

# KIM I AM

## EXPLORATION GUIDE

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*The W* with Ben Proudfoot & Camille Tucker  
by Luke Brad Bobo, PhD

# 1

Kim was raised by a single mother. They lived in the suburbs of Syracuse, New York. Kim said, "We were black kids growing up in the white suburbs." According to Kim, she lived a privileged life.

**What does it mean to "live a privileged life?" How is your life privileged? Or is it? How are you stewarding your privileged life?**

# 2

Growing up, Kim found herself in both the Black world and the white world, longing for these worlds to never collide or merge. Many times, African Americans navigating these two worlds have to engage in code-switching.

**Code-switching is defined as the practice of alternating between two or more languages or varieties of language in conversation. Do you understand the act of code-switching? Have you seen the way it is used in our culture? Have you ever code-switched?**

# 3

Initially, the Black Eyed Peas sought to reverse hip hop's digression. Kim said they were "happy" in a time when it wasn't okay to just be happy. This emerging group sought to reform the hip hop culture. But as the group grew, they were expected to soften and commercialize themselves. When Kim questioned the change in the group's goals, the guys said, "You don't have to go back to east LA, if this doesn't work out."

**Kim described life in east LA as tense and violent. Did the guys have a choice to stick to their original vision for the group? What were their options? What would you have done if you were in their shoes?**

# 4

When Kim was young, her mother asked her, "Where is your voice? Where are you?" Later in the film, Kim revisited these questions as she faced being objectified while doing her music.

**How did these questions from her childhood affect Kim as a young person and later in life? Have you faced similar struggles of choosing whether to conform or be true to yourself and your values?**

# 5

At the beginning of *Kim I Am*, Kim seemed bitter towards Fergie and the Black Eyed Peas. But as she told her story, it was clear that she holds on to no resentment. Kim is grateful for her contribution in the history of hip hop. Despite things not ending wrapped up in a bow, Kim said at the end of the film, "I have my happy."

**How would you describe Kim's "happy"? How do you find resolve when things don't go the way you expected? What gives you hope to go on in these situations? What's your happy?**