

One I think about often is Miss Wilson. She was an African American woman who was one of my math teachers. She was one of the very reasons I fell in love with math and would go off to college and major in math and she always stressed the importance of excellence. I love the fact that she looked like me. She was a Black woman, and she was a strong Black woman, but she always stressed the importance of doing the work, but also knowing that you were capable. All you had to do, as she would say, is read the problem, and she would yell that out, you must read the problem! And I'll never forget that until you go out into the world where things are scary. You may not know a lot, but if you just read the problem, you can learn things rather quickly, and so there's something about that spirit of creativity and a willingness to learn and be open-minded that she created I think in all of her students, including me.