So you want to talk about race

Ijeoma Oluo
“To any citizen of this country who figures himself as responsible – and particularly those of you who deal with the minds and hearts of young people – must be prepared to “go for broke.” Or to put it another way, you must understand that in the attempt to correct so many generations of bad faith and cruelty, when it is operating not only in the classroom but in society, you will meet the most fantastic, the most brutal, and the most determined resistance. There is no point in pretending that this won’t happen.”

- James Baldwin, A Talk for Teachers, 1963

It Ain’t Near ‘Bout Fair: Re-envisioning the bias and sensitivity review process from a justice-oriented antiracist perspective
Justice-Oriented Assessment

“Laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust... justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others. It does not allow that the sacrifices imposed on a few are outweighed by the larger sum of advantages enjoyed by many”

-- Rawls (1999)
Antiracist Assessment

• Explicitly disrupt conventional negative stereotypes, as they relate to any marginalized group

• Highlight oppressive sociopolitical inequities and injustices

• Provide complete and accurate historical perspectives that go beyond celebrating and/or protecting whiteness

• Allow for multiple ways of knowing/understanding and performing the content
Consistent with the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, & NCME, 2014), fairness in assessment can be approached by ensuring that test materials are as free as possible of unnecessary barriers to the success of diverse groups of test takers. Those unnecessary barriers can be reduced by following some fundamental rules:

- Test items and tasks avoid measuring irrelevant knowledge or skill.
- Test content avoids angering, offending, upsetting, or otherwise distracting test takers.
- Test materials are grounded in respectful representation and treatment of all representatives of various cultures (ethnicity, race, nationality, language, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, place of origin, beliefs, and other cultural characteristics).

Bias and Sensitivity Review: District Developed Assessments

Office of Race to the Top Assessments

Florida Department of Education

ETS Guidelines for Fair Tests and Communications
4 Key Propositions

1. Racist logics provide the historical framing for all of our assessment and measurement systems
2. The compulsion to elevate and protect Whiteness has led to the dehumanization and/or erasure of marginalized identities and experiences on assessments
3. Change requires an increase in the field’s collective critical consciousness
4. Need to shift from a fear-oriented to justice-oriented approach in bias and sensitivity review process
Critical Race Theory: Tenets

- Racism is not an aberration
- Race is a social construct differentially applied
- Intersectionality
- Interest convergence
- Narratives of minoritized communities
Critical Whiteness Theory: Recognizing/Understanding Whiteness

https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/whiteness
PAULO FREIRE

Education for Critical Consciousness
by the author of Pedagogy of the Oppressed

PAULO FREIRE
Stressful Topics to Avoid
Experimentation on People/Animals

Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment

J. Marion Sims’ (Father of Gynecology)
experimenting on Black slaves without anesthesia

Holocaust Internment Camp Experiments

JOAR: refrain from the gratuitous use of content that focuses on experimentation and focus on deliberate and intentional references to animal and human experimentation that serve a larger commitment to name injustice and the current consequences - both good and bad - of those injustices
JOAR: include representations of pregnant women engaged in a variety of activities to the extent to which they are represented (across racial and ethnic groups) in the communities the assessments are intended to serve.
Racial Justice and Social Problems

JOAR: Is this item empowering when addressing issues of oppression and injustice? Does this item show autonomy, agency in minoritized peoples as they fight oppression? Does this item demonstrate or represent allyship?
Genocide

Annual US human rights report takes China, Russia, Belarus to task over alleged rights abuses, cites Yemen violations.

Native Americans rally to change name of Fort George Wright Drive

President Biden 1st president in office to formally recognize he massacre by the Ottoman Empire as Genocide

JOAR: encourage test developers to include content that acknowledges the long term consequences and interconnectedness of genocidal practices/policies (both domestic and abroad) on multiple sectors.
JOAR: Encourage the accurate depiction of slave conditions, honor the dignity and humanity of enslaved persons, and demand/require the critical interrogation of the legacy of slavery within current contexts
Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to empower, and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also repair that broken dignity.”

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

‘The Danger of a Single Story’

“THE SINGLE STORY CREATES STEREOTYPES, AND THE PROBLEM WITH STEREOTYPES IS NOT THAT THEY ARE UNTRUE, BUT THAT THEY ARE INCOMPLETE. THEY MAKE ONE STORY BECOME THE ONLY STORY.”

CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE

Include a wide range of biographies (contemporary and Historical) that tell a wide range of comprehensive and truthful stories and perspectives
JOAR: care should be taken to ensure that the language used in any assessment reflects the linguistic formations of the intended population. In cases in which multiple linguistic formations are represented within a population, assessment developers should work to ensure that no one linguistic system is privileged over another; but rather multiple systems are acknowledged, included, and affirmed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phonological Variations</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cluster Reduction with /dr/</td>
<td>“Throw” for “Throw”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Consonant Deletion</td>
<td>“Lan” for “Land”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/ and /in/ Alteration</td>
<td>“Singin” for “Singing”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/t/ as /k/ within a /str/ Cluster</td>
<td>“Street” for “Street”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstressed Syllable Deletion</td>
<td>“Bout” for “About”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical Variations</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Ain’t” as an Auxiliary</td>
<td>“He ain’t coming”, for “He isn’t coming”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copula “Be”</td>
<td>“He be running all the time,” for “He runs all of the time”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Negatives</td>
<td>“Ain’t nobody got time for that!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Adverb “There”</td>
<td>“It ain’t no class today.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarked Third Person Singular Verbs</td>
<td>“She stare too much” for “She stares too much”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Principles for Re-Envisioning

Watch your tone

Shift to justice-orientation as the goal

Employ consistent and explicit antiracist language

Re-thinking/defining what is meant by barriers

Professional development of critical consciousness
“Watch your tone.”
Goal: Justice NOT Fear

• Does the item address a real issue of justice?
• Are the data presented in the item accurate?
• Does the item disrupt a negative and/or false stereotype about a minoritized group?
• Does the item elevate a minoritized group – affirming their values, hopes, and understandings of the world?
Explicit Antiracist Language
Conclusion

“If, for example, one managed to change the curriculum in all the schools so that Negroes learned more about themselves and their real contributions to this culture, you would be liberating not only Negroes, you’d be liberating white people who know nothing about their own history.”