



Culturally Responsive Teaching Activity

Developed by Christine Sleeter, California State University Monterey Bay

Participants (classroom teachers, interns) will consider what culturally responsive teaching looks like in the classroom, and how teachers can learn more about their students and where their students are “coming from.” This activity focuses mainly on elementary teachers with growing Latino student populations; it can be adjusted for other contexts.

NAME Student Learning Outcomes

- Develop Positive Academic Identities

Level

Introductory

Goals

- Participants will be able to describe some of the research and theoretical basis for culturally responsive teaching.
- Participants will be able to describe various ways they can learn more about their own students’ home and community funds of knowledge.
- Participants will be able to suggest implications of culturally responsive teaching for their own practice.

Assessment or Deliverable

- Participants identify a concept in their curriculum, and brainstorm home and/or community knowledge and culture they might tap into in order to make the curriculum more relevant to students
- Participants share one idea they gained from this workshop that they will act on in the next few days

Materials

- Case study of Marisol on NAME/Learn website
- PowerPoint that comes with this module
- Modules from Math in a Cultural Context (www.uaf.edu/mcc/culture-and-math/modules/)

Process

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

Ask participants what they know about culturally responsive teaching, what it might look like in practice, and its research basis. Listen closely to what they already do and do not know. Show slide 2 of the Culturally Responsive Teaching power point; ask participants what Marisol might be doing now and why they think so.

2. Example (10 minutes)

Explain that Marisol Moreno received the NAME Exemplary Teaching Award as a fourth grade teacher in El Paso, Texas, and that she has now completed her PhD at the University of New Mexico. Culturally responsive teaching begins with interpreting students (like her) in terms of cultural strengths they bring to learning, rather than assuming deficits.

On the NAME/Learn website, show Marisol explaining how she develops her own students' positive academic identities (http://nameorg.org/learn/marisol_moreno_enacting_multi.php). Note what she says about her students' academic achievement.

Slide 3 offers 4 dimensions of culturally responsive teaching. Ask participants to discuss how they saw Marisol enact each of these.

3. Research and Theory (15 minutes)

Explain that culturally relevant teaching relates to NAME's conceptualization of developing students' academic identities. Show: nameorg.org/learn/positive_academic_identities.php, including the research evidence links. Using Power Point slides 4-12, present and discuss various related conceptualizations of culturally responsive teaching. Facilitators may need to read works cited at the bottoms of slides to familiarize themselves with each conceptualization.

Slides 13-16 present two conceptualizations of culturally responsive teaching as enacted in Arizona, along with highlights of research into the impact on student achievement.

4. Application 1 (15 minutes)

Using Power Point slide 17, invite participants to discuss what they see as the main ideas thus far regarding culturally relevant classroom practice, and knowledge of students that practice is based on. Invite them to brainstorm strategies they could use to become familiar with students' home and community funds of knowledge.

Slides 18-23 show various guides for finding out more about students' communities. Slides 18-20 are from Augustus Hawkins High School in Los Angeles; you can learn more about these at: <https://cxarchive.gseis.ucla.edu/partnerships-grants/tiip/showcase/augustus-hawkins/manual-arts-team-lesson-plans>. Slides 21-23 were developed and used by Christine Sleeter. Participants might discuss how they can use or adapt tools like these.

5. Application 2 (25 minutes)

To illustrate connecting home and community knowledge with school knowledge, show sample modules from Math in a Cultural Context (<https://www.uaf.edu/mcc/culture-and->

[math/modules/](#)), a supplemental math curriculum developed over two decades in Alaska through collaboration among collaboration of educators, Yup'ik elders and teachers, mathematicians and math educators, and Alaskan school districts. Although these modules are much more complex than something teachers can create in a workshop, they illustrate what can be done when teachers work with community resources to make academic content culturally relevant to their students.

Working in small groups, ask teachers to identify a concept in their curriculum, and brainstorm home and/or community knowledge and culture they might tap into in order to make the curriculum more relevant to students. Also have them consider how they might invite their students to co-construct teaching this concept.

6. Wrap-up (5 minutes)

Invite participants to share one idea they gained from this workshop that they will act on in the next few days.