Overview:

This lesson plan will challenge participants to understand the power behind dominant narratives and why it's easy to accept them as nonbiased and unpolitical. Using a discussion guide, they will attempt to interrogate the “perfectly logical explanations” behind dominant narratives.

Background and Information:

Perfectly Logical Explanations is published by the LSA Inclusive Teaching Initiative, University of Michigan (see citation below).

Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. "Recognize the weight of dominant narratives and the power they have."
2. Understand "how dominant narratives are political and biased and why it's easy to think they are not."
3. Increase "awareness of how [they] learn, absorb, and reproduce dominant narratives."

Time:

1 hour

Group Size:

Entire group

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

• Minimization
• Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Cultural Self-Awareness:

• To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

Openness:

• To initiate and develop interactions with culturally different others.
• To suspend judgment in valuing interactions with culturally different others.

Curiosity:

• To ask complex questions about other cultures.
• To seek out and articulate answers to these questions that reflect multiple cultural perspectives.
Other Skills:
Diversity & Inclusion

Links to Activity Instructions:
- Perfectly Logical Explanations instructions on the LSA Inclusive Teaching website

Related Tools:
Tools to use in conjunction with this lesson:
- Dialogue Blocker Activity
  - This activity can help participants understand how dialogue blockers might emerge from dominant narratives.
- Dominant Narratives
  - This activity can be used as an introduction to dominant narratives.