

A good question is a question that matters; it is an attractor for energy and it generates energy, it opens up possibilities, it invites deeper exploration... it has some personal connection, it invites a variety of voices, it creates a certain tension, a certain dissonance between one's current understanding and something bigger. A good question has to be able to travel well.

– Juanita Brown, The World Cafe

Some questions to consider as you enter any institution of learning.

Adapted from *Art Corps' Social Justice Framework for Teaching*

Look in the Mirror: *Self Knowledge*

Who am I to myself? How do I appear to the world? What is my story? What brings me to art? What brings me to teach? What is my story as it relates to race / class / gender / sexuality / culture / language / nationality? How have I experienced power? How have I experienced oppression? How do I experience joy / sadness / anger / quietude / the sublime? What makes me feel powerful? What makes me feel disempowered? What memories do I have of school? What memories do I have of teachers / tutors / mentors / adults? What are my teaching triggers? What are my personal triggers?

Walk in the Door: *Classrooms and Institutions*

What do I know about my teaching classroom? Where is the school? Who is in the room? How many people? What is the age group? What is the socioeconomic / gender / racial / cultural / ethnic / linguistic background of this class? Who am I co-teaching with? What context do both teachers and students have about me & my art form in their classroom? What is this classroom's culture? What does the classroom look like? How are the seats arranged? Is there student work presented on the wall? Where are the students sitting? Who is sitting with whom? How do we un/intentionally create power dynamics? What youth do we like / relate to the most? Why? Who receives your praise and how often? Who do you provide with positive reinforcement? Who do you send out of the class or punish? What do I know about this institution? What is its history in the community? How does it receive funding? Who backs it? Who does not? How does the institution determine who has access, feels supported, has opportunity, uses power and who is ignored, punished and penalized?

Connect with Students: *Communication and Facilitation*

How do I create safety in this classroom within this particular group of young folks? trust? creative space? expectations? common language? How can I use my experiences / knowledge to work with this demographic of young folks even if we are coming from different places? Do these particular youth relate to the subject matter / content of my art form? What effective teaching tools do I use to bring my art form to life? How do I unintentionally and intentionally create unequal and inequitable power dynamics? What youth do I like / relate to the most? Why? Who receives your praise and how often? Who do you send out of the class or punish? What do I do to prevent this?

Create It Together: *Creation, Conflict & Community*

What tools and teaching strategies do I use that honor student voice, perspective and experience? How do I actively make space for student empowerment and agency in my classroom? What mechanisms does my classroom have for moderating conflict? Personal accountability? How will I know if I am in the wrong? How do I make space for humbling moments? What classroom structures are built for young folks to bring these moments to my attention? What structures are in place for young people to engage in deep dialogue and interrupt oppression amongst themselves? How do I actively interrupt moments of oppression when class is in session? When oppression occurs within the administration or parents? How will art act as an agent of liberation in this particular class and in this institution?

Leave The Room: *Assessing Transformation*

How do I evaluate the efficacy of my teaching through an SJ lense? What teaching methods do I keep? What do I need to build? What do I need to change? How can I measure the level of student agency in the room? Have I spoken out about inequitable / unequal / unjust situations I have witnessed: the class, with the administration, to the youth? Have I celebrated my students' achievements and individual lives? Did my art have a liberatory effect? Did my art have a healing effect? Did my art have a transformative effect? How will I know this?

The Inquiry Cycle and Transformative Pedagogy in community



https://conversationsthatmatter.typepad.com/world_cafe_community/2013/09/questions-anyone.html#more