



## Facilitator Page

# ROLE PLAYING IN THE LIBRARY

### Materials

- Provide printed copies of scenario and roles to students

### Set Up

- Break students up into groups of 3 or 4.
  - If groups are of three, each person will take turns playing a role. If in groups of four, three students will role play with the fourth observing and/or taking notes on what they are seeing, hearing, and observing. Each student will play each role once.
- Optional:
  - Have a copy of the book discussed in the scenario out for each group to look through before getting into role playing.
  - Have a set of props or costumes available for participants to help them get into their character

Students will be going into this scenario with some skills from prior Units, as well as from their own experiences. But it is expected they will not have the tools or skills they wish they did. That is part of the experience and those things will serve as springboards for the rest of the program. Emphasize, too, that they may disagree with the perspective of one or more of the roles they play. That is expected. The purpose is to practice explaining points of view and arguments, as well as to build empathy with each of the roles.

Students will work through the following questions from the perspective of the role they are playing. It is likely there will be disagreements or questions the groups find themselves asking along the way. That is purposeful—encourage them to write those questions or thoughts down for the follow up discussion with the whole group. Examples of those questions might include whether or not the comics section of the library has teen comics in it or if those are only in the teen area; whether or not this parent has complained about books previously; about whether or not the teen has been to the library before or is well-known to the librarian; what are the library's collection policies and challenge policies (that one is a reminder how much they really have learned already in the program!); and so forth.

### Scenario

A parent finds a copy of the book *Gender Queer* on display in the comics area of the public library, which is next to the teen area. The parent tells the librarian working at the nearby desk they are uncomfortable with that book being so close to the teen section. They do not believe it is appropriate for anyone under the age of 18 and should be removed from the library.

### Roles

- The Parent who found the book
- The Teenage child of the Parent who found the book but who is NOT present
- The Librarian who receives the complaint



## Parent Role

# ROLE PLAYING IN THE LIBRARY

### Scenario

A parent finds a copy of the book *Gender Queer* on display in the comics area of the public library, which is next to the teen area. The parent tells the librarian working at the nearby desk they are uncomfortable with that book being so close to the teen section. They do not believe it is appropriate for anyone under the age of 18 and should be removed from the library.

### Questions for the Parent Role

- What values or beliefs do you hold when it comes to your responsibility as a parent to your own child?
- What is your argument for removing the book from the public library?
- How do you imagine you would feel if you learned your teen had read the book? What conversation might you have with them about it?

### Questions for Discussion after Roleplay

- What were the most compelling arguments for removing the book from the library in your groups? What were the least compelling?
- Was it harder to be a listener in one of these roles than in another one? For example, did you find it hard to listen to the parent's reasons for wanting a book removed if you were their child or the librarian? Did you find it hard to listen to the librarian's response when playing the role of parent? What made it hard?
- Which role was most challenging to play? Which was the easiest?
- Did anything in this scenario surprise you?



## Teen Role

# ROLE PLAYING IN THE LIBRARY

### Scenario

A parent finds a copy of the book *Gender Queer* on display in the comics area of the public library, which is next to the teen area. The parent tells the librarian working at the nearby desk they are uncomfortable with that book being so close to the teen section. They do not believe it is appropriate for anyone under the age of 18 and should be removed from the library.

### Questions for the Teen Role

- If you read a book that made you uncomfortable, what would you do?
- How would you navigate disagreeing with the values and beliefs of your parent in this situation? What kind of conversation would you have with them and who might you turn to for help?
- Imagine you have a younger sibling who picked up *Gender Queer*. How would that make you feel and how would you/wouldn't you bring this up with your parent? With that sibling?

### Questions for Discussion after Roleplay

- What were the most compelling arguments for removing the book from the library in your groups? What were the least compelling?
- Was it harder to be a listener in one of these roles than in another one? For example, did you find it hard to listen to the parent's reasons for wanting a book removed if you were their child or the librarian? Did you find it hard to listen to the librarian's response when playing the role of parent? What made it hard?
- Which role was most challenging to play? Which was the easiest?
- Did anything in this scenario surprise you?



## Librarian Role

# ROLE PLAYING IN THE LIBRARY

### Scenario

A parent finds a copy of the book *Gender Queer* on display in the comics area of the public library, which is next to the teen area. The parent tells the librarian working at the nearby desk they are uncomfortable with that book being so close to the teen section. They do not believe it is appropriate for anyone under the age of 18 and should be removed from the library.

### Questions for the Teen Role

- How would you respond to the parent in this situation?
- What reasons would you give for having and keeping *Gender Queer* in the comics section of your library?
- Would your response in this situation be the same or different if it was the teenager who wanted the book removed, rather than the parent?

### Questions for Discussion after Roleplay

- What were the most compelling arguments for removing the book from the library in your groups? What were the least compelling?
- Was it harder to be a listener in one of these roles than in another one? For example, did you find it hard to listen to the parent's reasons for wanting a book removed if you were their child or the librarian? Did you find it hard to listen to the librarian's response when playing the role of parent? What made it hard?
- Which role was most challenging to play? Which was the easiest?
- Did anything in this scenario surprise you?