

Responding to Microaggressions  
Lewis and Clark EDLL 704

1. After a staff member shares that (s)he is a slow reader because of dyslexia, another staff member says, “we all have some form of disability.”
2. An English-speaking student says to a bilingual student, “Why do you have to speak Spanish? I never understand you guys! Spanish sucks.”
3. After a Black student speaks to an issue in class, several white students respond with words like, “You are so articulate.”
4. In the staff room you overhear people talking about the newly hired teacher. One person says, “I think she is an affirmative action hire. The district is requiring us to hire more diversity.” Another person says, “I hope she has the ability to do this job. I have heard that Portland has hired a lot of educators of color who are not succeeding in their schools.”
5. Hearing that a teacher has been allowing some of her students to say the Pledge of Allegiance in Spanish, another teacher says to her and a group of teachers, “The Pledge should always be said in English. That is patriotic and how it is meant to be.”
6. A high school teacher, with the intention of making communication safe for all students, responds to a student who uses the term, “illegal alien.” The teacher tells the class that this is a term that is disrespectful and inappropriate. The teacher suggests that students use the term, “undocumented” in order to maintain a safe and respectful classroom. A parent complains that the teacher is promoting a political agenda at the expense of students’ rights to freedom of expression?
7. A student insists on opening doors for another student in a wheelchair. You have heard the student in the wheelchair say, “Its OK. I can get the door.” The other student says, “I don’t mind. I like opening the door for you.” You and several students see and hear the interaction.
8. In the staff room with many people present, one person talked about their involvement in and support for Black Lives Matter. Another person said, “All lives matter.” It was agreed to take this controversy to the next staff meeting.
9. Said to a Black person, “Why do you sound White?”
10. In a staff meeting, a male staff member interrupts a woman who is in the middle of describing something, saying, “Let me explain what she means.”
11. On a hiring committee interview with a candidate named Maria Vasquez, who has dark hair, dark eyes, and a tan complexion, one of your colleagues asks the question, “Where are you from?” Ms. Vasquez responds, “Minneapolis.” The colleague follows-up with “No, I mean, where do you come from originally?” Ms. Vasquez frowns, “Minneapolis” she repeats with an edge to her voice.