



LABOR BASED GRADING: FROM THE STUDENT TO THE TEACHER

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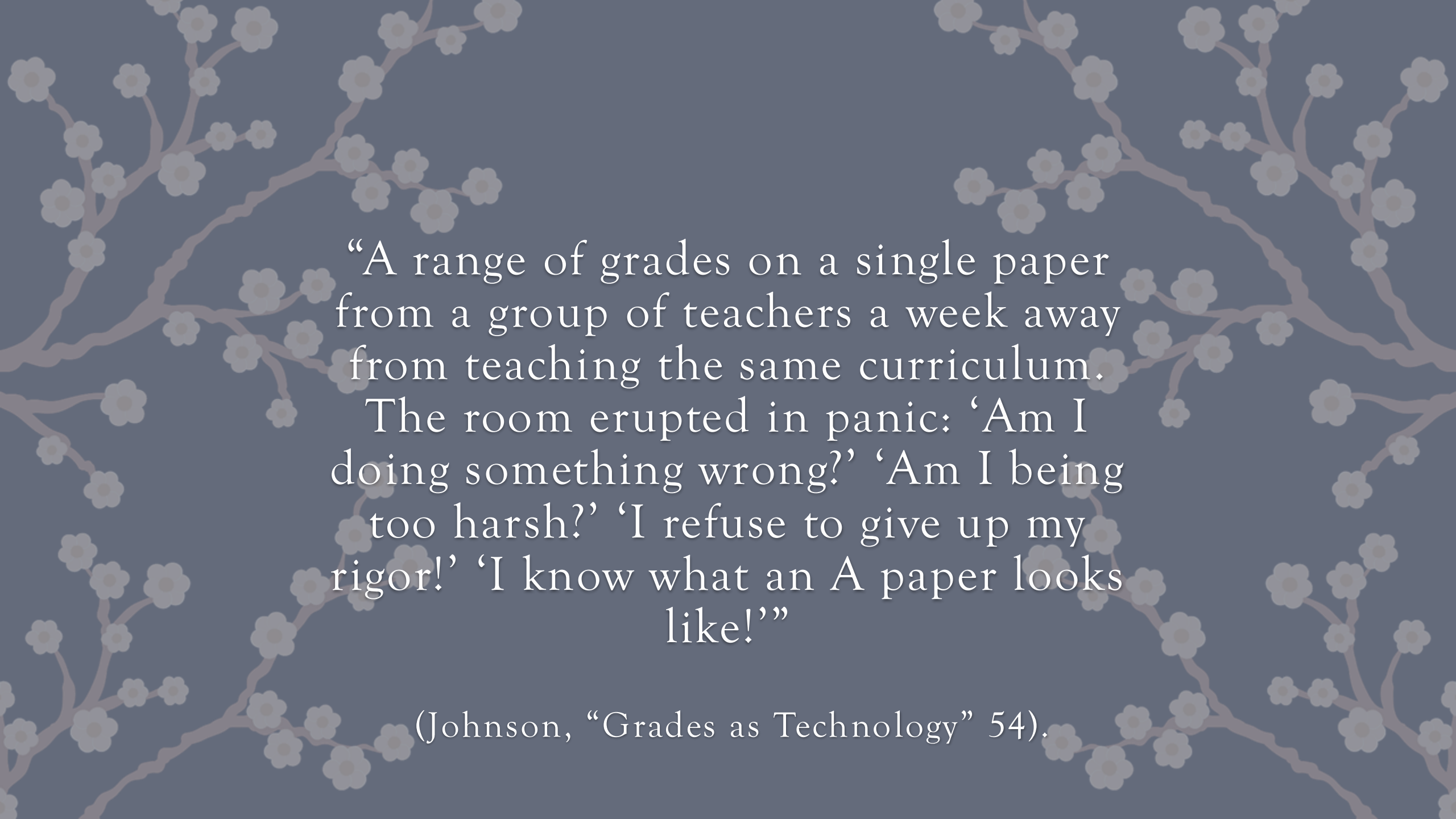
ACTIVITY:
GRADE THE
FOLLOWING PAPER



THINK, PAIR, SHARE

- Did you give this paper an A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, or C-, and so on...
- What made this an A/B/C/D/F paper? What things did you take into account?
- As a group, come up with a consensus on what grade this paper should receive





“A range of grades on a single paper
from a group of teachers a week away
from teaching the same curriculum.

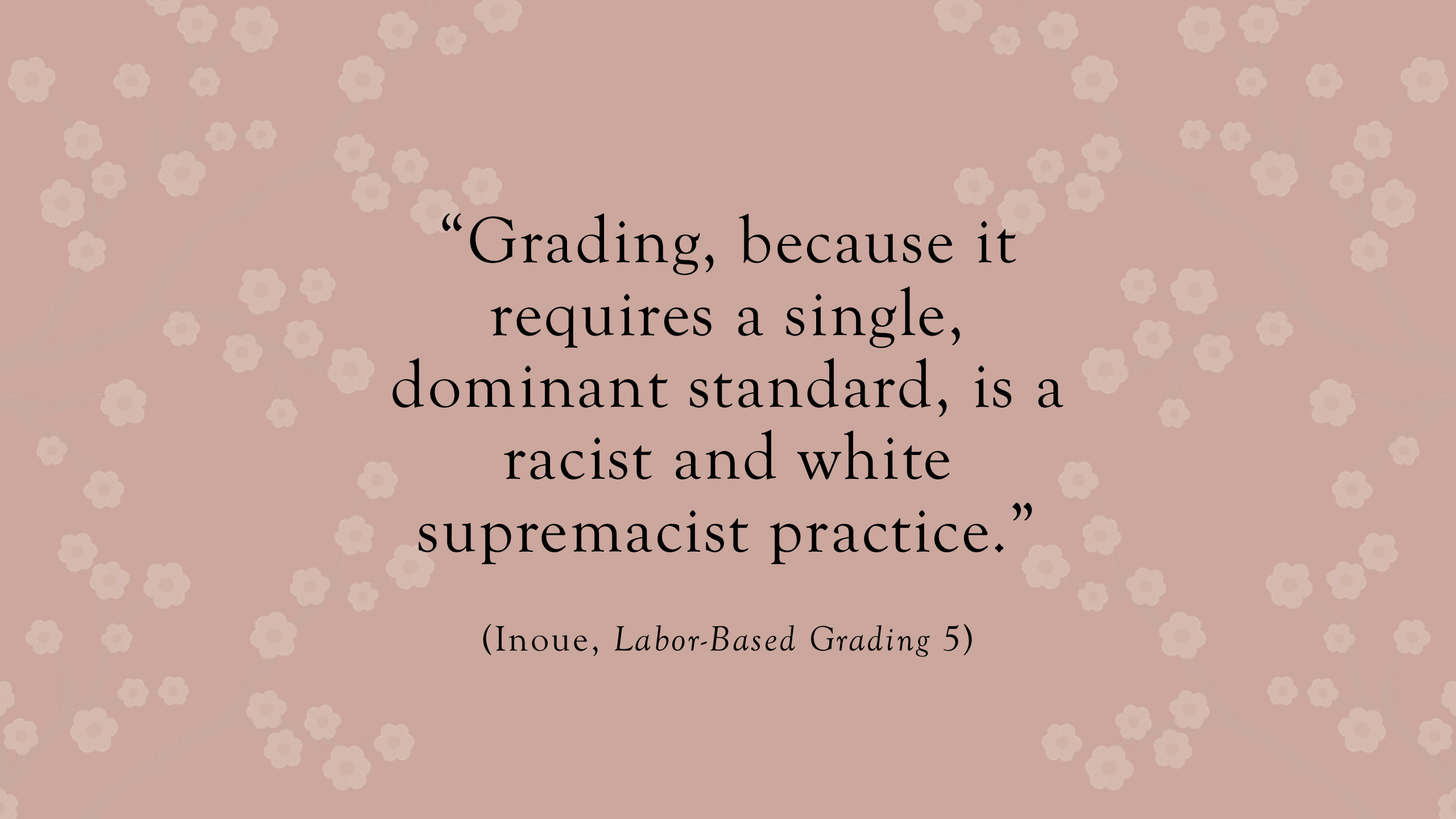
The room erupted in panic: ‘Am I
doing something wrong?’ ‘Am I being
too harsh?’ ‘I refuse to give up my
rigor!’ ‘I know what an A paper looks
like!’”

(Johnson, “Grades as Technology” 54).



“Grading is almost always employed in order to control students (and sometimes their teachers), force students to be accountable (and sometimes their teachers), and measure or rank students (and sometimes their teachers), either against each other or against a single standard. Each of these purposes for grading in writing classrooms is detrimental to learning.”

(Inoue, Labor-Based *Grading* 5)



“Grading, because it
requires a single,
dominant standard, is a
racist and white
supremacist practice.”

(Inoue, *Labor-Based Grading 5*)

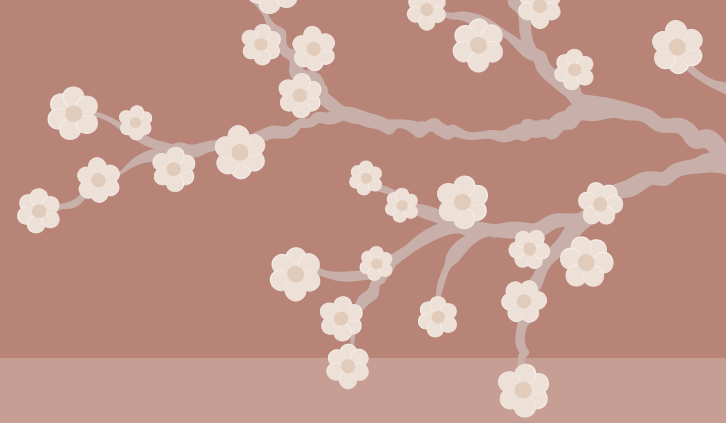
CRITICAL IMAGINATION



“seeing the noticed and the unnoticed, rethinking what is there and not there, and speculating what could be there instead”

(Gesa and Kirsch 18)

STRATEGIC CONTEMPLATION



a pause, meditation, and silent
observation to bear witness and “render
meaningfully, respectfully, honorably the
words” that we hear

(Gesa and Kirsch 22)

RHETORICAL LISTENING



when listeners invoke both
their capacity and
willingness to promote an
understanding of self and
others”

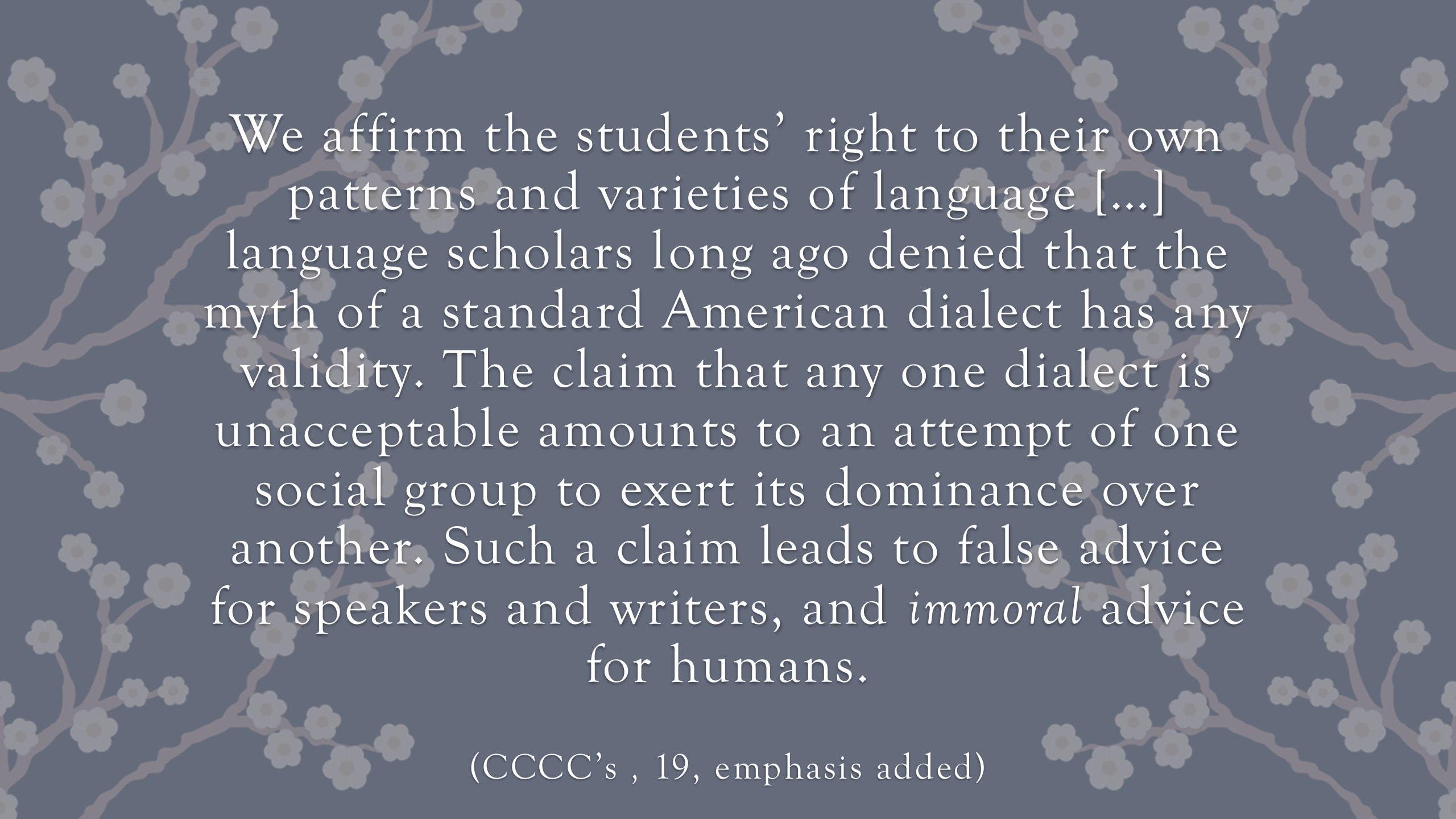
(Ratcliffe 205)

ISSUES WITH GRADES



1) They are historically and systemically rooted in racism.



The background of the slide features a repeating pattern of stylized, dark grey branches with small, light grey flowers. The pattern is dense and covers the entire background. The text is centered and written in a white, serif font. The text is arranged in seven lines, with the first line being the longest and the last line being the shortest. The text is a quote from CCCC's, 19, with emphasis added to certain words.

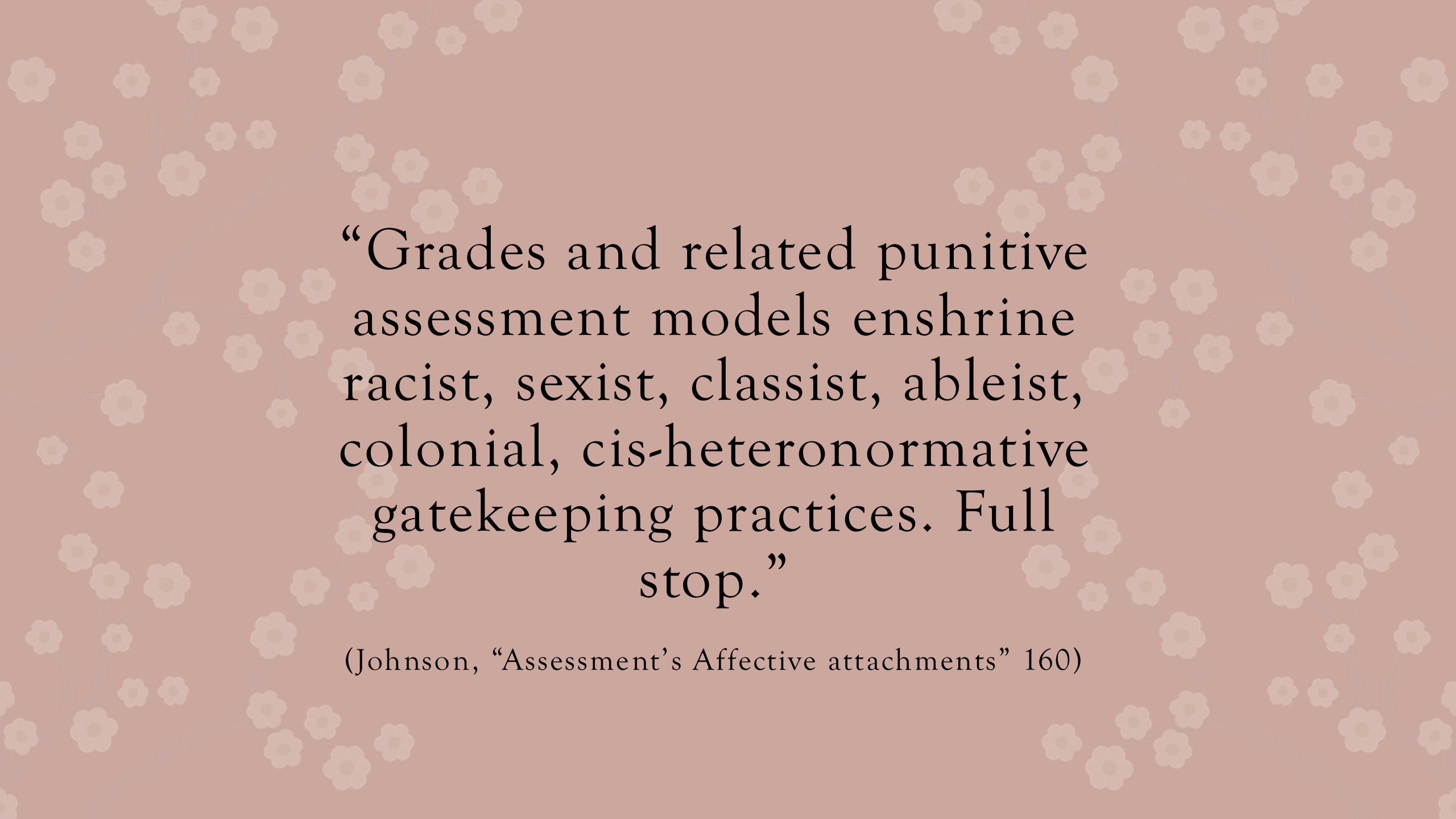
We affirm the students' right to their own
patterns and varieties of language [...] language scholars long ago denied that the
myth of a standard American dialect has any
validity. The claim that any one dialect is
unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one
social group to exert its dominance over
another. Such a claim leads to false advice
for speakers and writers, and *immoral* advice
for humans.

(CCCC's , 19, emphasis added)



ISSUES WITH GRADES

2) They are exclusionary of anyone who doesn't fit in the "idealized norm."



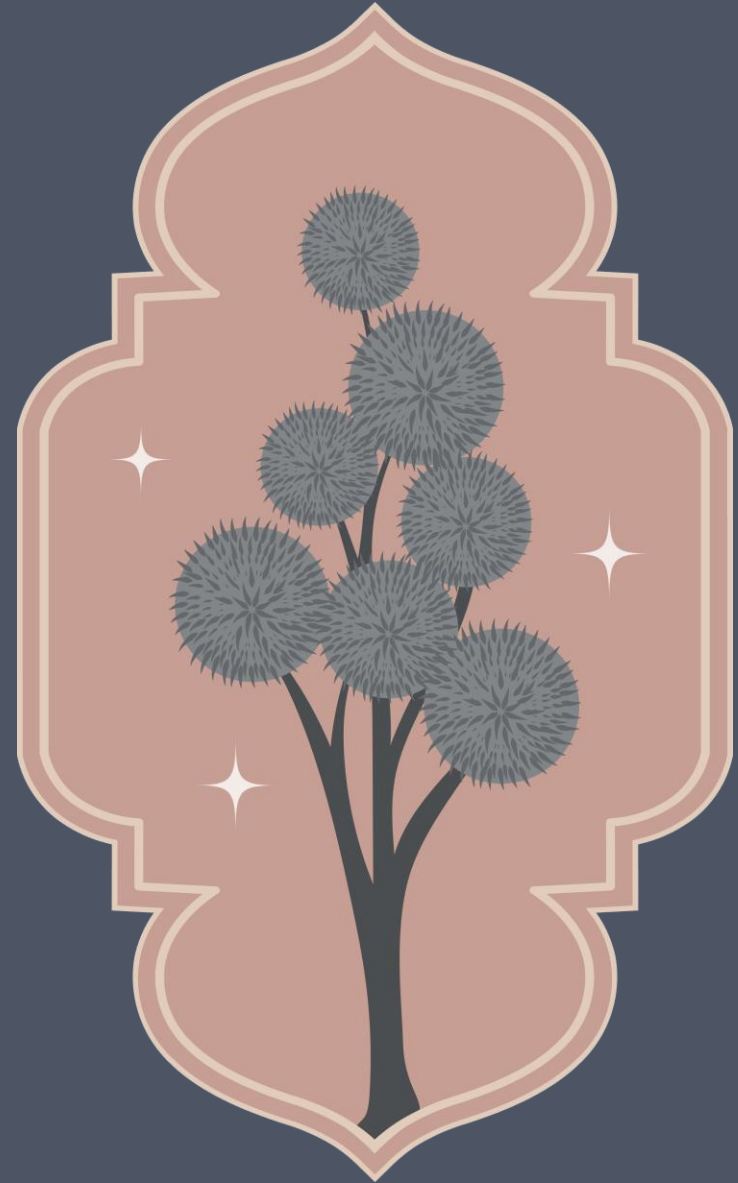
“Grades and related punitive
assessment models enshrine
racist, sexist, classist, ableist,
colonial, cis-heteronormative
gatekeeping practices. Full
stop.”

(Johnson, “Assessment’s Affective attachments” 160)

ISSUES WITH GRADES



3) They shape how students view themselves/their identity.



“The process follows this path: grades label a student (this is an A student, that student is at risk of failure), students perform identities based on those labels (“I’m smart” or “I’m stupid”), and students operate within material and cultural structures of power as determined by [those] identities (business executives, middle-class workers, and lower-class laborers)”

(Johnson, “Grades as Technology of Surveillance” 59)

ISSUES WITH GRADES



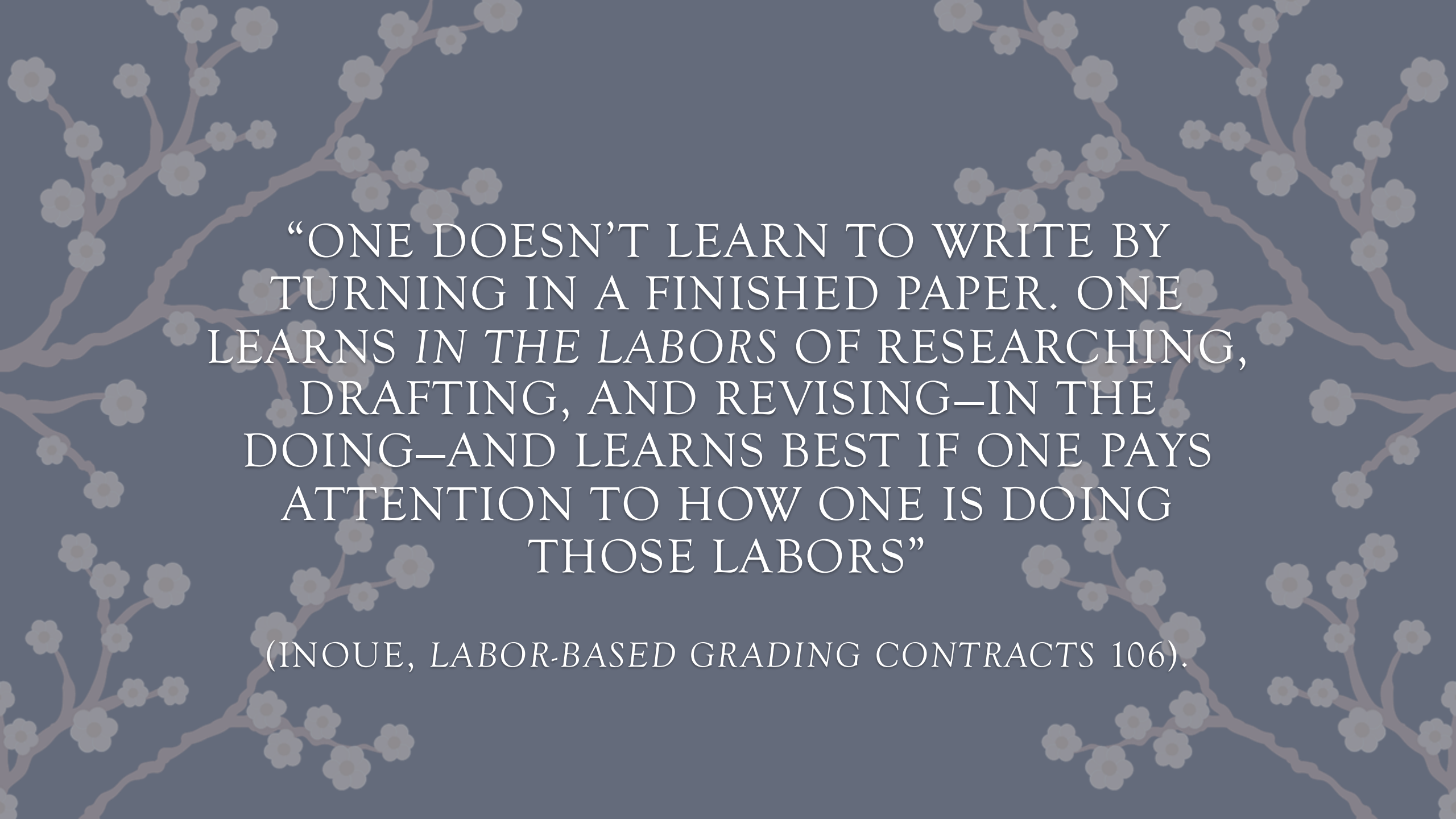
4) They are used to assess and evaluate the teacher and make determinations about their efficiency





ISSUES WITH GRADES

5) They “flatten” students and put them in neat (but often *too small*) boxes, ignoring their complex identities.



“ONE DOESN’T LEARN TO WRITE BY
TURNING IN A FINISHED PAPER. ONE
LEARNS *IN THE LABORS* OF RESEARCHING,
DRAFTING, AND REVISING—IN THE
DOING—AND LEARNS BEST IF ONE PAYS
ATTENTION TO HOW ONE IS DOING
THOSE LABORS”

(INOUE, *LABOR-BASED GRADING CONTRACTS* 106).

ASAO INOUE'S GRADING CONTRACT

(FROM *LABOR-BASED GRADING CONTRACT* 127)



Table 4.1. The final grade breakdown in the grading contract

	# Non-Partic Days	# of Late Assigns.	# of Missed Assigns.	# of Ignored Assigns.
A (4.0)	3	3	1	0
B (3.1)	3	3	1	0
C (2.1)	4	4	2	0
D (1.1)	5	5	3	1
E (0.0)	6	6	4	2

To balance my distrust of grades with the requirements of the university, we will work on a feedback and labor model, which will be codified in a grading agreement we negotiate at the beginning of the semester. This means you will receive (a lot of) feedback from me and your peers throughout the semester with the expectation that you use that feedback to continually revise, rethink, and remix your work. For the most part, the only “grade” you will receive during the semester will be:

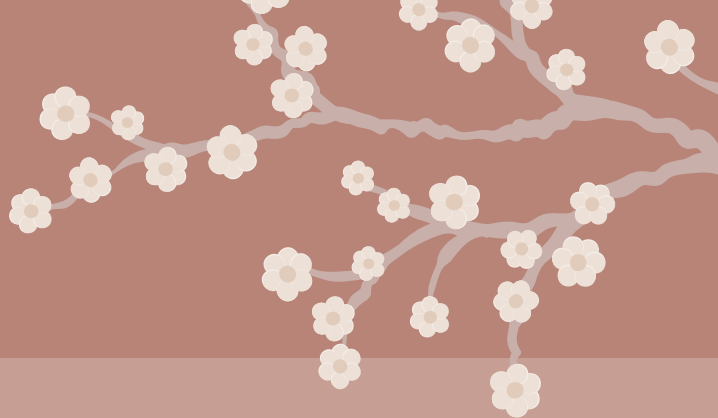
- **full credit:** project was completed, turned in promptly. Strong effort.
- **half credit:** project needs development and/or wasn't complete and/or prompt but effort was evident.
- **no credit:** project wasn't complete and/or prompt.
- **excused:** incomplete project due to uncontrollable circumstances.



ASHANKA KUMARI'S GRADE AGREEMENT

Rather than a letter or number grade, every assignment you do for me will receive one of the following responses:

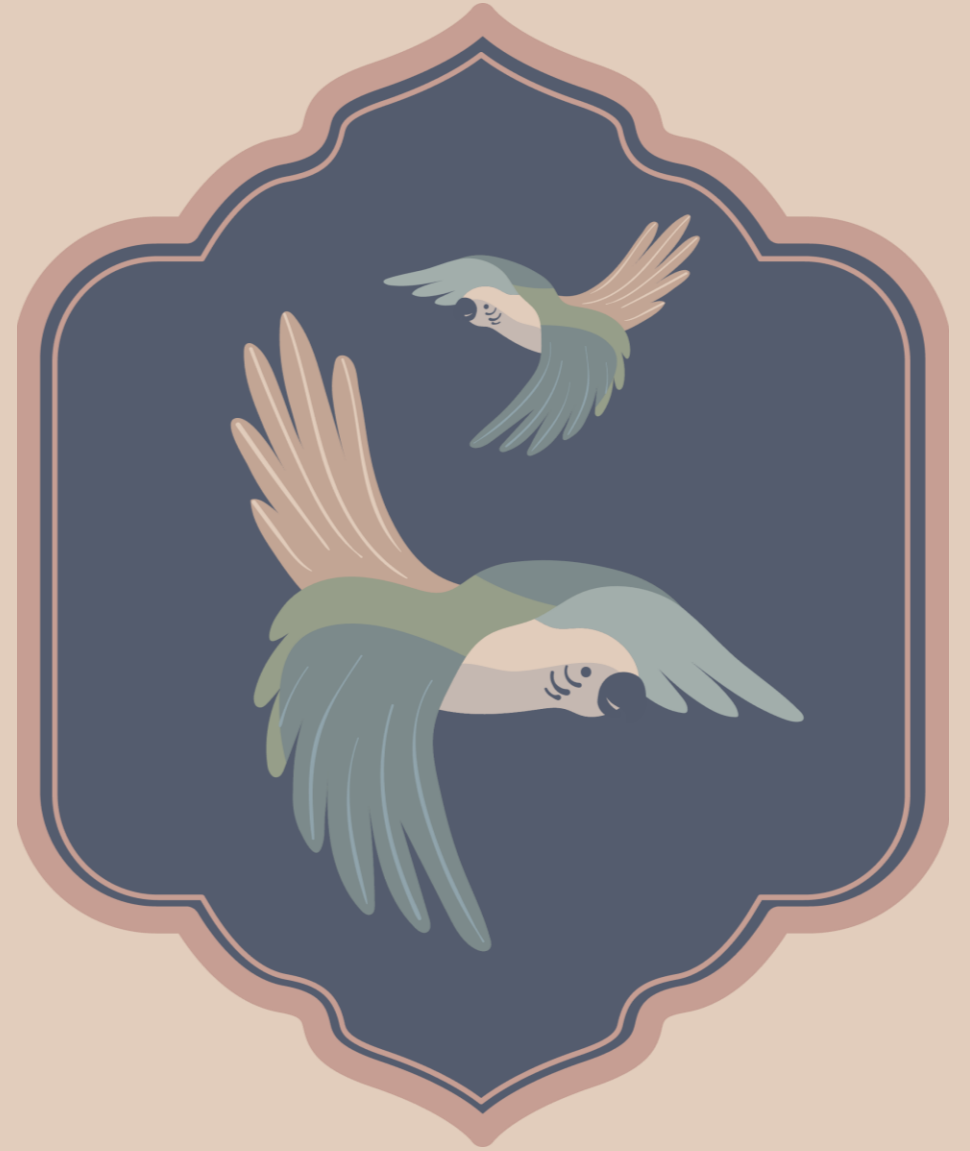
- **Accept**: AKA Full Credit; assignment was completed, turned in on time, demonstrates strong effort.
- **Revise**: project was completed and turned in on time, effort was evident but still needs a bit of work (specific feedback will be provided)
- **Partial Credit**: project was submitted late or revisions were never completed
- **No Credit**: project was either never submitted or clearly lacks effort



MY LABOR-BASED GRADING POLICY

(FROM A CURRENT SYLLABUS)

QUESTIONS,
COMMENTS,
DISCUSSIONS



THANK YOU



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