Advancing the Reading, Writing, & Intellectual Development of African American Males
Missing Architects
by
Dr. A.W. Tatum
June 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2011
9:25am

More than a million speeches and conference proceedings
focused on the intersection of my blackness and dangling manhood
They talk about me in hotel lobbies and national newspapers
I am thought about by think tanks
I am scorned in the comments section following a news article about me
I have even become profitable in the worst way
They are given vouchers and federal dollars to save me
I have made a lot of careers at top universities by folks who “address” my need in print
without addressing me
There are too many architects at the drafting board
without my blueprint
yielding the same image for us all
My blueprint may help to make sense of it all
One line, one scribble at a time
Kindergarten Lynching
By
Alfred W. Tatum
August 10, 2012

Roaming free spirit
You now belong to me
Tripped up by the alphabet in your first four years
I got you now
R is for rope
N is for neck
Can you remember that
The nation lets me off the hook
Because your dark skin gives permission
You’re invisible to me
It’s only the numbers that count
You little “at-risk minority”
I have the authority
To call you less than
And string you up at my discretion
In three years the noose tightens forever
When the state gives me the okay
Because helping you is a mystery
But this rope to the right is part of your history
Welcome to Lynchville!
Kindergarten Love
By
Alfred W. Tatum
October 21, 2014

Roaming free spirit
You now belong to me
Tripped up by the alphabet in your first four years
I got you now
L is for Love
B is for Boy
Having you in my class brings joy
Welcome!

Thank you
Gracias
Four Goals

• Examine Authorizations
• Provide Pathways to Develop Literacy Expertise
• Build or Rebuild Boys’ Reading and Writing Relationships with Texts (Textual Lineages)
• Use an Exponential Growth without Leaving Students who Struggle Behind
Examining Leadership Authorizations

• What are we authorizing?
  – Radical Love
  – Underperformance
  – Slow growth
  – Exponential growth
    • Language
    • Reading
    • Writing
    • Intellectual Growth
    • Human Development

• What are the basis of the authorizations?
  – Policy
  – Data
  – Teachers
  – Students

• How are the authorizations contributing to the literacy development of African American boys in grades prek-12?
  – Projected goals
  – Proposed goals
  – Academic and Personal Outcomes

Prepared by: [Name Redacted] - Do not copy without permission
Authorization #1
Simple Model
RESEARCH INPUTS = HIGH ACHIEVEMENT

An approach that only moves 5% or 10% of the students does not exist.

Grounded in projected possibilities vs. grounded in trend data.

GROUND TALK ASSUMES THINGS REMAIN STABLE/CONSTANT

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Authorization # 2

Complex Model

(Steeper the Model, The Harder the Push)

CHANGING FORCE

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Complex Model
(Steeper the Model, The Harder the Push)
Assessment System

Current ➔ Projected vs. Proposed

“It is safer to fail children than fail ourselves” - AWT

Moving African American boys toward advanced reading and writing levels

Chart Title
Two Years Above
At or Above
Below

Current  Projected  Proposed

Chart Title

Starting Point for Planning Literacy Reform

0
# Vital Signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R &amp; W</th>
<th>Readers &amp; Educators</th>
<th>R&amp;W Instruction</th>
<th>Educators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide the working tools and models</td>
<td>Improving the human condition (Why)</td>
<td>Rescuing the significance of teaching (How)</td>
<td>Interacting with students, not scorecards of achievement (who)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word knowledge</td>
<td>Home Life</td>
<td>Quality Instructional Support</td>
<td>Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>Culture (D,E,G)</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy knowledge</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Caring/Compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Culpability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language &amp; Language Use</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Courage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Severing of Reading & Writing

Lineages

One of the Great Tragedies of American Education
“More” Complete Framework

Usual-paths approach

Curriculum orientations

The role of literacy instruction

Theoretical Strands

Approach to Literacy Teaching

Use Comprehensive Framework for Literacy Teaching

Instructional Strands

Policy

Merit/Performance

Strengthen Assessment Profile

Professional Preparation For Teachers

Preparedness Strands

Professional Development

Mediate Text to Support Reading, Writing, and Human Development

Compliance / Input

P.O.C

From Teaching Reading to Black Adolescent Males: Closing the Achievement Gap
Language, Reading, Writing and Knowledge

- No evidence of language & skill development new knowledge
- Language & Skill development
- Evidence of language & skill development and new knowledge
- New Knowledge
Multi-Dimensional Reading Model

- Personal Growth
- Extension
- Academic Growth
- Reading
- Comprehension
- Writing
- Application
- Vocabulary
- Decoding Fluency
- Concept

Developed by Alfred Tatum
10-Point Curricular Focus
(Making Texts Meaningful / Textual Lineages)

- Sociology
- Philosophy
- Chemistry
- Economics
- Medicine
- Mathematics
- Biology
- Law
- Engineering
- Classics
Decoding Drill
a, e, i, o, u  1, 2

sociology  Afghanistan
suspicous  dubious
prejudice  prior
Political  virtual
Split consonant between vowels
- bal / lad

Move one consonant between vowels to the next syllable
- te / na / cious

Split neighboring vowels
- jo / vi / al

Do not separate blends or word groupings that need each other
- ous, qu, bl, cl, dr,
Concept of Reading Template

Being a problem is a Horrifying experience. The terrorist attacks, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (other countries), and violence around the World have affected the American dream for American Arabs and Muslims. In the Country of some Americans, they have become known as dangerous outsiders.

Developed by Alfred Tatum
Like the Rest
Dr. A. Tatum
February 13, 2011
3:33 pm

3.5 million jelly beans in a factory
Ready to be shipped

I am red jelly bean number 600,599
Will I make it out into the world?
Or, trashed like all the wasted jelly beans?

Should I hope that the new manager likes red jelly beans?
Or, should I hope the manager likes me?

Am I just a red jelly bean like the rest?
Or, am I more?
Group Identity vs. Individual Identity

Being a problem is a strange experience. Arabs and Muslims are the new “problem” of American society. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, Arabs and Muslims, two groups virtually (almost) unknown to most Americans prior to (before) 2001, now hold the dubious (doubtful) distinction of being the first new communities of suspicion (viewed as doing something wrong) after the hard-worn victories of the civil rights era. The terrorist attacks (violent attacks), the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the explosion of political violence around the world have put the dream in jeopardy (in danger) for American Arabs and Muslims. In the eyes of some Americans, they have become collectively known as dangerous outsiders. Crimes against Arabs and Muslims increased 1,700 percent in the first six months after September 11. A USA Today/Gallup Poll from 2006 shows that 39% of Americans admit to holding prejudice against Muslims and believe that U.S. Muslims should carry special IDs.

Line Set 1

Arabs and Muslims are the new “problem” of American society.

39% of Americans admit to holding prejudice against Muslims and believe the U.S. Muslims should carry special IDs.

Line Set 2

Arabs and Muslims are the new “problem” of American society.

Being a problem is a strange experience.
Group Identity vs. Individual Identity

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Thinking Across Texts Writing

Concept: Group Identity vs. Individual Identity

How are the texts From How Does it Feel to Be a Problem and “Like the Rest” connected to the concept of group identity vs. individual identity? You can make your response stronger by supporting it with lines from each text.

Write your response below:

It's connected because in both writings are similar and talking about feelings about circling people out like Muslims think U.S.A Muslims should not have special ids and the jelly bean thinks he is just another jelly bean but he is not everyone special in their own way no matter what.
Its connected because in both writings are similar and talking about people and circling people out like Muslims think U.S.A Muslims should have special ids and the jelly bean thinks he just another jelly bean but he is not. Everyone is special in there own way no matter what.

After collaborative writing critique (LRWK)

The texts are connected. Both writings are similar with talk about singling people out. For example, some people think U.S.A Muslims should have special IDs. The jelly bean thinks he’s just another jelly bean, but he is not. Everyone is special in their own way no matter what.
“Black toilet paper, please?”
The store clerk gave me a strange look.  
“Are you mistaken,” he asked? 
He pointed to aisle number 3 
Expecting me to follow the same path  
I had already scanned the shelves  
I knew what I wanted  
He tried to convince me otherwise 
I wasn’t mistaken 
I was just in the wrong place 
My failed request became a personal quest 
I am determined to get some black toilet paper.
Fluency Practice Piece

There are the voices which we hear in solitude but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions.

Ralph Waldo Emerson
Framework for Mediating Texts

1. Where to start the text
2. How to introduce the text
3. How to frame the text with questions that the students might find essential
4. How to connect the texts to larger goals that will give the text a sustaining quality
Establishing the Criteria
Litmus Test

• What questions should we be asking about our text selections?
  – Will students be underserved by “this” text?
  – What makes this text essential or useful?
  – Out of all of the text in the world, why this one for students in this time and space?
  – Will I love to rush in to teach this text?
  – Will this text allow me to find out more about me as I find out more about my students? Help me reconcile differences?
  – How can this text be appropriately paced to engage students?
  – What is the appropriate starting point for this text?
  – Is “this” a considerate and challenging text?
  – Does this text lend itself to academic excellence “smarter” and identity development?
  – Okay, I read this text, now what?
  – Will this text restore confidence in literacy instruction?
  – Do the texts serve as writing and language coaches?
Rated the Following
Scale 1-4

I read a text that...

- Had a lasting effect on me
- Made me want to do something for someone else
- I continued to think about after I read it
- Started me on a new path
- I reread several times on my own
- Stayed in my mind
- I felt a connect with
- Shaped who I am
- Changed the way I behaved toward other people

- Opened my mind
- I choose to talk about it with others
- I recommended to others
- Made me feel connected to something important
- Made me think about moments in my life
- That was important to me
- Caused me to think the way I do today
- Changed me
Textual forces

- International / National backdrop
- Personal backdrop
- Economic backdrop
- Community backdrop
- Social/Cultural/Gender backdrops
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Text Starters</th>
<th>Essential Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47 – Walter Mosley</td>
<td>And every night they chained your feet to an eyebolt in the floor. The men out there were mostly angry and so they were always fighting or crying of just plain sad. (p. 12)</td>
<td>1. What are the alternatives when someone tries to stamp out the existence of others? 2. Are there appropriate responses? Inappropriate responses?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bang – Sharon Flake</td>
<td>A black boy don’t get a hundred chances to get it right. Sometimes he just gets one. That’s it…You blow your chance, you blow your life. (p. 124)</td>
<td>1. Is the United States a redemptive society? 2. Is the society constructed to save some and sacrifice others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handbook for Boys – Walter Dean Myers</td>
<td>The problem with so many young men…is that when they’re young, they really don’t know how to get their lives together…After a while they just give up and start talking about how they really don’t care. (p. 135)</td>
<td>1. How does one recover a part of his soul? 2. What does it take to escape vulnerable-producing conditions unscathed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass – Frederick Douglass</td>
<td>I often found myself regretting my own existence… (p. 55)</td>
<td>1. What does it mean to exist? 2. What are the factors that contribute to one’s existence?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Directions: In each box below, place the title of a book, essay, or poem that you think you will always remember. Place only one title in a box. Explain why you think you will always remember the book, essay, or poem. Look at the example.

I like the part when it say, “We got to let our own light shine.”
Alexander Crummell  
James McCune Smith  
David Walker  
Henry Highland Garnet  
William Douglass  
Martin Delaney
W.E.B. Du Bois
Alain Locke
Jean Toomer
Countee Cullen
Claude McKay
Langston Hughes
Charles S. Johnson

John Edgar Wideman

Robert Hayden

Sterling Brown
Four Literacy Platforms

1. Defining self - finding the text and language that serve as a coach

2. Becoming resilient – remaining steadfast in the face of conditions inside and outside of school

3. Engaging others – Bringing others into the fold for striving toward a better humanity for all

4. Building capacity – Creating a foundation for future generations, agenda-building
WHY ARE WE HERE

• To be courageous, bold, even heroic in our writing
• To be a part of a community of writers
• To exercise literary freedom
• To become urgent souls
• To put our voice and vision on record
• To become a student of humanity

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WHAT WILL IT TAKE

• Knowledge (what did the author have to know to write the text)
  – You carry
    • Your experiences
    • Your world
  – Others have carried or contributed
    • Research
    • Words and Voices
    • Experiences

• Care
  – To put the right words in the right place
  – To write and write some more
“Oh, say can you see”
There trapped in the flapping stripes
Crimson flowing from cracked fingernails
Trying to grip the words of Jefferson

But the southerly winds of Baltimore
Rips through the stars, swatting a few more away
Young bodies flung back toward the Atlantic
To join their kindred spirits

By the dawn’s early light
What so proudly we held
Holding on to the white stars
In the northwestern corner
Burning through the flesh
Of those orphan hands who
saw the glimmer of light
Now fading as they black out
And the hope of Lincoln and Roosevelt dims

Near the ocean’s floor
Through the perilous fight
As the bombs and bullets burst through the air
Shattering American democracy
That maims sons and daughters of this republic
in the playgrounds of Chicago and in kindergarten classrooms
in our safest neighborhoods

Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there
Held by hands
Tired hands
Hands that found energy
As they clasped
To save a young nation
Open to fresh wounds
That they knew would heal

The flag still stands
So must we.
Kayla’s wavy hair was his baton. Her soft lips were his flute. Her breasts were his drums. Her cheeks were his cymbals. Marlon was the conductor. His rhythms were unheard of by his peers. He was a master at his craft. And yet, his most magical piece was being done on his most prized possession.

“Hey, what do you want to do tonight, Marlon?” Kayla asked.

“I want you to go see a concert.” Marlon replied.

“Ok. Well, who do you want to go see?”

“I wrote a song for you, but we’ll have to go to my house, if you want to hear it.”

“Well then, what are we waitin’ for baby? Let’s go!”
The empty house was a perfect audience for Marlon’s concerto. As he started the concert, Kayla was completely helpless. She had no idea of Marlon’s intentions. Only 14 years old, she was aspiring to get into a good high school. Marlon at first was a tutor to Kayla, then became a friend and is now a boyfriend. Little did she know she is now #354,671.

“Get off of me, you perv!” Kayla shouted.

Marlon smacked the cymbals and the audience cheered. He played the flute flawlessly. His epic crescendos rose as white fluid began to spill. Finally, the song came to an end.

“Who are you?” Kayla squeaked.

“Did you like my orchestra?”
# Research and Prep Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facts</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sentences</th>
<th>Name/Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>354, 670 girls victims of date rape</td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td></td>
<td>Marlon’s house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[www.aaamsli5.blogspot.com](http://www.aaamsli5.blogspot.com)
WRITING REQUIRES

• Language

• Consciousness / Truth

• Research & Knowledge

• You must suffer me now to deal plainly with you

• My dear brethren, for I do not mean to flatter, or omit the truth

• Whether it is for you, or against you
ASSESSING THE WRITING

• Writing that stands scrutiny if it is placed under review
  1. Is it significant and timely?

  2. Does it fill a gap?

  3. Does it make a contribution?

  4. Is it well organized?

  5. Does it have interdisciplinary depth?
## CCSS Conceptual Framing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientations for Literacy for African American Males</th>
<th>CCSS</th>
<th>Low-level of Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading and writing, debating, critiquing and being able to make meaning of one’s identity</td>
<td>Providing appropriate benchmarks for all students, regardless of where they live.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securing freedom and becoming self-determined</td>
<td>Defining the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Establishing platforms</strong> to secure civil, economic, educational, political, and social rights.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building agendas</strong> to improve and enhance the condition of the African American community.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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## Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSS</th>
<th></th>
<th>Moderate to high</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Producing texts that defined their lives and defined their times</td>
<td>Writing logical arguments based on substantive claims, sound reasoning, and relevant evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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| Using language to (re)claim the authority over them and counter oppressive and harsh circumstances (Tatum, 2009). |
| Sharing knowledge, promoting ideas and cultivating a scholarly and literate way of life (Belt-Beyan, 2004). |
| Cultivating speakers and thinkers |
| Using formal English in their writing and speaking and making skillful choices among the many ways to express themselves through language. |
| Growing their vocabularies through a mix of conversations, direct instruction, and reading. |
| Expanding students’ repertoire of words and phrases. |
| Preparing students for real-life experience at college and in 21st century careers. |
| Moderate to high Prepared by Dr. A.W. Tatum-Do not copy without permission |
Common Core (+)

- Identity Development
- Produce Text that Define Their Lives
- Use Language to Gain Authority
- Cultivating Speakers and Thinkers
- Build Agendas
Literacy instruction has to be wide enough and deep enough to counter an historical ugliness rooted in multiple forms of exploitation that has manifested into academic underperformance, social unrest, and suffocating violence in the streets and schools for so many of our boys. (Tatum, 2009)
Resolutions

1. Be it resolved – build reading and writing relationships as early markers of human development

2. Be it resolved – develop a stronger, better-defined literacy movement

3. Be it resolved – we will protect ourselves and our posterity

4. Be it resolved – move beyond narrow frames of scholarship

5. Be it resolved – seek to destroy everything that goes against our humanity
It’s not just about students’ literacies; it’s about their lives.

Tatum, 2005