

## How Much Do You Know About Equity? Extended Answer Key

1. What is often considered a significant challenge for schools when establishing more inclusive practices that support visually impaired and blind students?
  - Limited federal funding
  - Remote learning
  - Access to braille and tactile materials
  - All of the above

### Answer

*Although they are protected under existing federal special education legislation, blind and visually impaired students often fall through the cracks of the education system and receive fewer specialized services than they need—leading to lifelong learning problems or deficits that could have been prevented. Exacerbated by the pandemic is students’ access to equitable instruction practices that meet their individualized needs. Educators working with the visually impaired have had the especially difficult task of adapting a curriculum based largely on physical interactions—like teaching a student how to read braille by touch or how to walk with a cane—to the two-dimensional environment of online learning. Throughout the pandemic, schools also experienced reduced access to braille and tactile materials for their students.*

*These difficulties and educational inequities laid bare by the pandemic highlight the need for more federal support to meet the needs of blind and visually impaired students. **Continue reading more about supports for blind and visually impaired children in [The Challenge of Teaching Students With Visual Disabilities From Afar.](#)***

2. To make classroom instruction more inclusive to dyslexic students, schools should incorporate which of the following? **Select all that apply.**
  - Assistive technologies like text-to-speech or speech-to-text
  - Synchronous instruction
  - Establish small groups of students with similar needs and have literacy and dyslexia specialists work closely with them

### Answer

*Experts universally agree that students with dyslexia need direction, instruction, and real-time feedback that may not be available via remote learning or recorded lessons. This emphasizes the need for synchronous instruction that can be supported by assistive technology like text-to-speech/speech-to-text and communicating how students and parents can ask for help or additional support to meet their individualized needs. Additionally, it is important that schools identify new ways to connect students and relevant staff. One way to do this is to establish small groups of students with similar needs and have literacy and dyslexia specialists work closely with them. **Learn more about addressing literacy inequities in [5 Ways to Remotely Support Students With Dyslexia.](#)***

3. Leaders in literacy and figures in DE&I in the education space state that the most effective way to close the equity gap in Advanced Placement (AP) classes is to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Advocate for AP class placements for English-Learners
  - Offer more AP classes

- Make experiencing the benefits of the challenging coursework more accessible to all students

### Answer

According to The College Board, “Closing the equity gap in AP participation is essential to giving all students the chance to experience the benefits of challenging coursework.” These benefits are but not limited to raising a student’s grade-point average as well as the opportunity to take a unique yet enriching class.

According to a report from the organization, Black students in the 2021 class made up 8.1 percent of AP test-takers and 4.6 percent of exam-takers scoring 3 or higher on the tests on the 5-point scale. This number was 23.6 for Hispanic/Latino test-takers who scored 3 or higher. In contrast, non-Hispanic white students made up 49.6 percent of the class and 48.1 percent of AP test-takers, with 51.5 percent scoring 3 or higher. **Examine the differences in student opportunity and achievement in [Equity Scorecard: Assessing Equity in 4 Critical Areas](#).**

4. True or False: Schools should not use terms such as dyslexia or dyscalculia to describe children with disabilities to avoid stigmatization and inequitable treatment from teachers.
  - True
  - False

### Answer

This is false. The widespread belief that schools are not supposed to use certain words, such as dyslexia or dyscalculia, to describe children with disabilities is fueled in part by concerns that the districts would have to cover the cost of tuition at a private school if they couldn’t meet the needs of the child. The practice was so prevalent in school districts across the country that, in 2015, the U.S. Department of Education issued guidance assuring states and districts to not feel reluctant to use the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia when describing a particular child’s learning needs.

“One of the myths and taboos is that we’re not even supposed to say the word [dyslexia] in schools,” said John Humphries, the superintendent of the Thorp, Wis., schools. “Having a guidebook on dyslexia is really going to help parents be able to have important conversations with their schools about what reading difficulties look like and about improving instruction for kids who struggle.” It is essential for schools to use appropriate identifiers so that students can have their individualized needs met as well as reduce any stigma associated learning differences. **Learn more in [Dyslexia Is Not a Bad Word, Advocates Say. Schools Should Use It](#).**

5. The "homework gap" refers to students from low-income households, students of color, and students in rural areas who are disproportionately affected by lack of access to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Reliable computer and/or internet connection
  - Intervention specialists
  - Mobile devices
  - Grade-level reading materials

### Answer

A survey from Pew Research Center found that 22 percent of U.S. teens ages 13 to 17 said they often or sometimes have to do their homework on a cellphone, 12 percent said they “at least sometimes” are not able to complete homework assignments because they do not have reliable access to a computer or internet connection, and 6 percent said they have to use public Wi-Fi to do their homework “at least sometimes” because they do not have an internet connection at home.

This type of inequity can be referred to as the “homework gap,” which disproportionately impacts students in low-income households, students of color, and students in rural areas. Students in these groups report feeling “very” or “extremely” worried about falling behind and not sufficiently developing their reading, writing, math, and other skills. **Dive deeper into the inequities created by the homework gap in [The ‘Homework Gap’ Persists. Tech Equity Is One Big Reason Why.](#)**

6. According to the EdWeek Research Center, what percentage of teachers and district leaders are concerned about issues with the application of equity in the classroom?
- 10 percent
  - 22 percent
  - 44 percent

### Answer

44 percent of teachers, principals, and district leaders are more concerned with closing the education gap in the classroom than they were prior to the pandemic. Both the pandemic and the calls for national protests following the murder of George Floyd sparked what may be considered a moment of racial reckoning where school districts, superintendents, policymakers, organizations, even families were open to thinking about the ways in which structural inequity, the ways in which racism, sexism, and their intersections manifest in policies and practices. **Discover more about increasing equity in the classroom in [Schools Trying to Prioritize Equity Have Their Work Cut Out for Them, Survey Shows.](#)**

7. True or False: Students from low-income families are just as likely as their wealthier peers to make the switch from learning to read to reading to learn by third grade.
- True
  - False

### Answer

This is false. After third grade, students are expected to switch from learning to read to reading to learn. But if students have not mastered the foundational reading skills at that point, they may never become strong readers. They may disengage from school as the years go on, and many—especially students from low-income families—will not graduate. Students experiencing poverty often score lower on reading and writing than their wealthier peers.

These struggling readers often experience anxiety when they are not performing at the same level as their peers. Teachers that call on these students to read aloud in front of the entire class can open them up to potential judgment or snickers from their peers. And sometimes, students who lack decoding skills are given early-reader texts to practice, which feel babyish and boring. Often, students are ashamed and try to hide their lagging reading skills. To start, teachers must

*create a classroom environment where students feel comfortable asking for help and making mistakes in public without fear of mockery. Continue reading to identify other strategies for creating more inclusive literacy instruction in [What Teachers Can Do to Help Struggling Readers Who Feel Ashamed](#).*

<https://www.edweek.org/products/quiz/quiz-yourself-how-much-do-you-know-about-equity>