

Bridging the African Diasporic Divide in the Digital Age

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Overview of Presentation

- Introductions
- Definition of Terms
- Overview of the Diverse U.S. Black Population
- Shared Experiences between African Americans and the Black Immigrant Population
- What can educators do?
- Questions and Answers

Definition of Terms

- Nationality: the country of which you are a citizen
- Ethnicity: The beliefs, practices, and traditions held in common by a group of people who share identities (linguistic, historical, geographic, or racial)
- Race is a social construction, has no biological basis (Omi & Winant, 1994)
 - Racialization of Black immigrants (the Black monolith)
 - Subjected to homogenizing views of Blackness in the United States, cultural differences are often overlooked, expected to redefine their identities based on America's racial categories (Awokoya, 2012; Bashi & McDaniel, 1997; Landale & Oropesa, 2002; Waters, 1999)

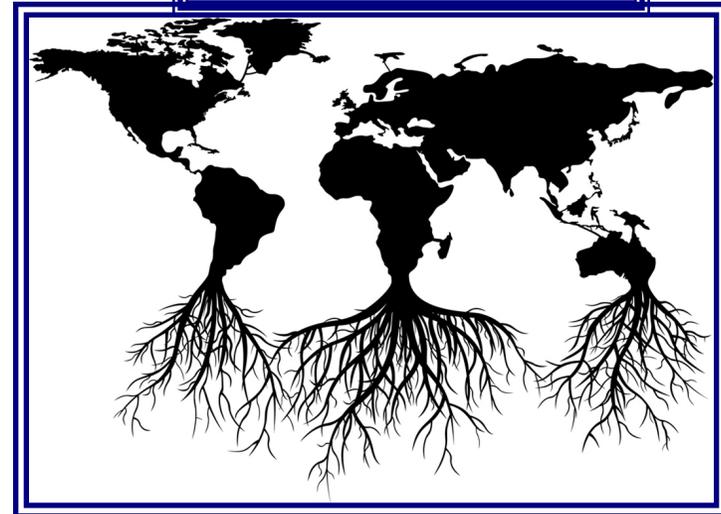
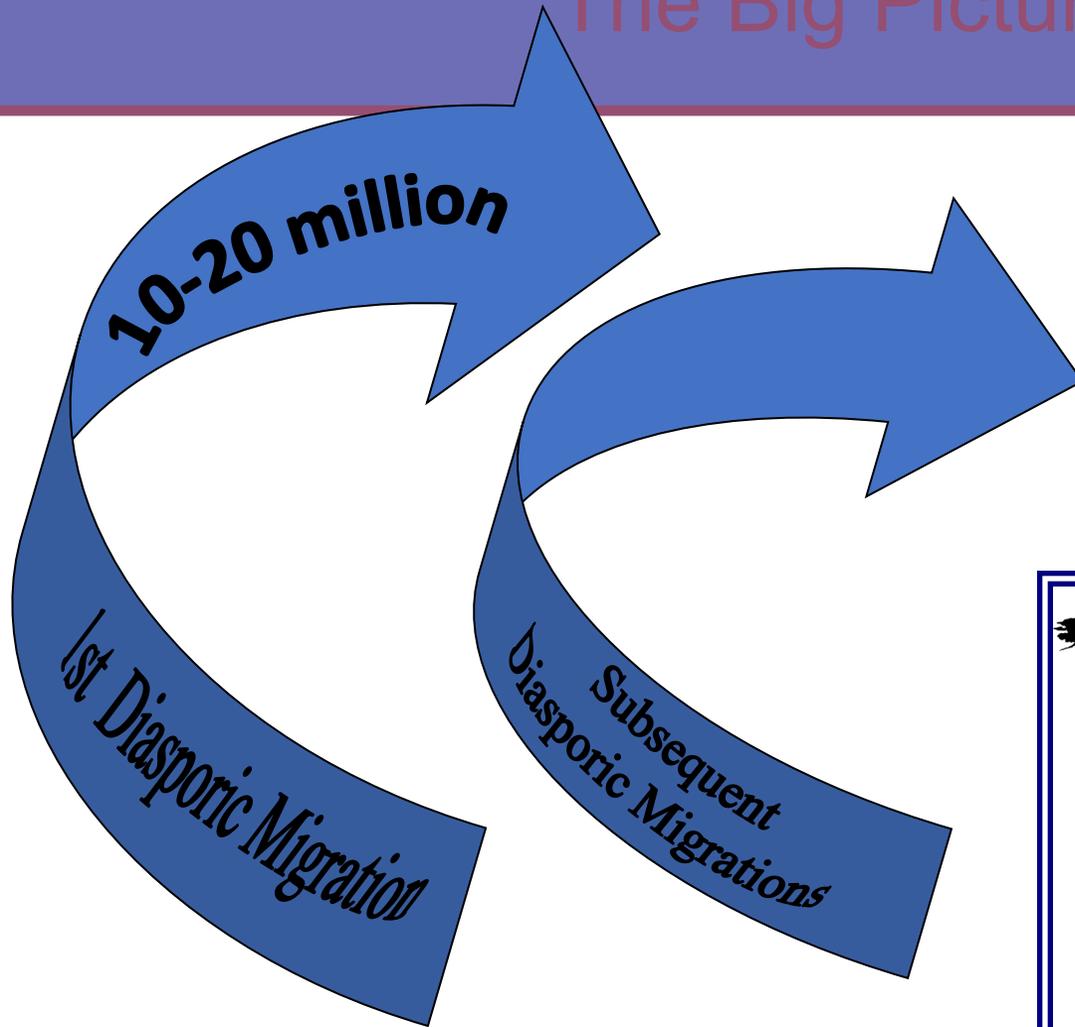
Definition of Terms (cont'd)

- ***African Americans*** have been a major part of the U.S. population since the country's founding. Nearly all of these early Blacks traced their roots to African slaves who were involuntarily forced to migrate to the United States during the transatlantic slave trade (Kent, 2007).
- ***Black Immigrants***: an umbrella term that refers to those from African nations, Latin America and Caribbean islands who have voluntarily and involuntarily migrated to the United States for social, educational, political, and economic reasons.

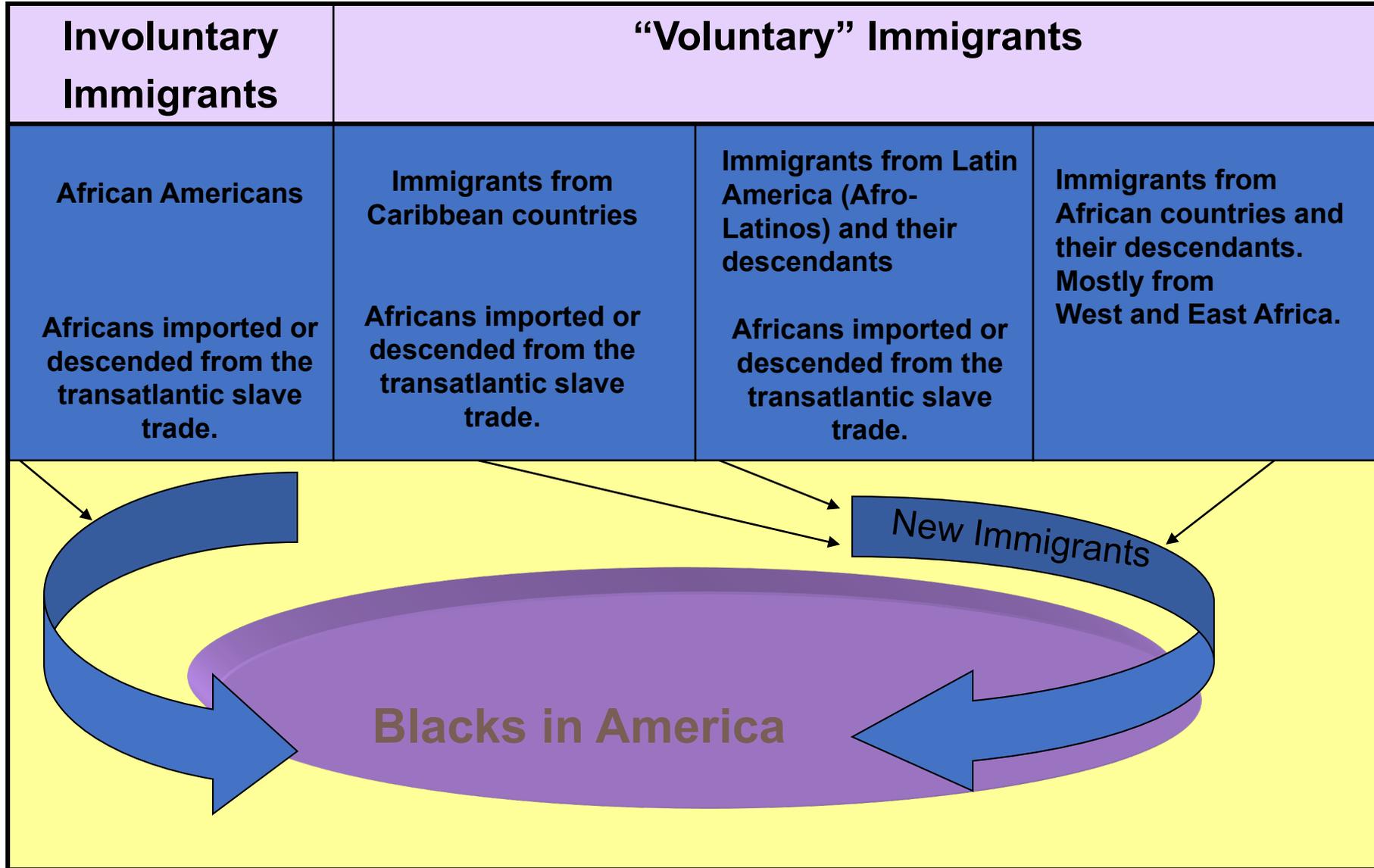
OVERVIEW OF THE DIVERSE BLACK POPULATION

Black Immigrants in the United States

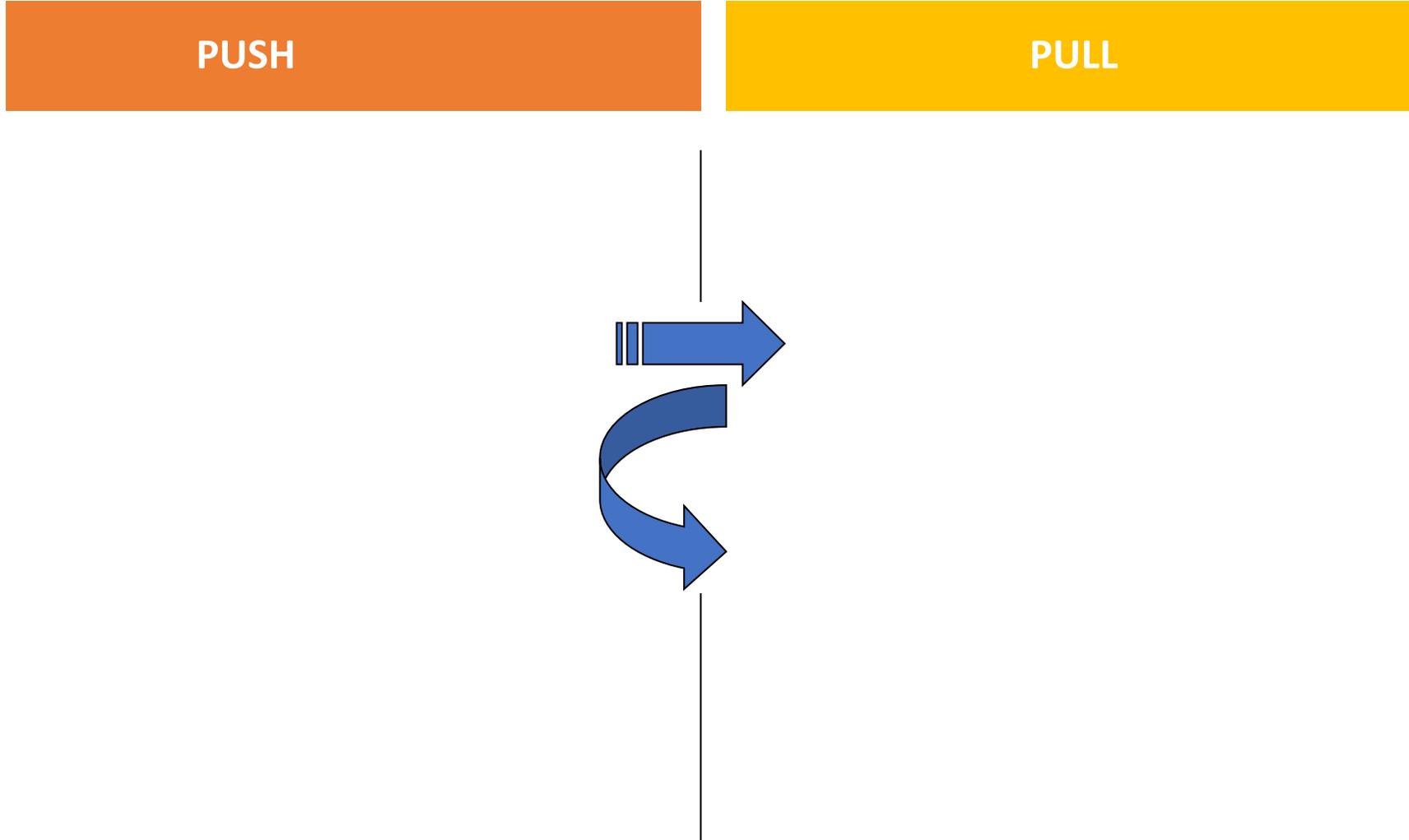
The Big Picture



Redefining Blacks in America



Uprooted: Push & Pull Factors Behind Immigration



U.S. Foreign-Born Black Population

Country of origin

- 30% born in Africa (Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Liberia, Cameroon)
- 66% born in Caribbean/Latin America
 - Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago
- 4% born in Europe or Canada

Current Status and Growth

- Over 3 million in total Black population are foreign born
- 50% entered the U.S. after 1990
- Population has tripled between 1980 and 2005 (800,000 to 2.8 million)
- 20% of Black population growth in 2000's

Generational Status of Black Immigrants

1 st generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Born and raised outside of the United States
1.75 generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Born abroad, arrived in the U.S. between 0-5
1.5 generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Born abroad, arrived in the U.S. between 6-12
1.25 generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrived in the U.S. between 13-17
2 nd generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Both parents born abroad, but student born in the United States
2.5 generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One parent born abroad, but student born in the United States

Source: Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Rumbaut, 2004

Census Definition of Race

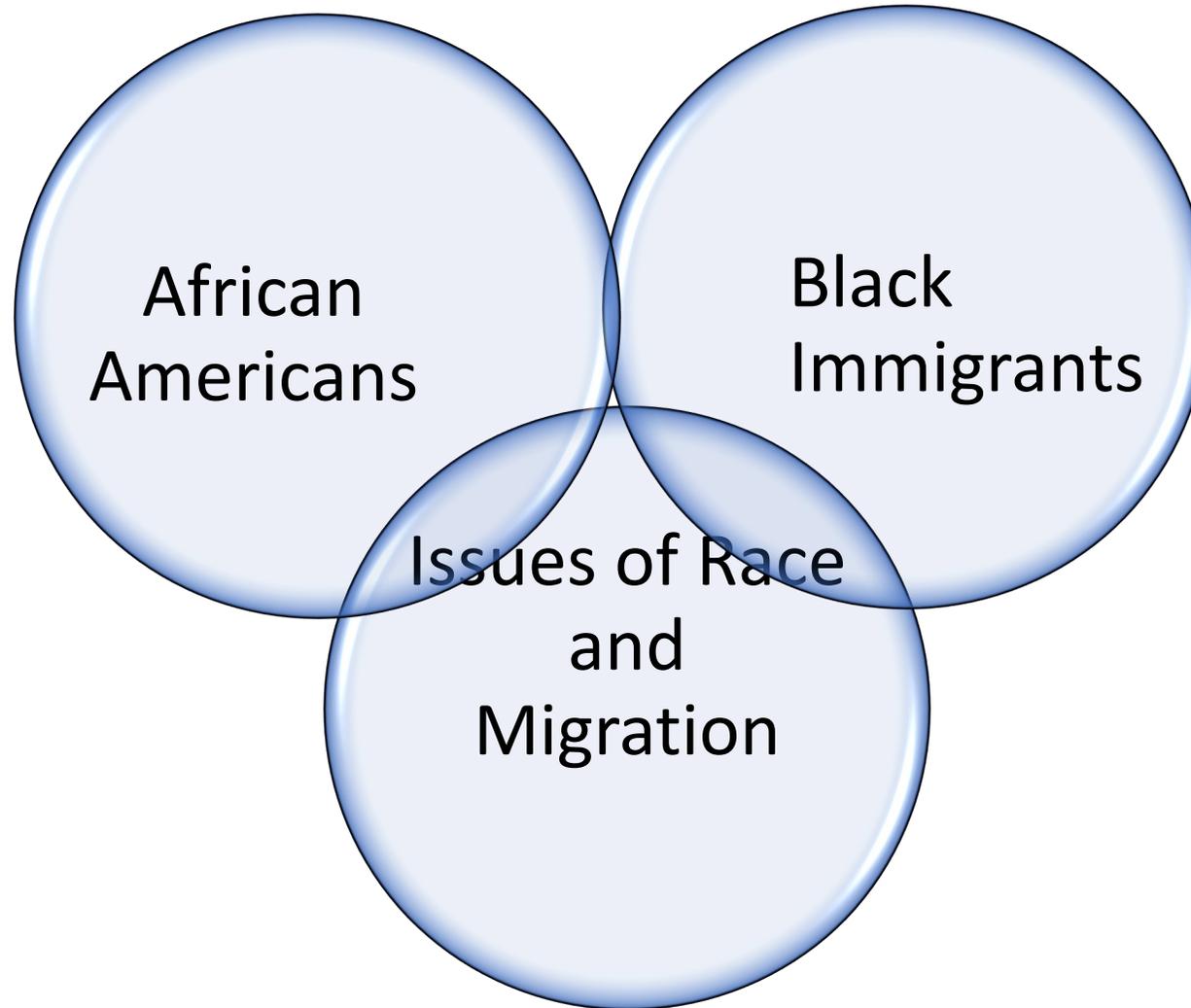
Census Bureau complies with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and these data are based on self-identification. The racial categories generally reflect a social definition of race recognized in this country and not an attempt to define race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically.

Census vs. Self-Identification

- Census does not capture the complexity of self-identification
- For many black immigrant adults and children, nationality (Ghanaian, Jamaican, etc.) or ethnicity (Yoruba, Fulani, etc.) carries more weight than race.



Shared Experiences of African Americans and Black Immigrants



Research Literature

Black immigrant integration into U.S. society and educational institutions has been controversial

- Immigrants occupy both the highest and lowest rungs of educational attainment and SES
- Highly educated among the foreign-born population, they are more likely to be unemployed and earn lower wages than their counterparts from other regions (Batalova & Fix, 2008; Faris, 2012)
- Black immigrants often positioned against African Americans (Waters, 1999)

Research Findings (cont'd)

Black immigrants face a “triple-disadvantage” and contend with *race, class* and *immigrant status* (Rong & Brown, 2002)

- Racism and xenophobia (Awokoya, 2012; Coleman-King, 2014; Waters, 1999)
- Integration of Black immigrants into low-income communities plagued by under-resourced, low-performing schools (Iceland, 2014; Traore & Lukens, 2006; Waters, 1994)
- Compared to Asian and Latino immigrants, poverty levels increase by 26% between the first and second generation (Zhou, 1997)

Shared Experiences of African Americans and Black Immigrants (cont'd)

Navigate multiple black identities (e.g. model minority)

Poor preparation in low-income, segregated, K-12 schools

Lack of racial diversity in elementary and secondary school settings

Unemployment and underemployment

Experiences with discrimination, xenophobia and ethnocentrism

Challenges to academic advancement (e.g. limited post-secondary opportunities, financial need, immigration status)

African and Caribbean Students' Experiences in U.S. Schools

- Optimistic, high educational goals
- May experience culture shock
 - Teachers' race and academic expectations, peers' behaviors
- May display a silent demeanor
- Frustrations and disappointments with schooling experiences
 - Placed in inappropriate classes
 - Bullying



African Students' Experiences in U.S. Schools

- Peer group influences
 - Many are socialized around American peers
 - Teased for “having the wrong clothes, wrong hair cut, wrong shoes and wrong accent” (*Clemetson, 2003*)
 - Accused of selling out (ex: standard English)
 - Hide their “Africanness” and adopt peer behaviors (*Awokoya, 2009; Stepick, 1998; Zephir, 2001*)
 - Intergenerational conflict
 - African Stereotypes
 - AIDS carriers, wild animals, jungle (*Awokoya, 2012; Traore & Lukens, 2006*)

Threats to Academic Success

- Afrophobia/Xenophobia
- Low teacher expectations
- Lack of concrete role models
- Negative images of Black peoples perpetuated in school and the media

African Students' Experiences in U.S. Schools (cont' d)

- Interactions with School Personnel
 - Exoticism
 - “Black history month, people always wanted to borrow outfits. You know that was the time, that was a month, you know, we were popular.”
 - “Well, it's frustrating because I don't want to be an ambassador of something I don't know.” .. I don't wear any of the Nigerian attire, nothing, because it's just not something that I can relate to myself, but other people put it on me because of my last name or whatnot.”
 - “I remember being excited whenever she [her mother] would come in just because people would kind of get to see another country, another side to it, and understand that I was from another place.”

African Students' Experiences in U.S. Schools (cont' d)

- **Linguicism**

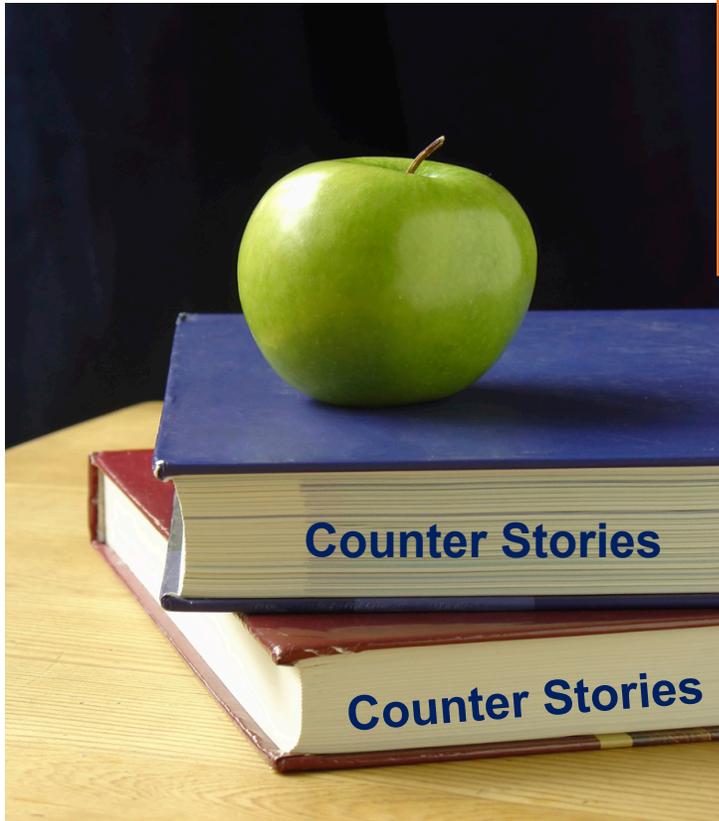
- “You’re speaking that gibberish to them and really told her you have to stop speaking Ibo to them because they’ll never understand English and they won’t do well in school.”

- **Double Burden of Tokenism**

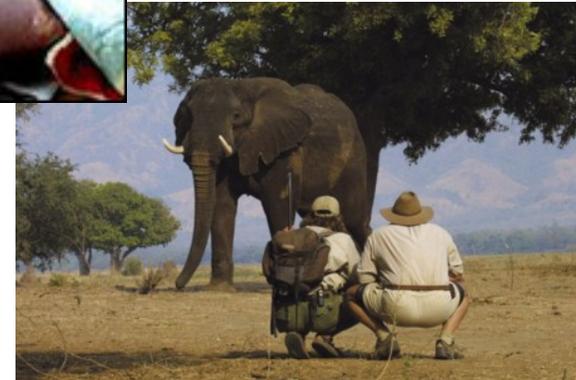
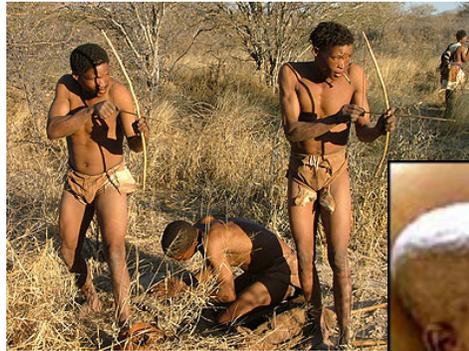
- “I’ve had a time, a teacher saying, well, you know, she could tell that my parents were Africans because I was disciplined and well-behaved...and I felt at times that I've been used as kind of that example, that black example.”
- “We would watch something about South Africa and they would ask me if I understood that language. I had to tell them Africa is a whole continent; there are many countries in it. I don’t understand every language in the whole continent. “

What Can Teachers Do?

Counter-Story Telling



Stereotypical African Images



Multidimensional Images of Africa/Africans



Learn...

- Use counter Story Telling... “a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told” - creating meaning as well as challenging myths; change racial dominance
- Refrain from stories that promote “deficit”
- Have sensitivity to meanings embedded in narratives
- Be a catalyst for building a culture of peace and help students do the same through “Counter Story Telling”

Start...

- ❑ Take time to Learn about your students' background and interests – developing connection and creating an environment conducive to learning
- ❑ By avoiding cultural topics, teachers might be widening the achievement gap for students of color by alienating them
- ❑ Effective teachers' classrooms reflect a multiculturally responsive curriculum.

Next...

- ❑ Understand and debunk racial and ethnic stereotypes
- ❑ Breakdown racial and/or ethnic separations
- ❑ Challenge the hidden curriculum

African Americans in the Diasporic Divide

Agenda

- Multiculturalism v. Cultural humility
- Challenging narratives
 - Revisionist history
- Using social media
 - Challenging definitions of Blackness
- Exploring Intersectionality
- Recommendations for educators
 - Addressing the digital divide
 - Critiquing content

Multiculturalism v. Cultural Humility

- **Multiculturalism**

- a situation in which all the different cultural or racial groups in a society have equal rights and opportunities, and none is ignored or regarded as unimportant.

- **Cultural Competence**

- the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures. It means to be respectful and responsive to the health beliefs and practices—and cultural and linguistic needs—of diverse population groups.

- **Cultural Humility**

- the ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the other person.

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Challenging Narratives

- Reviewing curriculum and content with a critical lens
 - Who is the author of the narrative?
 - Who is missing from the narrative?
 - What are the power dynamics involved?
 - What questions do you have as the reader?
 - Which voice(s) are missing? Missing perspectives?
 - What assumptions are blindly followed? Go unquestioned?

Resource #1: Voyages Database

- Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database

- Information on almost 36,000 slave voyages

- Includes

- African names database
- Manuscripts
- Images
- Maps

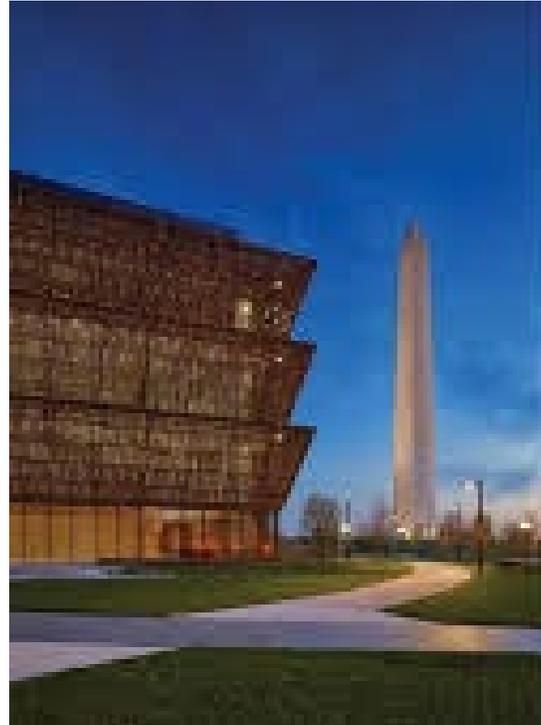
- URL:

<http://www.slavevoyages.org/>



Resource #2: National Museum of African American History and Culture

- Opened to the public in September 2016
- Virtual resources available:
 - Online exhibits
 - Early Childhood Education Initiatives
 - Professional Learning Events
 - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)
- URL: <https://nmaahc.si.edu/>



The National Museum
of African American
History and Culture

Using Social Media

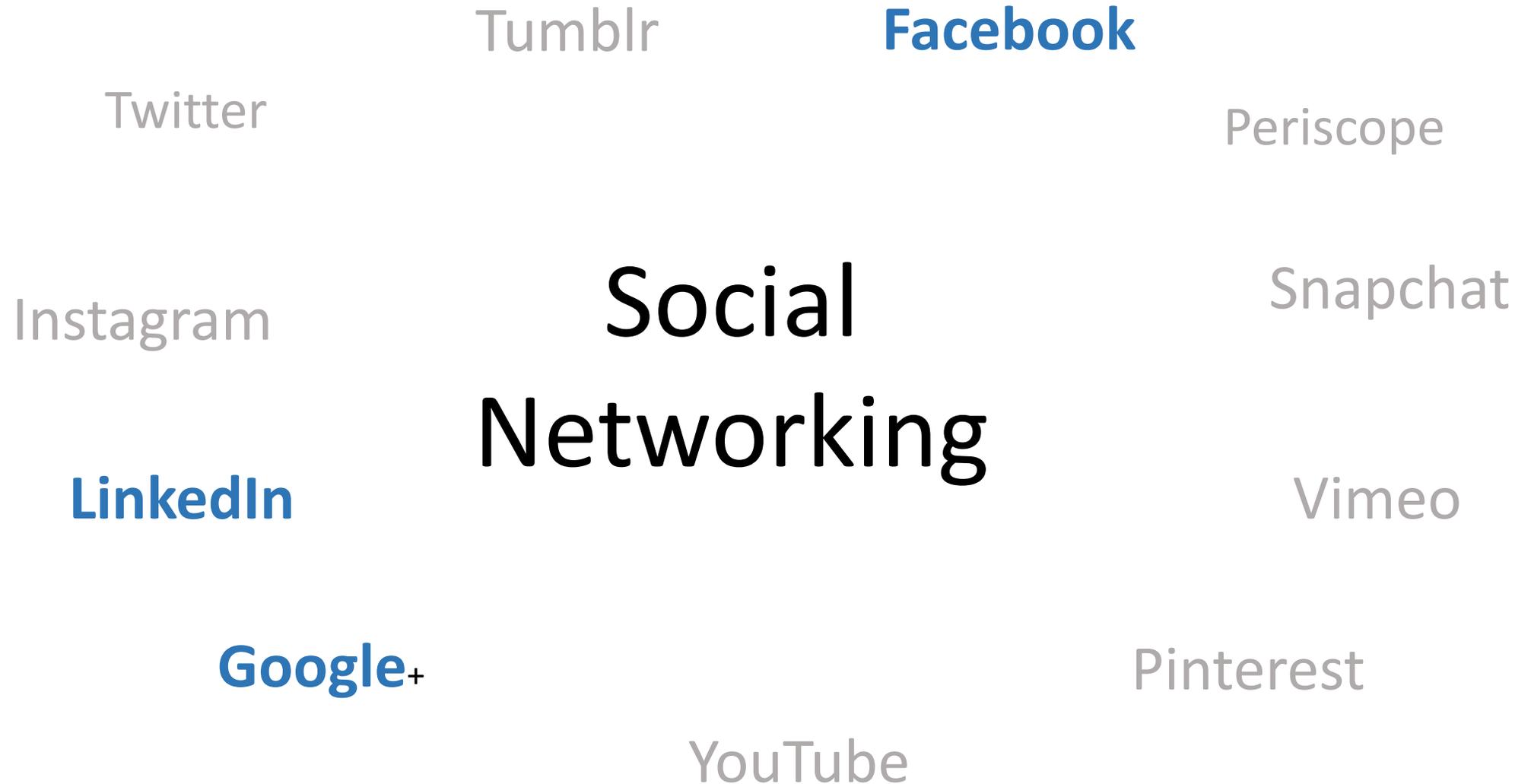
- Multiple Platforms

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Google+
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- LinkedIn
- YouTube
- Pinterest
- Vimeo

- Social Microlearning

- “micro” – refers to the length of time engaging content
 - Maximum amount of time – 15 minutes
- Social microlearning provides students with an opportunity to learn from peers, practice communicating about their knowledge, and create learning communities.

Using Social Media



Using Social Media

Tumblr

Facebook

Twitter

Periscope

Instagram

Micro-blogging

Snapchat

LinkedIn

Vimeo

Google+

YouTube

Pinterest

Using Social Media

Tumblr

Facebook

Twitter

Periscope

Instagram

Photo Sharing

Snapchat

LinkedIn

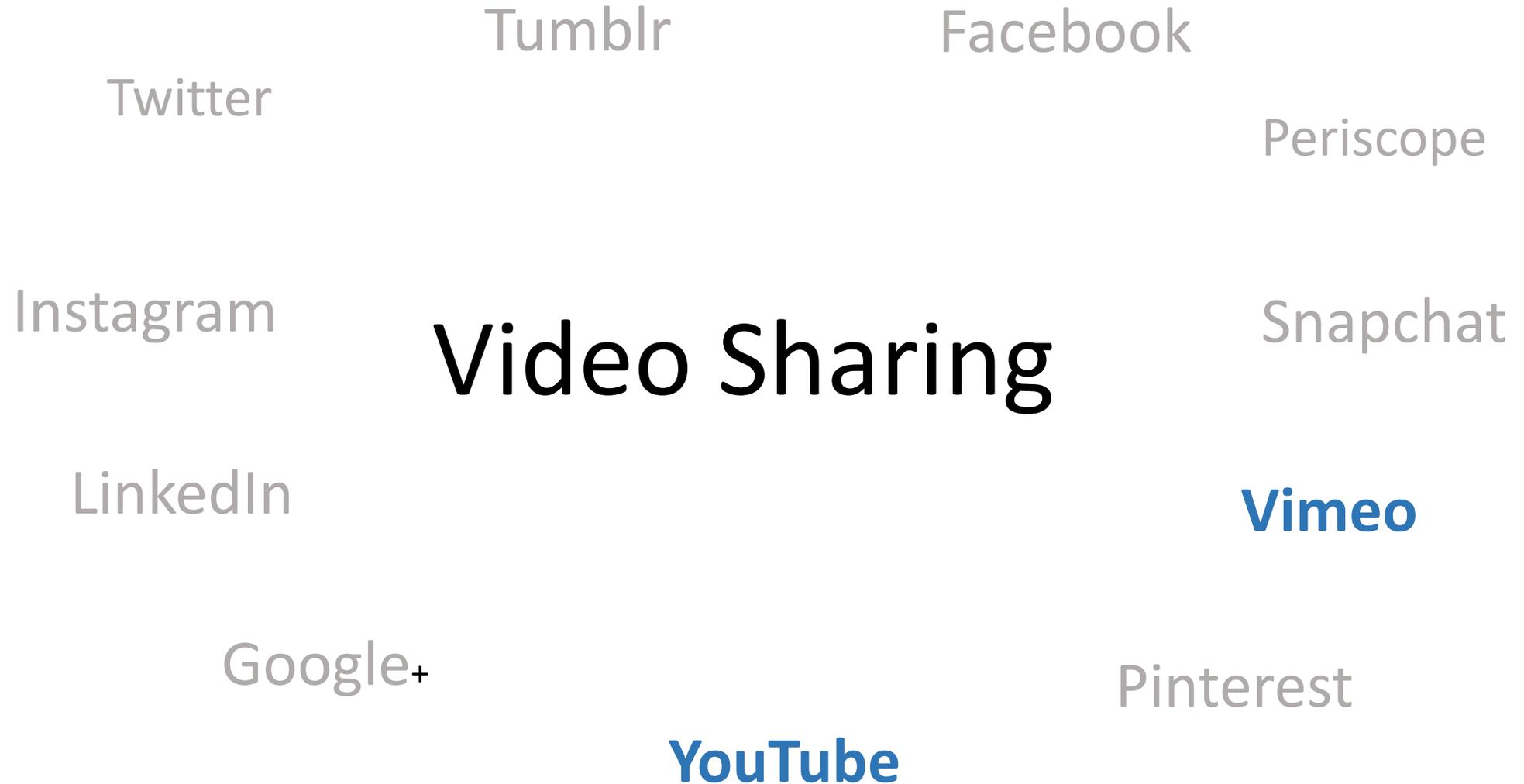
Vimeo

Google+

Pinterest

YouTube

Using Social Media



Resource #2: Social Media

- Black twitter
 - “a temporally linked group of connectors that share culture, language and interest in specific issues and talking about specific topics with a black frame of reference. And when I say "black," **that isn't just limited to U.S. blacks, but blacks throughout the diaspora**, and I think a lot of what we see reflects on blacks just in the U.S., but I do want to make that distinction clear, that it is not just of a matter of what we talk about here in the United States.” ~ Meredith Clark

#SayHerName

#TakeItDown

#BlackLivesMatter

#OscarsSoWhite

#GrowingUpBlack

#ThanksgivingWithBlackFamilies

#IfTheyGunnedMeDown

#StayMadAbby

#BlackGirlMagic

Exploring Intersectionality

- Coined by Kimberle Crenshaw
- “Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where **power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects**. It’s not simply that there’s a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LGBTQ problem there. Many times that framework erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things.” ~ Crenshaw (2017)



Resource #3: Diverse Literature

- Comic Books

- Team Supreme

- Created by Joshuan Leonard
 - Superhero team
 - Powers come from different physical and intellectual disabilities

- Karmzah

- Created by Farida Bedwei
 - Ghanaian software developer
 - Superhero with cerebral palsy



Recommendations for Educators

- Practice critical questioning when reviewing content.
- Make topics relevant to students
- Be action-oriented, solution-focused
- Interdisciplinary projects, courses

Questions and Answers

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