## Activity # 4, Advanced Research Activity (Gifted or Honors), The Tuskegee Syphilis Study

**Module Name:** Exploring the Rights of Human Subjects Through a Classic Work In Literature: Daniel Keyes’s *Flowers for Algernon*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class type:</th>
<th>ESOL</th>
<th>ESE</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Gifted</th>
<th>Honors</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>All</th>
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### Objectives for activity:
1. to be able to better understand the inappropriate use of experimental subjects, and its implications.
2. to be able to better understand the ethical conflicts involved in scientific experiments that benefit science and humanity at the expense of a smaller and potentially discriminated against group of people.

### Materials Needed (texts, props, special supplies)
1. access to the Internet.
2. paper and pencil or computer for writing.

### Procedures for Teachers—*What You need to Know/Do*
1. Define the term syphilis for students. Syphilis—is a sexually transmitted disease caused by a bacterial infection known as a spirochete. Syphilis is easily treated, but can have serious complications, including blindness, dementia and eventual death, if not treated soon after infection.
2. Read aloud President Bill Clinton’s apology to the eight remaining survivors of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. (*"The United States government did something that was wrong—deeply, profoundly, morally wrong. It was an outrage to our commitment to integrity and equality for all our citizens... clearly racist."*) Discuss why this apology was important so many years after the experiment was over.
3. Be able to help students search for materials online. Give them the descriptors to do a Google search: “Tuskegee Syphilis Study”; “Tuskegee Hospital Studies”. Refer to the following websites to help students get started on their research.

#### The Tuskegee Syphilis Study:
- [U.S. Public Health Service Syphilis Study at Tuskegee](#)
- [University of Virginia: The Troubling Legacy Of The Tuskegee Syphilis Study](#)
- [NPR: Remembering Tuskegee: Syphilis Study Still Provokes Disbelief, Sadness](#)

### Activity Type -Discussion Questions, Compositions, Small Group, etc.—*What Students Need to Do*
1. Classroom discussion
2. Online research
3. Write a position paper

### Assessment
1. Class participation in discussion.
2. Completion of individual research and writing project and evaluation by teacher.