

ROLE MODELS

MATERIALS |

None

OPTIONAL: pictures of role models, created handout

OBJECTIVES | The objectives of this activity are for participants to think intentionally about who they look up to and why, and for teachers to learn more about who their students admire and begin considering how to provide affirming and inspiring images to students.

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS |

Introduce the concept of “role models”

- Ask participants to brainstorm what it means to have or be a “role model.”
- Explain that role models are people we admire and look up to. They are people we learn from and perhaps would like to be like. For some people having role models is important because often it is hard to imagine what our lives could be like or what we are capable of accomplishing. Role models allow us to see what is possible for us to achieve and the work it will take to get there.

Facilitators should share who one of their role models is and why.

Invite participants to think about who they look up or consider a role model and choose three people: a person in their life, a person in history, and a person who is currently in the media. Then answer the following:

- Who are they?
- How do you know them or how did you learn about them?
- What is it about them that you admire?

Divide participants into small groups and invite them to share who their role models are and why.

Educators should attend to what students’ role models tell you about them and about what they need from you as a teacher. What is the racial background, gender, role, etc. of their role model? Were there common people who kept coming up? If so, why do you think this is? What does this mean about your students’ experiences and exposure to different kind of people? Were there any people listed who you did not know or had never heard of? Why do you think this is? What do you think this says about the differences and similarities between your experiences and your students?

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS |

- How did it feel to do this activity?
- What did your role models have in common? Why do you think they are similar in this way?
- How were they different?
- What does who we look up to say about our values and our life experiences?
- How can we be role models to others?



SUPPORTING MEDIA |

<https://www.michiganlearning.org/goals-and-aspirations/>

NOTES |

EXTENSION: Invite participants to share a picture of their role model (perhaps one they have found online or one they have), provide materials for them to make a poster about their role model, or ask them to write about their role model based on what they already know or based on a bit of research.