

Lesson 8: “Brenda Howard: The Mother of PRIDE”

Summary:

Students will learn about the history of PRIDE in the U.S. and Brenda Howard, an American bisexual rights activist who originated the idea for a week-long series of events around PRIDE Day that are now held around the world every June.

Materials:

Goals:

1. Students will discuss the importance of PRIDE and think about why PRIDE events are important for the LGBT community.

Objectives:

1. Students will understand the history of PRIDE, and value of community activism and support.

Session Outline

1. **Opening Essential Question:** *Tell us something you're proud of and why.*
2. **Report Activity:** Students will report on what they learned about Brenda Howard from the previous week's homework. (*leader note: ask students if they know why the LGBT community celebrates PRIDE in June. Use this opportunity to briefly discuss the Stonewall uprising.*)
 - Ask this question to the entire group. Answer around the circle or as a “pair share.”)
3. **Transition:** Remind the students that Brenda Howard was a major player in the First March after Stonewall (Christopher Street Liberation Day March). She coordinated the 1-month anniversary rally and the 1-year rally/march (after Stonewall), which became the annual Pride March which we all celebrate to this day.
4. **Case Study:** Read the following case study with your group and debate/discuss the questions that follow:
 - Azad and Melanie are two active members of their school's GSA. They are planning to have a meeting about how they can celebrate PRIDE Month at their school. As they were planning their meeting, Melanie said, “I don't understand the point of PRIDE Month. Why would you be proud of being LGBT?”
 - Azad responded that he had never thought about it. Melanie went on to say, “Isn't being proud of being LGBT like being proud of having brown hair? Shouldn't people be proud of things they've accomplished, not things that they have no control over?”
 - Azad suggested that PRIDE was a symbolic celebration of the beginning of the Gay Rights Movement and also stood as a political statement. Melanie wasn't satisfied with that answer and still wondered why people use the term “PRIDE”. Azad responded saying, “Well, maybe if we think about ‘proud’ as the opposite of ‘ashamed,’ then maybe we can understand why PRIDE Month is so important!”
5. **Role Model (Optional):** Role model will lead a discussion about the meaning of PRIDE. They will participate in the conversation while also discussing their thoughts and

experiences with PRIDE. Consider asking the role model to address the following questions when telling their story:

- Tell a story about your experience at PRIDE. Why do you attend PRIDE events?
- What do you think PRIDE does for the LGBT community?
- Tell a story about your first PRIDE event. What do you remember? How did you feel?
- What is your favorite part of PRIDE? What do you look forward to?

6. Role Model and Case Study: In addition to providing their insights and experiences with PRIDE events, the role model can use the following questions to facilitate a discussion about the true meaning of PRIDE.

- Do you agree with Azad? When we think about PRIDE celebrations, is “proud” the opposite of “ashamed”?
- Should PRIDE be a celebration or a political statement?
- Define PRIDE. Is being LGBT an accomplishment? Or, is *being out* as LGBT an accomplishment/something to be proud of?
- What do PRIDE events tell the world about our community?
- Does PRIDE represent you? Does it represent all LGBT people?