**Contracting for Safe/Brave and Reflective Learning Environments**

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Activity: **View video**

[John Amaechi: Identity and a Safe Environment](https://www.facinghistory.org/videos/john-amaechi-discusses-identity)

[**https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/john-amaechi-discusses-identity**](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/john-amaechi-discusses-identity)

**As you watch:** Note anything that stands out to you about identity, safe space and achievement.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Have you ever…**

* *Shared an idea or question you thought might be unpopular or “stupid”?*
* *Had an idea or answer to a question but decided not to share it?*
* *Asked for help understanding something?*
* *Been confused, but have not asked for help?*
* *Interrupted others when they have been speaking?*
* *Been interrupted by other when you have been speaking?*
* *Thought about your classroom as a community?*

**Key elements of *brave* spaces[[2]](#footnote-2):**

* A ***brave*** space within a classroom environment contains five main elements:
* “Controversy with civility,” where varying opinions are accepted
* “Owning intentions and impacts,” in which students acknowledge and discuss instances where a dialogue has affected the well-being of another person
* “Challenge by choice,” where students have an option to step in and out of challenging conversations
* “Respect,” where students show respect for one another’s basic personhood
* “No attacks,” where students agree not to intentionally inflict harm on one another[[3]](#footnote-3)

Activity: Contracting with the Class **[[4]](#footnote-4)**

**Our Goal:**

Create a Civilized Contract for a Safe / Brave Space during this seminar.

**Brainstorm:**

Break up into groups and work with your peers to create list of norms that will achieve this goal.

**Consolidate and Identify:**

Share 1-2 norms that your groups agrees is/are MOST important for a civilized, reflective environment.

**Consolidate and Identify Class Standards:**

Copy these onto a master document and discuss. Each member of the class signs contract.

1. Adapted from *Facing History and Ourselves*: *The Reconstruction Era and the Fragility of Democracy* Guide [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Adapted from Facing History and Ourselves The Reconstruction Era and the Fragility of Democracy [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections from Social Justice Educators“ From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces (2013) Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Adapted from *Facing History and Ourselves The Reconstruction Era and the Fragility of Democracy* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)