

**Race 1: “I’m gonna be so mad!”**

It’s International campfire and the idea is to celebrate different cultures. On your way in, you’re chatting with a group of 12 and 13 year-old girls. 4 are White or European-American and 1 is Asian-American. Emily, who is Asian-American says to her friend, “I swear, if we go inside and there are people with their eyes taped back, wearing kimonos and make-up, with CHOPSTICKS in their hair, I’m gonna be so mad!”

*Consider the racial stereotypes (and mockery) that are patterns in Emily’s life: she can see them coming before they happen. Are there ways that that event — which is supposed to positively represent diversity — that the event could do more to respectfully engage with the cultures of everyone at camp or not? How come?*

Follow-up: When everyone goes, you notice some campers are dressed up in makeup, kimonos, and sticks in their hair! *NOW what do you do?*

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**Race 2: “Yeah, that’s racist!”**

There is a 13 year-old boy in your group from Puerto Rico. During cabin time, you overhear kids call him “El Salvador”. You ask one of the campers why he’s calling him that.

Before he can answer, another 14 year-old camper chimes in with, “Yeah, that’s racist!”

Your immediate reaction is relief this guy didn’t flat out call the other racist. But you’re also thinking about how none of the other kids’ (mostly White kids) camp nicknames have anything to do with their race or ethnicity, much less imply that Latinos are interchangeable (Are your campers thinking, ‘Puerto Rico, El Salvador: what’s the difference?’)

*Could this be a teachable moment? Why/why not? What would you say?*

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**Race 3: Two Jacks**

Two boys in your group of 14 and 15 year-old senior campers are named Jack. To keep them apart, the other kids quickly give them the nicknames Asian Jack and Caucasian Jack, based on their ethnic backgrounds and appearances. As the week goes on, they mostly use ‘Caucasian Jack’ only when they need to distinguish between both Jacks, whereas ‘Asian Jack’ gets called that even when the other Jack isn’t around.

*How might you address this?*

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**Race 4: Kenton’s lucky hair**

You have a mostly White cabin with one boy you read as African-American or Black and another as Latino. The boys in your cabin are very physical with each other in a playful way. You notice that with Kenton, your one Black camper, they touch his hair often and they soon decide that it is lucky to do so (and end up doing it a lot!). You are concerned because you’ve heard from Black friends that this is a common thing for Black people in the US: that people (usually White ones) touch their hair often and without permission; even strangers do this. Your co-counselor tells you to ask Kenton how he feels about having his hair touched or just to watch how he reacts. Your concern is that, even if he wanted to, Kenton could not react negatively without damaging his friendships in the cabin. If it annoyed him, how could he show his irritation (especially with stereotypes about “angry Black people”)? And you know it wouldn’t be well-received if he suggested it might be because of his race. Besides, what reason would he have to confide in you, a White counselor he just met?

*So, what can you do?*

*Should you educate the White campers about how their actions affect people? How their actions fit a racial pattern? If not, why not? If so, how so?*

