Culturally Responsive Classrooms

A Toolkit for Educators

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July 28, 2010

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Preface

Imagine that you are a 9th grade math teacher in an urban school district. Over the past few years, you have noticed that that the diversity in your classroom has increased. You would like to respond to this increasing diversity by making sure that all students feel welcome in your classroom. However, you are not exactly certain how to accomplish this task. You want to include the cultural backgrounds of your students in lesson plans but do not want to make incorrect assumptions about their cultural beliefs and traditions, you want to use appropriate discipline practices but do not always understand the behavior of your students, and you want to include your students' families in the classroom activities but want to be certain that this is done respectfully.

This resource book has been created to help teachers create and shape culturally responsive classrooms. Given that the diversity in schools and classrooms is increasing, teachers are now in a position to learn more about their students in order to meet their needs within the classroom setting (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009). Some common questions include:

- What is culture?
- How diverse are school settings today?
- How do I find out about my students' cultural backgrounds in a respectful manner that provides me with accurate information?
- How do I come to understand my own cultural thoughts and beliefs?
- How do I incorporate students' families into my educational practices?
- What if I do not understand why my students are behaving in a particular manner?
- How do I build a trusting classroom environment where everyone feels welcome?
- How can I help my students become more engaged in classroom lessons?
- What discipline practices are appropriate?

These are all common questions asked by teachers. It is the goal of this resource to help answer some of these questions to help teachers build culturally responsive classrooms.

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our gratitude for those who helped to make this resource possible:

We would like to thank Dr. Mary Margaret Kerr, Dr. Fred Fowler, and Mr. Mike Valenti, without whom this work would not have been possible. We would also like to thank Dr. Rhonda Taliaferro for giving us the opportunity to assist with this important undertaking. We would like to thank Mr. Renauld Stevens whose valuable insight and guidance allowed us to gain a realistic perspective of the experiences of African American students. Last but certainly not least, we would like to extend our thanks to Ms. Connie Palmer and the Differentiated Instruction class at the University of Pittsburgh for their collaboration and support.

Glossary

Behavior Intervention	The anticipation of behavioral concerns before they arise to allow for the time and opportunity to prevent the concerns from occurring (Cartledge et al., 2009).
Bias	A preference or an inclination, especially one that hinders fair judgment
Bullying	Any act of repeated aggressive behavior in order to intentionally hurt another person, physically, emotionally, or mentally.
Collaboration	Working as a team
Community of Learners	A classroom in which students support each other and work together as a community rather than individual units, each taking stock in the others' behaviors and academics.
Connected/School Connectedness	Definitions include "students' attitude and motivation toward school and learning, the degree to which students felt they were liked at school, and students' commitment, involvement, and belief in school rules…students' perceptions of being accepted by the school and identifying themselves as being part of school" (Frydenberg, Care, Freeman, & Chan, 2009, p. 264).
Cultural Artifacts	The music, fashion, and art that we can see within a group.
Cultural Competence	Refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures.
Cultural Norms	Expectations of what represents "proper" and "improper" behavior in certain situations.
Cultural Values	Set of priorities; good vs. bad; fair vs. unfair; right & wrong.
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD)	Students who come from non-majority cultural backgrounds.

Culturally-shared Beliefs	Essential assumptions that people hold closely and without question.
Culturally-shared Traditions	Myths, legends, ceremonies or rituals.
Discipline	A practice that creates an orderly environment.
Disciplinary Disproportionality	An overrepresentation of minorities, often African Americans, in the use of disciplinary, exclusionary, and punitive consequences
Disproportionality	The representation of a group in a category that exceeds our expectations for that group, or differs substantially from the representation of others in that category (Skiba et al., 2008).
"Education of the Whole Child"	Learning that "encourages all children to learn, work, and contribute to their fullest potential" (Elias, 2003, p. 6).
English Language Learners (ELL)	Children whose primary language is not English.
Impulse Control	Ability to refrain from acting on one's impulses or thoughts (American Psychological Association, 2000).
Modeling	"Demonstration of expected behaviors" (Bagnato, 2009, p. 89).
National Council for Social Studies (NCSS)	An organization created "…to teach students the content knowledge, intellectual skills, and civic values necessary for fulfilling the duties of citizenship in a participatory democracy. The mission of National Council for the Social Studies is to provide leadership, service, and support for all social studies educators" (Schneider et. al., 1994).
Opportunities to Respond (OTR)	Chances presented to students in an effort to engage them within the classroom.
Pedagogy	Study or style of teaching.

Peer Tutoring/Cooperative Learning	Grouping students into pairs or small groups in order to accomplish a classroom activity or task (Cartledge et al., 2009).
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)	Proactive, positive approach to reducing problem behaviors.
Punishment	A consequence delivered after a negative behavior in order to decrease the frequency and/or severity of the problem.
Regulating Emotions/Emotion Regulation	Ability to cope with an emotion, such as anger or sadness, in a way that avoids "an intensity of emotion that is excessive or inappropriate to the situation" (Beck, 1995, p. 94).
Reinforce/Reinforcement	"Consequential events that follow a behavior can serve to increase or decrease its probability of occurrence" (Bagnato, 2009, p. 208).
Risk Index	"The percentage of a given racial/ethnic group that is serviced in special education…Number of total students in group X in special education/Total enrollment of students in group X" (Skiba, 2009, p. 17).
Risk Ratios	"A comparison of the risk indexes of different groups…Risk of group X in special education/Risk of all other groups in special education" (Skiba, 2009, p. 17).
Socio-Economic Status (SES)	An indicator of social class and/or poverty status that often references income and parental education.
Social-Emotional Learning	"The process of developing the ability to recognize and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations effectively" (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2003, para. 1).
Social Skills	Socially approved behavior that allows a person to meet his or her social needs while contributing to the social needs of others.

Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)	SPLC is "a nonprofit civil rights organization dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry, and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of society" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2010, para. 1).
Standards Aligned System (SAS)	"A comprehensive approach to support student achievement across the Commonwealth" (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2010, para. 1).
Student Interpersonal Skills (SIS)	Commonwealth of Pennsylvania standard for developing social skills.
Teaching Diverse Students Initiative (TDSI)	Promoted by the Southern Poverty Law Center, the initiative "helps educators…by providing research-based resources for improving the teaching of racially and ethnically diverse students" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2010, para. 1).
Warm Demander	A teacher who has high expectations and supports, encourages, and affirms students in order to meet those expectations.

Introduction

Melissa H. Castle

Objectives

This chapter references Cartledge recommendations:

- Cultural Competence: I.1, I.3, I.5

After reading this chapter, teachers will be able to:

- Understand the background and significance of….
  - Disciplinary disproportionality and what is being done to address this problem
  - The research-based tools, facts, and figures contained within this resource
- Learn how to utilize this resource to….
  - Incorporate empirically supported information into daily practice
  - Implement the activities within this guide
  - Effect change within your classroom and school
  - Evaluate your own progress as you move through each chapter
- Clarify what this resource is *not* meant to accomplish

Questions for Consideration

- How often do you think of culture when considering your teaching practice?
- What are the four most common reasons students are sent to the office? Suspended from your school?
- Think of the four children most frequently disciplined in your classroom.
  - Who are they?
  - Where are they from?
  - What do they do well?
  - For what behavior are they sent to the office?

- What do you do to address this?
- What can you learn about *them* that might decrease their misbehavior?
- What can you learn about *yourself & your practice* that might decrease their misbehavior?
-

This Toolkit

In May of 2010, students from the University of Pittsburgh's Professional Seminar in School-Based Behavioral Health began meeting to identify and develop culturally responsive resources for educators. The primary background for this work was provided by Gwendolyn Cartledge's work (Cartledge, 2009b). This report helped us target three important areas for culturally responsive instruction:

1. Cultural awareness about African American students
2. Positive behavioral supports for African American students
3. Social skills interventions for African American students

In response to this challenge, our team decided to create a professional development toolkit that provides teachers with knowledge, cultural awareness activities, thought questions, and resources to promote culturally responsive teaching within their classrooms. This toolkit is designed for use in teacher preparation classes, new teacher induction, professional development sessions in schools, and by individual teachers wishing to learn more about culturally responsive education strategies, behavioral supports, and social skill interventions for African American students.

How This Toolkit Was Developed

Students engaged in an extensive review of the literature, as reflected in the additional resources provided and reference lists for each content area. Finally, students consulted with community leaders, school officials, educators in the field of differentiated instruction,

and mental health professionals within, seeking their advice on differentiation strategies and diversity education.

How this Toolkit is Organized

This toolkit is divided into six chapters, each exploring a different aspect of culturally responsive instruction. The beginning of each chapter includes a short annotation indicating the *Cartledge Recommendations* that the chapter will reference (Cartledge, 2009a). These annotations may be utilized to guide professional development. The Cartledge recommendations will be followed by several *Objectives* that will clarify each content area's learning and performance goals. Every chapter will then posit several *Questions for Consideration* that users should contemplate both before and throughout the duration of the chapter. These questions will be followed by a *Background* section that will illustrate the history, importance, and data driving each chapter. Each chapter will also include a section on *Classroom Implementation*, which will discuss best practices, ideas, tips, common problems, and helpful suggestions associated with the implementation of each content area. Towards the end of each chapter, a *Summary and Reflection* section will help consolidate and assess your progress through each chapter. Finally, an *Additional Resource* section within each chapter includes supplementary resources that may be particularly useful.

Appendix A includes a series of *Professional Development Activities* that will help educators and teachers further explore each content area. Each professional development activity is accompanied by a *Facilitator's Guide*, which recommends how each activity is to be implemented.

Finally, *Appendix B* provides additional materials addressing culturally responsive discipline. This section includes several case studies of culturally unresponsive educators, which are paired with brief discussion guides to help facilitate conversation and learning. Appendix B also includes short, specific suggestions for how to incorporate cultural diversity within your daily practice. Information is provided regarding risk ratios and

suggestions for using these ratios to target professional development within your school and teaching practices.

Why This Toolkit is Necessary

Our overall goal is to create a professional development resource for teachers with the hopes of decreasing disproportionality in disciplinary practices. Disciplinary disproportionality is defined as an overrepresentation of minorities, often African Americans, in the use of disciplinary, exclusionary, and punitive consequences (Skiba, Michael, & Nardo, 2000). Historically, African American children are referred for disciplinary action two to three times more frequently than white children, independent of the ethnic population of the school (Children's Defense Fund, 1975). These same children are often punished more severely for *less serious* offenses. Punishable infractions for African American children are more vague than those for white children, suggesting that perceptions, cultural misunderstandings, or communication problems between teachers and African American students may contribute to this problem.

Racial disproportionality in school suspension is a consistent trend within the United States. Most studies considering race have found an overrepresentation of African American children receiving disciplinary action when compared to actions administered to white children. African American children are more frequently disciplined with harsher disciplinary techniques than their white counterparts (Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2009). While African American boys are only 30% more likely than white boys to receive office referrals, these same children are 330% more likely to be suspended or expelled. Gender seems to factor into the disparity as well, as African American females are nearly twice as likely to receive an office referral than their white female classmates, and nearly five times more likely to be suspended or expelled (Gregory, 1996, Wallace et. al., 2009). Further, overrepresentation of African Americans appears to increase almost linearly as suspension and expulsion disciplinary tactics are used more frequently (Advancement Project, 2000; Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1986). Although overall

rates of disciplinary action have decreased in the past ten years, African Americans' school disciplinary rates have increased or remained consistent (Wallace et. al., 2009). While these disparities are a problem throughout all grades, they seem to be greatest within elementary schools with suspensions rates of African American children climbing to nearly 6 times greater than their white counterparts (Skiba & Rausch, 2006).

Top Four Reasons For Office Referral

Caucasian Students	**African American Students**
Smoking	Disrespect
Leaving School	Excessive Noise
Vandalism	Threat
Obscene Language	Loitering

So, why do these disparities exist? First, some posit that disproportionality may be a result of the overuse of discipline among low-income students. Although poor students are more likely to have disciplinary problems, research suggests that that race continues to be a much stronger predictor of school suspension than poverty. This finding suggests that there is something about *African American* disciplinary processes causing disciplinary disproportionality. Some have suggested that this difference may be a response to greater rates of disruptive behavior among African American children; however, numerous studies find *no evidence* that African American students act out at a higher rate than their white counterparts. This lack of evidence suggests that disciplinary rates should be nearly equal among the two races, although disproportionality statistics suggest otherwise (Skiba, Michael, & Nardo, 2000).

It is also possible that disproportionate disciplinary practices are rooted in children's academic deficiencies, classroom management style, lack of cultural responsiveness, or cultural and communicative misunderstandings. If a teacher is unable to respond to diverse learners within his or her classroom, he or she may resort to disciplinary actions more frequently. Finally, it is possible that disproportionate disciplinary practices may be an extension of the institutional racism seen in today's society. Regardless of the source,

disproportionality needs to be addressed to promote and obtain equity in educational practices (Skiba, Michael, & Nardo, 2000).

In response, this toolkit provides a professional development resource for educators that is directed at promoting cultural awareness, using positive behavior support, and implementing social skills interventions between educators and their African American students. In doing so, this document will help specifically address issues of educational and disciplinary equality for African American students.

Culturally responsive and disciplined schools exhibit fair and equitable behavior management strategies, social skills instruction, caring, positive affirmations, and commitment (Cartledge et al., 2009).

Limitations of this Resource

This resource was developed to provide teachers and administrators with a toolkit for culturally responsive teaching, education, and discipline. Many of the posited sources behind disciplinary disproportionality are embedded within the areas addressed by this toolkit; however, there are many aspects of culturally responsive education that this project could not address. Nevertheless, we hope that this toolkit will provide teachers and administrators with a resource to support culturally responsive, research-based professional development training for educators who would like to address disproportionate disciplinary practices, to promote educational equity for all students regardless of race, and to confront incidences of bias within the classrooms, school, and district.

Summary

This project aims to provide teachers with knowledge, cultural awareness activities, thought questions, and resources to become increasingly culturally responsive educators. This resource is targeted towards African American students, and addresses three key domains: cultural awareness, positive behavioral supports, and social skills interventions. We hope you find this resource useful and informative, and invite you to embark upon this journey with us.

We aim to empower teachers to challenge educational inequity stemming from cultural differences.

Reflection Questions

- How might considering culture in your daily teaching, interaction, and disciplinary actions help promote educational equity for African American students?
- What evidence of disciplinary disproportionality do you see within your school? Your school district?
- What percent of African American students do you expect are suspended in your district every school year? What percent of Euro-American students?
- What might be some of the reasons that disciplinary disproportionality exists in your school? In your district?

Additional Resources

Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., & Nardo, A. C. (2000). *The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment* (Policy Research Report #SRS1). Retrieved from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Indiana Education Policy Center website: http://www.indiana.edu/~safeschl/cod.pdf

An excellent read for those wanting more information, data, and evidence for the sources behind disciplinary disproportionality, this article reviews the empirical evidence behind disproportionality statistics. Although this history is rich and detailed, little is known about the sources behind these discrepancies. As such, the authors investigate three questions:

1. *To what extent is disproportionality a statistical or methodological problem?*
2. *Are these disparities explained by differences in socioeconomic status?*
3. *Do higher rates of misbehavior explain higher rates of discipline?*

Results suggest that the overrepresentation of African American males in diciplinary action may be evidence of widespread and deeply embedded bias.

Valenti, Michael. *Sample Risk Ratio Report.* Retrieved from https://courseweb.pitt.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id=_2_1&url=%2fwebapps%2fblackboard%2fexecute%2flauncher%3ftype%3dCourse%26id%3d_22785_1%26url%3d.

Risk-ratios are helpful in identifying when disciplinary disproportionality may be occurring in your school. A risk-ratio can help us compare the proportion of African American children to the proportion of white children who receive referrals. This helps us determine whether one group of children is disciplined more frequently than another (proportionately). This document will help you understand what goes into a risk ratio report, and how risk ratios are calculated.

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Wallace, J.M., Jr., Goodkind, S.G., Wallace, C.M., Bachman, J. (In Press). Racial/Ethnic and Gender Differences in School Discipline among American High School Students: 1991-2005. Negro Educational Review

Chapter 1: Important Concepts to Guide Culturally Responsive Practice

Ashley M. Hurley

Objectives

This chapter references Cartledge recommendations (2009):

- Cultural Competence: I.1

After reading this chapter, teachers will be able to:

- Understand why it is important to value diversity and have the capacity for cultural self-awareness.
- Recognize the different roles within the dimensions of culture.
- Understand what steps to take to remain culturally aware within the classroom.
- Recognize the different dynamics that are involved when cultures interact and know what steps to take to remain neutral.

Questions for Consideration

- Why is it important for educators to be aware of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity?
- What are the potential dangers of educators being color-blind and otherwise pretending that groups are not culturally different?
- How does my view as an educator of diversity and culture influence my assessment, curriculum and instruction?
- How can I become a culturally responsive educator?

Helpful Hint: Try to answer these questions as you read through the guide.

Background Information

To begin to understand the racial and ethnic diversity within the United States, you must first review some demographical data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau for the 2006-2008 year. Then, the U.S. data will be compared with the Pennsylvania 2006-2008 racial and ethnic data.

United States

United States Demographics	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total:	301,237,703	****
White alone	223,965,009	+/- 63,750
Black or African American alone	37,131,771	+/- 28,694
American Indian & Alaska Native alone	2,419,895	+/- 14,633
Asian alone	13,164,169	+/- 17,493
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander alone	446,164	+/- 6,518
Some other race alone	17,538,990	+/- 58,473

When reviewing the data provided for the United States racial and ethnic demographics, you can see that when comparing the population of Caucasian to African American races, there is a 186,833,238 difference in the population.

- In the 2006-2008 Census data, there was an estimate of 74.3% of Caucasian Americans, 12.3 % of African Americans, 5.8 % of Other, 4.4 % of Asian, 0.8 % of American Indian and Alaskan Natives, and 0.1 % of Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.

With all of this being shown, you can see that whether you're comparing the whole United States or just one state within, there is a relatively larger number of Caucasians compared to the African American, American Indian & Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander as well as other. Before getting into the bulk of this chapter, it is important to note a couple of important demographics provided by Cartledge, Gardner, and Ford (2009):

- The teaching population is homogenous and is decreasing in racial and ethnic diversity; and
- The typical teacher in a public school is a European American female of the middle class status.

These demographical statistics will help you to notice the number of students you may have in class that are of a particular race and how predominant that race is within your country, your state, or even your city. Now, we can discuss some further concepts that will help guide your practice. To begin, you need to understand what exactly what is meant by *disproportionality*. Disproportionality is when one group is under or over represented when compared to a larger population (Skiba et al., 2008). For example, if you are comparing a classroom for disciplinary differences that has a population of 40% African American and 60% Caucasian students and your data shows that for the same offenses your African American students are being disciplined at a higher rate compared to your Caucasian students, there is a disproportion in disciplinary actions. Understanding disproportionality will help you to be culturally aware and help you as a teacher to recognize your own biases.

According to Day-Vines and Day-Hairston (2005), disproportionately higher rates of discipline can be attributed to a number of ecological factors, including cultural conflicts and misunderstandings between the student's culture of origin and school. Students in areas where poverty is prominent tend to have schools where teachers have little

experience or expertise and a small teaching force in general (Day-Vines & Day-Hairston, 2005).

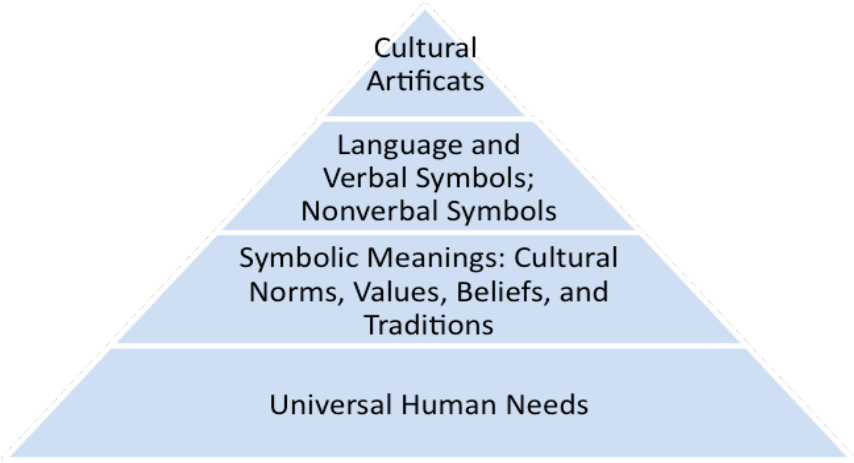
Also, teachers in these areas tend to spend less time on developing reasoning skills and are more likely to rely on worksheets as a teaching force. What is taught within the upcoming sections will allow you to see how teaching from a worksheet alone or developing teaching mechanisms that allow for little interaction with your students, can have poor affects on students, especially for some in a specific cultural context. For example, those who tend to work in a more collectivist nature may have difficulty learning from worksheets where your focus is to learn alone. Using this information can help you to step out of that mold and bring awareness of culture and diversity as well as differentiated instruction into your classrooms.

The next paragraphs will provide you with the information necessary to help guide your practice with the tools on how to be a culturally responsive educator as well as the concepts and dimensions of culture. Here you will learn how to define what culture is and how a person can operate within their own culture. With so many definitions and interpretations, how do we define culture? When you think of your own culture, perhaps something about your values and beliefs or even your family's traditions comes to mind. You are creating your own definition about what culture is and what meaning it has to you.

So how is culture defined if there are so many different interpretations one can have within their own group? To begin, culture tends to represent the learned systems from within a society. For example, an American traditional culture as defined by Day-Vines and Day-Hairston (2005) endorses such things as competition, individualism, and nuclear family constellations, whereas an African American culture tends to value collectivism and extended family networks. A great way to look at culture is to view the iceberg analogy. This analogy evokes a personal interpretation by the reader.

- Iceberg Analogy: Part above the surface represents cultural artifacts and the part below the surface is the invisible culture or deep culture, which includes traditions,

beliefs, values, norms and symbolic meanings (Cartledge et al., 2009). Try to think of what *your* iceberg would like look.



Source can be located in Cartledge et al., 2009, p. 13

When people are ignorant of others cultural beliefs, traditions, or values, this dissonance can produce what scholars call "unintentional clashes" (Cartledge et al., 2009). This clash happens when one group does not understand the symbolic meanings or language of another group's culture. Think about what you would do if you have a student whose culture does not believe in eating certain foods on certain days, and your school only provides the "standard" lunches for those certain days. What would you as a teacher do to help adhere to this student's cultural need? The lunch problem will probably catch the attention of your students. Again, keep in mind that you should resolve any issues arising from a cultural situation and explain to the children that neither is right or wrong, but rather a cultural belief. Keep this in mind along with the other questions for consideration.

After understanding at least one of the many definitions of culture and keeping in mind how you will resolve issues that may arise within the classroom over cultural beliefs and traditions, what steps can you take to become a culturally responsive educator? In order for you as a teacher to provide an effective multicultural curriculum you need to remain aware of the diversity within the classroom as well as account for any hidden biases you may have. You need to avoid being judgmental, recognize cultural communication and language differences, remain knowledgeable and above all else, avoid attempting to be color-blind (Cartledge et al., 2009). To become culturally competent, you need to develop

meaningful relationships with your students. Get to know students on a personal level; incorporate their families to participate and get involved with school activities; and advocate for respect within your classroom.

The interventions named below are designed and evaluated based on research that is related to best practices in instruction, educational leadership, academics, and behavioral problems. Culturally and linguistically responsive practices are also presented in order to best reduce the risk of inequity (Skiba et al., 2008). Remember that not all of these interventions may be relevant within your specific classroom; however, knowing and understanding them may help you to remain aware of the dynamics in your classroom. These practices include:

- **Teacher Preparation**: More specifically, raising the awareness of the potential for cultural mismatch. Cultural mismatch occurs when teachers lack the skills necessary to interact with students who are different than themselves or recognize these differences as okay. According to Skiba et al. (2008), this potential discord highlights the importance of teacher training in cultural responsive pedagogy.
- **Improved Behavior Management:** This intervention recognizes that the classroom structure and lack of effective behavior management may play a role in the disproportionate referrals to the office from teachers. When teachers are more culturally responsive they can recognize ways in which to respond appropriately to classroom disruptions or behavioral outbursts.
- **Family and Community Involvement**: As a culturally responsive educator, you will want to involve parent engagement in classroom and school activities. According to Skiba et al., (2008) enabling parent involvement will allow teachers to assess their own levels of cross-cultural competency as they engage in interactions with culturally diverse families. More on this topic can be found in Chapter 3.

To become a culturally competent teacher, you need to be able to recognize diversity within your classroom in order to interact with your students in an unbiased way. Below

are several tips provided by Cartledge and Kourea (2008) that can help reduce bias in your student-teacher interactions.

- Increase your understanding of the vital relationship between culture and social behavior. These two can be easily confused if you as an educator are not aware of the differences as well as how a relationship can exist between them.
- Realize children differ and are at risk for having their actions misperceived and judged unfairly, particularly students who differ from the mainstream. For example, there may be cultural miscommunication differences or concept of time differences.
- Have a keen awareness of your own culture as well as that of your students.
- Recognize that your cultural views are not absolute.
- Possess self awareness and understand how your beliefs and biases can affect you teaching
- Make conscious efforts to get to know your students on a more personal level to help understand their cultural backgrounds.
- Keep a positive and affirming environment in your classroom, and believe that regardless of a child's background, the child has the ability to make progress.

> ***"We can affirm success or we can affirm failure by what we say" (Wynn, 1992, p. 97).***

Keep in mind "that our actions towards young people can help them think of themselves as achievers or potential failures" (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008, p. 354). These tips can help you provide a multicultural curriculum and help you to remain culturally aware of any bias you may have. To further your understanding of diversity in the classroom, you need to have an understanding of the *five functions and dimensions of culture* and be able to provide appropriate teaching techniques and strategies related to each.

What Function Does Culture Serve?

According to Ting-Toomy (1999) and Ting-Toomey and Oertzel (2001, 2006), there are five main functions that culture serves. These include identity, group inclusion, intergroup boundary regulation, ecological adaptations, and cultural communication functions.

1. **Identity Meaning Function**: Identity refers to what is important within oneself; the beliefs, norms, and values that a culture attributes meaning to through their identity. Each culture has its own specific characteristics. What one culture may value may not be recognized amongst other cultures. Most importantly this function answers the questions of "Who am I?" and "How do I identify myself?" This knowledge allows you to place yourself in a cultural group or know what you value and believe to provide significance to your own identity.

2. **Group Inclusion Function:** This function values group membership and bonding experiences that serve to satisfy one's need for belonging. This function allows each culture to build their own safety spot within which they interact with others and value people's experiences. According to Cartledge et al. (2009), there are two types of comfort zones:

   - Within group: Safety, inclusion, and acceptance
   - Out group: Defend, justify and/or explain our actions, alert, "stand out," and conflicts arise

   You may be able to determine which out of these "comfort zones" you tend to fit in within your own culture. It is important to understand and recognize these different functions so that you can be culturally aware.

3. **Intergroup Boundary Regulation Function:** This function allows you to determine how to deal with others who are culturally different than you. Our own culture allows us to form opinions on other cultures that may be positive or negative. This process is similar to the way you form first impressions on someone. You may already have an idea of what you believe another cultural group may be like without actually understanding where they come from or what they value. This function can lead to a series of violations of norms, such as being misunderstood or unaccepted by others (Cartledge et al., 2009).

4. **Ecological Adaptation Function:** This function explains how cultures can adjust to change within one self, to one's community, and to the greater community at large. Cartledge et al. (2009) state that culture is dynamic rather than static, meaning that cultures can be active engagers rather than stand alone and fixed.

5. **Cultural Communication Function:** This function is extremely important and can lead to huge biases among cultures. There are several different communication styles that can be seen as specific attributes from one culture to the next. Not understanding or being aware of these may lead to misunderstandings. For example, if you have a student within your class who tends to work through his worksheets or test problems aloud rather than silently, he may be a verbal communicator. If you as a teacher aren't aware of this cultural communication, you may view him as defiant and acting out. It is extremely important to keep yourself aware of the different communication styles as well as language styles within each culture.

Dimensions of Culture

The section below will provide you with more information on how to guide your practice and to remain culturally aware. In addition to the five functions of culture, there are *five main dimensions of culture* (Cartledge et al., 2009). The following sections will describe these five dimensions will be described and break them down into more detailed parts.

1. **Concept of Self:** This dimension includes how you view yourself, how you identify with your own personal identity. For example, do you believe that you are one who values working independently and believes that time is a commodity that we must take advantage of, or are you more willing to go with the flow and work problems out within a group setting, such as calling your family for solutions to a problem. More specifically, there are two different styles that cultures typically identify with:

    - *Individualism*: You identify with yourself first and make sure you needs are satisfied before anyone else's are. You are more independent and self-sufficient and value your individualism.

- *Collectivism*: You identify with your membership within a group. Your role is to make sure the well-being of everyone within your circle is taken care of before you are. Cartledge et al. (2009), looks at this as the "we-us-our" orientation within the group.

2. **Personal vs. Social Responsibility:** This dimension is the general argument one has with oneself about how to juggle personal responsibilities such as family, friends, etc. with responsibility for community and the larger public. There are two sides that people typically fall:

   - *Universalism:* Universalism is when a person believes that no matter what is going on in a person's life, there are absolutes that need to be followed and applied. Deviating from these absolutes is not allowed –a rule is in place for a reason and it should be applied in all situations regardless. Exceptions should not be made, no matter the circumstance and all rules should apply to each person equally. For example, if a police officer gets arrested for driving under the influence, this universalism perspective believes that whether you are a law enforcement officer or not the rule clearly states you must be taken into custody for appearing under the influence of a substance – no if, ands or buts about it.
   - *Particularism:* Particularism is when a rule can be broken depending on the circumstance. Something may need to be altered or changed considering the situation and there may need to be exceptions to the rules. According to Cartledge et al. (2009), the belief here is that exceptions will be made for particular groups (such as friends and family), and to be treated fair is to treat each person as unique in their own way.

3. **Concept of Time:** This dimension is about how a culture can perceive what time is and what you can do with it. This dimension can largely have an effect within a classroom and how students and teachers can interact with students with it comes to how time is viewed. There are two ways in which time can be seen within a culture:

- *Monochronic*: Time is limited, and therefore, it must be used wisely. For example, if you have a dentist appointment at 11:00 a.m. and you finish at 11:45 a.m. and don't have another appointment until 1:00 p.m., you should use that time in between wisely, such as getting your grocery shopping done or going to the post office. Anything that helps occupy your time so that you are not wasting a moment.
- *Polychronic:* Time is limitless and therefore people can do what they please and when they please. There is not a set schedule that needs to be followed at certain increments of time, it can be altered and adjusted to suit the needs of the person.

4. **Locus of Control:** This dimension of culture explains the way in which a cultural group views their place within the world. They either believe that it is controlled by the human or that it is an outside control. Below explains the two views:

    - *Internal:* This means that the locus of control is from within the individual. The human has the power to make their destiny. Through change, you can achieve your goals.

    - *External:* This means that your locus of control is outside of the individual. You have no power to determine what can happen to you. There are certainties that are set out for you, and you must accept them because they cannot be changed.

5. **Styles of Communication:** Lastly, the style of communication is the fifth dimension of culture. This dimension is extremely important to you as an educator, specifically in an urban setting or low socioeconomic setting. When it comes to the interpretations one can have on language, you need to be armed with the understanding of what the different styles are as well as how these can pertain to specific cultures. Communication is how you deliver messages to one another. According to Cartledge et al. (2009), the dimension on which people differ the most is that of directness in communicating. The differences between the four are:

- *Indirect*: Cultures within this group tend to infer, suggest, and imply meanings to things rather than saying them directly. This style of communication is more hidden than implied.
- *High-Context:* This style is more nonverbal. A culture within this context believes that words are not needed to communicate messages. For example, a visual schedule may be necessary to convey important messages.
- *Direct:* Direct cultures are more outgoing in getting their messages across. This cultural style believes that people need to speak their mind and not beat around the bush. Say what's on your mind.
- *Low-context:* Here verbal communication is the style recognized by the cultural group.

Now you are equipped with the background knowledge on what the meaning and interpretations of culture are, as well as the five functions and five dimensions to understand more specifically how a cultural group can operate. These are just one notch on your tool belt as you begin to read through the next several chapters. Next, you can find out how to implement some of the knowledge you have obtained into your classroom, as well as what you should be personally reflecting upon before you begin your next chapter.

Classroom Implementation

- **Behavior Modification Strategies**
  - Provide your students with the tools necessary to be able to modify their behavior if a problem arises. Have a classroom atmosphere that enforces that no matter who is involved in an inappropriate behavior, they are not exempt from assuming responsibility for their actions (Day-Vines & Day-Hairston, 2005).
- **Introducing Cultural Communication Styles within the Classroom**
  - Cultural misunderstandings between communication styles and teachers and communication styles and students can contribute to the amount of disciplinary actions and referrals to the office for punishment. According to Day-Vines and Day-Hairston (2005), teachers can best assist students by helping them to recognize the

dimensions of each culture as well as by providing students with the strategies on how to behave with the set school norms, while at the same time respecting the diversity within the classroom among the other students and teachers. Teachers should recognize ethnic variations among the communication patterns and remember to attribute them to the cultural differences (refer to iceberg analogy for visual representation). A culturally competent classroom will evolve when teachers provide students with the strategies on how to respond appropriately to the behavioral demands and expectations of school (Day-Vines & Day-Hairston, 2005).

- **Mentoring Programs**
  - These programs pair students with a respected role model within the school and the community that can provide a relationship with the student that can help them to be become more adept in school activities as well as more engaged in classroom discussions. Mentoring programs between the student and the mentor can be structured with activities that can include tutoring, cultural awareness sessions, and more extra-curricular activities. All of these will promote personal development within the classroom and community (Day-Vines & Day-Hairston, 2005).
- **Bibliotherapy**
  - Students can read about literary characters that undergo experiences similar to their own. It is through these shared experiences that students can identify and connect with the character's situation and come to the realization that others experience similar concerns (Day-vines and Day-Hairston, 2005). For example, integrate a story that will provide social and cultural factors that will allow students to understand the struggles another group may have had to endure. This element can provide the students with self-reflection as well as open the class up for a cultural discussion (Day-Vines and Day-Hairston, 2005).

Summary and Reflection

Achieving complete competence in any area or discipline is a process that is life-long and will take time, patience, determination, and commitment, as well as the ego to understand that you will always be in a position of continuing education (Cartledge et al., 2009). It is

important to remember that schools are continuing to become more and more diverse; therefore, it is important for educators to strive to always remain culturally aware and be able to recognize diversity within their classrooms. Teachers need to remember to remain non-judgmental and get to know their students and their students' families. To remain a culturally responsive teacher, you will need to engage in such activities as cultural awareness trainings, reviews of guides such as the one you will be reading, as well as always engaging in critical teacher reflections. Teachers should confront themselves relative to race and social justice to see how their beliefs and behaviors affect their teaching (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008). Some teacher self-reflection questions that Cartledge and Kourea (2008) suggest include:

- What is the racial or gender breakdown of the students that I typically send from my class for disciplinary actions?
- How often do I send the same students to the office for disciplinary actions?
- Do I dispense disciplinary referrals fairly on the basis of race and gender?

Some other questions that you may want to consider are:

- Have I made a continuing effort to get to know each one of my student's families and cultural backgrounds?
- How am I going to continue to stay up to date on cultural communication styles?

When teachers face themselves directly, they can begin to see how intertwined their lives are with their students (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008). The handout below will provide a further insight into the level and stages of cultural awareness and how you may be viewing your students.

Model of Cultural Competence: Levels/Stages of Cultural Awareness

	Incompetence	Competence
Unconscious	**Blissful Ignorance** **Level 1** You are not aware that cultural differences exist between you and another person. It does not occur to you that you may be making cultural mistakes or that you may be misinterpreting much of the behavior going on around you.	**Spontaneous Sensitivity** **Level 4** You no longer have to think about what you are doing in order to be culturally sensitive (in a culture you know well). Culturally appropriate behavior comes naturally to you, and you trust your intuition because it has been reconditioned by what you know about cross-cultural interactions.
Conscious	**Troubling Ignorance** **Level 2** You realize that there are cultural differences between you and another person, but you understand very little about these differences. You know there's a problem, but don't know the magnitude of it. You are worried about whether you'll ever figure out these differences in others.	**Deliberate Sensitivity** **Level 3** You know there are cultural differences between people, you know some of the differences, and you try to modify your own behavior to be sensitive to these differences. This does not come naturally, but you make a conscious effort to behave in culturally sensitive ways. You are in the process of replacing old intuitions with new ones.

Adapted from Storti (1998) and located in Cartledge, Gardner, and Ford, 2009, p.20.

Additional Resources

- Milner, R. (n.d.). African American males in urban schools: No excuses-Teach and empower. *Theory Into Practice, 46*(3), 239-246. This article outlines five promising principles that can help empower teachers and African American male students in urban school contexts. The central theme of the article is next level education and a new level of education for African American students.
- Appendix B. Tips on Cultural Competency for School Staff provided by the Health, Mental Health, and Safety Guidelines for Schools. This article provides the five essential elements that contribute to a school's ability to become more culturally competent.
- http://www.tapartnership.org/cc/default.asp. The Cultural Competence Action Team (CCAT) is guided by three key principles: valuing the diversity in teaching approaches necessary for different cultural, ethnic and racial communities; ensuring that this cultural diversity is represented in an inclusive way; and moving from theory and concept to practical strategies, implementation and action.
- *Achievement and Motivation: A Social-Development Perspective* by Ann K. Boggiano and Thane S. Pittman. Within this book, Chapter 5 (Processes and Products of Change by Susan Harter) focuses on the relationship between perceived competence, affect, and motivational orientation within the classroom.

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Chapter 2: Identifying and Reducing Teacher Bias

Laura Carroll

Objectives

This chapter references Cartledge recommendations (2009):

- Cultural Competence: I.5

After reading this chapter, teachers will be able to:

- Increase awareness of their internal biases.
- Understand why their biases create ineffective learning environments for all students (especially African Americans).
- Recognize how biases exhibit themselves within the classroom.
- Reduce the biases within their classroom and create a culturally responsive classroom environment.

Questions for Consideration

- Are you aware of your personal biases?
- Who are the students that you typically send for disciplinary action?
- What behaviors warrant disciplinary actions in your classroom?
- Are the expectations for your students clearly defined?
- Are the expectations the same for all your students?

Background Information

When you are unaware of your own biases, they often manifest unintentionally. Teachers will continue to come into contact with students of different racial and cultural backgrounds than their own.

Fact: Everyone has their own biases, whether they admit it or not.

These differences can cause problems with the way teachers conduct classroom activities (Howard, 2003). Some teachers will show more bias than others.

Myth: African American students do not try as hard and are not interested in academics.

Teachers often have lower academic expectations of African American students than students of other races (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009). Teachers may not expect the same level of achievement from all their students, assuming that African American students will not do their work simply because they are African American.

Teachers may not realize that their students become aware of their teachers' biases. When girls do poorly in math, some teachers may respond with, "Girls are not supposed to be good at math." Consequently, the girls no longer try to succeed. Similarly, some teachers assume African American students do not care about academics. African American students will then stop trying and receive lower evaluations than they could normally achieve (Cartledge et al., 2009).

However unintentional these actions may be, some teachers make the mistake of assuming that all of their students receive the same amount of help when they are at home. There are cultural differences when it comes to helping children with homework. For example, difference may exist in regards to which family members are at home with the student after school. Some students may not have either of their parents at home with them. Both parents may be working multiple jobs, resulting in no time to assist their child.

Fact: Grandparents may be the ones at home assisting your student with their assignments.

Teacher bias can often be shown by what students you acknowledge during activities in your classroom. All teachers have their favorite students, whether or not they consciously admit the fact. Your biases can contribute to which students you "call on." Teachers may try to call on everyone, but if they are doing it without assistance, they will often call on the same students multiple times before calling on others. Milner (2007) says that African American students need help to change their negative perceptions of themselves. If these students are not called on in class, they will often stop trying to contribute.

By looking around your classroom, you should be able to see if your classroom expresses a culturally diverse view. You should have many different cultural examples around your classroom. When instructing your students, be sure to use culturally relevant names in their academic examples.

One of the biggest ways that teacher bias can express itself is through the discipline students receive when a classroom rule is broken. Teachers discipline African American students at a much higher rate than students of other races (Cartledge et al., 2009). When it comes to discipline, African American male are disciplined most often followed by Caucasian males, then African American females, and lastly Caucasian females. African Americans also get disciplined for more subjective behaviors than their Caucasian classmates. African Americans will often be disciplined for "disrespect" or "talking out of turn." When Caucasian students are disciplined, it is often for more concrete offenses, such as fighting (Cartledge et al., 2009).

African American students complain that teachers label them and respond to their behaviors more frequently (Cartledge, n.d.).

Disparate discipline may occur because the teacher does not understand African American culture. African Americans are very peer-oriented, and they often prefer group work to individual activities (Cartledge et al., 2009). If African American students are not given ample opportunity to work with others, they may seek out group interactions by talking with their peers during classwork. Teachers may view this behavior as disruptive, whereas the student is just trying to get work done. Another cultural aspect that may cause conflict between African American students and their teachers is the practice of overlapping speech (Cartledge et al, 2009). Teachers may view this atypical communication style as disrespectful. If teachers do not check their own biases, students may experience differential discipline.

In addition, there is an inverse relationship between rates of suspension and a student's test scores (Monroe, 2005). When teacher biases result in disproportionate discipline for African American students, and they, in turn, receive poor grades, it reinforces the biases

the teacher might have, making the bias stronger. There are also a higher number of African American students in special education classes and programs (Obiakor, et al., 2002). African American students are also less likely to be placed in gifted programs (Losen & Orfield, 2002). These differences could be attributed to the fact that some teachers do not know how to effectively discipline them and refer them.

Fact: Learning about your students cultures and making them apart of your classroom will make for a more comfortable learning environment.

Teacher biases can also cause self-fulfilling prophecies. If students feel like they are getting in trouble no matter what they do, they may stop attempting to behave and intentionally get in trouble. Milner (2007) says, "If teachers think and come to believe that their teaching cannot be improved with Black students, they will not likely improve" (p. 245). This abandonment can create an atmosphere of learned helplessness within the classroom. When teachers make it apparent to their students that no matter what they do, they will still get in trouble or never get a better grade, these teachers may create a feeling inadequacy and cause the students to stop trying.

Myth: Discipline is simply a method of punishment

Communication with your students can play an important role in your classroom, especially when you are disciplining them. You want to make sure you are not administering discipline too aggressively. Fair discipline should be administered and the student should not feel they are being singled out.

Classroom Implementation

Teaching is not a neutral act.

- Have consistent expectations of all your students, as well as an effective way of evaluating all students regardless of cultural and racial differences.
- Have a set of consequences that ALL students receive when they do not complete assignments. This guideline is not to say that you should not be supportive if a student is struggling. You should still be willing to give them help. Never simply expect them not to complete the assignment.

- Make sure homework assignments are able to be completed by the student alone. If you are basing homework assignments on the day's lessons, there should be no reason why the student should not get it done.
- If an assignment is given in which students must work with an adult, have multiple options in case a child's parent is unable to help. The student will feel more included if you do it this way.
- Use different strategies to ensure that you will call on all students at least once. These strategies do not allow for personal biases to affect the outcome. For examples, write your students' names on popsicle sticks, and pull the names from a cup when eliciting responses during activities. This method will also keep all the students better engaged, because they will not know who you will call on next. They will need to pay attention.
- Let students know that if they did not get a turn once, they will get a turn to answer next time. (Make sure they do.)
- Do not just use names like "Bobby" and "Sally" in all your examples. Use many different culturally and racially relevant names. Some students are unable to relate to "Bobby" and "Sally" and they will find it more difficult to complete assignments that way. To make it most relatable, you could try using the names of the students who are in the class.
- Have different races and cultures shown in pictures around your classroom. Students will feel more comfortable.
- Have a uniform set of consequences for broken rules within your classroom. This will ensure that your biases cannot come into the equation with different students.
- Make those rules and consequences visible in the classroom and periodically remind all students of them. If they are visible, students will find it easier to

"Unlike a punishment-only system, discipline is an approach designed to mold socially appropriate positive behavior" (Cartledge et al., 2009, p. 49).

remember them.

- Take frequent looks at your disciplinary referrals. Track what students you are referring and what behaviors are evoking the referral. If you look at who you are referring, you can become aware of your patterns and reflect on why they are that way. You may also be able to see if things with a particular student are improving or not.
- Remember that students are observant of what goes on within the classroom.
- Minimize punishment, be fair with consequences and relate the consequence to the offense.

Summary and Reflection

These things can happen in any classroom if teacher bias remains unchecked.

When teachers are unaware of their own biases, they can unintentionally create a poor learning environment. When teaching African American students, teachers often:

- Have lower expectations of them.
- Give lower evaluations.
- Assume that all their students receive the same amount of help at home.
- Use only "dominate" culture examples, both in their lessons and visibly in the classroom.
- Do not give all their students an equal opportunity to participate.
- Disproportionately discipline African American students.

Fact: Being aware of many different cultures within your classroom and including the different cultures and races is being culturally responsive.

As teachers, you need to inform yourselves of other cultures, in particular the cultures of the students in your classroom. Bringing the many different cultures into your classroom activities will ensure that all your students will be comfortable. Many biases are created because of misconceptions of African American students. If teachers become aware of the biases they may be bringing into the classroom, they can counter them.

Teachers should be able to do critical reflection of their biases. After reading this chapter, please reflect upon the following questions.

- Do you feel that you have equal expectations of all your students, regardless of race or cultural background?
- Are your classroom rules and consequences clearly laid out for all students?
- Are you aware of what students receive help from their parents at home?
- Do you use culturally responsive examples in teaching?
- Are your disciplinary actions the same for all students regardless of race or cultural background?
- How often are the same students disciplined?
- Do you communicate with disciplined students effectively in front of the class?
- When a student is disciplined, does the behavior improve?

Additional Resources

- *The Implicit Association Test.* To better become aware of your biases, try taking the Implicit Association Test. This test was created at Harvard University. On this website, you can find numerous tests that can test your biases on almost anything. https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/

- *Race and Sex: Things We Think, but Can't Say.* This 20/20 video does a great job talking about biases and how they impact the world we live in. It makes a great companion to this piece. http://abcnews.go.com/2020/Video/playerIndes?id=2448988

- *Unconscious Bias in the Classroom*. Read this article about equal treatment. This article talks about equal treatment with regards to race and gender. *http://www.equaljusticesociety.org/newsletter7/story4.html*

- *A Class Divided.* This Frontline special revisits Jane Elliot's famous classroom exercise about race and bias in the classroom. She does this by dividing her class by the color of their eyes. One day she says the blue eyed children are superior. The next day she says the brown eyed children are superior. This creates an interesting

dynamic.
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Chapter 3: Communicating Effectively with Parents

Tina L. Joos

Objectives

This chapter references Cartledge recommendations (2009):

- Parent Collaboration: III.1, III.2.a, III.2.b, III.2.c

After reading this chapter, teachers will be able to:

- Understand how to communicate more clearly with all the parents of the students' in their classroom.
- Recognize that communication with parents is a large part of the student's success when in school.
- Incorporate communication on a daily or weekly basis with parents.
- Integrate guest speakers to come speak to parents and/or the students about the many different multicultural issues.
- Provide parents with a friendly and welcoming atmosphere when visiting the school or classroom.
- Identify and be aware of the affects that communication has on the student, both negatively and positively.
- Have access and contact to more resources/people outside of the school.
- Communication is made uncomplicated for parents of a diverse nationality or ethnic group.

Questions for Consideration

- Why is communication so important between a teacher and a parent?
- What are the different ways that communication can be used?

- What kind of positive affect can good communication between parents and teachers have on the student?
- What kind of negative affect can no communication between parents and teachers have on the student?
- How do I currently communicate between the parents of students' in my classroom?
- Do I treat all of the parents of my students equally?
- Are all of the parents able to contact me and be informed of an activity going on within the school or the classroom?

Myth: Parents that are not involved in their child's academics don't care.

Background Information

When a school develops a plan to improve, families belonging to that school district have to be integrated in the entire development. Engaging families gives them a sense of belonging and responsibility. One way to involve parents and families is by making sure to let them speak up when they want. Having school gatherings with meals and childcare for families will increase families' willingness and ability to participate. Not every parent will be able to make it to every activity, so it is helpful to have alternative for parent involvment. It is vital for teachers to understand schedules may vary and to hold gatherings at different times of the day as well as different days of the week. Also, by doing this, it will help make the family feel more welcome and appreciated by the teachers understanding and working around the family's schedule (Boyd & Correa, 2005).

A great way to help improve communication between home and school is by having staff development. Staff development can help teachers to recognize and understand the benefits of family involvement and show them how to remove barriers between certain families. (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009). It can be extremely difficult when working in a school district that consists of different cultures. Teachers need to make sure that they are reaching out to families whose first language is not English and making individual accommodations for that family. Many urban districts no receive refugee families whose needs can be very complex.

Teachers can have an opportunity to learn from and network with important groups dealing with education by being able to be involved in different types of lecturers. These lecturers should be given by numerous and a variety of groups of people. Some lecturers can be given by other teachers, as well as by parents involved in the school district. Parents, community residents, and law enforcement officials can also facilitate to make an effort to try and solve frequent, as well as relentless problems that the school district may be dealing with. (Cartledge et al, 2009).

Fact:
Students learn when teachers communicate!

Through self-reflection, teachers can consider how their own perspectives influence their work with families. This should be the main objective for a teacher working with a diverse group of students. Self-reflection is simply journal writing and thinking about one's own family background, and history. They also need to consider their assumptions with reference to other families, and their attitudes, approach, and feelings towards working with those diverse families. Sometimes it is helpful for teachers to imagine themselves as being that family (Milner R. H.). Evidence has shown that when a parent, of any ethnic background, is more involved with their student's academics, it leads to not just an improvement in the students achievement, but also their attendance is greater (Flaxman & Inger, 1991).

Classroom Implementation

The following implementations focus on welcoming and involving students and their families into the school, making parents feel more welcome and want to become more involved with their child's academics. These implementations are intended to reduce negative experiences, with the hope of gaining new parental involvement from those who felt uncomfortable, unwelcome or, looked down upon.

- Welcoming Table

- The front entrance to the school or your classroom should have an abundance of information regarding the school, the principal and staff. Also having maps available to help navigate the school is important for visitors to receive. Recruiting staff to meet and greet everyone who comes through the door is a great way for students to learn social skills and for parents and visitors to feel welcome when they enter the school. It is also important to make sure the material that is handed out is available in multiple languages.

- Community Involvement
  - It is important to not only incorporate parents into the classroom, but finding community activities that families may be interested in is an excellent way to assist getting parents involved with their child's academics. Contacting any outside source that may want to speak in-class about a particular topic and inviting the parents for that special day will also encourage parents to want to be more involved.
- Communication
  - Plan to review all home communications for their readability level. Most word-processing programs no include an option to check readability of a document. A family can easily feel unwelcome and not appreciated when given a handout they cannot understand. If a parent does not have access, it will turn them away from wanting to help and be involved, which will lead to less parental participation with the child's academics (Taylor & Adelman, 2000). Making sure all families are treated equally and respected is vital for good communication. Parents like to feel as if they are talking to someone who respects them and does not look down upon them when visiting the school and teacher. Some teachers talk in jargon that is not understandable to parents, and this can lead to parents' feeling uncomfortable and distant. Make sure when you are speaking to the family they understand what you are talking about and you clearly state the issue. Some people hear things and don't understand it as well as if they have read it. So it is good for teachers to take into consideration of having a handout or having the

issue written on a handout for the family to read along as you speak about the issue.

Summary and Reflection

When a parent connects with his/her child every day, that child will benefit for life. When he or she knows that his/her mom or dad care and are concerned about their education, the following occurs: Achievement in school improves; students earn higher grades and test scores and enroll in higher-level programs; Children want to go to school; Courses are passed, credits earned and students are promoted to the next grade; Self-confidence improves; Children have better social skills and behavior at home and at school; Students graduate from high school and go on to postsecondary education. Self-reflection is very important for teachers to consider. The goal of a self-reflection is for teachers to consider how their own perspectives influence their work with families, especially those very different from their own. Self-reflection includes journal writing & other tasks that ask teachers to think about their own family backgrounds, their assumptions about other families, & their attitudes toward working with families. It is important for teachers to recognize that all parents, regardless of income, education or cultural background, are involved in their children's learning and want their children to do well.

Myth:
Good communication skills between the teacher and student are more important than parent teacher communication.

Additional Resources

- **Partnership for Family Involvement in Education**. This a helpful website that provides resources and supports to organizations and companies interested in building a coalition between schools and their communities.

- **Family Involvement in Children's Education: Successful Local Approaches**. An Idea Book offers descriptions of schools and communities who overcame key

barriers such as finding time, increasing their information about each other, bridging school-family differences, improving schools, and tapping external supports to strengthen school-family partnerships.

- **Team Up For Kids!! How Schools Can Support Family Involvement.** This website gives helpful strategies for encouraging parents to get more involved in their child's academics.

- **Ferguson, A.A. (2001).** *Bad boys: Public schools in the making of black masculinity.* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan.

- **Moore, J.L., & Owens, D. (2009).** Educating and counseling African American students: Recommendations for teachers and school counselors. In *The SAGE handbook of African American education,* L.C. Tillman, Ed. (pp. 351-381). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

- **Beach Center for Disability.** This website conducts research and training to enhance families' empowerment and disseminates information to families, people with disabilities, educators, and the general public (Cartledge et al., 2009). www.beachcenter.org

- **Center for Applied Linguistics.** This website offers online language and academic programs for recent immigrants (Cartledge et al., 2009). www.cal.org

- **Education Northwest.** This website was created for parents, teachers and administrators to have access to self-report checklists to evaluate the school environment towards immigrants (Cartledge et al., 2009). www.nwrel.org

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Chapter 4: Culturally Responsive Rules and Routines

Christina L. Scanlon

Objectives

This chapter references Cartledge recommendations (2009):

- Social and Academic Skills: II.2, II.3, II.4

After using this chapter, teachers will be able to:

- Incorporate elements of culture into classroom rules and routines.
- Discuss how teacher and student ideas of a classroom environment may clash.
- Understand the importance of fairness when creating and enforcing classroom rules and routines.
- Create culturally-responsive structure and routines within their classrooms.
- Use affirmations to create a caring classroom environment.
- Implement elements of culturally responsive discipline into their classrooms.

Questions for Consideration

- Which rules are consistently violated in your classroom? How do you typically handle misbehavior in your classroom?
- What are your classroom's rules and routines? How did you arrive at these?
- What is the difference between discipline and punishment?
- Are your students invested in your current classroom rules and structure?
- Are the rules in your classroom enforced fairly?
- How often do you give your students affirmations?

Background Information

As noted in the introduction to this text, racial disproportionality in school suspension has been a highly consistent finding within the United States. If we hope to narrow this discipline gap, it is important to know how to use discipline correctly and how to infuse culture into classroom rules and routines. Several factors contribute to this gap, including misperceptions of culturally based behaviors, unconscious bias against minority students, racial differences in the types of behaviors punished, and differences in the types and severities of punishments given (Monroe, 2005; Skiba, 2002).

Discipline vs. Punishment

Culturally responsive discipline is essential to culturally responsive instruction. In order to achieve culturally responsive discipline, a teacher must have a firm grasp of the difference between discipline and punishment.

Punishment is a behavior management strategy that involves using aversive consequences to reduce unwanted behaviors (Algozzine & Kay, 2002). Punishment may include taking away something that a person wants to do, and is often a reaction to undesired behavior (Kerr & Nelson, 2010). Common examples of punishment include keeping a child in for recess, revoking classroom privileges, and sending children to the office.

African American males are most likely to experience exclusionary disciplinary actions without evidence the offending students or their peers benefited from these disciplinary actions (Cartledge et al., 2009

Punishment pairs negative or unpleasant consequences with undesired behaviors, and represents an effort to either reduce or extinguish unwanted behaviors (Cartledge et. al., 2009). Common punishments include holding a disruptive child in for recess, sending that child to the office, or reprimanding him or her for their behavior.

Teachers often rely on punishment as an important way to maintain a structured and disciplined learning environment. Unfortunately, punishment is a largely ineffective

technique that can lead to undesired and unintended consequences. First, punishment reacts against negative behaviors while failing to teach a child desired behaviors. Second, the overuse of exclusionary punishments (i.e., office referrals and suspensions), a teacher may alienate the students who are most in need of support, patience, and knowledge of acceptable behaviors. Frequent use of this technique may teach children to lie to avoid consequences, gain attention though bad behavior, and manipulate the punishment system to avoid courses and responsibilities they dislike.

What we say can affirm success or affirm failure – it's up to you (Wynn, 1997).

Alternatively, discipline consists of proactive and preventative measures that can create an environment that is conducive to learning (Smith & Mirsa, 1992). Discipline focuses on identifying behaviors that need to be corrected, and providing ways in which to learn desirable alternative behaviors. In other words, the emphasis of discipline centers around what *to* do rather than what *not to* do. Examples of effective discipline include telling a running child to walk in the hallway, and teaching children to raise their hand to be called on (and then praising them when they do).

"Unlike a punishment-only system, discipline is an approach designed to mold socially appropriate positive behavior through systematic planning, teaching, and evaluation" (Cartledge et al., 2009, p. 49)

Elements of Culturally Responsive Discipline

Culturally responsive discipline consists of caring classroom environments, fairness, behavior management, affirmations, social skills instruction, and commitment (Cartledge et al., 2009). Once a teacher has learned to distinguish between discipline and punishment, he or she can begin to develop classroom rules and routines that reflect culturally responsive discipline.

Cultural Understanding

Understanding ones' own cultural background, as well as that of the students they teach, is crucial to cultural understanding (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009, p. 49). A teacher's

perception of cultural norms may differ greatly from that of his or her students. For example, a teacher who comes from an individualistic culture may have difficulty understanding why their collectivist students frequently converse during learning activities, instead of performing their tasks silently as instructed. Although unintended, lack of knowledge of students' cultures may result in unintentional bias or ethnocentrism being incorporated into classroom rules and routines (Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004).

A key step teachers can take in minimizing unintended cultural bias is to learn about the families, communities, and cultural backgrounds of their students (Weinstein et al., 2004). During this process, teachers should particularly pay attention to the dimension of culture (discussed in Chapter One of this guide) as well as home/personal life information, such as health and nutrition, religion, education, and cultural history and traditions (Weinstein et al., 2004). By increasing cultural understanding, a teacher can gain a more complete perspective on the students in his or her classroom. This perspective can help provide invaluable insight into student behavior and effective rules and routines.

Caring Classroom Environments

At the head of a caring classroom environment is a caring teacher who sets high standards and expectations for his or her class. Caring teachers establish positive and supportive relationships with their students that are based on respect and genuine desire for the students to succeed (Milner, 2007).

Positive and supportive relationships can be established by:

- expressing interest or concern in a student's life outside of school,
- respecting students by listening and encouraging them to express their thoughts and opinions,
- being friendly inside and outside of the classroom, and
- communicating that they care through smiles, gestures, high-fives, or other affirmations (Gay, 2007).

The caring teacher has high standards and expectations while providing support and encouragement for students to meet those standards and expectations. These teachers are also referred to as "warm demanders," "other mothers," or "other fathers" (Cartledge et. all, 2009; Collins, 1991; Milner, 2007).

Warm demanders are teachers who have high standards and expectations while providing support and encouragement for their students to succeed (Cartledge, et al., 2009).

Become a "warm demander" by holding high standards and expectations while respecting and caring about your students (Cartledge et al., 2009). Students respond better to teachers who recognize and value their emotional, physical, interpersonal, and economic environments (Cartledge et al., 2009). Teachers who actively engage with their students both in and out of the classroom develop relationships based on trust and support, making the students more likely to perform in class (Cartledge et al., 2010). Frequent and genuine affirmations, such as praise, encouragement, and support, can help establish these positive teacher-student relationships (Cartledge, n.d.). Additionally, the positive teacher-student relationships will set the tone for the community of learners, resulting in a higher quality of student-student relationships (Cartledge, n.d.).

When arranging your classroom, be aware of how the environment might affect your students (Kerr & Nelson, 2010). Physical layout mostly deals with proximity between student-teacher, student-student, and student-distractions (Kerr & Nelson, 2010). Incorporate elements of culture by taking into account dimensions of culture that may affect how your students learn (i.e., some students may work better when sitting in groups while others need a more individual setting).

Fairness

Fairness is a key element of a culturally responsive classroom, and often reflects the way a teacher perceives his or her students. Diverse students may display culturally-rooted

behaviors that can be misunderstood or perceived as malicious or non-compliant. These misunderstandings can result in unfair or inaccurate interpretations of student behavior (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008). Unconscious bias or preconceived ideas about a certain culture may also cause a teacher to have different expectations for certain students (Gay, 2000). For example, a teacher may expect a student to act out more and score lower on tests based on their race or culture.

Researchers have identified several contexts in which unfair interpretations of student behavior may be indicative of cultural bias. While white students are commonly referred for objective infractions including property damage or obscene language, African American students are more likely to be referred for subjective infractions, such as disrespect or threat (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2000). African American students also receive more severe punishments for less serious violations than their European American peers. These differences in disciplinary interventions create a sense of privilege among European American youth while stigmatizing African American youth.

"The best way to ensure that rules are reasonable is to develop them with students" (Kerr & Nelson, 2010)

It is important to your existing rules, routines, and consequences with your students in order to determine if all rules are clear and fair (Cartledge et al., 2009). When the students have a voice in developing classroom rules and routines, each student is encouraged to bring his or her cultural norms to the table. In a classroom discussion, the students can create a list of rules and establish routines in order to create a community of learners. Additionally, students can discuss the rationale behind these rules so that they understand why the rule exists (Kerr & Nelson, 2010). Teachers should also discuss with the students what should happen if a rule is broken, ensuring that the consequence is fairness in severity and applicable to all students (Cartledge et al., 2009). Conversely, teachers should talk about the positive consequences associated with following the rules in order to provide positive reinforcement (Kerr & Nelson, 2010). This student community of learners

encourages one another to follow the rules and routines. Because the students are invested in creating these guidelines, they will take ownership of their rules, making them more likely to follow them. If you find that your classroom rules need to be revamped, work with your students to create effective classroom rules. Discuss what isn't working – and ask your students for suggestions to fix the problem in a way that makes sense to them. Importantly, also be sure to discuss what work, as well.

To ensure you are disciplining your diverse students in a fair way, evaluate and track the behavior and associated discipline in your classroom (Cartledge et al., 2009). Keep track of which students are disciplined, what those students are disciplined for, and how often students require disciplinary measures. By being aware of trends in behavior/discipline, a teacher is able evaluate and adjust accordingly.

Culturally responsive discipline has the following characteristics:

- The severity of disciplinary measures matches the severity of the infraction
- All students are held to the same standards and rules so as to not create a sense of privilege amongst one group of students
- Disciplinary measures are implemented based on the infraction, not the student
- If a student breaks a rule, he or she receives the same disciplinary action as any other student.

Behavior Management

As learning of appropriate social behavior or cultural norms begins in the home, children may come to school with drastically different cultural norms (Cartledge et al., 2009). These norms often greatly differ from the social behavior expected of a child in a classroom (Cartledge et al., 2009).

Proactive behavior management strategies in the classroom can help a teacher manage small behavioral issues before they require disciplinary intervention. While asking students to behave out of fear of punishment or promise of reward may invoke some level of adherence to behavior management systems, it rarely invokes an intrinsic desire to behave. Appealing to the values and shared responsibilities of your students is a much more effective technique, as it draws upon culturally-salient rules and routines that are valued and enforced both in and outside of the classroom (Cartledge et. al., 2009).

Implement behavior management techniques in order to stop occasional problem behavior from escalating into disciplinary issues (Cartledge, n.d.). Some recommended behavior management strategies include providing high levels of structure within your classroom. By increasing classroom structure, a teacher is able to reduce chaos and provide a classroom routine that is both predictable and conducive to learning (Kerr & Nelson, 2010). When establishing structure, Kerr and Nelson (2010) recommend various elements of classroom routines that can help make your classroom run smoothly.

The SSS strategy (stroke, stifle, and stroke) is one way to provide effective feedback on maladaptive behavior (Day-Vines & Day-Hairston, 2005). The SSS strategy effectively maintains students dignity and pride while providing corrective feedback . This technique is accomplished by sandwiching correction between praise and affirmation. The SSS strategy is found to work especially well with African American male students (Day-Vines and Day-Hairston, 2005).

The SSS strategy may sound something like this:

- Stroke - "I really like the way you brought your math homework in today!"
- Stifle - "Next time, let's make sure we complete the right assignment."
- Stroke - "You've been doing so well lately! You're be

"The least intrusive prevention strategy is to teach students the rules and routines that will facilitate their success" (Kerr & Nelson, 2010).

Additionally, Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a program that reinforces positive behaviors as opposed to punishing undesirable behaviors (Sugai & Horner, 2005). By focusing on what *to* do rather than what *not* to do, PBS places a clear emphasis on what behavior is expected. PBS is particularly relevant for culturally-responsive discipline, as it emphasizes *teaching* desired classroom behaviors instead of simply reacting to them. This can be effective for promoting positive classroom culture, and for bridging cultural divides between home and school.

Positive Behavior Support focuses on what to do rather than what not to do, hence placing a clear emphasis on what behavior is expected.

Disruptive behavior can also be reduced by increasing the amount of opportunities a student has to respond in class (Cartledge n.d.). One way to increase opportunities to respond is a "Think-Pair-Share" activity (Kerr & Nelson, 2010). "Think-Pair-Share" involves having students quietly *think* about a passage after reading it, *pair* up with a group to discuss their ideas, and finally *share* the group's discussion with the entire class. "Think-Pair-Share is an excellent activity to use with culturally diverse classrooms, as it allows students to think across the span of individualist and collectivist thought.

Problem behavior can also be prevented through the use of precorrection *before* the problem begins. Precorrection facilitates the occurrence of more appropriate actions by reminding students of your classroom rules and routines, and stating clear expectations as to what behavior should be (Kerr & Nelson, 2010; Lewis, Sugai, and Colvin, 2000). For example, a teacher who knows that his or her students have difficulty lining up for lunch, he or she might state, "Remember that when we line up for lunch, we push our chairs in, walk to the door, and get in line order." Because the students are reminded of the steps involved in the routine of lining up, they are more likely to line up without behavior problems. Through the repetition of completing this routine correctly, culturally diverse students have many opportunities to learn social skills so that eventually, they can use these skills independently (Lewis, Sugai, & Colvin, 2000; Cartledge et al., 2009)

Active supervision is an additional preventative strategy that involves constant observation, movement around the classroom and engagement with students (Kerr & Nelson, 2010). Active supervision is designed to encourage more appropriate student behavior, while simultaneously discouraging rule violations (Lewis et. al., 2000). In combination with precorrection, active supervision allows for a teacher to intervene when problem behavior begins in order to divert larger problems. The active supervision/precorrection combination can be a powerful approach for behavior management in culturally diverse classrooms. While active supervision gives the students the teacher-student engagement and support that they need, precorrection clearly defines behavioral expectations and desired social skills prior to problem behaviors arising.

Affirmations

All students should be given praise and support; however, culturally diverse students particularly need to be encouraged and assured that they are able to succeed (Cartledge et al. 2009). Encouraging and praising the interests and strengths of culturally diverse students effectively communicates a sense of interest and caring on behalf of the teacher (Cartledge, n.d.). A teacher can also embrace culturally diverse interests by encouraging students to display these talents to others. This will help to affirm diverse students feeling of belonging within the classroom, and help to develop a sense of pride and individuality.

Contingent praise is a form of affirmation that reinforces desired behaviors. A teacher provides contingent praise when he or she consistently follows a desired behavior with praise (Kerr & Nelson, 2010). The difference between contingent praise and regular affirmations is that contingent praise follows a specific behavior and includes that specific behavior in the statement of praise, such as "I like the way you raised your hand". Because contingent praise is a form of affirmation, its use will strengthen student-teacher relationships, especially with culturally diverse students (Cartledge, n.d.).

The SSS strategy lends itself nicely to providing affirmations at the same time as delivering feedback on a student's undesirable behavior (Day-Vines & Day-Hairston, 2005). A teacher's attention is a powerful thing – whether that attention is used to affirm success or affirm failure is up to that teacher.

Social Skill Instruction

By incorporating social skill instruction into a classroom, a teacher is able to circumvent on-going behavior problems by educating the student on what behavior is expected. When teaching the desired behavior, a teacher should thoroughly explain the behavior, show the student how to do the behavior, help the student to practice the behavior, and evaluate for change (Cartledge, n.d.).

Because the "misbehavior" of culturally diverse students may be the product of a clash between home culture and classroom culture, it is important to make social skill instruction culturally relevant (Cartledge et al., 2009). As obtaining learner buy-in is also important, the skills selected must be socially appropriate for the students' own cultural background, and tailored to the diverse student. More information about culturally responsive social skill instruction is available in Chapter Six of this guide.

If a student has a particularly pervasive problem, teachers may consider conducting a functional behavior analysis (FBA) in order to better understand the behavior (Cartledge et al., 2009). An FBA involves creating a multidisciplinary team in order to formulate a hypothesis as to the function of the problem behavior (Cartledge et al., 2009). Understanding the behavior allows for a teacher to formulate a proactive plan that addresses the root of the problem behavior. While a teacher should not undertake the creation of an FBA single-handedly, Cartledge et al. (2009) and Kerr and Nelson (2010) provide guides as to how to perform FBA's.

Commitment

Setting up a classroom with culturally responsive discipline takes significant planning, evaluating, and time from the teacher. Developing a culturally responsive classroom environment is not an overnight change, but rather something that requires dedication, persistence, and resourcefulness (Cartledge et al. 2009). Committed teachers always keep the success of their students at the forefront of decision-making in order to adjust the classroom environment so that all students achieve their full potential (Cartledge et al., 2009).

Summary and Reflection

Culturally responsive discipline is necessary in order to decrease the discipline gap that has manifested in our schools. By understanding the difference between discipline and punishment, creating a caring classroom environment, striving for fairness, implementing behavior management, providing frequent and genuine affirmations, teaching social skills, and remaining committed to the goal of having a culturally responsive classroom, teachers can create an environment where all students reach their fullest potential. Please apply the information from this chapter as you reflect upon the following questions.

- Do I have cultural understanding? Do I thoroughly understand my students?
- Are some of the problem behaviors that currently exist in your classroom culturally-based?
- Are my classroom rules and the way I implement them fair?
- Do my classroom rules reflect a "do" or a "do not" mentality?
- Am I teaching the students the desired behavior when they display an undesired behavior?
- Are there ways that I can structure my classroom differently to prevent behavior problems?
- Do I provide enough praise and affirmation to my students?
- Am I prepared and committed to making these changes in my classroom? If not, what do I need in order to make myself ready?

Additional Resources

- **Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR).** CRESPAR is a collaboration between Johns Hopkins University and Howard University that emphasizes talent development, proactively addressing potential developmental setbacks, and creating effective programming for students who may experience discipline or academic gaps due to poverty, minority status, and having English as a second language. The CRESPAR website offers book recommendations and numerous articles devoted to enriching the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students. http://www.csos.jhu.edu/crespar

- **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).** PBIS encourage reinforcing positive behaviors as opposed to punishing undesirable behaviors by creating a network of engaged, supportive faculty who create a school-wide universal behavior plan with allowances for secondary and tertiary tiers of intervention for students who need more behavioral assistance. More information can be found on the PBIS website: www.pbis.org

- ***Strategies for Addressing Behavior Problems in the Classroom (6th ed.)*. (Kerr & Nelson, 2010).** Kerr and Nelson provide a comprehensive look at school-wide positive behavior support, strategies for behavior management, information on functional behavior analysis, and applied behavior analysis. Specific examples and case studies lend to a complete understanding of application and implementation in a classroom setting. This book is source for many of the behavior management strategies found in this chapter and should be consulted for more detailed information.

- **University of Pittsburgh's School-Based Behavioral Health Website.** This website is a rich resource for educators, parents, and youth with information about behavior management techniques, childhood disorders, and other issues that can affect school-aged youth and their caregivers. Information is available in multiple forms, including brochures, narrated Power Point presentations, podcasts, and study guides. Chances

are, if you have a question about a behavioral problem occurring in your classroom, this site will have information for you. Visit the website at www.sbbh.pitt.edu

Additional Readings

Increasing your cultural understanding will help you to cater your classroom rules and routines to fit the needs of the students you teach. Begin to read literature in order to become more familiar with the cultural norms of the students in your classroom. Gwendolyn Cartledge (n.d) recommends the following resources to learn about the culture of African American adolescent males:

Recommended Literature for Increasing Cultural Understanding of African American Adolescent Males (Cartledge, n.d.)

Bailey, D. F., & Moore, J. (2005). Emotional isolation, depression, and suicide among African American men. In C. L. Rabin, Ed. *Understanding gender and culture in the helping process: Practitioners' narratives from Global perspectives* (pp. 186 - 207). United States: Thomas Wadsworth.

Ferguson, A. A. (2001). *Bad boys: Public schools in the making of black masculinity.* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan.

Graham, A., & Anderson, K. (2008). "I have to be three steps ahead": Academically gifted African American male students in an urban high school on the tension between an ethnic and academic identity, *Urban Review, 40*, 472-499.

Jackson, J. & Moore, J. (Eds.) (2006). African American males in education. *Teachers College Record, Special Issue, 108*(2). Columbia University

Milner, H. R. (2007). African American males in urban schools: No excuses-teach and empower. *Theory Into Practice, 46*(3), 239-246.

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Lewis, T., Sugai, G., & Colvin, G. (2000). The effects of pre-corrective and active supervision on the recess behavior of elementary students. *Education and Treatment of Children, 23*(2), 109-121.

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Monroe, C. R. (2005). Why are the "bad boys" always black? Causes of disproportionality in school discipline and recommendations for change. *The Clearing House, 79*, 45-50.

Skiba, R. (2002). Special education and school discipline: A precarious balance. *Behavioral Disorders, 27*(2), 81-97.

Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *The Urban Review, 34*(4), 317-342.

Smith, M. A., & Mirsa, A. (1992). A comprehensive management system for students in regular classrooms. *The Elementary School Journal, 92*(3), 353-371.

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. H. (2005). School wide positive behavior supports: Achieving and sustaining effective learning environments for all students. In W. L. Heward, T. E. Heron, N. A. Neef, S. M. Peterson, D. M. Sainato, G. Cartledge, R. Gardner, III, L. D. Peterson, B. Hersh, & C. Dardig (Eds.), Focus on behavior analysis in education: Achievements, challenges, and opportunities (p. 90-102). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall/Merrill.

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Chapter 5: Activities and Active Engagement

Todd A. Bertani

Objectives

This chapter references Cartledge recommendations (2009):

- Social and Academic Skills: II.3, II.6.c, II.6.d
- Parent Collaboration: III.2.a

After reading this chapter, teachers will be able to…

- Discuss the importance of an engaging classroom.
- Plan culturally sensitive and engaging lessons.
- Read and implement culturally diverse and engaging lessons.
- Integrate engaging, culturally diverse lessons into their classrooms.

Questions for Consideration

- Why should we engage students in the learning process?
- How do teachers engage students in active learning?
- How do teachers learn to help students become actively involved in education?

Background Information

In order for substantial learning to take place, students must be actively engaged in the learning process. Students who are disengaged have difficulty succeeding in an academic environments. Re-engaging these students in classroom activities and learning must therefore be a primary focus of intervention, particularly for those who may be at higher risk for underachievement to begin with (UCLA School Mental Health Project, 2002).

"All genuine education comes about through experience."
John Dewey

Jones, Valdez, Nowakowski, and Rasmussen (1994) developed a blueprint or "indicators" of engaged learning specifically designed to direct educators in reforming instruction. These indicators are an introduction to what may be a multicultural and engaged classroom.

Signs of a Multicultural and Engaged Classroom

1. **Vision** – Students have developed a reflective, lifelong thirst for knowledge. They find value in cooperatively working with others in making contributions to society
2. **Tasks** – Classroom tasks include problem-oriented tasks have real-world applicability, require collaboration with others, involve integrated instruction and are project based.
3. **Assessment** – Assessments are frequently performance-based and tailored to individual needs and goals.
4. **Instructional Models & Strategies** – The classroom frequently uses interactive and problem, project, and goal-based instruction to engage students.
5. **Learning Context** – The environment is be empathetic, values diversity, and builds upon all members' views toward goal-oriented interactions of all community members.
6. **Grouping** – Flexible, equitable, and heterogeneous groups (including different sexes, cultures, abilities, ages, and socioeconomic backgrounds) are used to help each student contribute to all tasks.
7. **Teacher Roles** – The teacher facilitates and guides classroom learning – often learning alongside the students themselves.
8. **Student Roles** – The student assumes the role of an explorer, contemplating the environment, people, and production outcomes.

Establishing Standards

Dr. Edgar Dale, former Professor of Education at Ohio State University, notes that active engagement helps students retain information at the 95th percentile. It is imperative that

we achieve this level with *all* of our students in order for them to achieve success in a future that is progressing ever so rapidly into a more competitive and culturally diverse America.

A successfully structured physical environment must take shape before a culturally-responsive curriculum is instituted. Students' learning environments may promote positive learning by setting the tone for learning to take place. For example, using name tags for students and the arranging desks and tables within a classroom may initiate an atmosphere that invites discussion and the sharing of ideas (Kerr & Nelson 2010). These initial strategies reflect extensive preparation and a well-managed classroom on behalf of the teacher (Darch & Kame'enui, 2004). In turn, this facilitates a learning environment conducive to the needs of all students.

The tone of the classroom environment needs to be established early. To invest students in this process, instructors should involve studnets in proposing rules and brainstorming reasons they are necessary. Evidence suggests that students are more likely to follow rules that are established in this manner (Kerr and Nelson, 2010). Engaging students in this process will lead to deeper understanding and accountability. Further, allowing the students to help develop rules *collaboratively* facilitates the development of culturally-responsive rules and routines. Role-play of the expected criterion reinforces the class guidelines and provides for a fun, engaging, and interactive lesson.

Meeting Standards

Carefully designed multicultural education should recognize the uniqueness of all students while simultaneously meeting state and national standards (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009). Rules that have been established as curriculum standards announced by the school district, state, or national governing bodies often dictate what occurs inside the well-managed classroom. While standards set important guidelines for success, students' engagement and participation with instructional materal is also critical. Multicultural education can facilitate this engagement.

There are many education standards that set forth guidelines on active student participation in conjunction with diversity. For example, the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) dictates ten "Thematic Strands" for curriculum standards. *Culture* is the first of those ten strands. It emphasizes utilizing social studies programs that incorporate culture and cultural diversity as one way to meet these standards. The NCSS also notes that this type of cultural study encourages students to engage with the learning environment in a meaningful way that promotes critical thinking (Schneider et. al., 1994).

Culturally diverse standards nationally are echoed by standards established at the state level. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education Standards Aligned System (SAS), voluntary standards now in place are being presented to the Pennsylvania State Board of Education for consideration. These include Student Interpersonal Skills (SIS) that encourage the development of self- and social-awareness, interpersonal skills, and decision-making skills across multiple contexts.

Standards proposed include but are not limited to the following:

- Standard Area - SIS.1: Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life successes.
- Standard Area - SIS.2: Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships and respect for cultural diversity.
- Standard Area - SIS.3: Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behavior in individual, family, school, and community contexts.

The individual shapes and is shaped by his or her culture and by other individuals (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009). If we are to educate all students, this process will inevitably involve cultural diversity. Finding ways in which students progressively meet the demands of state and federal targets is essential for the teaching profession. Teaching and responding in culturally-responsible ways as a method to engage students is one possible pathway to these targets.

Opportunities to Respond

Educators can meet goals set forth by respective regulatory bodies by focusing on increasing students' opportunities to respond (OTR) in classroom settings. Increasing students' OTR is associated with improvements in both academic and behavioral skills (Kerr & Nelson, 2010). This can be accomplished through social skill dynamics. Social skill dynamics includes guided practice, where students are placed in a setting in which all students are given several chances to respond to prompts under the supervision of their teacher or other instructor (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009).

Myth:
Grouping students of different levels of achievement for instruction may benefit some students, but it can undermine the progress that could otherwise be made by higher-achieving students. (www.tolerance.org)

One way to invest students in this process is to incorporate culturally-relevant information within the scenarios students respond to. Developing a curriculum that students can identify with and embrace ensures greater participation by the students, and increases the prevalence of desired social skills (Moore, Cartledge, and Heckaman, 1995; Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford. 2009). Over time these activities can reinforce the social and academic skills necessary to reach the desired standards.

Peer-based strategies can be one culturally-responsive way to foster the interpersonal skills necessary for achieving state and national standards. The socially interactive nature of peer-based instruction creates an engaging atmosphere with positive results that can be reinforced not only by the teachers and school, but by the greater community as well.

Several peer strategies have been supported through research.

- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) learners prefer and succeed with [peer-based] strategies (Boykin, Tyler, Watkins-Lewis, & Kizzie, 2006; Ellison, Boykin, Tyler, & Dillhunt, 2005).
- Peer-based lessons can be effective with children of all ages (Cartledge, Gardner, Ford, 2009, p. 87)
- CLD students, often are more receptive to messages coming from their peers than from adult authority figures
- Peer-based instruction is associated with greater achievement gains than instruction from an adult facilitator (Cartledge, Wang, Blake, & Lambert, 2002)

Actively Engaging Family

Culturally-responsive classrooms take measures to actively engage the child's family. Family engagement can be helpful in developing a truly multicultural and engaging classroom. [WHY IS IT IMPORTANT – LOOK THIS UP]

One method for communicating with family about the progress made within the classroom is the notebook system (Williams and Cartledge, 1997). Using a notebook that travels to and from school with students, the teacher and parent both write notes about academic and behavioral progress. In this way, teachers maintain an open line of communication with the child's home environment (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009). This method puts the student at the center of both the school and home community, and invites the students' family background into the classroom on a daily basis.

Ultimately, any definition of good teaching must include the ability to make instruction fit all students and address a wide variety of problems within the regular classroom.

Another engaging method of open lines of communication involves a *student-created newsletter* highlighting activities within the district, school, or individual classroom. "Beginning at the upper elementary grades, students can assume primary responsibility for producing the newsletter under the supervision of the classroom teacher as a means of highlighting unique aspects of students' cultures, with students gathering the information and, whenever possible, writing the columns" (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009, p. 120). Parents most likely will read their son's or daughter's contributions and continue to generate a positively reinforcing collaborative between school and home.

Classroom Implementation

To begin the process of full engagement of *all* parties in multicultural education for students, a few guidelines for classroom implementation may be helpful. Some suggestions include:

- Obtain expert-level knowledge of the academic content to be taught

- Purposefully plan lessons to include culturally-sensitive information (Gollnick & Chinn, 2004).
- When investigating new cultures, allow yourself to assume the role of learner. Let your students teach you about their background!
- Talk to other teachers about how they have incorporated multicultural themes into the curriculum.
- Read about the history of culturally and linguistically diverse populations and about famous individuals and events from cultures represented in your classroom. Incorporate that information into lessons.
- Develop a diversity calendar, noting special days for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) groups and the meanings of the special days. Discuss the special days as they occur throughout the year. Provide opportunities for students to volunteer information about how they celebrate the special days with their family.
- Permit children to take home tape recorders or just notebooks to interview family members about their most enjoyable family traditions. Encourage children to share their experiences with the class
- Have students write about their family or neighborhood culture. Divide them into groups of three or four and have them share their papers with each other. Try to arrange groups so that students who normally sit together are not in the same group.

Most students can benefit from participating in learning groups comprised of students who have different levels of achievement and in which students of different races and ethnicities participate

Summary and Reflection

So why is it important for active student engagement in learning? The most important factor is that students need to become intrinsically motivated in becoming lifelong learners.

Posing questions, constructing unique ideas, and expanding upon existing ideas are skills necessary for students "…to acquire a level of understanding that provides them with the flexibility to respond to new situations and serves as the foundation for a lifetime of further learning" (National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, 1993, p. 1). No matter what challenges are presented to the lifelong learner, they will adapt coherently to the demands of standards set forth by differing cultures, including school, family, community, state, federal or international.

Because learning boundaries are limitless on a global scale and diversity is becoming more commonplace throughout all regions, students must fluently face the challenges an increasingly multicultural world has to offer. Active engagement within the classroom will set the stage for breaking down barriers to learning, and collaboration with community members, in an effort to overcome problems of tomorrow. The idea of multicultural competence enhanced through active engagement within the classroom provides the scaffold for greater learning.

Additional Resources

- Southern Policy Law Center. Teaching Tolerance Project. www.tolerance.org
  - *One of the most progressive resources for infusing active engagement and culturally diverse curriculum lessons is presented in the Teaching Tolerance project designed by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). The Teaching Diverse Students Initiative (TDSi) aspect of Teaching Tolerance is designed to help teachers enhance teaching quality and learning opportunities for students of color. Many student-engaging lesson examples from Teaching Tolerance and the TDSi program have been provided as supplements within the Additional Resources section in this chapter.*
- Dunkmann, K. (2010). Flag Day. *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from http://www.tolerance.org/activity/flag-day.
  - *Exemplifies how individuality contributes to the overall diversity of America.*
- Dutton, L. (2010). The Crayon Box That Talked. Retrieved from http://www.yourclasspage.com/9734298300/ldutton.file10.1217360851.d.doc
  - *Promotes students' use of interpersonal skills in understanding themselves and others.*

- Hart, T. (2010). Discrimination in Banned Books. *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from http://www.tolerance.org/activity/discrimination-banned-books.
- *Examines the role discrimination plays in books that have been banned.*
- Hollis, M. (2010). The Resurgence of Hate. *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from http://www.tolerance.org/activity/resurgence-hate.
  - *Explores hate groups, how they influence and to recognize their injustice.*
- Ipatenco, S. (2010). Celebrate Each Other. *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from http://www.tolerance.org/activity/celebrate-each-other.
  - *Encourages students to express their individual race and ethnicity and to appreciate the differences of others.*
- Oakes, J., O'Flahavan, J., & Slavin, R. (2010). Grouping Students by Ability. Teaching Tolerance. Retrieved from http://www.tolerance.org/tdsi/cb_grouping.
  - *Discusses grouping students by ability level through informational videos offered by scholars of various university settings.*
- Schreur, G. (2010). Why I Lied to My Students. *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from http://www.tolerance.org/supplement/why-i-lied-my-students.
  - *Teaches students about stereotyping and trust.*
- Torres, M. (2010). Rooting Out Termites. *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from http://www.tolerance.org/activity/rooting-out-termites.
  - *Addresses bigotry used every day in the vernacular.*
- Urbanski, E. (2010). A BOX OF CRAYONS. *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from http://www.kinderart.com/multic/p_mlkjr_crayons.htm.
- *Promotes working together and how diversity can make things more appealing.* http://www.worldpeacepassport.com/media/Sample-Lesson-Plan.pdf

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Chapter 6: Embedding Social Skills into Classroom Instruction

Kathleen E. Davies

Objectives

This chapter references Cartledge recommendations (2009a):

- Social and Academic Skills: II.5, II.6.a, II.6.b, II.6.c

After reading this chapter, teachers will be able to:

- Understand what is meant by developmentally appropriate social skills.
- Understand why social skills are important in educational settings.
- Incorporate social skills teachings into daily classroom lessons and activities.
- Infuse cultural components into lessons that promote social skills as well as instances in which concerning behaviors arise and are addressed.
- Identify and utilize a broad range of pedagogical techniques to effectively incorporate social skills into daily classroom lessons.
- Identify and use a social skills model that is "culturally responsive" (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009, p. 24).

Questions for Consideration

- What social skills do I feel are appropriate for my classroom? What skills are expected in my classroom?
- How do I promote social skills in my classroom?
- Do some of the students have an easier time interacting with others? Do some students have a more difficult time with social skills? Why are there differences among the students?
- Do I incorporate cultural components into lessons and classroom rules related to social skills?

- How might I incorporate the students' cultural backgrounds into classroom activities in relation to social skills?
- Do I rely on one pedagogical technique to promote social skills (example: discussion based activities)?
- What types of pedagogical techniques promote social skills naturally?
- Are there any teaching methods that do not support social skills (Cartledge et al., 2009)?

Background Information

In many societies and cultures, children eventually grow to assume the social roles that adults currently fill. Schools, teachers, parents, and communities are vitally important in helping to prepare students to fulfill these roles (Elias, 2003). Sometimes referred to as *social skills instruction or social-emotional learning*, this particular aspect of education allows students to effectively work and learn with others, and become important figures in their families, communities, and workplaces. Specifically, social skills are socially accepted that promote the good of both the student and those he/she interacts with (Cartledge et al., 2009).

Social skills instruction is aimed towards helping young people develop socially, ethically, and academically by incorporating character development and values into school culture, lesson plans, and interpersonal interactions with adults and peers. This emphasizes values shared by local communities, and commonly includes respect, responsibility, honesty, fairness, compassion, courtesy, courage, and kindness (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2003). Proactive, positive promotion of social skills within the classroom is designed to prevent problems from occurring in the first place, and to keep minor behavioral difficulties from escalating into major problems (Cartledge et al., 2009). Incorporating social skills into classroom instruction helps maintain an organized and friendly environment where students understand expectations and feel accepted within their classroom community (Cartledge, 2009b).

Social and Emotional Skills for Students

1. Awareness of self and others
   - Ability to identify emotions, understand the types of situations that lead to specific emotions, take the perspective of others, and regulate emotions.
2. Positive attitudes and values
   - Ability to respect and value others, promote and respect the classroom community, and be honest and fair when interacting with others.
3. Responsible decision making
   - Ability to use problem solving skills to address concerning situations (identify a problem, think of several solutions, identify risks and benefits of solutions, choose a solution, evaluate the outcome), compare behavior with expectations of classroom setting, and set individual and group goals.
4. Social interaction skills
   - Ability to listen to others, express thoughts and feelings to others in an appropriate manner, take turns/share with others, negotiate a solution when there is a problem with another individual, appropriately say "no," and seek help when needed from appropriate sources.

(Adapted from Payton et al., 2000, pp. 181-184)

Incorporating social skills into classroom activities and lessons can help students understand which behaviors are expected and can help to reduce classroom time spent on discipline (Cartledge et al., 2009b; Elias, 2003; Roberts, Tingstrom, Olmi, & Bellipanni, 2008; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005). Children often look to adults, parents, and teachers for guidance and approval. Yet, telling a child what *not* to do is rarely an effective strategy, as they are left without an understanding of what they *should* be doing. By teaching, modeling, and acknowledging appropriate behavior, we can teach children the behaviors

that are preferred and subsequently reward them for their efforts (Sigler & Aamidor, 2005).

If students understand classroom expectations about social interactions and feel welcome within the classroom setting, their interest in and ability to focus on classroom instruction often increases (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2010a; Elias, 2003). When students are engaged in activities and are actively participating in class, problematic behaviors, such as arguing or verbal conflict, often decrease (Cartledge, 2009b). Alternatively, students who are disengaged often have greater difficulty regulating emotions and impulses within a classroom setting. As such, the learning environment often suffers (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2010a; Elias, 2003).

Culturally diverse students may display culturally-relevant interpersonal behaviors that may be misperceived by classmates and teachers. For example, some cultures promote collectivism, or working together for the benefit of the group. A student who is encouraged to work together with family and community members may also attempt to work with fellow students to accomplish a classroom task. If the student is punished for "cheating," then the student may not feel accepted and valued (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al., 2009). Alternatively, children from cultures that discourage questioning of elders (e.g., some Native American or Asian cultures) may not participate extensively in class.

If misinterpreted, these behavioral differences may be viewed as social skill deficits and addressed in a punitive way. Such instances may leave children feeling misunderstood or devalued, and exacerbate existing problems. Understanding the cultural backgrounds of students, by completing research and talking with families, may help to prevent these misperceptions (Cartledge, 2009b.; Cartledge et al., 2009).

When the teacher and student are able to understand the purpose of the behavior, the behavior can either be incorporated into classroom activities and lessons. Alternatively, different behaviors that are acceptable within the classroom community can be identified collaboratively (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al.). For instance, the teacher who knows

that there are students in the classroom who are encouraged to work collaboratively in groups at home may include more group activities (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge, et al.).

Cultural misunderstandings may be one reason that African American students are disciplined higher rates than Caucasian students (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al., 2009; Skiba, Michael, & Nardo, 2000). When students are disciplined for culturally based behaviors or behaviors that are misperceived, behavioral concerns may increase due to the student feeling misunderstood (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge, et al.). Incorporating social skills expectations and including students in the creation of specific classroom rules may help to alleviate this confusion for students and teachers (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al.; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2009).

Incorporating cultural components into social skill instruction and classroom settings can help students to feel accepted, and can reduce problem behaviors (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al., 2009). For example, Banks et al. (1996) examined two culturally specific social skills training programs that aimed to provide African American youth with a holistic understanding of their cultural background and contributions. The programs also aimed to promote prosocial interactions by increasing positive self-image and attitudes towards others. Findings suggested that these programs were effective in decreasing anger and aggression, while increasing assertiveness and self-control.

The primary goal of incorporating social skills into the classroom setting is to promote a warm and inviting classroom experience for all students. This allows all students to learn skills that help them become successful members of their society (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al., 2009; Elias, 2003). When students feel connected to their school, they are more likely to feel motivated and have positive attitudes regarding learning while they are less likely to commit

Myth: Social skills should only be taught at home.
Fact: Incorporating social skills into classroom lessons can help students understand the expectations of the classroom, which will promote a positive environment with less time spent on discipline .

concerning behaviors such as using substances (Learning First Alliance, 2001). Providing an environment that promotes acceptance and positive social interactions not only teaches students the expectations of the classroom setting but also allows for a more holistic and diverse approach to education.

Myth: Social skills instruction does not support academic achievement.
Fact: Learning occurs within a social context; poor impulse control and emotion regulation can interfere with a student's ability to learn within a classroom (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2010a; Elias, 2003). Praise from the teacher has also been found to be related to an increase in focused student behaviors (Sutherland, Wehby, & Copeland, 2000).

Classroom Implementation

Peer and Cooperative Learning

Peer tutoring and cooperative learning activities can be effective methods of teaching interpersonal skills. As some children learn more effectively in groups, pairing strong students with those who need more help and encouragement can be an effective technique in not only teaching academic skills but social skills as well (Cartledge et al., 2009). For instance, pairing students with and without autism has been found to be an effective method in promoting social skills, including initiating communication with peers (DiSalvo & Oswald, 2002). Thus, pairing socially competent children with those who may display difficulties could reinforce behavioral expectations.

Including Cultural Components in Lessons and Activities

Often, the cultural backgrounds of students promote interpersonal relationships. For instance, some African American students may value the importance of their extended family (Cartledge et al., 2009). This value can be incorporated into classroom activities, such as literature based activities, discussions, and group work exercises, examining the various definitions of "family" and how this concept can differ across students and cultures (Cartledge et al.; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2010a).

Selecting culturally diverse literature is another effective way to embed interpersonal skills into lessons. Often books, as well as poetry, music, and film, provide lessons in interpersonal skills. Ask students to suggest books that they like or read at home. Ensure that the literature within your classroom is culturally diverse. For example, an African American student may not feel valued and may not feel as though the classroom teachings relate to him or her if the literature used in the classroom is solely written by Caucasian writers or has only Caucasian characters (Cartledge, 2009b.; Cartledge et al., 2009; Marchant & Womack, 2010). Exposure to multicultural literature will not only allow your students to feel welcomed and valued, but will also encourage cultural respect, curiosity, and learning within the classroom.

Be Positive and Affirming

The goal of incorporating social skills into daily classroom activities is to use a positive and proactive approach (Cartledge et al., 2009). Students respond best to positive reinforcement. One useful technique is catching students when they are doing well, and publically rewarding them for their positive actions. This serves to teach and reinforce positive behaviors for both that student and for onlookers. Be specific when using a positive and affirming statement, and be sure to tell students what they are doing well. For example, explaining that you should use “I” statements to tell others how you feel with your words is significantly more proactive, positive, and effective than responding with “don’t hit your classmates!” when one lashes out at another (Cartledge et al.; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005). Teaching students to reinforce one another is also an effective strategy for

promoting positive behaviors. This allows students to focus on the positive aspects of fellow classmates, and reinforces a positive school culture both in and out of the classroom.

When providing corrective feedback, try to sandwich the corrective statement in between two positive statements (Cartledge, 2009b). This is known as the "stroked, stifled, stroked" technique (Cartledge, 2009b, p. 30; Cartledge et al., 2009; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005). This primes the student for the corrective feedback, allowing them to feel better about themselves and their future actions. In the following scenario, Dion has just called Jeana stupid for mispronouncing a word.

"Dion, you have great reading skills – I'm so glad you can read these words so well! But telling a classmate that he or she is stupid is against our classroom "respect" policy. You are such a role model to your classmates - do you think you can help them sound words out in the future instead of calling them names?" This allows the student to receive the corrective feedback while feeling welcomed, appreciated, and valued.

Classroom Rules

A great way to promote respect for diversity as well as acceptance of all students is to incorporate social skills into your classroom rules and expectations. Invite students to a discussion and ask for their input on the rules and expectations of the classroom. Post these rules and expectations in the classroom so that students can take ownership of the rights of responsibilities of all members of the classroom. Include rules related to social skills, such as "what does it mean to be a good friend?" or "how do we express hurt feelings?" Advocate for acceptance of all students within the classroom setting, and remember to stay positive - tell students

"Social and emotional learning has been shown to increase mastery of subject material, motivation to learn, commitment to school, and time devoted to schoolwork" (Collaboration for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2003, p. 7).

"Children from diverse backgrounds may have social behaviors or traditions that differ from the culture of the school. Teachers need to understand the culture of their learners..." (Cartledge et al., 2009, p. 95).

what to do versus what not to do (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al., 2009; Elias, 2003; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2009).

Classroom Setting

The way teachers organize the classroom environment and instructional lessons can help or hinder the promotion of positive social skills (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2010b). Classrooms should be laid out in a way that facilitates positive interaction. Teachers can create a welcoming environment by standing at the classroom door to welcome students every morning, by representing the diversity of students in classroom pictures. Instruction can easily incorporate multicultural backgrounds by basing lessons and materials around students' cultural backgrounds, prior knowledge, and interests (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2010b).

Instructional Strategies that Promote Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

This short checklist offers effective classroom instructional strategies for teaching, modeling, and reinforcing social and emotional competencies.

Setting up the classroom:

_____ Arrange seating so that students can see one another.
_____ Make sure bulletin boards and displays reflect the rich diversity of your students.
_____ Keep the room clean and well-organized, with materials prepared in advance for the day's lesson.

Creating a safe, caring, participatory, and well-managed learning environment:

_____ Greet students as they enter your classroom, creating a welcoming environment.
_____ Establish shared ground rules/agreements with your students on how to treat each other respectfully.
_____ Model SEL behaviors of respect, caring, self-control, and fair decision-making.
_____ Focus on all students' positive qualities and acknowledge their efforts and contributions.
____ Pay attention to student reactions, need for clarification, and need for change in activity, and address these needs immediately.

Starting a lesson:

_____ Ask open-ended questions to discover what the students already know.
_____ Employ a variety of inquiry methods to draw out authentic student responses (i.e., think-pair share).
_____ Ask "What do you think?" rather than "Why?" questions to stimulate divergent thinking.
_____ Allow "wait time" of 7 - 10 seconds before calling on students to give everyone a chance to reflect.

Introducing new skills and information:

_____ Present and connect new skills and information to the students' responses.
_____ Provide clear and concise instructions and model tasks when appropriate.
_____ Respond respectfully to a wide variety of student responses to show respect and openness to divergent thinking, e.g.; "Okay," "All right," "Thank you."
_____ Offer students the right to pass to honor different learning styles.

Preparing students for guided practice:

____ Model the guided practice before asking students to practice and apply new skills and knowledge.
____ Always play the role with negative behavior in a role-play; students always act out the appropriate behavior as skill-building practice and reinforcement.
____ Give timely, supportive, and clear feedback immediately after guided practice.
____ Use closure questions to help students reflect on their learning and imagine ways they will apply the new learning to their own lives.

Managing discipline in a safe and respectful way:

_____ Enforce the ground rules/agreements consistently.
_____ Handle problems quickly and discreetly, treating students with respect and fairness.
_____ Encourage students to discuss solutions rather than blame others.
_____ Share your reactions to inappropriate behaviors and explain why the behaviors are unacceptable.

Problem Solving

What should you do when a student is not displaying appropriate social skills in your classroom? Perhaps the behavior is culturally based or is a behavior that is accepted at home. Have a discussion about the behavior with the student and perhaps the student's family. For instance, a child who disrupts class repeatedly may only be trying to gain the teacher's attention. In a discussion with child, find appropriate methods that the child can use in the classroom that help the child obtain the teacher's attention without disrupting the class. For instance, perhaps the child could hold up a small sign at his or her desk. The teacher could then acknowledge the sign immediately and come over to the desk when there is an appropriate moment. (Cartledge, 2009b.; Cartledge et al., 2009).

Myth: Social skills instruction takes up a lot of classroom time.
Fact: Social skills can be emphasized within an already planned classroom lesson. Examples include having students engage in reflective listening during group work or applying problem solving skills to a historical or political event (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2010a).

Summary and Reflection

Promoting social skills is a positive and proactive approach to preventing problem behaviors from occurring or worsening (Cartledge et al., 2009). Social skills instruction is substantially different from reactive and punitive approaches to discipline, and helps to make the classroom a warm and inviting place. Incorporating social skills instruction into classroom activities will not only help students understand the behavioral expectations of the classroom setting but will also help them to successfully fulfill roles in society (Cartledge et al.,; Elias, 2003).

Given that the diversity of students in schools is increasing, it is important to incorporate the cultural backgrounds and teachings of students into daily activities and lessons (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al.). For instance, reading books to students that reflect the diversity of the classroom and also teach social skills is an effective way of combining

academic and social learning (Cartledge et al.; Marchant & Womack, 2010). Additionally, teachers play a vital role in modeling and teaching appropriate social skills in the classroom setting (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al.). Peers can also be helpful in regards to peer based tutoring and cooperative learning strategies in which students model social skills for one another and affirm one another's use of positive interpersonal skills (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al.). The overall goal of incorporating social skills instruction to create a warm and inviting environment where all students feel accepted and valued (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al.). Students will take these skills with them, not only into other classrooms, but into the future social roles that they will fulfill (Cartledge, 2009b; Cartledge et al.; Elias, 2003).

Reflection questions and exercises:

- Name three developmentally appropriate social skills that could be incorporated in your classroom.
- Identify three teaching methods that will assist in incorporating social skills into classroom lessons.
- List three ways to incorporate students' culture into classroom lessons and rules related to social skills.
- How would you address a situation in which a concerning social behavior arises?
- How might you teach a new social skill in a "culturally responsive" way (Cartledge et al., 2009, p. 24)?

Additional Resources

- National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention (2010a): http://www.promoteprevent.org/publications/prevention-briefs/social-and-emotional-learning
    - The National Center for Mental Health promotion and Youth Violence Prevention organization offers support to schools in a variety of ways (National Center for Mental Health Promotions and Youth Violence Preventions, 2010b). Their

website offers definitions and descriptions of social and emotional learning including important student benefits. The website also offers tips on implementing social and emotional learning in schools.

- Committee for Children (2010): http://www.cfchildren.org
    - The goal of the Committee for Children organization is to "create a world in which children can grow up to be peaceful, kind, responsible citizens" (Committee for Children, 2010, para.1). Their website offers resources on concerning issues such as bullying and violence. They also offer resources on social and emotional learning. Bullying, cyber-bullying, school climate, and violence prevention are all addressed.
- Edutopia (The George Lucas Educational Foundation, 2010a): http://www.edutopia.org/social-emotional-learning
    - Created by The George Lucas Educational Foundation, Edutopia is designed to offer practical tips for teachers on incorporating social skills into classroom settings (The George Lucas Educational Foundation, 2010b). This website offers definitions related to social and emotional learning as well as an explanation as to why incorporating social skills into the classroom is important. The website also offers resources on applying social skills in classroom settings as well as blogs in which teachers can discuss techniques with one another.
- Center for Social and Emotional Learning (2010): http://www.schoolclimate.org
    - The goal of the Center for Social and Emotional Learning is to promote "a safe, supportive environment that nurtures social and emotional, ethical, and academic skills" (Center for Social and Emotional Learning, 2010, para. 1). This website discusses the importance of school climate and offers suggestions of ways teachers can build a positive and caring classroom, including techniques to incorporate social skills into classroom lessons.
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (2003): http://www.casel.org
    - The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning was created in 1994 with the mission of promoting social and emotional learning in classroom

environments (2003). The organization offers a wide range of resources including definitions of social and emotional learning, benefits of including social skills in classroom settings, and methods of incorporating social skills into lessons.

- "Academic and Social-Emotional Learning" by Maurice J. Elias: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/publications/EducationalPracticesSeriesPdf/prac11e.pdf
    - This report offers information regarding implementing social-emotional components into classroom lessons and activities including promoting community awareness and setting clear objectives in the classroom. The author also includes research findings to help support the techniques described.
- "Every Child Learning: Safe and Supportive Schools" by Learning First Alliance: http://www.learningfirst.org
    - This report describes the core elements needed for healthy school environments. The report also includes research findings that help support their recommendations for creating a positive school environment and school climate.
- This instructional checklist shown on the following page was obtained through the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's website (2010b): http://www.casel.org/downloads/InstructionalStrategies.pdf

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Appendix A: Professional Development Activities

To meet the needs of students, teachers need to be armed with the tools necessary to help them become culturally aware within their classrooms. As a facilitator you will need to be able to provide these tools to your teaching staff. As a facilitator your goal is to promote growth at all levels, including allowing your teachers the freedom to develop new strategies that help them to become culturally aware. Below you will find several activities that you can use with teachers to help them gain a better understanding of culturally responsive instruction.

Chapter 1 - Important Concepts to Guide Culturally Responsive Practice

Ashley M. Hurley

Think-Pair-Share

(Palmer, 2010)

Ask your teachers a question that will challenge their intelligence and allow them one minute to think of a response silently. Next, ask them to pair up and discuss their responses with another colleague. Then, bring the teachers back together for a whole-group discussion about the question.

- This exercise will help teachers to see how allowing for group discussions helps students to often feel far more comfortable to participate since they were able to run their thoughts by other students first.
- Remind your teachers that this exercise will be particularly useful to those students who come from a collectivist dimension of culture.

Graffiti Wall

(Palmer, 2010)

For this exercise, you as a facilitator should decide whether to do this at the beginning or ending of a lesson with teachers. To begin you will line a wall with a huge sheet of paper and provide your teachers with a writing utensil. For example, you might instruct your teachers to draw a symbol or write a word that makes them think of the concept of time and how it applies within the classroom. Then, ask the teachers to explain what they either drew or wrote.

- This is a great way to assess prior knowledge or readiness of the dimensions of culture or other topics concerning culture and diversity.
- Explain to your teachers that this exercise will allow the teacher to gain an understanding of how their students view concepts, such as the example of the concept of time.

Post-Its

(Palmer,2010)

For this exercise you will ensure that your teachers have post-it notes readily available. Have a specific spot in the area of training for questions. Invite teachers to jot their questions or ideas on Post-its, and allow them to put them in the designated area.

- Explain to teachers that this exercise will help to generate discussion about a topic and allow students to answer each other's questions.

Case Study

- Have the teachers consider the following discussion questions as they are reading the case study:
    - How should Mr. Dogood of introduced and incorporated the new student into the class?
    - What would you do to get to know your student on a cultural level that Mr. Dogood didn't do?
- Break the teachers into small groups and ask them to discuss their thoughts on the case study, focusing on the discussion questions given.

Scenarios

Ask the teachers to read scenarios from Activity Handout II that relate to the five dimensions of culture.

- Have the teacher's partner up to discuss the scenarios and which dimensions they fall within and why.
- Ask the teachers to write up a brief explanation of what the teacher should do during each scenario.
- After the teachers are given some time to go over each scenario with their partner, bring the group back together and discuss the scenarios together as a whole.

- This activity will help the teachers to gain a full understanding of all the dimensions of culture so that they can recognize them within their classrooms.

Activity Handout I: Mr. Dogood

Mr. Dogood has been teaching third grade in a suburban area for the past four years. A recent school closing has resulted in two schools merging and a small number of African American children are now in what was a predominately suburban Caucasian school. His district has offered instruction about DI as the professional development initiative for one year now. The principal noted the following activities when she observed Mr. Dogood's class.

Upon entering the classroom, students were greeted by Mr. Dogood. He spoke to each student individually. Students smiled as they passed their teacher on the way to their seats. Mr. Dogood began the lesson by asking students to locate the white boards and dry erase markers under their chairs. He asked a number of review questions to help students recall the story they'd read yesterday. After hearing each question, students wrote their answer on their board. Then they held their boards up and answered verbally, in unison. All but one student raised his board and Mr. Dogood prompted the students again to raise their boards with their answers. The child who did not raise his board was the only African American student in the classroom. Another student started to tease him about not knowing the answer. Mr. Dogood heard this and asked students to please quiet down and he moved on the next question.

Next Mr. Dogood explained to the students how to engage in their "learning stations" activity. Students were then randomly separated into four groups with each group beginning at a particular learning station. Again the same student was confused on what to do because he had never participated in learning stations before. Mr. Dogood placed him in his group and told him to work with the other students and they would help him understand the activities. At the learning stations, students completed various tasks as indicated on specific task cards located at every station. Essential materials were organized so that students would have access to paper, art supplies, and all that they needed to complete each task. Groups rotated every 15 minutes. While students worked, Mr. Dogood continually moved around the room, interacting with students and answering their questions. The African American student was not engaging in group work and didn't ask any questions when Mr. Dogood asked him if he had any. The other students within his groups did not try to get him to interact with them or help him to understand what "learning stations" were all about.

Finally, Mr. Dogood asked students to sit as a whole group again. He asked them what they enjoyed about the activity, and how they might like to see "learning stations" structured for the next time, should he choose to use this activity again. Several students told Mr. Dogood that they enjoyed the activity but next time would like to pick their own groups. Mr. Dogood said he would consider it and then began a discussion about how students chose to end their stories, how they envisioned the main character, what they expected to read in a follow-up story, and how they questioned the characters. During discussion, Mr. Dogood spoke to every student at least once.

Activity Handout II: Scenarios (Cartledge, Gardner, and Ford, 2009)

Scenario 1: What problems could arise when Mr. Red tends to value working independently, while Jamal tends to work better within a group? Mr. Red is likely to value the effort put into independent work, while Jamal is likely to enjoy working in groups, helping others, and asking questions of classmates if he needs assistance. When Mr. Red posts his students' grades, Jamal is uneasy about what to expect. He's concerned about what grades his friends will receive and hopes they are high or he will be just as upset as they will be. He sometimes blames himself for not being more helpful to his friends.

Scenario 2: When it comes to Mr. Lowry's classroom, rules are set and are to be followed no matter what. Therefore, students must follow his guidelines and requirements when writing assignments. Deviating from the outline will result in a loss of points. Tyrell dislikes set structure; he is not as linear in his thinking styles and likes to explore his ideas. He believes there is many ways to write a paper.

Scenario 3: Mrs. Easypeddle enjoys teaching, believing she is blessed to be in this profession. This is where she is meant to be according to her. So when students are difficult she does not give up on them. Mr. Matthews on the other hand respects the hard work involved in teaching, but he has other plans for the future. Although he enjoys helping others, he will be more prosperous economically if he majors in engineering or pharmacology. His motto is, "Why settle for hard work and little pay when you can work hard and earn lots of money?"

Scenario 4: Mr. Bandi (who prefers to be called Brother Bandi) loves to be around people and really gets fulfillment each morning by talking to the students in an attempt to set a positive mood for the day. Because of this, he is often late for meetings. According to Paul, Mr. Banki is wasting his time. When the bell rings, Mr. Bandi needs to begin his lesson immediately, and he shouldn't be late or miss appointments. His job is to teach, not waste his time socializing.

Scenario 5: Mr. Stevens is very direct in giving students feedback on assignments. He also tells them if they don't like their assignment or textbook, they need to speak up. If there is a lack of understanding within the instruction begin taught, students should ask questions. Lee holds Mr. Stevens and teachers to the utmost respect. She believes that if she doesn't understand a lesson, it's her fault and to ask a question would insult the teachers and suggest he isn't good at his job. She asks few questions and does not admit when she is confused.

Chapter 2 - Identifying and Reducing Teacher Bias

Laura Carroll

Critical Reflection

1. Break teachers into groups
2. Have them discuss their "exposure" to African Americans
3. Then have them participate in critical reflection (Howard, 2003)
    - What is the racial and gender breakdown of students I often send from my class for discipline?
    - How often do I send these same students?
    - What messages am I communicating to the students and their peers?
    - Is the disciplined behavior getting better? Why? Or Why not?
    - Are my disciplinary actions therapeutic or just punitive?

Reading Anticipation

Have all teachers fill out the Reading Anticipation Guide before they read this handbook. After all teachers have had a chance to read this chapter, have them complete the rest of the guide. The Reading Anticipation Guide can be found on the next page.

Reading Anticipation Guide

Directions: Before Reading this chapter, mark your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. Consider the statements as you read. After reading mark your level of agreement of disagreement with each statement. If your opinion differs please state why.

Teachers are not bias, they remain neutral and treat all their students equally.

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Strongly Disagree

Reasoning before you read:

Did your level of agreement change after the reading? Why or Why not?

I am culturally responsive because I do not see color differences between my students.

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Strongly Disagree

Reasoning before you read:

Did your level of agreement change after the reading? Why or Why not?

What the other students are thinking is not important to me when I am disciplining a student.

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Strongly Disagree

Reasoning before you read:

Did your level of agreement change after the reading? Why or Why not?

Chapter 3 - Communicating Effectively with Parents

Tina L. Joos

Telephone Game

The following is an activity for facilitators to carry out with their staff as well as parents to show the importance of good communication skills.

1. Everyone will be told to sit in a circle around the room. The facilitator will start the game by whispering a message to the person next to him/her.
2. The message can be something similar to "There will be an open house at the school on Tuesday July 28th. Please let your child's teacher know asap, so refreshments can be bought accordingly".
3. As the message gets told from one person to the next, more than likely it will not come across to some people the exact way the facilitator had originally told it.
4. The last person that gets told the message will then say it out loud or write it down. Then, the two messages (the original and one that was conveyed to last person) will be told to everyone.
5. After seeing a difference in the messages, it will become apparent to staff and parents about how important it is to communicate effectively to one another.
6. This is just a short activity that proves how important it is to have good communication skills between facilitators, staff, and parents. Not only is it important but it is a necessity for the success of the student's.

Chapter 4 - Culturally Responsive Rules and Routines

Christina L. Scanlon

Warm-Up Activity

Explain that we are going to talk about infusing culture into classroom rituals and routines. Before delving into material, have the participants review the "Questions for Discussion" in Chapter 4. Allow participants time to discuss their responses to these questions in small groups for no more than 10 minutes.

When the group reconvenes, ask for participants to volunteer information about their current classroom rules, the most violated classroom rules/behavior infractions, and what is currently being done to address these behaviors. Write the participants' responses on flip charts (or dry erase board) so that they are available for the future. Use these flip charts throughout session when discussing the way classroom rules are written, potential cultural clashes between current rules and classroom cultural elements, and the use of discipline as opposed to punishment.

Do's and Do Nots - Developing Strength-Based Rules

Before doing this activity, cut out or write on note cards the "do's" and "do nots" on the following page. Give each participant a card and have them match their "do" card with a "do not" card (or vice versa).

Once the participants have found their partner, explain that classroom rules should express what to do rather than what not to do. Have the pairs refer to the flip-charts made in the "Warm-Up Activity," specifically the list of current classroom rules. Have the teachers rewrite rules so that they clearly state behavioral expectations.

If time allows, have the teachers set up a rules-by-routines matrix. Consult Kerr and Nelson (2010) for more information on how to create these matrices.

Culturally Responsive Do's and Don'ts

Do's	Don'ts
Expect your students to do their best while giving them the support and tools to do so.	Do not expect low behavior or performance from a child because of his or her gender or race.
Focus on teaching positive behaviors.	Do not focus on punishing negative behaviors.
Be sure that consequences are fair, brief, and directly connected to the offense.	Do not make discipline actions excessive or unrelated to the offense.
Use behavior management techniques to proactively manage problem behaviors.	Do not wait until behaviors become out-of-hand before addressing them.
Use the same set of disciplinary actions for each child, regardless of race or gender.	Do not use a different set of disciplinary actions for students based on race or gender.
Involve students in discussions about rituals, routines, and rules to help develop classroom expectations and consequences. Encourage your students to "own" their rules.	Do not make your classroom rules and consequences by yourself.

Become familiar with different cultural norms that may exist in your classroom.	Do not ignore the effect that cultural difference can have on your classroom.

Chapter 5 - Activities and Active Engagement

Todd A. Bertani

The Cone of Learning

1. Have the teachers read the following:

WE REMEMBER

10% of what we read
20% of what we hear
30% of what we see
50% of what we see and hear
70% of what we discuss with others
80% of what we personally experience
95% or what we teach others
- Edgar Dale
(Former Professor of Education at Ohio State University)

2. Have the teachers consider the following questions as they are reading the information.

a. How much of your class time are the students spending reading, listening, watching, discussing, experiencing, or instructing others?
b. Why do you believe people remember 95% of what they teach others?
c. How can or do you accommodate your students to reach that 95% criterion?

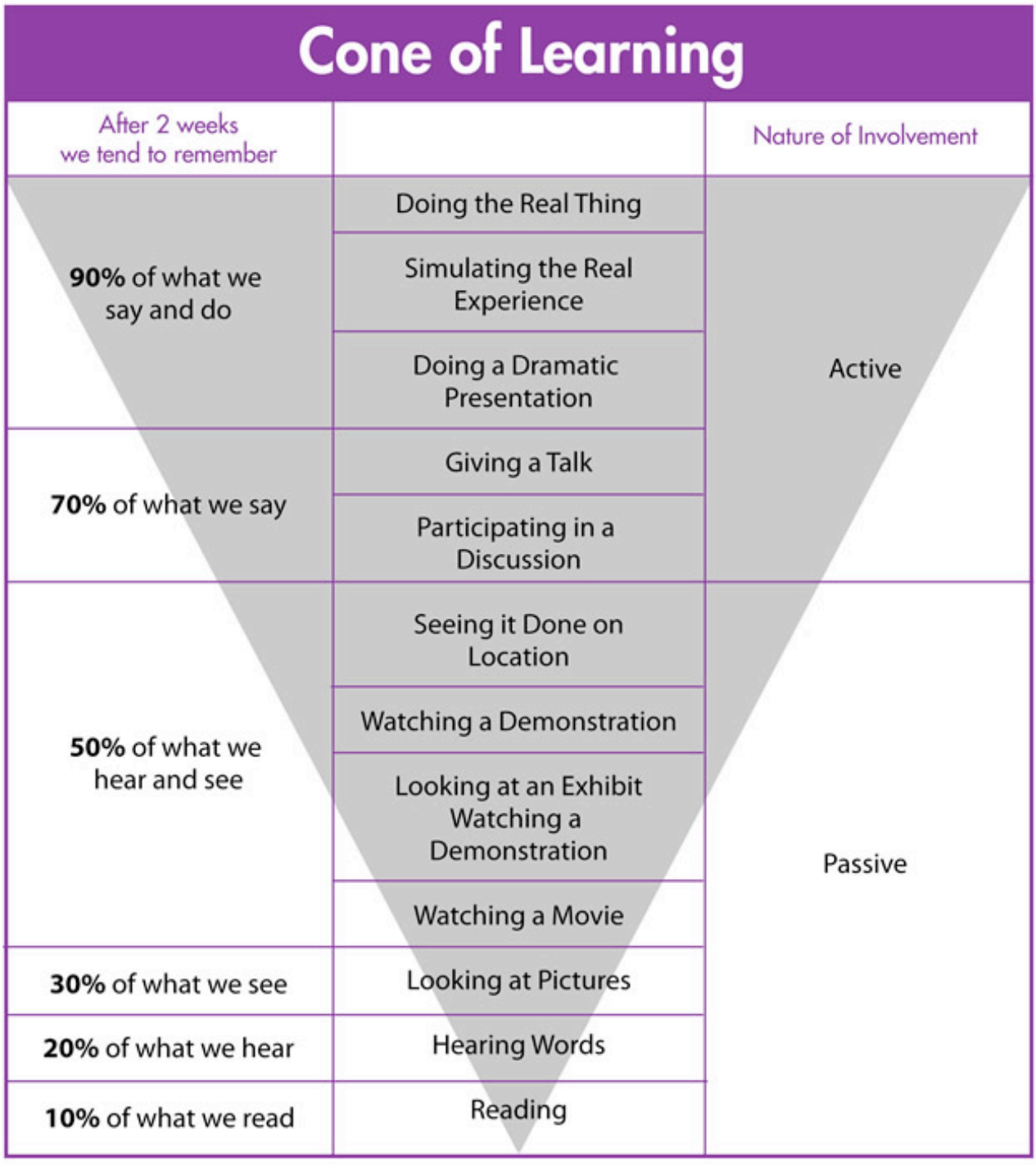
3. Break the teachers into small groups and ask them to discuss their thoughts on the Edgar Dale statements, focusing on the discussion questions given.

4. While sharing your thoughts on question c, record the best practices as a guide for future lessons.

5. Distribute Handout 1 "The Cone of Learning" and have teachers display them in their classrooms.

6. Teachers can engage their students with a discussion on “The Cone of Learning.”

Handout 1: The Cone of Learning (Dale, 1969)



Source: Cone of Learning adapted from (Dale, 1969)

Chapter 6 - Embedding Social Skills into Classroom Instruction

Kathleen E. Davies

Do You Agree?

Activity I: Do You Agree (Palmer, 2010; McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2010)?

1. Post the following three statements for teachers to read. Ask teachers to read the statements and state whether they agree or disagree. Ask them to explain their thoughts.
    a. Social skills can be incorporated into classroom lessons on a regular basis.
    b. Teaching social skills helps to promote academic learning.
    c. Students' cultural backgrounds can be included in lessons related to social skills.
2. Provide teachers with Handout I. Ask teachers to read the excerpt obtained from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's (CASEL) website regarding developmentally appropriate social skills expectations (2010c; http://www.casel.org/basics/skills.php).
3. After teachers are finished reading the excerpt, revisit the three previous statements again and ask teachers to rate their agreement. Ask them to note any changes in their thinking.
4. Ask teachers to discuss the statements as a large group. Discuss how the listed social skills in the handout could be incorporated into daily classroom activities. Address any barriers that might prevent these social skills from being incorporated into lessons and activities. Have a participant keep a list on the board or on a projected Word document.
5. Ask teachers to think about authority-how should students respond to or question authority in an appropriate manner? How should students respond to teasing? What type of language is appropriate? What about culture-what does your cultural background teach you about interacting with others?

Activity I Handout: Social Skills (Palmer, 2010; McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2010)
Obtained from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) website (2010c; http://www.casel.org/basics/skills.php). CASEL has identified five core groups of social and emotional competencies:

Self-awareness—accurately assessing one's feelings, interests, values, and strengths; maintaining a well-grounded sense of self-confidence
Self-management—regulating one's emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles; setting and monitoring progress toward personal and academic goals; expressing emotions appropriately
Social awareness—being able to take the perspective of and empathize with others; recognizing and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences; recognizing and using family, school, and community resources
Relationship skills—establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict; seeking help when needed
Responsible decision-making—making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others, and likely consequences of various actions; applying decision-making skills to academic and social situations; contributing to the well-being of one's school and community

With regard to **self-awareness,** children in the elementary grades should be able to recognize and accurately label simple emotions such as sadness, anger, and happiness. In middle school, students should be able to analyze factors that trigger their stress reactions. Students in high school are expected to analyze how various expressions of emotion affect other people.
With regard to **self-management,** elementary school children are expected to describe the steps of setting and working toward goals. In middle school they should be able to set and make a plan to achieve a short-term personal or academic goal. High school students should be able to identify strategies to make use of available school and community resources and overcome obstacles in achieving a long-term goal.
In the area of **social awareness,** elementary school students should be able to identify verbal, physical, and situational cues indicating how others feel. Those in middle school should be able to predict others' feelings and perspectives in various situations. High school students should be able to evaluate their ability to empathize with others.
In the area of **relationship skills,** in elementary school, students should have an ability to describe approaches to making and keeping friends. Middle school students are expected to demonstrate cooperation and teamwork to promote group goals. In high school students are expected to evaluate uses of communication skills with peers, teachers, and family members.
Finally, with regard to **responsible decision-making,** elementary school students should be able to identify a range of decisions they make at school. Middle school students should be able to evaluate strategies for resisting peer pressure to engage in unsafe or unethical activities. High-school students should be able to analyze how their current decision-making affects their college and career prospects.

Activity II: Social Skills Instruction Model (Palmer, 2010)

1. Post the following social skills instruction model (Cartledge et al., 2009, pp. 81-84) and review briefly with teachers.
   a) Define the social skill to be taught and explain why the skill is important to the class.
      - With student input, have a discussion about why the skill is needed in the classroom (example: an end to bullying may help promote the classroom's stance on respect of all classroom members).
      - Concerning behaviors may be misperceived. For instance, verbal sparring is sometimes used by African American male students in sport. Discuss with students the purpose of the behavior. Cooperatively determine what the student can do instead if appropriate (Cartledge, 2009b).

   b) Show the students how to perform the skill.
      - Role-play potential situations for students.

   c) Provide opportunities for the student to practice with the teacher.
      - Allow students to use actions and words that they are comfortable with and are likely to spontaneously use in the future.

   d) Provide opportunities for students to practice with each other.
      - Students should help teachers create scenarios to practice the newly learned skills. Students should be taught how to praise one another and provide feedback.

   e) Allow opportunities to generalize the behavior.
      - Praise the behavior.
      - Help students use self-statements to monitor their actions.
      - Help students provide one another with praise and feedback.

Activity II Continued: Social Skills Instruction Model (Palmer, 2010)

2. Provide teachers with Handout II. Ask them to read the scenario and think about the questions and tips provided. Using some of the aspects from the social skills model just presented, the teachers should develop a lesson that incorporates a reading lesson as well as a focus on affirming statements.
3. Ask teachers to join with a partner sitting next to them to discuss their lesson ideas. Ask them to list similarities between the lessons. Ask them to explore differences between the lessons. Ask them to practice positive and affirming statements while discussing their lesson plans.
4. Bring the partner exercise into a large group discussion. Ask individuals to volunteer to share their lesson plans or discussions with their partners. Ask them to discuss whether it was easy or difficult to affirm one another during the partner exercise.

Activity II Handout: Mr. Washington's Class (Palmer, 2010)

Mr. Washington is a second grade teacher. He has his students gathered in a circle on the reading rug. Occasionally he asks a student to read a small part of the book or respond to a question that he poses regarding the story content. After Mr. Washington asks Dominic to read a sentence in the book, a fellow classmate, Dante replies, "You idiot, that's not the right word. You probably can't read because you're Black." Mr. Washington immediately reprimands Dante and sends Dante off the reading rug and back to his seat. Dante misses the reading lesson for the day.

After class, Mr. Washington decides that he wants to promote positive behaviors versus always reacting to students when they are negative toward one another. Mr. Washington decides that he will incorporate positive affirmations, or teaching and modeling ways that he and the students can affirm and reinforce one another for positive behaviors, during his next reading lesson. Mr. Washington decides that he will talk with his class about what positive reinforcement and affirmations are and then use the group reading activity to practice these skills. Mr. Washington decides that the goal of the lesson and the reading activity will be to uphold the classroom rule to show respect for all members of the classroom.

Given this scenario as well as the previously presented social skills model, what would you include in Mr. Washington's lesson? How would you incorporate positive reinforcement into a reading lesson?

Keep in mind the following tips:

a) It is best to be very specific when giving positive reinforcement. Instead of saying, "Nice job." You might want to say "Wow, 'friendship' is a difficult and long word to read, great job sounding that word out" (Cartledge et al., 2009; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005).
b) Any time corrective statements are needed, try *sandwiching* them between two positive statements. For instance, if a student tells another student that he or she is "stupid" because the student mispronounced a word, the teacher may reply by stating that the student has great reading skills to pick up on another student's mistake, the student is out of compliance with the rules decided on as a class regarding what it means to be a good friend (i.e., no name calling, respect all classroom members), and that the student could be a role model to his or her fellow students and help them to sound words out in the future. This is known as the "stroked, stifled, stroked" technique (Cartledge, 2009b, p. 30).
c) Catch students when they are doing well. Model for students how they can affirm one another. For example, when approaching two students who are working well together, you may want to make several comments about their success as a team, such as "Wow Diamond you are terrific at those addition problems, thanks for helping us out" and "Great Jamal, I really liked how you helped your partner find the definition in the book." Students will quickly emulate this positive and affirming attitude (Cartledge et al., 2009; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005).

Activity III: Think, Pair, Share (Palmer, 2010)

1. Provide teachers with Handout III and ask them to read the printed case study.
2. After teachers read the case study, ask them to take a few minutes to think about the situation. Ask them to contemplate how they would handle the situation if it occurred in their classroom.
3. After thinking about the case study individually, have teachers pair up with the person sitting next to them. Post the following questions for discussion:
    - Do you think Mrs. Thornhill handled the situation appropriately?
    - What would you have done if you were in Mrs. Thornhill's position?
    - What classroom techniques might have prevented this interaction between Tyreese and Bethany?
    - If you decided to handle the situation between Tyreese and Bethany immediately or "in the moment," what would you have said to the two students?
    - What types of social skills were addressed in the story?
4. After spending time discussing the story with a partner, open the conversation to everyone in the room. Ask teachers to offer their thoughts in regards to the discussion questions or other topics discussed during the partner exercise.

Activity III Handout: Case Study (Palmer, 2010)

Mrs. Thornhill has been a fifth grade teacher for six years in an urban school district. On this particular day, Mrs. Thornhill has a new student joining her classroom. Tyreese is introduced by Mrs. Thornhill as he takes his seat. During recess on the playground, Mrs. Thornhill notices an interaction between Tyreese and a fellow student Bethany.

Tyreese approaches Bethany and states, "Hi, my name is Tyreese. What's yours?"

Bethany responds, "Don't talk to me. I don't play with people like you."

"What do you mean?" Tyreese asks surprised.

"I never play with people with dark skin, and my daddy says that I'm not supposed to have them over at my house. Please leave me alone now before I tell Mrs. Thornhill that you're bothering me," Bethany exclaimed impatiently.

"But I'm just trying to make friends," Tyreese stated, now with tears in his eyes. "My mom told me I can play with anyone as long as they're nice to me. It doesn't matter what you look like on the outside."

"Mrs. Thornhill, Tyreese is bothering me," yelled Bethany.

Mrs. Thornhill has been watching this interaction between her two students from afar. Hoping that her two students would be able to work out their concerns on their own, she had not intervened until this point.

Mrs. Thornhill approaches the two students and asks, "What's the matter Bethany?"

"Tyreese is bothering me and I just want to be by myself. Please make him go away," Bethany explained.

Mrs. Thornhill takes Tyreese aside and suggests that he plays with Shamar and Will, two boys in the classroom who are both very socially outgoing. Mrs. Thornhill suggests that Tyreese not play with Bethany today until they can address the concern between Tyreese and Bethany at a later time (Bell et al., 2009).

Activity IV: Taking Perspective (Palmer, 2010; Barbas, 2010)

1. After teachers read the case study from Activity III, break them into smaller groups. The facilitator should assign each group one of the following topics to be posted for teachers to see. Some groups may have the same assigned topic depending on the size of the group.
    - Take the perspective of Tyreese and pretend as though a family member has just picked you up from school at the end of the day and asked "How was your day?" Write down what you would say to this family member on the way home. What emotions would you experience while telling the story to your family member?
    - Take the role of Tyreese's family member who has just been told about the incident that occurred in school today. Write a letter to Tyreese's teacher about your thoughts and feelings regarding how you feel the incident was handled.
    - Pretend to be in Bethany's place, sitting down to dinner with your family. Talk with your father about the events that took place at school today. Write down what you would say to your family about how you handled the interaction during school.
    - Pretend to be in the teacher's role as she is coming over to intervene. Write down what thoughts are going through your mind. How do you hope to intervene? What do you think is happening between the two students?
    - Take the role of a fellow student who watched the interaction on the playground. Write a diary entry about how the incident made you feel. What happened at school and how did you hope the incident would turn out?
2. After working together, ask several groups to share their written pieces so that the larger group can gain perspective on everyone involved in the incident.

Appendix B: The Color of Discipline

Russel J. Skiba, Robert S. Michael, & Abra Carroll Nardo (2002)

The disproportionate discipline of African-American students has been extensively documented; yet the reasons for those disparities are less well understood. Drawing upon one year of middle-school disciplinary data for an urban school district, we explored three of the most commonly offered hypotheses for disproportionate discipline based on gender, race, and socioeconomic status. Racial and gender disparities in office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions were somewhat more robust than socioeconomic differences. Both racial and gender differences remained when controlling for socioeconomic status. Finally, although evidence emerged that boys engage more frequently in a broad range of disruptive behavior, there were no similar findings for race. Rather, there appeared to be a differential pattern of treatment, originating at the classroom level, wherein African-American students are referred to the office for infractions that are more subjective in interpretation. Implications for teacher training and structural reform are explored.[1]

[1] Abstract taken directly from Skiba, R.J., Michael, R.S., Nardo, A.C., & Peterson, R. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionatly in school punishment. *The Urban Review 34(4), 317-342.*

Appendix C: Cartledge Recommendations

Gwendolyn Cartledge

[INSERT CARTLEDGE RECOMMENDATIONS HERE]

Appendix D: Risk Reports

Mike Valenti

RISK REPORT

Sample School

Composition Indices, Risk Indices, and Race Ratios

REPORT COMPILED:

May 2010

MEASURES OF DISPROPORTIONALITY AMONG ETHNICITIES

It is important to review if any disproportionalities exist among different ethnic groups with regard to office discipline referrals. This report includes two measures that help assess this information: risk indices and risk ratios. Also included is a graph which displays the percentage of enrollment of the school's population by ethnicity.

A *risk-index* is the percentage of students in a particular group (e.g., Caucasians) who have at least one referral for the current school year. The risk index provides us with the answer to the following question: "What is the percentage of students in group X with at least one referral this school year?" For example, a risk-index of .50 for Caucasians means that 50% of Caucasian students have at least one referral this school year. It is useful to compare risk indices among ethnicities to unearth any disproportionalities. The formula for calculating a risk index is:

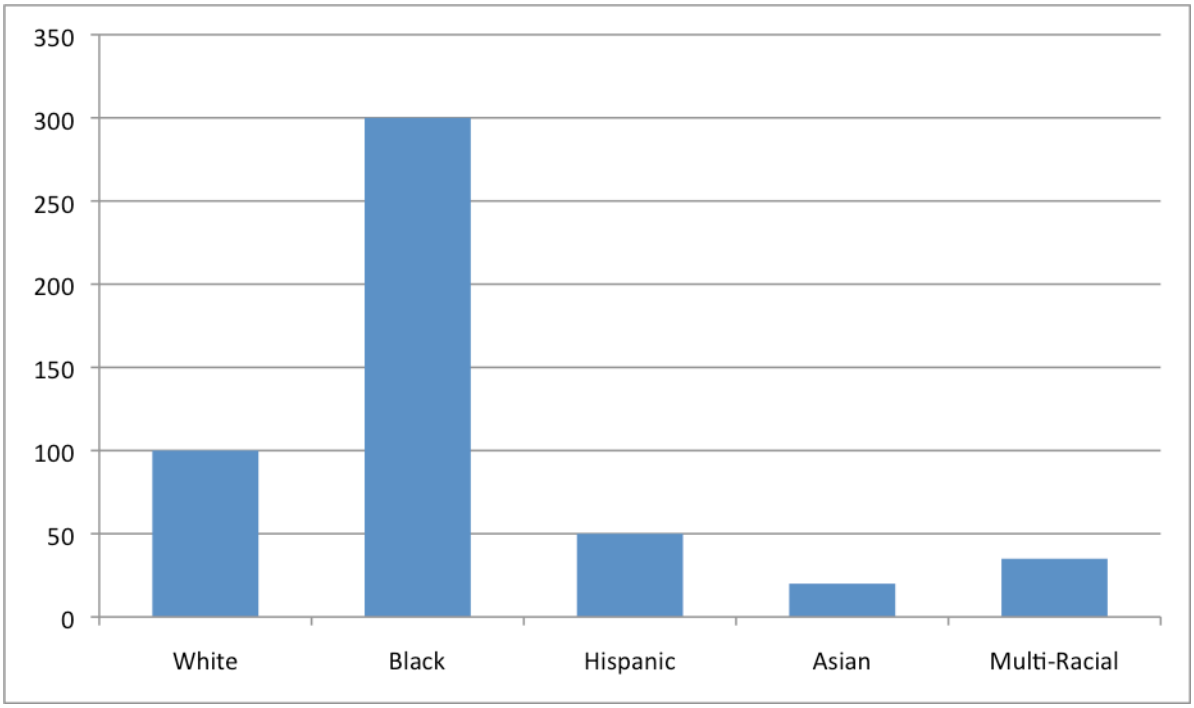
Number of Students in Group X with One or More Referral /
Total Enrollment of Students in Group X

A *risk-ratio* is a comparison of the risk indices of different groups. A risk-ratio greater than 1.0 indicates over-representation of a specific ethnic group, while a risk-ratio less than 1.0 indicates under-representation. A risk-ratio of 1.0 indicates exact proportionality. Risk ratios answer the question, "How much more or less likely is it for students in group X to be referred than all other students?" The formula for calculating a risk ratio is:

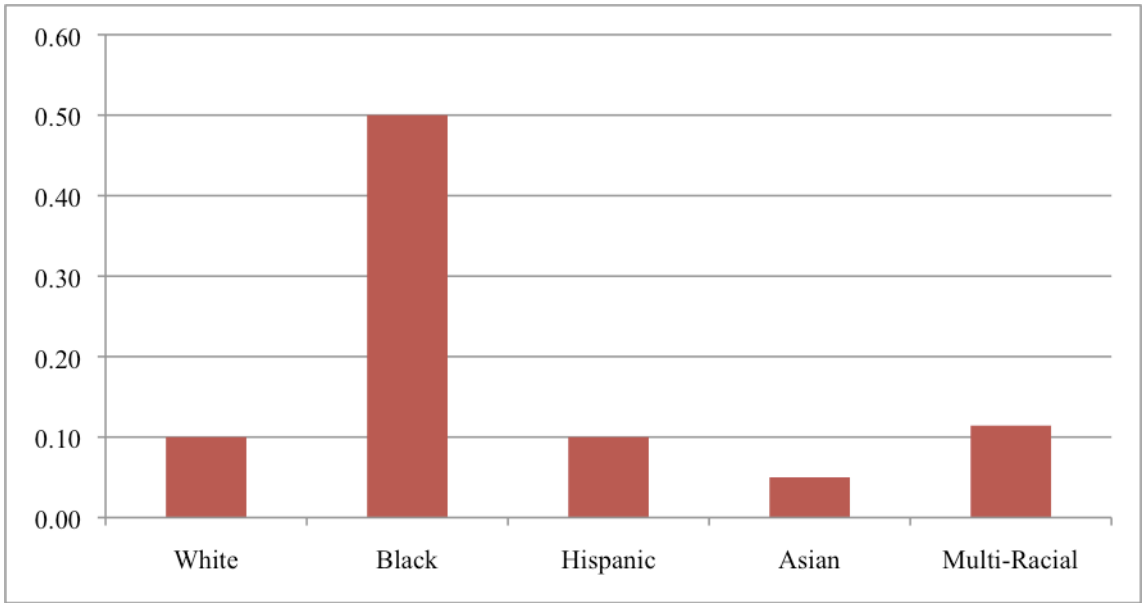
Risk Index of Group X /

Total of Risk Indices of All Other Groups

Ethnicity by Population

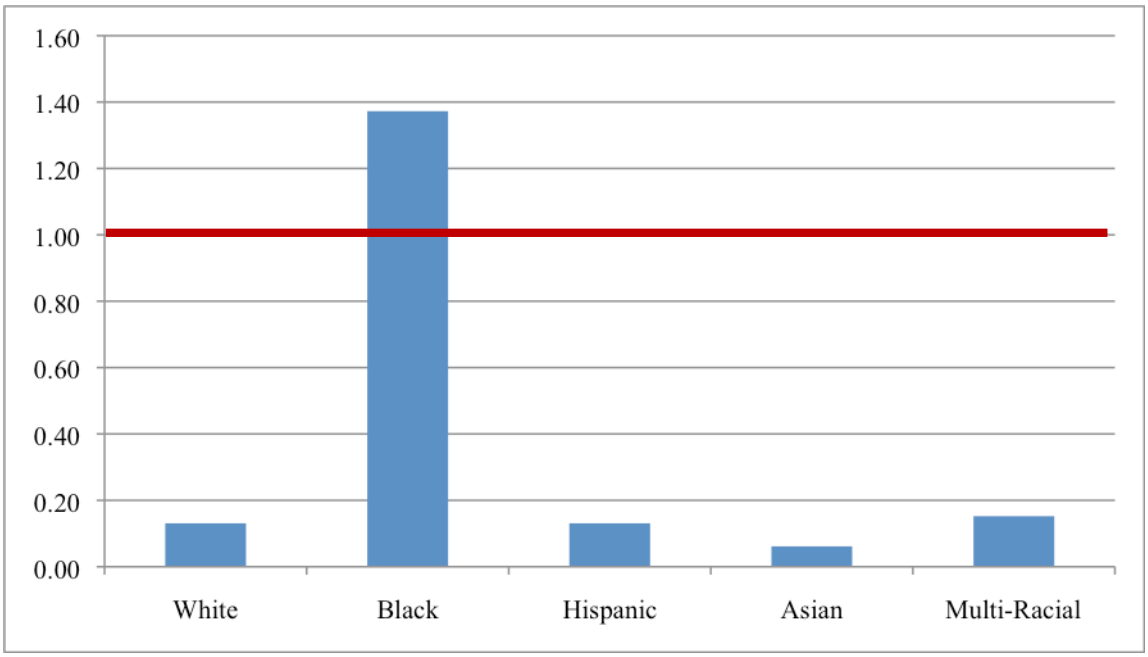


Risk Indices: Comparative



A *risk-index* is the percentage of students in a particular group who have at least one referral.

Risk Ratios: Comparative



A risk-ratio greater than 1.0 indicates over-representation of a specific ethnic group, while a risk-ratio less than 1.0 indicates under-representation. A risk-ratio of 1.0 indicates exact proportionality.

Appendix E: Assessment Strategies

Melissa H. Castle

What do we know about Assessment Practices?

- Language & culture are not adequately considered during the assessment process
- English language tests often used exclusively even when a student's background warrants bilingual testing
- Many test & homework questions & strategies are aimed at the dominant culture
- We need to develop better ways of assessing students' skills

What do we mean by Culturally Responsive Assessment?

- Assessment should sample the pool of acquired knowledge & skill
- Class, cultural, racial, ethnic, gender, & language diversity all influence the manner in which knowledge is acquired, and the manner in which this knowledge is produced in assessment demands.
- If performance is to be adequately assessed, we need to…..
  - *Effectively bridge assessment opportunities in the interests of all students*
  - *Ensure that assessments properly align with both student experiences & teaching objectives*
  - Or… *Uncouple assessment from social divisions & cultural identities*

What are some elements of Culturally Responsive Assessment?

- **Validity:** *The Assessment tests the learning objective – and nothing else*
- **Equity**: *All students have equal opportunity to master learning objectives, regardless of cultural background, economic status, or language*
- **Plurality**: *Students should be able to function & demonstrate mastery in multiple contexts*

Why should we use Culturally Responsive Assessments?

- Low test scores for students of color may partially reflect failure of test developers to consider students' cultural experiences in their assessments.
- Student performance on examinations can only be understood in terms of the student's background, the testing context, and the cultural lens of the test developer & scorer (Hood, 1998).

"What counts as "intelligence"… is so culturally variable that a single test of it cannot be valid for all people." (Estrin, 1993, p. 2)

Three Important Questions to Ask Yourself

1. **Is my assessment an accurate measurement of what I've taught?**
    a. Is it aligned with objectives & teaching?
    b. Have I taught my students how to answer this type of question?
2. **Is the measured performance a reflection primarily of actual ability or simply one of cultural or linguistic differences?**
    a. Do differences in life experiences or family background make portions of the assessment more difficult or inaccessible to your diverse students?
    b. Do cultural differences limit students' ability to respond to questions?
    c. Do test materials or methods of responding limit students' ability to respond?
3. **Do students display mastery of the material presented? (e.g., "But Can They Do Math?")**
    a. Do evaluations hold students to high expectations while remaining culturally relevant & flexible?
    b. Do students have multiple opportunities for demonstration of mastery in a variety of culturally diverse and interesting ways?

Common Problems	Simple Solutions
1. Assessments asking diverse children to interpret or draw upon events they may not have experienced	1. Rubrics & assignments that account for dialectical & experiential differences
2. Activities or projects that assume children have access to specific resources, family members, community activities	2. Multiple and flexible opportunities for assessment that draw upon culturally sensitive opportunities, backgrounds, & resources
3. Assessments in English when test-taker's primary language is Spanish	3. Curriculum-embedded performance-based assessment opportunities that depend upon students' engagement in and mastery of real tasks & projects
4. Assessments, rubrics, & assignments that hold diverse children to lower standards than other students	4. Rigorous questions that utilize culturally-relevant names & settings

(NON) EXAMPLES

WRITING: A picture can tell a story, but different people will see different stories in the same picture. Look at this picture. What story do you think it tells? Write what you think is happening in this picture. What is the story behind it?

MATH: Samuel and his family water-ski on the Allegheny River. If their boat's speedometer reads 16 mi/h and Sam stays on his skis for 18 minutes, how many miles does he ski?

SCIENCE: Open-Ended Item: A farmer plants corn one spring and harvests the corn in the fall. The farmer doesn't plant corn or any other crop in the field again. Describe two ways that the field will change over time.

VOCABULARY: Point to the image of the collar.

Thought Questions:

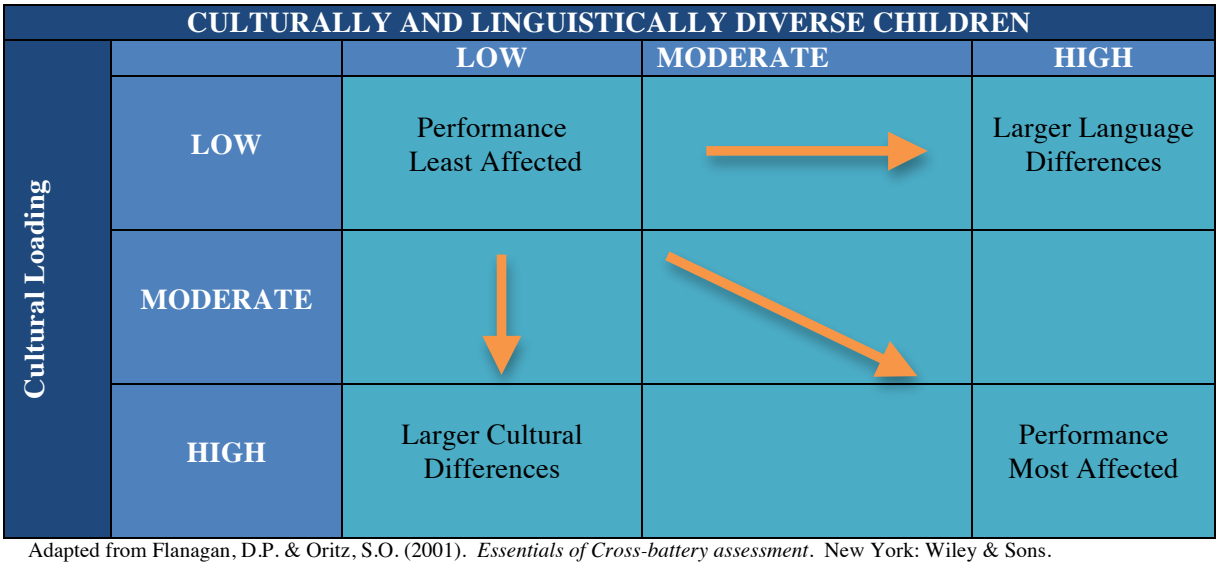
How well does this question address the standard?

What types of children might have the most experience with this image? The least?

How might lack of experience - or different experiences - with this topic skew test results?

Thinking About Your Assessments

Expected Performance of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children



Adapted from Flanagan, D.P. & Oritz, S.O. (2001). *Essentials of Cross-battery assessment*. New York: Wiley & Sons.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Resources & Tools for Closing Achievement Gap

National Center for Comprehensive Educational Systems. www.nccrest.org

A host of resources, tools, and presentations aimed at closing the achievement gap between students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, & reduce inappropriate referrals to special education. Targets improvements in culturally responsive practices, early intervention, literacy, and positive behavioral supports.

Diversity, Learning Style and Culture.

Pat Burke Guild. New Horizons for Learning. 2001.
http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/styles/guild.htm

Article that looks at the impact of diversity on student learning.

Readings on Multicultural Assessment.

Johnson, S. (Ed.). (1998). Assessment in the Context of Culture & Pedagogy [Special Issue]. *Journal of Negro Education*, 67(3): http://www.journalnegroed.org/

An excellent source of articles relevant to the subject of multicultural assessment. Many articles may be used for roundtable read-and-discuss sessions with teachers. Particularly pertinent articles include:

References

Hood, S. (1998). Culturally responsive performance-based assessment. *The Journal of Negro Education (67)* 3, 268-279.

Lee, C. (1998). Culturally responsive pedagogy and Performance-based assessment. *The Journal of Negro Education (67)* 3, 268-279.

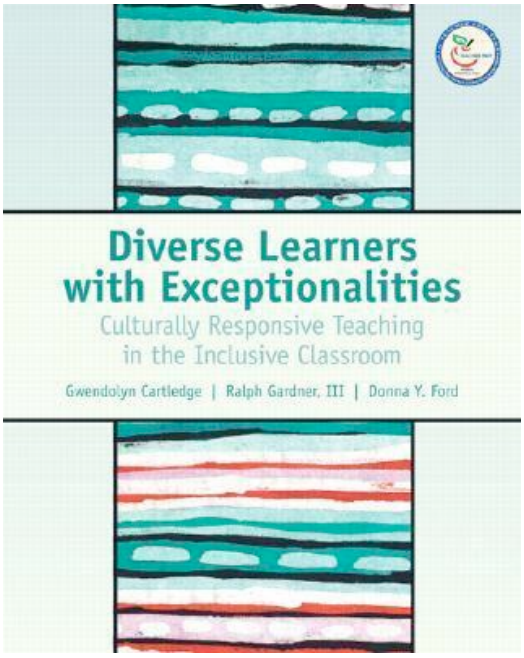
Madhere, S. (1998). Cultural diversity, pedagogy, and assessment strategies. *The Journal of Negro Education (67)* 3, 280-295.

Qualis, A. (1998). Culturally responsive assessment: development strategies and validity issues. *The Journal of Negro Education (67)* 3, 296-301.

Smith-Maddox, R. (1998). Defining culture as a dimension of academic achievement: Implications for culturally responsive curriculum, instruction, and assessment. *The Journal of Negro Education (67)* 3, 302-317.

Appendix F: Diverse Learners

Gwendolyn Cartledge



From Back Cover:

Are you searching for an exclusive and in-depth text that focuses on culturally and linguistically diverse learners with exceptionalities with added application to the classroom *and* the real world? Then look no further! *Diverse Learners with Exceptionalities: Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Inclusive Classroom* will exceed your expectations of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners in our schools *and* society.

Addressing the nature of culture and cultural/linguistic diversity in the United States, the exceptional learner (those with both disabilities and gifts), assessment and testing issues, family dynamics, ways to prevent academic and social problems through early intervention, and methods for teaching both social and academic behaviors, this new text focuses on the special needs of all culturally and racially diverse learners with exceptionalities in today's classroom. The authors make a strong case for why intense attention is needed for this population, the points of greatest need for this diverse group, and why certain types of instruction are more appropriate for those students with the most significant educational needs.

Cartledge, G., Gardner III, R., & Ford, D. Y. (2009). *Diverse learners with exceptionalities: Culturally responsive teaching in the inclusive classroom*. Boston, MA: Pearson Learning Solutions.

Appendix G: Additional Internet Resources

Toolkit-Specific Links

Gwendolyn Cartledge Wikipedia Page

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gwendolyn_Cartledge

An informative resource on Gwendolyn Cartledge that describes her, her work, and professional background.

Pittsburgh African-American Resources and Links

Center for Race and Gender Equity

http://www.ywcapgh.org/ordi.asp

The Center for Race and Gender Equity empowers individuals, organizations and communities to engage in educational and communication opportunities that address racism, injustice, oppression, diversity, and inclusion.

Our intent:

- Prepare employees within the Greater Pittsburgh Region as culturally competent members of an increasingly diverse workforce.
- Foster sensitivity towards and appreciation of diversity and inclusion.
- Develop behaviors that contribute to a non-discriminatory, respectfully workplace.
- Identify ways that promoting diversity can benefit individuals and businesses.

[Description from webpage].

Pittsburgh.net African American Communities

http://www.pittsburgh.net/ethnic.cfm?CtgID=160&GrpID=2

A listing of Pittsburgh-specific organizations, restaurants, groups, etc.

The Pittsburgh Courier

http://www.newpittsburghcourieronline.com/

The New Pittsburgh Courier is one of the oldest and most prestigious Black newspapers in the United States, with a rich and storied history.

Global Pittsburgh

http://www.globalpittsburgh.org/why/

Information about the Pittsburgh region, and efforts to incorporate global diversity within the community.

Information on Race, Ethnicity, and Culture

Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity

http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/cre/

This report is a Supplement to the first ever Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, *Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS], 1999).

CultureCrossing.net

http://www.culturecrossing.net/explore.php

"CultureCrossing.net is an evolving database of cross-cultural information about every country in the world. This user-built guide allows people from all walks of life to share essential tips with each other about how to navigate our increasingly borderless world with savvy and sensitivity. Easy to navigate and free to use, CultureCrossing.net provides an opportunity for travelers, business people and students to:

- Find information on 200+ countries and add your own knowledge to our guides
- Ask specific questions and chat with other users and experts
- Connect directly with community members from around the world
- Access global resources to further your cross-cultural exploration

The information posted in our individual country guides is submitted by people who are either natives or residents (or former residents) of the featured countries. Every day additional information is added by community members who have had experiences living, working, studying or traveling in each particular country. All of the information posted on the website is vetted by a Culture Crossing staff member and checked for credibility by cross referencing with at least two other sources." [description from website]

Kaiser Health Disparities Report

http://www.kaiserhealthnews.org/Topics/Health-Disparities.aspx

A weekly look at race, ethnicity, and health.

Building Cultural Competencies

Cultural Competence Action Team

http://www.tapartnership.org/default.php

In 2005, the Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health redesigned its approach to addressing cultural and linguistic competence. Recognizing the critical importance of this area, the TA Partnership created a team approach, drawing upon the expertise in the two organizations that come together to form the partnership: the American Institutes for Research and the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health.

The Cultural Competence Action Team (CCAT) is guided by three key principles:

1. Valuing the diversity in TA approaches necessary for different cultural, ethnic and racial communities;
2. Ensuring that this cultural diversity is represented in our team in an inclusive way; and
3. Moving from theory and concept to practical strategies, implementation and action

National Center on Cultural Competence

http://www11.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc/about.html

The NCCC provides national leadership and contributes to the body of knowledge on cultural and linguistic competency within systems and organizations. Major emphasis is placed on

translating evidence into policy and practice for programs and personnel concerned with health and mental health care delivery, administration, education and advocacy. [Description from website]

U.S. GUIDE ON HARASSMENT AND HATE CRIME

http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/archives/Harassment/index.html

This is the US government guide to elimination of harassment and hate crimes in schools.

Teaching Tolerance

http://www.tolerance.org/teach/?source=redirect&url=teachingtolerance

"Founded in 1991 by the Southern Poverty Law Center, Teaching Tolerance is dedicated to reducing prejudice, improving intergroup relations and supporting equitable school experiences for our nation's children. To us, tolerance is an ethic. We provide free educational materials to teachers and other school practitioners in the U.S. and abroad. Our self-titled magazine is sent to 400,000 educators twice annually, in September and January, and tens of thousands of educators use our free curricular kits. More than 10,000 schools participate in our annual Mix It Up at Lunch Day program. Our teaching materials have won two Oscars, an Emmy and more than 20 honors from the Association of Educational Publishers, including two Golden Lamp Awards, the industry's highest honor. Scientific surveys demonstrate that our programs help students learn respect for differences and bolster teacher practice." [Description taken from site]

Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice Cultural Competence Site

http://cecp.air.org/cultural/

Lists important questions and answers on cultural competence and educational practices.

http://cecp.air.org/cultural/resources.htm

This is a list of resources that provide more information about cultural competence.

WHO guide to Child-Friendly Schools

http://www.who.int/school_youth_health/media/en/sch_childfriendly_03.pdf

Focuses on the psycho-social environment of schools, and is designed to support social and emotional well-being. It is designed to assist with professional development promoting positive changes in the school environment, and integrates school health policies, school-based health education, and school-based health services.