

# Privilege Walk



The Privilege Walk is an activity that will help start conversations within the GSA about recognizing privilege and the power it has in our lives. It is a way for you and the GSA to start conversations on intersectionality (the concept that our multiple identities make our interactions with the world unique and different) and how the GSA can create safe and affirming spaces for EVERY student.

**Read this to the group before you start:**

“This activity is not to blame someone for having more privilege than other members of the group. This activity is meant to start conversations and open our eyes to the concept of privilege, and how it can positively and negatively impact our lives. Remember that the GSA is a safe space, and we are here to listen to and support each other.”

## What You Need:

- List of statements related to privilege or obstacles
- Instructions for the privilege walk
- Large enough space for members to form a straight line with an arm’s length between them, and enough space to move 10 steps forward and 10 steps backward (outside works great, or the gym)

## What to Do:

1) Members form a straight line across the room about an arm’s length apart, leaving space in front and behind.

2) **Read this to the group:**

"Listen to the following statements, and follow the instructions given. No one is going to check up on you, so if you feel you qualify to take a step then do so, if not then you may stay where you are. You are the judge of what you should do."



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3) Read the statements one at a time allowing time for participants to take a step.

4) When all the statements have been read process the activity using the following questions:

- Take a moment to look at where you are in proximity to others. How does it make you feel, and why?
- Are you surprised at where you are? How does it feel to be in front? In the middle? In back? Did you come to any new realizations? If so, which one had the most impact?
- How can the GSA help create a safe space for everyone who did this activity? Think about every “point” on the line.

*Adapted from the University of Albany School of Social Work*



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- If you are a white male, take one step forward.
- If there have been times in your life when you skipped a meal because there was no food in the house, take one step backward.
- If you have visible or invisible disabilities, take one step backward.
- If you have attended school with people you felt were like yourself, take one step forward.
- If you grew up in an urban setting, take one step backward.
- If your family has health insurance, take one step forward.
- If you have days off school that coincide with your religious holidays/traditions that you celebrate, take one step forward.
- If you feel safe and affirmed in your sexual orientation or gender identity, take one step forward.
- If you feel safe using a public or school restroom that aligns with your gender identity, take one step forward.
- If you have been the victim of bullying or harassment based on your gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or age, take one step backward.
- If you have not had to “come out” (explain to people that you’re straight, as you can just assume they will assume it), take one step forward.
- If you have never felt pressured to “tone down” your gender expression in your clothing, makeup, or hairstyle choices, take one step forward.
- If you were born in the United States, take one step forward.
- If English is your first language, take one step forward.
- If you have been impacted by divorce, take one step backward.
- If you came from a supportive family environment, take one step forward.
- If you have ever felt unsafe walking alone at night, take one step backward.



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