in these situations? What if the “Boxer” is a friend or family member?
2. Have you been in situations where you felt you were being pushed into the box of gender expectations? How did you react?
3. Have you ever felt discriminated against OR that you benefitted unfairly because of your gender or appearance? How could that experience relate back to the gender box?
4. Where do these gender stereotypes come from? When do we first receive these messages?
5. How much of your gender identity is defined by our environment/society? Discuss the times when you felt pressure to act differently so that your gender identity isn’t questioned or threatened.

ACCORDING TO GENDERDIVERSITY.ORG, GENDER IDENTITY REFERS TO A PERSON'S INNATE, DEEPLY FELT SENSE OF BEING MALE OR FEMALE (SOMETIMES EVEN BOTH OR NEITHER). WHILE IT IS MOST COMMON FOR A PERSON'S GENDER IDENTITY TO ALIGN WITH THEIR BIOLOGICAL SEX, THIS IS NOT ALWAYS THE CASE. A PERSON'S GENDER IDENTITY CAN BE DIFFERENT FROM THEIR BIOLOGICAL SEX.⁴

Activity 2: "A Critical Lens" Media Collage – Part 1

MATERIALS:

Magazines geared toward women/girls and ones geared toward men/boys (as many as you can get)

Scissors

Butcher paper (any color) or brown paper

Clear tape

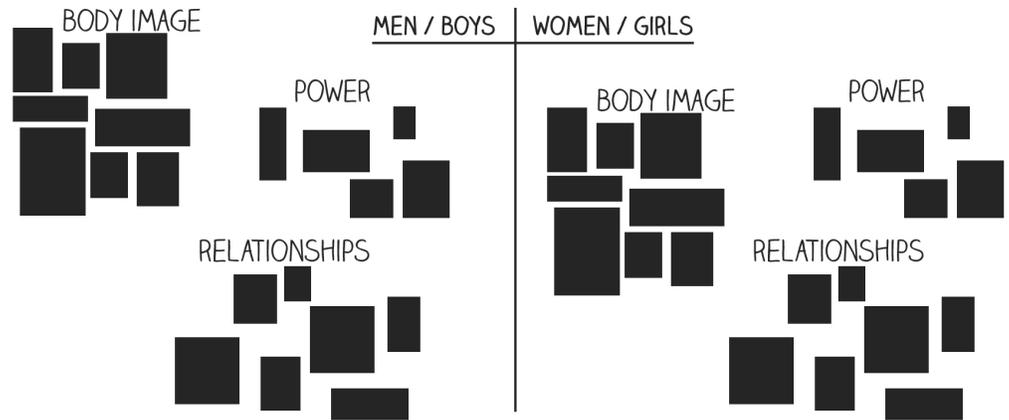
***Magazines that might work well for this activity are Men's Health, Women's Health, Teen, Cosmopolitan, GQ, Sports Illustrated, Seventeen, PC Gamer, Teen Vogue, etc. It is important for the participants to determine which magazines would be most relevant to the participants. Ask them to gather magazines from their friends and family ahead of time so there will be plenty to choose from.

"A Critical Lens" is a two part photo project where, in Part 1, participants cut out messages (images and/or text) from magazines that inform or support existing gender stereotypes (refer to the example provided) and ones that go against existing gender stereotypes. Then participants will review the selected messages for each gender and sort them into groups according to broad themes within gender stereotypes. Those categories might be things like body image, power, sex/relationships, money, etc. As the images are being sorted and attached to the butcher paper, participants will track the types of messages they are finding using the Media Analysis sheet provided in the appendix. The results from the analysis will be used in Part 2 of this activity.



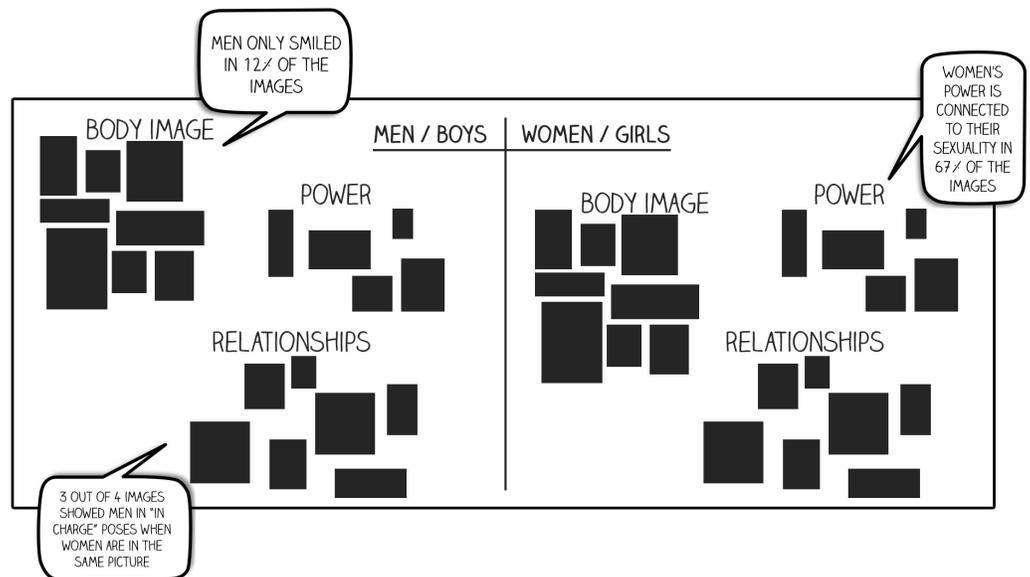
photo taken from <http://shredzcorp.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/alphatank.jpg>

After the messages have been sorted, analyzed, and attached to the butcher paper, display the butcher paper collage in a public space within the school. Options include the cafeteria, the school entry, a main hallway, etc. Choose a place that gets a lot of foot traffic so the collage is easily seen by the general student population in the school. The collage might look something like this:



Activity 3: "A Critical Lens" Media Collage – Part 2

Part 2 of "A Critical Lens" Media Collage is sharing their data analysis in a public way. Participants will use the media analysis sheets they completed to develop a statistical breakdown of the gendered messages taken from the magazines and make signs to attach to the media collages that present their findings. The end result will be a big, participant-created infographic that will be displayed publicly in the school. The infographic might look like this:



Ideally participants would be able to create the statistics signs the day before and hang them up after school so that other students will see them for the entire day the next day.

*Another option for this is to add blank "THOUGHTS" signs and invite students to write their thoughts on sticky notes about the data and stick them on the blank signs. This would add another layer of richness and depth to the activity and might spark a larger conversation within the school. With this option, there is some potential for students to post problematic and/or inappropriate statements on the signs, i.e.: statements that aim discriminatory or hurtful language towards individuals or groups of people or statements that demean any group of people. If you choose this option, be sure you have a plan to monitor the signs.

Activity 4: "Don't Box Me In" Photo Booth

MATERIALS:

Photo "booth"

Camera

"Don't Box Me In" is an opportunity for students to actively push back against gender stereotypes with the loud and clear message that gender boxes limit all of us. We have all been socialized to believe that people are supposed to look or act a certain way according to their perceived gender. Ultimately, the pressure that is created by this socialization can be restrictive and limiting because it doesn't feel safe to look or act in ways that are "outside the box". To participate in Don't Box Me In, students simply need create a sign that contains a message that challenges gender stereotypes and have their picture taken holding their sign in the "Don't Box Me In" photo booth (created by organizers – instructions below) located in the cafeteria during the lunch periods. A sample sign might read something like this:

"No gender boxes...no gender limits. #breakthebox"

The photos can then be printed at a local photo lab or on a computer printer and posted on the wall of the photo booth the next day for everyone to see.

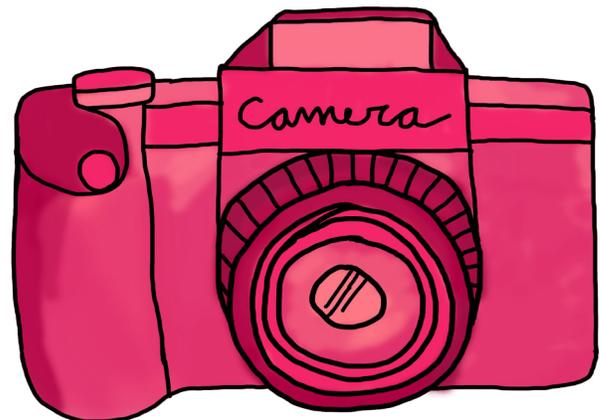
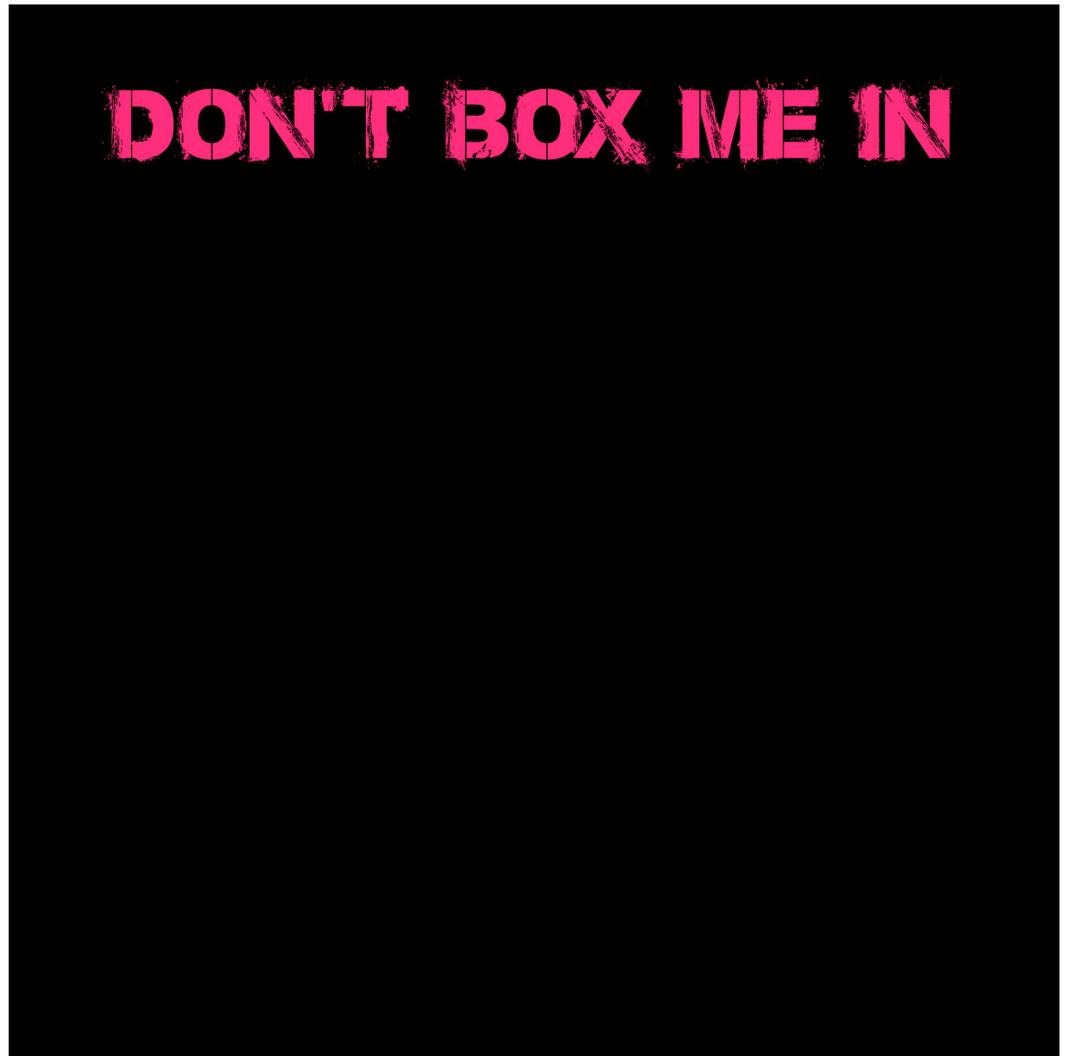


Photo Booth Instructions:

Creating your own "Don't Box Me In photo booth" can be as simple or complex as you want it to be. For a really simple one, first select an area where you can set up your booth, camera, and counting table. You will need to have a 6' wide by 6' tall space along a wall in the cafeteria for the booth itself. Sometimes there are theater stages built into the cafeteria. That can also be a good space to use. Next, cover the wall space with colored butcher paper or fabric. Dark colored backdrop is best, but any solid color will work. Then paint the words "DON'T BOX ME IN" near the top. You could also cut the letters out of paper or cardboard if you don't have paint. Here is an example:



If you want something more complex, go for it! Maybe you can build one out of cardboard boxes or PVC tubing and fabric. Feel free to use your imagination and come up with something awesome. Just be sure to make it big enough for people to stand in or in front of.

Activity 5: Unity Day

MATERIALS:

2" round , blank, white labels (Avery® White High-Visibility Labels for Laser Printers 5294, 2-1/2" Diameter, Pack of 300 would be a good choice)

Color printer

Unity Banner

The Day of Unity is an opportunity for students in the school to come together in a show of solidarity. It's a chance for members of the school community to take a stand against gender stereotypes and symbolically express their desire to break gender boxes to make their school a place that is more open and welcoming of all people.

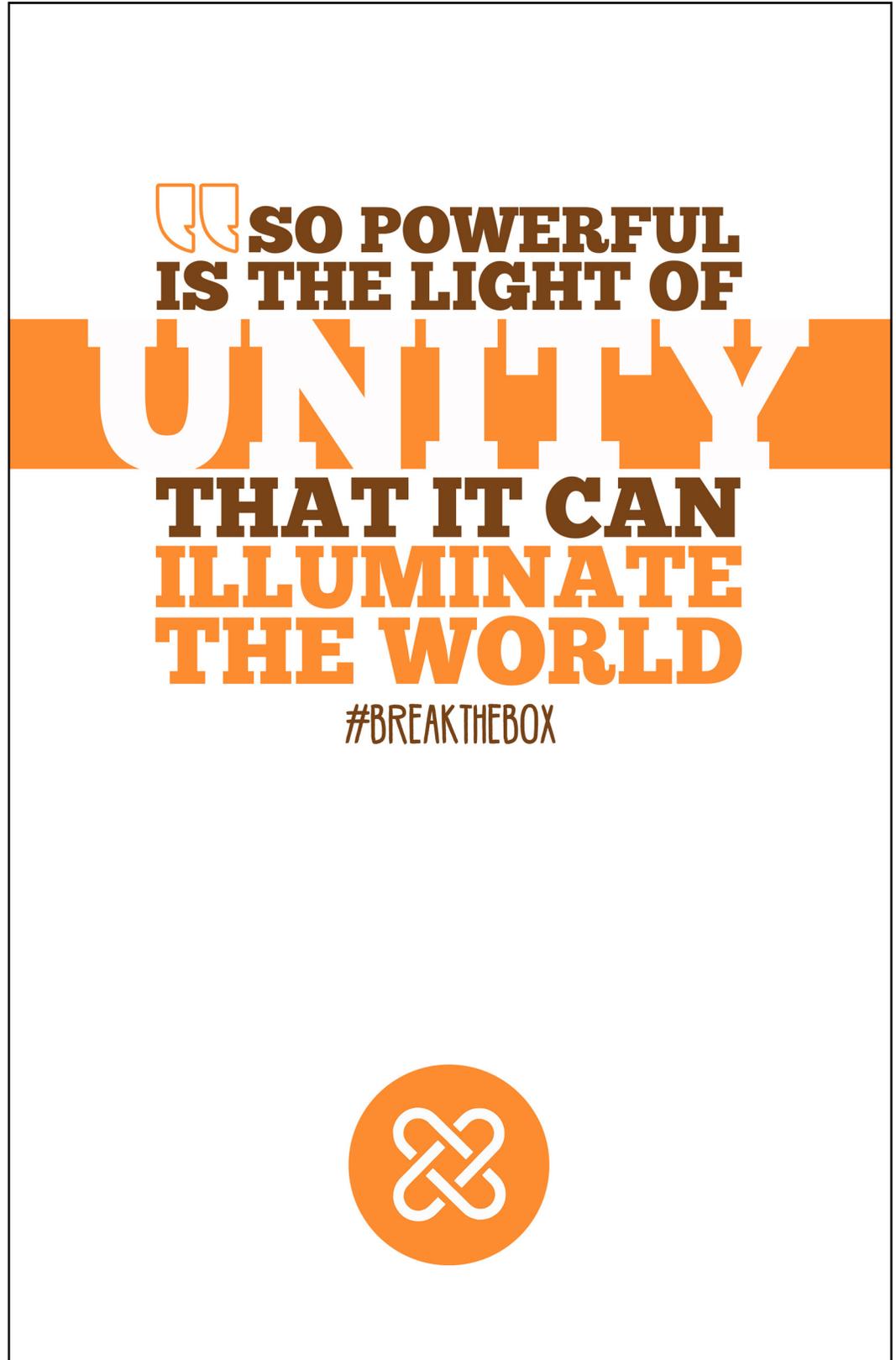
Since this is a school-wide activity, it will take a bit more coordination and promotion than the other activities. The Day of Unity has 3 components:

1. **Orange Out** – Encourage all students to wear something orange to school on that day as a show of unity. You can also decorate the hallways and cafeteria in all orange for the day. Lastly you can have a door decorating contest between the teachers to see who can "orange out" the door to the classroom the best. Perhaps the student council could serve as judges (it could be anyone as long as it is students rather than adults). Be creative with this. The idea is to cover the school and the people in it in orange because orange is the color for unity according to the National Bullying Prevention Center.
2. **Unity Banner** – Ask students to sign a banner to declare their desire to make the school a more open and welcoming place for all people. You can make a simple banner out of white butcher paper or brown paper. You could add an image to the banner like the one below and encourage participants to share the quote and hashtag on social media.
3. **Unity Stickers** – Give each person that signs the banner a Unity sticker (in the vein of an "I Voted" sticker). The image for the sticker is below. The symbol on the sticker represents Umoja – the Swahili word for unity.



Your team will need to heavily promote Unity Day all week long to the general school population. This is where they can really demonstrate their leadership skills.

Unity banner image:



OTHER ACTIVITY IDEAS:

Texas Box Breakers (optional)

We have selected 5 figures from Texas history that, through their actions, broke many boxes and inspired social change in Texas and beyond. Each of these people was committed to rejecting convention and paving a new path for others to follow. Throughout Break the Box Week consider taking a moment to highlight some of their accomplishments. Each day, find a time to share information about the box breakers. A good option would be to read their biography on the morning announcements. If you have access to showing photos or PowerPoint, you can also share the images provided with the biographies.



Barbara Jordan – “A groundbreaking African-American politician, Barbara Jordan worked hard to achieve her dreams. She grew up in a poor black neighborhood in Houston, Texas. The daughter of a Baptist minister, Jordan was encouraged by her parents to strive for academic excellence. Her gift for language and building arguments was apparent in high school, where she was an award-winning debater and orator.

After graduating from Texas Southern University in 1956, Jordan continued her studies at Boston University Law School. She was one of the few black students in the program. Jordan returned to Texas after earning her degree and set up her law practice. At first, she worked out of her parents’ home. Before long, Jordan became active in politics by campaigning for the Democratic presidential ticket of John F. Kennedy and fellow Texan Lyndon B. Johnson. In 1962, Jordan launched her first bid for public office, seeking a spot in the Texas legislature. It took two more tries for her to make history.

In 1966, Jordan finally won a seat in the Texas legislature, becoming the first black woman to do so. She did not receive a warm welcome from her new colleagues initially, but she eventually won some of them over. Jordan sought to improve the lives of her constituents by helping usher through the state’s first law on minimum wage. She also worked to create the Texas Fair Employment Practices Commission. In 1972, her fellow lawmakers voted her in as president pro tempore of the state senate. Jordan became the first African American woman to hold this post.

Announcing that she wouldn’t seek re-election, Jordan finished up her final term in 1979. Some thought that she might have gone

farther in her political career, but it was later revealed that Jordan had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis around this time. She took some time to reflect on her life and political career, penning *Barbara Jordan: A Self-Portrait* (1979). Jordan soon turned her attention toward educating future generations of politicians and public officials, accepting a professorship at the University of Texas at Austin. She became the Lyndon B. Johnson Centennial Chair of Public Policy in 1982.

While her educational work was the focus of her later years, Jordan never fully stepped away from public life. She served as a special counsel on ethics for Texas Governor Ann Richards in 1991. The following year, Jordan once again took the national stage to deliver a speech at the Democratic National Convention. Her health had declined by this point. Still, Jordan spoke to rally her party with the same powerful and thoughtful style she had displayed 16 years earlier.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton appointed Jordan to head up the Commission on Immigration Reform. He also honored her with the Presidential Medal of Freedom that same year. She passed away two years later, on January 17, 1996, in Austin, Texas. Jordan died of pneumonia, a complication of her battle with leukemia. ⁵

Script for the school-wide announcements:

Barbara Jordan (Houston, TX) was the first black woman to hold a seat in the Texas Legislature. She was elected in 1966 at a time when the fires of racism, sexism, and prejudice were burning brightly in Texas. She worked tirelessly for her constituents to pass the first laws regarding minimum wage. She also worked to create the Texas Fair Employment Practices Commission. In 1972 she was elected by her fellow lawmakers to the position of president pro tempore of the state senate – again the first African American woman to hold this post. Jordan went on to serve as special counsel on ethics for Governor Ann Richards and to deliver a speech at the Democratic National Convention. In 1994, President Bill Clinton appointed Jordan to head up the Commission on Immigration reform. He also awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom later that year.



James Farmer – “James Leonard Farmer Jr. was born on January 12, 1920, in Marshall, Texas. His mother was a teacher and his father a minister who was also the first African-American citizen to earn a doctorate in the state. Surrounded by literature and learning, the young Farmer was an excellent student, skipping grades and becoming a freshman at Wiley College in 1934 at the age of 14. While there he continued to excel as part of the debate team, and his eloquence and storytelling abilities would later be heard nationally as an adult.

Previously contemplating a career in medicine, Farmer then thought he would follow in his dad's footsteps and take up ministerial work, earning his divinity degree from Howard University in 1941. While there he learned about the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Farmer studied much of Gandhi's philosophies and would apply the leader's ideas of nonviolent civil resistance to U.S. racial desegregation.

Opting not to forge a career in religion either, Farmer was a conscientious objector during World War II and worked with the Fellowship of Reconciliation by the early 1940s. Living in Chicago, Illinois, he was also a TV screenwriter and magazine scribe. Committed to racial harmony, Farmer, his friend George Houser and a multi-racial group of colleagues decided that they would desegregate a Chicago eatery via a 1942 sit-in. They thus formed the Committee of Racial Equality, with the name later becoming the Congress of Racial Equality. With Farmer elected national chairman, CORE developed a mostly white North-based membership with various chapters, yet would eventually find itself becoming deeply involved in the South.

Farmer had some periods away from the organization, but with the Civil Rights Movement making headlines with historical rulings and actions, he was elected to become national director of CORE in February 1961. Farmer thus became one of the most prominent African-American leaders of the era, joining the ranks of figures like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Roy Wilkins.

Farmer worked on launching the Freedom Rides with the intention of challenging segregation on interstate bus travel, which had technically been declared illegal in 1946 and which CORE had taken action upon previously. The Freedom Riders consisted of both women and men, black and white who traveled on bus routes through Southern states.

The first ride was launched in May of 1961, with the bus firebombed upon reaching Alabama after travel through several states. Other riders were mobilized, yet the brutality was horrifying, with one rider having been beaten so badly he was left paralyzed for life and protesters jailed en masse in Jackson, Mississippi. Audiences around the world were able to see via television violent racism at work, and in September of 1961 the Interstate Commerce Commission—at the behest of Attorney General Robert Kennedy—declared segregation impermissible in Southern public travel facilities and modes of transport.

Receiving several honors for his work over time, Farmer was able to tell his story to new generations, releasing his acclaimed autobiography *Lay Bare the Heart* in 1985. More than a decade later he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from Bill Clinton. And

in 2011, PBS' American Experience released a documentary that focused on CORE's work entitled Freedom Riders."⁶

Script for the school-wide announcements:

James Farmer (Marshall, TX) was a community organizer and activist working for racial harmony. He founded and was elected national chairman of the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE). Farmer became one of the most prominent African-American leaders of the era, joining the ranks of figures like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Roy Wilkins. He worked on launching the Freedom Rides with the intention of challenging segregation on interstate bus travel, which had technically been declared illegal in 1946 and which CORE had taken action upon previously. The Freedom Riders consisted of both women and men, black and white who traveled on bus routes through Southern states. The first ride was launched in May of 1961 and audiences around the world were able to see via television violent racism at work. In September of 1961 the Interstate Commerce Commission—at the behest of Attorney General Robert Kennedy—declared segregation impermissible in Southern public travel facilities and modes of transport. Farmer was also awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his significant contributions to the civil rights movement.



Miriam "Ma" Ferguson – "On June 13, 1875, Miriam Amanda Ferguson, known as "Ma," was born in Bell County, Texas. "Ma" attended Salado College and Baylor Female College. She married James Edward Ferguson, the governor of Texas from 1915-1917. Mrs. Ferguson was the first lady of Texas but when her husband was impeached during his second term and unable to get his name on the next ballot, she ran for governor.

Her campaign was clear and aggressive: Ma promised extensive cuts in state appropriations, condemned the Ku Klux Klan, and opposed new liquor legislation. In November 1924, she won the election. Gov. Ma Ferguson became Texas' first woman governor and the second in the nation's history.

Her first administration was not without controversy. The courts overturned Ferguson's anti-mask law against the KKK, state expenditures increased despite her campaign promise, and she and her husband were accused of corruption. In 1926, she lost gubernatorial re-nomination to Attorney General Daniel James Moody.

Ferguson stayed in politics and in November 1932 was elected governor of Texas a second time. She continued her liberal policies but did not have the controversies that haunted her first term. Ma Ferguson made a third bid for governor in 1940. She was 65 years old and faced a tough incumbent, Gov. W. Lee O'Daniel. Ma advocated a 25 percent cut in state spending and increased social security funds for the elderly. She raked in a strong 100,000 votes but it wasn't enough to beat O'Daniel.

After her husband's death in 1944, Miriam Ferguson retired to private life in Austin."⁷

Script for the school-wide announcements:

Ma Ferguson (Bell County, TX) was the first female governor of the state of Texas and only the second female governor in the history of the United States. She was elected in 1924 and again in 1932 and during her two terms she fought hard to condemn the Ku Klux Klan and even passed legislation that prevented members from wearing masks. Ferguson remained steadfast in her convictions, even when they were less than popular from a re-election standpoint. She cared more about doing what was right than about her own personal security and well-being. Ferguson made a third run at governor at the age of 65 but was narrowly defeated.



Babe Didrikson Zaharias – “Babe Didrikson Zaharias was born Mildred Ella Zaharias on June 26, 1911, in Port Arthur, Texas. She earned the nickname “Babe” at an early age because she hit so many home runs while playing baseball with her brothers. Babe Ruth was in his heyday at the time and she was a powerful hitter just like him.

Baseball was just one sport in which she excelled. At the age of 15, Babe was the high-scoring forward on the girls' basketball team at Beaumont Senior High School. She attracted the attention of Melvin J. McCombs, coach of one of the best girls' basketball teams in the nation. In February 1930, McCombs secured a job for her with the Employers Casualty Company of Dallas, and she was soon a star player on its Golden Cyclones. She returned to Beaumont in June to graduate with her high school class. The Golden Cyclones won the national championship the next three years, and she was All-American forward for two of those years.

Didrikson soon turned her attention to track and field. At the National Women's AAU Track Meet in 1931, she won first place in eight events and was second in a ninth. In 1932, with much more interest in the meet because of the approaching Olympics, she captured the championship, scoring 30 points; the Illinois Women's Athletic Club, which entered a team of 22 women, placed second with 22 points. Babe then went to the Olympics.

Women were allowed to enter only three events, but she broke four world records; she won the javelin throw, with 143 feet, 4 inches, and won the 80-meter hurdles, twice breaking the previous world record (her best time was 11.7 seconds). She made a world record high jump, but the jump was disallowed and she was awarded second place.

Didrikson began playing golf in 1931 or 1932. According to noted sports writer Paul Gallico, in 1932, in her 11th game of golf, she

drove 260 yards from the first tee and played the second nine in 43. She herself stated that she entered her first golf tournament in the fall of 1934. Although she did not win, she captured the qualifying round with a 77. In April 1935, in the Texas State Women's Championship, she carded a birdie on the par-5 31st hole, to win the tournament two-up.

In January of 1943, Babe began taking golf seriously. Utilizing her tremendous powers of concentration, her almost unlimited self-confidence and her patience, she practiced furiously. She would drive as many as 1,000 balls a day, take lessons for five or six hours, and play until her hands were blistered and bleeding. In 1947, Zaharias became the first American woman to win the British Ladies' Amateur Championship, at Gullane, Scotland. On one hole she stroked a drive so far that a spectator whispered, "She must be Superman's sister." That August she announced that she was turning professional. For the next six years she dominated women's golf.

Zaharias was the greatest woman golfer of all time, the winner of seventeen successive golf tournaments in 1946-1947, and of 82 tournaments between 1933 and 1953. The Associated Press voted her "Woman of the Year" in 1936, 1945, 1947, 1950, and 1954. In 1950 the AP acclaimed her the "Woman Athlete of the Half Century." Zaharias had a cancer operation in April 1953, and it was feared she would never be able to return to competition. Three and a half months later, though, she played in competition. The next year she won the United States Women's Open by twelve strokes. In 1955 she had a second cancer operation. She died in Galveston, Texas in 1956. At the time of her death she was still the number one ranked female golfer in the world. In the last months of her life she and her husband established the Babe Didrikson Zaharias Fund to support cancer clinics and treatment centers."⁸

Script for the school-wide announcements:

Babe Didrikson Zaharias (Port Arthur, TX) is widely regarded as one of the greatest athletes of all time. She was an All-American forward and three time national champion in basketball at her high school. Afterward, she decided to try her hand at track and field. At the Women's National Track Meet she earned 8 first place finishes and 1 second place finish. After qualifying for the Olympics, Zaharias broke four world records; she won the javelin throw, with 143 feet, 4 inches, and won the 80-meter hurdles, twice breaking the previous world record (her best time was 11.7 seconds). She made a world record high jump.

In 1931 or 1932, Zaharias took an interest in playing golf. She entered her first tournament in 1934 and in 1935, she won the Texas State Women's Championship. She began taking golf seriously in 1943 and in 1948 she turned professional. As a professional, Zaharias won 17 consecutive tournaments a total of 82 professional tournaments in all. Zaharias died of cancer in 1956 and at the time she was still the number 1 ranked female golfer in the world.



Emma Tenayuca – “San Antonio native Emma Tenayuca was a pioneering activist involved with issues that resemble those of modern times: disparity of rich and poor, and substandard wages and working conditions of laborers and migrant workers.

In her formative years Tenayuca followed election politics of the U.S. and Mexico. She became a labor activist before graduating from high school. She was arrested at age 16 when she joined the picket line of workers on strike against the Finck Cigar Company of San Antonio in 1933.

Influenced by the causes of the Mexican Revolution, and Texas gubernatorial candidate Ma Ferguson’s position against the Ku Klux Klan, Tenayuca’s work for labor issues and civil rights predated Cesar Chavez and the Civil Rights movement.

She founded two International Ladies’ Garment Workers Unions, and organized strikes against San Antonio’s large pecan shelling industry. Tenayuca worked as an organizer and activist for the Workers Alliance of America and Women’s League for Peace and Freedom. She lobbied the mayor of San Antonio to improve relief distribution for unemployed workers during the Great Depression. In 1937 she organized protests of the beating of migrants by US Border Patrol agents.

Throughout her life, Tenayuca was a vocal advocate for free speech and workers’ rights, and a critic of many government policies. She was a dedicated student of political issues and processes. She expressed her belief in greater economic equality for citizens over expensive government relief programs.”⁹

Script for the school-wide announcements:

Emma Tenayuca (San Antonio, TX) was a pioneering activist who fought against disparity of rich and poor, and substandard wages and poor working conditions of laborers and migrant workers. Her work for labor issues and civil rights predated Cesar Chavez and the Civil Rights movement.

Tenayuca founded two International Ladies’ Garment Workers Unions, and organized strikes against San Antonio’s large pecan shelling industry. She worked as an organizer and activist for the Workers Alliance of America and Women’s League for Peace and Freedom. She lobbied the mayor of San Antonio to improve relief distribution for unemployed workers during the Great Depression. In 1937 she organized protests of the beating of migrants by US Border Patrol agents.

Throughout her life, Tenayuca was a vocal advocate for free speech and workers’ rights. She was a dedicated student of political issues and processes. She expressed her belief in greater economic equality for citizens over expensive government relief programs.

Inside Out Day (optional)



Expectations based on gender stereotypes often pressure us to act or behave in certain ways based on what people expect of us according to our perceived gender. Sometimes it can feel a bit like playing a character in a play or a movie. We may not always feel comfortable with the role, but the consequences of not playing the part (e.g. being made fun of or being excluded) outweighs all else. So we put on our costumes or disguises and perform who we are expected to be. Sometimes that means guys might feel pressure to suppress their feelings and emotions or girls might feel the need to pretend to be less intelligent than they really are. These are just a few examples, but in either case the stereotypes are preventing the person from expressing their true selves.

Inside Out Day is a fun way for participants to acknowledge the pressures placed on us to look or act a certain way while having a friendly competition between grade levels. To participate, students simply need to wear their clothing inside out. By wearing their clothes inside out participants call attention to those social pressures and challenge onlookers to create an environment where people can express their true selves without fear of negative consequences.

For the competition, set up a check-in table during the lunch period so students can get counted for their grade level. The winning grade will be announced the next day before the Texas Box Breaker reading.

Mix Your Clix Lunchtime Mash-Up (optional)



Gender stereotypes are not only harmful to individuals but they can also be harmful to a community (like a school). When people don't feel safe enough to be themselves, they are generally going to be less willing to build relationships with or interact with others outside their existing social circle. Mix Your Clix is an opportunity for participants to interact across group lines to help break down existing social barriers and promote a sense of community. The instructions are simple – in pairs, students that normally eat lunch together will sit at a table with people they don't normally eat with or know very well. While eating with these new people, participants are encouraged to strike up a conversation in an effort to get to know their new table mates.

It might be a good idea to make a section of the cafeteria the Mix Your Clix section rather than forcing the whole student population to participate. Your team will be able to gauge how many tables are necessary based on how many students they believe will participate.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

The success of your event relies heavily on the strength of your relationships with the youth in the school. It is important to view the youth that are co-organizing with you as partners with equal value and importance. These relationships should be ones where there is mutuality in teaching, learning, and action. Authentic youth engagement can best be achieved by focusing on the experiences of young people when they are engaged and by setting up a space where:

- “they are respected, valued, and trusted and they feel appreciated, safe, and comfortable;
- they feel they are working in an environment that facilitates their engagement, and they are involved in a meaningful way as teachers as well as student;
- their voices are being heard and treated as worthwhile;
- they are given the opportunity to be involved and make decisions, gain leadership skills, and see their ideas realized;
- they are able to participate in the social aspects of their involvement;
- they see change and progress happening as a result of their contributions; and
- they are in a space where they have ownership and control in decision making processes.”³

Success also depends on being realistic about your capacity to organize the week. Every situation is different. We strongly encourage you to not bite off more than you can chew. If you and your co-organizers don't have the bandwidth to do all of the activities, then don't. Choose the ones you can do really well and build from there year after year. Quality is much more important than quantity.

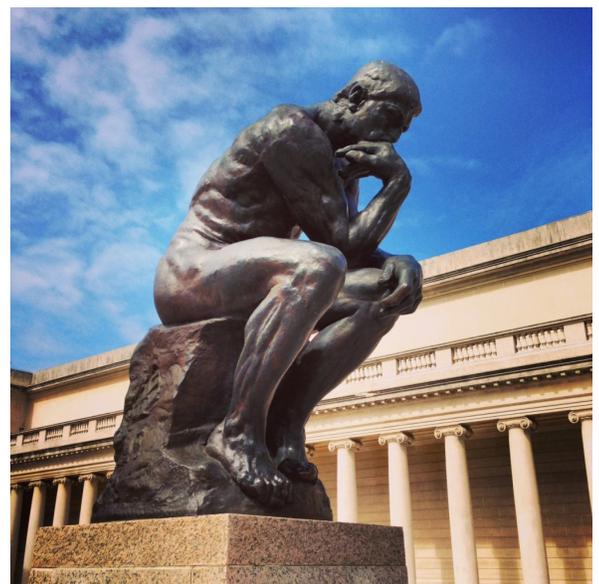


photo taken from <http://no-onions-extra-pickles.com/rodin-the-thinker/>



<http://discoveringsomethingneweveryday.blogspot.com/2013/09/how-long-is-grand-canyon.html>

IMPACT THAT IS DEEP AND WIDE

We believe participation in Break the Box Week will have an impact in your community that is both deep and wide. School-wide events like these tend to reach a broad segment of the student population. Everyone in the school will be exposed to the Break the Box messaging and, even if they don't participate directly, will witness others participating throughout the week. In addition, the subject matter being discussed is very personal and the activities are designed to be either introspective or interactive – both of which deepen the impact of the experience. To maximize the impact, encourage participants to reflect on their own experiences with being stereotyped and about the ways in which they reinforce stereotypes or have adopted stereotypes about others.

ENDNOTES

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3. "Gender Stereotypes." Gender Stereotypes. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 Sept. 2015, from <http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study-guides/sociology/sex-and-gender/gender-stereotypes>.
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