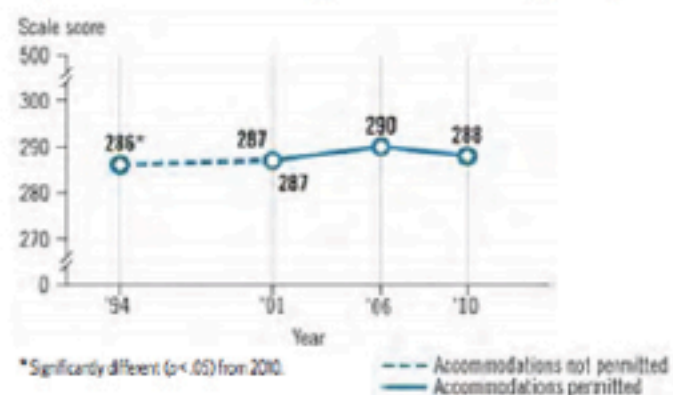


Problem/Rationale

This project addresses two problems—one pedagogical and the other historical. Current history pedagogy has led students to display a lack of interest in history, consistently producing poor academic achievement in secondary history classrooms while historically, there is insufficient scholarship on the history of education in Harlem.

I ASK: How can we work with high school students in Harlem to increase engagement and produce new scholarship in the history of education?

Figure 20. Trend in twelfth-grade NAEP U.S. history average scores

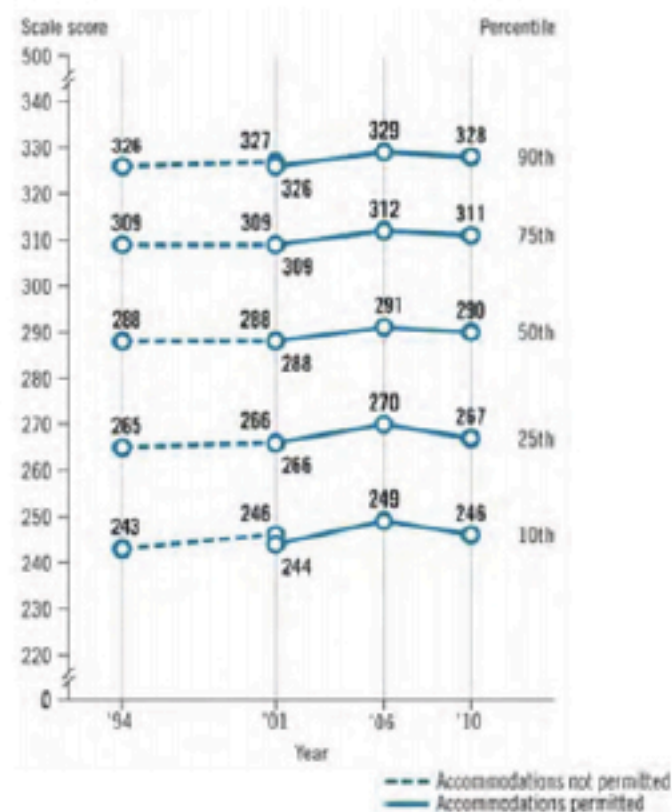


No significant change in twelfth-graders' performance since 2006

The average score on the 2010 NAEP U.S. history assessment at grade 12 did not change significantly from 2006 to 2010 but was 2 points higher in 2010 than in 1994 (figure 20). There were no significant changes in the scores at any of the five percentiles in 2010 compared to 2006 or 1994 (figure 21).

Forty-five percent of students performed at or above the Basic level in 2010, and 12 percent performed at or above the Proficient level (figure 22). The percentages of students at or above Basic, at or above Proficient, or at Advanced in 2010 were not significantly different from the percentages in previous assessment years.

Figure 21. Trend in twelfth-grade NAEP U.S. history percentile scores



PEDAGOGICAL PROBLEM:

Education researchers must find different pedagogical strategies to reverse the course of the disturbing achievement trends. Students must be able to see themselves in history classrooms for them to become engaged in the study of history. Not only is the study of history necessary for students to become informed democratic citizens, but also greatly improves critical thinking skills and academic literacy skills. Therefore, Youth Historians in Harlem will increase these skills while also strengthening student engagement, academic motivation, and empowerment.

HISTORICAL PROBLEM:

This historical gap is problematic because currently, the transformation of public schools to charter schools and private schools is not fully understood as a clearer historical understanding of Harlem's history of education has implications for the present education reform narrative. Therefore, with Harlem students as critical researchers, Youth Historians in Harlem will fill a scholarly gap while increasing student engagement.