



# TeachingWorks

UNIVERSITY of MICHIGAN SCHOOL of EDUCATION

2017-18 TeachingWorks Streaming Seminar Series

***Outrage to Action: Disrupting Inequity Through Teacher Education***

***Designing Lessons for a Culturally Relevant Curriculum***

***Featuring:***

Christine Sleeter

Professor Emerita in the College of Professional Studies

California State University Monterey Bay

**Thank you for your patience.**

**The session will begin at 4:10 p.m.**

**Email questions to [info@teachingworks.org](mailto:info@teachingworks.org)**

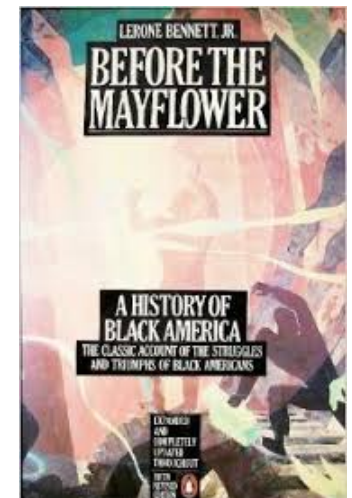
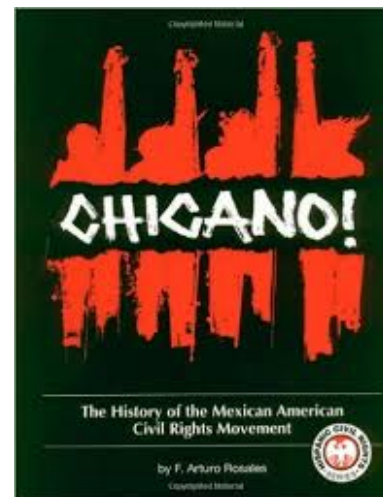
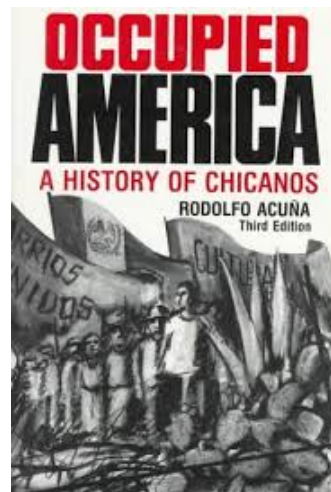
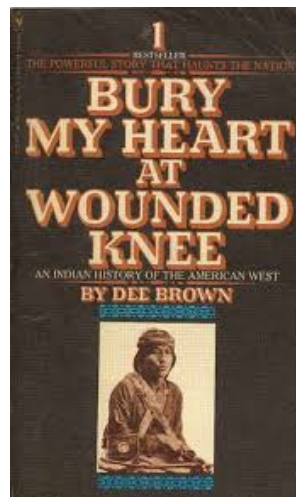
**#twseminar**

# *Designing Lessons for a Culturally Relevant Curriculum*

*Christine Sleeter*

*January 24, 2018*







# Levels of Curriculum Transformation

	Banks	Sleeter & Grant	Feminist Phase Theory
Curriculum helps students learn to examine and act on social justice issues through various disciplines and historically marginalized groups' knowledge.	Social Action	Multicultural Social Justice	
Curriculum organized around major ideas in discipline or subject area, thoroughly re-worked using intellectual knowledge of multiple groups.	Transformational	Multicultural	Curriculum that Includes us All
Curriculum organized around experiences and intellectual work of one historically marginalized group, in depth.		Single-Group Studies	Woman as Curriculum; African Americans as Curriculum; LGBT as Curriculum; etc.
Compare experiences of dominant and subordinate groups in context of discipline.			Bi-Focal
Add to existing curriculum famous people, facts about historically marginalized groups.	Additive; Contributions	Human Relations	"Add and Stir"
Adaptations to help students from historically marginalized groups better understand existing curriculum.		Teaching the Culturally Different	
Curriculum before transformation		Business as Usual	Womanless Curriculum; White curriculum; etc.

## TALLY

	Male	Female	Both Sexes
Arab American			
Asian American			
Black American			
Hispanic American			
American Indian			
White American			
Race Ambiguous			
Mixed Race Group			
Disabled American			

Total number of individuals depicted: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of group scenes depicted: \_\_\_\_\_

# Whose knowledge?

## Teachers and Textbooks, K-12

	Latino	White	American Indian	African American	Asian American
Student demographics	26%	49%	1%	15%	5%
Teacher demographics	6%	84%	<1%	7%	2%
Social Studies (10 texts)	0-4%	41-80%	1-10%	2-28%	0-8%
Reading/Language Arts (10 texts)	1-12%	37-73%	0-13%	9-33%	1-13(?)%
Science (6 texts)	1-20%	19-48%	0-5%	12-23%	0-8)%

# Mainstream National Narrative

- US was founded on Judeo-Christian Western European ideals of justice and equality under the law
- US capitalist economy provides opportunity for anyone to succeed through hard work
- Even though US was founded on slavery, its democracy has expanded to include more diverse peoples
- Many groups have both assimilated and contributed culturally to the US
- US champions individual liberties and personal freedoms

# People of African Descent: Creators, Thinkers, Builders

- Ancient Egypt, the cradle of civilization
- Other pre-colonial African civilizations
- Colonization and enslavement
- Building the church: Emergence of African American institutions
- Resisting the yoke of slavery
- The Harlem Renaissance
- The Civil Rights movement and institutional racism
- Black nationalism globally
- Creators, thinkers, and builders today

# People of African Descent:

pre-colonial African civilizations  
enslavement

slavery

- The Harlem Renaissance
- The Civil Rights movement

leaders today

# U.S. from Mexican American Perspective

- Identity and family history
- Mexican independence from Spain
- U.S. conquest: Texas insurrection, U.S.-Mexico War.
- Military occupation, arrival of Anglos, land loss
- Industrialization & institutionalization of racism in the Southwest
- Work, migration, and community-building
- Self-organizing, political divisions, and ethnic identity during hard times
- Struggle for equal rights
- Cultural renaissance and building a movement
- Latinos reshape America, America reshapes Latinos

# Addition of Mexican Americans

- Mexican independence from Spain
- U.S. annexation: U.S.-Mexico War
- Industrialization
- Work, immigration
- Struggle for equal rights (Cesar Chavez)
- Cultural contributions

Ford and Harris' (2000) interviews with 43 gifted Black middle-school students. All wanted to learn more about Black people in school, most agreed that this would make school more interesting, and almost half agreed that they got tired of learning about White people all the time:

You get tired of learning about the same White people and the same things. We need to broaden our horizons and learn about other people, even other countries. The White people are just trying to advance other White people and leave Blacks behind and ignorant. I feel like being in the class more when I learn about Blacks and my heritage. It gives me encouragement and lets me know that I have rights. It helps to improve my grades. Learning about White people doesn't help me know about myself ... I'd like to educate my children about my heritage when I get older. I want to feel good about who I am. Why shouldn't I want to learn more about Black people?

# Themes in Ethnic Studies Literature

Narratives contingent on position of narrator

Colonialism, capitalism and the new imperialism

Institutional discrimination

Difference and identity

Collective social change processes

Cultural wisdom

Sleeter, C. E. 2002. State curriculum standards and the shaping of student consciousness.  
*Social Justice* 29 (4): 8-25.

# Ethnic Studies Comprehensive Framework

## Double Helix of Ethnic Studies: **Humanity & Criticality**

- 1. Indigeneity/Roots.** The sovereignty of Indigenous peoples in the U.S. and throughout our planet, who still maintain relations with their ancestral land bases and ancestral cultures are a primary consideration. Basic geography and history lets us know that every human being today, has ancestral Indigenous roots upon the various continents our planet.
- 2. Colonization/Dehumanization.** While peoples have relocated and migrated throughout human history and conflict and conquest have always occurred, the Western World took conquest, beginning in 1492 CE to a global level, and in the process, created new social constructions of race and racial hierarchy, all of which continue to have reverberations at global as well as local levels.
- 3. Hegemony.** Ethnic Studies offers oppositional stories and counter-narratives, naming, speaking to, and resisting the hegemonic condition.
- 4. Regeneration/Transformation/Social Justice.** Development of an ancestrally grounded social and critical consciousness, a resurgence/application of geohistorical knowledge and academic identity, grounded in an understanding of the past, agency in the present, and consideration of future generations.

# Mexican American Studies, Tucson

## The Raza Studies Model: Critically Compassionate Intellectualism

**Increased Academic Achievement for  
Latino Students**

**Academic Proficiency for  
Latino Students**

+

**Academic Identity for  
Latino Students**

### Curriculum

- Culturally and Historically Relevant
- Social Justice Centered
- State Aligned

+

(honors alignment in most cases)

•Academically Rigorous +  
= **Raza Studies Curriculum**

### Pedagogy

- Critical Thinkers
- Community Service
- Critical Consciousness
- Social Transformation +

= **Raza Studies Pedagogy**

+

### Student – Teacher – Parent Interaction

- Respect
- Understanding
- Appreciation
- Centered in the Creation of  
an Academic Identity +

= **Raza Studies Student-Teacher  
Relations**

# Mexican American Studies, Tucson

“The estimated relationship between MAS participation and student educational attainment was surprisingly strong. Analyses from our initial report had not included covariates for prior academic achievement (Cabrera et al., 2014). We expected the estimated relationship to decline once these covariates were included, but it did not. Instead, the robustness of the coefficient on MAS participation was consistent with the descriptive statistics in Table 2. The MAS students had significantly lower 9th- and 10th-grade GPAs as well as 10th-grade AIMS scores than their non-MAS peers. However, they had significantly higher AIMS passing and graduation rates than their non-MAS peers.”

Cabrera, N. L., Milam, J. F., Jaquette, O., & Marx, R. W. (2014). Missing the (student achievement) forest for all the (political) trees: Empiricism and the Mexican American student controversy in Tucson. *American Educational Research Journal* 51(6): 1084-1118.

# 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Ethnic Studies, SFUSD

- Unit 1: Identity and Narrative
- Unit 2: Systems and Power
- Unit 3: Hegemony and Counter-hegemony
- Unit 4: Humanization and Dehumanization
- Unit 5: Causality and Agency
- Unit 6: Transformation and Change



**SFUSD** SAN FRANCISCO  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Ethnic Studies, SFUSD

“The results presented in this study indicate that the ninth-grade ES curriculum implemented in SFUSD led to large and statistically significant improvements in students’ ninth-grade GPA, attendance, and credits earned. . . . We present several forms of evidence that affirm the validity of this discontinuous assignment rule as a quasi-experiment as well as evidence on the robustness of our main findings. We note evidence that these large effects appear to reflect both reductions in the probability of dropping out as well as improvements in the performance of enrolled students. We also find that the effects of this course were concentrated among males, Hispanics, and to a lesser degree, Asians.”

Dee, T., Penner, E. (2017). The causal effects of cultural relevance; Evidence from an ethnic studies curriculum. *American Educational Research Journal*

# Impact on Attitudes about People Different from Self

- K-12 multicultural programming “brought more positive changes in students’ racial attitudes than did exposure to traditional instruction.” Okoye-Johnson (2011)
- Ethnic studies, women’s studies courses in higher education usually have positive impact on cross-group attitudes. Cross-group interaction as part of coursework strengthens positive impact
- While first ethnic studies course may be challenging (especially for White students), students who take more than one grow a lot

Schoorman & Bogotch (2010): 27 U.S. elementary teachers. Most described multicultural education as ‘a positive concept, associated with words and phrases such as “fairness,” “respect,” “acceptance,”[and] “encouragement,”’ (p. 80) -- strategies to deal with diversity in their classrooms, particularly by adding reference to minority groups in curriculum, expanding students’ awareness of diverse groups, learning to be colorblind.

Mansikka & Holm (2011): 26 Swedish-speaking teachers in Finland. Teachers’ position as speakers of a minority language prompted interest in multicultural education and tendency to see ethnically diverse students positively. However, most viewed the purpose of schooling as assimilationist, and colorblindness as a goal to strive for.

# Accessing Disciplinary Knowledge

*Search journals/books, using theme of course or discipline, + terms such as*

- African American
- Latino, Hispanic, Chicano or specific groups
- Asian American or names of specific groups
- Native American or Indigenous
- Ethnic or Multicultural
- Women
- Disability
- Lesbian (or gay)

# Accessing Syllabi

*Search Google, using name of course + terms such as*

- African American
- Latino, Hispanic, Chicano or specific groups
- Asian American or names of specific groups
- Native American or Indigenous
- Ethnic or Multicultural
- Women
- Disability
- Lesbian (or gay)

*+ the word “syllabus”*

# EBSCO: Telecommunication +

African American: 39 articles.

Topics: mobile phone use, text messaging, information-seeking behavior, home internet use, Black media entrepreneurs, racial health disparities, cultural politics of computers

Latino: 14 articles.

Topics: citizen health care, culturally-based perceptions of electronic media, internet communication in urban communities, how urban Latino youth use electronic media

Asian: 98 articles.

Asian American: 5 articles

Topics: Asian American film, internet survey of midlife Asian American women

Women: 271 articles.

Topics: texting to maintain weight loss, gender and equal access, workplace use of internet, on-line support groups for women with breast cancer, etc.

# EBSCO: Telecommunication +

African American: 39 articles.

Topics: **mobile phone use**, text messaging, information-seeking behavior, home **internet use**, Black **media entrepreneurs**, racial health disparities, **cultural politics of computers**

Latino: 14 articles.

Topics: citizen health care, **culturally-based perceptions** of electronic media, internet communication in urban communities, how urban Latino **youth use** electronic media

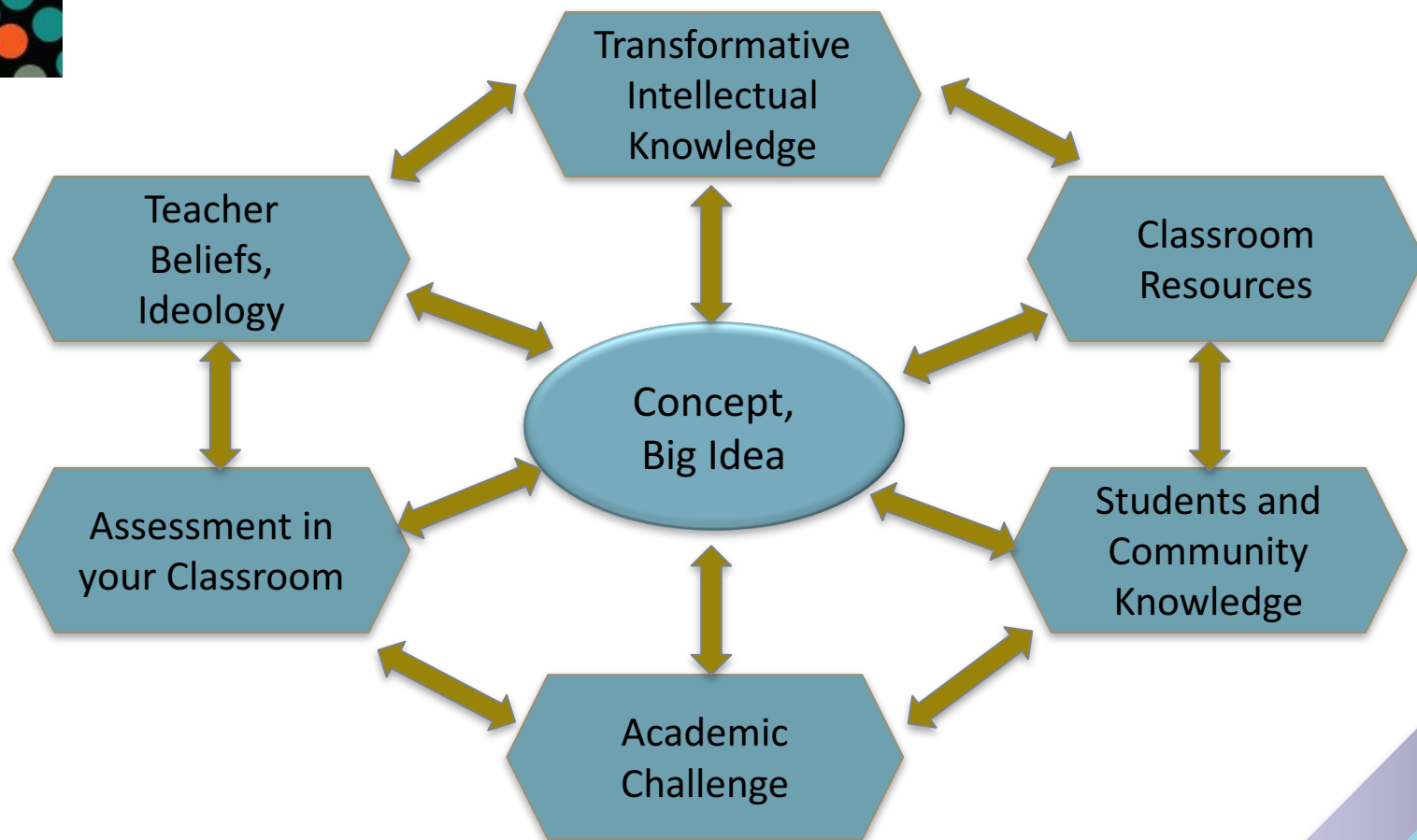
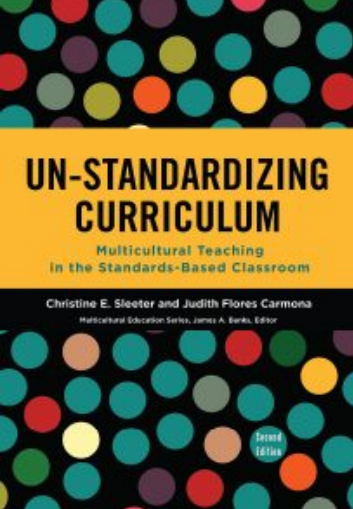
Asian: 98 articles.

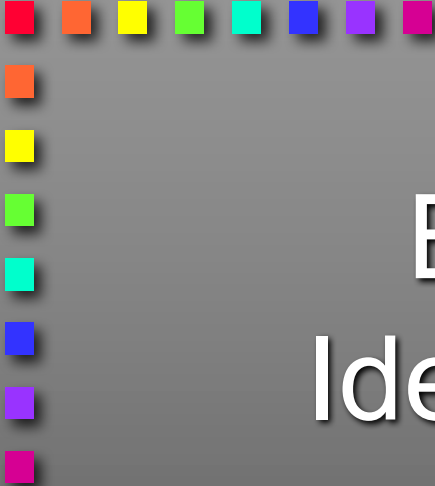
Asian American: 5 articles

Topics: Asian American **film**, internet survey of midlife Asian American women

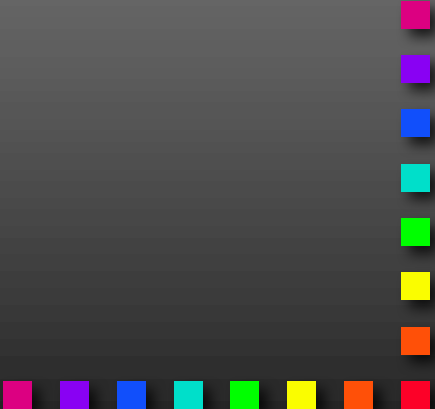
Women: 271 articles.

Topics: texting to maintain weight loss, gender and equal access, workplace use of internet, **on-line support groups** for women with breast cancer, etc.





# Backward Planning: Identifying central Ideas around which to build curriculum



Based on Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design*, 2nd ed. New York: Pearson.

# “Enduring” understanding

- Has value beyond the classroom
- Resides at the heart of a discipline
- Is complex, rests on ideas and understandings students don't already have
- Has potential to engage students



# Examples

- What is life like for adolescent immigrants to the West Coast?
- How did Indigenous peoples of Massachusetts experience colonization?
- How do Yup'ik people use perimeter and area in the construction of fish racks?
- How does the agriculture of Monterey County affect the lives of students and their families?



# Too narrow:

## Using Punctuation Correctly

# Broader:

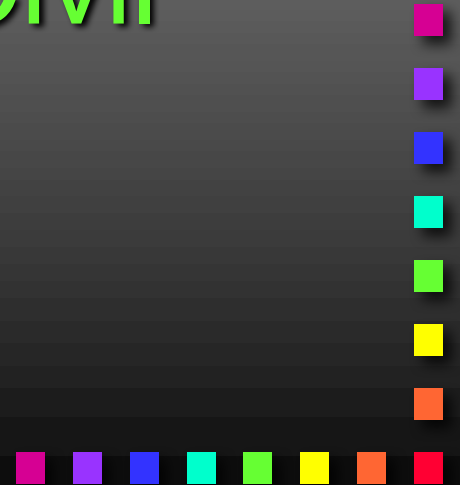
- How does punctuation relate to written communication?
- What do students want to communicate about, how can punctuation help?



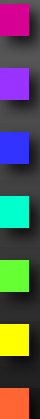
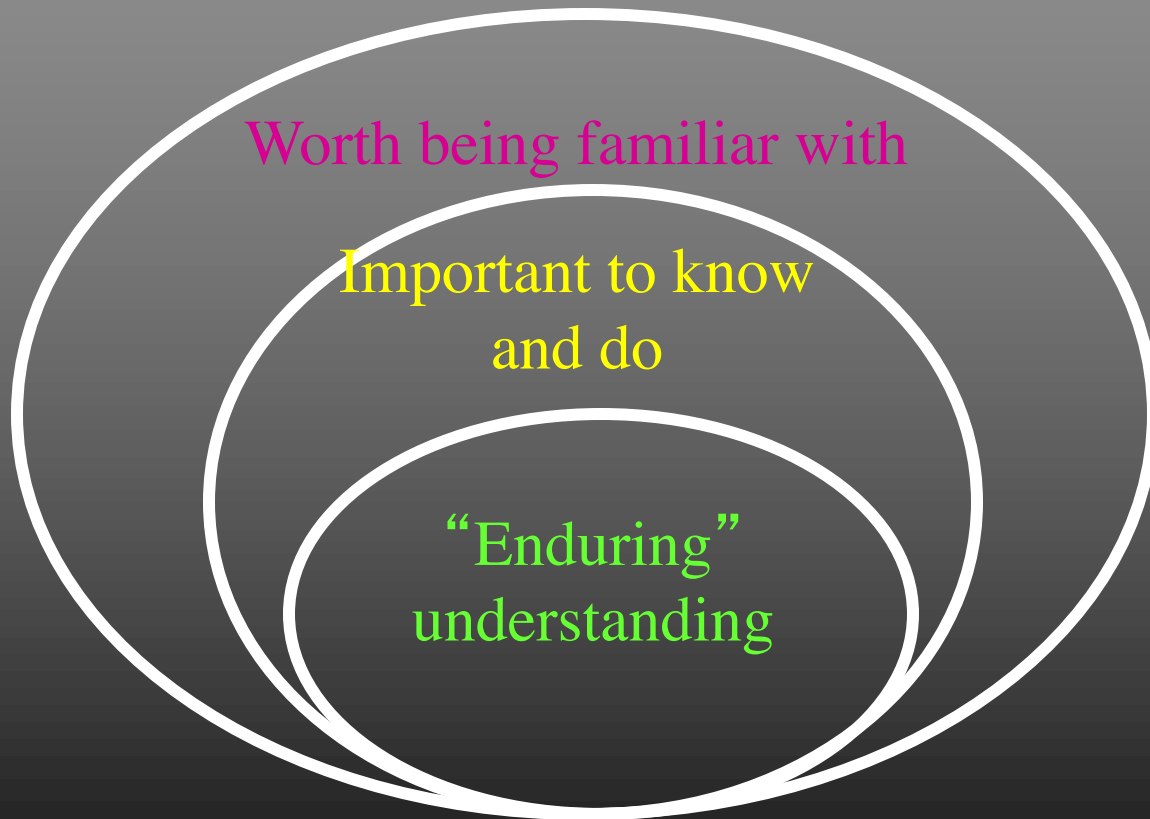
Too broad:

The Civil War

What do you want students to  
gain from studying the Civil  
War?



# What should students know, be able to do? What is worth understanding?



# Christi: 10<sup>th</sup> grade English

“When reading through the current language arts textbook, I noticed there are many gaps in perspectives. There were very few stories about immigrants, people of color, or young people. . . .The textbook represents little else than White European Americans and a tokenism of women of color. . . .The ideology that emerges in the textbook is that hardworking White Americans who rise up are the ideal, but some hardworking women of color who have overcome all manner of challenges to become famous are also ideal and can be accepted sparingly into the canon. If any immigrant is mentioned at all, it is the White European who originally came to America and succeeded through Horatio Alger-like means.”

# West Coast Immigration

Enduring Understanding: What is life like for adolescent immigrants to the West Coast?

What this enduring understanding meant in her own words:

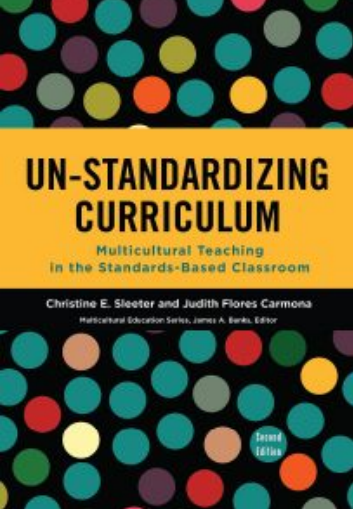
“Respect for other cultures, understanding of our multicultural region, historical perspectives of our immigrant nation, family bonds, identity and culture and the American high school experience. I see the entire unit as a vehicle to assist students in gaining a better grasp of our immigrant nation, to search for connection and commonalities among immigrants, and to forge a sense of what makes cultures unique.”

# West Coast Immigration

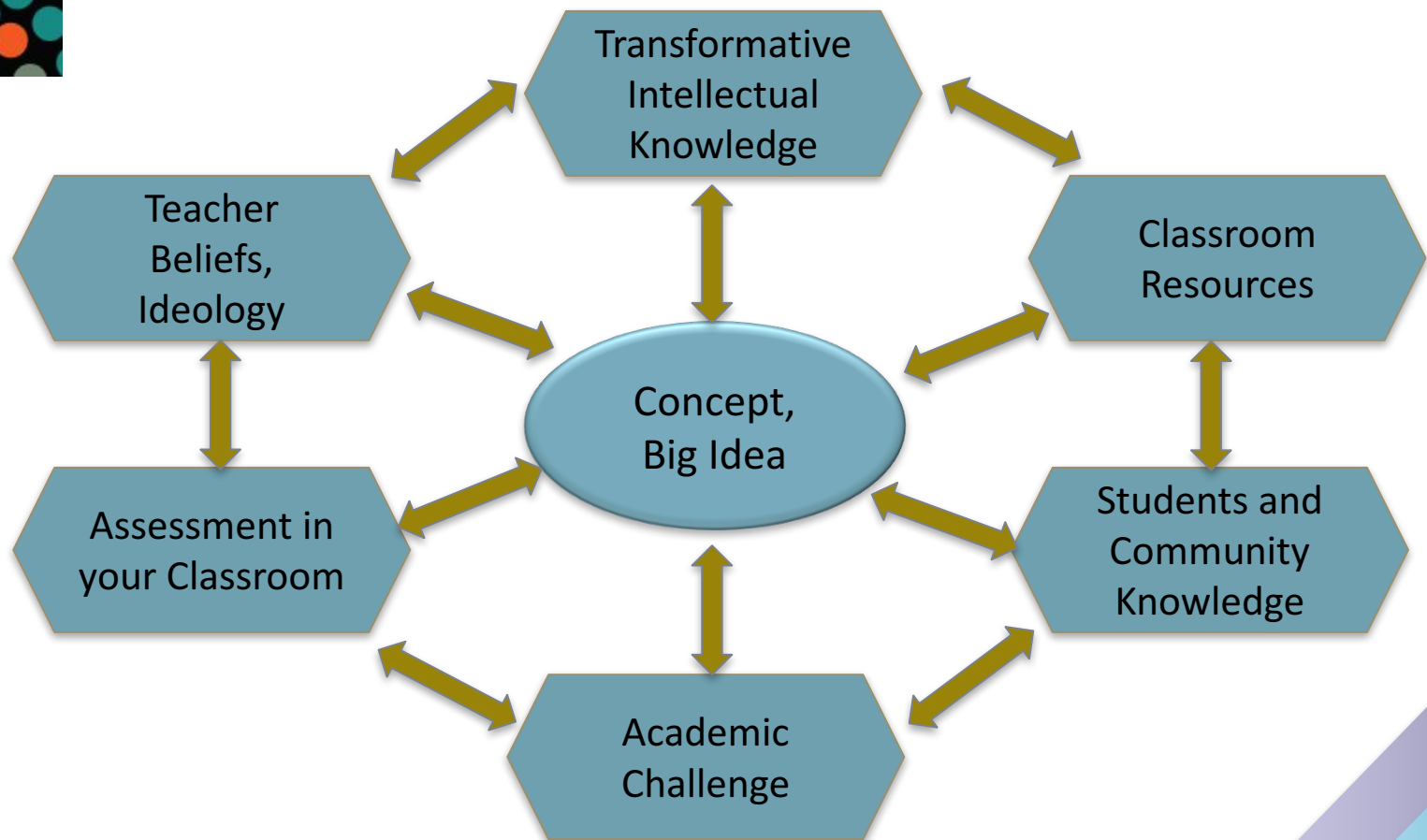
Enduring Understanding: What is life like for adolescent immigrants to the West Coast?

Unit's major writing assignments:

- 1) a narrative written from the point of view of a fictitious adolescent immigrant
- 2) a fictitious diary the immigrant might write about four days of school
- 3) a poem in which the fictitious immigrant expresses feelings
- 4) a research project in which small groups of students collaboratively wrote short research papers about West Coast immigrant groups to provide background for the other writing assignments.



... concepts, paradigms, themes, and explanations that challenge mainstream academic knowledge and that expand the historical and literary canon. . . . Transformative and mainstream academic knowledge is based on different epistemological assumptions about the nature of knowledge, about the influence of human interests and values on knowledge construction, and about the purpose of knowledge. (Banks, 1993, p. 9)



# Curriculum Concept Paper

Purpose: to conceptualize a specific content area and topic, using transformative intellectual work that reflects perspectives of a historically disenfranchised or underrepresented group.

Select a "big idea" that you actually teach. It should be a **content-related** concept or skill that is actually a part of the curriculum. Then develop a paper that does the following.

1. Briefly discuss how that idea is presented in school generally. From whose perspective is it presented?
2. Select a group whose experiences, perspectives, and/or intellectual work relates to the "big idea," but is usually marginalized in curriculum. Investigate how that "big idea" is thought about from the perspective of the intellectual work of the group you selected. You will need to investigate intellectual work by reading. Be sure that you read work that is a) written for adults, b) produced by scholars who are members of the group(s) you selected, and c) relevant to the "big idea" you are working with.
3. Write no more than eight pages discussing the main ideas, perspective, and ideology in this intellectual work, that could inform the selection of content to teach. Be sure to include complete citations of everything you read.

# Angela, 4th-5th grade

- Beginning teacher
- How to engage students actively when classroom behavior gets chaotic
- How to teach perspectives of indigenous people when curriculum isn't from that perspective



# Big idea: 13 colonies – How did indigenous people experience colonization?

## Indigenous people within textbook's story

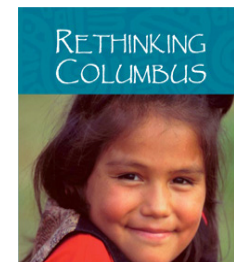
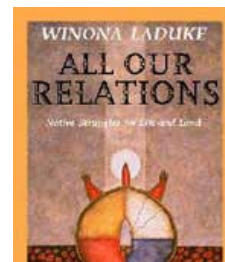
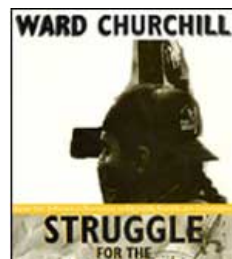
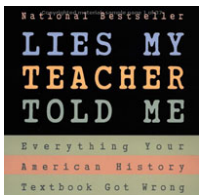
- Fourth grade: mention of indigenous people of California
- Fifth grade: unit on pre-Columbian Indians
- Westward movement of white people: Indigenous people appear sporadically
- Eighth grade: Chief Joseph's surrender

## Textbook Analysis:

“History is told overwhelmingly in the white European male perspective. . . . The history text teaches the story of American history as ‘We the People’ as a succession. All the chapters from 30,000 B.C. to 1600 are never rethought after colonization . . . . The broader ideology that is being supported in the text is that it is natural for Europeans to succeed prior races without accepting or studying their culture.”

# Story indigenous people tell

- Well-developed, sophisticated cultures in very different nations before Europeans arrived
- Massive dispossession and genocide
- Europeans learned much from indigenous people, e.g. personal hygiene, democratic political institutions, agriculture, medicine
- Main issues today: reclaiming political sovereignty, nation-building, building economies; current political status is as "semi-sovereign nations"



# Massachusetts, 1600s

How did Indigenous peoples of Massachusetts experience colonization during the 1600s?

Haudenosaunee

British colonists

Wampanoag

Pequot

# Case of the Missing Deer

How did Indigenous peoples of Massachusetts experience colonization during the 1600s?

Day 1            Background information about  
Wampanoag, how trial works,  
Haudenosaunee great law

Day 2            Ecology of deer population without,  
then with, over hunting

Day 3            Role Play trial: Wampanoag v.  
Colonists

# Case of the Missing Deer

Wampanoag v. Colonists

Haudenosaunee Great Law of Peace and  
Good Mind

## Roles:

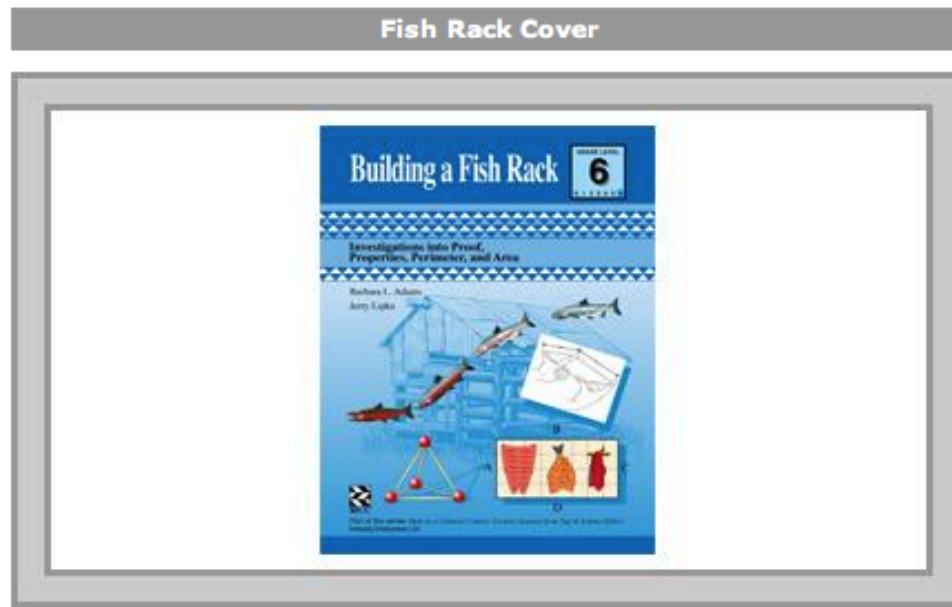
- Wampanoag witnesses
  - Colonist witnesses
    - 5 judges
      - jury

# Math in a Cultural Context (<http://www.uaf.edu/mcc>)

How do Yup'ik people use perimeter and area in the construction of fish racks?

## Building a Fish Rack

### Investigations into Proofs, Properties, Perimeter and Area (6th Grade)

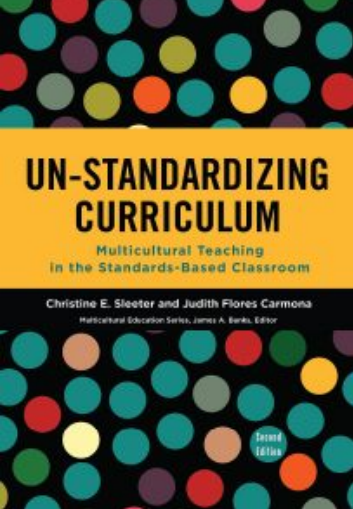


#### Mathematics Content

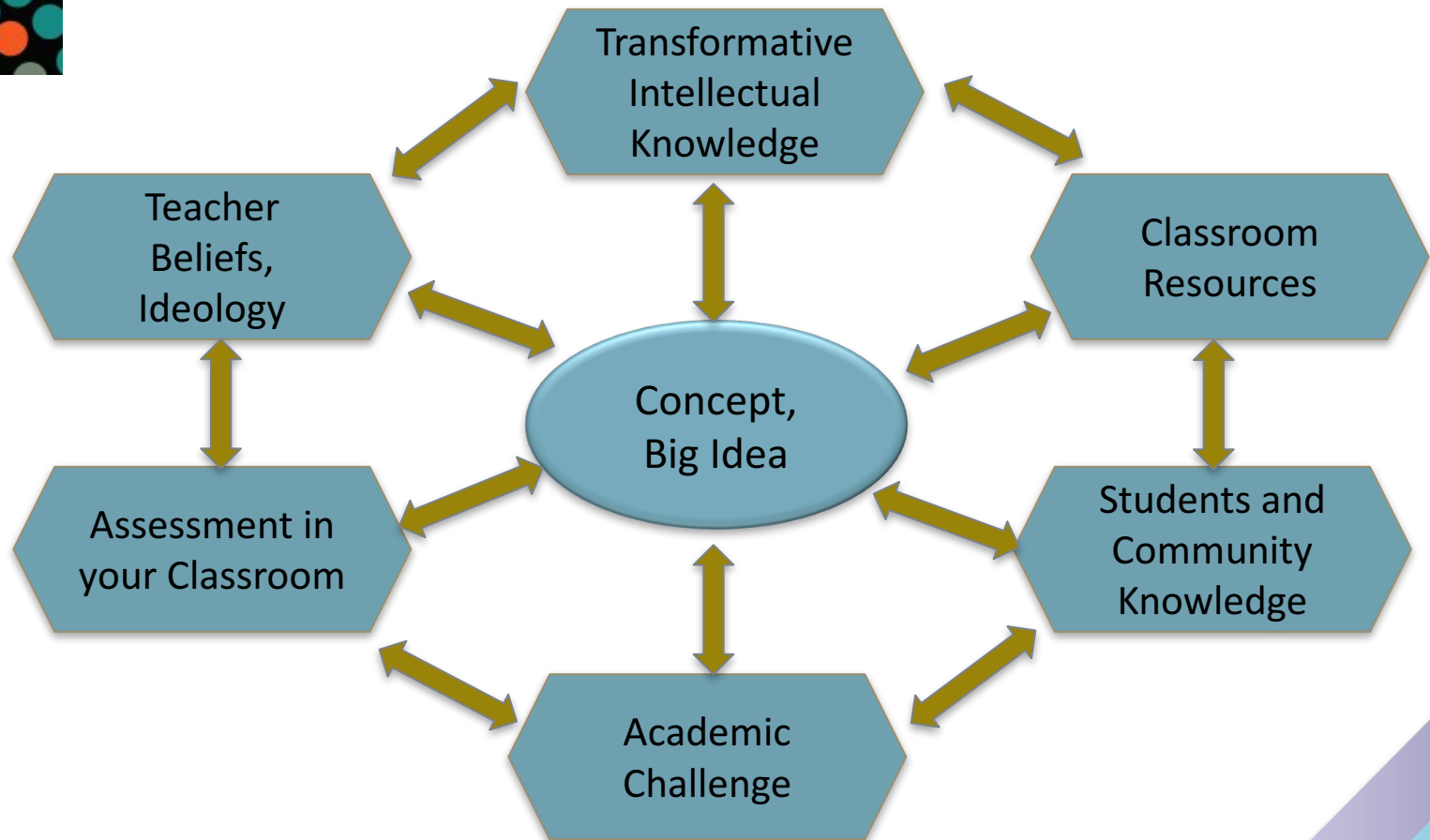
Measurement concepts of perimeter and area; introduction to proving and disproving mathematical conjectures (e.g., use of reasoning, counterexamples). Exploration of the relationships between measures of rectangles (e.g., constant perimeter, varying area).

#### Yup'ik Cultural Context

The subsistence practices of harvesting, preparing, and constructing a fish rack to dry salmon is the overall cultural context for this module. Students learn about fish camp, the role of subsistence in Yup'ik culture, and traditional ways of building a fish rack.



Funds of knowledge refers to: “the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being.” (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 2001, p. 133)



# Accessing Community Funds of Knowledge

- Learn how to learn from students' community, partly in order to learn to build respectful relationships with adults there
- Serve as volunteer in community organization, using guided learning experiences and reflections
- Connect community funds of knowledge with classroom teaching

# “Community Assets”

Select five adults from a community that is culturally different from yours, or from the neighborhood of a school in which you are doing a field placement. Tell them that you are learning to teach, and have been encouraged to get to know the community being served by the school. With their permission, ask questions such as the following:

- What do you see as the main assets of this community?
- What are people in this community especially good at doing?
- Describe how you would like to see the community ten years from now.
- What assets can help the community reach this vision?
- What barriers will the community face in working toward this vision? What is being done about those barriers?
- How can the school serve the community most effectively?

# Kathy: 1st grade

How does the agriculture of Monterey County affect the lives of students and their families?



“Agriculture directly affects the lives of my students. Out of my twenty students, most have at least one parent who is employed in agriculture or an agriculture-related industry such as vegetable packing. The parents’ income and work schedules are determined by the crops and the large companies which grow them.”

Kathy wants the children to learn more about their parents’ work, not to become agricultural workers themselves, but to respect the work their parents do.

“Most of the parents don’t want their kids to grow up to be farm workers, . . . that’s why they want their children to get more education.”



# Agriculture

Monterey County Agriculture On-Line



## Social studies

- Small farming vs. agribusiness
- Labor organizing
- Dust Bowl refugees

## Math

- Graphing
- More than/ less than

## Science

Observe and record changes in beans as they grow

## Music

Labor organizing songs

## Language arts

- Farming and local history vocabulary
- Fiction, non-fiction
- Writing across curriculum

Monterey County  
Agriculture

							Jesus
							Ricardo
				Diana V			Jose A
		Maria		Veronica		Carmen	Ruben
		Amalia		Patricia		Fernanda	Juana
		Rudy	Juan	Gilberto	Sandra	Humberto	Esteban
Diana	Jose M	Diego	Cesar	Felix	Maricela	Amaya	Carlos

Apio

Flores

La lechuga

La alcachofa

Las fresas

El brocoli

En casa

Otros trabajos

penny = 1¢

61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

20 I SPY a Growing Reader!



is  
eat  
eats  
were  
was  
ate  
did  
went  
had  
has

airplane  
ball  
jumprope  
stuffed animals  
Barbies  
blocks  
puzzles  
puppets  
games  
cards

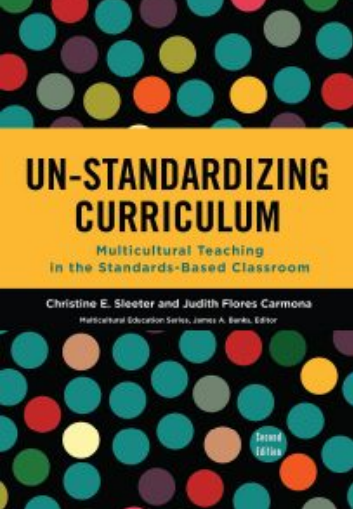
swings  
slide  
monkey bars  
pole  
tag  
Duck Duck Goose

FOOD  
milk  
cookies  
pizza  
hamburger  
ice cream  
vegetables  
rice  
beans  
meat

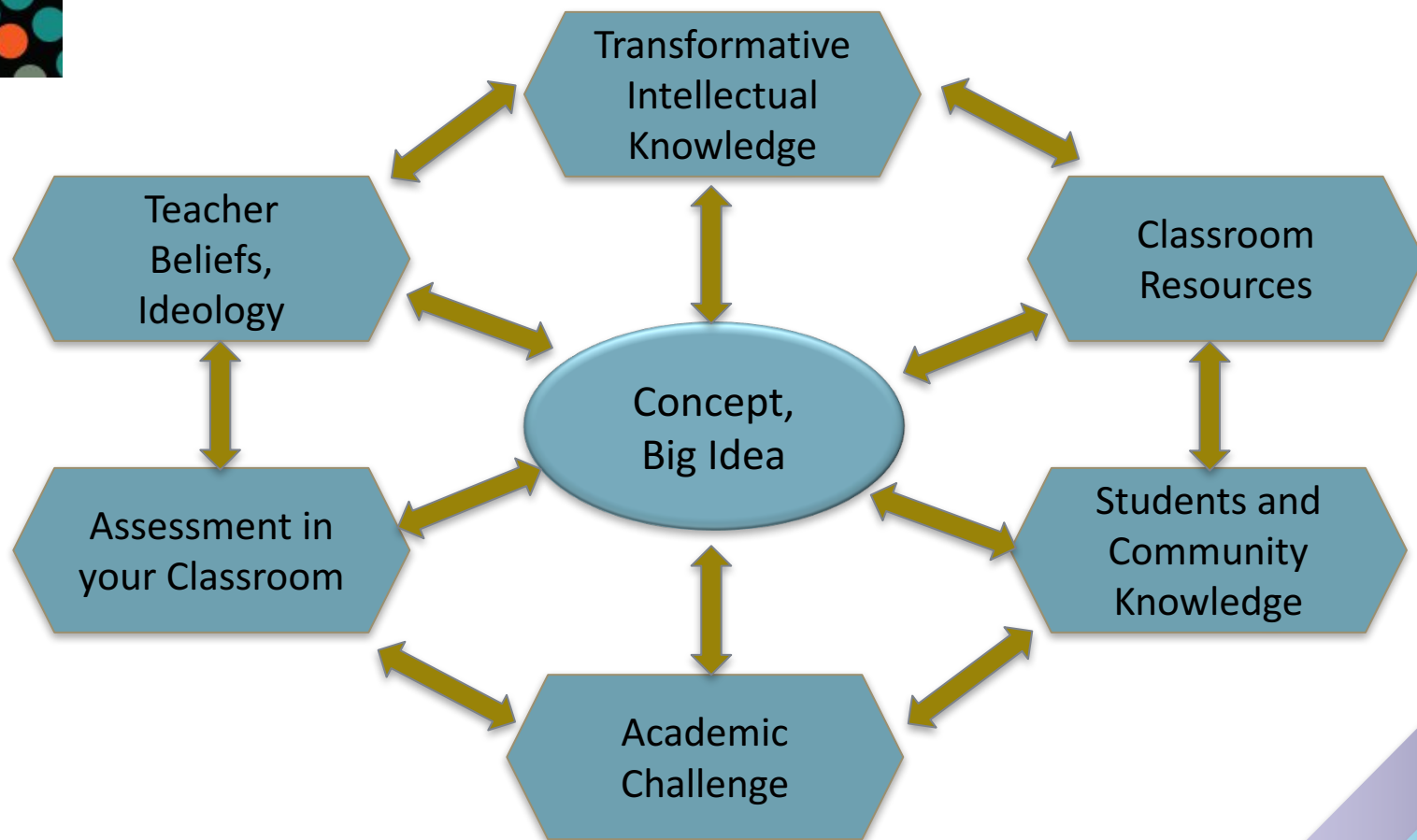
PEOPLE  
You  
He  
She  
We  
They

2 Pedro  
3 Diego  
4 Brenda  
5 Guillermo  
6





Research consistently shows that students from communities that have been historically underserved can achieve *when the teachers and school believe they can and take responsibility to make it happen* (e.g., Cabrera et al., 2014; Cholewa, Amatea, West-Olatunji, & Wright, 2012; Desmond, 1996; Diamond, Randolph, & Spillane, 2004; Haberman, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Meier, 1998; Perry et al., 2003; Reyes et al., 1999).



# Rethinking a culture of remediation

## Juanita, Bilingual Education, 2nd grade



I enjoy teaching but I didn't find it fun. I did not find anything fun about it, it was all about paper and pencil, paper and pencil, and I knew the kids were getting bored. I was getting bored myself, because I'm used to more interactive and engaging activities.



I want [my second graders] to be exposed to publishing. Publishing is our main goal in this classroom. . . . I thought, what skill is mostly needed in middle school or in high school? Talking to teachers who are in those grade levels, they said, oh, word processing . . . . We start playing with the computer, then Microsoft Word. Then we use the Internet, then we use scanning, then we download, we do research.

# From Remediation to Students as Researchers and Authors

- Biography of someone you admire
- Interview with someone
- Autobiography
- Research paper about topic of choice
- Fiction story

# Te Kotahitanga: What Indigenous students want

- Vehemently reject deficit theorizing to explain underachievement
- Care for students as culturally-located beings
- Care for academic performance of students
- Create secure, well-managed learning environment
- Engage in effective teaching interactions with Māori as Māori
- Use strategies that promote interactive teaching and relationships
- Promote, monitor, and reflect on outcomes that lead to improvements in student learning

# In students' words

The whole atmosphere around here is so much better because the teachers, they not only just teach but they also get to know the students and they develop a relationship with them, and the stuff they do is just unique to this school, and other schools have never done or heard anything like it.

