

## The Unopened Gifted Discussion

- Pieces of paper with statements from the book written on it spread around the room
  - I don't like the label on the gift.
  - I'm waiting for everyone else to open their gift first.
  - What if once I open it, it is not what people expected it to be?
  - Isn't it enough just to have the gift? Why do I have to open it?
  - I don't want people to feel bad because they don't have a gift.
  - My parents won't let me open it.
  - Others might be jealous of my gift.
  - People may make fun of me because I have this gift.
  - If I open it, people will expect more gifts.
  - What if people are disappointed by what's inside?
  - I don't want to be seen as special because I have this gift.
  - I'm bored with the gift.
  - No one has shown me how to open my gift.
  - No one seems to care that I have this gift.
  - I can't find the gift anywhere.
  - My friends don't want me to open it.
  - I was told it wasn't my gift.
  - Where do I start to open it?
  - I never asked for this gift.

### Lesson:

10 minutes – Begin by projecting the story “The Unopened Gifted” on the wall using the LCD projector. The teacher can either read each page or depending on the level of participants, can have them take turns reading each page.

15 minutes – Have a discussion about the story and its content.

- Ask them what the story was about?
  - Common answer will be it is about someone who does not want to open a gift, offering excuses as to why.
- What happens to the gift the more excuses that are given?
  - Common answer will be it begins to break down and fall apart. Participants can cite specific examples to illustrate this.
- Why do you suppose the gift is empty at the end of the story?
  - Answers will vary.

- Ask them to think about the gift in another way. What if the gift was not a physical gift, but rather your brain? And these were excuses why someone is not willing to open their mind. How would this change the way they think about the story?

10 minutes – After talking about this, point out that around the room are various statements from the book (you do not have to use all 19 of the statements but can select the ones you feel are most pertinent for your participants).

Teachers are going to choose the excuse they have encountered the most from students. They are going to go around the room in a gallery walk, reading these statements and then deciding which of them they have heard from students the most.

Announce they should move to the statement they hear the most from students. At each of these statements will be a group that has formed organically. Some groups might be very big, others very small, some with a single person. This is perfectly alright.

15 minutes – Once participants get into their groups, give them some time to discuss the following questions:

- What drew you to this statement?
- Can you provide a specific example of when a student used this statement as an excuse not to do something?
- Do you think there is ever a time this is a valid excuse?
- What advice would you give this student upon hearing this excuse?

Give them 10 minutes to discuss this in their groups. Then select a group spokesperson who will share with the class a consensus to what the group came up with.

10 minutes – Reflection

Bring the class back together and unpack what has happened during this activity. Some guiding questions you might want to ask.

- What did you learn from other people's responses to their student's excuse?
- How do you feel about your student using the excuse now?
- Does the empty box have a different meaning to you now?
- How would you convince a student that it is valuable to use their gifts?