



The Magic Pencil Curriculum Guide: A Literacy Lift for Youth, Volume 1 (The Magic Pencil Series)

Karen E. Dabney

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The Magic Pencil Curriculum Guide accompanies the engagingly didactic novel, **The Magic Pencil**. "TMP" is a "mirror" book as well as a "window" book, allowing readers to see themselves represented and widen their world.

It addresses standard English versus colloquial language as a large part of what is turning young black readers off from school and how to intervene aggressively - yet differently.

It enables its user to quickly bring subtle issues within the story to the forefront, thus encouraging dialogue and developing trust among instructors and learners.

The guide shows "articulate" means being able to effectively communicate within whatever language one is using by "code-switching".

It advocates being able to speak effectively in the preferred manner for communicating in our country is best but not at the expense of leaving behind the rich - and usually necessary - first/home language, when it is not.

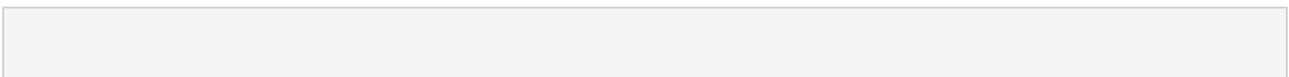
There is no book - other than **The Magic Pencil** - written for youth where black language (in this case, African American Vernacular English) versus standard English is dealt with in a way to engage - rather than alienate - them from understanding the validity of either way of speaking. The "talking white" issue, the co-opting, marketing and mainstreaming of black language, the hypocrisy and differing attitudes towards the use of language are provocatively discussed within the story.

By using the guide, the instructor will have a handy, productive tool for opening dialogue, piquing interest and suggesting supplemental activities. The guide provides summaries and questions for each chapter to jump-start the process. The instructor will be able to begin the lessons while experiencing **The Magic Pencil** along with his learners by reading its guide prior to teaching! Depending on how it's used, **The Magic Pencil Curriculum Guide** can be applied to all subjects and easily lends itself to becoming a total lesson in all disciplines for the learners - spanning over a month's activities or more!

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Attention please! I have no control over what books are shown under the pages featuring my books for youth. "Urban" literature has come to mean adult reading that leans toward writing I feel is not the type I would suggest toward a young audience. A lot of it seems to have no real value other than getting some youth more interested in reading.

~Karen E. Dabney



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