



The Problem with Color Blindness: Tales of a Black Man Raised “White”



The Problem with Color Blindness: Tales of a Black Man Raised “White”

Charles Williams



- K-8 Principal
- Educational Consultant
- Podcast Host
- EduShow Host
- Author
- Equity Champion



Learning Outcomes

Attendees will...

- Define, in their own words, the concept of color blindness
- Explain the impacts of color blindness as it relates to equity
- Differentiate between race and culture
- Use a framework to develop equitable approaches in their respective spaces



Session Norms

- Provide space for all voices
- Assume positive intentions
- Take responsibility for impact
- Expect and accept non-closure
- Stories come in, lessons go out

A graphic featuring a white rectangular frame containing a blue brushstroke background. The text 'Equity Curve' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font over the brushstroke.

Equity Curve

Curiosity

Withhold judgment and be in a space of inquiry - be curious to gain a better understanding of an issue.

Urgency

Work with a sense of urgency when championing the success of our students. We have to respond in a timely manner.

Resiliency

Acknowledge that this work can be difficult and requires resiliency.

Vulnerability

Recognize that each of us may not know a solution, but we can be vulnerable to collectively learn and problem-solve together.

Empathy

Build connection. Show empathy across differences, with someone who you think may not share your experiences.



Pause to Ponder

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What do I know about color blindness?

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

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How are race and culture similar? How are they different?

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

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In what ways am I contributing to (or pushing back against) equitable practices in my organization?

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

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Today's Agenda

- Part 1: My Story
- Part 2: Race, Culture, and Our Classrooms
- Part 3: Adjusting our Perspectives



Part 1: My Story

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Not Complaining
Not Condemning
Not Looking For Sympathy



“

***A good intention,
with a bad approach,
often leads to a poor result.***

-Thomas Edison



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nig·ger  *noun* \ni-ger\
[The word is pronounced with a diphthong, /ni-ger/, as indicated by the phonetic transcription.]

Definition of NIGGER



- 1 *an ignorant person*
- 2 *usually offensive; see usage paragraph below* : a member of any dark-skinned race

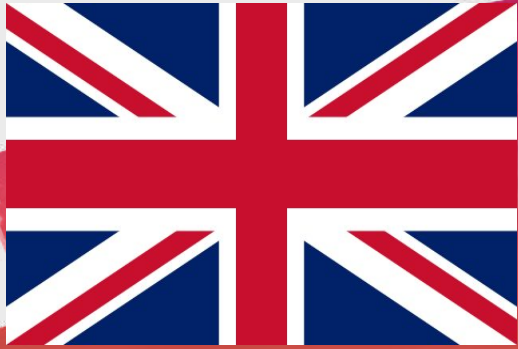


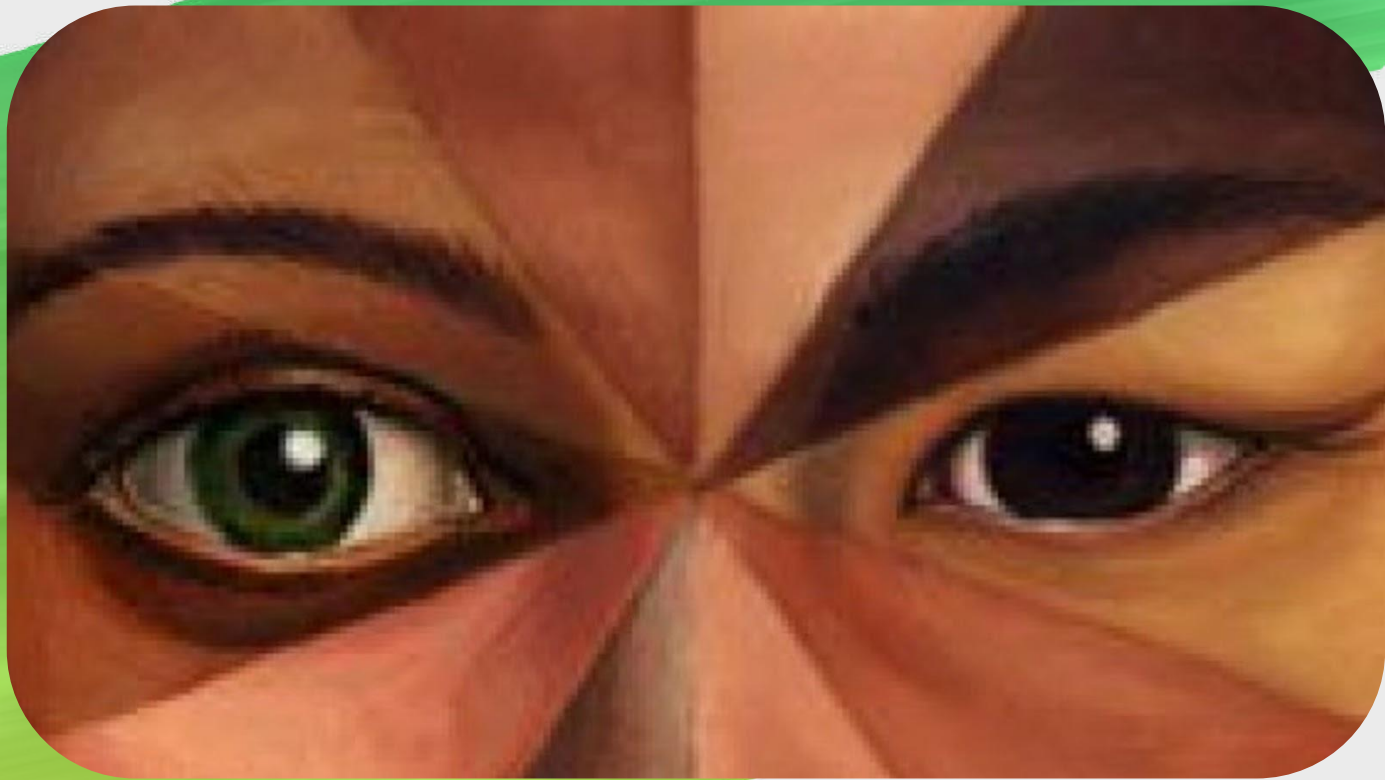
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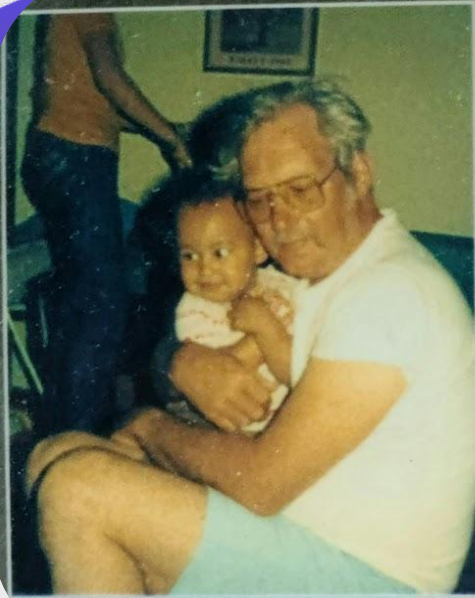


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*People are always going to
judge you by the way you look.*

*It's up to you to prove them
right or wrong.*

-Michael P. O'Reilly




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**Part 2:
Race, Culture, and
our Classrooms**

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Three Tenets of Equitable Educators

Aspiration

Develop an aspiration within ALL students to achieve excellence.

Access

Provide opportunities for ALL students to access spaces normally not afforded to them.

Advocacy

Representing the best interests of ALL students at ALL times.



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*I Don't See
Color*




*I Don't See
Race*



*I Don't See
Culture*



*I Don't See
You*

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Three Tenets of Equitable Educators

Aspiration

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“

“Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored.”

-Aldous Huxley



Two Issues

Race

The physical, or biological, characteristics often used to differentiate between two groups of people (ie. skin color, hair texture, etc...).

Culture

The shared knowledge, values, and beliefs of a group of people used to make sense of the world around them.



Shifting Trends

- Total enrollment in public and secondary schools has increased from 47.2 million students to 50.7 million students between the fall of 2000 and the fall of 2017.
- This number is projected to continue increasing to 51.1 million students by the fall of 2029.



Shifting Trends

- In the fall of 2000...
- 61% of students were White
- 17% of students were Black
- 16% of students were Hispanic
- 6% of students were Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, or a combination of races

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Shifting Trends

- In the fall of 2017...
- 48% of students were White
- 15% of students were Black
- 27% of students were Hispanic
- 5% of students were Asian
- 5% of students were Pacific Islander, American Indian, or a combination of races



Shifting Trends

- In the fall of 2029...
- 44% of students will be White
- 15% of students will be Black
- 28% of students will be Hispanic
- 7% of students will be Asian
- 6% of students will be Pacific Islander, American Indian, or a combination of races


Static Trends

- In 2000...
- 84% of teachers were White
- 8% of teachers were Black
- 6% of teachers were Hispanic
- 2% of teachers were Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, or a combination of races



Static Trends

- In 2017...
- 79% of teachers were White
- 7% of teachers were Black
- 9% of teachers were Hispanic
- 5% of teachers were Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, or a combination of races

A graphic featuring a white rectangular frame containing the text 'Three Tenets of Equitable Educators'. The frame is set against a background of horizontal brushstrokes in shades of red and orange.

Three Tenets of Equitable Educators

Aspiration

Develop an aspiration within ALL students to achieve excellence.

Access

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Advocacy

Representing the best interests of ALL students at ALL times.

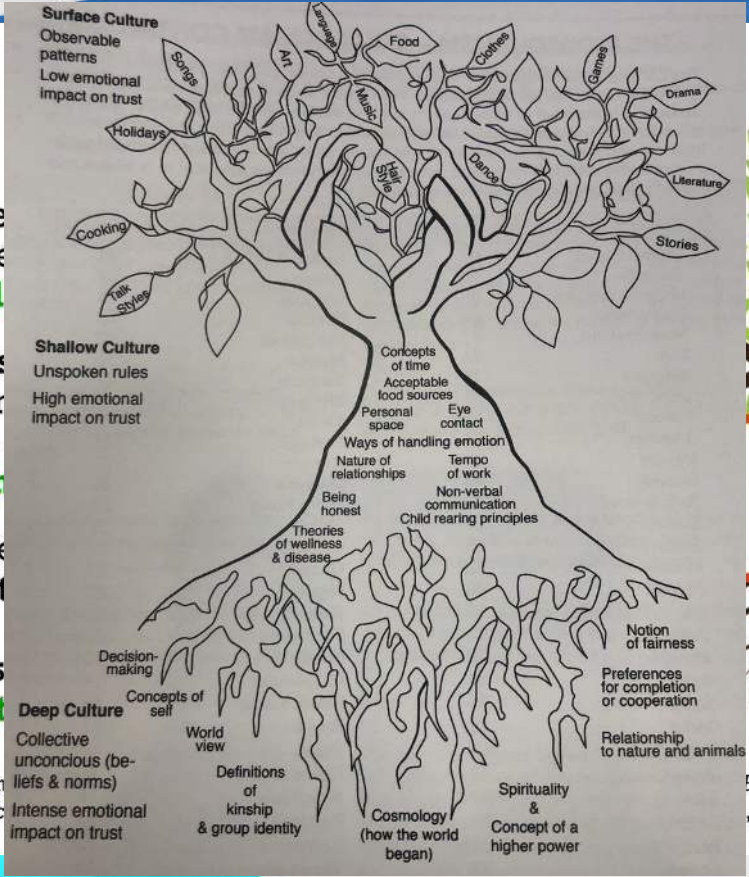
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One either allows racial inequities to persevere, as a racist, or confronts racial inequities, as an antiracist.

-Ibram Kendi

- **Observable elements**
food, music, dress, etc.
low emotional impact on trust
- **Unspoken rules**
nonverbal communication, personal space, etc.
strong emotional impact on trust
- **Worldview, core values**
- **Cultural archetypes**
vs. individual
- **Mental models**
INTENSE emotional impact on trust

“What’s Culture Got to Do With Trust?”
among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People



Engagement and Rigor
a SAGE Company, 2015.





Cultural Capital

The cultural knowledge that serves as currency that helps us navigate culture and alters our experiences and the opportunities available to us.



When Culture is Challenged

Surface Culture

No significant
anxiety is created

Blue Chair
BAY

CHILLAXIFICATION

TOUR 2020

STARRING

KENNY CHESNEY



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When Culture is Challenged

Surface Culture

No significant
anxiety is created

Shallow Culture

Can cause mistrust,
distress, social
friction



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When Culture is Challenged

Surface Culture

No significant
anxiety is created

Shallow Culture

Can cause
mistrust, distress,
social friction

Deep Culture

Produce culture
shock and trigger
flight or fight



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Reflection Activity

Think about your own culture and identify at least one feature from each level.

How might someone from outside your culture interpret those values?

How might your values support/coincide with the values of someone outside your culture?

How might your values conflict with the values of someone outside of your culture?

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Part 3: Adjusting our Perspectives

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It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.

-Audre Lorde

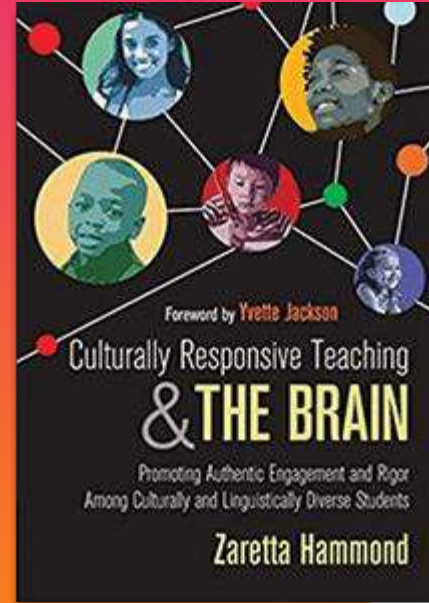


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Start here... Start somewhere...

Culturally responsive teaching is a research-based pedagogy that allows for students to make meaningful connections between instruction and their own cultures.



Use a framework to guide practices

- CPS Equity Framework
- Developed by a team of equity champions within CPS; workshops available



Develop safe spaces for brave conversations

A deck of cards that encourage both Discourse I and Discourse II responses; great to foster brave conversations





5 Tips to Shifting Your Perspective

1. Be a Partner

Collaborate and spend authentic time with someone who is different from you

2. Be a Student

Find ways to stretch your understanding (reading, listening, conversation)



5 Tips to Shifting Your Perspective

3. Be Honest

No significant changes can occur without first acknowledging the current reality

4. Be a Role Model

Push back on the status quo and redefine what is acceptable



5 Tips to Shifting Your Perspective

5. Be Resilient

This work is hard and messy; it requires consistent focus and dedication; will not always succeed

“

***People with good intentions
but limited understanding
are more dangerous
than people with total ill will.***

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

*Let's
Connect!*



SCAN ME