

CLASS DIFFERENCES AND CHALLENGES

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Classes in America

- The Unemployed and Homeless
- The Working Class
- The Middle Class
- The Upper Middle Class
- The Upper Class



The Unemployed and Homeless

- Definition: the portion of the population who suffers the most from the lack of a stable income or other economic resources.
- Most degrading and dangerous jobs
- Not welcome into other classes' communities
- Children have emotional/behavioral problems
- Delayed development



Statistics

- Doubled since the 2008 recession
- Children suffer the most
- 14 million of the civilian workforce considered “unemployed”
- 10% of U.S children spend at least half their lives in poverty

Passed Laws/Acts

- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
 - ❖ 1987 by congress
 - ❖ Homeless students have access to schooling
 - ❖ Not denied services due to circumstances
- Ex: school districts provide transportation



The Working Class

- Definition: group whose members hold manual jobs that do not generally require postsecondary education, except for skilled jobs.
- Normally not in leadership positions
- “blue collar”
- Manual/labor work (dangerous)
- Less job security



The Middle Class

- Definition: group whose members earn an annual income that allows them to have a standard of living that includes owning a home and car. (blue and white collar workers, professionals, managers)
- \$44,100
- Two wage earners
- Many live paycheck to paycheck



The Upper Middle Class & Upper Class

- Definition of Upper Middle Class:
 - Affluent group in the middle class whose members are highly educated professionals, managers and administrators.
- ❖ Tend to associate with those with similar income (often not chosen for themselves)
- Definition of Upper Class:
 - group whose members earn the highest annual incomes and have the greatest wealth
- ❖ Pays the highest taxes



Inequality

- Racial and Ethnic:
 - ❖ U.S. higher income inequality compared to other countries (besides Turkey and Mexico)
- Gender:
 - ❖ Women/women of color most likely to be in poverty
 - ❖ Discrimination
- Age:
 - ❖ Max income between 45 and 54
 - ❖ Children's class depends on their parents
 - ❖ FRPL: how schools track poverty by the number of students eligible for free or reduced price lunches (130% below poverty level)

Discussion Questions

- 1. As a future educator, how would you accommodate the needs of students who are homeless or come from working class families whose parents may lack the time to support them in their studies?
- 2. In Dr. Kunjufu's "Closing the Academic Achievement Gap" presentation, he mentioned that low income, economic class, and single parents are not a cause for students' low test scores. Do you agree with his statement, and what do you think the impact of socioeconomic class may have on a student's education?
- <http://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/factsheet-cyf.pdf>

Works Cited

- **McVey Lord M. (2012) National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY). Retrieved October 16, 2013. From <http://www.naehcy.org/about-naehcy/welcome>**
- **Children, youth and families & socioeconomic status factsheet. (2013). Retrieved October 20, 2013. From <http://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/factsheet-cyf.pdf>**