

GSA Day for Racial Justice 2023: Discussion Guide

Hi there! Welcome to our discussion guide for this year's GSA Day for Racial Justice. Please use this as a resource to host a virtual GSA club meeting and discussion; we're excited for you to join our conversation around racial justice. We've included a letter to prepare yourself, example discussion questions and prompts, and other resources we have compiled. We look forward to seeing and hearing your valuable input at our virtual GSADay4RJ General Assembly on Friday, February 24, 2023!

Content includes:

I. Letter to TQ2S+ Leaders

II. Discussion Topics and Questions

III. Definitions + Resources

Dear Trans, Queer, & Two-Spirit Youth leaders:

In November 2018, our youth members launched, drafted, and published the National Trans Youth Council's Nine-Point Platform, outlining the nine social justice areas that our work will be led and informed by as we continue forward in organizing for trans liberation. You can learn more about our process for the platform at [TRUTH Nine-Point Platform](#). While this platform was created to center gender justice, it can also be adapted and used to facilitate racial justice campaigns in our communities.

*“There is no thing as a single-issue struggle
because we do not live single-issue lives.”
- Audre Lorde*

This GSA Day for Racial Justice, We call for Decolonization and Reparations for all Indigenous and Black Peoples. We call for the payment of reparations that are owed and the reclamation of cultural practices by the communities from which they originated. We call for the active and complacent perpetrators of cultural appropriation and colonization to be held accountable and to recognize the privilege they maintain through the oppression of others.

This discussion guide is offered to GSA clubs and similar organizations who are interested in holding space and conversation on GSA Day for Racial Justice, which will be on Friday, February 24th this year. This guide outlines various discussion points to kick off and sustain a conversation with your community addressing some important questions like- What are reparations? What does decolonization mean? This guide does not need to be followed question by question, but rather offers a reference point for leaders who want to shape a powerful and productive conversation for your organization.

We believe in your power to hold space and conversation and we know that it is young leaders like you who are changing this world.

In solidarity,

GSA Network

Discussion Guide

Opening the space (5-10 minutes)

*Notes for facilitator: Be sure to open the space with these questions. It offers folks the chance to name the state of their heart, mind, and body it encourages participants to either share out loud or in the chat box. We recognize there are a lot of outside worldly conditions that are impacting folks at this moment. The world has an impact on us and how we navigate potentially heavy conversations. Remember to thank everyone for sharing!

- Ask folks to share “What is your name and pronouns?”
- What is in your heart, mind, and body? Or one word on how you are feeling?
- Share the theme of this year’s day of action + Community Agreements (5 minutes)
- Notes for facilitator: Remind folks that because of the nature of the theme some conversations might be a lot. Let folks know to make space for themselves if needed.
 - It would be good to come up with community agreements you all would like to follow as you share space together. We included some examples below as a good starting point!

What Community Agreements do we want to have in this space?

- **Make Space, Take Space:** Make sure everyone is mindful of the space they take up and allow for others to share- if you find yourself speaking a lot, make space for others to share. If you find yourself not speaking, challenge yourself to take space and share your thoughts!
- **Speak from “I”:** We want to make sure we are all speaking with “I” statements to express how we are each feeling and avoid generalizations about other groups or people.
- **Consider Power:** We all come from different walks of life and want to ensure we recognize the privileges we hold.
- **Put up a “v” or say “vocab check”:** For vocabulary check! People might say words others do not know and this would be a good practice to make sure everyone is on the same page about what is being discussed.

This year the theme of the year is: We call for Decolonization and Reparations for all Indigenous and Black Peoples.

Discussion Questions (30 minutes)

1. What does the theme mean to you?
2. What does decolonization or reparations mean to you?
3. How can you practice decolonization and reparations in your everyday life?
4. What does healing look like for you?
5. How can we establish collective healing as a community?

Definitions

Decolonization: The “cultural, psychological, and economic freedom” for Indigenous people with the goal of achieving Indigenous sovereignty — the right and ability of Indigenous people to practice self-determination over their land, cultures, and political and economic systems.

Reparations: Returning a person to a place they were removed from or forced to flee due to a violation of human rights. (M4BL, Reparations - Now)

Land Back: A movement that seeks to re-establish Indigenous folks’ political and economic control over land that has historically belonged to them prior to colonization.

Settler Colonialism: A form of colonialism that seeks to replace Indigenous folks through the removal and erasure of culture and land.

TQ2S+: trans, queer, Two-Spirit +

Two-Spirit/2S: Indigenous people who have both feminine and masculine spirits. Depending on the tribe, a person’s Two-Spirit identity can describe how they express themselves, what work they do in the community, and/or what role they may have in traditional ceremonies.

Resources

We have compiled a list of different resources for you to check out and continue your education.

Learn more about our Two- Spirit Initiative: <https://gsanetwork.org/resources/two-spirit/>

Honoring the Land Discussion Guide:

<https://gsanetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Honoring-the-Land-Resource.pdf>

Native-Land- Learn more about Indigenous territories and the Indigenous land that you reside on: <https://native-land.ca>

Movement 4 Black Lives- Reparations Toolkit:

<https://m4bl.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Reparations-Now-Toolkit-FINAL.pdf>

Educational Resource & Ted Talk on Decolonization:

<https://globalsolidaritylocalaction.sites.haverford.edu/what-is-decolonization-why-is-it-important/>