**Overview**

In this classroom video, English language arts teacher Jonathan Dee teaches a lesson on the concept of “we” and “they,” using the Facing History lesson Identity and Labels. Students consider the *Doonesbury* cartoon “Street Calculus” and then turn their analysis inward, examining what calculations they make as they encounter others and how others might make assessments about them. Concepts of membership, belonging, and stereotypes are addressed throughout the lesson.

**As you watch, consider the following:**

1. Why does the teacher use the cartoon to open this discussion, rather than having students immediately explore their own affinity groups?
2. Mr. Dee taught this lesson just after his students finished reading To Kill a Mockingbird. How might this lesson enhance students’ ability to engage with literature?
3. At 3:19, Mr. Dee notes that one student describes the process of creating mental lists of others as being “about feeling safe.” What do you think this student means? How might you have responded to the student?
4. At 6:37, Mr. Dee says, “If I had more time, I could have addressed some of the things that kids brought up” when discussing labels, assumptions, and stereotypes. Trying to “fit it all in” in a class period is often a challenge; how might you address students’ comments such as these if time grew short?

**In this video:**

Jonathan Dee, teacher  
8th grade, Cameron Middle School  
Framingham, MA

**Video Goals:**

The purpose of watching this video is to:

- Explore some of the ways we use labels to identify each other, and consider the ways that those labels affect how others think about us
- Witness how to implement the Identity and Labels lesson plan
- Observe students grappling with the power of labels and stereotypes and the stakes of “we” and “they” divisions

**Lesson Resources:**

- Unit: My Part of the Story: Exploring Identity in the United States
- Lesson Plan: Identity and Labels
- Cartoon: “Street Calculus”