

The background features a white space with several colorful circles and dashed lines. In the top left, there is a large teal circle with a white center, a smaller teal circle, and a dashed teal circle. In the top right, there is a large lime green circle, a smaller green circle, and a dashed green circle. In the bottom left, there is a large green circle with a white center, a smaller orange circle, and a dashed yellow circle. In the bottom right, there is a large yellow circle, a smaller orange circle, and a smaller pink circle. A large dashed blue circle is also present, partially enclosing the text.

# Why Question Presentation

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# Background Story

- ◎ Mackenzie, black, 6 years old, second grader, lives in Roxbury
- ◎ Struggled in reading picture book
  - Able: one, the, dog
  - Unable: police, goldfish, present
- ◎ Lily, white, 6 years old, second grader, Mackenzie's friend
- ◎ Able to read, slowly lead Mackenzie





# Why Question

- ◎ Why is there a huge linguistic differences existing among some of these children in distinct races?
  - ◎ What caused the difference?
  - ◎ What impact does their family and their grown-up community has on their literacy ability?



# Service-Learning Site Connection

## Yawkey's:

- 17,000 youth
- Age 6-18 youth
- 86% members are persons of color
- Lower Roxbury, Dudley area
- Mandatory reading time, Literacy programs



## Hernandez

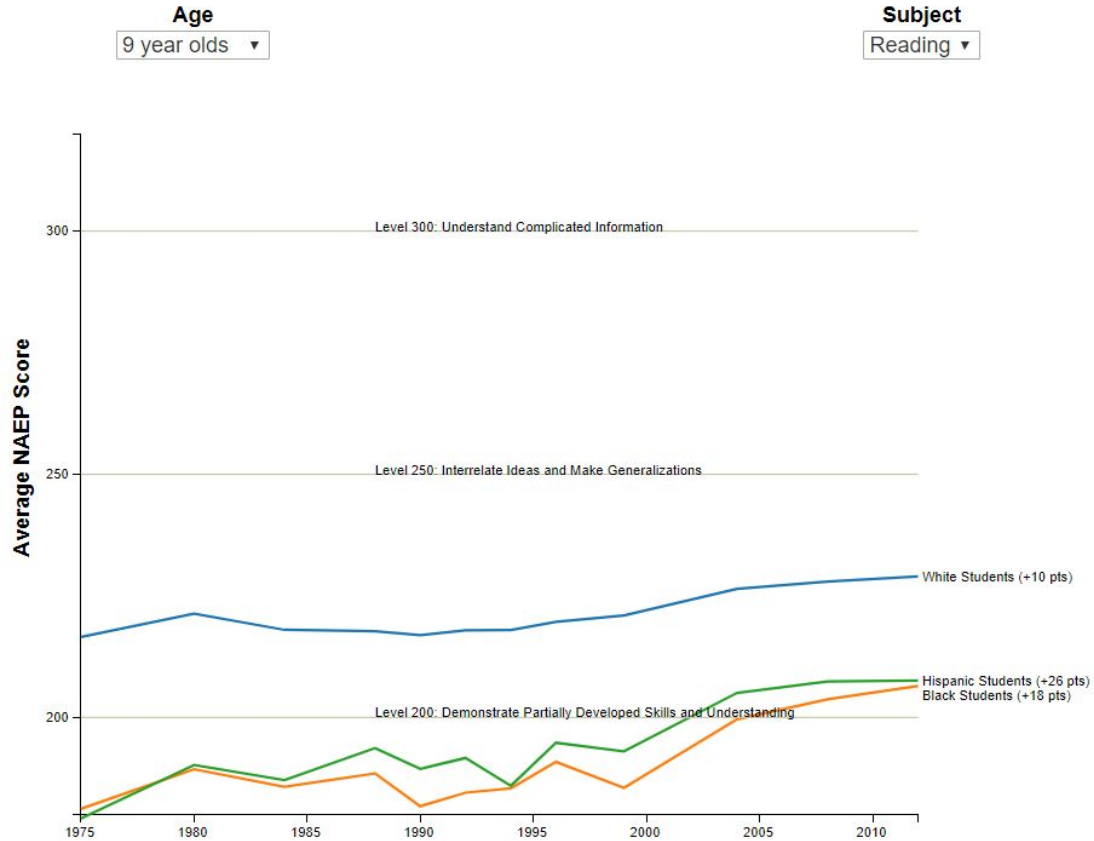
- Dual Language school
- Egleston square
- Founded in 1970 as a school for non-english speaking children



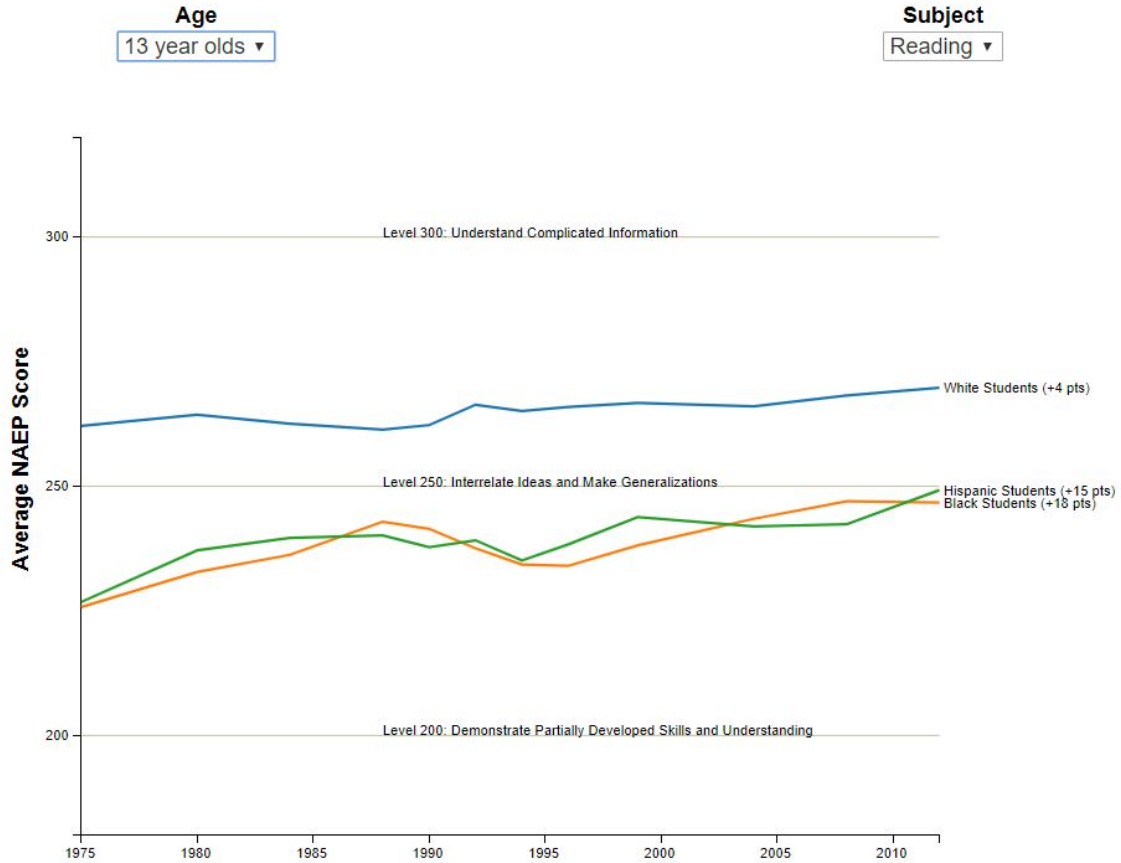
# Achievement Gap

- ◎ White-black and white-Hispanic achievement gaps are 30-40% smaller than they were in the 1970s.
- ◎ Black and Hispanic students today are roughly two to three years ahead of their parents' generation in reading.
- ◎ White students' scores have also improved, but not by as much.

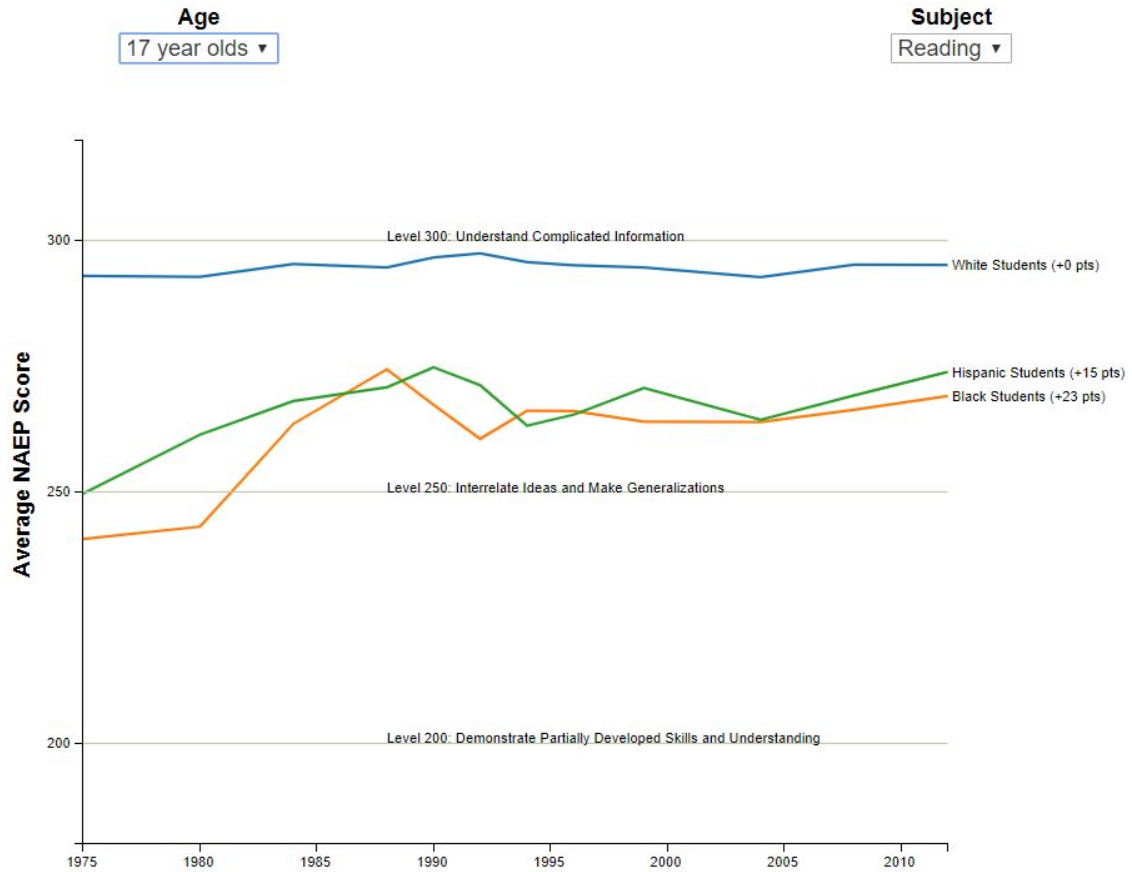
# Racial and Ethnic Achievement Gaps



# Racial and Ethnic Achievement Gaps



# Racial and Ethnic Achievement Gaps





# Sources

	Insider	Outsider
Children	Malina, Adian, Camila, (Yawkey's members)	
Adult	Kiara (Yawkey's staff)	Anya Kamenetz
Adult who studied the question	Olivia Foster-Carter	Sandra Hughes-Hassell



# Insider; Children

**Interview with: Malina, Adian & Camila**

6th graders & 2nd grader, black, Yawkey's members

**Q: Do you know how to read? When did you learn how to read?**

**A:** Yes, of course I can read. Most of my classmates all know how to.

We know how to read and write when we were around 1st and 2nd grade.

**Q: Where did you learn from? Who taught you how to read?**

**A:** My parents told me a little bit when I was little and then in primary school, the teachers there taught us how to read.

My mom ask me to read for 30 minutes everyday but I didn't want to.

I learned how to pronounce and read at my preschool program, I remembered that I didn't know how to pronounce H so I practiced a lot.

**Q: I noticed that some 2nd graders here can not read fluently, why do you think that happen?**

**A:** Maybe their parents didn't have time to teach them as our parents?

It can also be that they have learning or reading disabilities and that's why they can't read.

A decorative graphic featuring a large dashed light-blue circle. Inside and outside this circle are various colored shapes: a large lime green circle at the top left, a large cyan ring at the top center, a large yellow circle at the top right, a large orange circle at the bottom left, and a large orange ring at the bottom right. Smaller circles in green, blue, pink, and cyan are scattered throughout. A blue circle containing the white text "“" is positioned above the main text.

“

I think it really depends on where they are living and what school they are attending.

Different schools teach kids differently.

Some of the good primary schools teach students how to read but some of the other schools just don't.

# Insider; Children

- ◎ Family situations - wealth gap
  - ◎ Black families:  $\frac{1}{8}$  net worth of white families
  - ◎ Parents unable, no ability or time
- ◎ Early age education - preschool program
  - ◎ Unaffordable, limited resources
- ◎ Community & neighborhood
- ◎ Schools funding based on local district property taxes
- ◎ Low-valued neighborhood with low funding schools
  - ◎ Lack of literacy education
  - ◎ Comparison with high funding, expensive primary schools

# Insider; Adult

## 1. **Kiara - Yawkey's Boys and Girls Club education assistant**

- ◎ How does storytelling affect a student's engagement in learning about their ethnicity?
  - Students are more engaged if they learn stories about their ethnicity. It's something new that the kids can relate to. Textbooks in high school misrepresent other races or any race that isn't white. This leads to many kids never learning about their own heritage.
- ◎ Are students falling behind in their reading comprehension skills?
  - Difficult to say as many kids have different skills, and are involved with different programs. Some kids have advantage, because they are part of the Generations Incorporated program. Other kids have the skills to read, but will act like they don't know for easy answers. Most kids don't enjoy homework, so it's difficult for students to challenge themselves to do the work.

# Insider; Adult

- ◎ How does their levels of literacy connect with their race?
  - Since the club's predominantly Black, there isn't much of a difference between white and black kids in terms of literacy skills. It really depends on the school's resources.
- ◎ How does specific neighborhoods affect a child's education?
  - Metco students usually have more resources, while BPS students have less. Metco is a busing program that takes students from inner cities to other schools or Suburban environments.
- ◎ Why do you think some students can read better regardless of their race?
  - Schooling is a big factor, because schools push kids along even if they're not ready. Kids that need extra help are pushed along to the next grade even if they're clearly behind from their peers. Another factor is that some students aren't english speaking. Especially with parents that don't speak english, many students won't have the advantages and extra help from parents that do speak english.



# Outsider; Anya Kamenetz

- ◎ Lead education blogger at National Public Radio
- ◎ Podcast on Word Gap
  - ◎ Thoughts about what it means
  - ◎ What it represents
  - ◎ Ways to improve it



# Outsider; Anya Kamenetz

“And what I liked to see was, oh man, the TV was on for 20 hours - you know, I'm just kind of exaggerating but - oh man I didn't talk anything? I didn't say anything to my baby? And so the next week would be a challenge for me to talk even more. Or, oh, well, I know I'm going to record today, so I need to have less TV on and more talking. But I like that the report could actually give me some real-time data as to how much she's being spoken to. That's what I liked about the program.”

“I think people think, oh, it's just a baby. You know, they're so small. They don't understand what you're saying anyway. But they actually do. We received books. I started reading more to her. Even to this day, we still read. She had a library card, you know, ever since - before she was a year old. So the effect of just speaking to her and talking and reading with her.”





# Outsider; Anya Kamenetz

And you can certainly see how a cultural relativism message - if we say, like, oh, like, poor kids have so much word wealth, therefore they don't need extra resources, they don't need any consideration, we'll just celebrate difference, right? And your difference is that you don't know how to read even though you're in eighth grade.

This is the wealth that they have because they have their heritage wealth, whether it's another language literally or whether it's a dialect - a way of speaking. Whether that is, a way of storytelling, a way of joking - you know, if you're not the dominant culture, you are learning more than one kind of word. And to frame that as a deficit is so profoundly inverted, right? They're not worse at speaking dominant-language English, they learned a different language.

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide features several overlapping circles in various colors: a large pink circle with a dashed orange outline, a solid orange circle, a yellow circle, a green circle with a dashed green outline, a small cyan circle, a large lime green circle, and a blue circle. On the right side, there are more circles: a small lime green circle, a blue circle with a white center, a cyan circle, a yellow circle with a dashed orange outline, and a small orange circle.

## Insider; Adult that studied this question

- *An inner city school with half of the student population being minorities and a country school with 20 percent minority were given the same nonfiction social studies textbook*
- *'They don't need money, people come from abroad and give them money.' vs "We use tractors and they use sticks.' 'They are like animals, they go hunting.'*
- *It was a very US vs Them response about third world countries*
- *This would counter the potential 'superiority complex' of white children and the possible self devaluation of black children.*

A decorative graphic featuring a large dashed light-blue circle that frames the central text. Various solid-colored circles in shades of green, yellow, orange, red, and teal are scattered around the page, some overlapping the dashed circle. A large teal ring is positioned at the top center, partially overlapping a blue circle containing a white quotation mark.

“

54 percent of African American, 50 percent of Hispanic, and 51 percent of American Indian fourth grade students scored below basic in reading as compared to 22 percent of whites and 23 percent of Asian Americans (NAEP 2007).



## Outsider; Adult that studied this question

- 83.5 percent of books in the sample contained at least one white main or secondary character. By contrast, only 25.8 percent of the books contained at least one person of color as a main or major secondary character.
- African American students interpreted the passage as verbal play, whereas the white students tended to interpret it as a description of a fight.
- There are a number of factors that contribute to the poor performance of these children, including the fact that they are more likely to attend segregated schools than whites or Asian Americans; to receive a disproportionate amount of poor teaching, including teachers with less experience, fewer advanced degrees, and higher rates of absenteeism.



# Analysis

## Macro

- Racial formation theory
- Equity and future generations

## Meso

- Low valued communities such as Roxbury
  - Entry level/retail jobs
  - Higher level education; college

## Micro

- Interpersonal relationship between the child
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - Peers

# Implications

- ◎ There are diverse reasons why these children of minority lack literacy abilities
  - Family situation, wealth gap, low-valued neighborhood, education opportunity, segregated schools, learning disabilities, storytelling, etc.
- ◎ How will this difference in literacy ability affect their academic life?
  - Inefficient learning & understanding
- ◎ As community academic help sites
  - Yawkey's Boys & Girls Club
    - Mandatory reading hours for proper level, literacy program
  - Hernandez
    - Special help for non-English & bilingual speaker
- ◎ As community teachers & tutors
  - Understand these differences
  - Reduce the literacy gap, grouping



# Questions that arises

**New Question:** Studies shown that if you give a parents the information and data to change the way they speak to their kids, there will be improvements on their literal abilities. How does someone do that in order to communicate to all different types of families?

**One thing we learned:** There are many factors that might affect a child's reading ability, and there are many implications that are made. But at the end, it really is up to individual families and their ability to want to change and engage with their kids to improve.

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Thank You!



**Any questions?**