

Answer Key *Diversity Questions from page 2*

1. **False** – marks of difference may seem unimportant to those who don't have them, however they are very important to those who do have them. Not only do these marks of differences influence one's self-identity, they are often the basis of stereotyping or discriminating.

2. **True** – to have equity of opportunity in schools, businesses, or society in general, people must be able to speak, read, and write standard forms of English. This statement in no way detracts from the need for bilingual or multilingual skills or bi-dialectal. Every person speaking a language or dialect other than standard English deserves to be respected for that language difference and to receive instructional support for maintaining that language and using it and standard English appropriately. Likewise, native English-speaking people should learn an additional language.

3. **False** – this is an obvious stereotype. There exists the same degree of heterogeneity within groups that exists among groups. This becomes an important point of discussion when examining the compounding effects of class and caste.

Leadership for Diverse Schools

Michael Headings, 5th grade teacher at North Hills Elementary School, Central York School District and graduate of the Leadership for Diverse Schools (LDS), Class of 2007 recently attended a JCC Diversity Advisory Council meeting to share his perspectives on the LDS program and the impact it had on him personally and now on his students. Here are some of the thoughts he shared.

“Embracing diversity is a passion of mine. I signed up for the LDS program because I wanted to dialogue with my students about diversity issues in a more confident way. I also wanted to have additional stories to share with them that would help them seek new perspectives and a better understanding of differences.

The LDS program started off with an overnight retreat and to be perfectly honest, I was dreading it, as were most of the other participants. I mean, here we were going back to “dorm” life after many years and well, that wasn't the most appealing thought. Yet, it turned out to be the best experience of the LDS program because the bonds built between the class members are invaluable. The connections made that weekend, along with the thought provoking leadership and bias awareness activities presented, prepared us to be true diversity advocates in our schools and communities. Each session throughout the course was filled with meaningful and applicable information to guide all of us in building plans to help create safe environments for all our students.

My eyes were opened through being in this program. I am so fortunate. I have an enormous group of people to support me in my diversity initiative; 32 fellow LDS classmates, plus the faculty of JCC diversity programs and Leadership York. I can contact any one of them and they immediately get what I'm talking about in addition to being very supportive and encouraging. I'm very grateful for this opportunity and told my fellow teachers about the benefits of participating. Central York had 22 educators who wanted to be a part of the LDS Class of 2008; we have 6 educators participating this year.

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Jane Elliott's Message

By Cathy Bollinger, Diversity Acceptance Director

Internationally known teacher, lecturer and diversity trainer, Jane Elliott devised the controversial and startling “Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes” exercise in response to the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. She wanted to help her all-white elementary school classroom learn about racism, prejudice, and discrimination. She broke her classroom into two groups based on eye color. She divided them by blue eye color and brown eye color. Ms. Elliott told her blue eye students that they were superior over the students with brown eyes. She told them they were more intelligent and therefore gave them extra classroom privileges. The students with brown eyes were told they weren't as worthy as those with blue eyes. Very quickly, Ms. Elliott saw that the students with the “superior” eye color oppressed the brown eye children. The next day she reversed the roles and once again, children fell into the predicted roles. She did this exercise to awaken her students as to what it feels like to be treated a certain way based on a characteristic over which they had no control.

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