Equitable Learning Environment

MICROMESSAGING TO REACH AND TEACH EVERY STUDENT™ WORKSHOP

Agenda

Topic	Approximate Time
Introduction	10 minutes
Equity	40 minutes
Curricular Equity	20 minutes
Pedagogical Tools	25 minutes
Wrap-up	10 minutes

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Goal

Create an equitable learning environment
in light of larger patterns of socialization in society.

Activity: Classroom Issues

On an index card, write down an incident or issue that has occurred in your classroom that you had difficulty resolving.
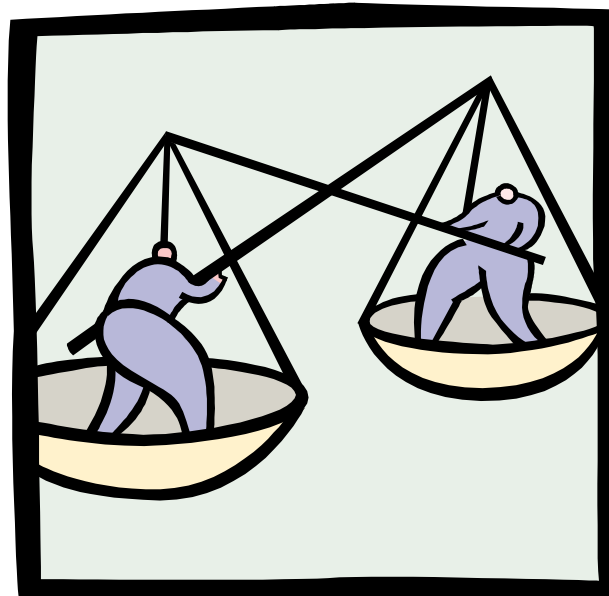
Equity

Equality

Equality often means that everybody gets the *same thing*, that is, that everybody hypothetically has access to the same classes or the same opportunities.

The Trouble with Equality

The *trouble* with equality is that, if people are not starting on a level playing field, giving them the same thing maintains the inequality that already exists.

An Equity Approach

An *equity* approach considers disparities that exist and gives students what they need to address those disparities.

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Starting Assumptions

Every student deserves access to the inclusive, equitable educational opportunity, regardless of gender, race, class, religion, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, and so on.

Inequitable Access: An Illustration

Compared with low-poverty U.S. schools, high-poverty U.S. schools have:

- More teachers teaching in areas outside their certification subjects

- More serious teacher turnover problems

- More teacher vacancies

- Larger numbers of substitute teachers

- More limited access to computers and the Internet

- Inadequate facilities (such as science labs)
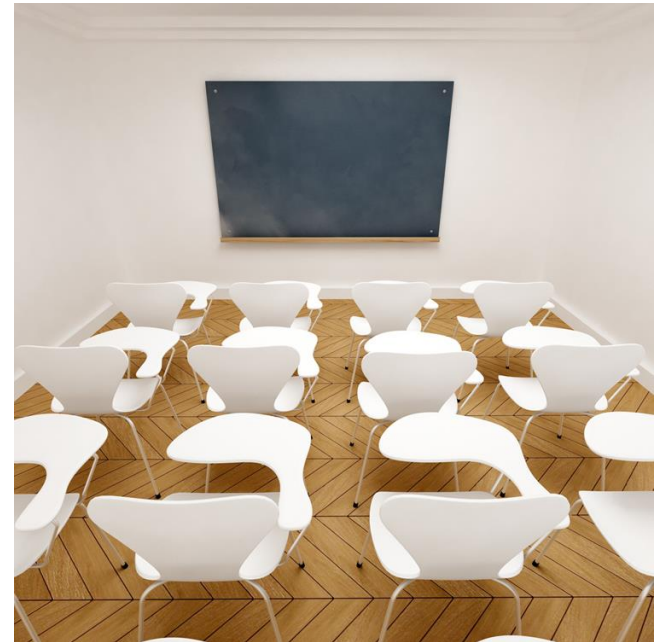
Inequitable Access: An Illustration

- More dirty or inoperative bathrooms
- More evidence of vermin such as cockroaches and rats
- Insufficient classroom materials
- Less rigorous curricula
- Fewer experienced teachers
- Lower teacher salaries
- Larger class sizes
- Less funding.

Activity: Research on Equity in the Classroom

1. Read the research summary on equity in the classroom.

2. Discuss the findings with a partner.

3. Share thoughts on the research with the larger group.

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An Illustration: Girls, Equality, and Computer Science (Cont'd.)

- So, young women might have *equal* access, but they certainly do not have *equitable* access.

- An *equity* approach takes these bigger social and educational conditions into account—it's about closing the gaps in access and opportunity.

Activity: Sphere of Influence

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Student access & opportunity:

What I *can* control

Student access & opportunity:

What I *can't* control

Activity: Sphere of Influence

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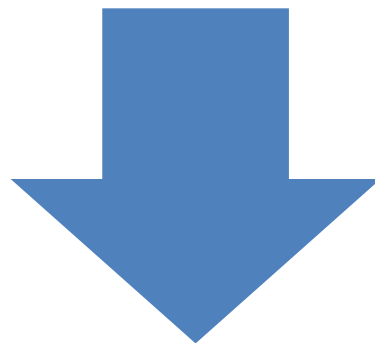
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Teacher access & opportunity:

What I *can* control

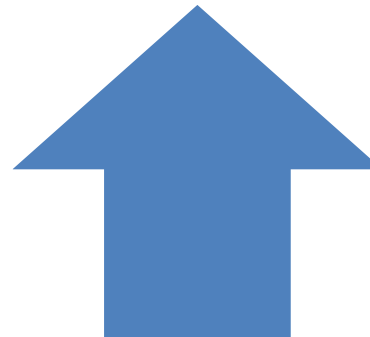**Teacher access & opportunity:**

What I *can't* control

Dimensions of Equitable Education
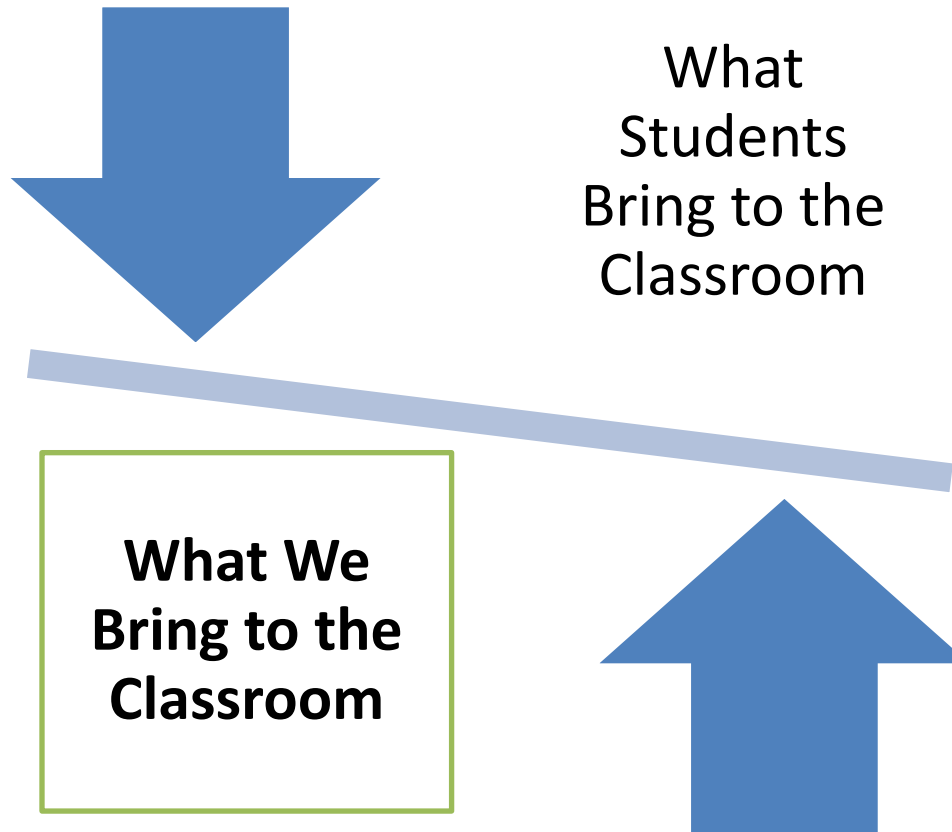
What Students Bring to the Classroom

What We Bring to the Classroom

Dimensions of Equitable Education

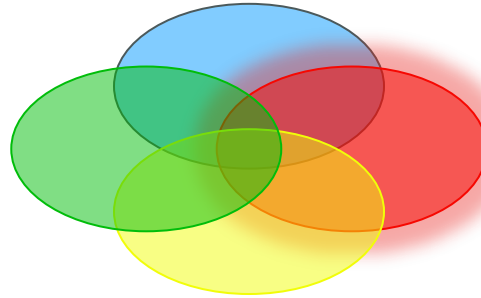What Students Bring to the Classroom

What We Bring to the Classroom

Dimensions of Equitable Education

1. What our students bring to the classroom

2. What we bring to the classroom

4. Pedagogy

3. Curriculum content

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Your Own Sphere of Influence

It is not the responsibility of a single teacher or counselor or administrator to transform the world or even a school district.

But it is our responsibility to define our own spheres of influence and make sure we do whatever we can to make those spheres equitable and just.

Equity

There exists no set of **administrative**, **curricular,** or **pedagogical** strategies that will work for all (or even most) students when we identify those students based on a single dimension of identity.

An Additional Dimension...

Although administrative frameworks may not always be in our sphere of influence, they exist in every school and also impact equity:

- Class size

- Scheduling

- Classroom environment

- Classroom placement in or around main building

Super Strategies

- To create equity, address each student's unique needs so he or she can meet equal academic performance expectations.

- Identify institutional or organizational policies that may unintentionally create inequity. For example, assigning students to mathematics tracks that restrict career choices based on math anxiety not math competence.

- Be thoughtful how you create cooperative teams or small groups – make sure everyone has a role and stereotypes are challenged.

- Perform an environmental scan on your classroom and address climate issues

- Participate in peer observation opportunities as both an observer and being observed.

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Curricular Equity

The Four Curricula

The Official Curriculum

The Explicit Curriculum

The Implicit or "Hidden" Curriculum

The Null Curriculum

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The Four Curricula

The Official Curriculum

What the institution publicly tells the world about itself through mission statements, vision statements, syllabi, and other official and public documents.

The Four Curricula

The Explicit Curriculum

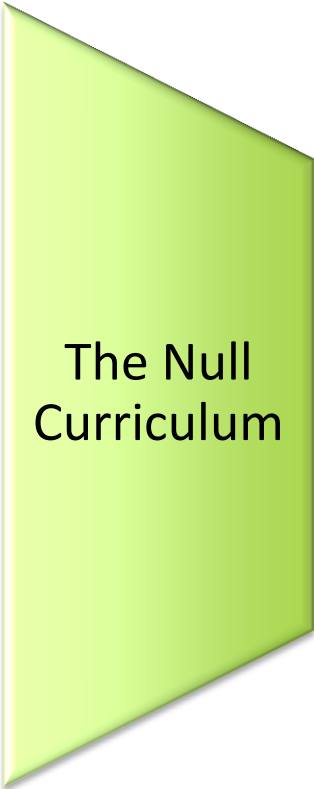What is purposefully taught in the curriculum or co-curriculum.

The Four Curricula

The Implicit or "Hidden" Curriculum

What is taught implicitly, usually without conscious purpose, through behavior, policy, relationships, and social conditions.

N A P E

The Four Curricula

The Null Curriculum

Part of the hidden curriculum—that which is learned by what is omitted from the curriculum or culture.

Activity: Reflecting on the Implicit & Null Curricula

<u>Small Group</u>

Consider whether there is any implicit or null curriculum (a) at your institution or in the institutions from which your students come.

Super Strategies

- Review curriculum and the implicit biases that unintentionally restrict access and equity.

- Correct bias in curricular and professional materials.

- Differentiate between the four types of curriculum and become aware of what was historically not spoken about or invisible. Speak up to bring institutional or organizational awareness.

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Pedagogical Tools

Remember this?...Micromessaging: Changing the Learning Narrative

Dynamic-Learning Frame

- Ability to learn is a mental process.

- Knowledge is growing and changing.

- When faced with a misbehavior, forgive and educate.

- When taking on a challenge or a risk, students are deemed as making a "smart" choice.

- Choosing to help others when excelling in a task is another "smart" choice.

- Engaging disagreement is part of the learning process.

Fixed-Performance Frame

- Ability to learn is a fixed trait.

- Knowledge is stable, a collection of facts, and everyone agrees with it.

- When faced with a misbehavior, punishment is invoked.

- Outperforming others is an indication the student is "smart".

- Putting down a student or shaming them is an acceptable method when confronting a disagreement .

Source: Peter H. Johnson. Opening Minds: Using Language to Change Lives. Stenhouse Publishers. 2012. Modifications made by NAPE.
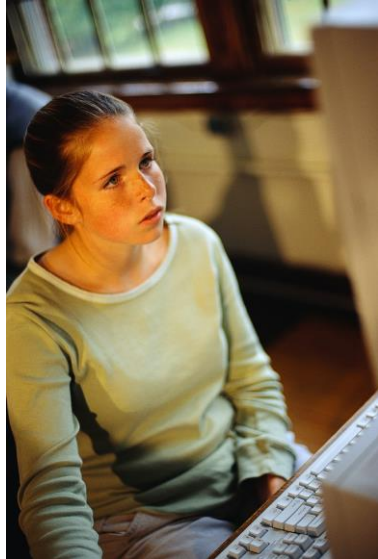
Project-Based Learning

- Teaching process that begins with a challenging question or problem

- Relies on complex tasks, investigative skills and refection

- Teacher provides facilitation but not direction

- Interdisciplinary and collaborative

Learning Styles

- Approach to learning that customizes teaching to individual needs
- Multiple models but all assert there are many ways to study and learn
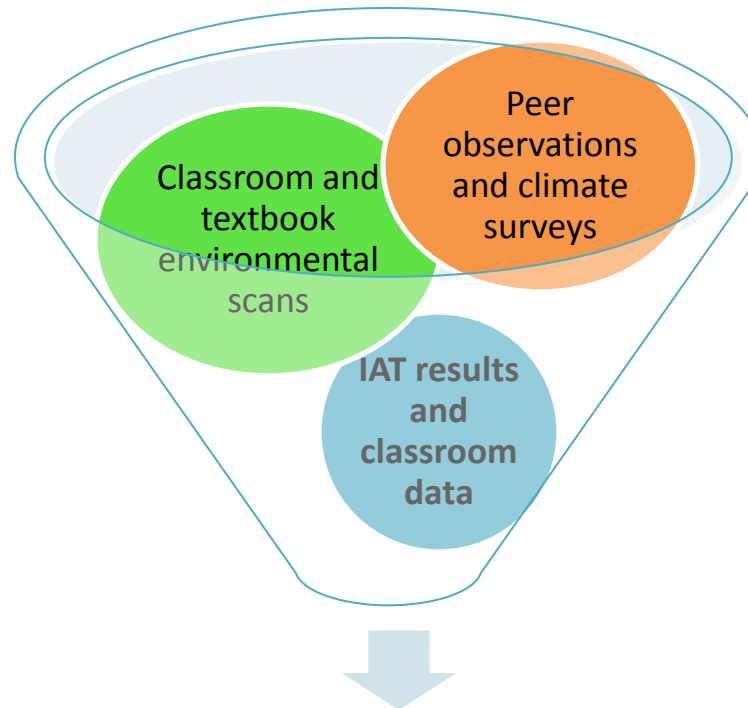- Controversial as to whether this makes a significant difference

Universal Instructional Design

- Teaching process that considers the needs of all learners

- Learning activities that are:
  — Accessible and fair
  — Flexible
  — Explicit

- Environment that is:
  — Supportive
  — Accommodates multiple teaching styles
  — Safe – tolerant of errors
  — Appropriate size and space

Review All the Data!

Classroom and textbook environmental scans

Peer observations and climate surveys

IAT results and classroom data

Create a more equitable learning environment!

Activity: Improving Equity in the Classroom

1. In a large group, brainstorm strategies to address the issues that you provided at the beginning of the unit.

2. In a large group, classify these strategies as:

   - administrative

   - curricular

   - pedagogical

Super Strategies

- **Utilize either virtual or hands-on activities.**
- **Avoid over-using worksheets as a teaching tool.**
- **Utilize real-life teaching strategies relevant to your students.**
- **Incorporate student experiences and culture in the instructional process.**
- **Provide students with periodic opportunities to share anonymous feedback.**
- **A diversity of learners will benefit from the diversity of strategies for conveying information in the classroom:**
  - **Collaborative learning**   **-Problem-based learning**
  - **Direct instruction**   **-Inquiry training**
  - **Group investigation**   **-Role playing**
  - **Facilitative teaching and self-esteem building**
  - **Creative thought whereby students "break boundaries" in problem solving and writing**

Wrap-up

Goal

Create an equitable learning environment
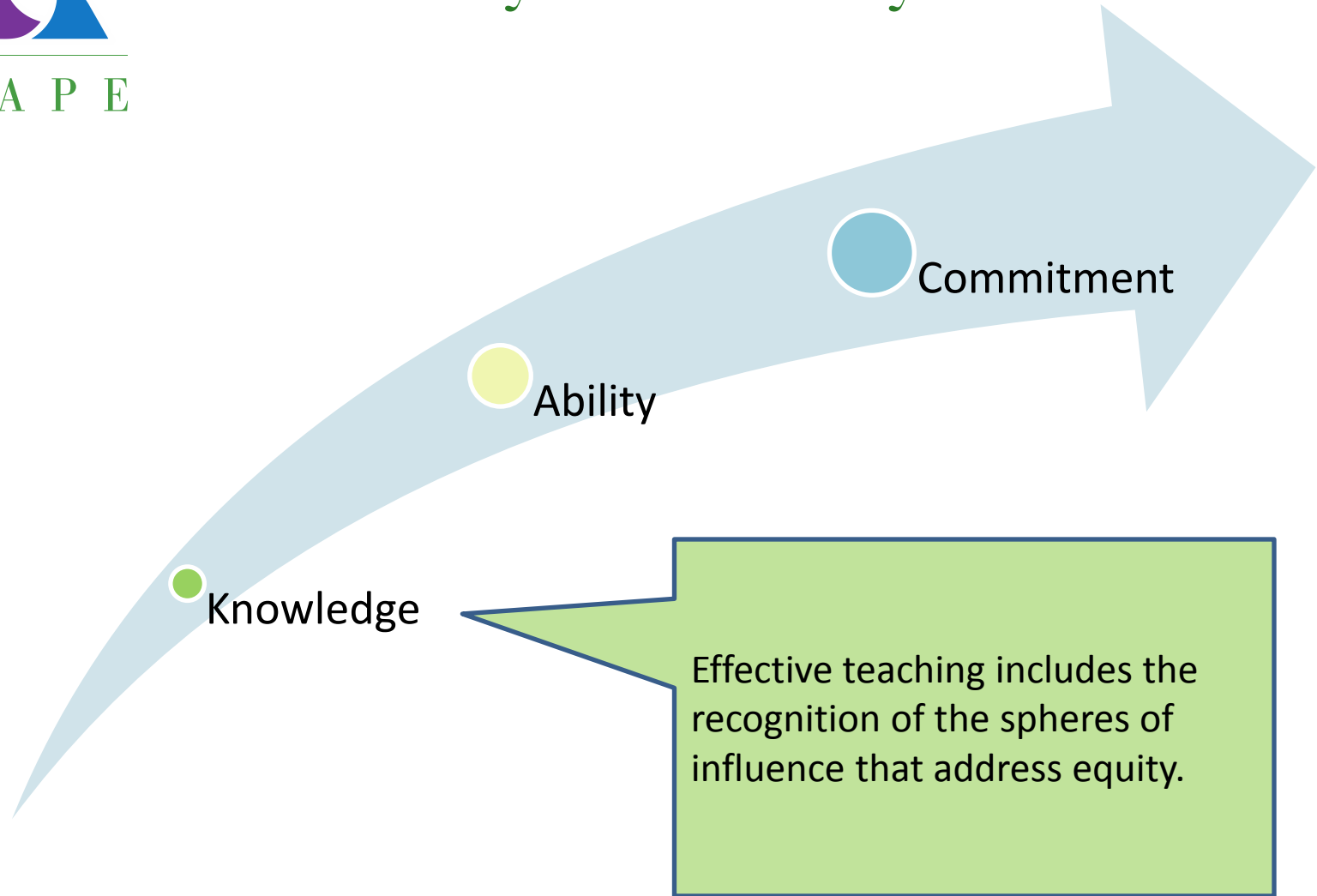in light of larger patterns of socialization in society.

Objectives

You should now be able to:

- ✓ distinguish between an *equality* approach and an *equity* approach to creating inclusive classrooms

- ✓ critically reflect on the sphere of influence of both teachers and students

- ✓ identify plans and/or strategies to improve equity in the classroom

- ✓ apply instructional strategies and materials to enhance equity for each student in the STEM classroom.
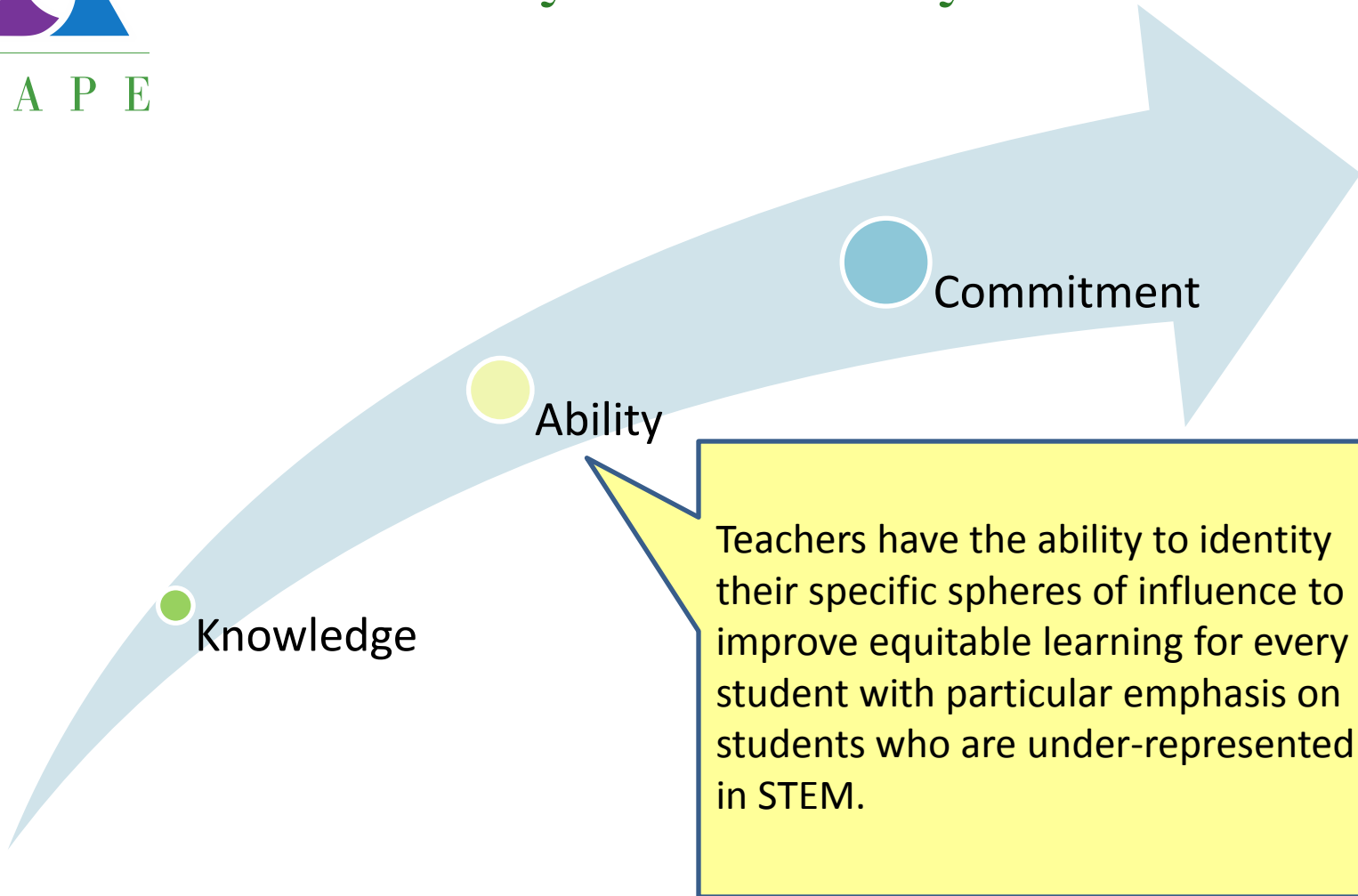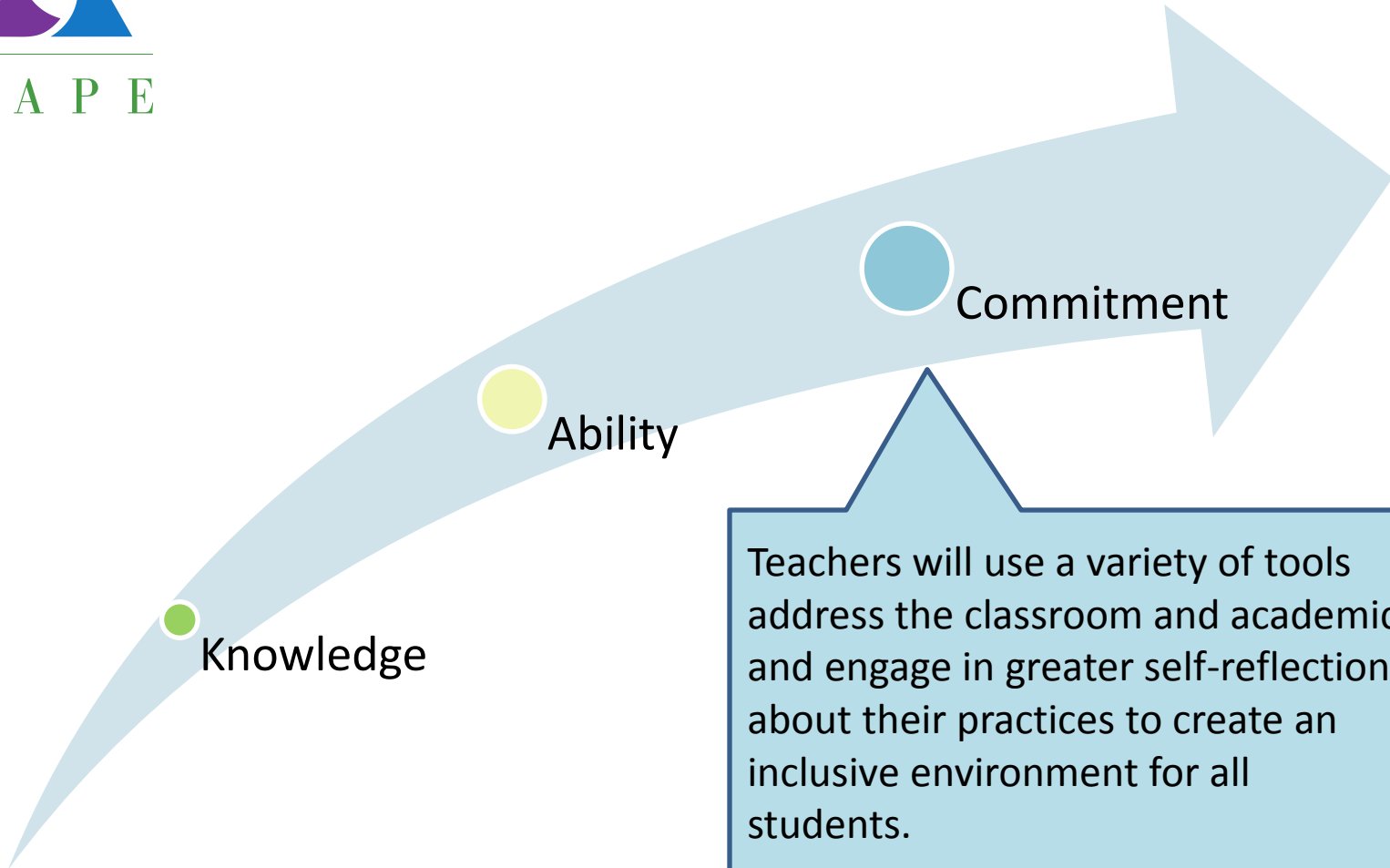
Key Takeaway Points

Commitment

Ability

Knowledge

Effective teaching includes the recognition of the spheres of influence that address equity.

Key Takeaway Points

Commitment

Ability

Knowledge

Teachers have the ability to identity their specific spheres of influence to improve equitable learning for every student with particular emphasis on students who are under-represented in STEM.

N A P E

Key Takeaway Points

Commitment

Ability

Knowledge

Teachers will use a variety of tools address the classroom and academic and engage in greater self-reflection about their practices to create an inclusive environment for all students.
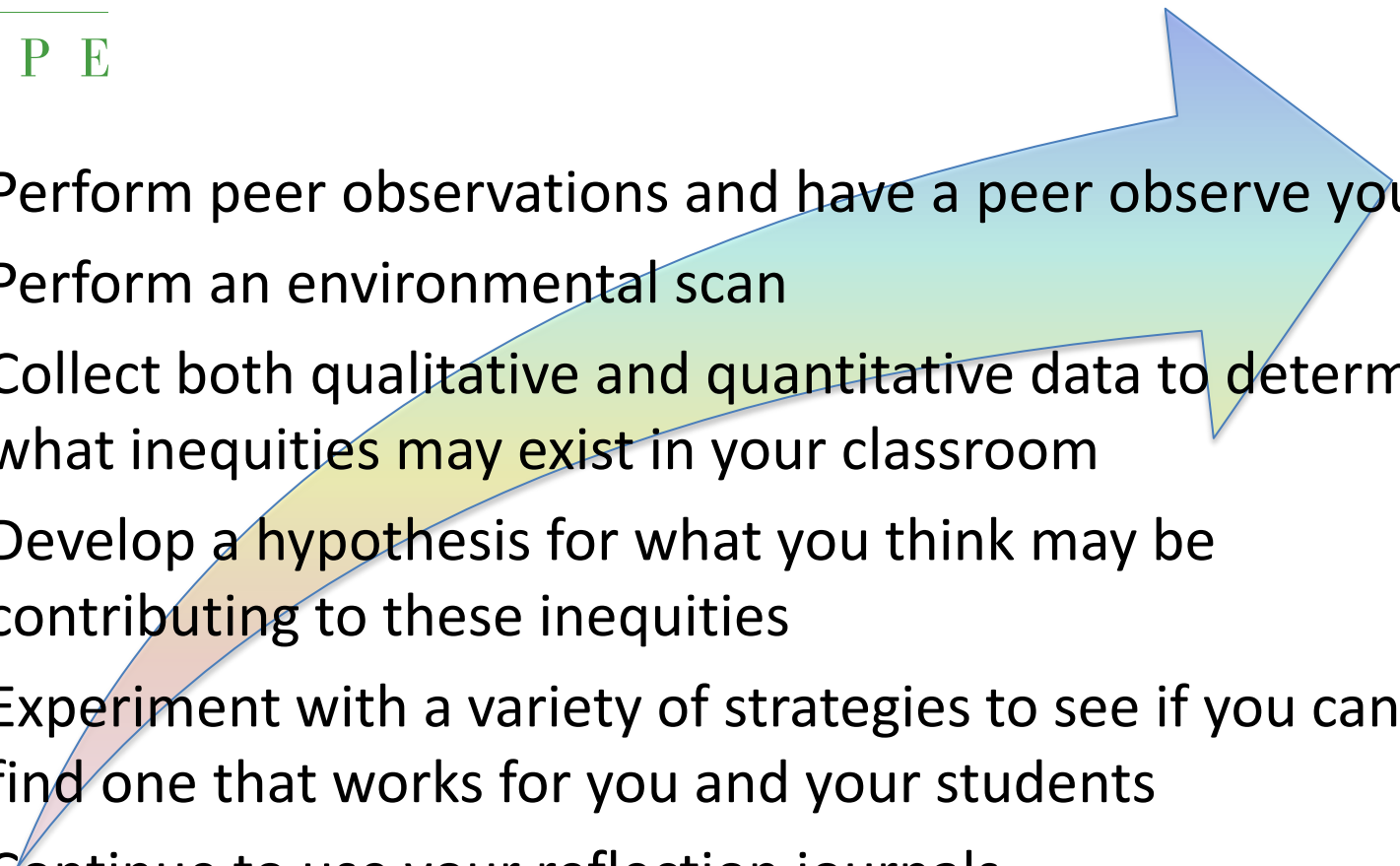
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Moving Forward

- Perform peer observations and have a peer observe you

- Perform an environmental scan

- Collect both qualitative and quantitative data to determine what inequities may exist in your classroom

- Develop a hypothesis for what you think may be contributing to these inequities

- Experiment with a variety of strategies to see if you can find one that works for you and your students

- Continue to use your reflection journals

N A P E

"Never doubt
that a small group of
thoughtful committed
people can change
the world.

Indeed,
it is the only thing
that ever has."

Margaret Mead