



# IDEA

Increasing Diverse Learner  
Engagement & Achievement



# Why?

In the new educational landscape created by the COVID-19 pandemic, engagement challenges have taken on new facets. When schools state they have an “engagement challenge”, this could mean that the school is experiencing struggles with:

- Instructional Engagement
- Student Engagement
- Parent Engagement



Engagement is defined as an active investment in a task or learning environment, which takes into consideration a multitude of **behavioral, emotional, and cognitive factors.**

# What is Engagement?



English Language Learners

Gifted and Talented Students

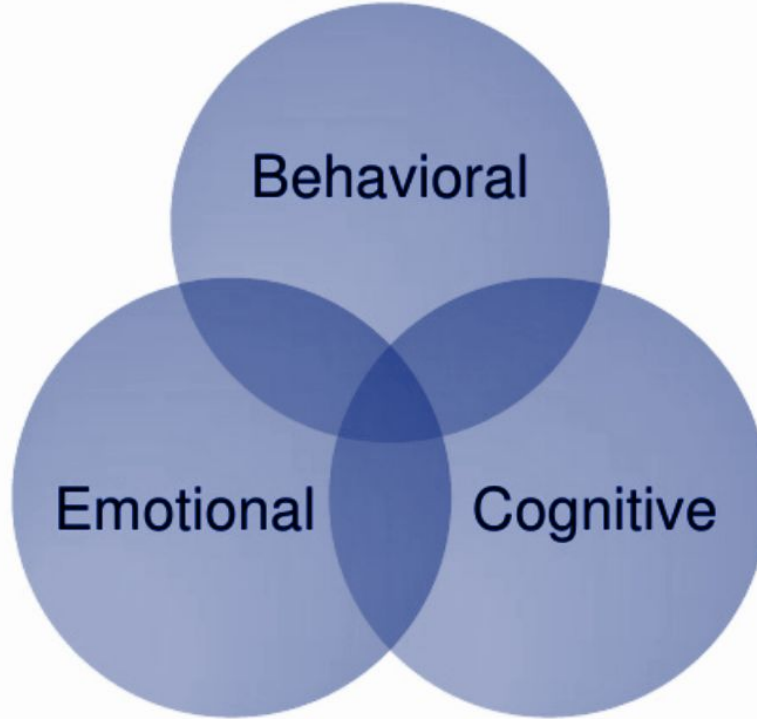
Students on IEP and 504's

Students receiving Free and Reduced Lunch

**Who are our  
Diverse  
Learners?**



# Three Prong Approach



# Unpacking the 3 Components



	High Engagement	Limited Engagement
Emotional	Interest	Boredom
Behavioral	Following Instructions, participating	“Acting Out” or withdrawing from the class
Cognitive	Deep Thinking and Application	Rote Memorization

Cognitive Lift: Learning facilitators create the conditions and culture to ensure learners carry the cognitive lift. A sense of ownership for learners can support high expectations, creating opportunities for active learning, encouraging productive struggle, and ensuring deliberate practice. This approach will ensure that planned activities and questioning lead to higher order thinking and opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning through discourse, use of academic language, and completing tasks that require higher Depths of Knowledge.

# Student Cognitive Lift



# Academy 360

Initial Observations

And

Next Steps...





Engagement does not necessarily mean “attentive,” “productive,” “polite,” “obedient,” or “excited.”

It is NOT ALWAYS OBVIOUS when a student is engaged! Sometimes you might not know that they are engaged when they, in fact, are.

Retention rates are very much intertwined with engagement and discipline at school.

Having a diverse classroom means you must implement multiple strategies throughout each lesson in order to reach the maximum number of students.

# Engaging Diverse Learners



Kids are naturally curious, but thinking is hard, effortful, and slow-paced. The default is to *avoid* thinking, UNLESS the learning conditions are right for them.

When kids say they dislike school, what they actually dislike are the things that make thinking so darn awful. It's the things that rob the fun out of learning, for instance:

- Problems that are too easy or too hard
- Problems that assume too much background knowledge
- Problems that exceed their limits of working memory

# Why Don't Kids Like School?



# Increasing the Cognitive Lift



# Cognitive Demand

VS.

# Rigor

**Rigor**: Complexity of thought

**Cognitive Demand**: Sustained mental taxation

*Cognitive demand is holistic; rigor is just one of its components.*

Imagine this: You open an application, and your computer executes the commands in the coding quickly and efficiently. Next, you open a more complex application, and your computer executes the commands with a slight delay. You conclude that the delay means your computer did something more difficult.

Now imagine an all-too-common, and very frustrating, scenario: You open a basic application, but since your computer is running functions in the background, you get an unexpected delay. Maybe you're impatient—you click a few more times and the screen grays out. Many seconds later, 14 identical windows open. Now what do you conclude?

In the first scenario, the more complex application is what is typically meant by rigor in the classroom. A teacher makes an assignment more difficult, and students find it more challenging, so it takes longer. However, the second scenario points up several things the first misses. We get a false positive for rigor when we ask a computer to run an application while computing resources are already taxed. If time on-task (the computing delay) is our only measure for rigor, when students have a lot on their minds already, teachers may underestimate what they can really handle.

It gets worse from there. We may be able to keep the computer on-task for hours by feeding it the same function over and over. What happens when we try this with students? Assigning them more to do—or, worse, providing vague directions—delays task completion and only gives the appearance of rigor.

# Edutopia's "Dials" of Cognitive Demand

## Pre-assessment:

- Knowing what your students can do, so you can stretch them, but not break them
- Knowing what sparks your students' curiosities and what their interests are; students are more likely to work hard on something they care about

# Edutopia's

# "Dials" of Cognitive Demand

## Rigor

- Accurately determine the rigor of something by completing it yourself

- Time yourself

- Ask yourself how challenging you found it

# Edutopia's

# "Dials" of Cognitive Demand

## Explicitness of Task

- Precise and clear directions
- Read your prompts to other teachers  
(or to students! I used to do this with G, it made her feel important when she knew she was helping me lesson plan)



# Edutopia's "Dials" of Cognitive Demand

## Criteria for Success

- STUDENTS CAN'T HIT TARGETS THEY CAN'T SEE!
- Provide student work examples, spell out exactly what you're looking for visibly, encourage innovation, make an exemplar WITH your students

# Edutopia's “Dials” of Cognitive Demand

## Differentiation

- Confidence and endurance soar when you provide the right supports
- Student choice in process, product, and content also improves confidence and pride

# Edutopia's “Dials” of Cognitive Demand

## Metacognition

- Explicitly repeat that the feeling of struggle is the feeling of learning
  - Post a troubleshooting guide prominently in your room (with pictures for MLLs/Littles!)

# Edutopia's “Dials” of Cognitive Demand

## Uninterrupted Processing and Application Time

This one is pretty obvious



# Types of Cognitive Loads

## Intrinsic

Sometimes things are just hard. Think calculus vs. arithmetic. It might be an easy lift for some, but not for others.

## Germane

The actual processing of information. This is how we organize our thoughts and make connections to something we've previously learned.

## Extraneous

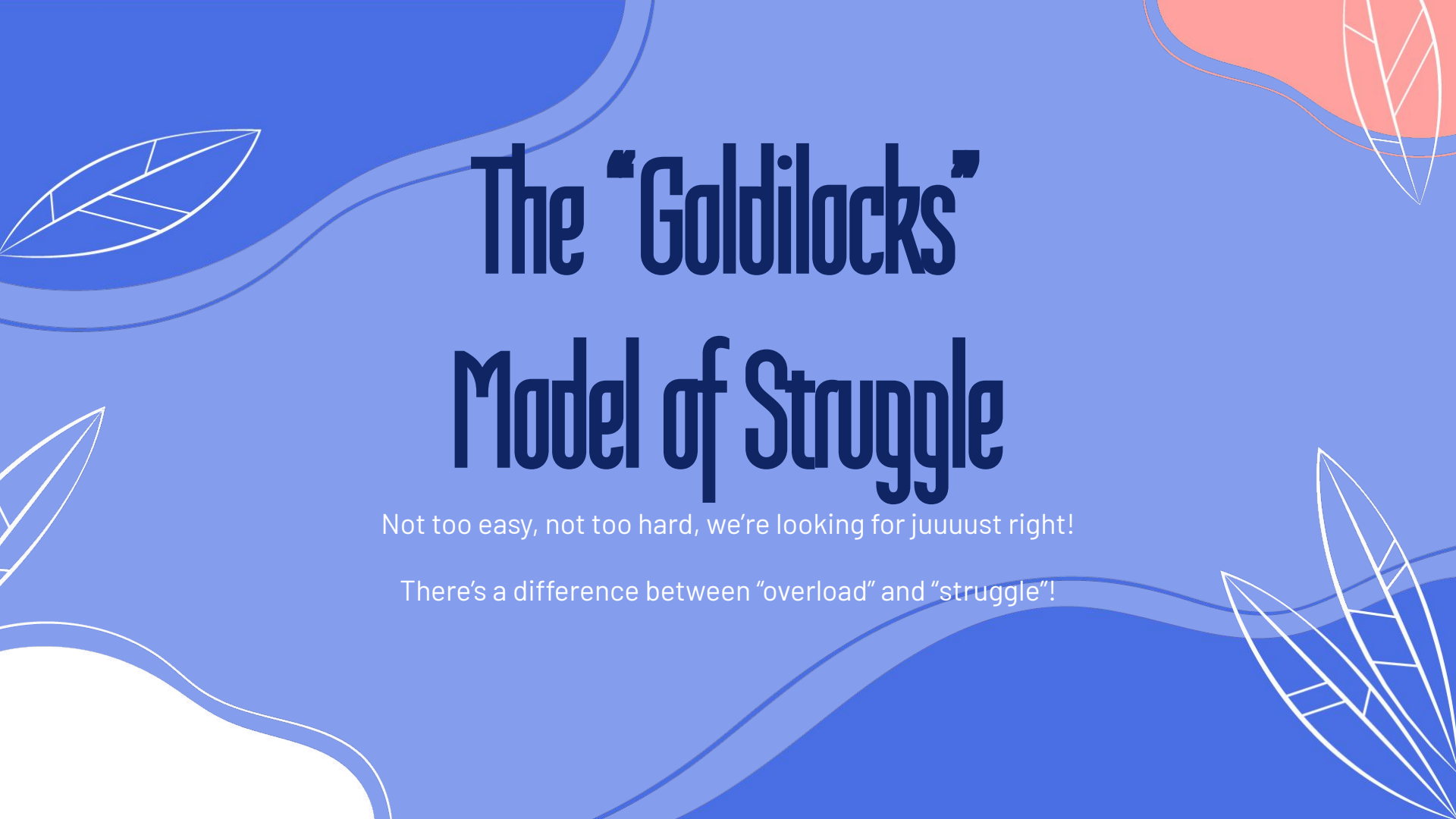
*\*Where teachers have the most control.\** Generated by the way information is presented and has nothing to do with the task.

# Struggle is Essential for Our Brains

Our message needs to be that the struggle is valued and that mistakes are productive. Students need to know that mistakes and struggling are the BEST times for our brains!

When students say, “this is hard,” respond with “That’s fantastic! That feeling of ‘hard’ is the feeling of your brain developing, strengthening, and growing!”

Knowledge is less important than a mindset of curiosity and discovery.



# The “Goldilocks” Model of Struggle

Not too easy, not too hard, we’re looking for juuuust right!

There’s a difference between “overload” and “struggle”!

# THE SAME GOES FOR TEACHERS!

Students are less likely to be engaged with their work when they are overloaded; so the same goes for you!  
You cannot effectively engage students if you are overloaded!



# In especially effective classrooms, students see themselves as their own teachers!

- Strategically use questions instead of explanations
- Dedicate a chunk of time to just observe student learning
  - “What can my kids do right now? Where might they need to be pushed next?”
  - Take notes on student behaviors (ex: “Katie is fake reading,” “Tony is using multiple strategies to solve”)
  - Be transparent with students: I’m in observation mode because I
- Provide non-teacher scaffolds
  - Ween students off of teacher dependence
  - Ask 3 before me, create “coach” name tags for students who are ready to provide feedback for others, strategic use of anchor charts



# Writing Strong Objectives

# Student-First Objectives

1. What are students being asked to do?
2. What are students being asked to say?
  3. What are students producing?
4. What are students doing during instruction?

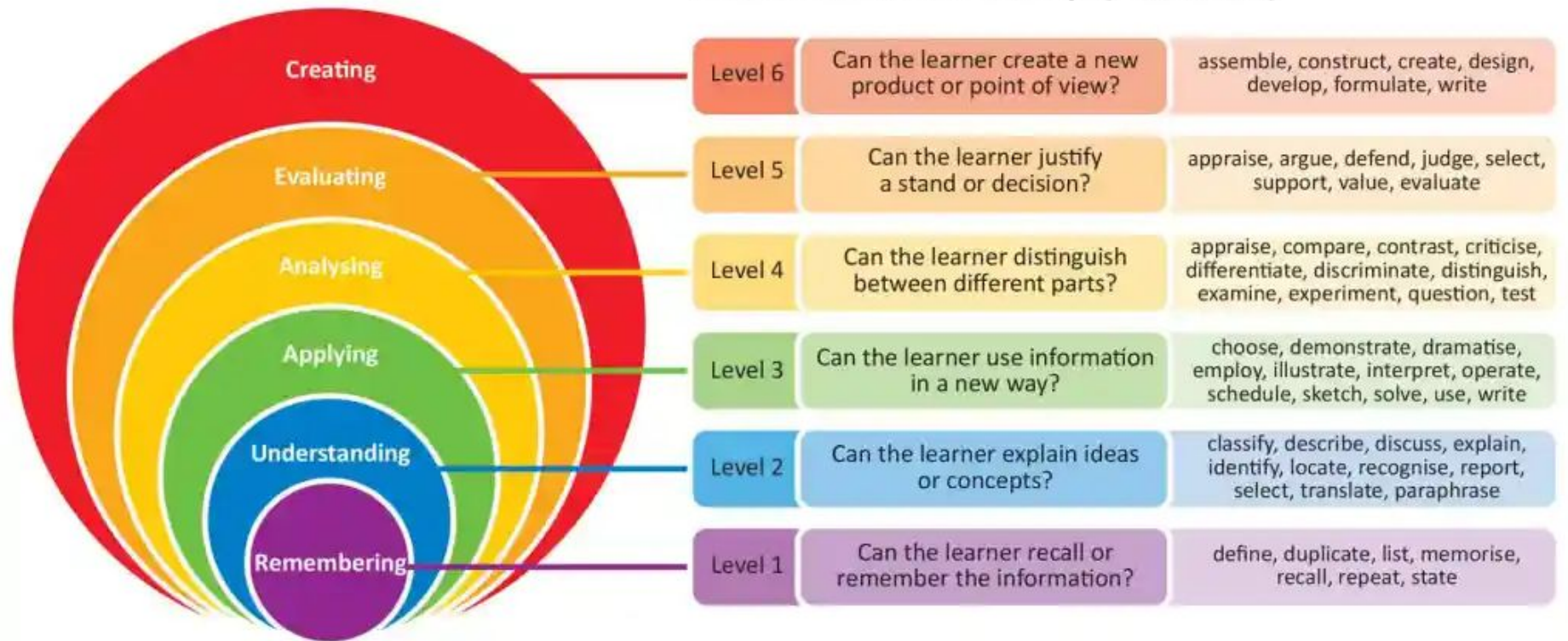
# Tackling Objectives

- Create a weekly/monthly/unit calendar with objectives, deliverables, etc.
- Individualize as much as possible to moves specific students to the next level
- Collaborate with your team! Get feedback from your colleagues/peer coach about your calendar *before* you lesson plan.



# Using Bloom's Taxonomy to Develop Strong Questions

# Bloom's taxonomy (revised)



# BLOOM'S TAXONOMY DIGITAL PLANNING VERBS

## REMEMBERING



Copying  
Defining  
Finding  
Locating  
Quoting  
Listening  
Googling  
Repeating  
Retrieving  
Outlining  
Highlighting  
Memorizing  
Networking  
Searching  
Identifying  
Selecting  
Tabulating  
Duplicating  
Matching  
Bookmarking  
Bullet-pointing

## UNDERSTANDING



Annotating  
Tweeting  
Associating  
Tagging  
Summarizing  
Relating  
Categorizing  
Paraphrasing  
Predicting  
Comparing  
Contrasting  
Commenting  
Journaling  
Interpreting  
Grouping  
Inferring  
Estimating  
Extending  
Gathering  
Exemplifying  
Expressing

## APPLYING



Acting out  
Articulate  
Reenact  
Loading  
Choosing  
Determining  
Displaying  
Judging  
Executing  
Examining  
Implementing  
Sketching  
Experimenting  
Hacking  
Interviewing  
Painting  
Preparing  
Playing  
Integrating  
Presenting  
Charting

## ANALYZING



Calculating  
Categorizing  
Breaking Down  
Correlating  
Deconstructing  
Linking  
Mashing  
Mind-Mapping  
Organizing  
Appraising  
Advertising  
Dividing  
Deducing  
Distinguishing  
Illustrating  
Questioning  
Structuring  
Integrating  
Attributing  
Estimating  
Explaining

## EVALUATING



Arguing  
Validating  
Testing  
Scoring  
Assessing  
Criticizing  
Commenting  
Debating  
Defending  
Detecting  
Experimenting  
Grading  
Hypothesizing  
Measuring  
Moderating  
Posting  
Predicting  
Rating  
Reflecting  
Reviewing  
Editorializing

## CREATING



Blogging  
Building  
Animating  
Adapting  
Collaborating  
Composing  
Directing  
Devising  
Podcasting  
Wiki Building  
Writing  
Filming  
Programming  
Simulating  
Role Playing  
Solving  
Mixing  
Facilitating  
Managing  
Negotiating  
Leading

- Require students to apply and analyze the information they've learned
- Continuous, fluid movement through Bloom's Taxonomy
  - If you're getting blank stares, go down a level or two!
- Allow as many students as possible to participate and do the cognitive lift
- Leverage supports and scaffolds
  - Begin with the end in mind
  - Should we begin on a lower level?
  - What supports will students need along the way?
  - How/When should we remove these scaffolds?
- List of mastery "look-fors"
- Create a feedback loop

# Criteria for Success for Strong Questions





# Academic Language

# 4 Key Principles to Language Acquisition

1. Increase comprehensibility
2. Increase interaction
3. Increase thinking/study skills
4. Using native language strategically

Encourage the use of vocabulary using strategic questioning so students retrieve and apply new words AND through cooperative work so students can support each other

Lesson Planning vs.  
Intellectual Preparation  
(Internalization)

# Criteria for Success for Intellectual Prep

- Read all relevant material
  - Start with the exemplar
    - Complete student work/deliverables
- Plan questions, look fors, and scaffolds
- Data-driven notes to target specific students
  - Find what you can skip
    - Script think-alouds



# Lessons to Learn from Other Schools who do Intellectual Prep

<https://stories.chartergrowthfund.org/intellectual-prep-what-weve-learned-5ce0506e03f9>

READ THIS!!!!



# Brene Brown's Daring Classrooms



# Brene Brown Education and Research Group (BBERG) Belonging Statement

1. Three values underpin all of our work, including our commitment to inclusivity, equity, diversity and belonging:
  - a. **Be Brave** — Creating safe and brave spaces for people to show up and be seen; skill-building around vulnerability, courage, shame and empathy; working to dismantle the systems that devalue and dehumanize people
  - b. **Serve The Work** — Protect the integrity of the research and the wellbeing of those we serve; work within your scope and skill; do *your* work before you do *the* work with others
  - c. **Take Good Care** — Love, grace, accountability, courage, vulnerability, empathy, shame resilience, and the power of story can change the world. As we put these into practice, we must take care of ourselves, each other, this community, and those we serve.
2. The most effective way to tackle issues of privilege and systemic bias is to name them, talk about them, and take personal and collective responsibility to change them
3. Doing nothing to address inequality is supporting inequality. There are oppressive systems in place, and our words and actions either support these systems or dismantle them.

## Brene Brown Education and Research Group (BBERG) Belonging Statement (cont'd)

4. It is not the job of the people being targeted by prejudice and discrimination to start the dialogue, carry the emotional labor of the conversations, or grant absolution to those who are feeling guilt or shame about the pain being experienced by others.

5. The greatest casualty of trauma is the emotional, and sometimes physical, safety required to be vulnerable, and that, in addition to violence and neglect, poverty, racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, sizeism, homophobia, transphobia, islamophobia, xenophobia, and other systemic forms of oppression and/or bias *are* trauma.

6. These systems are pervasive and we must be mindful that when we ask people to “take off their armor” we may be asking them to do something that is not emotionally or even physically safe in all environments.

7. Everyone deserves brave and safe spaces to be vulnerable. Therefore, we must work to both create brave, safe spaces for individuals as well as promote social justice. It is another form of injustice to ask generations of people to forego the life-giving experiences that are born of vulnerability until our systems are equal and just.





## Brene Brown Education and Research Group (BBERG) Belonging Statement (cont'd)

8. These beliefs only have value if they are also reflected in our practice, and we are committed to practicing these beliefs at every level.
9. Shame is a tool of oppression and not an effective social justice tool.
10. Love, grace, accountability, courage, vulnerability, empathy, shame resilience,



“Knowledge is only rumor until it lives in the bones.”

**The Asaro Tribe**





# *Daring* Integration Ideas

<https://brenebrown.com/classroom-integration-ideas/#close-popup>

<https://brenebrown.com/dcvideos/>

