

## **Achievement Gap – Reflection**

As teachers we hear about the achievement gap regularly. Always coming with ways to narrow the gap and improve performance on the standardized tests. I have never really been a fan of focusing on the achievement gap and I could never really figure out why but Gutiérrez showed me that it's because it pits the different races, genders, socioeconomic classes, etc. against one another and treating the different groups differently. I really enjoyed Gutiérrez's challenge calling "for a move away from gap gazing and toward more contextualized and intervention studies."

The other thing that really stood out to me from Gutiérrez's article was when she pointed out that gaps were considered one dimensional. Gaps occur because of race, or because of status, etc. when there are so many factors that can affect a student's learning. Blaming that achievement on one cause alone is not fair. Each student needs to be treated as an individual and, as teachers, we need to best meet each student's individual needs instead of lumping them together based on where they fit in the achievement gap.

The last thing that really stood out to me was when Gloria Ladson-Billings was discussing how achievement is not stagnant. To me this was really logical and made me wonder why I had never heard anyone discuss this before. Ladson-Billings says, "Those students who are achieving at acceptable levels are not waiting for those who are lagging to catch up with them.... So the primary premise of closing the gap rests on a notion of slower performance at the top, while there is simultaneous increased performance at the bottom" How is this EVER going to happen!?! My top students are not just going to stop working and wait, they push forward and challenge themselves to continue improving and to ask my lowest performing students to double

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their learning to “catch-up” is not a feasible request. The most logical solution is to stop comparing the two groups and strive for continued improvement for *all* students and stop focusing on the gap.