

# Disrupting Poverty: Five Powerful Classroom Practices

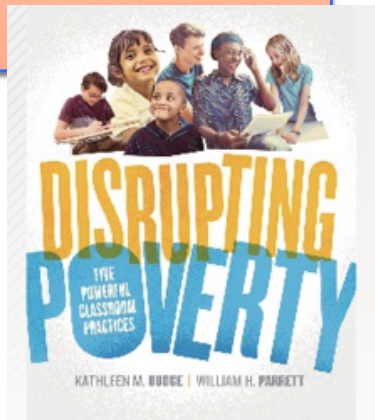
## “Take Away”

### The WHO question...

Succeeding with students who live in poverty involves more than what we do and how we do it.

Our mental map of poverty and people who live in poverty influences our attitude and behavior.

Stereotypes about people in poverty are often part of our mental maps.



### The WHAT question...

- ✓ Build caring relationships
- ✓ Hold high expectations
- ✓ Commit to equity
- ✓ Assume professional responsibility for learning
- ✓ Take courageous action to challenge the status quo

### The WHY question...

Tapping into the moral purposes for which we became educators builds resiliency to do the challenging work of disrupting poverty.

### The HOW question...



- *Relationships*: Role model, Mentor, Intervenor, and Extended family
- *High Expectations*: Warm Demander, Empathic Perspective, Growth Mindset
- *Equity*: Litmus Test--Homework, Grading, & Classroom Assessment
- *Professional Accountability*: Individual and Collective Efficacy
- *Courage*: Advocacy for All Students

## Teach to the Whole Child

### Increase our efficacy in:

1. Developing critical and creative thinking skills
2. Enhancing literacy skills
3. Fostering a sense of belonging
4. Personalizing/differentiating instruction
5. Connecting academic learning to interests, aspirations, and the “real world”
6. Using “teacher language” to encourage ownership of learning and behavior
7. Teaching Social and emotional skills
8. Growing Executive functioning skills
9. Integrating physical activity into academic learning
10. Teaching about bias, discrimination, and injustice

## Learning, Unlearning, Relearning

Impacts of Poverty: Ensuring Equity and Teaching to the Whole Child			
	Learning	Unlearning	Relearning
	<i>What conceptions did you hold about poverty before this workshop?</i>	<i>How, if at all, did the session on poverty challenge your beliefs or thinking?</i>	<i>How might this “challenge to your thinking” or new idea be beneficial to you?</i>
<p><b>Exploring Your Mental Map</b></p> 			
<p><b>One action you will take...</b></p>			

# Give One, Get One: A “Block” Party

Get your colleagues’ reactions to one of the quotes from *Disrupting Poverty: 5 Powerful Classroom Practices* in the blocks below. Give them your reaction to one.

Get their initial on the quote they discussed and give them your initial on the quote you discussed. Move to another colleague. When you have talked with 2-3 people, please return to your seat.

<p><i>Disrupting poverty requires us to depart from our comfort zones, to ask the hard questions, and to examine not only our individual professional practices, but also our collective practices and the classroom and school conditions that create inequities. (p. 12)</i></p>	<p><i>Confronting and eliminating barriers to learning requires us to challenge our mental maps related to poverty, people who live in poverty, schooling, and what it means to be a teacher. (p. 19)</i></p>	<p><i>Building caring and trusting relationships between you and your students and among the students is your first, most powerful strategy for successfully teaching any student, but especially those who live in poverty. (p.51)</i></p>
<p><i>For students who live in poverty, a teacher’s expectations can make or break them. Seeing beyond the poverty to the potential provides a protective factor that can make a significant difference in improved outcomes for students and is one of the many ways teachers ensure equity. (p.94)</i></p>	<p><i>Teachers who hold themselves professionally accountable to all students are aware of the many ways poverty adversely influences their students’ lives and learning. Still, rather than focus on what they cannot control, teachers who disrupt poverty focus on what they can control. (p. 130)</i></p>	<p><i>In a poverty-disruptive classroom, supporting all students to meet high expectations, particularly those who live in poverty and underachieve, entails fostering an environment in which fixed mindsets are challenged (by what we as teachers say and do) for the purpose of helping students to re-envision themselves as people with potential and agency. (p.91)</i></p>
<p><i>Students who live in poverty often come to school with fewer readi- ness-to-learn skills than their more affluent peers, and unfortunately the gap typically widens as they progress through the grades. Too often they view themselves as “failures” at an early age and eventually develop many coping skills for avoiding embarrassment. (p.87)</i></p>	<p><i>Foundational to everything else, effective teachers build caring relationships of mutual respect and trust with students. They work to reject deficit perspectives of people who live in poverty because they are courageous enough to engage in reflection, particularly of their own biases and blind spots. This reflection makes it possible for them to establish high expectations and provide multiple supports to meet those expectations. (p. 153)</i></p>	<p><i>Acknowledging the adverse effects poverty can have on learning, poverty-disrupting teachers understand that each student is affected differently by poverty. They are willing to interrogate their mental maps to ensure their own biases do not place limits on their students. (p.92)</i></p>

# A Story About Equity

*On a chilly spring day, Mr. Johnstone, a veteran high school teacher of ten years, walked into his classroom second period to find Elysa typing furiously on the keyboard in front of the computer he makes available for any student who needs to use it. The computer is connected to a printer he keeps stocked with paper, as he knows many of the students who attend the school do not have a computer or a printer at home.*

*Elysa is crying as she types. Asking her “What’s up?” she explains, “I had a homework assignment in my social studies class I was supposed to do over spring break. I got it done but we don’t have a computer or printer at home, so I wrote the assignment in my notebook. We were supposed to summarize six current events. I did. I used my phone to look them up, but I couldn’t get them typed up and printed.” Mr. Johnstone asks, “And, you couldn’t get into the school over break to use this computer, could you?” “No,” replies Elysa, “and I couldn’t get to the downtown library because my mom’s car isn’t working and there isn’t a bus, and I had to take care of my brothers most of the hours it was open.”*

*She continues: “Mr. Walther said the best I can do is half-credit and that is if I can get it to him typed up by the end of the day.” Later in the day, Mr. Johnstone decided to talk with Mr. Walther to see if he would make an exception. After all, he reasoned, Elysa had done the assignment—wasn’t that what was important? After discussing Elysa’s case, Mr. Walther remarked, “Johnstone, you’re such a bleeding heart, I am trying to teach these students responsibility. Other kids have it just as bad as Elysa, or worse, and they managed to get their assignment typed and printed. No, I am not making an exception. I would be doing Elysa a disservice. Someone has to teach her responsibility. She’ll be out in the real world soon. No one is going to make exceptions for her there.”*

## YouTube References

Audri/Rube Goldberg: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uDDEEHdf1Y>

Mr. Smith: [www.habermanfoundation.org](http://www.habermanfoundation.org)

Children's Defense Fund: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLrTZ5IG\\_Eg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLrTZ5IG_Eg)

After the Bell Rings: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBsFOynumgs>

Believe in Them: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9vc5WLLs7k&t=2s>

<https://www.edutopia.org/video/making-sure-each-child-known>

\*The Disrupting Poverty DVD Series and Don't Count Me Out can be found at: <http://www.ascd.org/professional-development/videos/disrupting-poverty-dvds.aspx>