

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING WITH DR CORLISS THOMPSON

TALKING POINTS

KNOWLEDGE

1. What is experiential learning?
2. What are opportunity gaps? Give some examples.

COMPREHENSION

3. Why might experiential learning be more effective for students of colour?
4. Why does Corliss focus on opportunity gaps rather than achievement gaps?

APPLICATION

5. How would you design an experiment to test the effectiveness of an experiential learning technique?

ANALYSIS

6. Why do you think experiential learning can sometimes exacerbate opportunity gaps if they are not fully considered first?
7. Why might teachers think they are helping students of colour through a 'colour-blind' approach? How could you demonstrate otherwise?

SYNTHESIS

8. How would you design an experiential learning syllabus on a tight budget? What difficulties might you come up against?

EVALUATION

9. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of a meritocratic society like the US? How could one be improved?
10. Do you think STEM will become fully representative in the future? Provide evidence to support your answer.

ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO AT HOME OR IN THE CLASSROOM

Design a science lesson that uses experiential learning techniques. Use the internet for research and inspiration. Remember to think about the following things:

- How can your lesson be relevant to students' own experiences?
- What aspects do you want students to reflect on once the lesson is over?
- How can you make sure your lesson makes efficient use of resources?
- Are you able to tailor any aspects to individual students?
- How can you ensure your lesson speaks to different cultures and backgrounds?

Try out the lesson, or part of the lesson, with your classmates. Ask for feedback. Did they learn the points you intended? Do they have any suggestions for improvement, that would make the experience feel more relevant to them?

MORE RESOURCES

- This article co-authored by Corliss explains how experiential learning can improve educational and workforce equity: <https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-12-17-how-experiential-learning-can-improve-educational-and-workforce-equity>
- This TED talk explains the opportunity gap in the US education system and offers a solution of how to close it: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRG5_9eE4w
- This article gives a practical introduction to setting up experiential learning lessons: <https://www.edutopia.org/article/getting-started-experiential-learning>