SAMPLE RACIAL HEALING CIRCLE PROMPTS

The following sample prompts may be used to facilitate racial healing circles as part of your library’s TRHT GSC series, Finding Your Voice: Speaking Truth to Power. Prompts have been developed in consideration of each title on the reading list by Mike Wenger (senior consultant, W.K. Kellogg Foundation; adjunct faculty, The George Washington University) and Salaam Green (executive director, Literary Healing Arts Foundation).

Sample Prompts for
Gabi, A Girl in Pieces by Isabel Quintero

1. Think back to your experiences in high school. What are three things you would tell your 17-year-old self? Consider writing a letter to your 17-year-old self. How would you end the letter?

2. In what ways have you changed from the person who you were in high school? In what ways are you the same?

3. What has been the greatest piece of advice you have received? Have you put this advice into action? If so, in what ways? If not, why? If you could give one life lesson to a teenage boy or girl, what would that be?

4. Talk about your journey towards finding your voice. Give an example of a time you spoke up for yourself and what you believe in? How did you feel after you spoke up?

5. What are some ways you have intentionally served as an ally to a marginalized group? What are some positive ways you respond to pressure in your daily life?

6. Talk about a time someone placed unrealistic expectations on you. Write or journal for 3–5 minutes about how you felt. Share your thoughts.
Sample Prompts for

Piecing Me Together by Renee Watson

1. This story is about Jade learning to speak up for herself. Tell a story about a time you spoke up for yourself and felt rewarded for doing so. How did it make you feel? How has it affected your behavior since then?

2. Visualize a neighborhood in which you’d like to live. What are the key characteristics about this neighborhood? How is it different from the neighborhood in which you live now? What are some things you can do to bring these characteristics to your neighborhood?

3. Visualize a school you would like to attend. What are the key characteristics about this school? How is it different from the school you now attend? What are some things you can do to bring these characteristics to your school?

4. Think about someone whom you consider a teacher or mentor, someone who is “looking out for you.” How does this person help you? How does this person make you feel? How does this affect your behavior? Would you like to be a mentor to someone else? What qualities would make you a good mentor?

5. What will success feel like for you? How will it affect you and your life?

6. Tell a story about a time when you helped someone else. How did it make you feel? How do you think it made the person you helped feel?
Sample Prompts for

I Am Alfonso Jones by Tony Medina

1. Think of a positive role model in your life. What qualities do you most admire in this person? How has this person affected your life?

2. Think of something you would really like to do. How do you think you’d feel if you were able to do it? What can you do in order to get to do this?

3. Describe one thing about which you feel passionately. How has this passion affected your life?

4. What makes you feel peaceful? What do you do to create this feeling? How does it affect your attitude when you achieve this feeling?

5. What makes you feel powerful and secure? What do you do to create this feeling? How does this feeling affect your attitude and your behavior?

6. Tell a story about a time when you felt invisible or dehumanized but were able to overcome the feeling. What was it that helped you to overcome this feeling? How did it change your life and/or the lives of others?
Sample Prompts for

American Street by Ibi Zoboi

1. You find yourself suddenly transported to another unknown world. What would you tell the first stranger you meet about the United States of America? What would you want to learn about this unknown land and their culture?

2. Explain what the American Dream means to you. Do you believe it still exists today?

3. In what ways have you benefited from “freedom”? In what ways has freedom been a nightmare for you or others close to you?

4. Would you uproot yourself and/or your family? If so, what factors would need to be in place for you to do so? Moving to a new city can be stressful. What are some ways, now or as an adult, you could begin to make new friends if you needed to relocate?

5. Define what it means to belong in your peer group. Share a time where you felt like an outsider in general. How did you feel?

6. Write for 2–3 minutes from the prompt “I am.” Share your thoughts.
Sample Prompts for

**The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo**

1. What are some of your fears? What are some ways that you have conquered your worst fears? What would you tell someone who admitted to you that they feared another race or ethnic group?

2. Pretend you are meeting someone for the first time, tell them three interesting things about yourself. Example: Do you know the meaning of your name, who named you, or why you were named your name? Is naming important in your culture or family?

3. Who has influenced your life the most? Why? Whose life have you influenced? In what ways?

4. What is the role of modern-day teachers? In what ways has this role changed over the last decades?

5. Who taught you about your culture? What were some of the ideas they taught you? How important is culture to you? Give examples from your cultural experiences.

6. In your opinion, what are some important messages missing from history books? How would you explain your favorite period in history to a first-generation American?

**Bonus:** Spend a few minutes exploring and thinking about your creative expression (poetry, writing, acting, singing, dancing, cooking, sports, quilting, gardening, etc.). Share or discuss your special talent with others. How do you feel when you are doing this activity? How comfortable are you sharing with others?
Sample Prompts for

**Anger is a Gift** by Mark Oshiro

1. Think about a time you had to overcome fear or hate or anger—and you did. How did you do it? How did it make you feel? How did it change your life?

2. Tell a story about a time you felt stuck and were able to overcome the feeling. How did you do it? What were you able to accomplish when you overcame the feeling? How did it make you feel?

3. Tell a story about a time you encountered someone who you thought was completely different from you in terms of race or sexual orientation and you were able to see something of yourself in this person. How did it affect your behavior and your life?

4. Think about someone you really admire. What do you admire most about this person? How has this person influenced your life?

5. Reg was good at drawing. What are you good at? How does doing it make you feel?

6. Think about something you are really proud of accomplishing. How does it make you feel?