

# Educational Strengths Assessment Tool

Measuring Cultural Resiliency in Your Students

Program Overview



EDUCATION - EXCELLENCE - EQUITY

**E<sub>3</sub>: EDUCATION, EXCELLENCE, AND EQUITY**

## EDUCATIONAL STRENGTHS ASSESSMENT TOOL

### DESCRIPTION

This qualitative assessment determines (1) what a student's extra-academic strengths are based on their diverse life-skills and (2) how those skills translate into academic success in the classroom. These strengths are the foundation for students to develop essential 21<sup>st</sup> century skills: *innovation, adaptability, critical analysis, cross-cultural communication, and teamwork.*

Educational institutions & corporations have acknowledged the need for individuals to demonstrate a proficiency in these skills.<sup>1</sup> Research on resiliency proposes that resilient individuals who rise above challenges also adapt quickly to new circumstances, thriving in constant change, and, most importantly, expect to bounce back.<sup>2</sup> "Cultural Resiliency" is what we call the competencies (inner strengths) acquired through diverse life experiences that often come from a difficult environment.<sup>3</sup>

### PROGRAM OUTLINE

- 1 hour or 8 hour workshop format: quantitative data is collected and analyzed through interactive activities that include: an auto-ethnography, creative writing, spoken word, and a digital story (I-movies) project.
- To determine a student's level of five essential competencies, data is collected through the project. A scale from 0%-100% indicates the level of competency in each of these areas as acquired through personal, social and cultural experiences.



### OUTCOMES

- E<sup>3</sup> provides a strengths-based approach to assessing students' competencies in five areas.
- Participants who complete the 8-hour workshop will produce either a one-minute Digital Story (I-movie) and/or a book of Spoken Word poems.

<sup>1</sup> Global Achievement Gap, Tony Wagner, 2008, and Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills [http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=120](http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=120)

<sup>2</sup> [Building Resilience, Kenneth Ginsburg, 2011, The Resiliency Advantage, 2005](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Resource Guide: Cultural Resilience, Joyce Strand & Robert Peacock, Tribal College Journal, v14 n4 p28-31 Sum 2003](#) Jaula de Oro, Dissertation JuanCarlos Arauz 2007



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## 1-Hour Educational Strengths Assessment Tool External Agenda

While E3 recommends the Educational Strengths Assessment of 8-hour session, we understand that some schools may not have the capacity to implement the full version. The 1-hour Educational Strengths Assessment, which is part of the longer assessment, provides a good baseline of these five essential competencies.

**Teacher Outcome:** Engaged student community

**Student/Teacher Outcome:** Awareness of students' strengths as 21<sup>st</sup> century skills

The E3 1-hour Educational Strengths Assessment is broken up into four main parts: Introduction & Community Norms, Understanding Diversity and Inclusion, Understanding Our Lenses, and the online Educational Strengths Assessment. Here at E3 we believe that the more time spent creating community and a safe space, the more authentic the assessment will turn out. That said, here is our suggestion for getting authentic results.

### 1.) Description: Introductions & Community Norms (10 minutes)

- a. Review Agenda
- b. Community Norms for dialogue (Handout)
- c. Introductions (Who are you? activity)<sup>4</sup>

### 2.) Personal interpretation: Understanding Diversity & Inclusion (25 minutes)

- a. Identifying Your Experience (Power Flower activity)<sup>5</sup>
- b. 10 second habit forming activity

### 3.) Critical Analysis: Understanding Our Lenses (10 minutes)

- a. E3 video
- b. I.A.A.C.T. (handout): Innovation, Adaptability, Critical Analysis, Cross-cultural communication, Teamwork<sup>6</sup>

### 4.) Action Steps: Acknowledging Our Strengths (15 minutes)

- a. Educational Strengths Assessment (online)
- b. Closing

<sup>4</sup> Based on the identity foundation work from Dr. Asa Hilliard

<sup>5</sup> Based on the Youth Empowerment Model of Ilalo Kalika

<sup>6</sup> Based on the research of Cultural Resiliency by Dr. Arauz



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## 8 Hour Session Educational Strengths Assessment Tool External Agenda

E<sub>3</sub> believes that the more time spent creating community and a safe space, the more authentic the assessment will turn out. Consequently, the following activities are designed to generate engagement among each participant to achieve our intended results.

**Student Outcome:** Spoken Word & Digital storytelling project  
**Teacher Outcome:** Engaged student community  
**Student/Teacher Outcome:** Awareness of students' strengths as 21<sup>st</sup> century skills

### Session 1 – Introductions and Group Agreements

- This session will build community amongst the class or group being assessed as well as establish group agreements regarding behavior and interactions between students as well as between students and teachers during the time you spend together.

### Session 2 – Spoken Word Activity

- The second session of the Educational Strengths Assessment process guides students through the creation of a seven line spoken word poem that will allow them to delve into some of what makes them who they are and create a space to share this with the group. This is an essential step towards getting an authentic assessment.

### Sessions 3-6 – Digital Story Creation

- Sessions 3-5 consists of a student-centered, highly engaging digital story project. Using the seven line spoken word poems created during Step 2 students will find and create images that they feel represent their words. The combination of student poetry with images of their own choice always leads to insights into each student's life that are at the center of developing a trusting relationship between students and teachers; this is so important in an authentic assessment!

### Session 7 – Group Definitions

- In order for all students to access the language of the assessment equally, it is important that definitions of the key five 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills are commonly understood by the group. Session 7 takes participants through creating group definitions.

### Session 8 – Initial Written Assessment

- With students feeling safe and comfortable in the setting you have created, and key vocabulary well understood, it is time for the E<sub>3</sub> Educational Strengths Assessment. Session 8 takes participants through the assessment process.

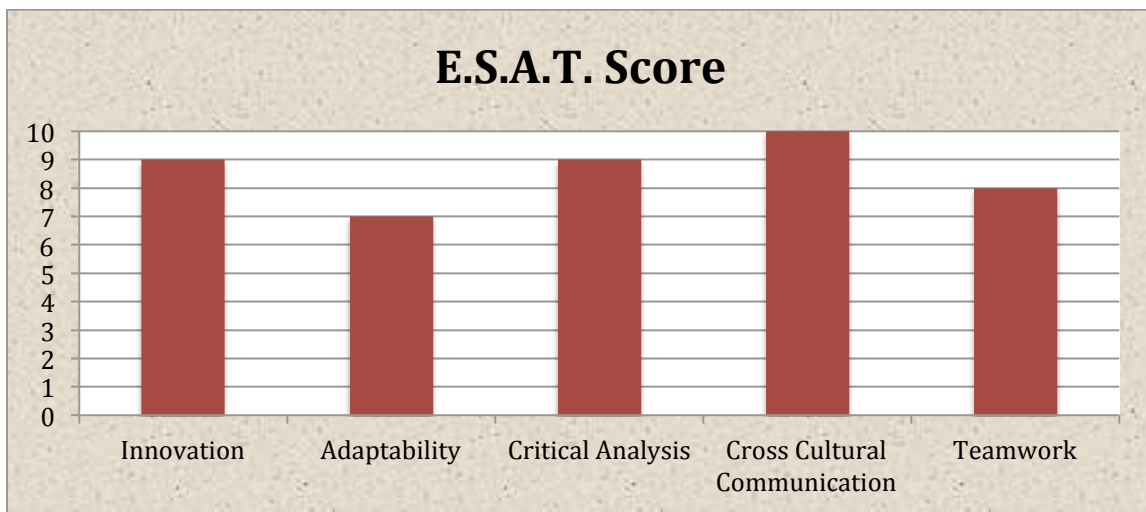
## Educational Strengths Assessment Score

**Student Name:** AISHA MOORE

**Year of High School Graduation:** 2014

**Date of Assessment:** 11/11/16

Based on the skills you have gained from lived experiences that we call *Cultural Resilience*, we have provided the following results. We believe that the competencies gained from life experiences can be translated into skills for success in the workplace. Research shows these are essential competencies to be successful in a global society.



### DESCRIPTION OF CULTURAL RESILIENCE COMPETENCIES

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>0-3: Rare Experience</b>     | Due to your rare experience, you would benefit from more structured practice to develop a level of competency that can be translated into other areas of your life.   |
| <b>4-5: Limited Experience</b>  | Due to your limited experience, you would benefit from more structured practice to develop a level of competency that can be translated into other areas of your life.  |
| <b>6: Minimal Experience</b>    | Due to your minimal experience, you would benefit from more structured practice to develop a level of competency that can be translated into other areas of your life.  |
| <b>7: Developing Experience</b> | Due to your developing experience, your familiarity with this competency would benefit from more independent practice to develop a level in which you can later translate this into other areas of your life. |
| <b>8: Frequent Experience</b>   | Due to your frequent experience, you have some level of comfort and competency in this area that places you in a good position to be able to translate this into other areas of your life.                    |
| <b>9: Consistent Experience</b> | Due to your consistent experience, you have a high level of comfort practicing this competency, which enables you to more easily translate this into a skill you can use in other areas of your life.         |
| <b>10: In-Depth Experience</b>  | Due to your in-depth experience, you probably have a high level of comfort and competency in this area, which enables you to translate efficiently this into a skill you can use in other areas of your life. |



**CORRELATION BETWEEN CULTURAL RESILIENCY AND 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SKILLS**

| <b>21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills</b>  | <b>Sample life experiences that help build these competencies</b>  | <b>Examples in an Academic Setting &amp; Work Environment</b>   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>INNOVATION:</b><br><i>Ability to create</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in Visual/performing arts, computer programming, poetry/writing, designing or building, etc.</li> </ul>   | <b>If I don't know, I will figure it out</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Develop a creative class presentation</i></li> <li><i>Develop an innovative solution</i></li> </ul>  |
| <b>ADAPTABILITY:</b><br><i>Ability to ease between transitions</i>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exposure to different cultural environment (countries, neighborhoods, schools, etc.)</li> <li>Personal challenges (injury, family transitions, etc.)</li> <li>Social challenges (relationships, multiple activities, etc.)</li> </ul> | <b>In a crisis, I don't freak out</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Adjust my schedule to balance all my academic &amp; social activities</i></li> <li><i>Effectively assess and prioritize multiple tasks</i></li> </ul>   |
| <b>CRITICAL ANALYSIS:</b><br><i>Ability to identify various factors &amp; perspectives</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognizing when you are creating something or the need to create something to better a situation.</li> <li>Recognizing when/where/how/how often you are to and from varying situations.</li> </ul>                                   | <b>Because I have multiple perspectives, I think strategically</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>I strategically plan my future</i></li> <li><i>I contribute the big picture by offering the pros, cons and method of implementation of an idea</i></li> </ul>    |
| <b>CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION:</b> <i>Ability to network</i>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Translating languages: English to Spanish, French to Mandarin, etc.</li> <li>Code-switching: youth language to adult language, formal to informal, verbal to written, etc.</li> </ul>   | <b>I examine the environment to figure out how to communicate effectively.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Communicating with my teachers, friends, coaches and parents</i></li> <li><i>Communicating with my supervisor, colleagues and clients</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>TEAMWORK:</b><br><i>Ability to utilize one's own network</i>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in team sports, family, group projects, etc.</li> <li>Networking in organizing a fundraiser, party, group activity, etc.</li> </ul>   | <b>I can contribute as a leader or follower.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>In my family, sports/clubs and work/study groups</i></li> </ul>  |