

Equity and Equality Lesson

Equity and Equality are terms that are easily confused with each other but understanding each one's definition and their relationship with each other is essential. Our goal in this lesson is to develop our definition of these terms and how to model them for ourselves and others. For older students, our objective is also to connect these definitions with how they are interpreted by political candidates as they campaign for office.

Objectives

- Define equality
- Define equity
- Identify how these concepts affect student's lives in ways they can relate to
- Connect, when appropriate, how the political candidates use these terms in the election process and when communicating to voters.

Materials

- Equity vs Equality image
- Paper and pens (younger students)
- Phones and computers (older students)

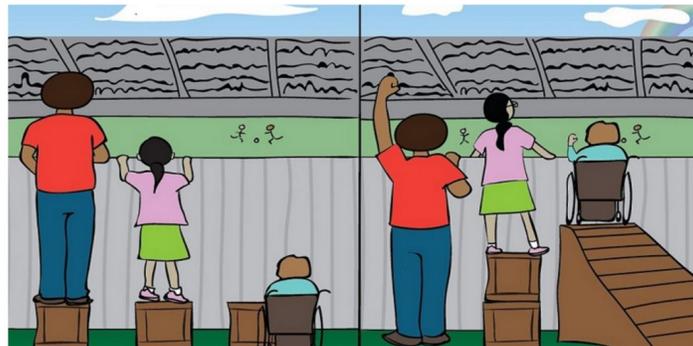
ACTIVITY: The Difference Between Equality and Equity

Time: 30 minutes

Purpose: To define equality and equity

Materials: Equity & Equality Images

Divide groups into groups of 3 or 4 and give them the image. Either projected on the board or printed.



Equality

Equity

Discussion Questions

- What do you notice about these two photos?
- What is the difference between them? What is the same?
- How might the images make you think differently about the words underneath?
- What do you notice about the physical objects in the photo? How do they relate to the experience each person is having?

Bring the students back together as one group and ask them to share some of their individual group's insights with the larger group.

Define The Terms

Now let's get clear with words.

Looking back at the image labeled **Equality**.

- How is each person able or not able to participate?
- How do you think each person in this scenario is feeling?
- How does having "equal" access and resources impact each person?
- Is having equal things in this scenario more or less fair?

According to the dictionary, equality is treating everyone the same. When people use this term they tend to talk about fairness.

In our own words, how would we like to define equality?

Write students answers on the board.

What are some challenges that can come up between people when equality is used to view situations?

Looking back at the image labeled **Equity**.

- Why is each person able or not able to participate?
- What had to happen to achieve equity?
- Think about the resources each person has, how did those have to change based on each person's needs?
- What would be the easiest way to make this situation equitable for everyone?
- Is equity more or less fair?

The dictionary defines equity as giving everyone what they need to be successful. When people use this term they tend to talk about justice.

In our own words, how would we like to define equity?

Write students answers on the board.

Debrief

Separate the group into smaller groups (four students per group is ideal) or as an individual reflection have students think, discuss, and write about three of the following questions.

Discussion Questions

- Why do we need to know the difference between these two words?
- Why do you think people confuse these two words so often?
- Why might these words be important to a school? And to you as students?
- Can you think of other examples of people being treated with equity that led to them being able to succeed?
- Can you think of an example of how treating someone with Equality might not actually be fair or may limit their success?

- Can you think of ways your school or community could work to be more equitable?

ACTIVITY FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS: Talking To Adults

Time: 10 minutes

Purpose: Strengthen the relationship with an adult in the student's life

Materials: Papers & pens

Have students individually write a letter to an adult in their life thinking about the following:

- How would you describe equality to an adult in your life?
- How would you describe equity to an adult in your life?
- How does it feel when you are being treated with equality?
- How does it feel when you are being treated with equity?
- Why is it important to you?

Remember here are the definitions:

- Equity: giving everyone what they need to be successful; when people use this term they tend to talk about justice.
- Equality: treating everyone the same; when people use this term they tend to talk about fairness.

Is anyone willing to share their letter?

ACTIVITY FOR OLDER STUDENTS: Equality and Equity in the Election Cycle

Time: 15 minutes

Purpose: Connect concepts of equality and equity to the presidential election

Materials: Phones or laptops for research

For the next ten minutes, look up campaign information or posts from a presidential candidate(s) and answer the following questions

- How is equity and equality showing up in the 2020 Presidential election?
- How is the candidate talking about these concepts?
- Do you believe them? If so, why? If not, why not?
- How do you think the candidates who are currently running for office apply these terms to their political positions?

Ticket Out the Door (Younger Students)

Identify a friendship or relationship in your life that you believe is equitable.

Ticket Out the Door (Older Students)

Identify a political candidate or campaign that uses the words equality or equity in a similar manner as we discussed in class today.

Resources

- Visit <https://culturesofdignity.com/navigating-politics-with-dignity-materials/> for more lessons