Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW)

<https://www.centerforaiw.com/aiw-research/>

# Overview

“Authentic intellectual work involves original application of knowledge and skills, rather than just routine use of facts and procedures. It also entails careful study of the details of a particular topic or problem and results in a product or presentation that has meaning beyond success in school (King et al, 2009, ).”

AIW is not a practice of different teaching methods, but rather focuses on the intellectual demands on students. The Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools (CORS) research indicates that any teaching methods can be employed and still result in weak intellectual achievement (Scheurman & Newmann, 1998, p.1).

## Model

***There are 3 Criteria:***

1. Construction of Knowledge
2. Disciplined Inquiry:
   * *Use of prior knowledge base*
   * *Strive for in-depth understanding rather than superficial awareness*
   * *Develop and express ideas and findings through elaborated communication*
3. Value Beyond School

### Theorist

AIW was originally developed through federally funded national research by CORS (Newmann et al, 2001). Fred M. Newmann developed the criteria and conditions for AIW.

## **Critisms of the Model**

* Adopting AIW criteria is not easy (Scheurman & Newmann, 1998).
* Reforming teaching and assessments is slow paced (King et al, 2009).
* “Many urban school reformers...worry that if teachers attempt more complex intellectual assignments in their classrooms, many disadvantaged students will never master the basics (Newmann et al, 2001, p.11).”

## **Strengths**

* “... [AIW offers] explicit standards for authenticity that are not apparent in many attempts to apply constructivist theory to the classroom (Scheurman & Newmann, 1998, p. 3).” **If it does not meet all three criteria it is not AIW it is just constructivism.**
* “The point [of AIW] is ***not to abandon all conventional schoolwork...***(Scheurman & Newmann, 1998 p. 4).”
* “In Chicago classrooms with high-quality assignments, students' record learning gains were 20 percent greater than the national average (Newmann et al, 2001, p. 24).” This includes students from diverse backgrounds.

# **Research**

There were 4 major studies done on AIW. They analyzed 1) Authentic Intellectual work 2) Conventional Assessment Measurements (End of Year tests). They studied schools over 306 schools in Minnesota and Chicago K-12

**Citations**

King, M. B., Newmann, F. M., & Carmichael, D.L. (January-February 2009). *Authentic intellectual work: common standards for teaching social studies*. US: National Council for the Social Studies. http://www.ncss.org/

Scheurman, G., & Newmann, F.M. (1998). *Authentic Intellectual Work in Social Studies: Putting Performance Before Pedagogy.* US: National Council for the Social Studies. http://learner3.learner.org/workshops/socialstudies/pdf/session4/4.AuthInellectualWork.pdf

Newmann, F.M., Bryk, A.S., & Nagaoka, J. (2001). *Authentic Intellectual Work and Standardized Tests: Conflict or Coexistence?*. Chicago, US Consortium on Chicago School Research.https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED470299.pdf