



**This is a graded discussion: 10 points possible**

due -

## Discussion #2-Ally versus Co-Conspirator

10 68

### Discussion Board #2:

**WATCH:** This very short video of Bettina Love and her take on being a Co-Conspirator for People of Color (POC):

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4804332/user-clip-conspirators> [\\_\(https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4804332/user-clip-conspirators\)](https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4804332/user-clip-conspirators)

### Respond to:

1. In your own words, describe the difference between being an ally and being a co-conspirator.
2. Describe ways in which you can see yourself as a co-conspirator in role as teacher who serves their communities. *Do keep in mind that being an ally and/or co-conspirator is not only relegated to people of color (POC), but to any marginalized community seeking a voice and activist to walk alongside them and also share their stories with others in order to create change.*

Complete this **by Saturday** and then comment on at least two other classmates' Discussion entries **by Sunday**.

\*If interested in more on **Bettina Love** and to see the full video, please check out this link where University of [Georgia Professor Bettina Love](https://www.c-span.org/person/?119907) [\\_\(https://www.c-span.org/person/?119907\)](https://www.c-span.org/person/?119907) talked about the book, *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*, in which she shared her thoughts on how educators, parents, and community leaders can advocate for “education freedom” for students through civic engagement and activism.

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?458837-1/we-survive> [\\_\(https://www.c-span.org/video/?458837-1/we-survive\)](https://www.c-span.org/video/?458837-1/we-survive)

← Reply

Unread



✓ Subscribed

Oct 5, 2020

There is a clear difference between an ally and a co-conspirator. An ally is an informed individual who supports minority movements in a society. However, a co-conspirator is a person who uses her/his/their privilege to take actions that directly benefit those minority movements. A clear example of this is happening now as the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement continues to take hold in America. Allies support the movement and post BLM posters on their property, but they are not out on the streets marching or lobbying their leaders to change unfair practices across institutions. Co-conspirators, on the other hand, are on the frontlines, like the white mothers and grandmothers who created barricades in Portland so that the police and federal agents could not arrest protestors.

I am a co-conspirator as an educator by incorporating diverse voices in my composition classes at a Hispanic-serving institution and empowering my students to stand up for their rights. For instance, I subvert dominant white narratives by teaching Patrice Khan-Cullors's book, *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir*, incorporating articles by bell hooks and Gloria Anzaldúa (among other theorists of color), and having discussions on LGBTQ+ authors of color from working-class backgrounds. I am empowering my students with knowledge that will help them navigate and tackle institutional racism and other unfair practices in education, the workplace, and beyond.

[← Reply](#)[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Oct 6, 2020

Hello, Luis nice to meet you. As an inspiring instructor, when it comes to being a co-conspirator in your educational field how is the knowledge you are giving your students aiding in the upcoming life struggles they will be faced with in life? In other words, how does your teaching inspiring change and drive within them ?

[← Reply](#)[Luis Orozco \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922)

Oct 8, 2020

Hi Monta!

Unread



✓ Subscribed

queer individuals of color, I hope my students will feel validated and inspired to create the same positive changes those writers have started to engender with their words and actions.

[← Reply](#)[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Oct 8, 2020



Hi Luis. Nice to "see" you again. I appreciate what you're doing in your classroom. I've had some great professors over the years who challenged the narrative I was raised with and broadened my limited exposure beyond white, male, Eurocentric ideas. As a woman, I felt seen and heard, and as a white, cis-gender person, I learned that there are so many other valuable perspectives beyond the ones that predominated my early education. Your students are lucky to have a teacher who appreciates a diverse range of perspectives and incorporates them into the curriculum.

[← Reply](#)[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Oct 11, 2020



I like what you're doing with your composition classes. It's very inspiring that you teach your students how to navigate a world that doesn't seem to treat them fair. Keep it up! Slowly, but surely, these kids will grow up to empower others.

[← Reply](#)[Shuo Niu \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757)

Oct 11, 2020



Hello Luis,

Thank you for your share of the answer. I feel it kind of hard to summarize the property of the two kinds. Your answer inspired me :)

[← Reply](#)



Oct 6, 2020

The assignment of differentiating ally from co-conspirator centers on understanding the bridge that turns words into actions, as one selflessly puts their self in an uncomfortable situation fighting for a burdened comrade. Shown in many cases in the United States, society's infrastructure has subliminally and explicitly marginalized a group of people into criminals before they even attempt to break the law. These criminal assumptions are made based on prejudice stereotypes on ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender, and other human characteristics that define that person. For any individual belonging to these minorities, categories present an uphill battle living in society. Luckily, there is a group of individuals that do not have to go through these struggles but use their privilege to aid the oppressed. It is easy to feel sympathy for someone, to make a social media post claiming to support something deemed unjust. However, words are not enough as it may come across as insensitive, as the message stirs toward on YOUR feelings and emotions while the problem you are presenting becomes irrelevant. Now, if one can convert those thoughts, words, and emotions to noble deeds, one finds themselves contributing in the act of co-conspiring. As a co-conspirator, one will break the law, becoming a part of what society has viewed as wrong. You will find yourself standing the frontline, taking bullets for your fellow black brother or sister at a protest. You will find yourself as a German hiding Jews in your house from Nazi radicals. You will find yourself as a public official leaking information exposing the evils in our countries administrative organization that they are using to target a designated group that may get you put in jail. Those are the merits that define a co-conspirator.

I am not an instructor, as my enrollment in the TESOL hopes of making that into a reality. However, I have learned many lessons from various friends that are instructors that will serve as an inspiration in what I hope to perform beyond my paid role of teaching a subject. I hope to analyze my surrounding area to present ideas to my superiors to promote creating various programs that will assist my students and their families. Charity events, life skills programs, and other outside resources will contribute to my cause. Finally, teach my students life skills to help them navigate through the terrain living in a world that may seem difficult for them based on their ethnicity.

[← Reply](#)

[Kelly H. Kim \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907)

Oct 7, 2020

Monta,

Unread



✓ Subscribed

as much. I think all of us can be part of these privileged groups depending on which social issues we face. This is because we all have our own unique struggles as we come from different backgrounds and circumstances. Although it's hard to be a co-conspirator in every battle we come across, I think it's important to be aware of those of others and stand by those we believe in.

Kelly

[← Reply](#)**Monta Wiley** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624>)

Oct 7, 2020



Exactly Kelly. You also brought up a great point when you touch on us having unique struggles. While these unique struggles may differ from each group, there are always small elements that make our designated struggles relatable. Through this two groups can work together pushing toward a common goal/mission., almost like forming an alliance !!

[← Reply](#)**Erin Lynch** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296>)

Oct 8, 2020



Hi Monta. You make an great point about social media. I get frustrated with social media posts expressing support for a cause without action to back it up. While I think it's a good platform for sharing information, I think those types of posts tend to center on the individual and as you said, the cause loses relevance. In my opinion, those types of posts seem to serve the purpose to make the person who posted it feel better about themselves by alleviating guilt or anxiety. In many cases it seem it's not so much about the evoking change as it is about telling their social media circle, "I'm a good person". In recent months, however, I have seen a lot more people put action to their words and push hard for change, especially the younger generation. It's encouraging and inspiring and hopefully others take note and see what it takes to bring change.

[← Reply](#)**Monta Wiley** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624>)



social media post. Can someone make a post or post a news story support a cause without using "I" references thus making the post relevant steering the attention away from their emotions ?

[← Reply](#)



**Erin Lynch** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296>)

Oct 11, 2020



Great point. I think social media posts can be very informative - whether to share important news, or share ways to get involved. I suppose I was referring to posts I see too often from the same people who express sadness, fear, or outrage, but nothing more beyond that. I think those posts tend to be self- serving.

[← Reply](#)



**Gabriela Miranda Laguna (She/Her/Hers)** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/142177>)

Oct 9, 2020



Hello Monta, I liked the part of your text when you said " a instructor will serve as an inspiration" . I agree, I believe that to grow as complete people we must develop as much as we can, taking every opportunity that life gives us to learn and observe. First, we must start helping our environment, the people who are closest to us like our family and friends, our community; only in this way, we strengthen ourselves to be a better person and to be able to help others. I am pretty sure, with your enthusiasm, you will get everything that you proposed to you.

[← Reply](#)



**Erica Wahlgren** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386>)

Oct 9, 2020





unfairly based on their ethnicity really resonated with me. I think it's important to have an open dialogue with our students and each other about these topics so that we can begin the process of making meaningful change.

-Erica

← [Reply](#)



[Aya Takeichi-Leitz \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001)

Oct 10, 2020

Hi Monta,

It's nice to meet you. I felt like many of the students who are taking these courses are experienced teachers... I have no experience instructing, and just like you, I am taking this TESOL course to prepare myself for future teaching opportunities. I like your thoughts. Nice to take the same class as you!

← [Reply](#)



[Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411)

Oct 10, 2020

Hello Monta, I found your post to be really inspiring. I like that you talked about including outside resources to assist others in an accessible way. Living in Hawai'i for a few years, I found that a lot of people there could be considered allies but not co-conspirators. The islands are majority people of color yet they don't believe that they can make a difference. They think that they are a forgotten state and even if they raise their voices, it won't be heard. But, if they realize they can make a difference on a community level, I think that more people would be willing to become co-conspirators.

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Oct 11, 2020

Monta, YES to all of THIS! I loved how you cited specific examples of what a co-conspirator does versus what an ally doesn't do. Social media, for sure, has its merits, but



Like you, I'm also not an instructor. My goal is to make my teaching career a reality with the help of the TESOL program.

Your last sentence about teaching students life skills to help them navigate a world not designed for them...totally resonated with that. It's very sad that we have to do this. It's a sort of teaching that isn't taught in schools.

[← Reply](#)



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617>

Oct 7, 2020

An ally is someone who supports your beliefs, values, lifestyle, cause, stance, etc . They are someone who you know is 'on your side' when you call them to talk. They will listen to you, encourage you, and support you from the sidelines. A co-conspirator is like an ally but these are the people who rise to the next level. Not only does he/she listen, encourage, and support you in your beliefs, cause, value, lifestyle, stance, etc., they are right there beside you to help you along the way. A co-conspirator does not watch from the sidelines or take a back seat to the cause. They are right there with you working towards the same purpose.

Teachers must be co-conspirators for their students. We've read a lot this week about culture, diversity, and multicultural education. We have listened to speakers address the impact that teachers have on students. Students need a safe haven in their teacher. They need a cheerleader, someone to nurture them through their academic journey, a constant person with patience, acceptance, and who is full of encouragement. That is what a co-conspirator is. A teacher should never be someone who watches from the sidelines and never steps foot into the game. For me, with the littles in my room, my job is to create a safe environment where children feel loved, accepted, and wanted. With the families, it is my job to be an open communicator, an understanding adult, and one who respects their family values.

[← Reply](#)



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907>

Oct 7, 2020

Hi Melissa,

Unread



✓ Subscribed

for and 'they are right there beside you working towards the same purpose.' I also agree with your second paragraph where you said teachers need to be able to create a safe environment for their students. I wrote something similar in mine. I believe it's important that teachers remind themselves that their role in their student's life can be much bigger than they think :)

Kelly

[← Reply](#)**Monta Wiley** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624>)

Oct 8, 2020



Hello Melissa, hope your day is going well. Reading your message I take it that you are already an instructor. If so I would like to ask a question about this statement you made

*For me, with the littles in my room, my job is to create a safe environment where children feel loved, accepted, and wanted. With the families, it is my job to be an open communicator, an understanding adult, and one who respects their family values.*

What is a typical day in your class in accomplish this goal ? what are your teaching strategies and finally, in relation to the adults what is how does your interaction with adults affect/alter the lesson delivery teaching the students ?

sorry for the questions, but you gave an awesome response. :-)

[← Reply](#)**Russell Fung (He/Him/His)** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480>)

Oct 11, 2020



Posting here, because I'm interested in this thread. Looking forward to many responses!

*"A teacher should never be someone who watches from the sidelines and never steps foot into the game."* I love this sentence.

[← Reply](#)

Unread



✓ Subscribed

Hello Melissa! Very happy to see you in this class. I very much appreciate your point of view of how teachers should be as co-conspirators. I thought that being a co-conspirator means you need to be ready to just fight for others. But reading from your perspectives, I realized that on the positive note, it's actually providing them a safe and encouraging environment. An environment where students can really be who they are and are comfortable in it. Where children can feel the love. Thank you for your post!

[← Reply](#)[Aya Takeichi-Leitz \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001)

Oct 10, 2020

Hi Melissa,

I agree with your thoughts. I especially like the part "they need a cheerleader". In my post, I described the teacher should be a mentor, but cheerleader sounds similar to my thoughts. Great post!

[← Reply](#)[Geronima Garcia \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244)

Oct 11, 2020

Hi Melissa,

You bring up a good point, teaching as a co-conspirator is not only about our students, but also their families. That adds a whole other layer to our roles as co-conspirators as we need to know and respect our students, understand their cultures, backgrounds, and family values. Then we have to leverage our privilege to serve those families by advocating for resources, family support programs, or community liaisons and translators when needed.

[← Reply](#)[Kelly H. Kim \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907)

Oct 7, 2020

Unread



✓ Subscribed

involved and take actions even if it may put them at risk. Sometimes, the line between these two concepts can be blurred as they both take the supportive role of those leading the movement. However, the difference is clear in that being a co-conspirator starts with the active thinking of what one has to offer. A co-conspirator considers this issue as their own that may have a direct impact in their life while an ally isn't involved in depth and settles for being supportive from a distance. For example when it comes to racial injustice, an ally can support those fighting against racism from a distance while a co-conspirator would go an extra mile and actively think of what they can offer to get involved in the movement. A co-conspirator is committed to take actions first-handedly and proactively seek for an opportunity they can contribute to do their part.

Although I'm not in a teaching role yet, when I become a teacher, I will strive to become a co-conspirator to my students and the communities I serve in. I believe taking a role as a teacher means more than being an instructor. Teachers teaching a new language will be in the position to introduce new cultures and perspectives to the students from diverse backgrounds who attend their classes with an intention to explore and accept different views. I will actively seek ways to motivate students to open up to different cultures their classmates come from by encouraging students to share their stories, backgrounds and opinions with one another. I will create a safe environment for my students to express their differences without fear where they can be respected and valued. Along with the communities, teachers, and families I interact with, I will promote and stay involved in activities or programs of good cause that are for social values I believe in.

[← Reply](#)**Monta Wiley** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624>)

Oct 8, 2020



You cant spell teacher with the key word, "teach" as that is the action we will be doing. Kelly, you ideas for your future teaching aspirations set the tone for students not only receiving helpful guidance through learning a new language, but considering the subject you are helping them for so many scenarios they make encounter in the real world such as job searching, making new friends, and other life challenges. That alone makes you a co-conspirator.

[← Reply](#)**Erica Wahlgren** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386>)

Unread



✓ Subscribed

I really enjoyed reading your post. I like your description of a co-conspirator as someone who is informed and takes action but also as someone who is actively thinking about ways to take action. Co-conspirator action can be in the moment but also can be well thought out and intentional. The key element, as you point out, is that a co-conspirator takes action.

-Erica

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Oct 11, 2020

I definitely agree with your take, that the difference between an ally and a co-conspirator comes from the level of commitment. This take doesn't place allies in a negative light, but more like a spectrum. There is not shame in being an ally, in my opinion, as long as there's continued growth and movement towards becoming a co-conspirator.

Like you, I'm not in a teaching role yet. I hope to get there. When I do, I would adopt the same idea that taking a role as a teacher means more than being an instructor.

← [Reply](#)



[Erin Lynch](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Oct 7, 2020

### Ally v Co-Conspirator

The difference between an ally and a co-conspirator comes down to the level of involvement you take in social justice issues. The difference lies in how much you are willing to take personal risks to help those who do not have the same privilege you have. The difference is an ally is someone who may, in theory side with those who are oppressed and may take some action, though never really putting themselves at risk and a co-conspirator will use their privilege to leverage change for those who do not have the same privilege even if that comes at a price.

In my work as an educator, I imagine I would use my privilege to actively advocate for those who may be "othered", to educate my fellow educators who may demonstrate unconscious or

Unread



✓ Subscribed

learners. Being a champion for those in educational institutions is necessary and important work.

In my former work as a psychologist, I worked in a variety of settings with diverse clientele. Many times, my colleagues, supervisors, or administrators would carry negative stereotypes about certain clients. Whether it was due to poverty, a criminal history, immigration status, language differences, level of acculturation or assimilation, educational background, sexual orientation, or gender identity, it was clear at times that assumptions, not facts affected treatment plans and expectations. I had amazing training and some incredible mentors and support at the time and was able to stand up for these clients and challenge the biased assumptions others had about them. Sometimes I risked professional relationships, risked losing out on promotions, or risked receiving a bad review. A particularly memorable time was when a psychiatrist tried to have me fired for advocating that a child not be medicated because, in my opinion, her assumptions were affecting her evaluation of the child. In short, he was an active boy, but based on my thorough assessment, and the assessment of a colleague of mine, he did not meet the criteria for a mental health disorder and his level of activity was normal. I had the support of my colleagues and supervisor at the time and I was not fired and the child was not medicated. Another time was when I disagreed with a supervisor about a client's level of functioning because as an adult she was still living at home. The supervisor, from a different background, was pathologizing what in her culture was not the norm, but in the client's culture was much more acceptable. I risked a bad evaluation. I mention my previous experience as a psychologist because I plan to apply the same principle to my future work as an educator. I believe that in my role as educator it is my duty to advocate for all my students.

[← Reply](#)

[Luis Orozco \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922) (https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922)

Oct 8, 2020

Hi Erin!

Nice to "see" you again, too! I'm glad your clients had someone like you to advocate for them. It was so brave of you to risk your job performance reviews, and even career, in order to protect people whose lives could have been dramatically altered by ill-informed decisions.

[← Reply](#)



I thanks Luis. I've had a lot of support along the way which made advocating for others a little easier.

← [Reply](#)



[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Oct 8, 2020

Erin, wow, what an amazing story of self-sacrifice. It seems as though you have been on the frontline fighting for those that are at a disadvantage. With this experience under your belt, I am sure you will take on those same challenges being a co-conspirator for your students.

I also like how you brought up the concept of developing a curriculum where students can see themselves in the material. This can be an excellent task, as a student's attention span toward particular subject material can be considered unimportant. This point caught my attention because if one can create a format for making subjects relatable to students, a wealth of possibilities can be open in future teaching formulas!

← [Reply](#)



[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Oct 11, 2020

Thanks Monta.

← [Reply](#)



[Kim Doan \(She/Her/Hers\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/151802\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/151802)

Oct 10, 2020

Hi Erin!

I can see that you care very deeply about your clients and am encouraged by the ways in which you've used your privilege to advocate for others. It is a brilliant idea to develop curriculum or incorporate curriculum where students can see themselves and the value of their individual stories and diversity. The qualities that come across in your writing show me that you are and will be a great teacher!

← [Reply](#)



Hi Kim. I've been lucky to have people advocate for me and it's made all the difference. I hope I can continue to do that for others.

← Reply



**Russell Fung (He/Him/His)** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480>)

Oct 11, 2020

Hi Erin,

You are spot on about actively advocating for those who may be "othered." This is so crucial and I'm happy that you were able to articulate this.

It sounds like you've gone through so many trying experiences. Thank you for sharing your stories! They sound like true examples of what being a co-conspirator looks like. You fight for your beliefs and you put yourself on the line. That's something I have yet to discover when I become a teacher.

← Reply



**Caitlin Flynn** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934>)

Oct 11, 2020

your examples of how to be a co-conspirator in your previous work were really inspiring. I hope I can be a teacher who fights for their students like that.

← Reply



**Erin Lynch** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296>)

Oct 11, 2020

Thanks Caitlin!

← Reply



**Shuo Niu** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757>)

Oct 11, 2020

Unread



✓ Subscribed

Thank you for your share of the story! It is very touching.

It is so nice of you to risk your own benefit to do something that would totally change the life of others. I respect you very much!

Shuo

← Reply



**Erin Lynch** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296>)

Oct 11, 2020

Thank you Shuo!

← Reply



**Erica Wahlgren** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386>)

Oct 8, 2020

An ally is someone who is educated on the issues and stands by in support and solidarity. A co-conspirator is someone who takes action for a cause. Not to oversimplify the concepts, but we could describe an ally as someone who can “talk the talk” and a co-conspirator as someone who can “walk the walk”. I think the role of ally and co-conspirator overlap in many significant ways but perhaps the main difference is the amount of action taken and what is at stake with that action.

Considering the question of how to be a co-conspirator in the classroom and as a teacher was interesting. Typically, I have steered clear of making my personal opinions on politics, religion, etc. known in the classroom so that I can help foster an environment in which students can discuss these topics and issues comfortable and safely. With that being said, I think we have reached a point in which standing by is not enough. I believe that I can still create a safe environment for students to share their opinions while pushing to the forefront a color appreciate and inclusive curriculum. As a teacher, I have put this into action by assigning readings from a diverse group of authors, such as works by Frederick Douglass and Gloria Anzaldua, who’s bilingual text many of my students connect strongly to. By providing a broad range of readings and demonstrating a commitment to multiculturalism I am developing a classroom environment that values diversity and appreciates different perspectives. This gives my students the chance to develop their views and beliefs and the ability to articulate those



[Melissa McConnell-Quinn \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617)

Oct 9, 2020

You spoke of that fine line that we as teachers walk between protecting our students but not throwing our ideologies onto them. I struggle with how to address this. Thank you for sharing actions that you have started to take with your students. I appreciate any and all new thought processes that allow me to think in new ways.

[← Reply](#)



[Kim Doan \(She/Her/Hers\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/151802\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/151802)

Oct 10, 2020

Even though you have years of teaching experience Melissa, I love how open you are to thinking in new ways and learning from others. I also understand very well that fine line that you spoke about, between educating students while at the same time trying not to influence them with our biases.

[← Reply](#)



[Ting Tai Lui \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284)

Oct 10, 2020

Hi Erica

Yes, allies talk the talk and co-conspirators walk the walk. Some teachers even give no talk, let alone walk.

Everybody has a reason to walk, or just talk, or even give no talk. I admire the walkers - who walk an extra mile. These walkers I am sure believe that they are righting the wrong. I appreciate them.

However, it's a free world. Perhaps the people not giving a talk may think the talkers' and walkers' belief does agree with theirs - I don't mean the belief is wrong. At least the "muters" don't do anything against the talkers and walkers. If some people choose to talk or remain mute, leave them to do it the way they find comfortable.

Just a thought.



○



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/142177> **Gabriela Miranda Laguna (She/Her/Hers)** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/142177>)

Oct 9, 2020



The difference is the level of commitment, enthusiasm and dedication of the people.

Those who are willing to "propagandize" and those who are willing to "take action."

An ally is someone who cooperates only with ideas, it is an informed person who supports and helps some movements in a society.

A co-conspirator is a person who takes actions that directly benefit those movements, turns words into actions, a teacher is a good example of a Co-corporation because the teacher is involved in the student's progress, not only is he concerned about their student, it is who takes action, who participates and involved with the issues.

I believe that to grow as complete people we must develop as much as we can, taking every opportunity that life gives us to learn and observe. First, we must start helping our environment, the people who are closest to us like our family and friends, our community; only in this way, we strengthen ourselves to be a better person and to be able to help others.

← [Reply](#)

○



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686> **Silver Park** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686>)

Oct 10, 2020



Hello Gabriela, I agree we need to start looking after the ones around us first. I liked how you used the word "strengthen". I feel that strength cannot just grow and come from only one person. Individuals can be strengthened when they come together and unite as a community to fight for one another as a whole.

← [Reply](#)

○



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934> **Caitlin Flynn** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934>)

Oct 9, 2020



Unread



✓ Subscribed

taking the risks to protect those more vulnerable than they are. From the video it felt like an Ally was someone you could trust to support your cause in general. A co-conspirator, on the other hand, was someone who you could trust to have your back. And that level of trust is an important part of what it means to be a co-conspirator as a teacher. Creating a safe environment for everyone to be themselves and creating a relationship in which a student feels able to come to you for support are both important ways to move from being an ally to a co-conspirator.

[← Reply](#)<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/151802>

Oct 9, 2020

Although I am not an expert in Hinduism, I learned about Shiva the God of Destruction many years ago through a Hindu text. Shiva is both the destroyer and one of the creators of the universe. With recent events bringing the US to its knees, (quite literally) I draw strength from the knowledge that we cannot build a better world, until we destroy and dismantle the existing systems that are broken. As painful as it is to watch the violence and destruction of the world that I've always known, I am hoping that we will emerge from this period wiser, kinder, more compassionate and loving towards each other.

After reading the class discussion thus far, I would also like to add that the act of being a co-conspirator is also very personal and might look differently to the ally/co-conspirator and to society. As a teacher, I was trained to not be vocal about certain subjects such as religion or politics. We were advised to be neutral in order to be respectful of our students viewpoints and our school's image/philosophy. For example, the simple act of posting a meme in support of BLM on social media might not be much to some but to a teacher at a conservative school, they might be targeted professionally or fired for speaking out. It is my belief that all co-conspirators start out as allies at some point but become co-conspirators when realize that it is simply not enough to sympathize. That moment when they commit to an action that challenges the status quo makes them a co-conspirator.

Bettina Love's distinction of ally vs. co-conspirator reminded me of Ibram X. Kendi's book, *How To Be An Antiracist* which stated that it is simply not enough to be "not racist". We must be actively ANTI-RACIST if we truly want to commit to dismantling systemic racism and injustice.

It was many months ago when I witnessed 20 or more police cars swarm around the house two doors from my house. The police had their guns drawn and pointed at a large group of



that day. I spoke to the men after the police left and felt the injustice of what happened to them. I was heartbroken, shocked and embarrassed but also angry because there wasn't anything that I could do to fix any of it, not anything that I could do to prevent it from happening again. In the months after this incident, I spoke to my children about systemic racism, made posters for BLM marches, put their lives and mine on the line when protests got messy and confrontational. I don't know if any of it will make any difference, but I do know that it takes a lot of courage, especially for teachers to speak up when a lot of them have been taught not to rock the boat.

← [Reply](#)



[Melissa McConnell-Quinn \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617)

Oct 9, 2020

Wow Kim. This was a POWERFUL post. I really appreciate that you wrote this. You have me thinking. I too was raised, and believe to this day that as teachers, our students shouldn't know our political stances. After this topic and after reading your post, my brain is going 100mph thinking about how we can be co-conspirators for students without pushing our views onto them.

Again, wow. What a terrible experience for the man you talked about. I'm sure that's not his first experience either. I'm sure you made a difference with what you did, even if it was to the next generation that you spoke to.

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Oct 11, 2020

This imagery of destruction and creation had me pondering for a few minutes. That is a unique way of looking at what's going on this year. I also agree that co-conspirators do start out as allies at some point. The choice to take action is also a personal one.

Good pull on Ibram X. Kendi's book. I haven't read it yet, but it's on my list.

Your story of the police raid. I'm happy you wrote this in a poignant way. Left me thinking for a while.

← [Reply](#)



Oct 10, 2020

When someone is an ally of a certain movement or an incident, they know what is going on and they even know how to act on it but they can have reservations in their being to take an actual action. Whereas a co-conspirator is taking the lead, risking it all, pulling themselves out there, and sacrificing their own voice to take an action for their community. Abolitionists during the 19th century to end slavery were all co-conspirator. It didn't matter what kind of professions they had. Everyone was a co-conspirator in their heart to fight for the rights that they deserved. It takes commitment and determination to be a co-conspirator to fight against a force.

To be honest, there are many teachers who could be just allies, and they choose to be that way. They know in their classrooms, what is going on. But that is kept as an elephant in the room. No one is willing to take action and point out the problem. I understand why it's hard to be a co-conspirator to stand for others and expose social problems because it can bring a lot of trouble and hardship in your life. However I think I can see myself as a co-conspirator if I truly know what is important and what it takes for our community to have social justice and equality for all. At the end, I myself come from a minority group so when I see something is going wrong in my own class and community, I cannot sit there and just watch what's happening.

[← Reply](#)**Michelle Akamine** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411>)

Oct 10, 2020

Hi Silver, I agree with what you said about some teachers being just allies. It is certainly difficult to take action beyond just words. Perhaps this could be related to what Kim was talking about that teachers are told to maintain a neutral stance. If teachers take action, their job may even be at risk. That being said, I think that teachers who are co-conspirators and engage in critical pedagogy set the best examples to their students.

[← Reply](#)**Ting Tai Lui** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284>)

Oct 10, 2020

First World countries like the US have loads of NGOs and the Social Security Department and politicians in place to address social injustice. What is the point of having English



improve the mechanism in place first. Preparing class, grading homework, and setting exam papers are already exhausting. Isn't it unfair for English teachers to sacrifice their precious family time for the failures of these organisations to do their jobs?

My family and people around me deserve my full attention and care too.

← [Reply](#)

○



[Aya Takeichi-Leitz \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001)



Oct 10, 2020

An ally is a person or group, that is associated with another or others for some common cause or mutual benefit. A co-conspirator is one that will go the extra mile, will go above-and-beyond, to support a cause. Co-conspirators utilize access, power, and privilege to create a better result. So, what actions can co-conspirators in education take? I think they recognize, collaborate, connect, and act as a mentor on the journey of learning.

One of the reasons why I am taking this TESOL course is that I want to teach English at the beginner level in Japan after my retirement. I will be a co-conspirator in the role of a teacher in Japan. As I grew up in Japan, I understand and recognize Japanese culture very well. I will keep learning to stay up-to-date, always try to be the best version of myself, and will listen to my students.

I always thought learning English from a Japanese teacher at the beginner level is effective since students can receive great guidance from their learning experiences. I will take advantage of ESL learning myself. I will share my tips on learning English as a native Japanese. I know where students get confused, and I should be able to clarify effectively. I will prepare well to deliver fun and effective classes. For the beginner level students, I will create a fun, interesting, and sustainable environment. I think especially at the beginning of learning, students should have a warm and welcoming environment to keep them coming back to classes. I want to lead students to start speaking English in a relaxed and friendly manner so they can comfortably and gradually make progress to move up to the intermediate and to the advanced level.

← [Reply](#)

○

Unread



✓ Subscribed

All co-conspirators are allies but not all allies are co-conspirators. The difference between the two is the extent to which they are willing to help people who are marginalized. Allies are well-versed in the situation and understand the toxicity of social injustices. They will listen and support others by providing encouragement. Co-conspirator are people who transform these ideas into practices and actively show their support through their actions. They do not limit themselves to words and are willing to take a risk for people who are at a disadvantage. Being on the frontline, co-conspirators not only stand up for their ideals, but they fight for change.

Back when I was in high school, I remember I had the option of taking an English course called "intercultural literature." This class discussed the many social injustices that we are faced with and aimed for students to become more accepting by embracing our differences. I felt that this classes in particular left a huge impact on me (which is why I still remember it despite taking it a long time ago) and serves as a framework for how I would like to teach. Teachers have the ability to influence and inspire their students which is why incorporating critical pedagogy into their teaching method is important to becoming a co-conspirator. This can allow for students to think about their surroundings and hopefully lead the path for them to become allies and co-conspirators too.

[← Reply](#)**Ting Tai Lui** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284>)

Oct 10, 2020



Hi Michelle

I am glad that you discussed social injustice in high school and that experience lasts a long time upon graduation.

In Hong Kong - and I am not sure if that happens in the US or other countries - quite a lot of student teachers on English teacher credential programs at my alma mater (The University of Hong Kong) had already graduated from Western universities (e.g. me from King's College London). Loads of my classmates on the program were born to middle-class or better off families. When they were in school, they received quality education and their affluent parents got behind them and gave them an abundance of financial resources to back up their after school learning.

So, how could school teachers persuade their students that they know social injustice inside out if they're born to middle-class families? I have recently watched a local Chinese movie I'm livin' it. The movie intends to reveal the social injustice in Hong Kong, where

Unread



✓ Subscribed

night. The screenwriter apparently did not know the issue very much, nor did she do an in-depth investigation in this social problem. I guess that she was not born to a grassroots family and so failed to write a touching story revealing social injustice in this First World city.

Therefore, whether an English teacher can be a good co-conspirator or not is to a large extent subject to their upbringings and life experience. Otherwise, some underprivileged students will think the teachers not knowing the roots of their problems and social injustice.

Ting

[← Reply](#)

○

[https://](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284)[Ting Tai Lui \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284)

Oct 10, 2020

I agree to Luis's definitions of both allies and co-conspirators:

An ally is an informed individual who supports minority movements in a society. However, a co-conspirator is a person who uses her/his/their privilege to take actions that directly benefit those minority movements. A clear example of this is happening now as the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement continues to take hold in America. Allies support the movement and post BLM posters on their property, but they are not out on the streets marching or lobbying their leaders to change unfair practices across institutions. Co-conspirators, on the other hand, are on the frontlines, like the white mothers and grandmothers who created barricades in Portland so that the police and federal agents could not arrest protestors.

In a result-oriented society like Hong Kong, where admissions to medical and law schools at top universities in the city and abroad like UCLA, Stanford, and Oxford, students failing to be admitted to top-notch colleges are on many occasions considered useless or not behaving well at school. Lots of students not gaining access to public universities enroll in community college's associate degree programs or vocational training institutes' diploma programs. I have taught English courses at these two types of institutions. To reignite their passion for learning and rebuild their confidence, many teachers talk to our students and explain to them studying at community or vocational college is not a dead end. Students getting a top GPA are eligible for applying to senior years of top colleges' bachelor's degree programs. So, to a certain extent, teachers at these colleges serve as their students' social workers and

Unread



✓ Subscribed

junior university and they will receive quality education and a different experience than university proper.

[← Reply](#)[Caitlin Flynn \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934)

Oct 11, 2020

your perspective on the issues in hong kong was really interesting to hear and how to apply the question in a different cultural setting really made me think. thanks for sharing your experience.

[← Reply](#)[Shuo Niu \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757)

Oct 10, 2020

1. An ally is someone who understands and supports something. They will be on your side. They know all the information about a certain thing. However, they never really think about being there for their ally. They won't risk their benefit to help their ally.

A co-conspirator is someone who not only understands and supports something but also use their own benefit to support them. It is very distinctive from ally because they will take great action towards the action. They are willing to take a risk to help.

2. As a teacher, I should engage myself in the actions that students have. To be the one to support them. And let them know that I am there to help them. Let me know I care. I should build trust between teachers and students. Allow them to come to me as soon as they have questions and troubles about something.

[← Reply](#)[Geronima Garcia \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244)

Oct 10, 2020

Unread



✓ Subscribed

actions and risk taking of the abolitionists, co-conspirators leverage their privilege and take risks in support of marginalized people.

2. This question is so interesting. As a woman, first generation American, working class, Latina, privilege is not something I typically feel I have. However, in considering the various marginalized communities within our society, I can see that I have privilege as a US citizen, native English speaker, by being able bodied, and as a college educated person.

As an educator I am a co-conspirator when I leverage my power to advocate for my EL students. I work in a high achieving, affluent school district in which EL instruction is often an afterthought. I voluntarily attend professional development geared towards the instruction of EL students, and when appropriate curriculum is not provided for my students I develop it myself. In addition, at my school, I attend every student support team meeting to push for scheduling and curriculum changes that will benefit my EL students. I nag, push, and annoy administrators and district leaders even if it means making them angry because as Love said, my account refills with privilege, the privilege that some of my students don't have.

[← Reply](#)

[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480>)

Oct 11, 2020



Hi Geronima,

I often wonder what a high achieving, affluent school district looks like in an EL setting. When you say it's an afterthought, does that mean the demographics of the school isn't diverse? Like maybe this kind of school district would skew mostly white, versus non-white? Anyway, I'm glad you're out there fighting the good fight.

[← Reply](#)

[Geronima Garcia](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244>)

Oct 11, 2020



Hi Russell,

My school district is pretty diverse, but our EL student demographic is typically recent immigrants and make up about 10% of our population (at my school). The affluence in this community results in a push for accelerated coursework/increased rigor and less focus on average or struggling learners. In our middle school grades the entire EL

Search entries or author

Unread



✓ Subscribed

have to be enrolled in a course with intermediate learners or attend a different school. Also, there is only one section of each Sheltered course (a 7th and 8th grade combo course), which ends up dictating student schedules. For example, a student in my course cannot be in symphonic orchestra, ASB, or video production which are some of our most popular electives and are also only taught one period a day. Instead, a lot of my students end up in electives like public speaking and office aide. These types of scheduling inequities get overlooked, but they truly affect the ability of a new student, with limited English to become a real part of the school community.

← Reply



[Grace Shin \(She/Her/Hers\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/137566) (https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/137566)

Oct 11, 2020

Hey Geronima,

Thanks for sharing your post. I really resonate with you in that EL instruction is often an afterthought. Though my school has a high population of EL students, the appropriate curriculum is not enforced in the English classrooms! As I came fresh out of the credential program from CSUF, I was really disappointed and almost disturbed at how EL support was lacking in the majority of the content classrooms.

I am constantly revamping and making changes to my curriculum to serve the EL population at my school as well. I would love to hear about your work if you are willing to share and collaborate.

This is taking action! Yay for you being an advocate for your EL students! They need you.

← Reply



[Grace Shin \(She/Her/Hers\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/137566) (https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/137566)

Oct 10, 2020

If someone were to ask me what the difference between an ally and co-conspirator is, I would respond with the following. An ally is someone I would feel comfortable sharing my stance and opinions with. Meanwhile, a co-conspirator is someone I would be calling to make plans to attend the next walk-out movement or protest with. As many of you have mentioned, allies can “talk the talk” but not “walk the walk.” Allies are not necessarily negative, in my opinion, but can



Personally, I have never understood what it meant to be either. I am a second-generation Korean American who was born in a very Korean populated community. All my friends were Korean, I attended a Korean church, I participated in Korean school on the weekends and it's pretty much all I knew. Only when I went to community college after high school, was when I realized how sheltered I was while growing up. So, I never thought once about my privileges and definitely took many things for granted. I never had a passion for social justice movements or even knew the reality of how much social injustice there was in my own community.

With that context, I will confidently state that I am now a co-conspirator in the making, as a teacher who serves their communities. During my first year of teaching ELA to 8<sup>th</sup> graders last year, I incorporated curriculum texts that I've researched about during my MA in education for culturally and linguistically sustaining teaching. I taught the novel *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas and had students really enjoy and dive into topics like police brutality, racism, discrimination, being a bystander, being an ally, and also allowed them to share their own experiences, thoughts or comments. It was unreal how invested the students were and they really took agency and responsibility in their learning each day (especially because I bribed them with the film!) They loved this unit and I'm hoping to teach something similar to my 7<sup>th</sup> graders this year. Though I am not actively serving in big movements, I am starting with my own curriculum in my own classroom by exposing students to relevant and recent texts about real and present issues.

Edited by [Grace Shin \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/137566\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/137566) on Oct 10 at 11:28pm

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Oct 11, 2020

Grace, I totally agree that "Allies" are not necessarily negative. I think it's easy to espouse how self-righteous we are about current social issues. It's very easy to come off as a "social justice warrior." That's like a really moving thing. However, that's where a lot of people stop. This isn't negative, but more like an opportunity for growth. The negative thing would be for people to not care. Apathy is way worse.

Thank you for sharing about your experiences with 7th and 8th graders. Middle school is where I'd like to teach. I'm curious to know how you were able to be in a position to teach the novel *The Hate U Give*. That sounds totally dope that you got to do that.

← [Reply](#)



Hey Russell!

Thanks for your comment. Yeah, it was a really awesome unit and I'd love to share it with you! The students responded so positively. Feel free to email me, if you feel comfortable so to do. I see that you're from San Francisco! I'm hoping to move up north one day and maybe you can give me some advice as well.

[← Reply](#)



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480>

Oct 11, 2020

An ally is someone who is aware of social injustice and takes a stance against it. However, while this person can preach and stay informed about social injustice, when it's time to put themselves on the line, they stumble. Current popular culture calls this "virtue signaling." An ally is the type of person who posted the black square on Instagram after the murder of George Floyd to show solidarity, but hasn't actually done anything useful for the cause. People who identify as allies are still growing in their awareness and activism. They have yet to get to another level.

A co-conspirator is more of an activist. They take actionable steps to backup their allyship. A white person, for example, would qualify as a co-conspirator if he/she uses their whiteness/privilege to make actual change. A co-conspirator is the type of person who would march in the BLM protests and actually put themselves on the line to protect those who can't. This can also be the stranger at a grocery store who witnesses something racist and then steps in to help.

As a teacher, I can see myself being a co-conspirator by teaching English to those who need a fighting chance at a prosperous life. I would step in to help them write letters to government officials, companies, etc. Documents such as grant applications, scholarship applications, are important to get funding for things they normally wouldn't be able to ask for in their native language. Another way I could be a co-conspirator is by connecting students with valuable resources. I can empower students to apply their English language skills on social media so they can communicate with the world.

[← Reply](#)

Unread



✓ Subscribed

Hey Russell,

It's awesome that you want your future students to take action and initiative with their own responsibilities - like applying for scholarships. I would like to add that you can also teach your students how to be responsible and careful with their digital use on social media. Digital footprint is something many people do not think about but it should be considered, since everything we post is saved **somewhere**. I love that you're incorporating 21st century skills while inspiring to be a co-conspirator as your role of the teacher. Excited for you!

← [Reply](#)