

Week 5 Message from the ABC Curriculum Committee

Welcome to Week 5 of the Action Book Club (ABC) Community! This week our book clubs will be reading chapters 7 (Culture) and 8 (Behavior). In chapter 7, Kendi defines and distinguishes between a cultural racist and a cultural antiracist. He asserts that to be antiracist is to see all cultures in all their differences as on the same level, as equals. “The idea that Black languages outside Africa are broken is as culturally racist as the idea that languages inside Europe are fixed”. (p.83). In chapter 8, Kendi emphasizes that what exists today is an opportunity gap rather than an achievement gap. “What if we measured intelligence by how knowledgeable individuals are about their own environment? What if we measured intellect by an individual’s desire to know? What if we realized the best way to ensure an effective educational system is not by standardizing our curricula and tests but by standardizing the opportunities available to all students”? (p.103).

For those whose book clubs are not yet reading this segment of our book, please know the joy is in the journey. Learning to interrogate and dismantle our internal racism takes critical reflection and work. We encourage you to continue the dialogue, with the context of our current climate in mind.

Week 5 Highlight: Advancing Equity and Antiracist Policies in Schools

Interested in ideas for advancing equity in schools? In this episode of the podcast, Cult of Pedagogy, host Jennifer Gonzalez talks with Professor [Pedro Noguero](#) who shares “10 Ways Educators Can Take Action in Pursuit of Educational Equity.” Find the podcast here: <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/10-equity/> In *How To Be An Antiracist*, Professor Kendi argues for equity in funding education, i.e. funding schools in a way that leads to academic success for all students. California changed the way it funds schools about seven years ago, adopting a formula that provides more funds to support students with the greatest need (among other changes). The Center for Transformation of Schools, started by Professor Noguero at UCLA, <http://transformschoools.ucla.edu/>, presents case studies of three school districts, their implementation of the new funding formula, and initial student outcomes.

Week 5: Chapter 7 (Culture) & Chapter 8 (Behavior)
Pre-ABC Reflection, Discussion Prompts, Actions & Resources

Activity	Suggested Time Estimate*	Reflection, Dialogue, Action	Process Suggestions
Self-Reflection Prior to ABC meeting	5-10 minutes* Prior to meeting	<p><u>Chapter 7. Culture</u> Think back upon a time when you felt powerless. Reflect upon those individuals and events involved. Now think back to a time when you felt powerful. How did those two experiences shape you?</p> <p><u>Chapter 8. Behavior</u> How were state and national test scores talked about in schools you attended? To what extent were you aware of differences in test scores among racial groups? What inferences did you make about “smartness” based on what you heard about tests? When you were a child, how were “good” behaviors and “bad” behaviors and students described?</p>	<p>Read and think about these questions before and after reading the chapter.</p> <p>Read the chapters before the ABC meeting.</p> <p>If you cannot read the chapter(s) before the meeting, come to the ABC meeting anyway. Participate humbly knowing that you have not read the chapter.</p>
Discussion ABC meeting	Greeting and Settling in 10* minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check in with each other (How are you?) 2. Welcome and Agenda 3. Review and check on Participation Norms (very brief) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the group doing? Any changes to norms needed? 4. Review chapter to identify a key passage or two (to warm-up get back into the chapter after a busy day) 5. Take turns sharing a passage. 	<p>Arrive early to the meeting so you can catch up</p> <p>Facilitator welcomes everyone and shares the agenda (made at the previous meeting.)</p> <p>Facilitator asks the group to reflect briefly on participation norms. Ideas for how to reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review individual participation and norms silently. Facilitator asks each individual to reflect on one norm the individual has done well and one they need to work on. End. ➤ Review group process while silently reflecting on norms. Facilitator asks for feedback: What is one norm we are doing well? One we need to improve on? ➤ Review norms by reading them aloud followed by individual

			<p>reflection or by group discussion: On which one norm should we focus today?</p> <p>➤ Review norms. Facilitator asks: How are the norms working? What do we need to change, if anything?</p>
Discussion 50 minutes*	<p>Chapter 7. Culture How does Ebonics fall prey to culturally racist thinking? What is a broken language? When have you experienced what Kendi describes as “behaviorally racist insecurity”? Discuss Kendi’s quote from p. 91, “Whoever creates the cultural standard usually puts himself at the top of the hierarchy”.”</p> <p>How are cultural norms determined day-to-day? What does Kendi mean by “surface sighted eyes”? What are the deep structures of culture?</p> <p>Chapter 8. Behavior How did Kendi internalize his individual academic struggles as being connected to his race?</p> <p>How do educational policies create disparities between and among racial groups?</p> <p>Can you think of a time that you have attributed someone’s behavior to a race?</p> <p>How can you practice separating racial identity from behavior?</p>	<p>Everyone has a voice. Ideas for making sure all voices are heard:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each person chooses a passage. The discussion begins with each person sharing the passage and why. 2. Round robin, each person talks building on previous speaker—in order, around the room. 3. Each one asks one. After making a comment, the speaker calls on the next person to comment. 4. Pairs. First pairs share their thinking in response to the question. Then each person responds. <p>Return to the chapter/text frequently during the discussion. Remember one purpose is to understand the chapter/book/ideas.</p> <p>Facilitator keeps track of participation and asks questions to ensure that all participants get a chance to talk. In addition, active participants ask questions of their colleagues.</p>	
Reflection and Action 5 minutes*	Reflect individually: Based on the discussion, what personal action will I take this week?		
Next Steps 5 minutes*	<p>Plan for the next book club meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What chapters are next? • What actions have we committed to for next week’s meeting? Restate the plan. 	Facilitator takes notes and reads/restates the plan for the next meeting after the discussion. “We have agreed to...”	
Closing 5 minutes*	Thank each other and say good-bye!		

Action	Will vary**	<p>Locate the lyrics of one Black artist Kendi mentions in this chapter. Read the lyrics out loud twice. How does the artist and the art forward black culture?</p> <p>With a group of friends, discuss “smartness”. What does it mean to be “smart”? Kendi asks on p. 103, “What if we measured intelligence by how knowledgeable individuals are about their own environments...by an individual’s desire to know?” If we were to do this, what would be different? What cultural funds of knowledge do you perceive being overlooked or underappreciated?</p>	Never underestimate the power and importance of everyday actions you yourself can take.
Learn More	Will vary**	<p>1) Find the school report cards for one or two of the schools you attended or worked with. Find the performance on state tests by different racialized groups. What would happen to test scores if policies standardized “the opportunities available to all students?” as Kendi asks on p.103. OR</p> <p>2) Listen to this podcast with Professor Beth Hatt on “smartness” in schools. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuXzgLTFJWM)</p>	

*These are suggested times. Different groups might spend time differently. The main guideline is to spend time intentionally.

** It is expected that more time might be dedicated to action and learning more as the group progresses through the book.