Social Justice and Culturally Responsive Teaching

TEACHER TOOLBOX WORKSHOP SERIES
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DR. CAMP
Overview

- Changing demographics
- Social justice
- Culturally relevant pedagogy
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Culturally sustaining pedagogy
- Competencies of culturally responsive teaching
- Characteristics of social justice and culturally responsive teaching
- Benefits of culturally responsive teaching
Circles of my multicultural self
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1. Share a story about a time you were especially proud to identify yourself with one of the descriptors.

2. Share a story about a time it was especially painful to be identified with one of your identifiers or descriptors.

3. Name a stereotype associated with one of the groups with which you identify that is not consistent with who you are.

4. Fill in the following sentence:
   I am (a/an) _______ but I am NOT (a/an)________.
Changing demographics of the U.S.
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- **White:**
  - Largest in the U.S.
  - 204.3 million (8.6% decrease)
- **Multiracial:**
  - 33.8 million (276% increase)
- **Black or African American:**
  - 46.9 million
- **Some Other Race alone or in combination:**
  - 49.9 million (129% increase)
- **Asian:**
  - 24 million
- **Indigenous and Alaska Native:**
  - 9.7 million
- **Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander:**
  - 1.6 million
- **Hispanic or Latino:**
  - 62.1 million
  - 23% increase

U.S. Census Bureau (2021)
Social justice

• Promotes fairness and equitable opportunities for all
• Promotes access to resources, equity, participation, diversity, and human rights
Culturally relevant pedagogy

• Coined by Gloria Ladson-Billings (2009)
  o Form of teaching that calls for engaging learners whose experiences and cultures are traditionally excluded from mainstream settings

• Goals:
  1. Teaching must yield academic success
  2. Teaching must help students develop positive ethnic and cultural identities while simultaneously helping them achieve academically
  3. Teaching must support students’ ability to recognize, understand, and critique current and social inequalities
Culturally responsive teaching

• Coined by Geneva Gay (2010)
  o Focused on the *doing* of teaching
• “Using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them.” (p.31)
• Make positive changes:
  o Instructional techniques and materials; student-teacher relationships; classroom climate; and self-awareness to improve learning for students
• Asset-based view of students is fundamental
• Providing opportunities for students to think critically about inequities
Culturally sustaining pedagogy

- Coined by Django Paris (2014)
  - An approach that considers the many ways learners' identity and culture evolve
- Culturally sustaining educators draw and sustain students’ culture
- **Goal:**
  - Supporting multilingualism and multiculturalism in practice and perspective for students and teachers
  - Promotes asset-based approaches as alternatives to deficit-oriented teaching methods
Figure 1: Eight Competencies for Culturally Responsive Teaching

1. Reflect on one's cultural lens
2. Recognize and redress bias in the system
3. Communicate in linguistically and culturally responsive ways
4. Draw on students’ culture to shape curriculum and instruction
5. Collaborate with families and the local community
6. Bring real-world issues into the classroom
7. Promote respect for student differences
8. Model high expectations for all students
Competency 1: Reflect on one’s cultural lens

- Self-awareness
  - Identity
  - Worldview
- Self-awareness
  - Biases and assumptions
- Understand how internalized biases impact instruction and interactions
- Stereotypes
- Microaggressions:
  - Microassault
  - Microinsult
  - Microinvalidation
Competency 2: Recognize and redress bias in the system

- Understand bias at the different levels:
  - Personal and institutional or systemic
- Understand how identity influences the educational opportunities that students receive
- Advocate for the dismantling of systemic injustices
- Implications of unawareness of institutional barriers
Competency 3: Draw on students’ culture to share curriculum and instruction

- Using cultural scaffolding
  - Connecting new academic concepts to students’ background knowledge
- Evaluate textbooks and instructional materials
- Complement the curriculum with appropriate/accurate examples
Competency 4: Bring real-world issues into the classroom

- Address the “so what?” factor of instruction
  - What does this material have to do with your lives?
  - Does this knowledge connect to an issue you care about?
  - How can you use this information to take action?
- Assignments require learners to identify and propose solutions to complex issues
- Ensure learning happens inside and outside of the classroom
Competency 5: Model high expectations for all students

- Understand certain populations are vulnerable to negative stereotypes
- Maintain belief that all students can meet high expectations if given proper support and scaffolding
- Do not allow students to disengage from learning
- Help students develop high expectations for themselves
- Ensure all students have access to a rigorous core curriculum

“Nobody rises to low expectations.”
-Calvin Loyd
Competency 6: Promote respect for students’ differences

- Foster learning environments that are respectful, inclusive, and affirming
- **Model** how to engage across differences and respect diversity
- Assess how learners from different backgrounds might experience the environment
- Encourage students to reflect on their own experience with bias
- Help students value their own and others' cultures
- Help students develop a sense of responsibility for addressing prejudice and mistreatment
Competency 7:
Collaborate with families and the local community

• Assume parents/guardians are interested in being involved
• Remove barriers to family engagement
• Be mindful of past trauma
• Establish trust of families of color and low-socioeconomic families to foster engagement
• Learn more about the local community
• Learn more about families’ cultures, values, and expectations for their children’s education
• Collaborate with local agencies and organizations
Competency 8: Communicate in linguistically and culturally responsive ways

- Communicate in culturally and linguistically sensitive ways
- Consider the communication styles of your students
- Understand how culture influences communication (verbal and non-verbal)
- Honor and accommodate multilingual students and families
- Advocate for services and resources in various languages
Characteristics of social justice and culturally responsive teachers

- Develop cultural competence
- Care about and value each child
- Adapt curriculum; relate to students’ backgrounds
- Establish connections with families
- Establish connections with local communities
- Seek to understand students’ cultural experiences
- Recognize cultural differences as strengths
- Use culture as a vehicle for learning
- Celebrate the unique contributions of every child
- Are creative
- Create shared learning experiences
- Help students understand their roles as change agents in society
- Cultivate sociopolitical awareness in students
- Are intentional
Benefits of culturally responsive teaching

• A way of closing the achievement and discipline gaps
• Connects the curriculum, classroom instruction, and the social, cultural, and economic environment
• Views culture as strength which can be leveraged
• Fosters broader sociopolitical consciousness
• Fosters space for discussing social change
• Encourages students to think critically about social issues
• Engages students in meaningful activism to produce positive social change
• Fosters space for discussing social change and social justice
• Encourages students to engage in civic and social justice initiatives (i.e. volunteering, civic missions)
Reflection video

Showing up: Conversations about social justice in the classroom
In social justice and culturally responsive classrooms, all students are valued, and their contributions are recognized!


Milner 1V, H. R. (2017). Where’s the race in culturally relevant pedagogy? Teachers College Record, 119,1-32

References

• Culturally responsive teaching: Reflection guide
• Edutopia: Culturally responsive teaching
• Culturally responsive instruction: Resource list
• Culturally Responsive Classroom: Self-Assessment
• Culturally responsive pedagogy: Self-assessment and Reflection