



KEY THEMES

The key themes are thematic focal points that anchor the conversations around care for each dispatch. They can be used by educators and facilitators to prepare for learning, drive and structure conversations, and plan for connections to media/art/current events/ personal contexts.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUNG PEOPLE AND “ADULTS”

America has a conflicted relationship with youth. In popular culture we are obsessed with it. In politics we are dismissive. Youth are not part of most decision-making processes (politically or otherwise) of which outcomes directly affect them. The construct of adult carries its own connotations marked by measures of success, maturity, and emotional togetherness that leaves little space to exist as anything otherwise. These constructed ideas weigh on people (of all ages) individually but deeply shape the limited scope of relationships between young people and adults. Jason jumps over the supposed generational gaps that divide young people and adults, reflecting instead that the complications of our childhoods shape who we are as adults.

RESONANT FREQUENCY

Resonant Frequency is an engineering term that defines the increase in amplitude that occurs when the frequency of one force matches the frequency of another force. Thus, there is a break of sorts. Bridges crumble, and glasses can shatter with the onset of a loud sound. Jason applies this concept to human relationships—specifically intergenerational ones. He prompts us to think about what might happen if we sought to intentionally match the frequency of others. The breaking and crumbling is vulnerability. Vulnerability, he suggests, is necessary for human connection.



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TENDING TO THE IMAGINATION

In many learning contexts, the imagination is not centered. In a society driven by efficiency and production, our schools often align to these purposes to prepare students for “the world.” Tending to the imagination is centering the imagination and giving it value, acknowledging that freedom includes being able to imagine something that does not currently exist.

Jason Reynolds asks us to think about how language can be used to tend imagination, making up words, combining words, shifting meanings, and combining languages. He prompts the question, what is at stake if we don't tend to the imagination?



Sections

Discussion Questions

Supplemental Resources

RESONANT FREQUENCY

0:40 - 3:37

What do you think Jason means when he says “adult is a loaded word”?

What does the idea of resonant frequency suggest about people and how they relate to one another? How might you apply this to connecting or understanding someone in your life? Who do you experience this with? And why?

TENDING IMAGINATION WITH LANGUAGE

3:40 - 4:36

What are some ways you’ve been cared for by words and language? What words, quotes come to mind? Who said them? What are some ways you’ve cared for others with language?

What role do words and language play in being able to imagine something that does not yet exist? How can this be freeing?

If language isn’t the medium, what other mediums are helpful in being able to imagine something new?

Podcast: “On Imagination and Fortitude”
Jason Reynolds.

On Being with Krista Tippett.



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CREATING SPACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

5:48 - 7:37

Looking at your world, where do you think the voices of young people are left out? What would it look like to “bring young people in the room”?

What is different about spaces where there are just young people? Do you feel more or less comfortable? Why?

What was a time where you remember an adult asking you what you needed? What did that feel like?

Jason discusses the importance of him saying “I love you” to the young men he works with. How do you think gender plays into our capacities to explicitly share feelings of love with one another? What do we risk (if anything) if we don’t become comfortable with this practice?

JASON REYNOLDS VIDEO DISCUSSION GUIDE



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CREATING SPACE FOR ADULTS

7:46 - 9:02

What keeps young people and adults from relating to one another?

How much do you know about the childhood of adults around you? How did you learn this? What would you like to know more about?

When have you felt judged by an adult? When have you been judgemental towards an adult?

[Megan Thee Stallion and Representative Maxine Waters on Misogynoir, Saying No, and the Genius of WAP](#)

by Kaitlyn Greenidge. Harper's Bazaar. Feb 22, 2021.

> [Video](#)

HUMILITY, INTIMACY, GRATITUDE

9:06 - 12:23

Do you think Humility, Intimacy, and Gratitude are required for care to exist between young people and adults?

How do you think you can grow in each of these areas?



I. LOOK FOR THE THING YOU CAN LOVE

Propose the following to students to do at home:

- 1.** Ask an adult in your life (at least 15 years older than you) to identify a song that you like and they don't like.
- 2.** Listen to the song together and challenge them to identify three things they like about the song.
- 3.** Your turn: identify a song that your caretaker likes that you do not. Challenge yourself to identify 3 things you like about the song.



II. HUMILITY, INTIMACY, GRATITUDE

A. WARM-UP

1. Show students the word *Humility*.
2. Welcome 3-5 students to do a gesture or body movement that symbolizes that word.
3. Repeat the exercise for *Intimacy* and *Gratitude*.

B. REFLECTION

1. Pass students post-it notes.
2. Independently, students reflect on each word: *Humility*, *Intimacy*, and *Gratitude*. For each word, students will identify the following and write their answer on a post-it note":
 - A person they connect with that word
 - A song that is emblematic of that word
 - Any words that help give the word meaning to them
 - A color they connect with that word
 - A specific time they felt that word

C. CHALK WALK

1. The words *Humility*, *Intimacy*, and *Gratitude* are up on three different anchor charts—one for each word.
2. Play music. Give students 5-10 minutes to place their reflections under each word and use pens to comment and make connections to other people's shares.
3. Come back together to discuss the working definitions of each word.
4. Give students a chance to share some of the songs that come up.

