

# Shifting Deficit-Thinking Worksheet

## Sample Deficit-Thinking Phrases

Deficit-Based Thoughts	Identify Deficit Trait(s)	Unlearn Deficit-Based Thoughts: Consider re-defining the problem as not solely the population, but also the structural inequalities.
Students of color from disadvantaged homes just seem to show a lack of initiative.		E.g., students of color from disadvantaged homes are disproportionately being suspended and receive limited access to enrichment, and thus are challenged to show initiative
Disadvantaged students generally do not have the abilities necessary to succeed in the classroom.		
Students from disadvantaged backgrounds do not value education as much as other students.		
It is important that students of color assimilate so they can succeed in mainstream American culture.		E.g., it is important that schools understand and embrace the cultural assets of students of color so that they can learn how to have cross-cultural experiences in schools and society.
Unfortunately, for many people of color, education is just not a real priority.		
Schools cannot be expected to overcome the disadvantages of race and poverty.		

(Continued)

Deficit-Based Thoughts	Identify Deficit Trait(s)	Unlearn Deficit-Based Thoughts: Consider re-defining the problem as not solely the population, but also the structural inequalities.
There is not much schools can do to close the achievement gap.		
Trying to be culturally responsive all the time is nice in theory, but the reality is that a teacher does not have time to be all things to all students.		
I am frustrated by how hard it is to be politically correct in our more diverse society.		
The values and beliefs shared by those in disadvantaged neighborhoods tend to go against school values and beliefs about what makes up a good education.		E.g., continuous social experiences of discrimination and structural disadvantage make it hard to believe that merit will result in success.
As an educator, I'm very limited in what I can do when students from disadvantaged neighborhoods hold negative beliefs about their education.		
Racial / ethnic minority children from disadvantaged neighborhoods do not have the role models they need to be successful in school.		
Although I am hesitant to say so publicly, I believe that racial differences in intelligence may have a hereditary or genetic component.		