Working with African-American Students

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Myths About African American Children

1. “African American children do poorly on achievement test.”
2. “African American children are underachievers.”
3. “African American parents are uninterested in education.”
4. “African American children can’t behave.”
5. “African Americans can’t attend college.”

Understanding Learning Styles of African American Students
Challenges of African American Students

- Less access to highly qualified teachers and higher level mathematics courses
- Lack of resources (schools, nutrition, books, etc.)
- Higher instances of poverty (30% of African American students compared to 10% of Caucasian)
- Low self-esteem and negative attitude towards school result in lower achievement
- Not wanting to “act white” to fit in with peers
- Lack of parental involvement
Challenges of African American Students

- Lower teacher expectations and misunderstandings of behavior
- Burden of stereotypes: Fear that one's behavior might contribute to a negative stereotype
- Absence of positive role models
- Tendency for females to outperform males
- High rates of special education misplacement
Strategies for Addressing the Achievement Gap

- Avoid assumptions
- Have high expectations of all students
- Scaffold instruction
- Build on pre-existing regulatory skills
- Have opportunities for collaboration
- Involve family in learning

- Build meaningful relationships
- Allow opportunities for work with rigorous and complex problems
- Use formative assessments
- Include active engagement in lessons

Understanding Learning Styles of African American Students
Most strategies that are beneficial for African-American students ARE BENEFICIAL FOR ALL STUDENTS!!!!!!!!!!
Teachers want to increase academic performance of African American students but don’t know how.
what
Teachers Should Know

Understanding Learning Styles of African American Students
What Teachers Should Know

✓ Teach and expect respect before trying to teach academics

Understanding Learning Styles of African American Students
What Teachers Should Know

✓ Socioeconomic factors have a significant impact on academic achievement
What Teachers Should Know

✓ African American students have a need for inspiration
What Teachers Should Know

✓ Not all African American students’ experiences are identical
What Teachers Should Know

- Almost all African Americans can speak African American Vernacular English and do so regularly.
What Teachers Should Know

Teachers need to know how to negotiate a productive relationships and establish norms with African American students
What Teachers Should Know

✓ African American students may have been told that they are inferior and are incapable of high academic achievement.
What Teachers Should Know

✓ The culture has a tendency for energetic and lively stimuli and a dislike for a solitary, routinized orientation toward life.


