

# Racial and Ethnic Identity Autobiography

## Family Background

Where did your parents grow up? What are/were their racial and ethnic backgrounds?

Are there different races and ethnic groups in your family (e.g., parents, siblings, extended family)?

What ideas did you grow up with regarding race relations? Do you know? Have you ever talked with your family about this? Why or why not?

Do you think of yourself as White? Black? Asian? Latinx? Native American? Mixed? Or simply as “human?” Do you think of yourself as a member of an ethnic group? What is its importance to you?

## Neighborhood

What was the racial makeup of the neighborhood you grew up in?

What was your first awareness of race—that there are different “races” and that you are a member of a racial group?

- What was your first encounter with another race? Describe the situation.
- When and where did you first hear the N-word or other similar racial slurs?
- What messages do you recall getting from your parents about race? From others when you were little?

## School

What was the racial makeup of your school? Of its teachers?

Think about the curriculum: What ethnic and racial groups were represented in the curriculum? How were they described? How did the school celebrate the achievements and celebrations of different ethnic and racial groups?

What cultural influences impacted your life (e.g., TV, advertisements, novels, music, movies, etc.)? What color God was presented to you? Angels? Santa Claus? The tooth fairy? Dolls?

What was the racial makeup of organizations you were in (e.g., Girl Scouts, soccer team, church, etc.)?

Was there interracial dating? Racial slurs? Do you recall any conflict with members of another race?

Have you ever felt or been stigmatized because of your race or ethnic group membership?

## Present and Future

What’s the most important image or encounter that you’ve experienced regarding race? Have you felt threatened? In the minority? Have you felt privileged? Are you at a loss to think of even one single experience?

What is the racial makeup of the school/organization you currently work in? Of your circle(s) of friends? Your neighborhood? Does it meet your needs? Do you want to change anything?

What goals do you have for the future with regard to race and ethnicity?

Source: Adapted from a Pacific Educational Group Workshop (n.d.).