the RACE CARD

H. Richard Milner IV

Leading the Fight for Truth in America's Schools

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Discussion Questions

What does Milner mean by *"the race card"* in the book? What are issues and concerns we must consider regarding race in education and society?

Who decides what truth is in education and society?

How is truth being questioned and constructed in this moment and why?

What are educators' responsibilities with respect to understanding and addressing race inside and outside of education?

How can educators build their knowledge and understanding about race?

Why is it essential for educators to build their knowledge, understanding, and mindsets about race?

What are opportunity imperatives educators must consider leading the fight for truth in America's schools? Explain. (See on page 3. Figure 1.1.)

How do opportunity imperatives intersect with race, racism, whiteness, and anti-Black racism? Share some examples from your own experiences, conversations, and/or practices.

Which of the opportunity imperatives do you believe to be the most important and why?

Define race, racism, whiteness, and anti-Black racism. How are these constructs similar? How are they different?

Explain how racism and anti-Black racism are similar and different. You might consider differences and similarities conceptually [how they are defined], policy, and/or practice.

What are some concrete examples of race, racism, whiteness, and anti-Black racism in practice? (See pages 4–8.)

Study and discuss Table 1.1 on page 8. What stands out the most? What is missing? How might the chart be educative for families, communities, educators, and young people?

What is frontline leadership? Who can be considered a frontline leader and why? (See pages 9–15.)

What are essential tenets or features of Frontline Leadership? Explain. (See pages 11–15.)

Which of the eight tenets of Frontline Leadership resonate the most with you? Explain.

Which of the eight tenets of Frontline Leadership resonate the least with you? Explain.

Examine Table 1.2 on page 16. How does the rationale of Frontline Leadership connect to your own work or your own hopes in the future?

What are under(lie)ing conditions that we must consider as educators and frontline leaders? (See pages 17–22.)

Which of the under(lie)ing conditions do you believe are the most pressing? Why?

What is already being done and what still needs to be done to address under(lie)ing conditions described in this book?

What are some additional under(lie)ing conditions that we must be mindful of and address in our work that are not listed and addressed in this book?

Examine Table 1.3 pages 23–24 of the book. How do potential outcomes and opportunity gaps outlined by Milner align with or disconnect with your experience? Explain.

Define and discuss "the urgency of now" and "pace imperative." (See pages 27–30.)

How do issues of race, racism, whiteness, and anti-Black racism emerge in different contexts?

Why is it important to consider *"the race card"* in mostly white settings? Explain. (See pages 35–36.)

Please scan the introduction for important introspective questions that you might consider as an individual and collective.

What is Frontline Leadership not (see page 39)? Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

Define and discuss micro-level structures related to Frontline Leadership. (See page 39.)

Identify and discuss how opportunity gaps are perpetuated through the following: color and race avoidance, cultural conflicts, myth of meritocracy, deficit thinking and low expectations, and context neutrality. (See pages 40–43.)

What role does language play in closing opportunity gaps? Provide some examples of how to close opportunity gaps through language. (See pages 43–49.)

Provide explicit examples of how Frontline Leadership can and should be used to address and enhance student learning and development through (1) curriculum, (2) instruction, (3) assessment, and (4) relationships.

How can schools be improved by building Frontline Leadership muscles? Explain. (See pages 51–56.)

What role must community play in improving curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationships? (See page 52.)

Define and discuss community knowledge to inform practice and address race: community immersion, community engagement, community attendance, and community investment (See page 52).

Define and discuss various levels of curriculum as J. Banks has described. (See page 54.)

In pursuit of truth, how might the curriculum be a social action tool? (See page 54.)

What is self-efficacy? (See page 56.)

What are sources of self-efficacy according to A. Bandura? (See page 56.)

What are asset practices related to self-efficacy as described in Table 2.1? (See page 56.)

How can opportunity gaps be addressed through relational practices in education and beyond? (See pages 56–57.)

What are essential elements of disrupt movement? (See pages 58 – 65.)

Discuss Table 2.2, on page 61. Which insights resonate with you and your experiences in practices the most? Explain.

How do we close opportunity gaps in the fight for truth in America's schools? Why is closing opportunity gaps important?

Please scan Chapter 2 for important introspective questions that you might consider as an individual and collective.

Who should be involved in developing and implementing plans and designs for truth in America's schools? (See page 69.)

For how long should people be involved in development and planning work of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationship construction? (See page 69.)

How do school leaders decide on who should be involved in developing curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationship practices in pursuit of truth? (See pages 69–70.)

How often should a team of co-designers and co-developers meet to reimagine and advance the work of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationships? (See page 70.)

Discuss what individuals and groups of people do to press toward truth in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Please be specific. (See page 70.)

Discuss how people design and plan curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationship on different levels (micro, meso, and macro). (See pages 71–72.)

Why is it important to rethink, advance, and revise curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationship with data as the guide? (See page 73.)

What are some broad-level data points that can be used in guiding curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationship practices?

What are specific, school-level data that can be gathered to inform designing and planning for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationship practices? (See pages 73–77.)

In data building and the pursuit of truth, which probes do you find most important and why? The focal areas of the probing practice are ecological and social probing; curriculum probing; instructional probing; mental health, emotional, and affective probing; behavioral probing; and assessment probing. (See page 77.)

Explain and discuss the role of the individual and self-reflection in the work designing and planning for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relational practices. (See pages 78–80.)

How do frontline leaders engage and partner with families and communities in the fight for truth and to disrupt racism, whiteness, and anti-Black racism? (See pages 80–84.)

What role must students play in the work of planning and designing curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationship practices in schools? (See pages 84–90.)

What is essential for adults to remember and address when engaging students in the work of racial justice? Explain and be specific. (See pages 85–90.)

Identify and discuss the three phases of designing and planning for advancing curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relational practices according to Jackson (preactive, interactive, postactive or reflective). (See pages 91–94.)

How do educators co-develop systemic plans and designs in the fight for truth in schools? Why is this co-development important? Explain.

Please scan Chapter 3 for important introspective questions that you might consider as an individual and collective.

How to Disrupt Punishment and Pushout Practices

Why is it essential for frontline leaders to focus on discipline and pushout in the fight for truth in America's schools? Explain. (See pages 95–98.)

What are similarities and differences between discipline and punishment? Explain. (See pages 99–102, and Table 4.1.)

Discuss punishment practices as prevalent in many schools across America: (1) curriculum punishment; (2) scripted curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices; and (3) narrowed curriculum, instruction, and assessment. (See pages 103–110.)

Describe specific examples and potential remedies to (1) curriculum punishment; (2) scripted curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices; and (3) narrowed curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

What do educators need to know and be able to do in the work of designing and rethinking practices of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationships? Explain. (See pages 110–115.)

What are the 13 core areas that Milner outlines as essential to curriculum and instruction leadership on page 112? Do you agree or disagree? What is missing from the list?

Why are curriculum and instruction so important to the work of truth in America's schools? Explain. (See pages 115–123.)

What are culturally relevant and culturally responsive practices, and how might they be applied in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and relationship practices? (See pages 115–123.)

What are potential outcomes of culturally relevant and culturally responsive practices?
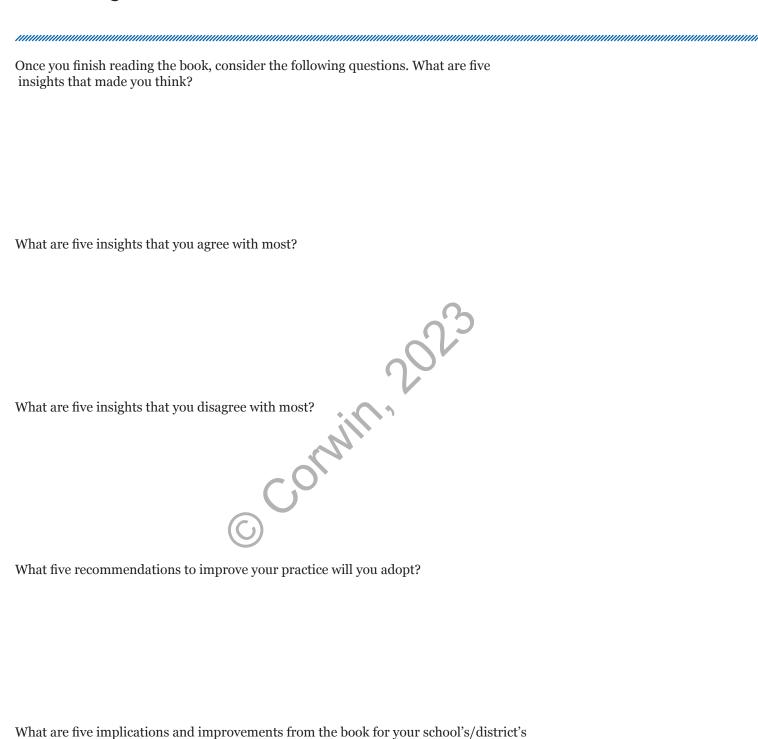(See pages 120–121.)

What are necessary tenets of culturally relevant and culturally responsive practices, and what are examples of how these practices manifest in schools and classrooms? Explain. (See pages 115–123.)

How do educators disrupt punishment and pushout practices in the fight for truth in schools? Explain.

Please scan Chapter 4 for important introspective questions that you might consider as an individual and collective.

What are some problematic profiles of leaders? (See pages 125–127.)

How might schools move away from leadership that takes the following stances: race and color avoidance, "everybody matters", "they will figure it out", and "someone else will teach them"? Explain. (See page 127.)

Describe and critique profiles of problematic leaders identified in the book. Do you relate to problematic profiles of leaders described in the book: "Hiders, Talkers, Theorists, Obstructors, Stallers, Pleasers, Sporadic Doers, and External Motivators"? Explain. (See pages 127–131.)

What are recommendations for collective deliberation and action discussed in the book? (See pages 131–136.)

Consider the pros and cons of the recommendations for action described in the book: (1) Racial Justice Theme for the Year, (2) Racial Justice Community Book Reading, (3) Community Racial Autobiography, (4) Amplification of Story and Narrative, and (5) Elevation of the Morning Meeting.

Please scan Chapter 5 for important introspective questions that you might consider as an individual and collective.

Concluding Questions

Once you finish reading the book, consider the following questions. What are five insights that made you think?

What are five insights that you agree with most?

What are five insights that you disagree with most?

What five recommendations to improve your practice will you adopt?

What are five implications and improvements from the book for your school's/district's community practice?