

Week Four: Seedfolks

Theme: Community, Political Participation

1: Ice Breaker

Using the geometric shapes that were given out at the end of the last meeting, build a community connections chain. Starting with one person, ask them to name one thing on their cube. Ask for another person who has the same thing, or a relationship to that thing (like mother and daughter), and tape those sides together. Go on until everyone's cube is connected to the larger sculpture of community. Explain that we are each unique individuals and belong to many communities made up of other individuals.

Lead in to the Living and Breathing Neighborhood Sculpture (see attached description). Speaking of sculpture, have any of you ever seen any public sculptures in your neighborhoods or cities?

Frame the discussion: We will be talking about community and participation in our discussion of Seedfolks.

2: Passage from the book

Ask: Which stories or characters moved you? Who do you remember? Take answers, open to that chapter and ask individual to summarize what stands out from the chapter. ASK: What does each person get out of participating in the garden? Why did they go to the garden? Take 3-5 examples.

Read Amir, page 58.

3: Discussion

How do conflicts threaten the community in this book? What bonding experiences draw the community together? When do individual interests take priority? When is there a sense of shared interest or common goal? In this book, many of these characters get an unexpected return on their investment in the garden. That is, they find they are part of a new community, the Gibb Street Garden. Each would add a new side to their cube: Gibb St. Gardener.

4: Closing activity/for further reflection

We have all chosen to be a part of this group. We, too, could add a side to our cube as a member of this book discussion group. Consciously choosing what groups we want to participate in, and how we participate, helps to build the skills of a participant in a democratic society, an engaged citizen in our local, state, national, and global communities. This is, essentially, what it means to be politically active. We get something out of it, it is in our own interest, we invest because we personally gain, but there might also be unexpected results, like the Gibb St. Gardeners found.

QUOTE: ...not "political" in the sense of voting in an election but in the way Thucydides used the word: to mean activity with other people at every level, from the family to the neighborhood to the broader community to the city-state."

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