

# ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF YOUR DIGNITY STORY

Students/participants leverage Donna Hicks' **Essential Elements of Dignity** as a brainstorming tool to identify and develop their own dignity stories. In the process, they consider the characteristics of dignity that they extend to others and deserve for themselves.

AGES 10 +

TIME 60 MIN

## PREPARATION

Teachers/Facilitators create 5 stations (preferably where students can sit and write), each one with two of the items listed on Donna Hicks' **Essential Elements of Dignity**. These can be written on a piece of paper, sticky note or a white-board.

- **STATION 1:** Acceptance of Identity, Safety
- **STATION 2:** Acknowledgment, Inclusion
- **STATION 3:** Recognition, Understanding
- **STATION 4:** Fairness, Independence
- **STATION 5:** Benefit of Doubt, Accountability

## MATERIALS

Copies of Donna Hicks' **Essential Elements of Dignity worksheet** for each student/participant  
Paper, pencil or pen

- **TECHNOLOGY OPTION:** Computer, internet, Donna Hicks: **Exploring the Meaning of Dignity** and/or **The Declaration of Dignity** (stop at 1:35). Copies of Donna Hicks' **Essential Elements of Dignity worksheet** for each student/participant.

## DIRECTIONS

**PONDER:** Give students/participants one minute to brainstorm how they can extend dignity to others. Explain that Harvard scholar Donna Hicks studies dignity and has



created ten *Essential Elements of Dignity* that people can use as a framework for treating others with dignity.

- **TECHNOLOGY OPTION:** Watch Donna Hicks explain dignity in [Exploring the Meaning of Dignity](#) or play video [The Declaration of Dignity](#) (stop at 1:35).
- **TECHNOLOGY-FREE OPTION:** Read the [Essential Elements of Dignity worksheet](#) with students.

**THINK/PAIR:** Distribute [Essential Elements of Dignity worksheet](#). Working in small groups, students/participants go to each of the five stations. While at a station, students/participants will Think/Pair. They read the two elements of dignity, silently brainstorm, and—using their worksheets—write examples from their lives that illustrate the two dignity elements, and, if they are comfortable doing so, share their examples with their group. Groups move around the room until they have visited all five stations.

**COMPOSE:** Students/participants circle their favorite examples and decide which one to use for their dignity story. They can write their stories in paragraph form, bullet point the main ideas, or draw a cartoon/image that clearly tells the story.

**PAIR/SHARE:** Students/participants share their story with their small groups. Remind students it is important to respect each story, even if it is unfamiliar or is different than something you have experienced before.

**REFLECT AND VALIDATE:** Students/participants practice an element of *Essential Elements of Dignity*, Recognition, and take turns validating and praising their peers, identifying which stories resonated with them, made them think differently, moved them, etc. Students/participants can snap when someone says something they agree with.

## EXTENSIONS OR GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

- **CONNECT:** Students/participants complete one or more of the learning experiences in *Share* and share their dignity stories and ideas with the Global Dignity community.
- Provide students with examples of dignity stories with [Sample Dignity Stories](#)

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Connect with our Global Dignity community and explore our Teaching Dignity resources and curriculum at [GLOBALDIGNITY.ORG](https://www.globaldignity.org).