

Playing Keep It Real

with your students

A Teacher's Guide



Your role as a teacher is one of utmost importance! Each day, you give your students the opportunity to open doors, expand visions and share in the learning of new skills and ideas. Your interactions and teachings can have a lasting impact on how they develop and grow as individuals.

Yet you know, more than any, that in our present society there are many challenges to creating optimal environments in which children can share outside of their 'social masks' or prescribed roles. Issues such as:

- Peer Pressure
- Bullying
- Economic Stress
- Disruptive Domestic Situations
- Interpersonal Challenges
- Learning Difficulties
- Gender and Ethnic Profiling
- Self-Esteem

(and the list goes on), affect a young person in many ways.

So, where in their education, is there **a place** that they can express what their reality is? What they wrestle with and face each day? Where in their curriculum can they **learn** to value their unique self-expression? Uphold their important ideas? Where can they look at someone they don't know or like and come to realize they are beautiful?

Playing **Keep It Real** provides a diverse and exciting experience that invites a new way of learning about ourselves and others. And most importantly, it was created to address the true challenges that young people face.

Playing **Keep It Real** will allow practice and discovery in:

- Empathy
- Diversity
- Communication
- Individuality
- Learning from ones Strengths and Vulnerabilities
- Compassion
- Critical Thinking
- Listening
- Empowerment

Important qualities, indeed, if we are to become human and radiant in the world.

Keep It Real is a game of non-judgmental learning and self-disclosure which bares the fruit of increased

resiliency and connections.

Here are some guidelines that may be useful as you open the unlimited potentials of young minds and hearts yearning to share their gifts and wounds.

Validate the Importance of Authentic Communication

Young people are often incredibly sensitive; picking up the way their peers feel, or tuning into the 'zeitgeist' of the group they are in. Often, it is difficult to share their 'true' self, thoughts and feelings, if they are different or quite unlike those whom they have to interact with or befriend daily. Let your students know that “who they are” is what you want to know.

Set the Stage for Empathy

Encourage your students to open their minds to what others are saying; to their stories and experiences as they live their lives. Discuss differences in perception, religions, work ethics, family life. Let your students enter one another's world by supporting the notion that we all come from very different backgrounds because we are individuals.

Offer a Non-Judgmental Process

As you play the game, reflect to your students the power of refraining from judging each other. Simply helping each other to accept 'what is' and what is being presented, is a vital quality. Explore further, how judgment keeps us separate and isolated.

Utilize the Game to Learn About Diversity

Enjoy your students as they share their interests, exciting ideas and specific contributions. Tap into the concept of beauty and appreciation; of learning from each others' cultures, languages, rituals, lifestyle. What can you learn from each other today?

Practice Assertiveness Through Exploration

Playing **Keep It Real** offers regular exercises in “assertiveness skills.” Skills which are not easy to come by if you struggle with self-consciousness, introversion, guilt, shame, fear or have learned to be a people pleaser. Allow your students to practice “speaking from the I,” “standing up for their ideas,” “taking risks,” and “being direct.”

Emphasize Equality

There is nothing more liberating than to realize that you are special, and so is everyone else. Furthermore, when you engage in the practice of shared experience, you begin to understand how we all share in similar fears, longings, hopes and dreams. Discuss with your students how much we have in common and that we all have basic needs: to be heard and seen; to express ourselves; to love and be loved.

Please feel free to use *Keep It Real* in your curriculum. It can be tailored to any topic or discussion.

Some additional ideas for teachers!!!

- 1) Do Peer Group sessions alternating leaders
- 2) Pick Focus Topics of Discussion
- 3) Have a **Keep It Real** club!