

Privilege Checklist

Race & Class

If the statement applies to you, give yourself **one point**. If it does not apply to you give yourself **zero points**. At the end tally the number of points you have overall.

*If you are an educator, do this exercise a second time from the perspective of a student who struggles in your school or who you struggle with—how might they respond?

1.	When I was in school, the majority of my teachers were from my racial background.
2.	I grew up in a community where people did not have to lock their doors for safety.
3.	My parents could attend my school meetings and events without struggling with lack of transportation or inflexible work hours.
4.	Teachers in my K-12 schools perceived me to be someone who came from a “good” home.
5.	I had access to a car that I was allowed to drive when I became of legal driving age.
6.	My primary caregivers owned our home when I was growing up.
7.	The majority of characters in the books I read, the shows I watched, and the toys I played with as a child were from my racial background.
8.	I have never had to move because we could not afford the mortgage or rent.
9.	I did not have to work in high school or college in order to help pay for family expenses.
10.	I have never been asked, “What are you?” or mislabeled as a race other than my own.
11.	I am not asked by people if they can touch my hair because it is “different” or “interesting.”
12.	At least one of my parents has a college degree.
13.	As a child, I was taken to plays, museums, libraries, the ballet, summer camp, and other cultural events.
14.	I have gone on vacation outside of the city or town where I live.
15.	People in my family were able to go to any college they qualified for because of the GI Bill.
16.	I can go shopping alone fairly well assured that I will not be followed or harassed by store employees who consider me suspicious because of my race or class.
17.	People in my family were not barred from moving to the suburbs or given subprime mortgages because of their race.
18.	Most of the people I went to high school with attended a 4-year college or university after graduation.
19.	Conversations about national heritage or “civilization” prominently and positively feature people of my race as instrumental in making our society what it is.
20.	I had more than 20 books in my home when I was growing up.
21.	I have never been told that I am “well spoken” or “articulate” because I speak Standard English.

	22. People never question whether I am the one in charge because of my race or class.
	23. I can go into any bookstore and count on finding the writing of people from my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods that fit with my cultural traditions, into most any grocery store and find products for my hair.
	24. My family currently has access to healthcare.
	25. I am confident that I have never been denied a job because of my name.
	26. If I need childcare I can afford it.
	27. Schools populated predominantly by students from my current class position are usually thought of as good or high-quality schools.
	28. Schools populated predominantly by students from my racial background are usually thought of as good or high-quality schools.
	29. When I was a child my family could afford clothes and housing that did not make me feel embarrassed or ashamed.
	30. I have never lived in a home, neighborhood, or community where I felt unsafe and did not have the means to move.
	31. I have not been hungry or had to skip meals because of lack of funds.
	32. I can swear, dress in second-hand clothes, not answer email, or be late to meetings without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, laziness, poverty, or illiteracy of my class or race.
	33. During my K-12 academic experience I learned a lot about the history, culture, scientific inventions, writings, poetry, and other contributions of people from my racial background.
	34. I completed college.
	35. The neighborhoods where I feel most comfortable typically have better resourced schools.
	36. If I need glasses I can afford to buy them.
	37. My ancestors were not the victims of enslavement or genocide.
	38. The school I attended as a child had updated textbooks, technology, and facilities.
	39. My decision to go to college (or not) was not based entirely upon money.
	40. I have never needed a paycheck advance or had to go to a check cashing place to get immediate funds.
	41. People from my current class background are seen as good parents who care about their children's education.
	42. If I choose, I can afford to regularly feed myself and my family healthy, fresh foods.
	43. It is impossible to succeed academically without knowing the language, culture, inventions, and history of people from my racial background.
	44. Students from my racial background are some of those least likely to be written up, suspended, or placed in special education.
	45. Students from my racial background are some of those most likely to be in advanced and honors.
	46. I have inherited money or property.

What would happen if we privileged the assets of people who experience generational poverty?

Now let's consider what our world would be like if we turned privilege on its head and truly valued the strengths, skills, and contributions of individuals from oppressed groups. Let's try this with social class by thinking about the many skills that individuals who have experienced generational poverty have. If you have the skills listed below, give yourself **one point**. If you do not have the skill listed give yourself **zero points**. At the end tally the number of points you have overall.

*If you are an educator, do this exercise a second time from the perspective of a student who struggles in your school or who you struggle with—how might they respond?

1.	I could get by for three weeks while waiting for my first paycheck.
2.	I know how to get food stamps and welfare assistance should I need it.
3.	If I needed to cash a check but did not have identification I would know where to go and how much it would cost.
4.	I know how to get a loan on my car title and how much it will cost.
5.	I know how to get tons of newspaper, cardboard, and bottles to sell at recycling centers, where I can you sell these items, and how much I will get.
6.	I could move out of my house with only 72-hours notice.
7.	If I was evicted and had no money to move I know where I could find a place to stay.
8.	I could survive without garbage service, utilities, or a telephone.
9.	I know how to survive winter nights without heat in my house.
10.	If my utilities are cut off and I cannot afford to pay them I know where to go for help.
11.	I know how to “prove” that I live in a neighborhood I do not really live in so that my children can go to better schools.
12.	I could go for several days without food.
13.	I know which stores will let me get food and pay for it later.
14.	I know how to keep food cold without a working refrigerator.
15.	I know how to prepare meals without using the stove.
16.	I can peel a potato with a butcher knife.
17.	I could figure out how to get my car fixed without any money for parts or a mechanic to help.
18.	I know how to fix a toothache with superglue.
19.	I know where to get free prescription drug samples if I am sick.
20.	I am used to waiting hours for health or social services in rooms with people who are hungry, homeless, or sick.
21.	I know which churches in my community give away free clothes and shoes that have been well maintained.

	22. I know how to wash my clothes without money, laundry soap, or a washing machine.
	23. If I cannot afford to buy sanitary napkins or toilet paper I know how to use other items in my home to serve this purpose.
	24. I know how to find out if a missing friend or family member is in jail, what jail they were sent to, and what the court date will be.
	25. I know the rules for visiting people in prison.
	26. I know where to get a bondsman to get a relative out of jail.
	27. I know how to advocate for the highest quality public defender without having any money.
	28. I know how to safely walk down a dangerous street.
	29. I know how to get access to the internet if I cannot afford a computer or smart phone.
	30. I can give off a “pretend” aura of violence to avoid trouble if I am in a dangerous setting.
	31. I know how to smoothly change the subject to avoid answering humiliating questions like “What do you do?” or “Where do you live?”
	32. I can bounce back from regular crises (such as eviction, shut off utilities, illness, hunger, and unreliable transportation) to focus while at work or school.
	33. I know how to laugh and smile even if I am hungry, being evicted, or have nowhere to live.
	34. I could entertain a group of my friends with no food, drinks, or transportation.
	35. I could quickly throw out a witty comeback if I were being made fun of for wearing the same outfit to school multiple days in a row.
	36. I could get myself to school if there was no school bus and my parents were unable to provide me with transportation.
	37. I know how to get milk, cheese, and healthy foods for my child without money.
	38. I know what the requirements are for receiving cash assistance from the government, how much I am eligible for, and where to get it.
	39. If I am checking out at the grocery store and the cashier does not know how to process my food stamps I can explain how to do it.
	40. I know where to get toilet paper, paper towels, and other basic needs for free and what I will need to get them.
	41. I know the tax laws for people who have no income.
	42. I could find free, regular childcare if I need to work.
	43. I can remember the dates and times of appointments without a calendar.

Sources

Generational Poverty Survival Skills (<http://www.combarriers.com/SurvivalSkills>)

Peggy McIntosh, *Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*

University of Michigan Program on Intergroup Relations

Adams, Bell & Griffin, *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*

Allan Johnson, *Privilege, Power and Difference*

Arizona Residence Life, Privilege Walk—Class