

# Resistance Learning

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# What is resistance learning?

“It consists of an **active**, often ingenious, woeful rejection of even the most compassionate and well-designed teaching (Kohl 2).”



# Why Question

Students at Boys and Girls Club Boston display varying levels of willingness to participate in learning during homework time. One student in particular, S, an African-American elementary schooler that grew up in Roxbury, refuses to complete their homework. We wondered: *What causes resistance learning? What is the relationship between racial and ethnic grouping and resistance to learning?*

# Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindset

Growth Mindset: belief that their learning and intelligence can grow with time and experience

Fixed mindset: qualities are fixed traits and therefore cannot change over time



# Source Matrix

	Insider	Outsider
Child/young person	Testimony <i>from I Won't Learn From You</i> by Herbert Kohl	x
Adult	BCGB Staff Interview, Kiara	“Welcome back to test insanity: New York State’s ever-changing standardized tests in English and math are here again” by Fred Smith
Adult who has studied question	Best Practices for Teaching African American Boys (video) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DeUFhei81wg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DeUFhei81wg</a>	<i>No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning</i> by Abigail Thernstrom and Stephan Thernstrom

## *I Won't Learn From You*

“I say well, to hell with my life. You have to take some kind of stand. Everything you learn is lies. It's their education. Not mine. It's their history. Not mine. It's their language. Not mine. You name it. It's theirs. Not mine. A white teacher, he has not lived the life. He cannot relate any of the things to me. So I'm bored (Meyer 1967 as cited by Kohl 1991).”

“Because not-learning involves willing rejection of some aspect of experience, it can often lead to what appears to be failure (Kohl 4) .”

# *No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning*

“By age 17 the average black student is four years behind the average white student; black 12th graders score lower than white 8th graders in reading, math, U.S. history and geography.” (Thernstrom and Thernstrom, 2003, as cited in Harris)

# BGCB Interview, with the staff Kiara

“I think schools push kids along when they’re not ready. [...] And it’s also the age of technology so the kids don’t really need to learn these skills ’cuz they got google on their phones.” -- Kiara





# Best Practices for Teaching African American Boys

“We have to find ways to bond with these students, especially black males. [It] has nothing to do with race or gender. It’s time on task, expectations, and connecting with students by understanding and appreciating and acknowledging their learning styles.”  
(Kunjuku, 2012)



**“Welcome back to test insanity..”**

“We must recognize that in virtually every year from 2012 through 2018 there have been differences in the publishers, the test population and the test parameters.”

“How do you keep score, either of individual kids’ progress or of schools’ overall performance, when the rules keep changing and the goalposts keep moving? You can’t.” (Smith, 2019)

# Conclusion

- Inadequate schooling system for nonwhite students

- Being an educator that is inquisitive, culturally-conscious, and involved in the learning of their students will..

Where do we lie on this spectrum? To what extent is it our responsibility to go about resolving the issue of resistance learning and what is the limit of our reach?

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