

Handout

Agency and Action in the World Today

Having *agency*—the power and ability to make decisions and take action on your own behalf—doesn't always have to include participation in movements or lead to sweeping social change. As you learned from the authors and activists speaking about power in the quotation activity, the personal narrative essays, "As You Were," and Clint Smith's TED Talk, speaking up or standing up for oneself can be a powerful demonstration of agency. Now it is time to consider an individual or group whose power, agency, and voice inspires you.

Directions: Write about an example of individual or collective agency in the world today that inspires you. You might choose to write about a family or community member, a mentor, a coach, a neighbor, or a friend. Or you might choose an individual or group that is more well known. The important part is that their agency and the ways in which they use their power and voice are inspirational to you.

1. What person or group of people is an example of individual or collective agency that inspires you in the world today? Explain your choice.
2. How do you see this person or group having agency? How are they taking action on their own behalf and/or on behalf of others? Support your response with specific examples.
3. How does this person or group inspire you to use your own power, agency, and voice to take action? What lesson(s) from their experiences, actions, and decisions can you apply to your own life?