
That's Racist: Preparing for Discussing Controversial Issues Using Web-Based Simulations

G. R. Marvez

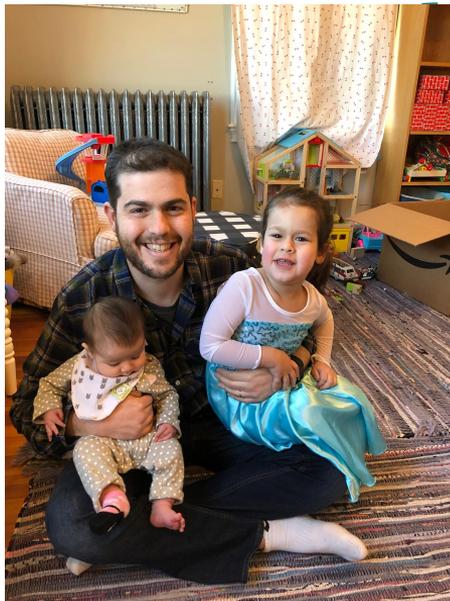
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Introductions



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Introductions

MIT Teaching Systems Lab: *The way students learn is changing. The way teachers learn should change too.*

Practice Spaces: Teachers need spaces to practice teaching strategies in low-stakes settings. We're drawing on models from games and simulations to create these practice spaces. We seek to establish collaborations with other teacher education programs, school districts, and research institutes to design and test these spaces.



Practice Spaces and Teacher Learning

“Drills vs. Scrimmages”



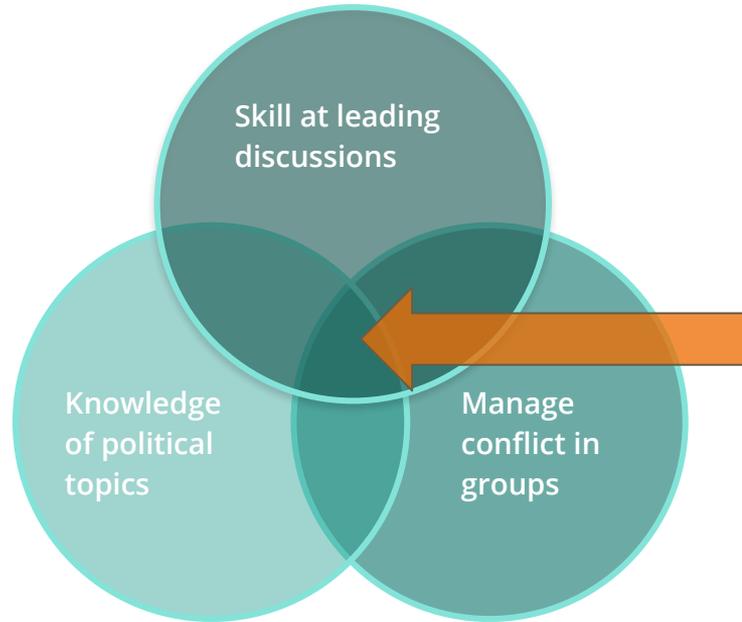
Controversy in the Classroom?



- 24% of teachers in a national survey said their classroom climate was more contentious than it was before the 2016 election
- 41% said students were more likely to introduce unfounded claims from unreliable sources

(Source Rogers et al., 2017)

Skills for facilitating discussions of controversial issues



Opportunities to improve practice of improvisational interactions



Discussion Leader Overview

- Created *Discussion Leader* - an adaptive choose-your-own-adventure simulation for practicing leading controversial discussions
- *Discussion Leader: Immigration*
 - Manage a discussion about immigration policy with a group of diverse students
- *Discussion Leader: Gun Violence*
 - Practice enforcing classroom norms in a discussion about gun violence





Today's Session: Choose Your Own Discussion!

- Immigration Discussion
- Link to play: <http://bit.ly/OGDLTSL>

- Gun Violence Discussion
- Link to play: <http://bit.ly/GVDLTSL>





Reflection Protocol

Turn and Talk with a Partner:

1. What was your experience like in the simulation? What parts did you find most challenging?
2. Which of the students did you most strongly identify with? Which students did you least identify with?
3. Was there any point in the simulation where you would have given a different response than the ones offered?
4. If you could do the simulation again, what would you do differently?





Design Exercise

With your partner consider the design of a new teacher practice space:

1. What is an issue that has come up with students in your school (either with you or with colleagues)?
2. What are three student perspectives on this issue?
3. What skills do teachers need to work on to facilitate discussions about this issue?

Resources and People!

Discussion Leader can be accessed through the TSL website at:
<https://tsl.mit.edu/project/discussionleader/>

Have ideas? Want to chat with us?

Contact us at:

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