**The teacher has to be**

The teacher needs to practise aspects of today need to be conducted at home due to factors such as political unrest, poverty and the inability to access resources needed for full educational practice.

**Photographs and videos.**

Researcher’s field notes;

**The process should take into account bias.**

The teacher must be aware that the topics raised maybe related to their own personal experiences.

**I pick it up.**

This action research project aims to foster an understanding of the term implicit bias whilst demonstrating how boys can develop a sense of empathy to better understand other people.

**Worldwide, heightened tensions around diversity advocate that the youth of today need to be actively taught about diversity and implicit biases.**

The participants of the Action Research project were a form class consisting of 25 Grade 6 boys.

These boys were selected because of the amount of time they had spent with their form teacher and the close relationship they had established with her.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

The data collected were both qualitative and quantitative and were derived from:

- Flipgrid interviews;
- Student surveys, including an empathy questionnaire and the Harvard Project Implicit Bias survey;
- Student journals, in which they reflected on the activities covered during the action research process and provided evidence of visible thinking;
- Class discussions and feedback from case studies;
- Researcher’s field notes;
- Participants’ work samples, including the final product of a Philosophy for Children storybook;
- Questionnaires;
- Photographs and videos.

**Inductive analysis was used to narrow down the information collected.** Interviews were transcribed and common themes identified. The patterns and themes that emerged from the inductive analysis were recorded on an Excel spreadsheet, which was then used to code and categorise the responses of the learners and the different data collection methods. Each category was noted as it appeared and coded accordingly. Connections were made between the coded data and the research question. The process was further filtered to identify three main themes, which emerged by interpreting the simplified data. The use of both qualitative and quantitative data allowed for the application of Mertler’s (2017) polyangulation method. This approach combines results from various data sources, enabling each source to be corroborated and thus increasing its validity.

**The Research Action**

1. Pre-interview/pre-discussion about the term Implicit bias, and what was understood by it.

2. Participation in a pre- and post-empathy questionnaire.

3. Exposure to the use of picture books.


The examination of these existing stories allowed for the boys to interact with the various scenarios by making minor changes to certain variables. These included changing the race and gender of the characters.

5. Encouraging the boys to share their written personal narratives on the topic through journaling.

**Key Readings**


**Research Context and Participants**

How can the use of narrative help Grade 6 boys understand implicit bias and develop empathy towards others?

**Key Findings and Discussion**

- Storytelling is an effective teaching tool to pique and maintain Grade 6 boys’ interest whilst eliciting constructive discussion.

  ‘Wow! Are these real life-stories? This is cool’

  ‘This is hectic. I’ve never thought about it like that!’

- A deeper understanding of the term implicit bias (and by association, bias)

  ‘I feel happy that I’m learning about this and that everyone has it and it’s good that we’re talking about it. It helps us understand each other better. I haven’t changed me but I’m thinking twice before I make judgements on others.’

  ‘I’ve started to recognise that my parents have unconscious bias - I pick it up.’

- A heightened sense of empathy

  ‘I feel I’m beginning to learn about other people’s perspectives’

**Conclusions**

Through the use of narrative, the Grade 6 boys appear to have been enriched by the project by coming away with a deeper understanding of implicit bias and an ability to better understand and demonstrate empathy. Implications for future practice include the following:

- The same teacher needs to be involved in every step of the process and s/he needs to embrace the uncomfortable nature of the process;
- The teacher has to be adaptable, as each class is unique and will handle the project differently;
- The teacher must be aware that the topics raised maybe hurtful and embarrassing to certain groups and individuals;
- The teacher needs to practice good classroom management and enforce sound collaboration and communication skills;
- The process should not be rushed.