



# Tips for Teachers

## Hey Teachers,

We can all relate to being stereotyped at some point in our lives. This month VOX teen staff members write about their personal experiences with prejudices. Whether they've been teased about their appearances, beliefs or interests each writer honestly shares how he or she copes.

"It's appropriate that February is also Black History Month, a time to recognize the struggle to combat negative prejudices," writes Sage Nenyue, this month's co-coordinator and a senior at Tech High. This issue is all about smashing stereotypes! There are plenty of opportunities below to get your students to raise their voices. They could even be published in next month's VOX issue!

**Target Skills:** Reading, Persuasive/Essay Writing, Letter/Poetry Writing, Analytical/Critical Thinking, Research, Group Work, Interviewing, Public Speaking

### Letter Writing

Have your students each find a story that stands out to them in this issue and craft a letter to the author with their thoughts. Send the letters to VOX, and we'll publish the best ones in the next issue! We always welcome class sets.

### Poetry Writing

Every issue of VOX offers readers a



chance to showcase their original poetry or art on "The Wall" (p. 20) Have your students write a poem — about anything — and submit it to VOX. Again, we publish the best poems every month.

### SUBMISSIONS

Please send any exceptional writing resulting from "Tips for Teachers" to VOX, 229 Peachtree St., Ste. 725, Atlanta, GA 30303 or [vox@VoxRox.org](mailto:vox@VoxRox.org) for potential publication in the newspaper. Please write Tips for Teachers on the envelope or subject line. And include each student's name, age, school and contact information (including e-mail address) for verification and feedback.

You'll find more tips for using VOX in the classroom on the back of this page. Please let us know what works for you!

**Reading, Analytical/Critical Thinking, Persuasive Writing**

VOX's Extra! Extra! section (p. 3) highlights teen-related news. Have students share their views in an Op-Ed piece about a story of their choice.

**Analytical/Critical Thinking, Persuasive Writing**

On page 3, North Atlanta High senior Jasmine Gallman writes a review of Kenna's latest album: "Make Sure They See My Face." Album and movie reviews give teens a chance to write freely about something they're already passionate about. Have students review their favorite album or movie, using descriptive details.

**Analytical/Critical Thinking, Essay Writing**

In "Accepting Other Cultures" (p. 7) Tri-Cities High sophomore Think Vu shares openly about being both the perpetrator and victim of various prejudices. He writes, "The insults I've received have never failed to anger me, even though I know I'm not what they call me." Ask your students to write about a time when they've been hurt by a stereotype, hurt others with stereotypes, spoken out against a stereotype or stood by as others perpetuated a stereotype. Students may feel more comfortable writing anonymously.

**Reading, Analytical/Critical Thinking, Group Work, Public Speaking**

On page 8, Georgia Perimeter College freshman Crystal Jordan takes the unusual position that cliques are necessary for high school survival. Divide students into two teams — one for, the other against cliques. After giving each team 10 minutes to brainstorm arguments for their respective positions, hold a classroom debate on the issue.

**Reading, Analytical/Critical Thinking, Public Speaking**

In "Smiles without a Face" (p. 13), Tech High junior Kalina Harrison writes about her life-changing experience with Bell's palsy. She writes, "I'm thankful for those who have said mean things to me because they've taught me an important lesson: to never make fun of other people's conditions because I never know if I'll find myself in similar situations." Read the story as a class. Then start a class discussion

about teasing and bullying. Explore sample scenarios and discuss conflict resolution techniques. Ask: Why do people bully? What are ways to stop bullying? Together, have the class brainstorm and implement the most effective strategies into a pamphlet to stop bullying.

**Public Speaking, Letter/Persuasive Writing**

In "Racial Tensions in the Justice System: Why I Think Black Men are at Risk" (p. 11), Lithonia High junior Sasha Daniels addresses blatant disparities of black men caught up in the U.S. justice system. She writes, "Despite the numbers that prove the inequality, racism has become this hush-hush issue that no one wants to discuss or admit to." Have students engage in conversation about this issue. They could write letters to VOX and/or the AJC about how they feel black men are treated/mistreated in the U.S. justice system. Alternatively, your students could write persuasive essays about whether they think racism still exists today and why.

**Group Work, Interviewing**

On page 15, Grady High sophomore Nia Williams writes about her fear of change. Divide students into pairs and have them interview each other about a time when they experienced a major transition. Have students write short stories based on their findings, incorporating quotes from the interviews.

**Essay Writing, Research**

*Extra Challenge:* The theme of next month's issue of VOX is Taking a Stand. Have students write about an issue they're taking a stand on. They should include how they're doing so and how other teens can get involved. Send their stories to VOX for possible publication.