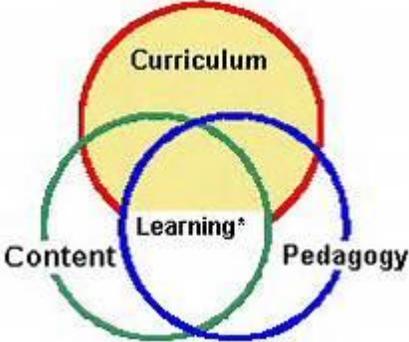


Becoming a Culturally Responsive Teacher Part II

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Part II



Becoming a Culturally Responsive Teacher

This Podcast will discuss the importance of curriculum selection and will identify instructional activities adjunct faculty can use to celebrate and appreciate diversity in the classroom.

Hello, I am Essie Childers a professor at Blinn College and a Partner for Cengage Learning. Welcome to “Becoming a Culturally Responsive Teacher” Part II. In Part I of Becoming a Culturally Responsive Teacher, discussion centered on the culture iceberg, high school vs. college culture and stereotyping. In Part II, let’s look at the importance of curriculum selection and identify a couple of activities to promote and celebrate diversity in the classroom.

One of the greatest challenges that I have, and perhaps you as well, is we may have a tendency to teach the way we were taught. I can recall through textbook and reading assignments, in which contributions of people of color were omitted. I don’t believe this was done with the intention of promoting a superior culture. But, leaving out other minorities who made positive culture contributions would be a mistake. So, when does culturally responsive

teaching actually occur? Margery Ginsberg and Raymond Wlodkowski in their book, *Diversity and Motivation Culturally Responsive Teaching in College (2009)*, shared the following comment.

Culturally responsive teaching occurs when there is respect for the backgrounds and circumstances of students regardless of individual status and power, and when there is a design for learning that embraces the range of needs, interests, and orientations in a classroom.

In other words, our teaching must be inclusive to reach a large diverse group of students. We know that this is not always an easy task when constructing student learning outcomes and many adjuncts have very little time create or modify assignments.

Before I share a couple of activities, Ginsberg and Wlodkowski has created a model called, "*The Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching.*" This model can be used as a guide to help teachers evaluate and revisit their curriculum selection. What does this model include? Let's take a look. One should note, of course, that the student is in the center; the focus is the student. The four intersecting conditions to promote culturally teaching begin with:

1. **Establishing Inclusion.** This is where you will create an environment in which the learners and teachers feel comfortable, respected and connected to one another.
2. **Develop attitude.** The adjunct can develop practices that have personal relevance and volition or choice.
3. **Enhance meaning.** The adjunct can develop practices and experiences that include a student's values.
4. **Engender competence.** The adjunct can develop practices in which the student realizes they are learning something of value to themselves and to their community.



You may have noticed that each of the conditions begin with a verb—establish, develop, engendering, and enhancing. All of these conditions must work in concert to promote motivation, affect learning, and build meaningful relationships with students. So, keeping the Motivational Model in mind, what are some activities that will allow students to construct and analyze meaning from their own experiences?

Allow me to share a couple of activities I have used to help intersect the four conditions in *The Motivational Model for Culturally Responsive Teaching*.

1. **Popcorn Reading.** Allow students to read out loud any article on cultural awareness and assumptions. A favorite article of mine is titled, “Who Are the Nacirema?” This is a short story that tells about the body rituals of a cultural group called “the Nacirema.” Nacirema is American spelled backward. I do not tell my students that the story is fiction. After reading the first three paragraphs, ask if your students are familiar with the cultural group. Continue reading and have further discussions about cultural worldview and our personal assumptions. You can have students brainstorm other rituals of the Nacirema that might seem strange compared to their own culture. At the end, the students are surprised that Naciremas are Americans. This is a great article to help students understand their view of culture and other cultures.

2. Academic Autobiography. This is a writing assignment in which I ask students to introduce themselves by telling about their family, their support group, hobbies, academic past, present, and future goals. This assignment is for my eyes only and helps me to develop a bond with the student. In corresponding to students, or during midterm conference, I try to recall information that they shared in their Academic Autobiography. I find that students are very honest when they are given opportunities to reflect without interruption.

3. Motivational Videos. This last assignment I want to share is by no means of lesser importance. Consequently, it is an assignment I look forward to viewing. It addresses a student's volition. Students are asked to select a video that motivates them to excellence and write a reflection journal stating why they chose the video. By noticing a student's selection, you can tell about their values, goals, and the type of music they enjoy listening to.

Preparing this Podcast gave me reason to pause and think about my own culture views and assignments I have chosen for my students. Since graduating from college in the middle 70's as a young black woman, I would look for people in my textbooks and readings that were like me. It was important that I could feel comfortable in a setting in which success could blossom. So it is also true with our students. They come into our classrooms with a variety of culture viewpoints and identities that cannot be checked at the door. Adjunct teachers must find ways to infuse diversity into their curriculum, void of bias, in which students can relate.

Being able to celebrate the different cultures encountered in our classroom creates a golden opportunity for both teachers and students to continue to have courageous conversations. These conversations and assignments are challenging, but at the end of the day,

becoming a culturally responsive teacher will help you develop a salient learning environment that is warm and inclusive in which students can become competent learners.

Thank you for listening.