

# That's Just Good Teaching

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Being Culturally Responsible in Our Classrooms

# **Why is it important to be Culturally Responsible?**

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“An American Education” by Eli Saslow

# Our Premise

IF – Our goal is to have our students learn by creating and nurturing new pathways for them to attach knowledge and connect with the content

AND WE KNOW –Students learn better if they feel seen and valued

THEN –How can we as instructors encourage our students to recognize their individuality and appreciate their gifts while focusing on academic success, cultural integrity, and critical consciousness for each student?

# **What does it mean to understand our students?**

To know where they come from

To know where they want to go

To know how they learn

# What does it mean to understand ourselves?

To know where we come from

To know what we want our students to learn

To know how we learn and also how we teach

To know how to adapt our teaching to their  
learning and how to teach them how to learn  
from us

# What does Culturally Responsible mean?

Niño and Perez-Diaz (2021) describe intentional classroom communities where teachers and leaders make decisions based on inclusivity, equity, and empathy. Each student has value, and we care about each student.

# **How can I be Culturally Responsible in my classroom?**

Know names, maybe use name tents

Also ask what they want you to call them

Pronounce correctly

Use a seating chart

# **How can I be Culturally Responsible in my classroom?**

Have students introduce themselves to classmates, create a community

Share names, hometowns/countries



# **How can I be Culturally Responsible in my classroom?**

Conduct interest inventories: what do your students enjoy doing? What music do they listen to? Can you create a playlist of their songs to play as they enter/exit classroom?

What are their goals after graduation?

Ask leading questions – what is a celebration food/meal for you? For example, my family eats turkey at Thanksgiving.

# **How can I be Culturally Responsible in my classroom?**

Connect concepts to students' lives  
(lemonade example)

# **How can I be Culturally Responsible in my classroom?**

Listen and Learn! We are fortunate as educators to be able to learn from so many different people.

# How can I be Culturally Responsible in my classroom?

Asset Model --not deficit

Our students have prior knowledge and experiences. They are not empty vessels to be filled with content.

We must work to not make our students feel “less than.”

# What are your ideas and suggestions?

- Take attendance with index cards on which students have written their name and what they want the instructor to know about them. Can also use google form to collect the information.
- Work groups contact group members who are missing class.
- Awareness of English “levels”and “types”. NCTE policy form 1971 to own their language and land acknowledgement.
- Grade writing on purpose and effort. “Grammar can be oppressive”.

# More Ideas and Suggestions

- Allow students to be seen and heard: mathematicians who are not just “white dudes”.
- Meet students where they are.
- Incorporate current events.
- Model continuous learning. Share what we are learning.
- Think out loud and involve them in the thinking.
- Students provide feedback to other students’ work.

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