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| Topic: | Articulating Our Values | |
| Date: | August 26 th , 2010 | |
| Inquiry Questions: | What do we value most in life? Why do we have these values? | |
| Objective: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For students to be able to acknowledge and articulate their values | |
| Materials: | None | |
| Lesson: | <i>10 min</i> | Share with students one of your values. Tell a story or give a reason why you have this value. (If you example story is thoughtful and thorough, the kids will follow your example and make their stories more thoughtful and thorough.) |
| | <i>25 min</i> | Then have students think of 2-3 values they have in life. Students should come up with these ideas on their own, but feel free to give them some ideas if they're stuck (family, education, religion, friendships, health, happiness, rest, soccer, myself, etc...) For each value, have the students write a paragraph connecting that value with a story to explain why they have that particular value. |
| | <i>optional</i> | If time permits, have each student share their three values, or have each student tell a story about one of their values. |

June Jordan school for equity :: Advisory Curriculum

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| Topic: | Standardized Tests and Life |
| Date: | September 2 nd , 2010 – Testing Zen Thursdays (35 minutes) |
| Inquiry Questions: | Why do we need to develop good test taking skills? What are the tests testing? |
| Objective: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For students to learn about your experience with standardized tests• For students to understand the numerous tests that await them in life |
| Materials: | Tape. List of careers and the tests you need for those careers. There are 10 careers and corresponding tests, so pick the top 6 or 7 that you think your advisees might like. Also, for lawyer, there are two tests (LSAT and the Bar), use both tests if you have an odd number of participants. |
| Lesson: | <i>10 min</i> Talk to students about all the tests you've had to take in life (drivers test, SAT, GRE, CBEST, CSET, etc.). Talk about any test you've ever failed, or a test you studied really hard for. |
| | <i>10 min</i> Put a sign on each of the student's back. By asking questions, students will need to find the match to their identity. For instance, and aspiring "Doctor" will need to find his/her match with the "Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)". First the "Doctor" will need to figure out his/her identity by asking questions like, "Am I a person, place, or thing?" "Do I get paid a lot?" until he figures out s/he's a "Doctor", then he has to walk around the room until s/he finds the "MCAT". |
| | <i>10 min</i> Once all students have found their match, have them share out their careers with corresponding tests. Then facilitate a discussion on what these tests test for. You want them to understand that none of these tests test intelligence, they test a skill set . Some questions to guide your discussion might be: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which test seems the hardest?/Easiest?• What do they have in common? How are they different?• Do you have to be "smart" to pass these tests?• How do you think people prepare for the test?• What is the test testing? |
| | <i>5 min</i> Pass out the list of tests they will be taking in the next few years for school. Read the list as a class and have them put the lists in the folders for future reference. |

National Council Licensure Examination-Practical Nurse (NCLEX-PN) → Nurse

Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) → Doctor

Certified Public Accounting (CPA) → Accountant

Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) → Professional Engineer

Dental Admission Test (DAT) → Dentist

Examination for Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP) → Psychologist

Veterinarian College Admissions Test (VCAT) → Veterinarian

Real Estate Exam → Realtor

Police Officer Selection Test → Police Officer

Law School Admission Test (LSAT) & the Bar Examination → Lawyer

Architect Registration Exam (ARE) → Architect

California Subject Exam for Teachers (CSET) → Public School Teacher

California State Board Cosmetology Exam → Cosmetologist

Upcoming Standardized Tests

CAHSEE - In order to graduate, all students **MUST** pass the CAHSEE. It is a pass/fail test.

ACT/SAT/SAT II - This is for your college admissions. It is not a pass or fail exam like the CAHSEE, instead you will receive an overall score. Your score will help determine your eligibility for college (be clear that it is one part of how you'll be evaluated for college. schools will also look at grades, extra curricular activities, personal statements, letters of recommendation, and in some instances interviews.)

Subject A - The writing placement exam for UCs

EPT/ELM - The English and Math placement exams for CSUs. Placement tests are important for placing out of remedial classes. Remedial classes are classes that you pay for, but may not get credit for. Being able to test out of them will get you straight into college courses and will save you time and money.

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| Topic: | Obama and Stereotype Threat | | | | | | | | |
| Date: | September 9 nd , 2010 – Testing Zen Thursdays (35 minutes) | | | | | | | | |
| Inquiry Questions: | What is stereotype threat? Why did test scores for Black American students go up after the election of President Obama? | | | | | | | | |
| Objective: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">For students to begin understanding stereotype threat and how it might impact them | | | | | | | | |
| Materials: | “Obama and Stereotype Threat” Article (class set) (Make sure you have a solid understanding of stereotype threat before teaching this lesson. If you need to refresh your memory visit http://www.reducingstereotypethreat.org/ for more information) | | | | | | | | |
| Lesson: | <table border="1"><tr><td>10 min</td><td>Have the students brainstorm stereotypes about their race (either on index cards, then collect and share out... or just brainstorm on the board if they're mature enough). Notice how many students have similar responses. Remind them that that is because we are all taught similar things about stereotypes.</td></tr><tr><td>10 min</td><td>Check-in: How do these stereotypes make you feel? (Have everyone share their feelings)</td></tr><tr><td>10 min</td><td>Read the article as a class. Focus on the part about stereotype threat. Have the students come up with a class definition of stereotype threat.</td></tr><tr><td>5 min</td><td>Discuss the implications of stereotype threat on standardized tests. (Students should understand that they may do worse on tests just because they are nervous about proving the stereotype right... this is why we need to 1) know the material and 2) relax and mentally prepare for the tests) Remind students that <i>knowing about stereotype threat is the #1 way to combat it.</i></td></tr></table> | 10 min | Have the students brainstorm stereotypes about their race (either on index cards, then collect and share out... or just brainstorm on the board if they're mature enough). Notice how many students have similar responses. Remind them that that is because we are all taught similar things about stereotypes. | 10 min | Check-in: How do these stereotypes make you feel? (Have everyone share their feelings) | 10 min | Read the article as a class. Focus on the part about stereotype threat. Have the students come up with a class definition of stereotype threat. | 5 min | Discuss the implications of stereotype threat on standardized tests. (Students should understand that they may do worse on tests just because they are nervous about proving the stereotype right... this is why we need to 1) know the material and 2) relax and mentally prepare for the tests) Remind students that <i>knowing about stereotype threat is the #1 way to combat it.</i> |
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Obama and Stereotype Threat

Posted on: January 26, 2009 9:39 AM, by [Jonah Lehrer](#)

http://scienceblogs.com/cortex/2009/01/obama_and_stereotype_threat.php

The NY Times [reports](#) on a fascinating new study showing that Obama's election has improved the test scores of African Americans, at least in this one very small study which has yet to undergo peer-review:

Now researchers have documented what they call an Obama effect, showing that a performance gap between African-Americans and whites on a 20-question test administered before Mr. Obama's nomination all but disappeared when the exam was administered after his acceptance speech and again after the presidential election.

The inspiring role model that Mr. Obama projected helped blacks overcome anxieties about racial stereotypes that had been shown, in earlier research, to lower the test-taking proficiency of African-Americans, the researchers conclude in a report summarizing their results.

"Obama is obviously inspirational, but we wondered whether he would contribute to an improvement in something as important as black test-taking," said Ray Friedman, a management professor at Vanderbilt University, one of the study's three authors. "We were skeptical that we would find any effect, but our results surprised us."

Claude Steele, a professor of psychology at Stanford, has pioneered the study of this psychological effect, which is known as [stereotype threat](#). When Steele gave a large group of Stanford sophomores a set of questions from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), and told the students that it would measure their innate intellectual ability, he found that the white students performed significantly better than their black counterparts. This discrepancy—commonly known as the achievement gap---conformed to a large body of data showing that minority students tend to score lower on a wide variety of standardized tests, from the SAT to the IQ test.

However, when Steele gave a separate group of students the same test but stressed that it was *not* a measure of intelligence—he told them it was merely a preparatory drill—the scores of the white and black students were virtually identical. The achievement gap had largely been closed. According to Steele, the disparity in test scores was caused by an effect that he calls "stereotype threat". When black students are told that they are taking a test to measure their intelligence, it brings to mind, rather forcefully, the ugly and untrue stereotype that blacks are less intelligent than whites. (Steele conducted his experiments soon after *The Bell Curve* was published. But the same effect also exists when women take a math test that supposedly measures "cognitive differences between the genders," or when white males are exposed to a stereotype about the academic superiority of Asians.) The Stanford sophomores were so worried about being viewed through the lens of a negative stereotype that they performed far below their abilities.

If this study is replicated - and that's a big if - it would be tangible proof of this historic moment, evidence that change has filtered all the way down from the White House to the individual mind.

June Jordan school for equity :: Advisory Curriculum

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| Topic: | Tests Do Not Test Intelligence | |
| Date: | September 16 th , 2010 – Testing Zen Thursdays (35 minutes) | |
| Inquiry Questions: | What do tests test? Is your performance on a test any indication of your intelligence? | |
| Objective: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">For students to understand that tests test a skill set and not one's overall intelligence | |
| Materials: | "The NFL Scouting Combine: All Hype and Zero Substance" (class set) "The Ideal Student Colleges Want" (class set) | |
| Lesson: | <i>5 min</i> | Brainstorm what qualities are necessary to be a great football player and write their responses on the board. (If they don't come to it on their own, make sure to add things such as: good team player, determination, work ethic, communication skills, etc.) |
| | <i>10 min</i> | Read "The NFL Scouting Combine: All Hype and Zero Substance" article. Discuss the author's main point, then ask students, "If the Combine is the standardized test for football, what does that tell us about standardized tests as a whole?" |
| | <i>5 min</i> | Brainstorm what qualities are necessary to be a great college student and write their responses on the board. |
| | <i>15 min</i> | Read "The Ideal Student Colleges Want" article. If time, show kids the common app so they see all the things colleges ask them about on an application. |

The NFL Scouting Combine: All Hype and Zero Substance

By: Brian Carson

February 23, 2010

The human meat market known as the NFL Scouting Combine will kick off its 28th year Wednesday at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. Over 300 players will be poked, prodded, interviewed, and tested as NFL coaches and general managers start to solidify their draft boards for April.

Wonderlic tests will be given, forty times established, and bench press reps totaled. This will go on for six days. Six days of meaningless information spewed out to the masses by so-called draft experts and football gurus.

Why meaningless? Because the NFL Scouting Combine is all hype and zero substance. It was the mass media that created this frenzy and made the Combine more important than it actually is.

The NFL Combine started back in 1982 for one purpose only—to check out medical information of the draft-eligible players. A secondary element was to ascertain any character issues a player might have. For those two reasons, the Combine is a good thing.

But when the NFL deviated from its original goals to placate the rise of cable TV, the minutiae of meaninglessness began. Seriously, does anybody really believe a player who gets high reps on the bench press is a better football player than someone who doesn't?

Let's look at the top three players for most 225-pound reps since 1999:

1. Justin Earnest, Eastern Kentucky, 51
2. Mike Kudla, Ohio State, 45
3. Leif Larsen, UTEP, 45

Anybody hear of these guys lately? How about the good old 40-yard dash? Is that an indicator of a great player? Not really.

With the exception of Tennessee Titans running back Chris Johnson—who ran a 4.24 in 2008—the rest of the top three since '99 featured Roland Melendez (4.24) and Jerome Mathis (4.28). Larry Fitzgerald ran a 4.54 and shiny new Hall of Famer Jerry Rice was in the 4.5, 4.6 range. Both were considered to be too slow by some scouts and draft experts. Look how wrong they were.

Bench press reps and 40-yard dash times mean nothing—what's between the ears does. Is the guy a football player on the field, in pads, facing competition? That's what matters.

Here's some more proof the Combine isn't the be-all, end-all it's made out to be. Below is a list of players who weren't drafted or not invited to the Combine since its inception:

John Randle (Hall of Fame)
Rod Smith
Warren Moon (Hall of Fame)
Tim Krumrie
Karl Mecklenburg
Wes Welker
Jay Ratliff
Tony Romo
Osi Umenyiora
Pierre Garcon
Wayne Chrebet
Kurt Warner

Not bad, is it? A list that features two Hall of Famers, with Smith and Warner certain to go in as well.

The next list is players who were invited to the Combine but didn't impress and fell in the draft:

Terrell Davis, sixth round
Shannon Sharpe, seventh round
Curtis Martin, third round
Matt Birk, sixth round
Jamal Anderson, seventh round
Jay Novacek, sixth round
Adam Timmerman, seventh round
Jason Taylor, third round
Brad Johnson, ninth round
Tom Brady, sixth round

Brady is the poster child for how the Combine is overhyped. Remember his workouts? They were terrible. The guy could barely run. All he's done is win three Super Bowls and become one of the best quarterbacks of his generation, along with Drew Brees, who was considered too short to be an everyday starter, and Peyton Manning.

Let's wrap this up by looking at some of the Combine's workout warriors. These guys were supposed to be sure things:

Tony Mandarich
Akili Smith
Tim Couch
Cade McNown
Ryan Leaf
Brian Bosworth
Andre Wadsworth
Charles Rogers
Lawrence Phillips
Keith McCants
Heath Shuler
Andre Ware

That's just off the top of my head. I'm sure there's plenty more. These can't-misses...missed. Can you believe people were even debating who should be taken first in 1998—Manning or Leaf?

To sum it all up, watch the Combine if you want to, but don't take the numbers the pundits shout out so seriously. Attitude, desire, and heart make an NFL player—not his time in the three-cone drill or 40-yard dash.

Remember this before falling into the hype that is the NFL Scouting Combine.

The Ideal Student Colleges Want

By **Xandri Ferris**

We're told colleges want the dedicated student that does well education-wise, does a lot of stuff, and takes the initiative. But every now and then we hear about a student who was Valedictorian, president of student council, creator of their own tutor business who got turned down by all three colleges that they wanted to get into. Also, we're told you can't get into Princeton if you go into Harvard or the vice versa so there's no chance we'll have an option. But then, a story comes on where a student makes it into all the ivy league colleges. So, we ask the question, what *is* it that colleges want in their students? We'll discuss what they want their environment to be like, what that means as a student, and how to be all-college material.

How do colleges want to be viewed?

Most colleges have a specific way they want to be viewed. Some want to be viewed as the cradles of new sciences, keeping students on top of everything new and advancing our world. Other colleges want to be viewed as places that take on the challenge of turning each individual person into a shining star, the best they can be. Other colleges want to be viewed of as giving a classical education that gives their students that biting edge against the competition.

It's important to see how colleges want to be viewed by doing a lot of research. Read about colleges from students who go there, read the college's website, learn about their history and do your homework. If you can get a good sense of how the college wants to be viewed, you will have the secret to success.

Be a happening person

The most important thing is that *you* think you are a happening person. Even if you are doing twenty different things, you may not think you are happening and maybe even a bit boring and cookie-cutter even in spite of your well-roundedness. Your self-satisfaction gives you a drive that colleges crave. They want passionate students who can zero in on what they want and go for it. Every college wants that, but that's not *all* that they want.

So what kind of person *do* they want? Here's a basic 6 traits they look for.

Passionate: Colleges want people that are passionate about something. Something they couldn't possibly get enough of. Physics, graphic design, even cheese. What are you passionate about? What could you devote your life on? Colleges look to see if you are passionate about anything. If you don't come across as a passionate person, they'll probably be a lot, lot harder on your admission. That's why it's important to explore *now*, instead of *then*. If you're thinking, "I'll find my passion in college", don't have hyped expectations. Instead, do a lot of exploring. Be open to anything even if it seems "geeky" "crazy" or "strange". It doesn't matter—you may love it. I believe everybody has something they can love. If somebody has been suffocating your passion for something, don't let them destroy it. You have every right to be passionate about whatever you *are* passionate about, as long as it fits into *your* principles. If it feels wrong to you, don't force anything. Only you know.

Creative: Universities and colleges are always looking for creative personalities. Some people may be *artistic*, but that seems to get people thinking only along the lines of *art*. People can be creative in other aspects. New ideas in the fields of math, science, literature, English, and society are creative too. Think in a different way, outside the box, etc. That's what colleges look for. The easiest way is to find an art form, or self-expression of some kind. When I say art form, I don't mean just paint, clay, or graphics. Poetry, photography, dancing, acting, writing and music are all forms of art. Everybody has a way of expressing themselves in the right hemisphere of their brain. Max Planck and Albert Einstein, great physicists, were also very musical. Creativity is anything you make up with your own mind. It's what colleges are always on the prowl for.

Involved: Anybody who was ever famous were either one of the rare people chosen by luck, or somebody who put himself out there. Most of us can't be on being chosen by luck, so we have to put ourselves out there. Colleges look to see if your willing to put yourself out there and be seen by the public's eye. That's how people are successful—they are willing to be seen. The budding of this ability is seen when teenagers get involved, courageous, and independent. Sure, this means the basic volunteering. But how about creating solutions to problems you see? Getting passionate about something and doing something about it? You see problems and things you'd like to fix. The easiest way is just to listen to what you complain about. And then fix it!

Dedicated: Colleges look for perseverance. People who don't give up. After all, they don't want their students to just give up themselves. The best way to show you are dedicated is to do well in school. Any long-term commitment in which you succeed is a show of commitment. Perhaps doing amazingly well in piano, or scoring tons of points for your basketball team. Anything that you don't give up on and stick through reflects well and you and your college application process.

Directed: Ah, the quality that gets a lot of college applicants. No, it's not enough to be dedicated, involved, creative, and passionate. You also have to be directed. You need to know where you want to go and what you want to do, or at least have optimum clarity on your life in general. Colleges don't expect you to know *exactly* what you are doing, in fact that's a bit of a turn off, but they want to know what you would like to do and *why, why, why*. Did I mention why? They want the golden mean between the prepackaged personality who seems to already know every detail of their life and the wandering dreamer who has absolutely no idea, but hey! They're alive! They want somebody who knows themselves and where they want to go and can prove they are strong on a few paths. They want proof that you are into what every you are into, so don't think you can fake it.

Unique: Mainly a college wants someone whose all of these but also *unique*. What makes you different from the person next to you? How about the majority of people? And is it enough to really pick you out? The amount of uniqueness you have will be equivalent to your college's level. If you want to go to Harvard, you'd best be unique.

In summary

Be *industrious*, Benjamin Franklin advises. It's true. Use every moment you can towards that one goal that is so important to you. Do everything you want to while you can. Be who you want to be. Your satisfaction with yourself is the most important component to getting into college. If your not satisfied with yourself, don't expect them to be satisfied with you.

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| Topic: | Career Concentration | |
| Date: | October 20 th , 2011 | |
| Inquiry Questions: | What tests do we have to take for the potential career fields we want to enter? | |
| Objective: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">For students to understand that most careers require passing a test, and that each test is to measure their readiness based on a particular skill set, not intelligence | |
| Materials: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Career Concentration Powerpoint (only works on PCs) The activity is attached as a powerpoint. When you view it as a slide show, you can play it. Click a box to remove it, then click on the text to cover it back up | |
| Lesson: | <i>30 min</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Remind students that the brain is a muscle and the more exercise we give it, the stronger it becomes! Tell them today's lesson is about exercising our brain and learning about the tests that we need to take for future careers. (only 15 careers are represented, but today almost ALL careers require some sort of entrance exam)2) Separate the class into two groups (boys vs. girls/9th vs 10th/spring and summer bdays vs fall and winter bdays/etc)3) One group goes first and tries to match a career with its corresponding test. If they correctly match two, they get a point and they get to go again (leave the corrected matches uncovered for the rest of the game). If they incorrectly match two, their turn is over. Repeat these steps until all of the careers have been matched with their corresponding test. The team with the most points at the end wins!4) At the end of the game (or before, your preference) tell students about all of the tests you've had to take to become a teacher (or any other tests you had to take for other careers). Remember to share stories of how you studied/prepared, and how you kept trying even if you failed. Finally, remind them that all of these tests test a skill set, not intelligence. No matter how intelligent you are, you still have to study for each test as they all test something different. |

