# Q METHODOLOGY:
# A SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF SUBJECTIVITY

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# Sharing Our Interests

In some important ways, "Q" is about relationships . . .

- Who are you?

and finding patterns and themes in those relationships.

- What do you want to walk away with from this session?

# What is Q Methodology?

Identified as the "best-developed paradigm for the investigation of human subjectivity" (Dryzek & Holmes, 2002, p. 20).

"Provides researchers a systematic and rigorously quantitative means for examining human subjectivity" (McKeown & Thomas, 1988)

Qualiquantological (Stenner & Stainton Rogers, 2004)

A "whole" methodology with distinct techniques, procedures, processes, and epistemological assumptions

Often Misunderstood, Misapprehended, and Misrepresented

# What Can "Q" Do For You

- When fully employed (methodologically), honors the subjectivity of participants throughout the research process: construction of the instrument (Q sample), data collection, data analysis
- Allow for the identification of distinct viewpoints that would be "buried in the mean scores" of more traditional survey data
  - Allows for otherwise marginalized views to arise
- Requires a relatively small person sample size (P set)
- Is user-friendly (statistical support)

# Why "Q"?: Constructs of Education, Development and Methodological Fit

**Phenomenological nature of educational and dvlp processes**

- "Loads the dice in favor" of participant subjectivity
- Does not impose *a priori* assumptions, definitions, meanings

**Social justice and equity emphases**

- Operationalizes social justice within the research context
- A "marginalized methodology for studying marginalized populations

**Social constructionist**

- "Research instrument" often developed from naturalistic sample of a communication concourse
- Resultant factors are comprised of shared perspectives

# Q Methodology Overview Illustrated

□ Leeds Metropolitan Quick Q Animation

□ Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AejeH6jw2c&list=PLFKu0j9dWNQz8vM6TLMkBbtWp0-SuyOb6

# Q Overview: Phase 1

CREATE THE Q SAMPLE (from the CONCOURSE)

1. Compile statements reflecting opinions, attitudes, viewpoints, or perceptions around a topic
   - How many? When to stop? Saturation. Usability. Representativeness
2. "Sculpt" those statements into the research instrument (Q sample)
   - Reduce through combining same, similar or overlapping content; eliminating impertinent statements or outlandish outliers
   - At the same time, make sure that the widest span of viewpoints are represented
3. Pilot the research instrument
   - For content validity and readability

# Phase 1: LET'S BUILD A Q SAMPLE!

GENERATING THE CONCOURSE (NATURALISTICALLY)

"What are classroom behaviors/practices/strategies that you believe are culturally responsive?"

1. Please list and briefly describe up to 5.
2. Share with partners (and consolidate)
3. Compile collectively

# Let's Perform Q Sorts!

•Sort our 12 Q Sample statements (practices/behaviors/strategies)

"What are the most culturally responsive classroom behaviors/practices/strategies?"

| Least culturally responsove | | | | Most culturally responsive |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

# Reflecting on Q Methodology

What was the experience like as a participant?

What methodological questions arose?

What pragmatic concerns surfaced?

What resources can we help you identify?

# Online Data Collection

Link from:

*Positionality and Subjectivity in Black and White: Teacher Views of Pedagogical Practices that Best Support African American Students* (McGill and Janson, 2018)

http://edutrope.phpwebhosting.com/Flashq-CRP/

# Q Sample & Factor Arrays

| Q Sample Statement | Factor | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | A | B | C |
| 1. Use of diverse and differentiated methods of instruction to honor different learning styles. | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| 2. Have students explore behaviors that will help them be more successful in school. | 3 | -2 | 2 |
| 3. Provide opportunities for students to learn about the diversity in the world around them. | 0 | 1 | -2 |
| 4. Promote equity and mutual respect among students. | -1 | 4 | 4 |
| 5. Incorporate music into student learning, rather than just simply playing it in the classroom. | 0 | -4 | -1 |
| 6. Always teach and express hope and optimism. | 0 | -3 | 1 |
| 7. Use call and response patterns and rhythm-based exercises and activities (E.g. Drills such as multiplication tables, state capitals and Latin numbers, conjugations and declension). | 3 | -4 | -4 |
| 8. Help students think about their own thinking to help them learn metacognitive strategies. | 1 | -2 | 1 |
| 9. Be attentive, open minded, understanding, and respectful about what students might be experiencing in their lives outside of school. | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 10. Assist students in becoming socially and politically conscious. | -1 | -2 | -4 |
| 11. Validate students' cultural identity through instructional materials and curriculum that highlight African American and African cultures, figures, and excellence. | -2 | 4 | -2 |
| 12. Challenge students to strive for excellence as defined by their potential. | 2 | -2 | 2 |
| 13. Provide opportunities for students to actively participate in their learning. | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| 14. Allow for students to express their creativity with assignments. | 0 | -3 | 0 |
| 15. Encourage students to think critically | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| 16. Be in their corner and champion their achievements. | 4 | 0 | -1 |
| 17. Acknowledge students' differences as well as their commonalities. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 18. Welcome humor in the classroom – yours and theirs. | 1 | -1 | 0 |

| Q Sample Statement | Factor | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | A | B | C |
| 19. Use fair discipline approaches, starting with an understanding that African American youth are chronically over-disciplined in most places. | -1 | 1 | -1 |
| 20. Explore the role of spirituality and faith-based factors in their learning. | 1 | -4 | -3 |
| 21. Create opportunities for students to share their stories. | -2 | -1 | 1 |
| 22. Foster positive interrelationship among students, their families, the community, and the school. | -3 | -1 | 4 |
| 23. Personally engage in and support the community in which students live. | -3 | 0 | -1 |
| 24. Learn from teachers who are successful in diverse settings, particularly those who are closer culturally to your students. | -1 | 2 | 1 |
| 25. Provide consistent routines and feedback | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| 26. Respecting language (dialect, pronunciations, etc.) variations that might exist. | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| 27. Help prepare students to communicate their talents and achievements to teachers and educators they will have in the future. | 0 | -3 | 0 |
| 28. If students have had a bad educational experience in the past, help them understand they can move beyond it. | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| 29. Focus on strengths and assets in your students, their families, and their communities. 30. Participate in reforming your school and/or district so they function better for African American students and their families. | -4 | 2 | 2 |
| 31. Provide opportunities for collective learning: group and teamwork. | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| 32. Explore your own personal, family, and cultural histories. | -3 | -1 | -2 |
| 33. Acknowledge your own affiliation to different groups (race, class, culture, gender, etc.) and the advantages and disadvantages that accompany such affiliations. | -4 | 0 | -4 |
| 34. Personally and professionally engage in reflective practices. | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| 35. Learn about African American history and experiences – including in the community in which you teach. | -2 | 3 | -2 |
| 36. Develop an appreciation of diversity. | -1 | -1 | -1 |

# Resources

- **Dedicated online resources:**
  - [http://qmethod.org/about](http://qmethod.org/about)
  - [http://www.qmethodology.net/http:/](http://www.qmethodology.net/http:/)
  - [http://facstaff.uww.edu/cottlec/QArchive/Bps.htm](http://facstaff.uww.edu/cottlec/QArchive/Bps.htm)
- **Online listserv Q community:**
  - [https://listserv.kent.edu/cgi-bin/wa.exe?A0=Q-METHOD](https://listserv.kent.edu/cgi-bin/wa.exe?A0=Q-METHOD)
- **Data collection tools:**
  - [http://www.hackert.biz/flashq/home/](http://www.hackert.biz/flashq/home/)
  - [http://q-assessor.com/](http://q-assessor.com/)
- **Data analysis software:**
  - [http://www.lrz.de/~schmolck/qmethod/](http://www.lrz.de/~schmolck/qmethod/)

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