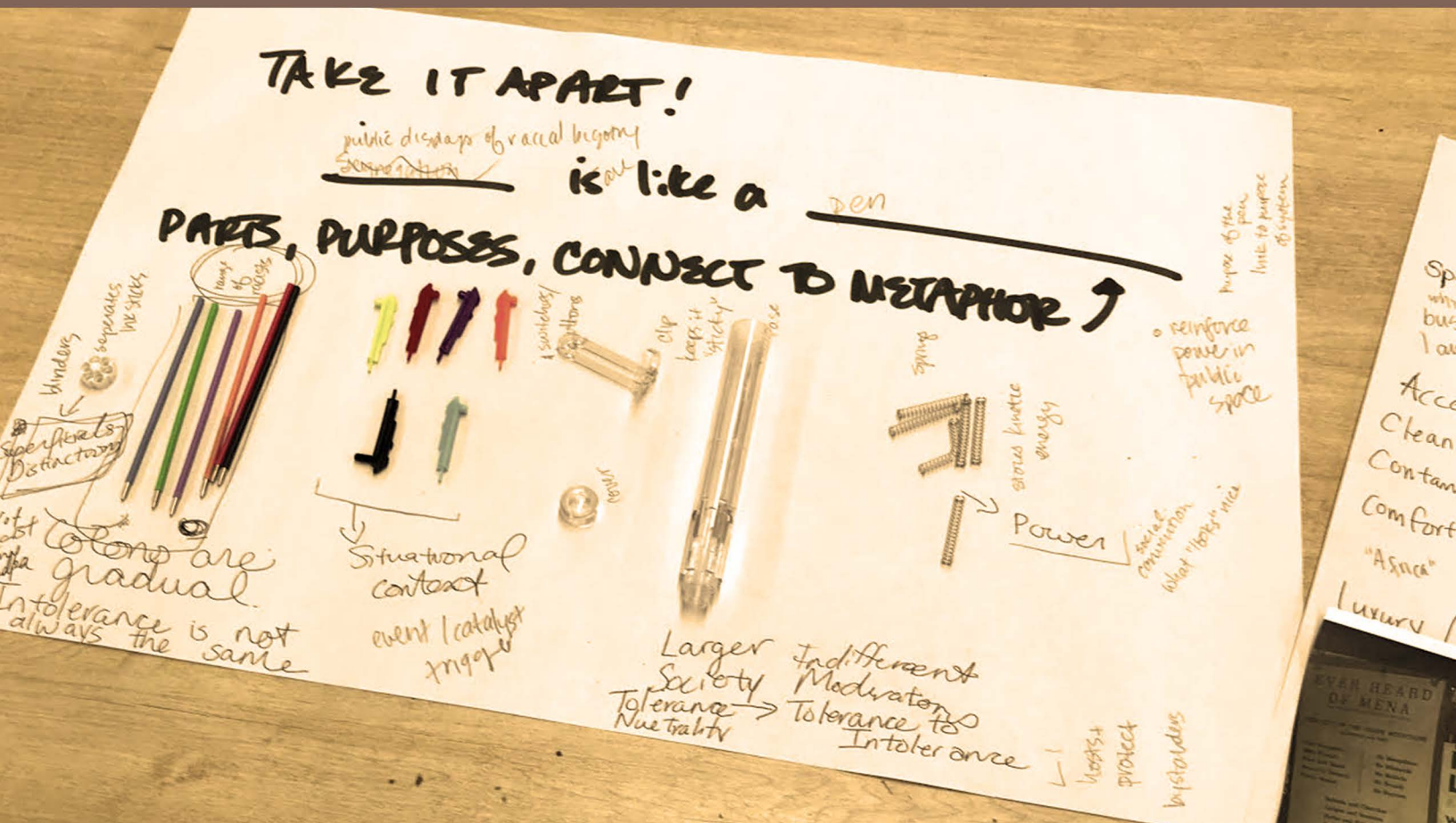


# TAKE APART RACISM

## Lesson Plan

Using Maker Centered Practices to Breakdown Systems of Oppression.

Jaime Chao Mignano and Mark Perkins



# SUMMARY

## TAKE APART RACISM

*This lesson plan is based on a workshop at the National Association of Independent Schools People of Color Conference (PoCC) titled "Taking Apart Racism: Using Maker-Centered Practices to Break Down Systems of Oppression," led by Jaime Chao Mignano and Mark Perkins. Jaime and Mark are educators at the Washington International School and collaborators on the Making Across the Curriculum project, an initiative of Agency by Design at Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.*

Learners will analyze a system of oppression using a piece of evidence of that system.

They will break it into its parts and people, and describe any complexities based on the evidence provided and their prior knowledge. Learners will then take apart a representative object, identifying the parts and their purposes, and finding connections between the parts of the objects and the parts of this system.



These connections seed the metaphor of the object as the system. Learners will find points of breakdown or intervention in the object and describe what this implies for their metaphor. They create a story of change by identifying the best (most equitable, most feasible, etc.) point of intervention and describing it in the context of their metaphor. Putting all the pieces together, learners share their stories and find connections and insights.



# GROUPING

Learners should be in small groups of 3-5.

# TAKE APART RACISM



# MATERIALS



Prompt pages (4-pages per group)

Pencils

Tools to take apart the object  
(In this example, paper clips and scissors)

Tape

Evidence of a system of oppression  
(In this example, racial gerrymandering in North Carolina)

Representative object to take apart  
(In this example, a 5-color pen)

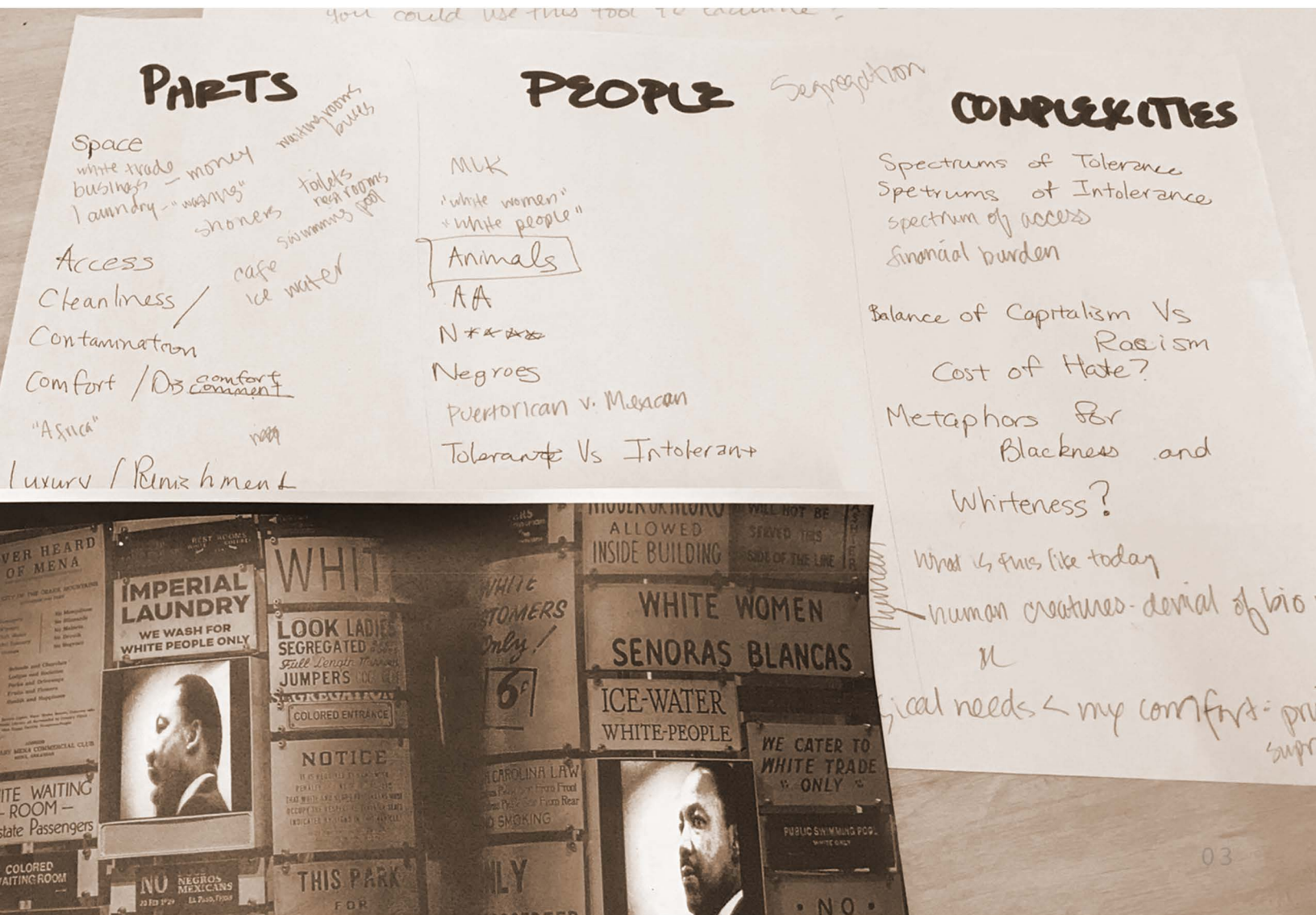


Note: Although learners begin together, it is important to note that progressing through the steps may not happen in lockstep. We offer the next step to groups as they are ready and check in with groups to move them through the steps with questions and observations.

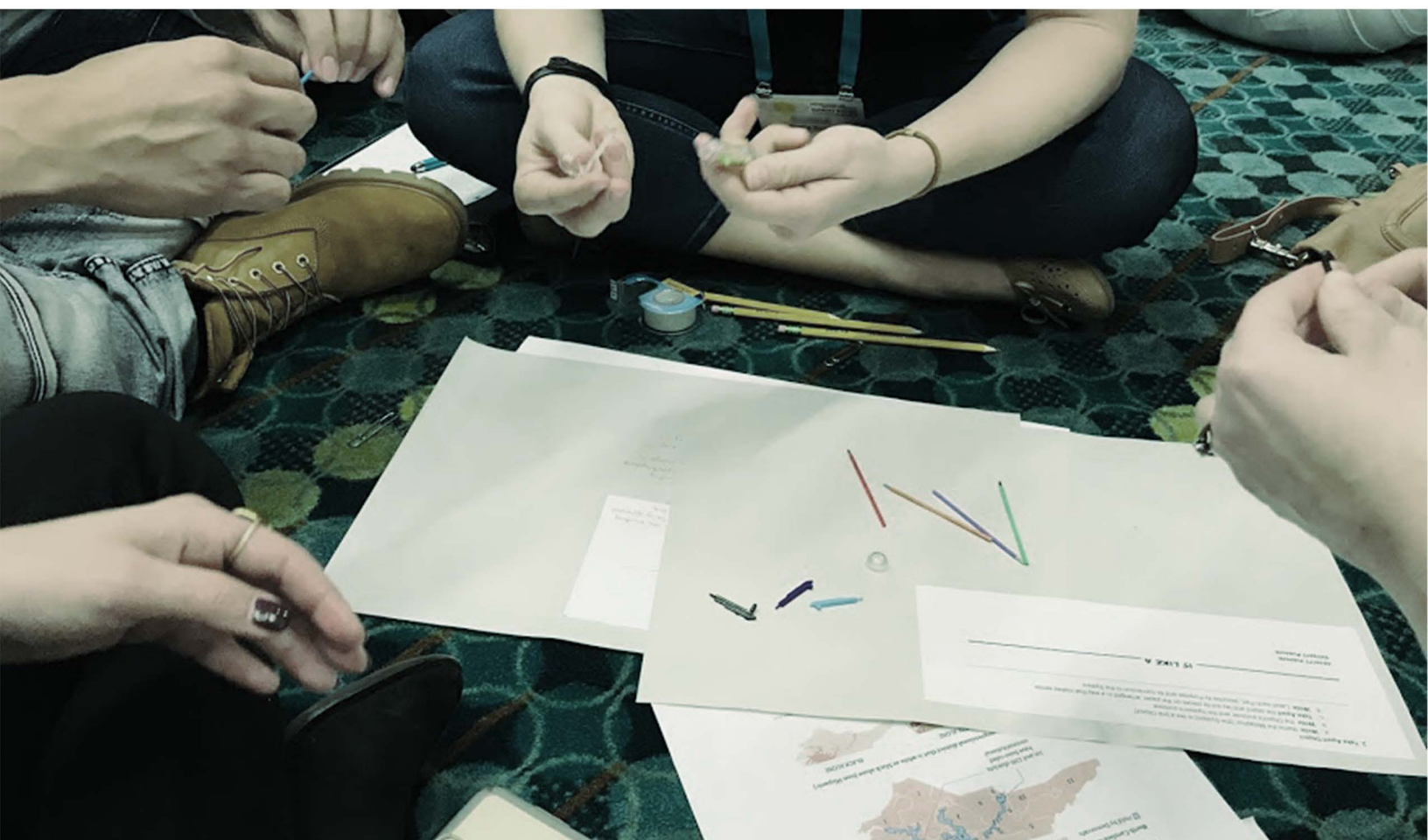
## 1 Take Apart the Evidence of the System

When learners are grouped, they begin by examining the evidence of the system of oppression:

- Look at the evidence
- Write: Name the System
- Write: Parts, People Complexities







## 2 Take Apart Object

Learners are given the representative object and the tools to take it apart, as well as tape to affix parts to the paper as they are arranging it:

Write: Name the Metaphor "[the System] is like a [the Object]"

Write: the Object's purpose and the System's purpose

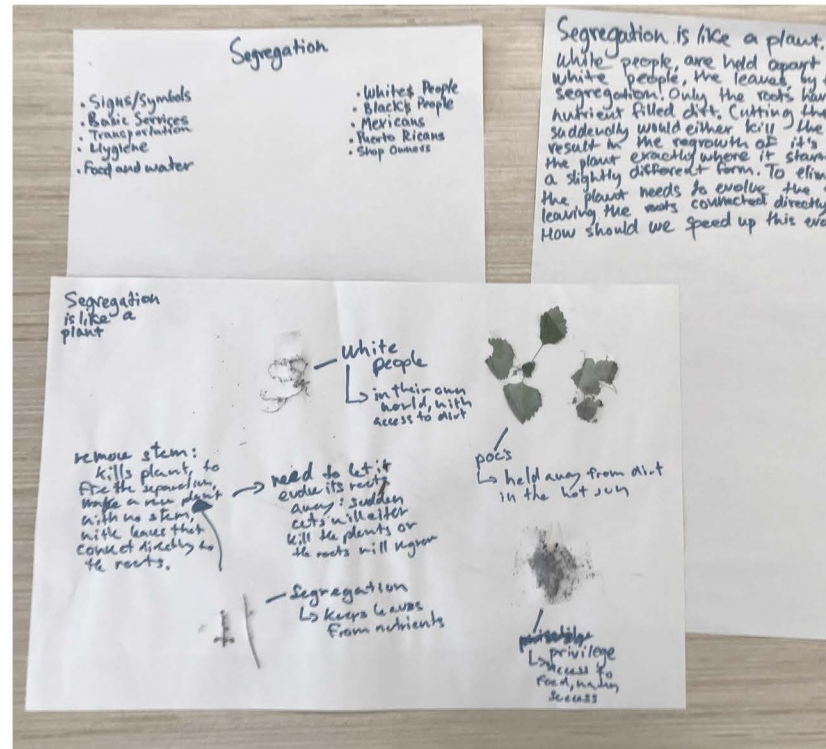
Take Apart the object and lay out its pieces on the paper, arranged in a way that makes sense

Write: Label each Part, describe its Purpose and its connection to the System

## 3 Finding Opportunity

Write: Looking at the Object, find points of intervention and points of weakness and list them. Connect these points to the System as opportunities for change.

Discuss: What interventions could change the system? Which ones are the best?



## 4 Story of Change

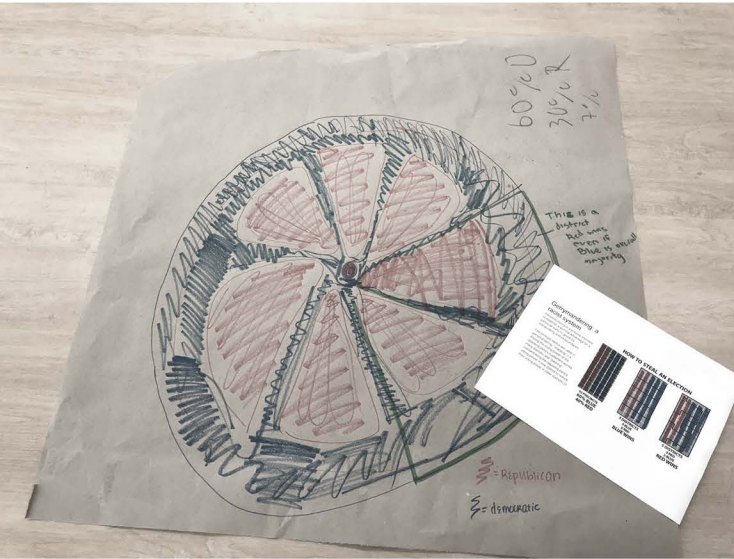
Write: Outline the story of change that you've identified

Pair and Share - Read the story of change with another group



# EXETENSIONS

## TAKE APART RACISM



The feedback on this protocol that we received during our time developing it and during the workshop was around time and depth. This was a one-hour workshop by design to accommodate the restraints of PoCC, but we identified opportunities at every step to extend the activity in ways that would add depth and complexity.



Possible extensions include:

Selecting more complex evidence of the system of oppression  
Offering more complex objects to take apart

Giving each group different objects or different systems, and allowing them to compare their findings  
Building in more time for feedback or reflection

Building in more time for polishing finished stories

If they don't give you a seat at the table,  
bring a folding chair

Shirley Chisholm

Thank you to all of those who helped pilot this lesson plan and to all of the participants who attended the workshop at the National Association of Independent School's People of Color Conference. We are grateful for the support and inspiration of Washington International School and Agency by Design.