

African American History and Culture:

The Journal of Educational Foundations
Vol. 31 No. 3 & 4,
Fall/Winter 2018, pp. 7-26
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What White Teachers Should Know

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Abstract

White teachers who purpose to support the cultural integrity of African American students must possess essential knowledge, skills, and dispositional understandings relative to Black history and culture. This qualitative study examined the content and conceptual knowledge of 41 individuals relative to African American history and culture through personal interviews, a focus group, and survey interviews. Utilizing their formal and informal learning experiences, the participants highlighted the essential content and concepts relative to Black history and culture necessary for White teachers who work in schools with large numbers of African American students. We provide recommendations for teacher educators charged with preparing culturally relevant teachers and school administrators for supporting the enhanced content and conceptual understandings of White teachers.

Keywords: Black history and culture, teachers, teacher knowledge, teacher skills, teacher dispositions

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Introduction

As Black or African American professors of pre-kindergarten to higher education pre-professionals and practicing professionals, we reflected on our own educational upbringing that caused us to become actualized around our Blackness and enabled us to navigate traditional power structures. Our stories are geographically and generationally different, but a commonality is that we are decedents of enslaved Africans brought to the continental United States and are therefore burdened with historical and legislatively imposed marginalization in the United States. We are all also steeped in the rich Black history and culture displayed and reinforced in our families, churches, and communities. Additionally, we realized that we had a number of strong African American teachers and principals who informed us about our history and culture and modeled aspirations we could replicate. As Delpit (2006) stated, these educators recognized our brilliance and provided us the pragmatic and functional navigational skills to access the power structure. This fortress of support from educators, family, and our communities (Ford, Watson, & Ford, 2014) strengthened our resolve and encouraged us to seek educational and economic attainment.

Presently, many African American students may lack the school-based models we encountered as students, due to limited numbers of African American teachers and administrators in public schools. Primarily teachers who are of European ancestry or White teach most students in today's public schools. In 2011-2012, 82% of the teaching population was White, non-Hispanic, while only 52% of student population was White, non-Hispanic (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013a, 2013b). While we had a number of African American teachers as students, we also acknowledge that we had some White teachers and administrators who possessed the competencies necessary to connect their teaching to our culture and heritage and provided us contextualized learning experiences. These reflections on our own learning led us to consider what White teachers have learned about African American history and culture. In teaching our predominately-White students, we recognized that there are content knowledge and concept gaps in their cognitive and pedagogical repertoires. We believe it is necessary to prepare White teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be effective teachers of African American students (Ford & Quinn, 2010). To this extent, we decided to conduct a qualitative inquiry project to examine the content and conceptual knowledge of selected individuals relative to African American history and determine the essential the knowledge, skills, and dispositional

content and concept understandings White teachers should possess relative to Black history and culture.

Literature Review

White Teachers, Black Students

Considering the gaps in knowledge, skills, and dispositions White teachers may possess relative to teaching African American students, Henfield and Washington (2012) determined that White teachers who taught in multicultural schools entered with dispositional and pedagogical roadblocks, such as deficit thinking, decreased academic expectations, and the lack of knowledge pertaining to the implementation of culturally relevant curriculum. Neville and Awad (2014) found that White teachers tended to operate with hegemonic and meritocratic views of whiteness. They also found that White teachers often operated with the belief of color-blindness and failed to see that they held a dominant culture lens that had little consideration of the worldviews of others.

For meeting the educational needs of African American learners, Asante (1991) called for a centric approach. In this approach, the learner is at the center of the curriculum. If the learners are Black, this should be an Afrocentric approach. The centric paradigm postulates that the most productive methods of “teaching any student is to place her or his group within the center of the context of knowledge (Asante, 1991, p. 171)”. Along with a centric approach, Assaf, Garza, and Battle (2010) noted that teacher education programs should create a multicultural curriculum that is not simply isolated in one course, but threaded throughout the teacher preparation sequence so that all professors would have ownership of the content and learners could benefit from recursive elements of the curriculum. They stated that a threaded multicultural curriculum should consist of balancing optimistic perspectives of diversity while facing challenges, authentic experiences with diverse students, universal methods of ideological understandings, and an exploration of ethnic and linguistic differences. Ford and Quinn (2010) further delineate the need for multicultural education that includes openness to diversity, self-awareness, commitment to social justice, intercultural experiences, support group experiences, and educational field-experiences.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

As we reflected on the content knowledge and critical concepts surrounding African American history and culture, we found it necessary to consider

pedagogical practices specifically for teaching African American students. For this, we center our discussion on the seminal works of Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994, 1995a, 1995b), which theorize the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions for successfully teaching African American students. Using parent and administrator nominations, Ladson-Billings intensely examined the practices of eight classroom teachers. Parents described these teachers as having respect for parents, encouraging enthusiasm and positive attitudes towards learning among students, and improving student outcomes while supporting the home culture of students and their families. The work of these eight teachers focused on preparing students to confront inequitable and undemocratic social institutions and structures. These teachers defied administrative mandates to do what they considered best for students and routinely engaged in pedagogical practices, which were more consistent with their personal values (Ladson-Billings, 1995b).

Tenets of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. This pedagogical practice was designed to problematize teaching and encourage teachers to ask themselves and others about relationships, the curriculum, the role of schools, and the historical and present structure of society, all while linking principles of learning with understanding and appreciation for culture (Ladson-Billings, 1995b; Ladson-Billings, 2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy recognizes that teaching not only takes place in classrooms, but in schools and communities, which operate within local, state, national, and global contexts. How teachers question themselves and others and think about the context of teaching shapes how one perceives teaching (Ladson-Billings 2011). This theoretical practice rests on three tenants or elements: students must experience academic success; students must develop and maintain cultural competence; and students must develop a critical consciousness where they challenge the current social order (Ladson-Billings, 1992, 1995b).

The tenant of interest for this work is culturally relevant pedagogy's assertion that students must maintain cultural integrity (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, Ladson-Billings, 1995b). For many African American students, school is not a place where they can be themselves because schools often view African American students and their culture from a deficit perspective. Despite this, it is important for African American students to be able to function in their culture of origin (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). This requires African American students to gain an understanding of their culture in order to communicate and relate to other members of the community (Gay & Baber, 1987). The classroom can support this by acknowledging the home language of African American students and the use of curriculum tools that reflect the lived experiences of Black

people. The use of the language and other African American cultural characteristics can be a vehicle for learning designed to assist students in appreciating and celebrating their culture while gaining knowledge of and fluency in the larger culture. When African American students recognize and honor their cultural beliefs and gain knowledge of and fluency in the larger culture, they are better positioned to improve their socioeconomic status and the ability to make decisions about the lives they wish to live (Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2011, Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Critical Race Theory and Education

Along with Ladson-Billings' assertion that instruction for African American students should be culturally relevant, we also looked to critical race theory and its ability to explain the continued inequity Black students experience in schools (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Critical race theory asserts that racism is normal and natural in the culture of the United States, it employs the use of stories to counter presumed objective perspectives, it is critical of liberalism, and it asserts that Whites have benefited substantially from advances made during the Civil Rights Movement (Delgado, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998). In education, critical race theory sees school curriculum as a tool that upholds White supremacy, utilizes instructional strategies that assumes African American students are deficient, and relies on assessment tools to justify a deficit perspective relative to the achievement potential of African American students (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Purpose of the Study

We recognize education's role in the United States in upholding White supremacy and perpetuating a deficit perspective of African American students and culturally relevant pedagogy's counter-perspective believing Black students must experience academic success, develop and maintain cultural competence, and develop a critical consciousness where they challenge the current social order. In an effort to support students in maintaining their cultural integrity, this study examined the content and conceptual knowledge of individuals relative to African American history. Our goal was to determine the essential content and concepts White teachers should possess relative to Black history and culture and to determine the pedagogical implications necessary to enhance and enrich the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of White educators.

Methodology

In order to determine the content knowledge and critical concepts White teachers should possess pertaining to African American history and culture, the researchers decided to utilize qualitative research methods because they assist in facilitating an understanding of naturally occurring phenomenon (Klink, 2003). Specifically, qualitative research is “an inquiry into the process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting (Creswell, 1994, p. 2).” Our desire as researchers was to gain deeper and richer knowledge of how individuals characterize and articulate the essential content and concepts pertaining to African American history and culture.

Participants

This study utilized convenience sampling to select practicing teachers, pre-service teachers, teacher educators, community members, and others. Convenience sampling is the use of a targeted group of people or cases because the researcher believes they are available and can be accessed easily (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2006). Participants for this study were selected because they were located at or near the researchers’ place of employment. Each researcher selected a set of participants to interview. One researcher primarily focused on pre-service teachers, another focused on practicing teachers, another focused on administrators, and another focused on community members. We also consulted with additional individuals who were teacher educators or otherwise vested in the education of African American students. Each potential participant was contacted separately via email about participation. Once potential participants expressed interest in the research project, informed consent documents were sent for their review and meeting times were arranged. Before the start of the audio-recorded interviews, participants were provided copies of the informed consent documents to sign. Forty-one individuals participated in this project. The racial demographics of the participants consisted of 22 individuals of European ancestry or White, 18 African American or Black individuals, and 1 Latinx individual. Thirteen of the participants were pre-service teachers, seven were practicing teachers, four were teaching assistants, five were teacher educators, two were public school administrators, three were administrators at higher education institutions, and the remaining were community members (2 pastors, 1 grandmother, 1 university staff member, 1 public school secretary, 1

social worker, and 1 retired industry representative). The participants ranged in ages from 20 years of age to 77 years of age.

Procedures

Personal Interviews. Merriam (1998) acknowledged interviewing as a valuable complement to historical qualitative research. The in-depth structured interviews in this study utilized structured and open-ended questions conducted with select individuals. All study participants were asked the same set of questions that allowed the participants to describe their learning experiences relative to African American history and culture and what they considered the necessary content knowledge and critical concepts White teachers should possess pertaining to African American history and culture. The specific interview questions are in Appendix A.

Focus Group. One researcher held a focus group interview with former and current school administrators. A focus group interview took place as a qualitative approach for this group because it allowed participants to share common experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). This focus group also allowed for interactions among similar individuals and gave them the opportunity to cooperate with each other (Creswell, 2005).

Survey Interviews. There were a number of individuals, mainly pre-service teachers, interested in participating in the study, but some were unable to arrange a time for an individual or group interview. Survey interviews were used to supplement and confirm data already collected by individual interviews and the focus group (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2006; LeCompte, Preissle, & Tesch, 1993). For this group, we determined this was the best way to get detailed information in their own words on how they attached meaning to their experiences and the ways they expressed their feelings, opinions, and values (Fink, 2003). Like the other participants, these individuals were contacted separately via email about participation. Once informed consent documents were electronically signed, they were sent a link to the same open-ended interview questions to respond to in written form at their leisure. Their responses were collected via Google Forms.

Data Analysis

Wolcott (1995, 1999) indicated that qualitative research uses several techniques to collect information (i.e. participant observation, interview, and document or artifact analysis). This study utilized individual interviews, a focus group discussion, and survey interviews as a means to establish

African American History and Culture

trustworthiness and triangulate the data (Fink, 2003). Following the interviews and focus group, recordings were transcribed. Following the transcriptions, open coding was used to systematically assign tags to pieces of data. Then, axial coding was used to construct a comprehensive view of the data and to develop themes (Straus & Corbin, 1990).

Results

The objectives of this qualitative study was to examine the content and conceptual knowledge of individuals relative to African American history, to determine the essential content and concepts White teachers should possess relative to Black history and culture, and to determine the pedagogical implications necessary to enhance and enrich the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of White educators. What follows is a presentation of the data gathered from interviews, a focus group, and survey interviews.

Personal Reflections on Black History Learning Experiences

In discussing how they learned about African American history, the responses of the participants were categorized into two groups. The first set of responses reflected intentional learning about African American history and culture. Many of these participants had either learned about Black history and culture from their teachers and school experiences. One participant remarked, “In elementary school, [I learned about Black history and culture] through different pieces of literature, visuals and media. We also attended a play about Harriet Tubman. In high school, we learned a lot about it through textbooks, articles and videos.” Others had learned about Black history and culture through lived experiences, through family stories and memories, and/or from church.

The second set of responses from the participants indicated that some were not intentionally taught about African American history and culture. When probed, these participants, many of whom identified as White, indicated that they intentionally sought opportunities in order to fill in the gaps of their knowledge shortfalls. One participant commented, “I learned 99.9% about African American history and culture on my own.” As a result, many these participants conducted research through personal readings of articles, books, periodicals, and encyclopedias, sought mentors, and interacted with African American people. Additional information about African American history and culture was obtained through social media, social events, music, travel, professional conferences, critical friends, movies, and theatre productions.

Content and Concepts Learned About Black History

In examining the data, the researchers were able to determine the content and concepts the participants had learned formally or informally about Black history and culture. We divided the content and concepts into seven categories, such as the general role of African Americans in United States history and individuals' understanding of their ancestry. Many of the mature Black participants were able to reflect on their lived experiences, so events of the Civil Rights era were prominent in their responses. Specifically, the participants mentioned experiencing and learning about the notable legislation to emerge during the period, the role of children in the movement, and the notable and unsung leaders of the movement. For many of the younger participants (i.e. pre-service teachers), their formal and informal learning consisted of Black History Month, the slave trade and chattel slavery in the United States, and the Civil War. For the Civil War strand of content and concepts, the participants mentioned learning about the role of Blacks during the war, the Emancipation Proclamation, Juneteenth, Reconstruction, and the Nadir Period. Table 1, which is located in Appendix B, captures the variety of responses offered by the participants.

Concepts Essential for White Teachers

We looked to our participants to assist in generating a listing of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions pertaining to African American history and culture, White teachers should possess in order to be effective in classrooms. Their responses were shaped by their own formal and informal learning experiences over their varied life spans. For example, one of the mature participants stated,

I believe pre-service teachers need to learn the barbarity of slavery and Jim Crow Segregation as well as the struggles of Black people to win their civil and human rights. I also feel that the voices of those who experienced oppression over the centuries should be heard.

While this participant focused on knowledge pertaining to specific historical periods, many of the pre-service teachers focused on necessary knowledge and skills closely related with their areas of study. For example, a TESOL teaching major shared,

I think the sociolinguistic side of the topic is left out unfortunately, which can greatly help teachers understand the importance of accepting other varieties of English in their classroom, including African American Vernacular English. Teachers can subconsciously use language to mask

African American History and Culture

racial/ethnic discrimination by saying they are not speaking proper English and treating them unfairly because of it.

A music education major shared, "...in music, it is important to know of notable jazz musicians and performers that were African American and how that history has shaped music today." One history teaching major simply stated, "...lies taught in American history and published in textbooks" need to be pointed out.

Participants also described specific conceptual skills and dispositions they believed were essential for White teachers to be familiar. One participant remarked, "I think White pre-service teachers need to understand the following: racial prejudice; institutional racism and discrimination; social injustice; genocide; social construction; multiple and cumulative causation; privilege; and self-sacrifice." Another concept shared was that of colorblindness versus color consciousness. One participant stated, "I don't see color, to me all people are the same." This participant went on to share that this was often said proudly until having the opportunity to "see color" or become color conscious. For this participant being color conscious is how one shows respect for race, ethnicity, and the culture of people (Neville & Awad, 2014). The participant further elaborated, "Instead of just assuming that a person of color would best be represented in a blended, acculturated way ... I try to honor and embrace the cultural heritage and race of the person."

Table 2 in Appendix C provides a more detailed representation of the participants' responses on the necessary content and conceptual knowledge, skills, and dispositions for White teachers. The table displays the alignment with the learning frame, the concepts provided, and a description of the concept. For example, institutional racism is a concept categorized as essential knowledge. It is a system of inequality based on race. As mentioned by a participant, understanding the utilization of African American Vernacular English is a necessary skill for White teachers of African American students. This linguistic pattern known as Black English Vernacular or Vernacular Black English among sociolinguists and is commonly called Ebonics outside the academic community. A final example of the detailed representations in the table include the dispositional understanding of White privilege. White privilege describes the societal privileges that benefit White people in Western countries.

Discussion

Participants in this study expressed having learned about Black history and culture through a variety of formal and informal means. An interesting finding was that many of the Black participants never formally

learned African American history and culture. For these participants lived experiences, social events, and family remembrances gave them ongoing access to a plethora of opportunities to be exposed to African American history and culture. Also like the White participants, many had to seek intentional opportunities to learn the history of their people because they were not provided this information during formal schooling. Additionally, the researchers noticed that most of the Black participants talked about the family, church, and community being essential to their acculturation. According to Ford et al. (2014), this notion of the church, community, and family being the fortress of support for Black learners is a concept that teachers, especially White teachers should use to their pedagogical advantage. When White teachers utilize the fortress of support for Black learners to their pedagogical advantage, they are also demonstrating culturally relevant pedagogy which recognizes that teaching not only takes place in classrooms, but in schools and communities, which operate within local, state, national, and global contexts (Ladson-Billings, 2011).

As a collective, the participants pointed out, that White teachers should be familiar with content surrounding African and African American ancestral and historical experiences, which have shaped the role of Blacks in the United States. White teachers having an understanding of the historical experiences and contributions of African Americans to the United States would be essential in supporting students' ability to maintain cultural integrity (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, Ladson-Billings, 1995b). When White teachers possess and utilize essential content knowledge about African American history and culture, they are signaling to students that schools are places where they can see themselves reflected and gain understandings of their culture in order to be able to function in their culture of origin (Gay & Baber, 1987; Ladson-Billings, 1995b).

Essential concepts White teachers should be familiar with include multicultural education, social justice, racism, racial identity development, and White privilege. As Assaf, Garza, and Battle (2010) pointed out, conceptual learning for White teachers on Black history and culture should not take place formally just in one course, but threaded throughout their teacher preparation sequence. The participants' responses highlight the need for extensive conceptual learning that would consist of balancing optimistic perspectives of diversity while facing challenges (i.e. multicultural education versus social justice), authentic experiences with diverse students, universal methods of ideological understandings (i.e. racial identity development), and an exploration of ethnic and linguistic differences (i.e. African American Vernacular English).

African American History and Culture

Along with extensive conceptual learning on multicultural education and social justice, the participants communicated the need for conceptual learning on racism, racial identity development, and White privilege. This is essential for future teachers as Luckerson (2015) communicates "... millennials like to see [them] selves as progressive and post-racial. But this is the crux of the problem because young people take 'not seeing race' as a badge of honor that proves their progressivism and absolves them from engaging in discussions on the topic (p.26)." The participants discussed how understanding race, racism, and White privilege has direct application in the classroom because teachers who are colorblind could have hegemonic and meritocratic views and fail to consider the worldviews of others (Neville & Awad, 2014). This colorblind approach could also lead to ignoring the rich pedagogical opportunities that can take place if racial diversity was embraced and multicultural social justice education was threaded throughout the curriculum. When teachers have the content and conceptual understanding of Black history and culture and see race, they are in a better position to assist African American students in recognizing and honoring their cultural beliefs. They can also assist Black students in gaining knowledge of and fluency in the larger culture, and to better position themselves to improve their socioeconomic status and the ability to make decisions about the lives they wish to live (Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2011, Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Recommendations

The objective of this study was to communicate experiences individuals had in learning about African American history and culture and how formal and informal experiences can shape the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions White teachers need to have in order to teach African American students. Data analysis revealed that participants had a variety of formal and informal learning experiences on African American history and culture and that these experiences provided the content and concepts (i.e. Civil War, social justice, White privilege, etc...) essential for White teachers to know. As primarily teachers who are of European ancestry teach students in today's public schools, critical and intentional historical and cultural curricula on African Americans, other people of color, and indigenous groups must be part of the scope and sequence in teacher preparation programs. This instruction should not occur in a few targeted courses, but be threaded throughout the teacher preparation sequence (Assaf, Garza, & Battle, 2010).

Along with formal classroom instruction, authentic and diverse field experiences should be required to give White pre-service teachers hands-

on opportunities to interact with African American students and their families. Along with formal instruction and varied field experiences in racially diverse schools, White pre-service teachers should be given the opportunity to experience Black culture through a variety of realistic intercultural opportunities. Some examples include attending a church service, events at community centers, volunteering with a community organization, and hearing from other White teachers who have learned about and use African American history and cultural characteristics to assist their students in maintaining cultural integrity.

Conclusion

In order for White teachers to be effective in supporting African American students' need to maintain cultural integrity, they must have formal and informal learning experiences on Black history and culture. Given the continued increase in the numbers of students of color in public schools, White teachers must possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to assist students in experiencing academic success, developing and maintaining cultural competence, and developing critical consciousness. This article has highlighted the specific content and concepts essential for White teachers to know about Black history and culture. It is hoped that the results and recommendations will be seen as useful for teacher educators charged with preparing culturally relevant teachers. Additionally, we hope that educational administrators will utilize the information gathered here in supporting the continued professional growth and development of teachers who presently work in schools with large numbers of African American students.

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African American History and Culture

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

- Question 1: How were you taught about African American history and culture?
- Question 2: How did you learn about African American history and culture?
- Question 3: Who taught you this information?
- Question 4: Where was this information taught?
- Question 5: What content do you think is essential for White preservice teachers to learn about African American history and culture?
- Question 6: What concepts do you think is essential for White preservice teachers to learn about African American history and culture?
- Question 7: Is there anything else you want to share that you think will inform our article?

African American History and Culture

Appendix B

Table 1:
Content and Concepts Learned
about African American History and Culture

<i>Content Themes</i>	<i>Aligned Content Topics</i>
United States History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revolutionary War and the Role of Blacks• United States as a Commonwealth• The Rise of the Black Church• Women in the Black Church• Women's Rights in the Early 19th Century
Ancestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Genealogical History of One's Family• Racial Identity Development• Understand Spiritual, Cultural, and Historical Values of African American People• Cradle of Civilization
Civil Rights Era	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil Rights Act and Other Laws• Negro National Anthem• Young People and the Civil Rights Movement• Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Other Civil Rights Leaders
Civil War History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil War and the Role of Blacks• Emancipation Proclamation• Juneteenth• Reconstruction• Nadir Period
Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• See a historical Black cast play such as <i>Porgy & Bess</i>, <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>, <i>The Wiz</i>, <i>The Color Purple</i>, etc.• Read books from the Coretta Scott King award winning list• Research and be able to name African-American pioneers and their contributions across sports, medicine, entertainment, economics, politics, religion, literature, education, science, technology, history, etc.• Attended a Black church, local organization, or community event• Listen to and know the history of Black music such as Negro spirituals, blues, ragtime, jazz, gospel, soul, funk, and hip-hop.

Segregation/Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Crow Laws • Sundown Towns • Lynching • De Jure and De Facto Segregation • <i>Plessy vs. Ferguson</i> • <i>Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka Kansas</i>
Slavery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West African life of Blacks before Slavery • Geographical and Historical Roots of Slavery • Middle Passage and the Triangular Trade Route • Three-Fifth Compromise • One Drop Blood Rule • Blacks in the Resistance of Slavery • Abolitionists, Black Abolitionists • Free Blacks in the Colonies • Slave Narratives

Appendix C

Table 2
African American Culture and History Concepts and Definitions

<i>Learning Frame</i>	<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Definitions</i>
Knowledge	Approaches Multicultural Curriculum Reform	Guidelines for incorporating multicultural education into the curriculum includes the <i>Contribution, Ethnic Additive, Transformation, and Decision-Making / Social Action Approaches</i> (Banks, 1989)
	Education as Emancipation	One of the characteristics in Geneva Gay's (2000) culturally responsive teaching is emancipatory. Students are given the freedom to move beyond traditional canons of knowledge and explore alternative perspectives.
	Institutional Racism	A system of inequality based on race. It can occur in institutions such as public government bodies, private business corporations (such as media outlets), and universities (public and private).
	Meritocracy	A political philosophy which holds that power should be vested in individuals almost exclusively according to merit. Advancement in such a system is based on performance measured through examination and/or demonstrated achievement in the field where it is implemented.
	Racial Prejudice	Prejudice against or hostility toward people of another race, color, ethnicity, or culture.

African American History and Culture

	Role of the Family/Community	This focuses on the resourceful Black grandmother, the vital Black church, the effective Black school, the successful Black business enterprise, the authentic Black scholar, the hard-working, long-suffering Black masses, the upwardly mobile sectors. All hold important keys to the regeneration of Black families and communities (Billingsley, 1994).
	School-to-Prison Pipeline	A disturbing national trend wherein children are funneled out of public schools and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Many of these children have learning disabilities or histories of poverty, abuse, or neglect, and would benefit from additional educational and counseling services. Instead, they are isolated, punished, and pushed out.
	Social Justice	The social, educational, and economic factors pertaining to race, gender, and class.
Skills	African American Vernacular English (AAVE)	African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is formerly known as Black English Vernacular or Vernacular Black English among sociolinguists, and commonly called Ebonics outside the academic community.
	Appropriate Touch	Hugs, pats on the head or back, or other touches could be deemed inappropriate by African American students. Teachers should be aware and sensitive to students' needs.
	Physicality of Males	There is a long history of the super-humanization of Black males. Physicians in the late 1800s and early 1900s characterized Blacks as having magical bodies that were able to withstand pain and surgical procedures (Waytz, Hoffman, & Trawalter, 2015).
	Play on Language	Verbal play that serves as instruction, entertainment, and mental exercise in preparation for interacting with friend and foe in the social arena. In Black vernacular, Signifying is a sign that words cannot be trusted, that even the most literal utterance allows room for interpretation, and that language is both carnival and minefield (Gates, 1988).
	Racial Identity Development	The stages of racial identity development are 1) conformity, 2) dissonance, 3) resistance and immersion, 4) introspection, and 5) synergetic articulation and awareness (Tatum, 1992).

Logan, Hilton, Watson, & Kirkland-Holmes

	Respect Resilience and Survival Strategies	Resilience theory explains the phenomenon of learners' positive adaptation despite various adverse life conditions and traumatic events. This theory emphasizes the importance (relevance) of positive factors and assets versus deficit thinking.
	Self-Sacrificing Behaviors	The sacrifice of one's own desires and interests for the sake of duty or for the well-being of others.
	Silence as a Sign of Respect	Teachers need to understand that some Black children were taught not to look an adult in the eyes or say anything as a sign of respect to the adult and not as a sign of obstinacy.
Dispositions	Acceptance of Social Equality	State of affairs in which all people within a specific society or isolated group have the same status in certain respects, often including civil rights, freedom of speech, property rights, and equal access to social goods and services.
	Ethnic-Racial Socialization	Race and ethnic-based cultural constructs that shape the racial and ethnic identity of a person.
	Micro-Aggressions	Micro-aggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.
	Oppression	Oppression is when a person or group in a position of power controls the less powerful in cruel and unfair ways.
	Oppositional Identity	Ogbu and Simon (1998) argued that involuntary minorities often adopted an oppositional identity to the mainstream culture in response to a glass ceiling imposed or maintained by white society on the job-success of their parents and others in their communities.
	Social Construction	Race, although it does not exist in the world in any ontologically objective way, it still is real in society (as opposed to nature). Race is a social construction that has real consequences and effects. These effects, consequences, and the notion that race is ontologically subjective is epistemologically objective. We know

African American History and Culture

that race is something that is real in society, and that it shapes the way we see ourselves and others (Boaz, 1940).

White Privilege

White privilege is a term for societal privileges that benefit white people in Western countries beyond what is commonly experienced by non-white people under the same social, political, or economic circumstances.