

1. Why did your kids want to see *Black. White.*? What attracted them to the show? The situation? The potential politics? What do your kids think *Black. White.* is trying to accomplish?

2. Do your kids feel a TV show can have an impact on society? What kind of impact did they hope *Black. White.* would have? Were their hopes fulfilled?

3. Early episodes feature the Sparks and Wurgal families learning to speak and act more like the other race. Does teaching someone to “act white” or “act black” damage or reinforce the kinds of stereotypes the show is trying to expose?

4. Think about the two families chosen for this experiment. How much of what happens on the show depends on them, rather than their races? Ask your kids how they think the show might have been different if other families had been chosen, and whether it would have been more or less successful as a result. Would they have been interested in trying an experiment like this?

5. Many of the scenarios the families are put into — the race-related focus groups, for example — seem to be designed to cause as much conflict as possible. Has anything happened in these scenarios that has shocked or surprised your kids? What has surprised and shocked you? Do the dramatic situations add to or detract from the show’s more political meaning? Comparing your own assumptions about race and behavior may spark a very interesting conversation.

6. Early on in the series, Brian (the father of the black family) says that “Black culture has to conform to white society to make it.” Do your kids agree? Is “conform[ing] to white society” a necessity for minorities in the United States?

What evidence can they find in modern culture to support or disprove that claim? Does the growing influence of hip-hop culture on teenagers change the equation at all?

7. Bruno (the father of the white family) repeatedly claims that how people treat each other has much more to do with mutual respect and dignity than with race. Consequently, he is very skeptical of Brian’s claims of constant, low-level racism. Ask your kids with whom they tend to agree more. Is either one wholly right or wrong? Have your kids ever witnessed or experienced racism? How did they handle it?

8. Nick (the black teenage son) talks about racism as a generational issue — he says he doesn’t notice it, even though his parents do. Are racial differences ever likely to become a thing of the past? Does getting further away from slavery and the Civil Rights movement ease race relations or just make it easier for people to ignore the issue? Why is Brian so insistent that Nick learn what racism feels like?

9. Bruno and his wife, Carmen, very clearly see themselves as open-minded liberals. Do your kids agree, or does their approach to the experiment turn them off? Which of the people on the show benefits most from the experiment? Is there anything the families could do to increase the benefit of their time together? What do your kids think they would have learned if they were in a similar situation?

10. Ask your kids whether watching *Black. White.* has changed how they approach race in their own lives. Do they think more carefully about what they say and do? Do they see people of other races as more similar or more different than themselves? Do they think any changes will be lasting or only temporary?