

4 Pillars of Education



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Introductions

Think-Pair-Share Exercise: What is the story behind your name? What does your name mean to you and how does it define and/or challenge who you are becoming? Once you have thought through these questions, pair up with a neighbor and share your responses with them.

Food for Thought



Image Details:

Black and white photo of James Baldwin in a shirt and blazer. Buildings serve as the backdrop for this photo.

“The paradox of education is precisely this - that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated.”

- Taken from “A Talk to Teachers” (1963)

Overview of Presentation

Introducing 4 Pillars of Education

- Positionality
- Pedagogy
- Place
- Power

Discussion - Engaging your questions, thoughts and comments

Conclusion - Summarizing key take-aways from this presentation

Positionality

- When we think about our “position” in society, we reflect upon the different roles that we take on in our lives.
- What are some identity markers that inform who we are and how we navigate the world?
 - Race. Class. Gender. Sexuality. Dis/Ability. Ethnicity. Citizenship. Faith Traditions.

Pedagogy

- Teaching is an inherently contextualized and political endeavor
- Personal beliefs and backgrounds manifest themselves in your pedagogy
- How can you apply a pedagogy and develop course content that allows for your students (pre-service teachers and otherwise) to reflect on their own intersectionalities and positionalities?

Place

- What is the place from which you speak/teach?
 - Do you speak from a place of privilege? Are you positioned within the margins and thus speak from that location?
- What are the social, political, cultural, geographical and historical contexts under which you live and teach?
 - When you enter a new learning environment, it is pivotal to understand the place(s) from which you come from. Such critical reflection facilitates a deeper understanding of how your lived experiences can transform and/or impede the learning experience.

Power

- When we think about the power teacher's possess, we think about the role(s) they play during the teaching process.
- How do you view power relations between the teacher and the student?
 - How do power dynamics in your classroom/teaching shape your viewpoint on what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in student-teacher discourse or interactions?
- What culture(s) do your ground rules and expectations represent? Are they representative of the different cultural experiences that your students bring to class? Are they negotiated with your students?

Discussion

Take-Aways

- Teaching is NOT a neutral process
- One's positionality influences and informs pedagogical decisions
- Understanding the socio-historical contexts and cultural histories that shape the places (and spaces) that you live *and* teach in promotes reflexivity, sensitivity, and awareness
- There is power in engaging across difference to foster and realize more fulfilling and social justice oriented teaching and learning environments