

The Sankofa and our philosophy

Sankofa is a word, symbol and concept in the Twi language of Ghana that translates to “Go back and get it” (san – to return; ko – to go; fa – to fetch, to seek and take).



The Sankofa is often depicted as a bird standing forward with its head looking back, carrying a precious egg in its beak. It symbolizes the need to reflect on the past to build a successful future.

The Sankofa Club, from Urban Intellectuals, embodies this spirit. We strongly believe we must educate ourselves and our youth in all aspects of our history to empower ourselves for the present.

Positive Priming

When the students were asked to identify their race on a pretest questionnaire, that simple act was sufficient to prime them with all the negative stereotypes associated with African Americans and academic achievement—and the number of items they got right was cut in half. As a society, we place enormous faith in tests because we think that they are a reliable indicator of the test taker's ability and knowledge. But are they really? If a white student from a prestigious private high school gets a higher SAT score than a black student from an inner-city school, is it because she's truly a better student, or is it because to be white and to attend a prestigious high school is to be constantly primed with the idea of “smart”?

- Excerpt from Chapter Two of Malcolm Gladwell's book Blink

In a world where we are bombarded with negative images, concepts and nuances about our people, we need to fight back with positive and true representations of who we really are. We owe it to our youth to look through the smoke screen and expose our children to positive representation in order to further their learning and unleash their deserved potential. If we can help push each and every one of our youth to be primed each and every day with positive and true representations of our past and present, then they will excel in the future.

Repetition through diverse activities

Our lessons have a simple objective. We want to engage the youth by helping them develop basic skills such as word and shape recognition, math, dexterity in writing and drawing while positively priming them with our great history.

Our monthly box highlights people / events from our history with short bios and vocabulary lists which are then incorporated into varied tasks which repeat the initial words and facts in order to help the participants retain the information. We have our own children who are excelling and we know these methods work.

The future

As a subscriber you are getting the Beta version of The Sankofa Club digital subscription box. It is essential that we collect feedback and grow with our users; therefore we are keen to hear all feedback and thoughts in order to build the best learning and empowering experience for our youth.

So, please make sure you join our exclusive members facebook group at www.facebook.com/groups/357846721423617 to get involved in the community and make this project the best it can be. You can contact us directly at support@urbanintellectuals.com.

