

## **DIVERSITY ISLAND**

### **Objectives:**

- To explore the different meanings of diversity
- To compare and contrast first impressions vs. reality



30 minutes

### **Materials Needed:**

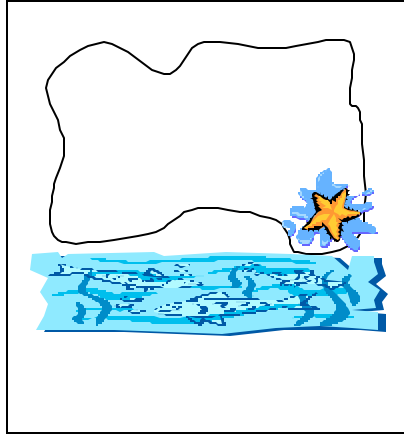
- Flip Chart
- Markers
- Handout

### **Participants:**

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### **Exercise and Participant Instructions**

1. On a flip chart draw a picture of an island with a water line going across the middle of the page.



2. Tell the group the following: “We are going to a special place called Diversity Island. Diversity means many different things to different people. We are going to brainstorm different aspects of diversity.”
3. Ask the group: “what do you think of when I say diversity?” After they have a few minutes to share their thoughts explain to them how Diversity Island works. Characteristics you can easily identify when you meet someone are put on the island, but characteristics you cannot are put below the water line. Characteristics you can sometimes tell and sometimes not are put near the water line.
4. Give an example: When I think about diversity, the first thing that comes to mind is gender. Since I can tell someone’s gender when I first meet them, I put it on the island. Every now and then I meet someone I am not quite sure about their gender so I will put it on the island but close to the water line.
5. Ask again, “what do you think of when I say diversity?” When they tell you, have them also decide if it goes on the island or under the water. Let the person answering ultimately decide where it goes but question them to really think about it if it seems like it

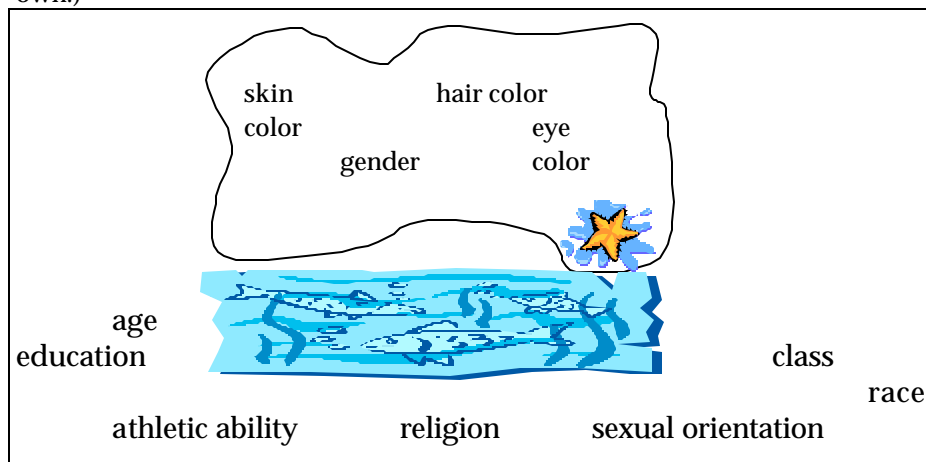
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should be in the other section. For example, some people will try to put ethnicity on the island, but can you really tell what ethnicity someone is when you meet them? No, you can tell skin color, hair type, and eye color but not ethnicity.

6. After they have filled up the space, ask for any last thoughts.
7. Have a group debrief about what was learned.

(This is how your flip chart should look when they are finished. If they are having a tough time, you can fill in with some of the following or some of your own.)



### Large Group Discussion and Debrief

- A. What did you learn? (You are looking for them to realize the majority of words are below the water.)
  - B. What does that tell you? (We really don't know someone when we first meet them. We have to learn about other aspects of people through discussion or sharing, letting our masks down.)
  - C. What does diversity really mean?
8. Hand out Diversity Island worksheet to each participant.
  9. Have each participant fill out their responses to what you brainstormed earlier. For example, if on your flip chart 'gender' is on the island, have them put their gender on their island. (They do not have to fill in an answer that is too personal.)
  10. You can have them keep this for themselves as a self-reflection tool, or you can take the time to have each participant share one to two items that they would like to share about themselves.

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