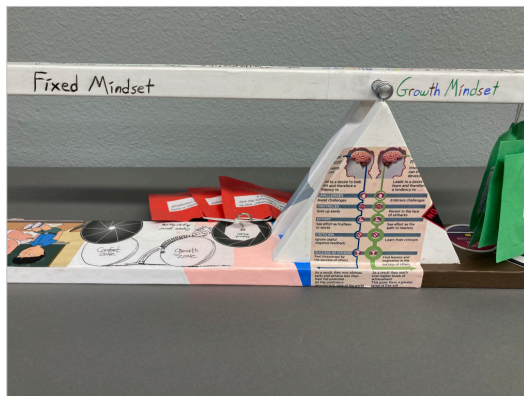
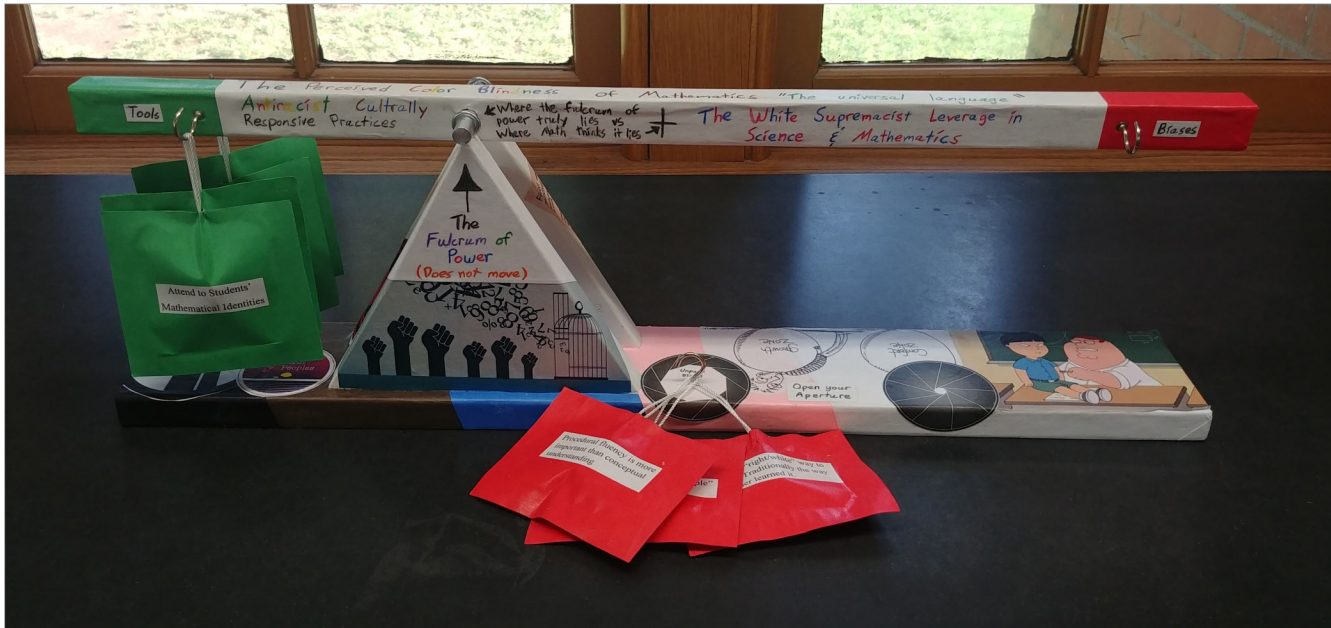


THE PERCEIVED COLORBLINDNESS OF MATHEMATICS "THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE"



I constructed this project to help me wrestle with the tensions I feel striving to be an equitable STEM teacher. While reflecting on my student teaching experience and thinking about my future classroom, I couldn't help but feel that being antiracist and culturally responsive in STEM was less cut and dry than the subject matter itself. As I worked through the "Centering race and unlearning racism course" I felt this consistent tension of how do I fit this into my STEM classroom?

The "universal language" of science and math would have us believe that it is colorblind. That the cut and dry, right and wrong nature of STEM lends itself to equitable instruction, but this is false. STEM is white supremacist, elitist and is traditionally dominated by white males. I fit right into this elitist box as I too am a white male.

This is why I created the unbalanced balance beam to show that white culture has the leverage or power in STEM and that we must work to overcome this leverage to make math and science more equitable. The fulcrum does not move to indicate the structural nature of this imbalance. One side of the lever represents the antiracist and culturally responsive practices that are tools to help us in our journey towards STEM justice. The opposite side of the balance represents the implicit biases that a white male STEM instructor might have. When all of our tools are used on the antiracist CRT side of the balance, we are still unable to achieve equity. This is because of the biases that are still weighting the white supremacist side of the balance. It is only when we unpack our implicit biases and apply our CRT tools that we can overcome the leverage that whiteness holds over the system and achieve equity.

Creating this project has enhanced my teacher learning by representing the work that we must do as antiracist culturally responsive educators. Not only do I need to hone the tools needed to deliver the curriculum in a way that connects with all of my students, helping them form their own STEM identities, I also need to unpack and reflect on my cultural views and implicit biases and how they affect my classroom. I have realized the need to be mindful and slow down to try and understand my positionality and how it can affect my students.

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