ELA IN A TIME OF DISCONNECT:

CREATING BELONGING THROUGH IDENTITY, INQUIRY, & SEL



AGENDA

1. Welcome & Entry Activity
2. Identity & Joy
3. The Disconnect
4. Belonging & Inclusion
5. Engagement Through an SEL Lens
5. Inquiry Based Learning
6. Reflection & Application



GALLERY WALK

1. Which picture **resonates** with you?
2. What **qualities/ values/ memories** does this person/ group represent?
3. What might your choice reveal about your own **identity & experiences?**

DISCUSS

Find your card match

1. Which picture resonates with me?

2. What **qualities/ values/ memories** does this person/ group represent?

3. What might my choice reveal about my own **identity & experiences?**



IDENTITY

Culture, Race, Traditions





The Iceberg Illusion

Success is an iceberg





WHAT PEOPLE SEE

WHAT PEOPLE DON'T SEE

Persistence



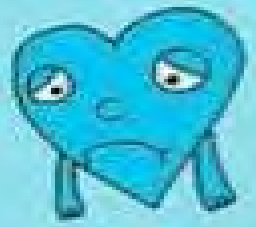
Failure



Sacrifice



Disappointment



Dedication



Hard work



Discipline



ASSUMPTIONS & STEREOTYPES

What people see	What they don't know

ASSUMPTIONS & STEREOTYPES

What We Notice	What We Don’t Know
• Doesn't talk	➢ *Could be nervous*
• Gets high marks	➢ *Could be under pressure*
• Always jokes	➢ *Could use humour to cope*
• Posts happy pictures	➢ *Could be struggling*

PARTS OF IDENTITY

Personal Identity:

- How you define yourself based on your priorities
- Experiences

Social Identity:

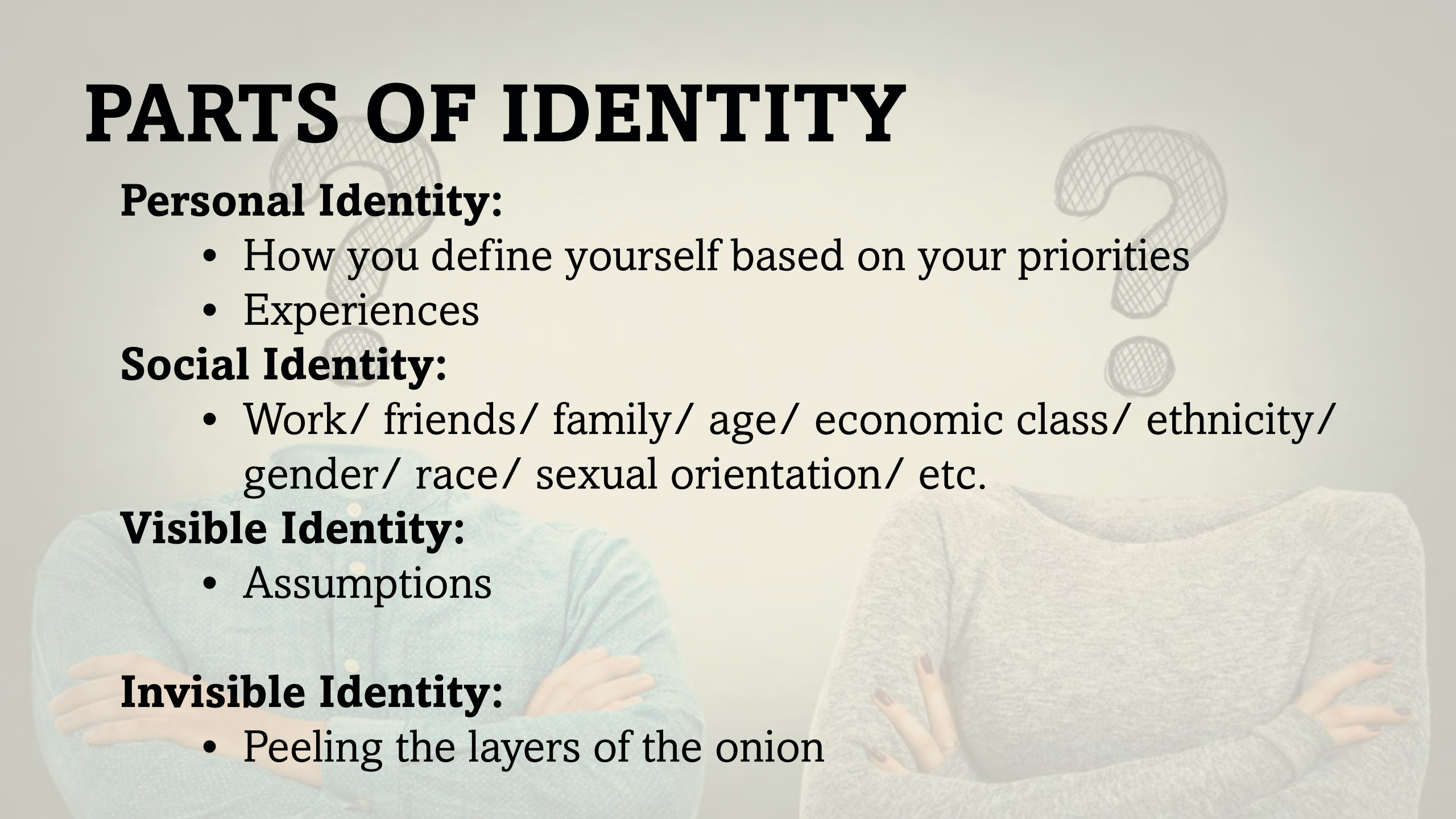
- Work/ friends/ family/ age/ economic class/ ethnicity/ gender/ race/ sexual orientation/ etc.

Visible Identity:

- Assumptions

Invisible Identity:

- Peeling the layers of the onion




Colour
or
Pen
your
JOY
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#INSIDEOUT



Colour or Pen your JOY

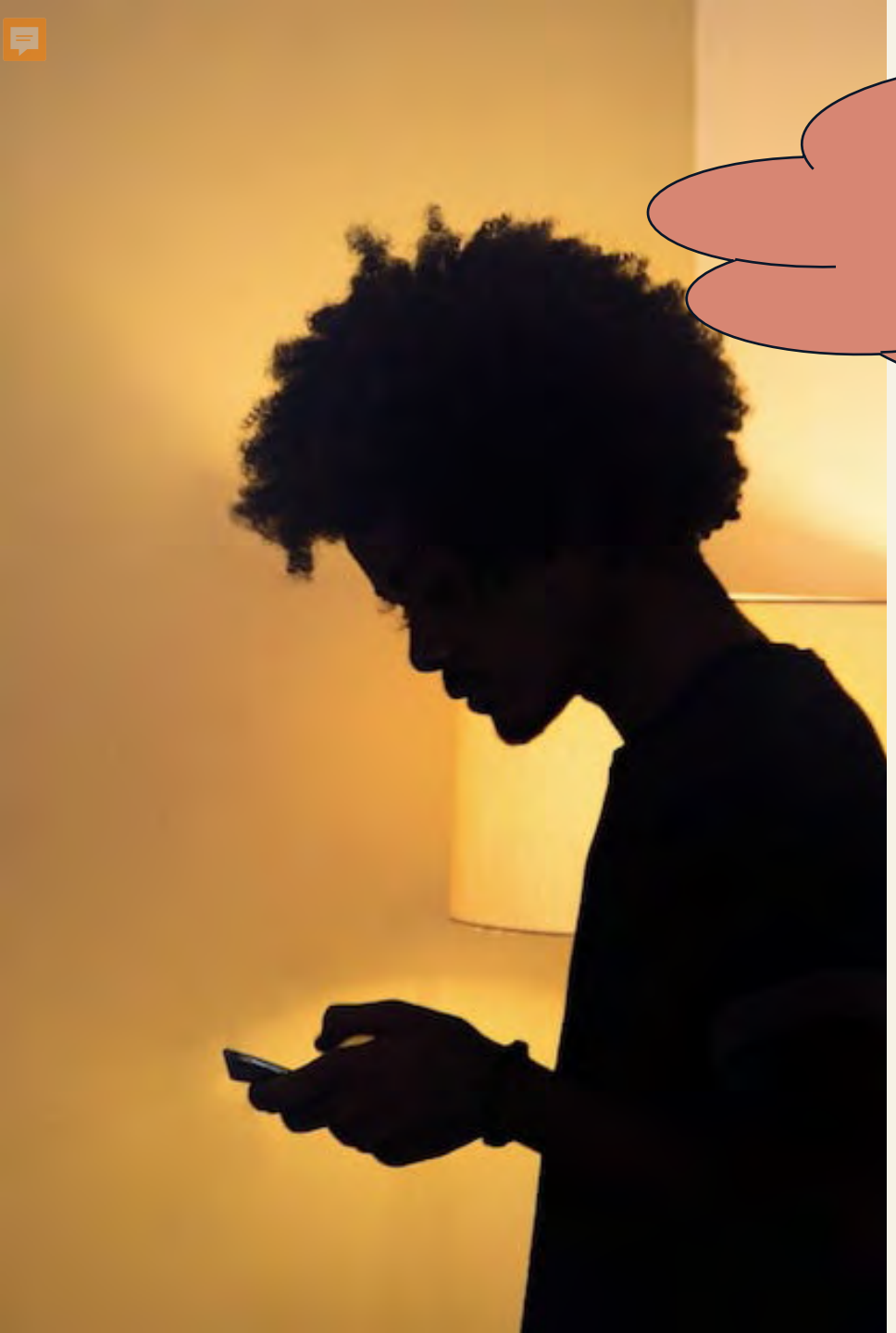
How do you share your joy with your students?

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#INSIDEOUT

THE DISCONNECT





THE DISCONNECT

Think about a time when you were physically present somewhere but felt disconnected/ unseen/ or excluded.

- What was happening?
- What factors created the disconnect?
- What support, action, or change would have helped?
- How did the experience affect your ability to participate or contribute?

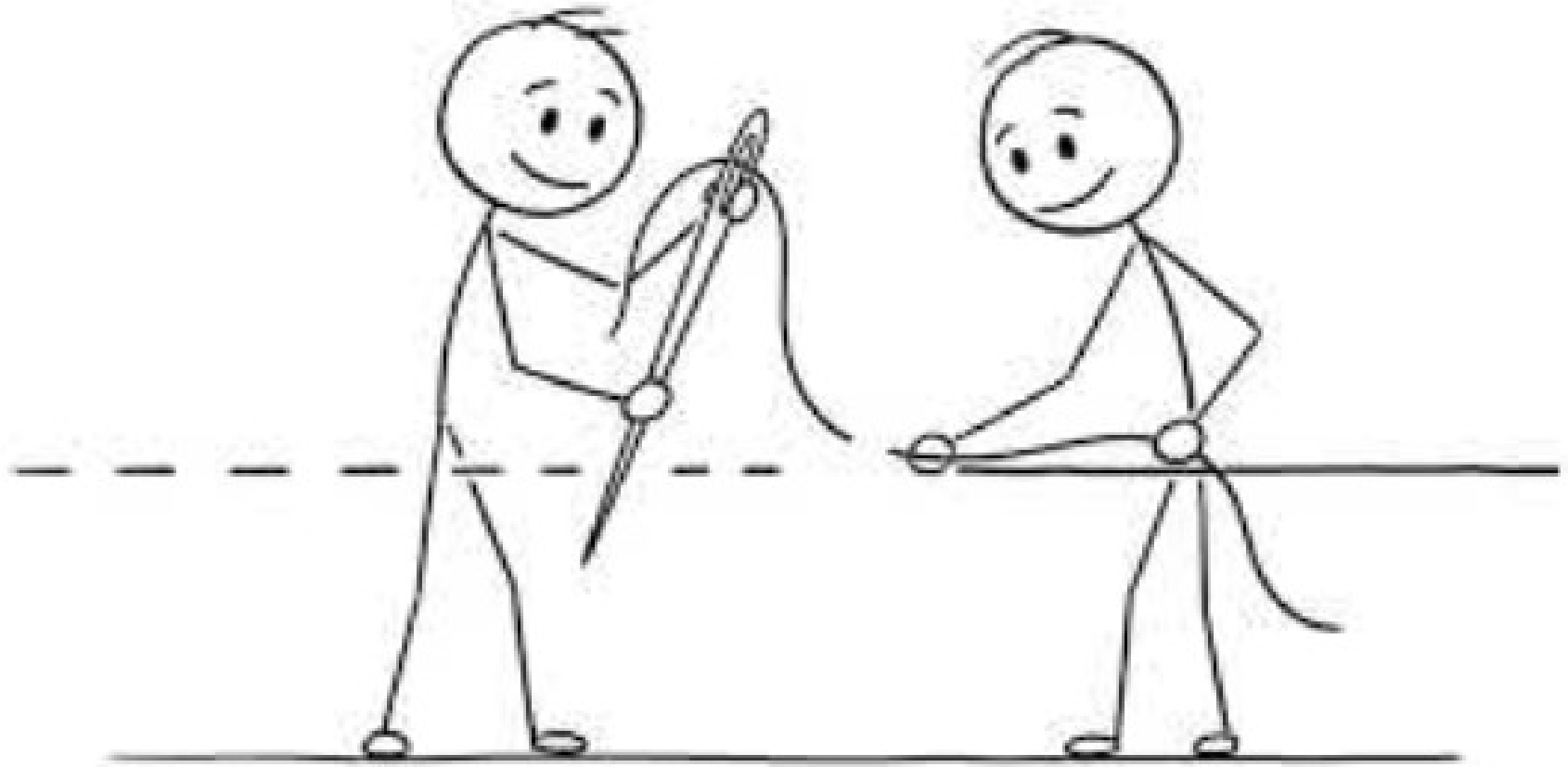
BELONGING



AGREE---DISAGREE

1. Every student has at least one meaningful connection with me or a peer in my classroom.
2. I intentionally notice who participates/ stays silent/ may be feeling invisible.
3. I create learning experiences that affirm a wide range of identities/ perspectives/ lived experiences.
4. I know which students feel a strong sense of belonging in my classroom and which students may not.
5. If I asked my students what helps them feel connected and engaged, their answers would align with my assumptions..

If belonging is a condition for engagement, then belonging cannot be left entirely to chance.





4 CONDITIONS OF BELONGING

1. **Seen**: Recognized and **valued** “I matter here.”
2. **Connected**: Authentic **relationships** and part of a community “I belong here.”
3. **Supported**: **Access** to people, resources, and opportunities “I can grow here.”
4. **Pride**: Identity & **agency**

“I take risks and ownership of my contribution.”

INCLUSION



HOW DO I CREATE A STRONGER SENSE OF BELONGING AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM?



If students feel seen when their identities and experiences are reflected, what does that require us to examine in our curriculum?

- Whose stories are centered?
- Whose knowledge is valued?
- Whose identities are reflected?

ELA is uniquely positioned to foster belonging because students are constantly engaging with stories, voices, identities, and perspectives.

WHAT DOES DECOLONIZING THE CLASSROOM MEAN TO ME?



HOW DO I ENGAGE IN CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING?





I WANDERED LONELY...
—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

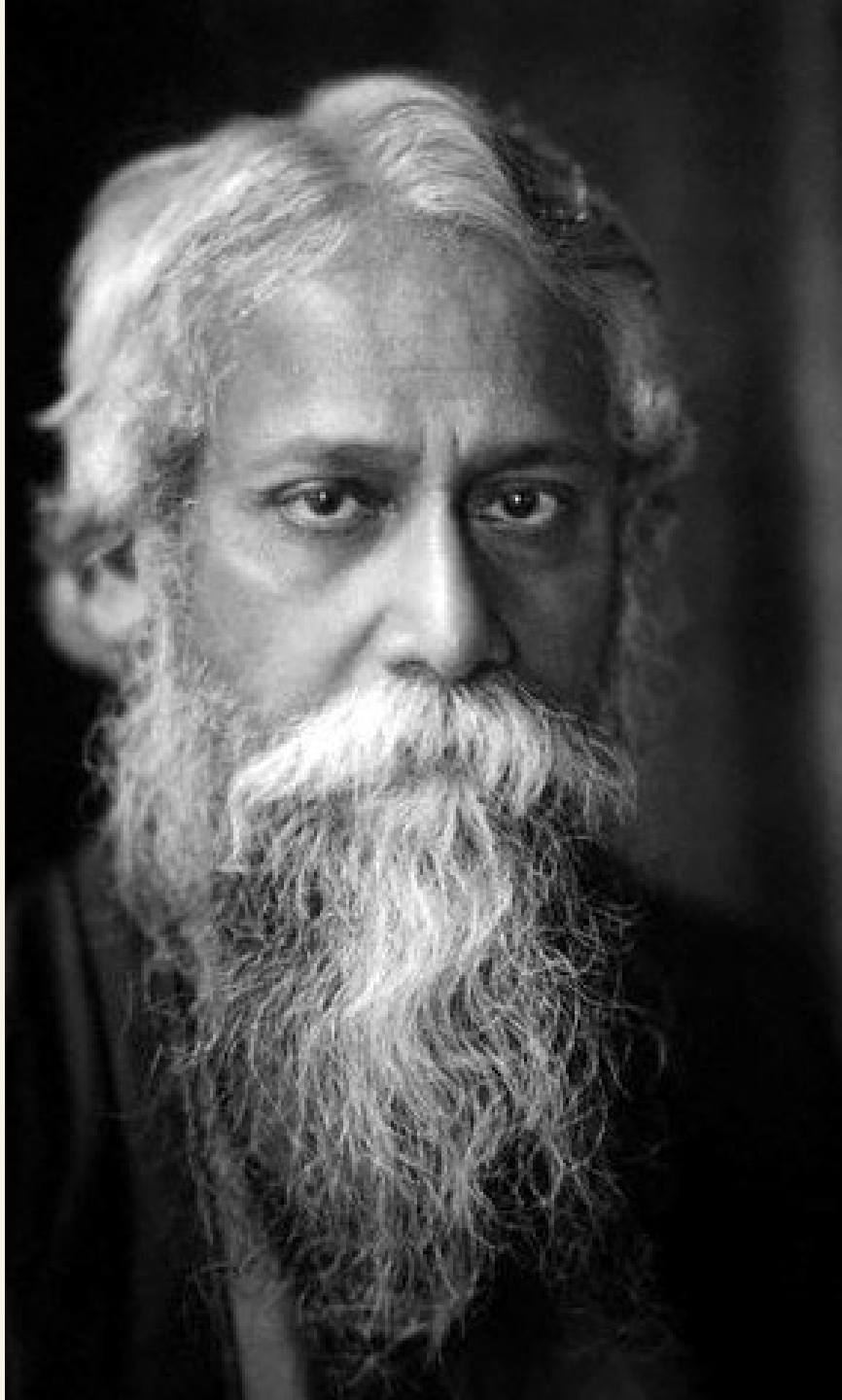
I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

THE FLOWER-SCHOOL —RABINDRANATH TAGORE

When storm-clouds rumble in the sky and June showers come down.

The moist east wind comes marching over the heath to blow its bagpipes among the bamboos.

Then crowds of flowers come out of a sudden, from nobody knows where, and dance upon the grass in wild glee.



THE CONNECTION

Belong

Culture

ENGAGEMENT



WHAT IF THE BARRIER TO ENGAGEMENT ISN'T A STRATEGY WE'VE OVERLOOKED, BUT AN ASSUMPTION WE'VE NEVER THOUGHT TO CHALLENGE?



INQUIRY IN ENGAGEMENT

What might be preventing this student from participating?

What I Know	What do I Assume	What I Don't Know	What I Wonder
What is explicitly visible?	What am I interpreting?	What information is missing?	What questions emerge?

INQUIRY IN ENGAGEMENT: GROUP ACTIVITY

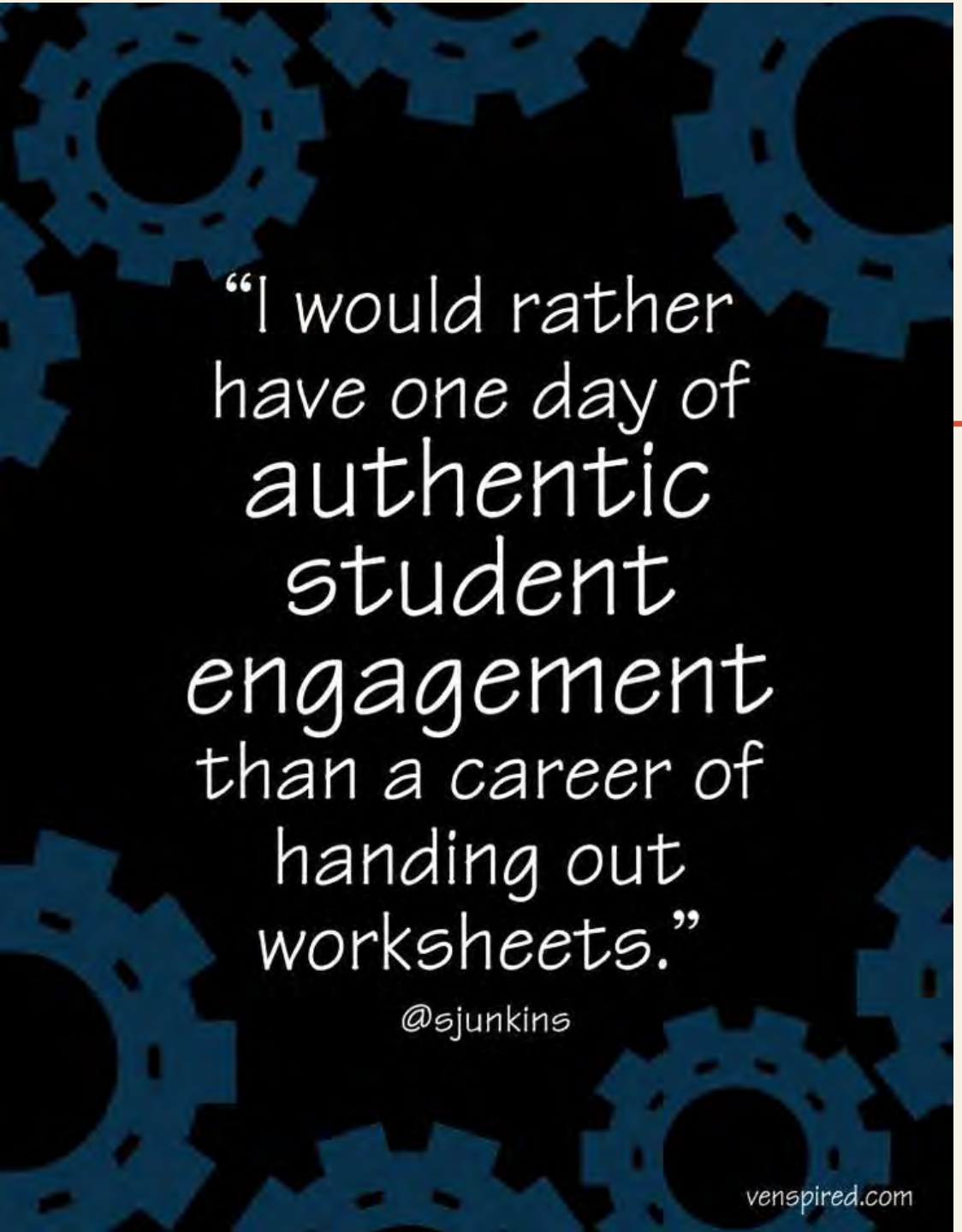
Share a case study you are currently experiencing in your classroom:

What I Know	What do I Assume	What I Don't Know	What I Wonder
What is explicitly visible?	What am I interpreting?	What information is missing?	What questions emerge?

WHAT IF I APPROACHED PEOPLE WITH CURIOSITY INSTEAD OF CERTAINTY?

HOW MIGHT THAT CHANGE THE RELATIONSHIPS, CLASSROOMS, OR COMMUNITIES I HELP CREATE?





STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

What might disengaged students actually be disconnected from?

- Content?
- Process?
- People?
- Purpose

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING



"SEL is already embedded in much of what we do.

How do we become more intentional about its impact?"



SEL CONNECTION

Why does this lesson matter today?



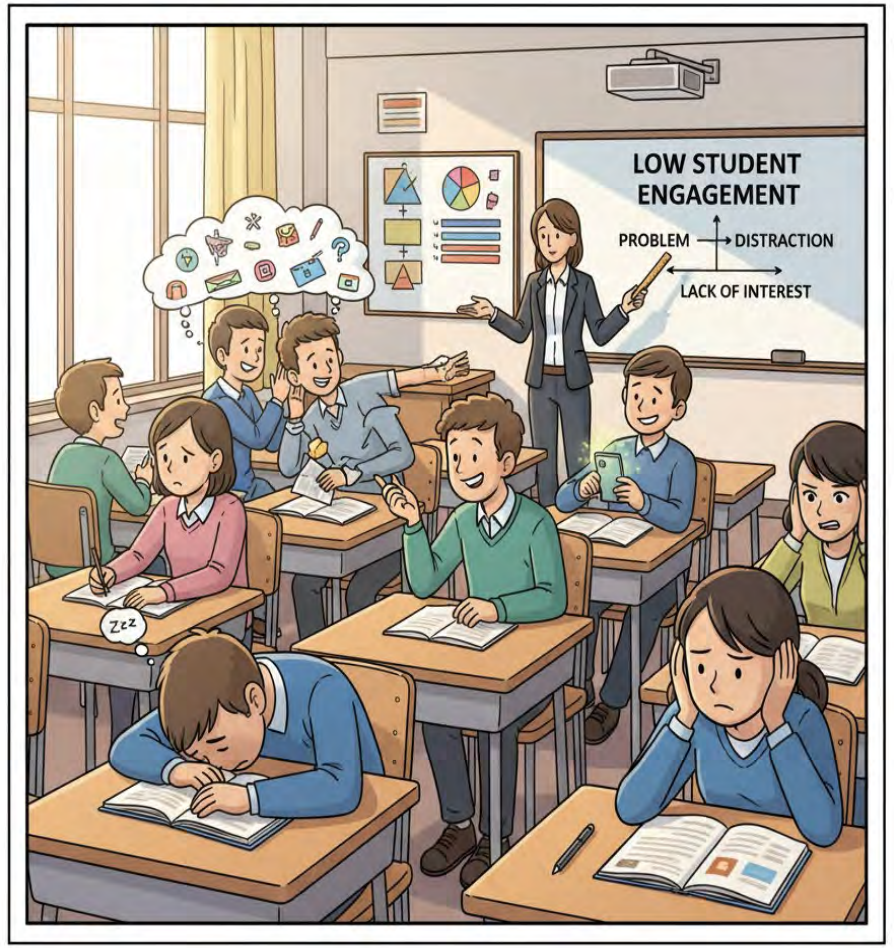
REFRAMING QUESTIONS

Example:

What is the theme in the story?

Why do people sometimes hide who they are in order to belong?

What message from this text feels most relevant today, and why?



Instinctive	Intentional
"We're discussing a novel."	"We're developing perspective-taking and empathy through discussion."
"Students are reflecting on their work."	"Students are building self-awareness and self-reflection skills."
"Students are working together."	"Students are practicing relationship and collaboration skills."
"Students can choose their topic."	"Students are developing agency, voice, and a sense of belonging."

REFRAMING QUESTIONS

Traditional Question

What is the theme of the story?

Reframed Inquiry Question

What message from this text feels most relevant today, and why?

SEL & Engagement Connection

Encourages personal connection, relevance, and perspective-taking.

REFRAMING QUESTIONS

Traditional Question

Describe the main character's development.

Reframed Inquiry Question

What experiences shaped the character's identity, and how do those experiences compare to our own?

SEL & Engagement Connection

Builds empathy, self-awareness, and identity exploration.

REFRAMING QUESTIONS

Traditional Question

What is the conflict in the text?

Reframed Inquiry Question

Which conflict feels most significant, and how might different readers interpret it differently?

SEL & Engagement Connection

Encourages perspective-taking and respectful discussion.

REFRAMING QUESTIONS

Traditional Question
What happened in this chapter?

Reframed Inquiry Question
What surprised, challenged, or resonated with you, and why?

SEL & Engagement Connection
Invites reflection and personal connection.

REFRAMING QUESTIONS

Traditional Question

What literary devices does the author use?

Reframed Inquiry Question

How does the author's craft influence what readers think, feel, or question?

SEL & Engagement Connection

Encourages deeper emotional and intellectual engagement.

REFRAMING QUESTIONS

Traditional Question

What evidence supports your answer?

Reframed Inquiry Question

Which piece of evidence most influenced your thinking, and how?

SEL & Engagement Connection

Develops metacognition and reflective thinking.

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INQUIRY BASED LEARNING UNIT EXAMPLES

GRADE 9 IDENTITY PROJECT PORTFOLIO

HOW DO THE STORIES WE INHERIT AND EXPERIENCE SHAPE WHO WE ARE AND WHO WE ARE BECOMING?

Why it mattered:

- Personal connection.
- Authentic engagement led by curiosity
- Connected to curriculum
- From texts to lived experience.
- Projects presented on BookCreator

ENGLISH FIRST PEOPLES 10
FIRST PEOPLE'S PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

How can learning through story, land, relationships, and reflection guide us in understanding who we are, how we belong, and how we carry responsibility for the well-being of our communities, ancestors, and future generations?

- reflection over time
- connections to **ALL** First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL)

WHAT → SO WHAT? → NOW WHAT?

Identity, belonging, and engagement are connected.

Why is this important?

What is at the core? Relationships!

What intentional shift will I implement in my practice?


Celebrate your
JOY
#INSIDEOUT
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