

Implicit Bias and Racial Equity:

Cynthia Peters

April 13, 2021



WORLD EDUCATION



“Literacy means liberation.” -- Septima Clark

This is first of three webinars

1. April 13 – Implicit Bias
2. April 20 – Classroom Materials and Practices (with Riva Pearson)
3. April 27 – Programs and the Field (with Carmine Stewart)



Also a separate space for interaction!

The header features a light blue background with a horizontal band of light green. Above this band, several squares of different colors (dark blue, red, grey, dark blue, and red) are scattered across the top.

Agenda

- Welcome; acknowledge our historical moment
- Implicit bias is real and it matters
- Three ways we can address it:
 - raise our own awareness,
 - put up guardrails,
 - change the water we swim in
- Resources, Handouts, Closing

The header features a light blue background with a horizontal band of light green. Above this band, several colored squares are arranged: a teal square on the left, a red square, a grey square, another teal square, and a pink square on the right.

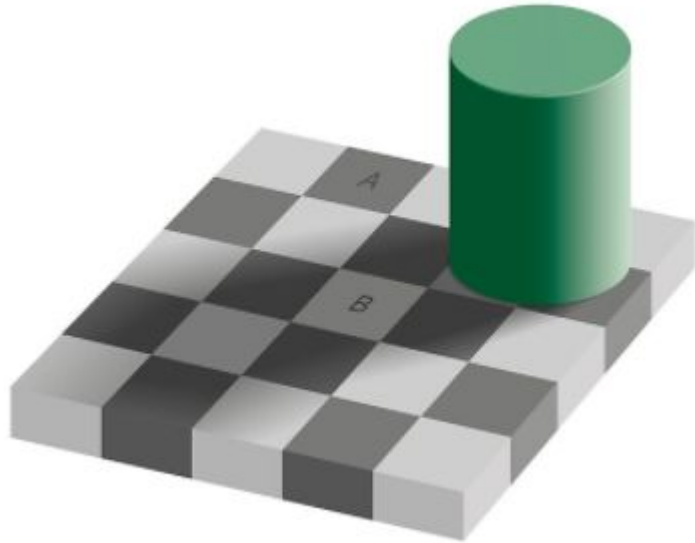
Implicit Bias: a definition

Implicit bias includes attitudes and beliefs (positive or negative) about other people, ideas, issues, or institutions that occur outside of our conscious awareness and control, which affect our opinions and behavior. Everyone has implicit biases. However, people can work to combat and change these biases.

Source: Facing History and Ourselves (www.facinghistory.org)

Want to catch your brain making a mistake?

<https://outsmartinghumanminds.org/module/illusions-at-work/>





**Has Anyone Taken the Harvard Implicit Bias
Test?**

Another source of LOTS of data:

According to many large studies:

- Referees favor home teams
- Referees show racial bias

National Bureau of Economic Research

<https://www.nber.org/papers/w19765>



What is your experience?

Please share one example of implicit bias that you have

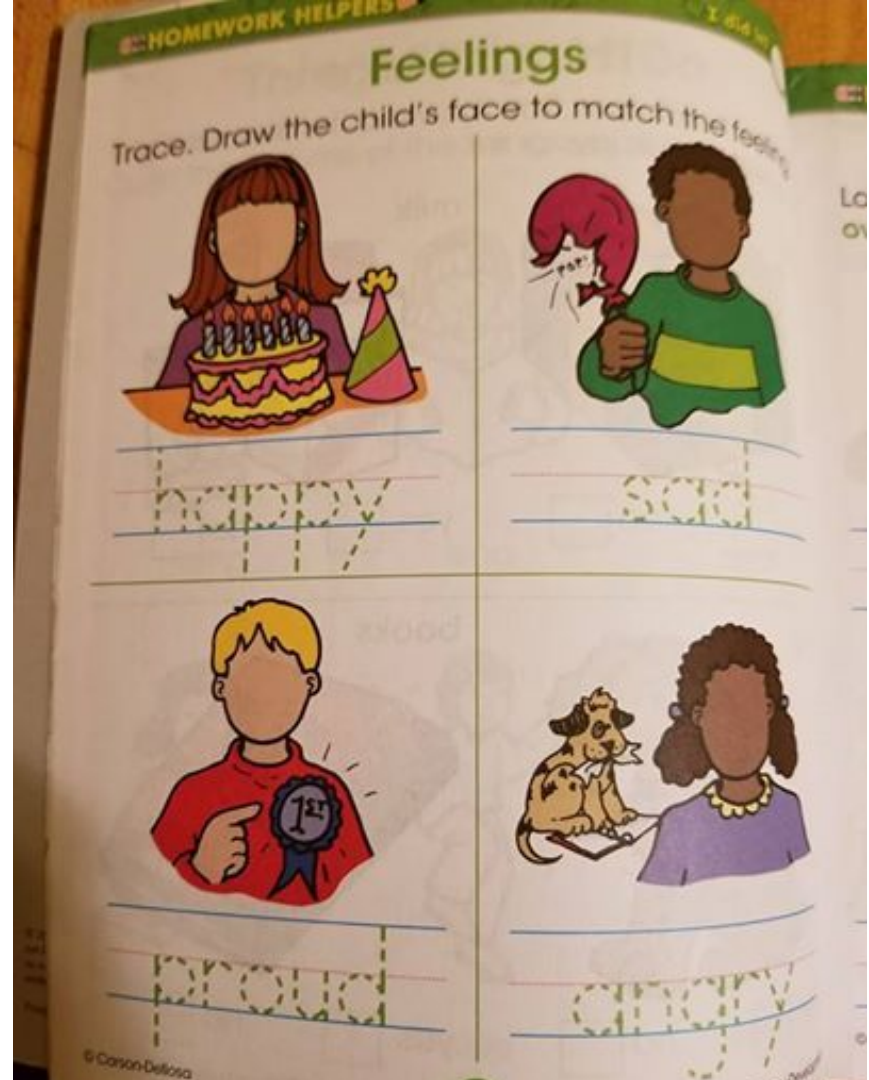
1. witnessed,
2. experienced
yourselves, or
3. expressed yourselves.



Where does implicit bias come from?

- Family and culture
- Media
- Life experiences based on circumstances you were born into
- Schooling/education
- Religious practices

Image from *Homework Helpers Vocabulary Development Workbook*, 2009, Carson Dellosa Education



Unconscious Bias Applies to All of Us

- We are hard-wired to make snap decisions about what is safe, comfortable, valuable.
- Like the referees, we all have countless discretionary moments in a day -- moments when we may be driven by bias.
- Our biases show themselves in various ways:
 - Micro-affirmations
 - Micro-devaluations
 - Affinity bias
 - Underlying worldview



Average Bias in a Community Matters

“Metro areas with greater average implicit bias have larger racial disparities in police shootings. And counties with greater average implicit bias have larger racial disparities in infant health problems.”

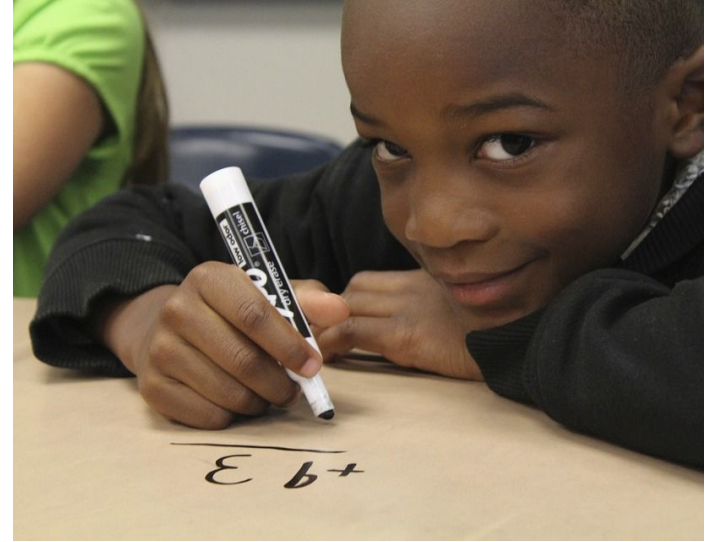
www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-to-think-about-implicit-bias/



Bias Yields Racial Disparities in Expectations

“Non-black teachers of black students have significantly lower expectations than do black teachers. These effects are larger for black male students and math teachers.”

research.upjohn.org/up_workingpapers/231/



Names that *sound* white & male get more responses

A recent field experiment conducted by one of us and colleagues found that the instructors of online courses were *nearly twice* as likely to respond to discussion-forum comments placed by students who were randomly assigned white-male names.



www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2017/03/20/the-insidiousness-of-unconscious-bias-in-schools/

Stereotype Threat

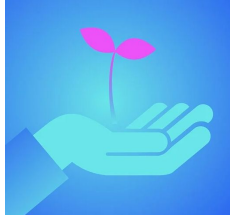
Studies show that just the ***fear of being stereotyped*** will cause students to de-identify with the school or the field of study, and it will lower test-takers' scores.



psycnet.apa.org/record/1997-04591-001

How can we work to combat biases?

1



Raise our own awareness so we can change our attitudes

2



Slow down, put up guard rails to keep ourselves on track

3



Change the water we swim in

What can we do? Raise Awareness!

Remember the referees?

- May 2007, an academic study shows referees' bias
- At first, study ignored by media. Referee behavior stays the same.
- Then lots of media attention. Referee behavior changes. According to the academic paper, "The bias completely disappeared."



What does that look like for us? We can:

- **Build self-awareness:** Examine our biases so they shift from unconscious to conscious
 - Take an implicit bias test
 - Make a conscious effort to slow down and monitor our own beliefs /decisions/behaviors
- **Remember:** it's not about whether you're a "good" person or not. It's hard to think about something if you're feeling blamed or at fault. Everyone has implicit bias.



Build Guard Rails

“A lot of the strategies revolve around how to give yourself more time to think, and how to put guard rails on how you judge other people so that you’re less likely to act on your biases.”

From “Can You Train People to Be Less Biased?”

<https://why.org/segments/can-you-train-people-to-be-less-biased/>



What can teachers do to build guard rails'

- Monitor your practice
 - When do you ask students for “evidence”?
 - Materials: do they reinforce or interrupt bias?
 - Consider your perspective and how it shows up in your teaching
- Invite feedback
 - Collaborate with peers to create an observation protocol
 - Get student feedback through evaluation
- Lessons
 - Study the phenomenon of bias
 - Build listening skills
 - Develop lessons that surface underlying perspective



Why does it matter to notice how perspective shows up in our materials?



[illegible]



Opinion 1	Opinion 2	Underlying Perspective
Immigrants take our jobs and lower our wages.	Immigrants are good for our economy and do the jobs nobody else wants to do. Our food would be unaffordable if it weren't for immigrants.	If immigrants aren't good for the economy, we don't want them. Their worthiness is determined by how they affect our economy. If a person doesn't serve a purpose - provide a 'good' - they are disposable.

What could you share in the classroom that would interrupt this narrow perspective?

You can put up a guard rail against this perspective by listening to the voices of immigrants, talking about immigration...

From the "Immigration" Issue (#38) of *The Change Agent*: "I Left My Son and Daughter Behind" (p. 37)

I Left My Son and Daughter Behind

Gladis Escano

When I came to the U.S., I felt sad because I left behind my son and daughter. The decision to come

They cried and said, "I want my Mama to come back to us."

to the U.S. affected my family and me so much.

Every day, my children would ask my parents about

me. Some days, they cried and said, "I want my Mama to come back to us." When I talked to my son on the phone, he always cried.

I wanted to see my family, but it was impossible. Because of the type of visa I had, I could not travel easily. In any case, I didn't have the money to buy a ticket to go home.

After several years, I brought my son to the U.S. He was 10 years old. I haven't seen my daughter again, but I am hoping and praying every night that she will be able to come and visit me this year.

Gladis Escano, originally from Honduras, is a student in the adult ESOL program at the Fairfax County Public Schools in Fairfax, VA.



"Cruzanado Fronteras," Paula Nieto Cumez, © 2008 Arte Maya Y'utuil, www.mayawomeninart.org

Make up your own title for this image. Use the details in the image to explain why you picked that title.

...and talking about other things that matter

Breathe! Sorting through the Advice

Vidhya Palanimuthu

BEFORE YOU READ: When you are having emotional struggles, do you find people's advice helpful? Explain.

People Give Advice

We often find people around us saying, "Relax, you will be fine." But is it that easy? If yes, then why do people need assistance and support to "treat" stress? It's absolutely not easy. I find it to be tremendously tough. It's not easy to make people understand what is going on in your mind when you don't understand it yourself. Sometimes, our minds can feel completely chaotic. A few friends offered real support, and a few others sounded more like they were quoting something from a Google search:

"Dance it out." But I was falling.
"Go for a walk." But my legs were frozen.
"Talk about it." But I was tongue-tied.
"Go to bed early." But I was tossing and turning.
"Focus." With a confused mind?
"Think of good times. Smile!" But how?

I Find My Way

I laid awake at night wondering how I could fight back against the stress I was feeling. I decided to

What Is Irony?



Look up the definition of irony. Explain how this image is ironic.



Vidhya Palanimuthu is from India and has been living in Keene, NH, for the last six years. She is a busy mom of a 3rd grader and a 6th grader, and she loves being a mom. She takes some time out for herself to learn and socialize with the best teachers and awesome fellow students. She also enjoys drawing, painting, and music.

revisit some of my childhood hobbies like painting. I found I could wipe away the blues with happy colors. Trust me: colors can do magic! I tried reading with no berries or judgement. I read magazines, cookbooks, online articles, even kids' comics.

I also turned to my family. They were my greatest support. We cooked together, played together, and shared childhood stories. Some of a good long hug is the best medicine. We remember that it's okay to cry or feel bad.

My Advice for You

With time, I found my mantra: "Breathe. Take a deep breath and exhale. Love refreshes your mind. And no, the power of family and friends. You friends give you many reasons to live. You can find a way to take a deep breath. I find myself saying, "Hey stress... let's go!" Whoops! Does that sound like a quote?

AFTER YOU READ: There is irony in this essay. Describe the irony at the beginning, middle, and end of the essay.

The Power of a Workout

Aggie Cersosimo

I used to hate to work out. I have always wanted to be athletic and strong, but I have found it very difficult to motivate myself. When I used to work out, soreness, sweat, pain, and the general unpleasantness of it all. I hated it. I didn't even like to watch sporting events.

When the pandemic changed all that! The world health crisis of the century, everybody's shelves in the stores were empty. Schools, workplaces, and parks got shut down. We were all at home, on hold with no plan, no instructions, and no deadline. Suddenly, the days got really long, slow, and lonely. The isolation felt painful.

I was overwhelmed by the amount of negative news. I kept thinking about the worst. What if something happened to my family in my native country? I hated living in fear and uncertainty. One day, I woke up and I told myself: "This needs to change." I packed my two boys into the

car, and we went for a hike. We chose a short but picturesque hike near our house. We explored the footpaths along the gorge and enjoyed the scenic views. It was freezing, but it did not matter. We enjoyed nature and each other. We were happy!

That was the day when something changed. I decided to get friendly with workouts. We decided to go hiking once a week, then two days a week, and then three. I took as many online yoga, spin, and Pilates classes as a stay-at-home mom could do. I started walking in the morning.

It was extraordinary how much my mood improved. I stopped following negative and depressing news. I changed my diet and lost a few pounds. I became more patient and calm. Every morning, I was looking forward to my little exercise routine. It was my escape, almost a spiritual

Now, I cherish my active time every day. It gives me power and fuel for the whole day, and it saved my sanity. Even though I am still worried about my family, and we still do not know what the future is going to bring, I know that I have my workout routine that never disappoints.

Aggie Cersosimo is from Poland, She is an ESL student at Keene Community College in Keene, NH. She is a member of the Keene International Festival committee, and she loves travel, interior design, reading, skiing, and of course her newest hobby: a workout that she does almost every day.



Stress of Moving to a New Country

moments in our lives. Stressful times was when I was shocked by how hard it was to change. The biggest change was that I could not speak the language. I had studied English, but most of the teachers in the US were British, so I have a British accent. Native speakers, they did not understand me. And I could not understand them.

I hesitate to speak to anyone. The weather was so hard for me as the average temperature in Vietnam is in the 40s. I felt so cold! Meanwhile, in Portland, the average temperature is in the 40s. I felt so cold! I could not sleep at night in the summer, I could not sleep at night in the winter because of the time difference. I did not taste right, so I just ate bananas for a month. I always had an allergic reaction when I left the house.

When I came to the United States, I could not drive. If I wanted to go somewhere, my sister had to take me. I was totally dependent on her. In addition, the people here drive very fast, and this scared me.

Routine Helps?

Yes! Research shows that you can improve your physical and mental health by having regular routines for sleeping, eating, and exercising. Start small and see what works for you. Remember that it takes an average of 3 months to change a habit. So...give it time, and don't try to be perfect. One day at a time!

Source: <https://www.international.org/creating-routines>



Then I registered for the ESOL program at Portland Community College. This gave me more structure to my day. I tried to wake up early in the morning, and I exercised every day. When I had free time, I listened to music, watched action movies, called relatives, and visited my nephew on the weekend.

I tried to remember that many people who immigrate to the United States feel disappointed at first. But they learn to make it work. This thought encouraged me very much. After that, I learned to drive a car. I was scared at first, but I got used to it.

Now everything is better. I can speak and understand native speakers. Regular exercise makes me feel much better. I don't feel cold anymore, and I can sleep well at night. I got a driver's license and I bought a car, so I can go anywhere I want. I have learned a valuable lesson: When we are in trouble, we can be patient and persist, and things will get better.

AFTER YOU READ: What routines make you feel better? Read the box on the left and check the source. Is it credible? Why or why not?

Lin Thong is an ESOL student at Portland Community College. He has been in the United States for 2 years. He likes walking around the park, listening to music, and taking his friends. He says, "When we face tragic moments in our lives, we should not give up. I hope that when people read this article, they will get some motivation to overcome their obstacles."

“Immigrants are good neighbors. They are interesting and wonderful people.”

Immigration in My Community

Carl Barnes

I am a 71-year old African American male, and I have been in Caldwell County, North Carolina, for some 60 years. I have seen this county change a lot with the Hispanics arriving in our community. And in my opinion, it's all for the better.

Immigrants contribute to our community by being good, hard-working people. They get jobs as landscapers, furniture workers, and construction workers. They help to make our community great by bringing good food, good

ideas, and different languages and cultures. They are also good for the community because they pay taxes.

Immigrants are good neighbors.

Immigrants are good neighbors. They are interesting and wonderful people. They bring new forms of entertainment like

soccer and cricket. They offer so much to the community. I have seen this with my own eyes. I have worked with immigrants, played with immigrants, and gone to church with immigrants since the 1960s.

It is a pleasure to see my nieces and nephews and grandchildren grow up with immigrants. I think Congress should pass a bill that would give immigrants the same opportunities that the rest of us enjoy.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. got the ball rolling by bringing all of us together, black and white, to end segregation and fight for equality.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., got the ball rolling by bringing all of us together, black and white, to end segregation and fight for equality. Now, whites and blacks understand each other better. I hope that we try to do our best to finish his work. We are all in this together. Together we stand, and divided we fall.



Carl Barnes attends the Caldwell County Family Literacy Program in Hudson, NC. Carl is made aware daily of the new opportunities that getting his GED credential will bring to his life.

What can programs do to build guard rails?

- Support teachers and administrators to pause
 - Could anti-bias be part of lesson-plan template?
 - Provide classroom materials that support anti-bias perspective in the classroom
 - Integrate “addressing bias” into teacher evaluation rubrics and PD
- Build student leadership in your program and in the wider world



Example from the field

- The El Rio Learning Center at PIMA CC developed a Student Ambassador program.
- “Not just student-centered but student-driven.”
-- Laura Porfirio



Change the water we swim in

- This part might be harder!
- We're going to zoom out. What is happening with jobs and wages?
- Let's look at *one aspect* of the “water we swim in” – the work world.









What do you notice about racial stratification in work? How might that contribute to the creation of bias?



Now let's look at some statistics about work.



Fastest growing occupations by %, 2019-29

OCCUPATION	% RATE OF GROWTH (PROJECTED) 2019-29	ANNUAL MEDIAN PAY 2019
Wind turbine technicians	 61%	\$52,910
Nurse practitioners	 52%	\$109,820
Solar photovoltaic installers	 51%	\$44,890
Occupational therapy assts.	 35%	\$61,510
Statisticians	 35%	\$91,160
Home health aides	 34%	\$25,280

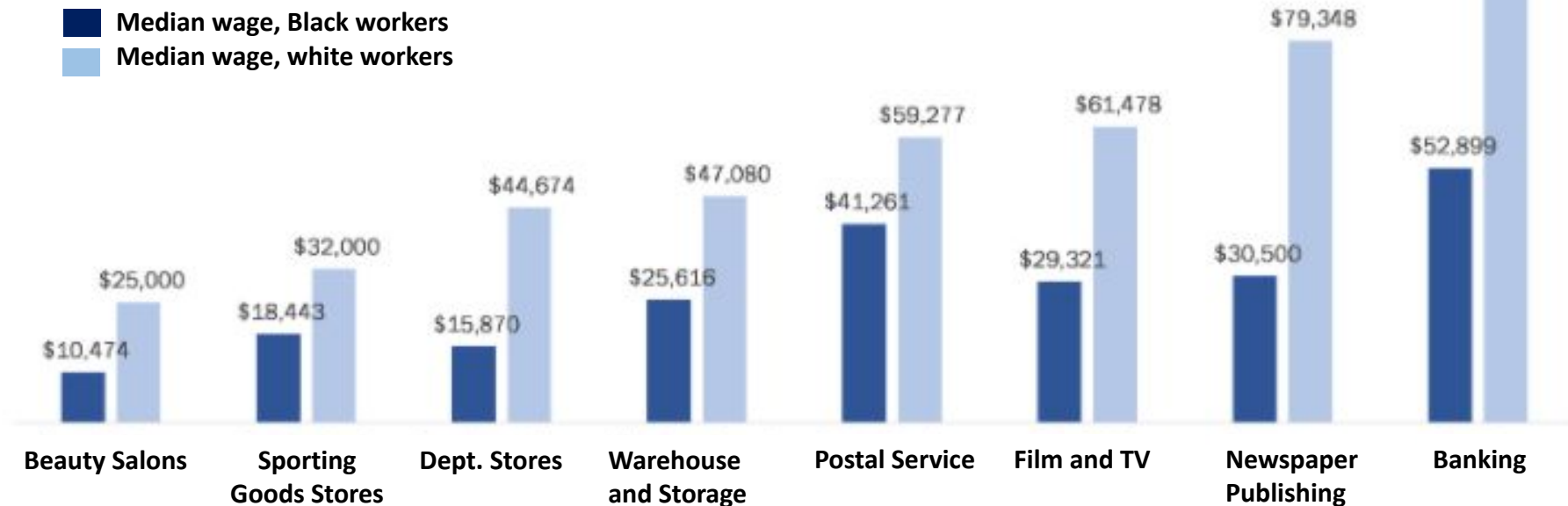
<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/fastest-growing.htm>

Most new jobs, 2019-29

OCCUPATION	NUMBER OF NEW JOBS (PROJECTED) 2019-29	ANNUAL MEDIAN PAY 2019
Home health aides	1,159,500	\$25,280
Fast food/counter workers	460,900	\$22,740
Cooks, restaurant	327,300	\$27,790
Software developers	316,000	\$107,510
Registered nurses	221,900	\$73,300
General/operations mgrs.	143,800	\$100,780

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/most-new-jobs.htm>

Black New Yorkers Earn Less Than White New Yorkers in Most Industries



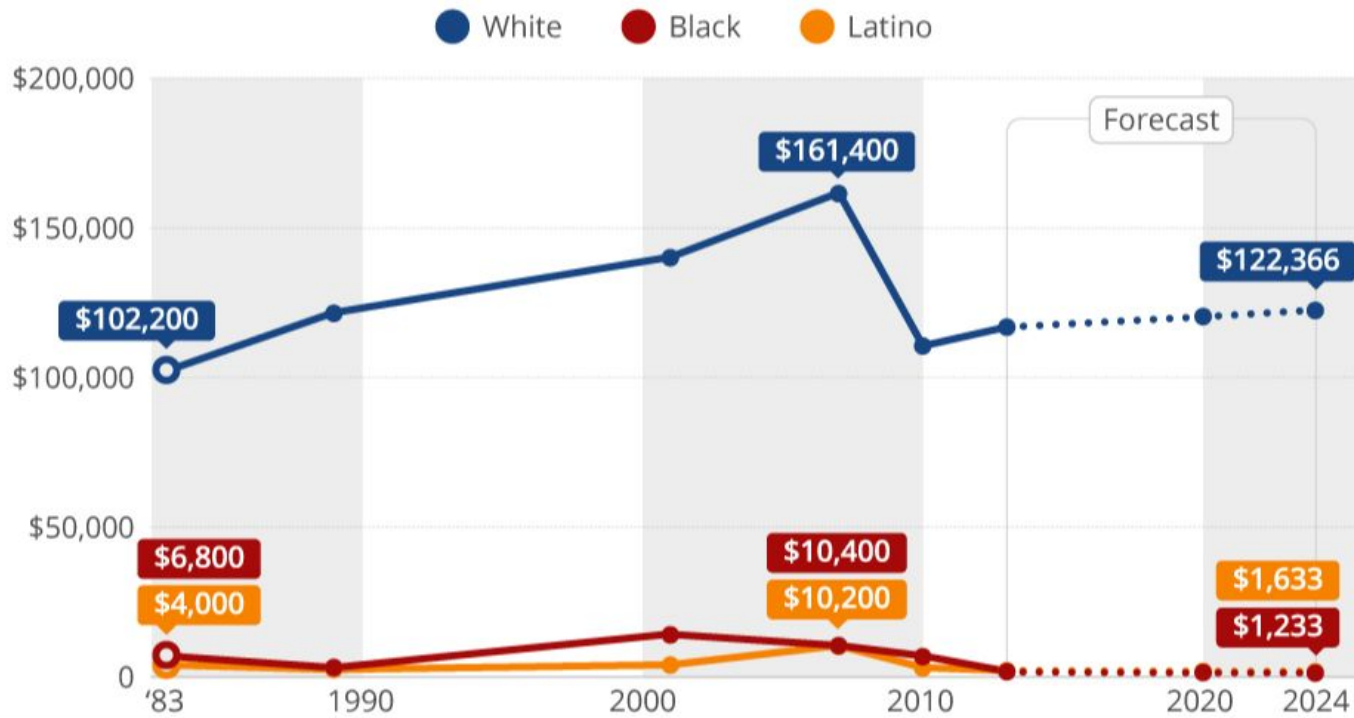
<https://nycfuture.org/research/stark-disparities-in-employment-and-wages-for-black-new-yorkers>

Black Women's Wage Equality by Education

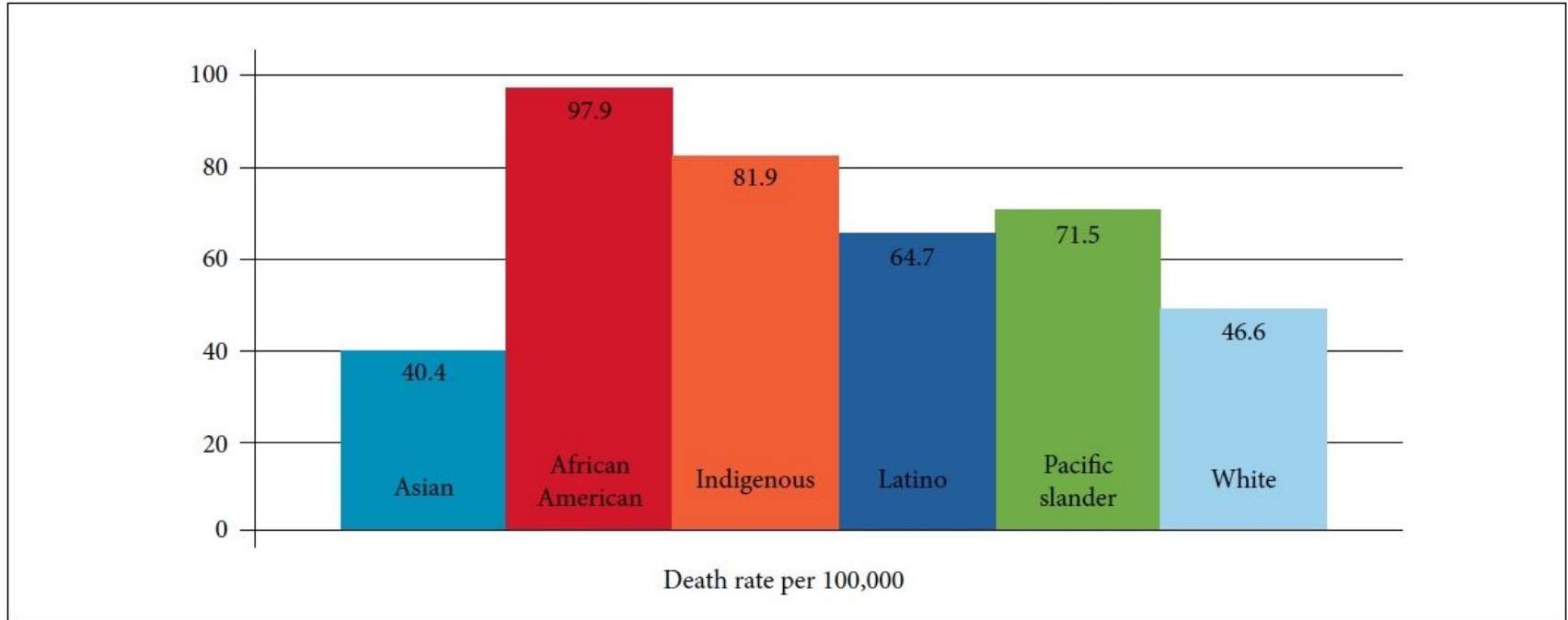
Education	Black Women's Earnings	White, Non-Hispanic Men's Earnings	Black Women's Pay per \$ of White Men's Pay
No high school degree	\$21,847	\$36,480	60 cents
High school degree	\$29,468	\$46,729	63 cents
Associate's degree	\$36,409	\$54,620	67 cents
Bachelor's degree	\$46,694	\$75,080	62 cents
Master's degree	\$56,072	\$87,051	64 cents

Racial Wealth Inequality is Rampant in the U.S.

Median household wealth by race/ethnicity (1983-2024)

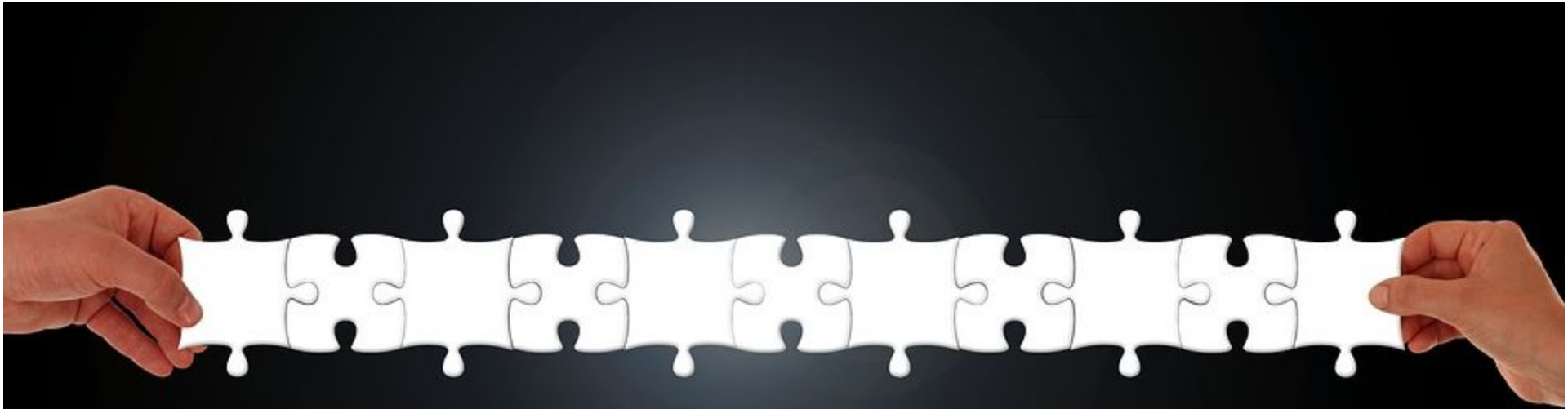


Covid-19 deaths per 100,000 by race/ethnicity through 9-10-20



Source: APM Research Lab, September 10, 2020. Available at <https://www.apmresearchlab.org/COVID/deaths-by-race>.

How does this data connect back to addressing racial inequity in our classrooms?

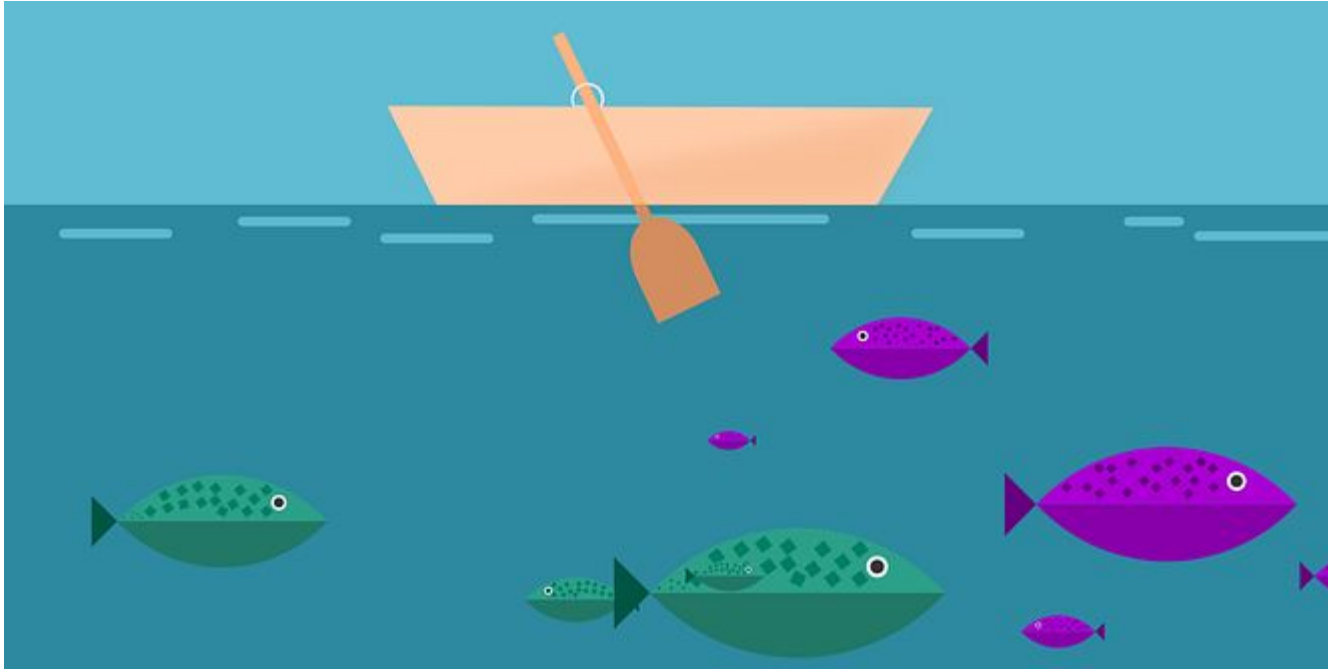


My thoughts:

- The language we use -- “getting ready for jobs and careers” -- sounds race neutral. But working in the U.S. is profoundly NOT race neutral.
- Examining larger context makes us think twice about the deficit model.



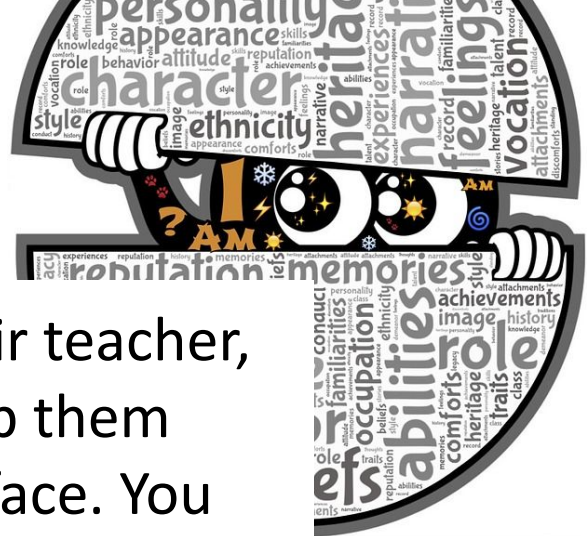
Let's take another stab at surfacing an underlying perspective. This one is about financial literacy.



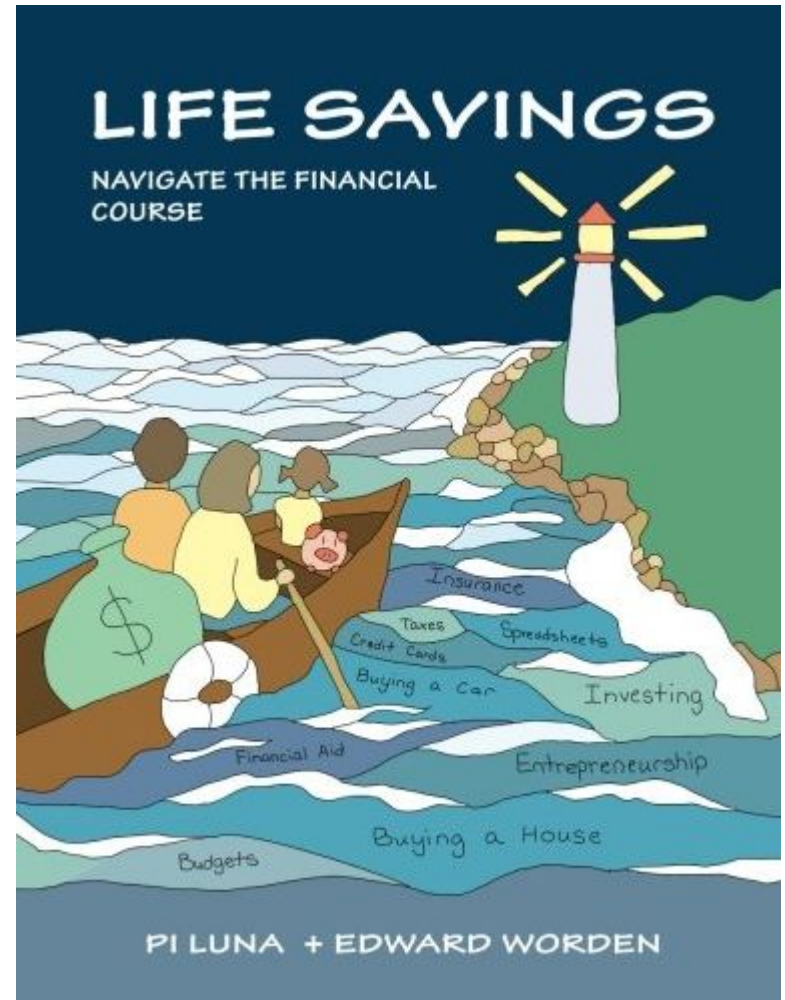
What is the underlying perspective?

Students say they have money problems. As their teacher, you search for financial literacy resources to help them make sense of and address the challenges they face. You find one source that offers workshops such as:

- Tips for Managing your Money
- How to Make Informed Retirement Decisions
- Use Google Spreadsheets to Make a Budget
- Three Strategies for Saving for College



In other words, financial literacy looks something like this!



In an adult ed. program that was consciously taking on racial equity, financial literacy might look different:



- Yes, it would still include a focus on personal budgets and savings plans
- But it might not be race-neutral! It might acknowledge racial stratification and provide a civics lesson about how to counter it! This would equip our students with tools to make bad jobs better. ***And that is a profound way to defend black and brown lives.***

Example from the field. In Massachusetts,

MCAE allied with Raise Up Massachusetts to raise the minimum wage and ensure that Massachusetts workers would have access to paid sick time.



Example from the field: In New York City,

the Literacy Assistance Center launched the Literacy and Justice Initiative with a mission to connect students to movements for racial, social, and economic justice.



Teach about unions and the history of labor movement

Miami

\$9.50

average hourly wage
non-union housekeeper



3 union hotels

Boston

\$21.45

average hourly wage
union housekeeper



29 union hotels

**MAKE OUR ECONOMY WORK
FOR WORKING PEOPLE**

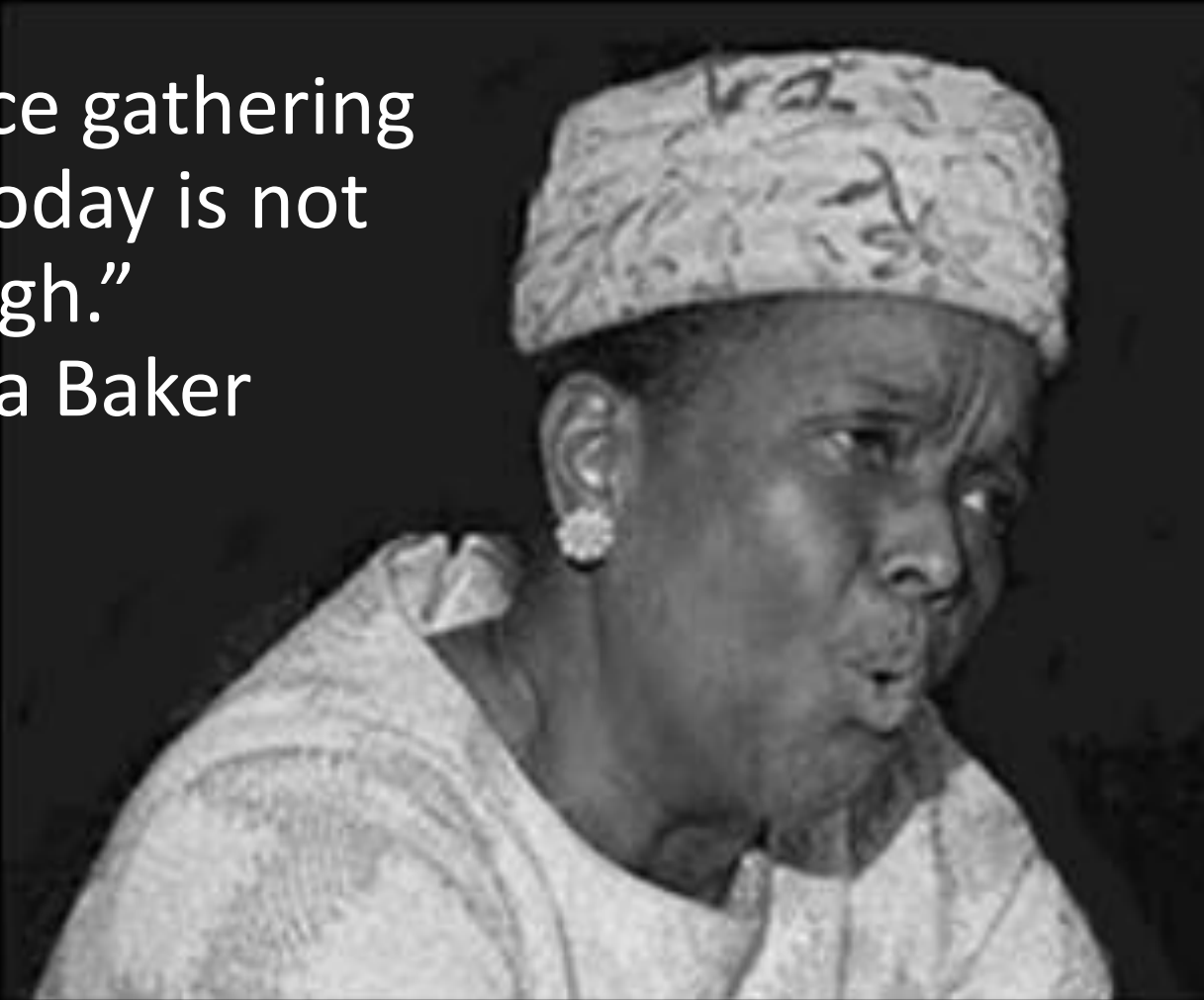
PASS THE PRO ACT

CALL CONGRESS: 866-832-1560



“A nice gathering
like today is not
enough.”

-- Ella Baker



Hope to see you for the next two webinars

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2. April 20 – Classroom Materials and Practices (with Riva Pearson)
3. April 27 – Programs and the Field (with Carmine Stewart)

Remember: Check out this interactive space where we have collected some best practices, and where you can share your own experience.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mnsTxTZc3rHo9K1kik49ghnBx3s7HW4trtiXGBoqRUY/edit?pli=1>

Questions/comments? Contact me at Cynthia Peters, cynthia_peters@worlded.org

Handouts

- Lesson Packet 10 – “Taking Action at Work” – a collection of mostly first person stories of students speaking up at work for better conditions, and wages, etc.

<https://changeagent.nelrc.org/in-the-classroom/lesson-packets/#packet10>

- Lesson Packet 17 – “Indigenous People’s Issue (Level 4 Adaptations)” – a 13-page collection of 5 articles by and about indigenous peoples.

<https://changeagent.nelrc.org/in-the-classroom/lesson-packets/#packet17>

- “Talking about Race” – this issue of *The Change Agent* is free this year. Go to <https://changeagent.nelrc.org/>, fill out the form, and receive a PDF of the magazine, all the audio, and all the extras!

Resources

The Change Agent – students tell stories of taking action in micro and macro ways in school, family, community, and workplace. <https://changeagent.nelrc.org/>

EdTech Center – <https://edtech.worlded.org/>

NCTN – College Success for Single Mothers.

<https://www.collegetransition.org/career-pathways/featured-projects/single-mothers-success/>

NELRC: resources for civic engagement -- <https://nelrc.org/resources/#civic>

“Literacy and Justice” – blog by Ira Yankwitt from the Literacy Assistance Center, with link to Google doc of teaching resources: <https://www.lacnyc.org/lit-and-just-message.html>

COABE Student Ambassador training – <https://coabe.org/student-ambassador/>

ProLiteracy Advocacy Toolkit – <https://www.proliteracy.org/What-We-Do/Advocacy>

“Racial Equity,” COABE Journal -- <https://coabe.org/coabe-journal/>



Read the word. Read the world. – Paulo Freire