

ENSURING RIGOR & BUILDING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN DIVERSE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENTS



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“To know where we are going, we must know where we’ve come from”



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- The Adinkra symbolize the Akan way of life, and individually each symbol can be associated with an **aphorism or proverb** rooted in the Akan experience.
- African proverbs offer insight into African philosophical thought, cosmology, and worldview, so that collectively, the Adinkra and their accompanying proverbs form a communication system that preserves and transmits the accumulated cultural and spiritual values of the people.

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Sankofa symbol



"Anansi no, Anansi no, Anansi no, Anansi no"

- One of the Adinkra symbols for Sankofa depicts a mythical bird flying forward with its head turned backward. The egg in its mouth represents the "gems" or knowledge of the past upon which wisdom is based; it also signifies the generation to come that would benefit from that wisdom.

(**sa**n = "to return") + (**ko** = "to go") + (**fa** = "to look- to seek and take")

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The role of culturally responsive pedagogy

- There is great need to identify effective ways to prepare teachers **who will implement culturally responsive practices that will engage and motivate** all children while allowing and **encouraging those children to affirm their cultural identity in a positive manner.**
- An equally important area is the need to **identify effective ways to alter attitudes of teachers so that they are willing to reflect** upon and change as appropriate their long-held views about teaching, culture, and learning.

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Linking **culturally responsive** pedagogy to retention and success of culturally diverse gifted students

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Challenges for diverse gifted students

- Gaining a sense of belonging in gifted ed schools/classrooms
- Maintaining cultural legacy
- Focusing on 'scholar mentality' in the midst of oppressive school & community settings
- Overcoming discrimination through low expectations
- Feelings of 'being different' from the norm
- Accessing high end curriculum & programming opportunities elem-high school

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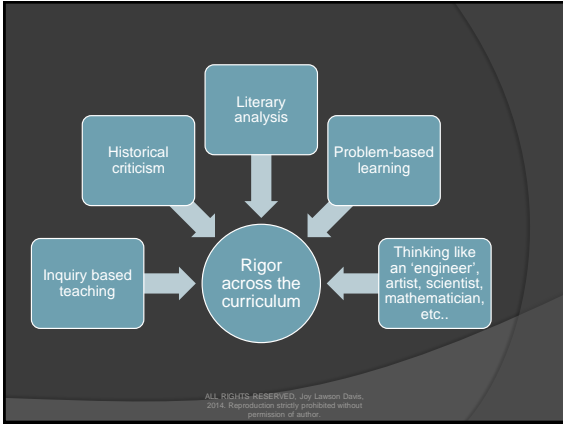
Ensuring Rigor --

- Typically characterized as 'high-end' learning
- Students are placed in the 'mode' of practicing professionals
- Discuss and learn about 'Big Ideas'
- Critically analyze literature, historical perspectives, scientific theories

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- Matched with interest of learners
- Provide for creation of new ideas, products, knowledge in a given area
- Hands-on, using tools & methodologies of specific disciplines
- Opportunities for lab experiences, internships, and independent studies

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Aligning strengths/inclinations with instruction

CLD learners	Rigorous/Relevant Instruction
Verbal, Linguistic Strengths	Literary analysis, read-alouds, forensics, using music to teach math/geography, focus on writing, oral competitions/debates
Visual/Spatial Strengths	STEM content focus , innovative technologies, Board Games to teach skills, engage across groups
Flourish in hands-on learning environments	Laboratory classrooms, Internships, Group problem solving experiments
Facility & ease with use of multiple modalities	Using visual imagery , music, hands-on, integration of technology throughout
Vervistic, Energetic	Flexible grouping, allowing movement during class period
Situational, pragmatic problem solvers	Problem-based learning . Using word problems to teach math concepts, cross disciplinary instruction

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**Relationships~
connecting with
students to increase
access & improve
opportunities**

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Relationships in gifted education classrooms that-

- ✓ build trust,
- ✓ attend to students' psycho-social needs,
- ✓ sustain their engagement
- ✓ teach them to value the contributions of their peers across cultural groups

will yield the most long-term effects

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Educators must be open to:

- Learning tools of 'Code Switching'
- Arranging discussion groups re: Race & Education in non-defensive settings
- Understanding importance of Cohort groups with similar peers
- Examining lives and work of contemporary & **historical figures** across cultures and genders

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Historical Figure: Paul Robeson

Black & Gifted- Just like Me

Paul Robeson Was Born In Princeton, New Jersey On April 9, 1898.

- ❖ His Distinguished Career As An *Actor, Scholar* (He Was Phi Beta Kappa And Valedictorian Of His Graduating Class At Rutgers University),
- ❖ *Activist, Athlete* (Two-Time All America Football Player At Rutgers University & **Earned 15 Letters** In Basketball, Track, Baseball And Football),
- ❖ *Lawyer, Singer, Writer* And
- ❖ *Multilingualist* (Robeson Spoke More Than 20 Languages),



Made Him One Of The Most Versatile Talents Produced During *The Harlem Renaissance*.

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Robeson as an Activist/Leader

- Robeson Understood The Power Of His Celebrity And Combined It With Activism To Fight Injustice. He Opposed Segregation In The North And South.
- He Also Spoke Out Loudly Against Lynching And In 1946 Founded **The American Crusade Against Lynching**.

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Power of Words – Mirror & Window Books



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Share **Mirror** and **Window** Book lists

- Use for Bibliotherapy
- Book Reviews
- Literary Analysis
- To open discussions re: cultural difference & similarities
 - See work of Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop
 - Book Review Listing (JLDavis)

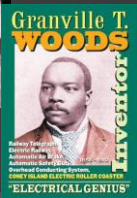
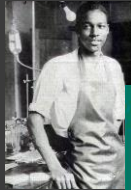
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African Americans in the STEM fields



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STEM Leaders-



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Problem Based Learning (PBL)

- Ill-Structured Problem
 - > *Group interaction*
 - > *Inquiry*
 - > *Research*
 - > *Presentation of solution to public group*

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A Problem-Based Learning Inquiry :

Do the dry bones speak?

• <http://www.history.buffalo.edu/documents/SeemanWMO.pdf>

• **Ill-structured Problem**

- an Archaeological dig in the late 1990's unearthed the remains of what appeared to be the remains of Africans buried in a particular lot/area of NYC
- Landowners had made an earlier agreement to sell the property to a realtor ready to build a new high-rise apartment building
- After the dig and discovery, the land deal was halted
- Many interested in this discovery and land development were at odds; how can they resolve this matter to the satisfaction of all concerned (those interested in history of AA in colonial period NYC; land owner; realtor; national archaeologists; local politicians; local educators – high school and university personnel)

Your task: Create a plan for how this discovery can be successfully dealt with to the satisfaction of all parties.

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**Share
Ideas/Curriculum
models that have
worked for you-**

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