



I AM A MAN VR & DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

OVERVIEW

Students will go through the “I am a Man” VR experience. Using the material covered by the app, additional classroom readings, or information covered in the class, students will engage in discussions.

MATERIALS

- Oculus Rift
- Oculus controller/Touch

CREDITS

www.cultofpedagogy.com/speaking-listening-techniques/

www.grinnell-k12.org

<http://iamamanvr.logicgrip.com/>

SYNOPSIS

“I Am A Man” VR Experience is an interactive virtual reality experience set to the historic events of the African- American Civil Rights Movement.

I Am A Man puts the user in the shoes of a black sanitation worker during the Memphis Sanitation strike in 1968. There are a number of scenes that showcase the racism and segregation that was taking place, as well as what the strikes looked like. The experience also covers the rise and assassination of MLK Jr. and the aftermath of that incident.

The vision is to give people an experience of history in a way that provides a more personal understanding of the struggles of these marginalized people. The VR experience allows one to literally walk in the shoes of people who fought for freedom and equality during the civil rights era. Most importantly, this project gives users a deeper awareness of their struggle. Using historical film and photographs, along with voice narrations of actual Civil Rights participants, the project falls along the lines of a new type of interactive-documentary experience. I Am A Man VR experience looks to help usher in this rich new way of experiencing history.

TIMELINE

This activity is designed to take be completed in two-45 minute sessions.



DISCUSSION FORMAT SUGGESTIONS

Philosophical Chairs

(a.k.a. *Values Continuum, Forced Debate, Physical Barometer, This or That*)

Basic Structure: A statement that has two possible responses—agree or disagree—is read out loud. Depending on whether they agree or disagree with this statement, students move to one side of the room or the other. From that spot, students take turns defending their positions.

Variations: Often a Philosophical Chairs debate will be based around a text or group of texts students have read ahead of time; students are required to cite textual evidence to support their claims and usually hold the texts in their hands during the discussion. Some teachers set up one hot seat to represent each side, and students must take turns in the seat. In less formal variations (which require less prep), a teacher may simply read provocative statements students are likely to disagree on, and a debate can occur spontaneously without a text to refer to. Teachers may also opt to offer a continuum of choices, ranging from “Strongly Agree” on one side of the room, all the way to “Strongly Disagree” on the other, and have students place themselves along that continuum based on the strength of their convictions.

Ongoing Conversations

This strategy places students into one-on-one conversations, getting them to learn each others’ names better and create a track record of what they talked about. Excellent for classes where you want to assess for discussion and help students get more comfortable with each other.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What issues did African-Americans face during the Civil Rights Era?
- How are the events portrayed to in the app "I Am A Man" related to events in today’s society?
- After experiencing what African Americans went through during this time, why is racial equality so important in today's society?
- What scene most affects you and why?
- What would be different if Dr. King hadn’t died when and how he did?



STANDARDS

American History

- **Expectation:** Summarize the struggle for racial and gender equality and the extension of civil rights that occurred in the United States in the postwar period.
- **Learning Targets:** Summarize the struggle for racial, gender, and extension of civil rights that occurred in the postwar period.

