

Understanding Culturally Responsive Teaching



Monday January 23, 2023

Circle Question:

(Say Your Name, School, Position)

Think about the grade you work with, what was your favorite thing you remember learning about when you were that age?

Turn and Talk:

Why did you choose to
come to this session?

Racism in Schools



Foundational Knowledge of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Leveraging the prior knowledge scholars have in order to allow them to better access rigorous content.

Centering scholar voice within the classroom in order to drive learning.

Zarretta Hammond (Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain)

“The core of culturally responsive practice is the ability to help the student level up their cognition...getting them ready for rigor, so that they can carry the cognitive load.”





3 Pillars of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Conversations- What is the teaching saying?

Content- What are the scholars exploring?

Pedagogy- How are the scholars exploring it?

Turn and Talk:

What things are you or your school currently doing that you feel are culturally responsive?

“All instruction is culturally responsive. The question is to whose culture is it responding.”

-Zaretta Hammond

6 Stages of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Stage 1

Disconnected Content

- Activities occur only outside of the curriculum, like during Black History Month.
 - May only focus on reviewing a current event before “moving on.”
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Concerns

- Limits the moments when POC are discussed.
- Has scholars not connect “regular” learning and the accomplishments of POC.
- Is not standards driven.

Questions

- How does this connect to my curriculum?
- Why did I decide to teach this activity?
- What impact do I hope this activity has on my scholars?

Stage 2

Supplemental Materials

- Learning about a single POC in a unit.
 - POC only appear in enrichment or extension activities.
 - The work of POC is done in one-off comparisons.
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Concerns

- Makes POC appear as “others.”
- The lessons are the first to be cut.
- Leads to surface level discussions.

Questions

- How much time am I spending on this lesson? Why?
- Is this surface level or a deep dive?
- What impact do I hope this activity has on my scholars?

Stage 3

Pedestal
Authors/Figures/Ideas

- Having one unit focused on 1 author of color “accepted” by white/traditional academia.
 - Only learning about the life of a few POC “accepted” by white/traditional academia.
 - Presenting POC as unreachable/perfect ideals.
 - Only teaching POC who are assimilationists.
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Concerns

- Makes POC not comfortable in their own identity.
- Causes scholars to be disconnected from POC
- Makes a few POC out to be Gods that all POC must aspire to be.

Questions

- Why did I select this specific author/figure/idea?
- How will my scholars understand their identity?
- What impact do I hope this activity has on my scholars?

Stage 4

Singular
Stories/Narratives/Themes

- Has POC main characters, but they all have similar lives.
 - Isolates the work of POC from their larger historical context.
 - Promotes the idea that all POC act or think the same way.
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Concerns

- Causes scholars to learn or reinforce stereotypes.
- Puts POC into specific boxes.
- Limits discussions around identity.

Questions

- What similarities and differences do my characters have?
- How will my scholars understand their identity and/or the identity of POC?
- What impact do I hope this activity has on my scholars?

Stage 5

Diverse Content but
Teacher Centered

- The curriculum has a wide range of thoughts, characters, ideas, beliefs, races, etc.
 - Teacher relies on lecture style or talking at kids about race/identity/diversity.
 - Scholar work is typically completed independently.
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Concerns

- Scholars feel disconnected from the material.
- Scholars don't understand their role in the content.
- Teacher pushes in their personal views.

Questions

- Who is doing the talking?
- How are scholars engaged in the learning? What activities are they doing to demonstrate mastery?
- What impact do I hope this activity has on my scholars?

Stage 6

Diverse Content and Student-Centered

- The curriculum has a wide range of thoughts, characters, ideas, beliefs, races, etc.
 - Scholars voices are centered and drive discussions.
 - Scholars are constantly asked open-ended questions.
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Critical Components

Questions

- Scholars are building upon their prior knowledge and challenging their prior biases/stereotypes.
- Scholars leave with a more critical eye of the world.

- Who is doing the heavy lifting in this lesson?
- How are scholars taking this knowledge outside of our classroom space?
- What impact do I hope this activity has on my scholars?

Stages

Stage 1- Disconnected Content

Stage 2- Supplemental Materials

Stage 3- Pedestal Authors/Figures

Stage 4- Singular Story

Stage 5- Diverse Content but Teacher Centered

Stage 6- Diverse Content but Scholar Centered

Incorporating Culturally Responsive Strategies

Brainstorming:

What is your favorite activity/lesson/part of lesson/teacher move you do in your classroom?

Foundational Understanding

Foundational Goal:

Have scholars be able to leverage their prior knowledge to help them better access rigorous material.

Typical Strategy:

Connect part of the lesson to an identity/experience the majority of scholars either understand or have experienced before.

Common Strategies

Brainstorming Question at Start of Lesson All Scholars Can Respond To

Image/Video at Start of Lesson Scholars Recognize

Using Individuals/Settings Scholars Know

Using Experiences Scholars Have Had in Questioning

Having Scholars Connect to

Characters/Events/Experiences/Emotions

Understanding Race and Culturally Responsive Teaching

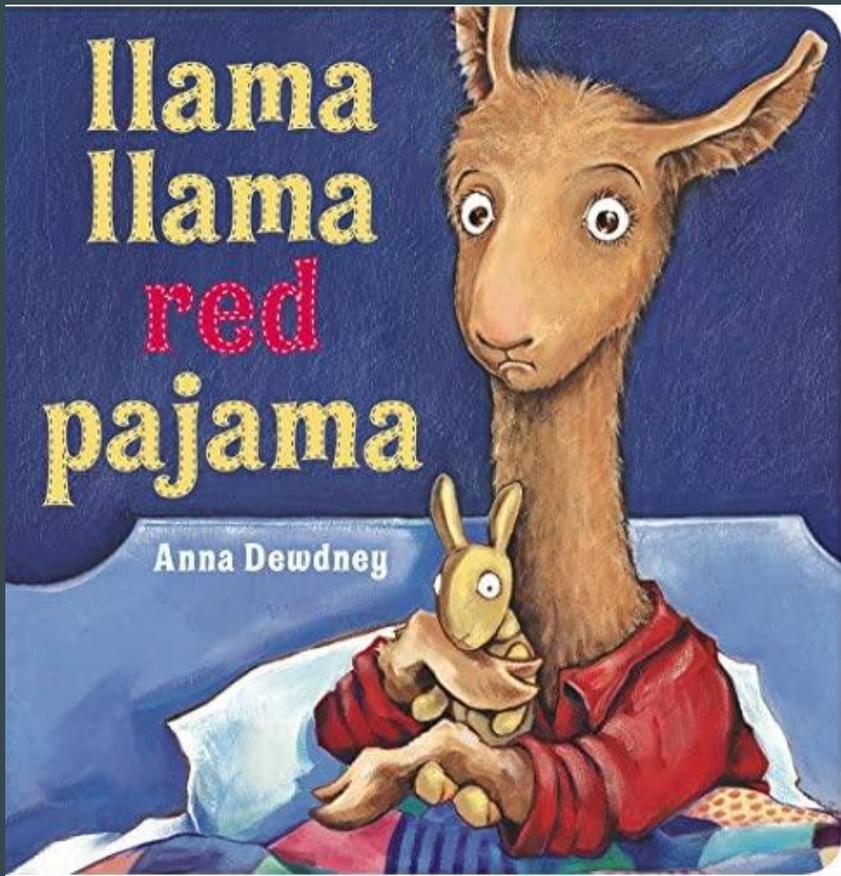
“It’s not color, it’s culture.” -Denzel Washington

Using materials where racial identity is the only possible connection scholars have is NOT culturally responsive teaching.

Seeing individuals in books/videos/images can increase a scholar’s ability to form a connection, if they can also make additional connections to the experiences or emotions of that individual.

EXAMPLE

Can we make this book culturally responsive for my son?



Standard: Reading Literature 8.6

Analyze how difference in the points of view of the character and the audience/reader create different effects such as suspense.

Things to Consider...

What questions should I put in my pre-reading to signal prior knowledge I want my son to access?

What questions should I put during my reading to help my son BOTH connect the character/text to his own prior knowledge AND build new knowledge and understanding?

What questions do I need to incorporate during my reading that connect clearly to my standard/objective?

What questions do I ask at the end to measure mastery of the standard/objective while also allowing my scholar to showcase how their prior knowledge was used/increased?

**What are things you
would do with this text to
make it culturally
responsive for my son?**

What I might do...

- Brainstorming: Describe a time you were worried or upset recently?
- Pre-Teach Vocabulary Words: Patient, Fret, Points of View
- Brainstorming #2: Describe a time you showed patience recently?
- During Reading Questions:
 - What is Baby Llama's relationship like with his mother?
 - Follow Up: Who is someone you have a close relationship with?
 - Have you ever felt alone before? What did you do when you felt alone?
 - Follow Up: What does Baby Llama do when he feels alone?
 - How did Baby Llama's mother feel when she first came into her son's room? How about when she left?
- After Reading Questions:
 - What information did we have as a reader that Baby Llama didn't have?
 - What information did we have as a reader that Mama Llama didn't have?
- Exit Ticket: How did difference in points of view impact the actions/behaviors of each character in the story? What do you think Baby Llama should do next time he feels alone?

Your Turn

Your Turn...

Open up an upcoming lesson.

Identify strategic questions you can insert or modify in the lesson to help scholars access prior knowledge at the start and throughout the lesson.

OR

Identify supplemental images, videos, readings, questions, etc. you can use to help scholars better connect to the material and access prior knowledge.