DEVELOPING A CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Margaret Renn
Do Now

- Please place the item that tells us something about you on the table.

- On the provided index cards, write a literary theme that you use in your classroom. Tape it to the window above the line.

Example: Struggle
What is Culturally Relevant Education?

The Framework

Culturally relevant education is, “a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Ladson-Billings, 1994)

Ladson-Billings, (1995) asserts that culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria or propositions:

a) students must experience academic success,

b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and

c) students must develop critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order.”


What is Culturally Relevant Pedagogy?

The Regenerated Framework

What is Culturally Responsive Teaching?

The Implementation of the Framework

Making standards-based curriculum accessible to students in a way that students can understand through incorporating and relating aspects of students’ daily lives. (Rajagopal, 2011)

“Curriculum content should be chosen and delivered in ways that are directly meaningful to the students for whom it is intended. In some instances, means validating personal experiences and cultural heritages; in others, it means teaching content entirely new to students but in ways that make it easy for them to comprehend.” (Gay, 2000)

Culturally Responsive Teaching:
Not a New Concept

• John Dewey, educational philosopher, *The School and Society*, 1889

  • learning should be based on students’ interests.

  • teachers should connect each student’s life experiences and interests to the existing curriculum.

  • through making connections to students’ experiences would enable students to understand and succeed in the traditional curriculum.
Why teach culturally responsibly?

- Cohen (1979) suggests that, “The classroom environment disadvantages some students, just by the virtue of who they are.” (Race, gender, language immigration status, culture and sexual identity)

- No one teaching strategy consistently engages all learners. The key is to help learners to relate to the content of the lesson to their own experiences (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995).

- Supports building connections, collaborative spirit, empathy, community is the classroom, motivation and engagement (Alber, 2017).


Why teach culturally responsibly?

- Teaching that ignores student experiences, norms and behaviors elicits student resistance, while teaching that is responsive stimulates student engagement (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995).

- Culturally responsive classrooms specifically acknowledge the presence of culturally diverse students and the need for these students to find relevant connections among themselves and with the subject matter.” (Montgomery, 2001)

- Supports building inclusive classrooms to promote and support academic, social and behavioral knowledge and skills. (Montgomery, 2001)

How is Culture Defined?

According to Samovar and Porter (1994), culture refers to the cumulative deposit of
• knowledge,
• experience,
• beliefs,
• values,
• attitudes,
• meanings,
• hierarchies,
• religion, and
• material objects possessions acquired by a group of people

• Gudykunst and Kim (1992) see culture as the systems of knowledge shared by a relatively large group of people.

How is Culture Defined?

Your Who Affects What You Do

- Complete the cultural identity wheel diagram to reflect aspects of your culture identity makeup.

- Use words and/or illustrations.

- Be prepared to share your diagram. Post your diagram on the windows.
Commonalities and Differences

• Write your name on two blue and two green post-it notes.

• Through a Gallery Walk, take a look at your colleagues’ identity wheel diagram.

• Identify **two commonalities** and **two differences**. Place your blue post-it note next to the cultural identity wheel that has commonalities and the green next to the differences.

  • blue – Commonalities
  • green - Differences
Create a culturally inclusive classroom!
Building a Culturally Inclusive Classroom

Learning Within the Context of Culture
• **Vary** teaching strategies (cooperative and independent learning, role-playing, options for demonstrating understanding, community related research projects).
• Teach and talk to students about differences and how those **differences** make learning better.

Culturally Mediated Instruction
• Research and use students’ **preferred learning styles**.
• **Collaboratively set** learning **goals** for projects.
• Create an **environment** the encourages and **embraces culture** (allowing students to share their cultural knowledge and experiences; and question and challenge their beliefs and actions).

Building a Culturally Inclusive Classroom

Reshaping the Curriculum
• Use **primary sources** that provide **alternative viewpoints** or beliefs
• Provide **learning** activities that are more **reflective of** students’ **backgrounds** (integrated thematic units)

Teacher as Facilitator
• **Learn** about students’ **cultures** by having them share artifacts and/or traditions from home that reflect their culture.
• Organize **student directed discussion groups**, literature circles.
• Use **community resources** (guest speaker on application of content in the community, demonstration)

Student Centered Instruction
• Engage students in **generating lists of topics** they wish to study and/or research.
• Create **classroom projects** that involve the **community**.

Teaching Students Using What They Already Know

- Experiences
- Interests
- Traditions
- Histories
- Challenges
- Concerns

Using students’ experiences as valuable tools, not deficits.
How do we get to know the cultural backgrounds of our students?

- Surveys
- Questionnaires
- Conversation with students and families
- Artifacts/Primary Sources
Types of Artifacts

- Objects
- Documents
- Images
Make Meaning of Artifacts

Deconstruct.....the artifact

Decode......the deconstructed parts of the artifact

Construct .....meaning, understanding
Images

- What do you see?

- What time period does this image depict? What makes you say so?

- What event is depicted in the image created? What makes you say so?

- What can you tell about the person based on this image? What makes you say so?

- What was accidentally captured in the image?

What can you tell about the person that owns this image and why it might be important to him/her?
Objects

- Of what is this object made? How can you tell?

- Describe the object. Color, Shape, Estimated Size. What are the distinguishing features on the object?

- How do you think this object might be used? How can you tell?

- When do you think this object might have been used? How can you tell?

- Who might used this object? How can you tell?

- Put all these observations together.

What can you tell about the person that owns this object and why it might be important to him/her?
Documents

1. Unique physical qualities of the document
   ____Interesting letterhead  ____Stamp  ____Seal
   ____Handwritten  ____Foreign Language  ____Other
   ____Typed

2. Type of Document: (check one)
   ____Letter  ____Advertisement  ____Census Report
   ____Newspaper  ____Telegram  ____Map
   ____Identification Certificate  ____Other ______

3. Date/Period of Document ____________________________
   Evidence:

4. What information is found in the document?

5. What information do you know about the person from the document? or What do you know from the document?

   What can you tell about the person that owns this document and why it might be important to him/her?
Your turn...

Select one artifact from the table and use the object, document or image strategy to answer the following?

What can you tell about the person that owns this item and why it might be important to him/her?
Sharing our findings.
Connecting to the curriculum

To what theme(s) do you connect based on the artifact you brought?

Write your name on a Post-It Note(s) and tape it under the theme(s) to which you connect.

(Can be more than one.)
What to do with this information?

• Make a bulletin board based on the information shared. (Knowing our colleagues/classmates)

• Mirror and window text selection.

• Connect to curriculum - LAL unit/literary themes.
Using Student Artifacts

- Getting to know your students at the beginning of the year.

- Theme based student artifacts before each unit.
Thank you!

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Create descriptive labels</strong> for the portrait and each object in the portrait.</th>
<th><strong>Create a life size profile of the person</strong> using the objects to help tell their story. Include who they are, their perspective and experiences.</th>
<th><strong>Write a story</strong> (specify length) using the person as the main character and objects within the appropriate historical context.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draw/paint the objects and create an exhibition.</strong> The exhibition must have a purpose (thesis), story, and labels.</td>
<td><strong>Create a bumper sticker</strong> or buggy sticker that describes the person’s perspective, experiences.</td>
<td><strong>Write</strong> and perform a <strong>skit/monologue.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Add objects</strong> to the painting that tells more about the life of a Civil War soldier’s experiences.</td>
<td><strong>Write</strong> and perform a <strong>song</strong> about the person’s role in the Civil War, post-Civil War.</td>
<td><strong>Write a diary entry</strong> (specify length) from the perspective of the person.</td>
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