

## For Teachers: Bias Awareness Scale

### What does this SSW measure address?

Awareness of one's potential bias against Blacks.

### For use with:

School Personnel Who are  
White

### BIAS AWARENESS:

Racial biases toward Blacks are virtually impossible to avoid in the United States because of the prevalence of negative racial messaging in American culture. The definition of Bias Awareness reflected in this scale includes an individual's awareness of and worry about holding negative attitudes or acting in a prejudicial way toward Blacks.



### Why is it important?

Becoming aware of biases is the first step toward reducing them and their harmful effects on behavior towards Black students, caregivers, and professional colleagues. Biases in schools and classrooms can have a wide range of negative effects on students of color, including their self-esteem, school engagement, sense of belonging, trust of teachers, and academic achievement. Higher scores among school staff on the Bias Awareness Scale are an indication not only that they would benefit from bias reduction strategies, but also that they may be open to engaging in bias reduction strategies. The Best Practices database contains a number of strategies for reducing biases and for interrupting their potential negative effects on decision-making, especially on decisions about exclusionary discipline.

### Scoring:

The scale has four items, each with a range of responses from 1 to 7. Response options range from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Higher scores indicate more Bias Awareness.

1. First, the scores on the fourth item have to be reverse coded (because higher scores indicate *less* awareness).  $7 = 1$ ,  $6 = 2$ ,  $5 = 3$ ,  $4 = 4$ ,  $3 = 5$ ,  $2 = 6$ , and  $1 = 7$ .
2. Then add up the scores for the four items for a total Bias Awareness score ranging from 1 to 49; higher scores indicate more awareness and concern about biases.

### What do researchers say about the quality of the scale?

Based on three studies and four samples, the researchers claim the scale demonstrated good reliability and validity. Its value may be primarily in its ability to identify individuals who are open to bias reduction training.

**Source:** Perry, S. P., Murphy, M. C., & Dovidio, J. F. (2015). Modern prejudice: Subtle, but unconscious? The role of Bias Awareness in Whites' perceptions of personal and others' biases. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol 61, 64-78. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2015.06.007>

If you have questions about how to use these scales, contact Natasha K. Bowen at [bowen.355@osu.edu](mailto:bowen.355@osu.edu)

## MEASURES FOR PRACTICE

### Bias Awareness Scale

Please read each of the following statements and circle the number of your response.

**1. Even though I know it's not appropriate, I sometimes feel that I hold unconscious negative attitudes toward Blacks.**

<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**2. When talking to Black people, I sometimes worry that I am unintentionally acting in a prejudiced way.**

<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**3. Even though I like Black people, I still worry that I have unconscious biases toward Blacks.**

<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**4. I never worry that I may be acting in a subtly prejudiced way toward Blacks.**

<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7