Essays in Education

Responding to the Needs of At-Risk Students in Poverty

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Abstract

A major challenge in the educational system today is improving the quality of instruction for urban students. Concentrated poverty, family instability, and early exposure to violence are but a few hardships typical of growing up in an urban environment. From an early age urban children are confronted with a series of obstacles in their attempts to meet academic, personal, and social success. Urban teachers need to be conscious of and understand the ecology of the environment that has a profound influence and impact on the urban child's success in school. Additionally, urban teachers must respond to the needs of their students by creating culturally responsive classrooms that spotlight a variety of instructional practices and methodologies that reduce the risks of school failure. In this article, we identify the external factors (outside of school) and internal factors (in school) that continuously place urban children at risk for academic failure. A profile of effective urban teachers who respond to these external and internal factors, and are culturally proficient is presented.

Responding to the Needs of At-Risk Students in Poverty

Nobody disputes that urban school districts are confronted with multiple challenges. The isolation of urban neighborhoods, concentrated poverty, and family instability all contribute to the severe conditions and risks of failure in urban schools. Kincheloe (2004) states ". . . nowhere are the obstacles to success and the existential needs of the students as great as in urban areas" (p. 4). These issues are further magnified in the schools when teachers are not adequately prepared for this type of environment, lack cultural sensitivity and awareness, and use pedagogical methodologies that are not culturally congruent. Although there are occasions of impressive educational success, the vast majority of urban schools continue to face "savage inequalities" that impact learning and achievement (Kozol, 1991).

Kincheloe (2004) contends that the existing literature on urban education falls short in providing teachers and other educational professionals a balanced understanding of teaching in the urban context. He further states that teachers need to develop a deep understanding of the "nature and needs of urban students" (p. 16). For education to move forward in narrowing the achievement gap between urban and nonurban populations, teachers need to understand the urban culture and social conditions, and use this awareness to adapt pedagogical practices and methodologies so that they reflect students' cultural references (Banks, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994). If the ideological context of 'urban' is addressed in the pedagogical knowledge and practices of teachers, urban students will be provided with richer learning experiences, which in turn will impact school success (Haberman, 2005; Kincheloe, 2004; Banks, 2001; Hollins, 1996).

This article begins with the identification and discussion of the many social conditions and hardships that affect student success, including the complex realities of urban poverty. Research-based, culturally responsive best practices that promote equity and excellence on student achievement are then presented, and are followed by a profile of culturally proficient teachers whose ideology and dispositions respond to the needs of at-risk students in poverty.

Social Conditions and Hardships Affecting the Success of Urban Students

Clearly, developing and supporting teachers to transcend prejudicial biases and appreciate diversity, become more culturally literate and responsive, and demonstrate state-of-the-art pedagogy that responds to the needs of diverse learners is of utmost importance for any urban school success. It is paramount for educators to focus specifically on understanding the urban learner and the ecology of the urban environment that clearly has a profound impact on the child's academic achievement in school (Haberman, 2005, 2003, 1995; Cooper, 2004; Rodriguez & Bellanca, 1996). This understanding will assist educators in overcoming a "pedagogy of poverty," in which low level tasks dominate instruction and learning opportunities (Haberman, 2006; 1991).

Concentrated Poverty

One out of every four American children (14 million children) attends an urban district school (Haberman, 2005). The U.S. Census Bureau (2005) reports that 37.0 million people (12.7 %) were living in poverty in 2004, an increase from 35.9 million (12.5 %) in 2003. Likewise, families in poverty increased from 7.6 million in 2003, to 7.9 million in 2004. However, the poverty rate and the number in poverty for children under the age of 18 in 2004 went unchanged from 2003 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

The effects of family poverty are exacerbated when there is a high concentration of low-income families and individuals in the neighborhood (Simons, Simons, Conger, & Brody, 2004; Wilson, 1997; 1987). Known as "collective socialization," depressed attitudes and motivation may be accepted as normative, thereby reducing urban children's expectations and hope for the future, and success in school (Simons, Simons, Conger, &

Brody, 2004; Wilson, 1997; Jencks & Mayer, 1990). For example, Swanson (2004) examined the effect of neighborhood poverty on high school graduation rates among different ethnic groups. He concluded that graduation rates were lower for African American students affected by poverty environments when compared to the graduation rates of white or Asian American students. Simons, Simons, Conger, & Brody (2004) explored collective socialization and child conduct problems. Their analysis revealed a strong inverse relationship between level of collective socialization and behavior problems. Additionally, Shumow, Vandell, & Posner (1999) studied the effect of community demographics on 3rd and 5th grade academic achievement. Their results found that the 5th graders living in neighborhoods characterized by low income levels, more violent crimes, and female-headed households demonstrated less academic progress than did other 5th graders living in neighborhoods with more resources. These results did not extend to the 3rd graders. The researchers suggested that because the 3rd graders were younger, they spent more time at home, and therefore, had less interaction with the community. Bickel, Smith, & Eagle (2002), however, reported that disadvantaged neighborhoods that demonstrate support can mitigate the effects of poverty on student performance.

Concentrated poverty is often noted as the biggest challenge facing urban schools. Crime, unemployment, human discouragement, and feelings of hopelessness are other often cited problems that pervade many urban communities, and accentuate the consequences of poverty (Haberman, 2005, 2003; 1995; Olson & Jerald, 1998; Wilson, 1997; Kozol, 1991). Further, poverty depresses school achievement, such as IQ, and verbal ability (Smith, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1997). Olson & Jerald (1998) concluded that "concentrated school poverty is consistently related to lower performance on every educational outcome measured" (p. 14). They further noted that "school poverty depresses the scores of all students in schools where at least half of the students are eligible for subsidized lunch, and seriously depresses the scores when more than 75% of students live in low-income households" (p. 14).

Poverty can also influence a child's perceptions, interactions, and relationships. Haberman (2005; 1995) reports on five forces that impact urban children affected by concentrated poverty. According to Haberman (2005; 1995), children may (a) experience difficulty trusting adults, (b) avoid interacting with others, (c) demonstrate feelings of hopelessness, (d) reveal as little as possible of themselves, and (e) respond only by giving and taking orders. Because children's behavior is influenced by poverty, Haberman (1995) concluded "One's power becomes one's self-definition" (p. 88).

Violence

Schools should be safe havens where the environment is focused on teaching and learning. The impact of violence in urban neighborhoods and within the family structure inhibits both the academic and social development of the urban child, and places them at particular risk to victimization (Schwab-Stone, Chen, Greenberger, Silver, Lichtman, & Voyce, 1999). Many children are regularly harmed, both emotionally and physically, within their own homes and neighborhoods. For many of these children, violence has

become an integral part of their lives. Violent behavior is often accepted and has become the norm among family and peer groups in many communities.

Because of the constant violence that surrounds urban children, many frequently act out their hostility and frustration by being disruptive in the classroom learning environment. Frustration and depression are common feelings of both adults and children who live in depressed areas witnessing violence. This abiding frustration level may present itself as some form of aggression, which may be expressed as violence towards self or others. It can also take the form of passive resistance, where students loose their sense of hope, will, and self (Haberman, 2005; 1995). This pattern of repressing emotions can also interfere with the ability to feel empathy for others (Wallach, 1997). When urban children's energies are distracted because they are anticipating violence or danger, this fear may cause them to experience difficulty in learning and staying focused in school (Haberman, 2005, 1995; Craig, 1992). If this becomes a regular occurrence, they can become academically discouraged and are more likely to fail at school.

Risk of Early and Continued School Failure

Many urban children are not experiencing academic success in school and are dropping out before they achieve the educational requirements needed to become productive and contributing members of society (National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, 2004). This problem takes on significance today because of the education needed and required to respond to the complexity of today's society. Individuals who drop out of school in today's society are more likely to be unemployed, earn significantly lower incomes, and have more medical, psychological, and emotional problems than did past drop-outs (National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, 2004; Rumberger, 1987).

Definitions of at-risk students vary among educators. According to Costello and the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (1996):

> Students are placed 'at-risk' when they experience a significant mismatch between their circumstances and needs, and the capacity or willingness of the school to accept, accommodate, and respond to them in a manner that supports and enables their maximum social, emotional, and intellectual growth and development (p. 2).

The North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (2003) also proposes that schools should concentrate their efforts on "…enhancing our institutional and professional capacity and responsiveness" (p. 2). Schools can respond to this by providing instruction and experiences that build upon the strengths of each student rather than "watering down" or remediating the curriculum.

Rush & Vitale (1997) developed a profile of significant factors that place elementary school students at-risk. From their investigation, eight factors emerged as being significant contributors: (a) academic failure, (b) behavior, (c) coping skills, (e)

family income, (f) parent involvement, (g) language development, (h) retention, (i) attendance, and (j) withdrawing socially. They believe that this profile will provide educators with a pattern of at-risk factors that can aid in the identification of potential dropouts as early as the elementary school level.

According to the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (2004) dropping out of school has an economic impact. High school graduates earn more than $9,245 more per year when compared to high school dropouts. Dropouts have a higher chance of committing or getting involved in criminal activity. For example, 75% of high school dropouts account for America's state prison inmates, and 59% account for America's federal prison inmates. Students facing poverty or from low income families have a higher dropout rate when compared to middle and high income families. The National Center for Educational Statistics (2002) reported that students from low income families have a 10% dropout rate; students from middle income students have a 5.2% dropout rate, while students from high income families have a 1.6% drop out rate.

Facing continuing hardships and debilitating social conditions can be overwhelming and depressing for any individual, especially a child. Numerous studies document that poverty and the associated disadvantages negatively affects student learning and achievement. Fortunately, educators can ameliorate the impact of these problems by recognizing and responding to cultural and ethnic differences, providing cultural responsive instruction, and creating a classroom learning environment that is student-centered, cooperative, and establishes trusting and caring relationships (Lapp, Block, Cooper, Flood, Roser, & Tinajero, 2004; Banks, 2001; Hollins, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Culturally Proficient Instruction

School effectiveness is contingent on classroom success (Pollard-Durodola, 2003) and therefore, special attention must be given to improving the schooling experience for urban students. Urban pedagogy appreciates cultural references, and takes into account the social conditions and hardships that many urban children face. When teachers use student's cultural and social experiences as a means to implement best practices and to develop new knowledge, learning becomes more significant (Pardon, Waxman, & Rivera, 2002). Furthermore, when teachers understand resiliency, support behaviors that demonstrate high expectations, consider social dynamics, and use diverse teaching methods, student success is inevitable (Robins, Lindsey, Lindsey, & Terrell, 2002; Mehan, Hubbard, & Villanueva, 1994).

Resiliency

Many urban children succeed both academically and socially despite severe situations and obstacles. It is critical that teachers understand the concept of resiliency and those factors that foster resilience. Equally important, teachers need to model resiliency, and ". . . move from the knowledge of their own resilience to the practice of building resilience in the classroom" (Dill & Stafford-Johnson, 2004, p. 2).

Henderson & Milstein (1996) developed a model that suggests that resiliency is made up of twelve factors internal to the child. These factors include: (a) a sense of selflessness or giving of one's self, (b) the possessing life skills [i.e., good decision making, self control, assertiveness], (c) an ability to be sociable, (d) a sense of humor, (e) an internal locus of control, (f) autonomy, (g) orientation toward a positive future, (h) adaptability/flexibility, (i) an interest in and connection to learning, (j) self motivation, (k) personal competence in one or multiple areas, and (l) some element of self-worth or self-efficacy. Additionally, the model suggests that there are twelve factors needed in the environment if resilient growth is to be fostered. These factors are all encapsulated in Henderson & Milstein's (1996) six item "resiliency wheel." The wheel serves as an outline for the process of building resiliency and includes the following factors: (a) supportive bonding among members, (b) the provision of clear and consistent boundaries, (c) encouragement toward the learning of life skills (those skills necessary for survival in the environment), (d) caring and support, (e) exhibition of high and reasonable expectations, and (f) the provision of opportunities for meaningful participation (see Henderson & Milstein [1996] for the expanded list).

Previous to the work by Henderson & Milstein, Winfield (1994) stated that "resilience should be viewed as something we foster throughout students' development by strengthening protective processes for students at critical moments in their lives" (p. 3). As a developmental process, strategies must concentrate on practices, policies, and attitudes among educators.

Teachers need to establish nurturing environments, or as Barr & Parrett (1995) term "educational intensive care units" (p. 60) in order to instill and develop within the students those characteristics that will help them persevere. By providing cooperative and active learning opportunities and peer-tutoring and student mentoring programs, teachers can enable positive development. Moreover, Kincheloe (2004) and Winfield (1993) propose that urban schools should develop and implement programs that foster and cultivate resilience instead of the current programs that concentrate on academic deficits. This vision of urban pedagogy has the power to transform the culture and perceptions of urban schools.

Expectations

Urban children are likely to be victims of labels, which communicate and foster low expectations. When a teacher demonstrates an attitude of low expectations, this can produce a negative *Pygmalion Effect* (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968) or self-fulfilling prophecy. This occurs when individuals internalize inaccurate expectations, which causes the inaccurate expectation to become a reality (Good & Brophy, 1997). Unfortunately, teachers often have misconceptions of urban children, and as a result they develop and adopt low expectations for them. Consistent exposure to low expectations can lead to the erosion of self-confidence, motivation, and academic success (Good & Brophy, 1997).

There are clear indications that teacher expectations can and do affect student's achievement and attitudes (Good & Brophy, 1997; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Brophy's (1982) investigation of urban teachers led to the identification of eight factors that influence their effectiveness in working with urban children. One such factor is teacher expectations and a sense of self-efficacy. Brophy suggests that effective teachers believe that all children can learn and that they are capable of teaching them successfully. Low or negative expectations can hinder urban children's access to quality educational opportunities, learning, and achievement levels, as well as their development of self-concept (Good & Brophy, 1997).

Teacher expectations are communicated and demonstrated in a variety of ways. Good & Brophy (1997) suggested that certain behaviors characterize teacher interactions with high and low achievers. For example, teachers differentiate their expectations for academic success between high and low achievers by paying less attention to low achievers in academic situations (smiling less often and maintaining less eye contact).

Teachers' beliefs about the academic ability and achievement level also influence their instructional and evaluative decisions in the classroom setting. Instructional practices that communicate high expectations for all learners are not readily visible in many urban classrooms. Rodriguez & Bellanca (1996) noted that "the scarcity of these practices says more about the lack of conviction behind the espoused belief than it does about the sentiment itself" (p. 10). When faced with challenging students, some teachers tend to "give up" on them, accept failure, and often blame the student for their failure. Lavoie (1996) characterized this as "blaming the victim," but such failure may be the result of the teacher's own incompetence or lack of understanding. Good & Brophy (1997) argued that "this attitude psychologically frees the teacher from continuing to worry about the student's progress and from seeking more successful ways to teach them (p. 113).

Intimately related to teacher attitudes, beliefs, and expectations are the teacher-student classroom and school environment interactions. Hernandez (1989) reported that experiences in the same classroom vary for each child, and this is sometimes related to ethnicity. He further elaborates by stating that teacher expectations and attention shown to majority and minority students vary greatly, as does the quality of teacher-student interactions. Direct and indirect messages conveying low expectations contribute to the academic performance and achievement of many urban students. The research and literature clearly communicates that a teacher's expectations are a critical factor in decreasing the number of academically at-risk students (Mehan et al., 1994).

Social Dynamics

When teachers lack cultural understanding of minority students, they sometimes misinterpret their behaviors (Bowers, 2000; Cole, 1995). Lynch (1987) reported that teachers should not discriminate against any student because of their ethnicity or social background, and that they need to make conscious efforts to engage all students in the learning process. This means that urban teachers must have multiple opportunities to

learn about the span of their social realities and beliefs of their students. Based upon this knowledge, teachers then may be more aware of the thoughts and feelings of their students and make a conscientious effort to be respectful of their cultures. In addition, teachers may then utilize their knowledge of students' cultures to inform their teaching practices so that they may fine tune their instruction to meet the interests of their students. According to Bowers (2000), teachers who consider cultural connections of their students negate any misunderstandings of schooling experiences for students. For example, students respond to their schooling experiences based on their "invisible culture" – the values and norms of their families and community (Cazden, 1988). Conflict can arise when the ideals of the teacher and school don't recognize or appreciate the cultural norms of urban children (Banks, 2001; Greenfield, Raeff, & Quiroz, 1996).

Consequently, teachers' study of the dynamics of culture, power, and race in the education setting may raise important questions for them to consider: How does the dynamic change when the "minority" is the "majority?" How does the dynamic change when the teacher is white, but all of the students are of color? The work of Ogbu (1998) illustrates that classroom interactions will most favor the child of the dominant culture. As a result, these classroom interactions are then labeled as not supportive of minority students. However, teachers who are trained to analyze the social dynamics in the classroom in terms of culture, power, and race are in a position to reflect and consequently make changes within the classroom to promote social interactions that support all students and the teacher.

Providing opportunities for students to "explore their ancestral cultural roots" allows for urban students to develop their personal identity, which can alleviate or reduce any cultural conflicts in the classroom (Greenfield, Raeff, & Quiroz, 1996). Additionally, when teachers increase their sociocultural knowledge of the cognitive development of urban students, they can use this information to adapt their instructional practices and focus on the strengths that urban students bring to the classroom (Greenfield, Raeff, & Quiroz, 1996). Kuykendall (1992) suggests that "students who find their culture and learning styles reflected in both the substance and the organization of the instructional program are more likely to be motivated and less likely to be disruptive" (p. 36). Therefore, it is critical that urban teachers facilitate cultural congruence between teaching and learning styles.

Diverse Teaching Methods

Good (1983) defines the term "active teaching" as teaching that is responsive to students' needs and interests. Instructional practices used in many schools may prevent poor, minority students from excelling (Haberman, 2005, 1995; Cole, 1995). Darling-Hammond (2000) stressed the importance of teachers to be adept at using a variety of strategies in their teaching in order to positively impact student performance. Through an understanding of theories such as Gardner's multiple intelligences (1999) and applications to teaching such as the work of Tomlinson's (1999) differentiated instructional practices, teachers hold the potential to meet the needs of all of their students within the urban classroom setting.

In *More Strategies for Educating Everybody's Children*, Cole (2001) defined the term "pedagogy of plenty" as "teaching at its best" (p. 3). He further states that universally sound teaching practices can contribute to the academic success of diverse students. Creating an environment that highlights authentic tasks, inquiry based instruction and classroom discussions and dialogue are strategies that promote best practices. Additionally, exposing students to a literacy rich environment, complete with resources that promote active and problem based learning are also proven to be effective strategies.

Educating Everybody's Children (Cole, 1995) identified thirteen effective instructional strategies that bring about increased scholarly learning for diverse students with different ability levels. They include: (a) providing opportunities to work together, (b)using reality-based learning approaches, (c) encouraging interdisciplinary teaching, (d) involving students actively, (e) analyzing students' learning and reading styles, (f) modeling appropriate behaviors, (f) exploring the fullest dimensions of thought, (g) using a multicultural teaching approach, (h) using alternative assessments, (i) promoting home and school partnerships, (j) using accelerated learning techniques, (k) fostering strategies in questioning, and (l) emphasizing brain-compatible instruction are identified as best practices for urban learners. Concrete classroom examples of these practices are provided in Table 1.

Table 1
Classroom Examples of Effective Instructional Practices

Effective Instructional Practices	Classroom Examples
Providing Opportunities to Work Together	Cooperative Learning Groups
	Peer Tutoring
	Group Discussions
Using Reality-based Learning Approaches	Authentic Purposes
	Real Audiences
Encouraging Interdisciplinary Teaching	Parallel, Multidisciplinary, Integrated, and Field-Based Instruction
Involving Students Actively	Hands-on Activities
	Differentiating According to Student Interest
Analyzing Students' Learning and Reading Styles	Differentiation of Instruction
Modeling Appropriate Behaviors	Teacher Expectations-Student Achievement

Exploring the Fullest Dimensions of Thought	Ask Higher Level Questions Ask Probing Questions Promote Inductive and Deductive Reasoning
Using a Multicultural Teaching Approach	Reciprocal Teaching Address Cultural, Linguistic, Ethnic, and Racial Backgrounds
Using Alternative Assessments	Student Self Evaluation Portfolio Assessments Performance Tests Observations, Conferences and Interviews Authentic Assignments
Promoting Home and School Partnerships	Classroom Newsletters Frequent Phone Calls Parent-Teacher Conferences Parent Volunteers
Using Accelerated Learning Techniques	Differentiation of Instruction
Fostering Strategies in Questioning	Ask Higher Level Questions Ask Probing Questions Rephrase Questions Provide Verbal, Gestural and Physical Prompts
Emphasizing Brain-compatible Instruction	Address Multiple Intelligences

Although these strategies are not new to education, Cole (1995) points out that "what is new is their rediscovery and renewed emphasis and the effort that has been devoted to exploring and applying them" (p. 22). Effective teaching must also promote an atmosphere that ". . . accepts, encourages, and respects the expression of ethnic and cultural diversity" (Banks, 2001, p. 315). Simply demonstrating the aforementioned techniques and strategies does not qualify as multicultural teaching or urban pedagogy at its best. Teachers who are able to utilize these techniques while incorporating a multicultural ideology is what constitutes the move to multicultural education (Banks, 2001). As cultural and ethnic diversity is increasing across the United States, teachers must utilize instructional practices that promote multicultural ideologies, practices, and pedagogy.

Ideology and Dispositions of Effective Urban Teachers

The effects of poverty, violence, family, and neighborhood conditions increase the likelihood that urban children will enter school without the skills, competencies, and emotional intelligence they need to meet success (Corrigan & Udas, 1996). Furthermore, the interweaving of these social conditions and hardships pose great challenges for teachers in their attempts to provide equal access to educational opportunities for urban students. However, this challenge can be addressed when teachers take specific actions to develop and institutionalize ideas, awareness, and practices that reflect diversity and cultural values (Banks, 2001).

What characteristics define the culturally responsive teacher? Several leading researchers have identified the characteristics and ideology of those teachers who embrace a multicultural philosophy and respond and have proven successful in working with diverse student populations. For example, Banks (2001) identified the characteristics of effective teachers in a multicultural society. According to his research, effective teachers must have (a) Knowledge of the complex nature of ethnicity in western societies, (b) Knowledge of the stages of cultural identity, (c) Ability to function at cultural identity [Stage 4 or above], (d) democratic attitudes and values, (e), a clarified pluralistic ideology, (f) A process conceptualization of ethnic studies, and (g) the ability to view society from multiethnic viewpoints.

Haberman, (2005, 1995) the leading researcher in urban teacher education, identified the characteristics of teachers who are effective in urban school settings. He refers to these teachers as "stars," and the characteristics include: (a) Persistence, (b) Protecting Children's Learning, (c) Putting Ideas into Practice, (d) Approach to At-Risk Students, (e) Professional/Personal Orientation to Students, (f) The Bureaucracy, (g) Fallibility, (h) Emotional and Physical Stamina, (i) Organizational Ability, (j) Explanation of Teacher Success, (k) Explanation of Student Success, (l) Real Teaching, (m) Making Students Feel Needed, (n) The Material vs. The Student, and (o) Gentle Teaching in a Violent Society. A description of each characteristic identified by Banks (2001) and Haberman (2005, 1995) is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Characteristics of Effective Teachers in a Multicultural Society

Haberman (2005, 1995)	Banks (2001)
Persistence *Teachers constantly pursue strategies and activities so all children can meet success.*	Knowledge of the Complex Nature of Ethnicity in Western Societies *Embraces and appreciates*
Approach to At-Risk Students *Teachers take responsibility for children's learning, regardless of the conditions they*	Knowledge of the Stages of Cultural Identity *Teachers should provide instruction as*
Putting Ideas into Practice *Teachers can relate theory and practice.*	Ability to Function at Cultural Identity *Teachers need to function at higher stages of cultural identity.*
Profession/Personal Orientation to Students *Teachers expect and are able to develop rapport with children.*	Democratic Attitudes and Values *Promotes democracy within classroom.*
The Bureaucracy *Teachers can adjust and cope with the demands of the bureaucracy.*	A Clarified Pluralistic Ideology *Teachers need to embrace an ideology that is effective in diverse settings.*
Fallibility *Teachers take responsibility for their own errors and mistakes.*	A Process Conceptualization of Ethnic Studies *Incorporates multiculturalism within curriculum.*
Emotional and Physical Stamina *Teachers are able to endure the challenges and crises of urban settings.*	Ability to View Society from Multiethnic Viewpoints *Teachers need to understand the cultural characteristics of their students.*
Organizational Ability *Teachers have extraordinary organizational and managerial skills.*	
Explanation of Teacher Success *Teachers believe that success is met by effort and hard work, and not by ability*	
Explanation of Children's Success *Teachers are committed to student autonomy and individual differences.*	
Real Teaching *Teachers engage in active teaching instead of direct instruction.*	
Making Students Feel Needed *Teachers are able to make the students feel needed and wanted in the classroom.*	

The Material vs. The Student
Teachers find approaches that will assist
students in mastering the material.
Gentle Teaching in a Violent Society
Teacher's ideology is promising, even in
light of a violent society.

Summary

Students attending urban, high poverty schools are faced with multiple challenges: concentrated poverty, violence, victimization, family instability, and the perils of collective socialization. The impact of these social conditions and hardships can extend into the actual classroom setting when teachers are unable or unwilling to adopt an ideology that can overcome these barriers to success (Haberman, 2005). This can be readily seen through the demonstration of low expectations and the utilization of instructional practices that are not culturally congruent. However, current research concludes that effective teachers within these settings can overcome these obstacles, and lead students in reaching both social and academic success. "Students in these schools need effective teachers who make a difference" (Haberman, 1995, p. x). Even in the harsh realities of high-poverty urban schools, effective teachers can enable and inspire their students for continual learning and lifelong development.

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