

The Quiet Rack

Facilitator note: The engine is dignity by design: finding the parts of a system that quietly tax the people it serves - exposure, records, audience - and rebuilding so the honest user pays nothing. The story is careful that nobody was cruel: the volunteer was kind, the clipboard was orderly, the jumble was just laundry, and the room still repelled exactly the girls it was built for. That is the lesson to hold in discussion: systems fail people without anyone meaning harm, so good intentions are not a defense of a bad design. The sponsor's objection is real and gets a real answer - you cannot run a room on suspicion of the worst girl; the price of the best use is that you cannot see everything - and the five-jumpers episode tests that answer honestly (Yetta could investigate, and chooses not to, because a list that lives in her head is still a list). Do not let discussion turn the five jumpers into a hunt for a story about some family; the refusal to pick a story is the point. The sister coda brings the engine down to one bag and one closed door: privacy is something you can design at home in ten minutes.

Teacher answer key

Activity 1: 1. The sign-out clipboard (name, item, size readable by everyone); the jumbled rack (browsing takes ten public minutes); the room's culture (the loud size question, the gossip about three skirts). 2. A girl should be able to enter, reach her section, check three hangers, and leave in ninety seconds; a short visit is a deniable visit. 3. "The rack keeps no records" plus a weekly totals-only count - they count the rack, not the girls. 4. Five jumpers leave one section in a week; Yetta thinks of a dozen innocent reasons, does not pick one, and does not investigate, because a list in her head is still a list.

Activity 2: 1. Fact. 2. Guess (they double). 3. Guess - her size moves off the rack week by week; Yetta never sees her, and that is the design working. 4. Fact.

Activity 3: Sample answers - 1. Kindness is in people; design is in the arrangement. The arrangement charged exposure even when every person meant well. 2. The list would tell more about each girl, but girls would stop using the room, so the room would know more and do less. 3. The list's power is that girls believe they are watched; whether it is paper or memory, if the school knows it exists, the privacy is gone.

Activity 4: 1. (a) The tax is visibility; move the shelf to a low-traffic spot, organize it by subject so a visit takes ninety seconds, and let taking be quiet. (b) "A sign-out sheet stops only the honest and the embarrassed - the exact girls the shelf is for. If we must count, count the shelf weekly, not the girls." 2. Donors are taxed too - being seen giving feels like being seen needing; the closed bag removes that, so stock flows. 3. Open; look for the honest-user-stopped insight.

Activity 5: 1. RACK. 2. SIZE. 3. FITS. 4. LIST.

Activity 6: 1-b, 2-c, 3-a, 4-d.



Activity 7: RACK row 1 columns 1-4; SIZE row 2 columns 1-4; CLIPBOARD row 3 columns 1-9; PRIVACY row 4 columns 1-7; FITS row 5 columns 1-4; DONOR row 6 columns 1-5; LIST row 7 columns 1-4; JUMBLE row 8 columns 1-6

Activity 8: Open response; look for an exposure cost named correctly and a fix that does not add a record.