

CAAASA presents:

Lifting Our Voices:



Presenter:

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*Field Guide #4:
Planning Forward with Cultural
Relevance in the Classroom*



California Association of African-American
Superintendents & Administrators

School Re-orientation for Post-COVID Learning:

*What to Know, Do, and Expect as In-Person
Instruction Resumes*



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Introduction to Field Guide #4
Planning Forward
with
Cultural Relevance
in the
Classroom
Dr. Gordon **Amerson**
Superintendent
Duarte Unified School District
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The Why

Children of color increasingly make up a larger proportion of California K-12 students. The entire nation is becoming increasingly more racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse, (not less diverse) suggesting that our instructional methods should be sensitive to meeting the educational needs of those students. Whether we are looking at education, medicine, or commerce, it is vitally important to understand the population that an institution or enterprise is responsible for reaching or serving. In business and industry, market segmentation is considered the most effective strategy for product marketing and delivery, which is achieved by addressing the needs and interests of a specific target population and designing strategies to reach a particular consumer group.

However, in education, California faculty members tend not to be quite as diverse as the population of students they intend to reach nor do they have a history of teaching for a significant length of time in schools with diverse settings. Nationally, students of color make up the majority of school-aged children. In contrast, teachers of color only make up approximately 20% of the nation's teaching ranks. The percentage of African American teachers stands at approximately 6% while that of Hispanic teachers is closer to 9%. Although there have been numerous initiatives to increase the number of teachers of color, these figures have remained consistent for the past decade, partially because the attrition rate is higher than that of their white counterparts.

While these figures may suggest concern, there are thousands of research articles, books, podcasts, videos, and other resources available to assist educators in understanding how to make learning culturally relevant and meaningful for students of color. (It should also be noted that while being an educator of color provides some degree of insight into cultural sensitivity, it does not make one an expert at cultural diversity). However, what we talk about, how we talk about it, what we see, what we attend to, what we ignore, how we think, and what we think about, are all experiences, perspectives, and perceptions that are influenced by our culture (Porter and Samovar, 1991). Consequently, people of different cultures do not always see things in the same manner, including in education.

Over the past 25 years, noted authorities Drs. Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings, have written and spoken extensively on the need for more effective teaching, targeting students of color through what is now referred to as “culturally relevant pedagogy” and “culturally responsive teaching.” Others have referred to these approaches as culturally sustaining pedagogy and cultural sensitivity. While the precise terms and their interpretations may vary, the basic tenets of these pedagogies are essentially the same, all advocating academically rigorous instruction that take advantage of relevant cultural experiences that take place outside of school. The fundamental idea behind CRT is knowing one’s students and their cultural histories in order to be effective as a classroom practitioner.

Just as a “one-size-fits-all” approach seldom fits all, a one culture focus does not fit the needs of all learners. Research and CRT tells us that no single teaching strategy will consistently engage all learners. What is most important is that students be able to relate the lesson content to their own personal and cultural backgrounds. Culturally responsive teaching is a shift in mindset that advocates planning instruction and classroom experiences that connect the student to school experiences and personal culture. It is student-centered and purports to enhance cultural understanding for all learners (including the teacher, at times), not just those students who are members of the culture under discussion. Culturally responsive classrooms increase learner engagement, their sense of belonging, and their academic achievement. These efforts have the potential to reshape traditional teaching and learning in the classroom.

There have been numerous books, articles, and conferences centered around meeting the academic needs of diverse students in ways that were never attempted a generation ago. At that time, education was not designed, nor intended to meet the needs of a diverse population. With today’s demographic shifts, there must be a corresponding shift in meeting the needs of the students we find in today’s classrooms.

Becoming a culturally responsive educator requires professional development and does not occur overnight. Research suggests that there are three essential teacher attributes that are important to delivering Culturally Relevant Teaching (CRT) to students.



- (1) Teachers should be able to take their students' perspectives.
- (2) Teachers should develop positive attitudes and beliefs about other cultures, as well as be aware of their own cultural frames of reference.
- (3) Teachers should have knowledge about cultures that are represented in their classrooms and be able to adapt their teaching of the content accordingly (Rychly & Graves, 2012).

Perspective taking, a teacher's ability to perceive things from a point of view other than one's own (Moskowitz, 2005), has been suggested to be a highly needed trait for teachers who work in multicultural settings. Piaget's theory of constructivism can be slightly modified to acknowledge that such development occurs through a co-constructed learning process, where knowledge is constructed in a social setting with multiple participants contributing to the development of ideas and conceptual understanding.

The cornerstone of this approach is being able to provide context during instruction that is as relevant as possible to students. There are five elements that make the processing of incoming stimuli meaningful to a learner, making information memorable and increasing the likelihood that it will be transferable to other contexts. Those five brain-considerate factors (PERC3S) include the following:

- (1) Patterns (derivative of visual experience)
- (2) Emotions
- (3) Relevance
- (4) Context, Content, and Cognitively-appropriate
- (5) Sense-making

Matters that are relevant to us provoke an emotional response that can capture our attention. In today's non-school environment, students are immediately and constantly connected to their mobile devices that inform them about what is occurring in their community (their culture), throughout the country, and around the world. Culturally inclusive instructional practices consistently include the addition of relevance to the instructional cycle and contribute to highly engaging conversations and the transference of skills. When we validate and affirm a student around these essential aspects of their identity, they feel that we see them, hear them, and value them and their culture. It is important to acknowledge that culturally relevant instructional lessons should be authentic learning experiences that allow students to see the value in learning as well as more value in themselves.

In all fairness, teachers of European descent are not alone in not understanding the perspectives of students of color, particularly those students who grow up in poverty's grasp. There are substantial numbers of non-white educators who do not themselves have a deep knowledge of non-dominant cultures and histories.

Student learning is accelerated when the learner can connect the relevancy of the content to one's own life. Educational researcher, Jay McTighe points out that when the learning goals are personally relevant to a learner, that particular learner will see additional value in the learning.

Culturally Responsive Teaching, as defined by Gay (2010), is using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. When CRT is deployed in schools, there is a notable increase in student engagement and interest in school as well as an increase in educational achievement of minoritized students (Aronson & Laughter, 2016).

Culture has been defined as the integrated pattern of human behavior (e.g., thoughts, communication, action, customs, beliefs, and values) of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group (Day-Vines et al., 2007). Since its founding, there has been a Eurocentric basis in American education. As a result, students of European background and of middle-class status typically find the school curriculum to be affirming and encouraging. However, what might a child who does not happen to be of European stock feel about encountering that same curriculum?

The What

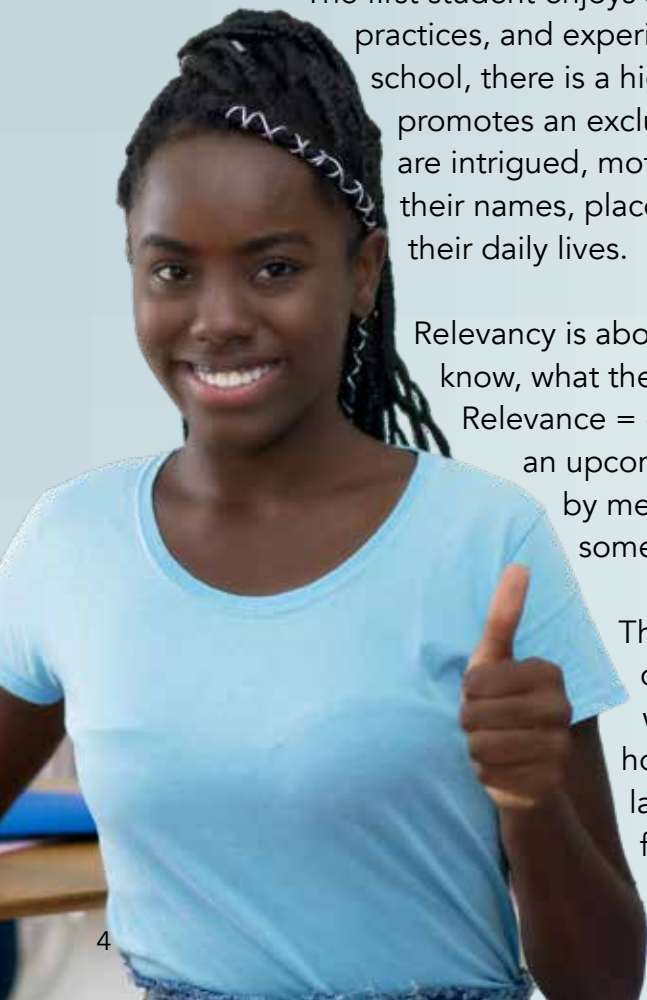
According to Gloria Ladson-Billings, Culturally Responsive Teaching is an approach that “empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Equally important, teachers are empowered by increasing their own effectiveness in engaging students with the mandated content.

Often, students feel disconnected with content, due to the perception of little or no relevance to their culture or personal lives (See Figure 1). There are two students - Student A and Student B.

The first student enjoys a community and home with a common language, values, practices, and experiences found in his school. Whether playing at home or at school, there is a high degree of consistency in each of these experiences that promotes an exclusive environment. We know from the research that students are intrigued, motivated, and more engaged with word problems that have their names, places they are familiar with, people they know, and contexts from their daily lives.

Relevancy is about connecting classroom experiences to what students already know, what they experience and breathe on a daily basis. For most students: Relevance = engagement. Connecting a lesson's target concept or skill to an upcoming activity or event can create relevancy for many students by merely knowing that what they are about to do is connected to something that lies in their future.

The second student (Student B) comes from a home and community that enjoy few commonalities with his experiences while attending school. He speaks a second language at home, enjoys the language and cultural practices from a foreign land. Clearly, Student A will have a distinct advantage in finding the entire school experience culturally affirming, and



he/she will likely be academically more successful. By example, if every American student received classroom instruction that was taught in French, those with that particular language background would fare substantially better than those without, which should come as no enormous surprise. The educational experience of students with a migration history still continues to reflect disadvantages when compared to their native-born classmates (OECD, 2016).

When teachers have a grasp of the points of reference, perceptions, and practices of their students' culture, educators can connect their students through this understanding by making appropriate references connecting the curriculum with their culture. Research has shown when parents and communities are involved, students are more likely to attend school regularly, complete homework, earn better grades, and have higher self-esteem. Educational research tells us that it is considerably less challenging for students to connect new content to concepts they already value and understand from their personal experiences outside of school. Teachers can help make lessons more relevant to students by helping them make connections from the school curriculum to their lives on both a large scale and small.

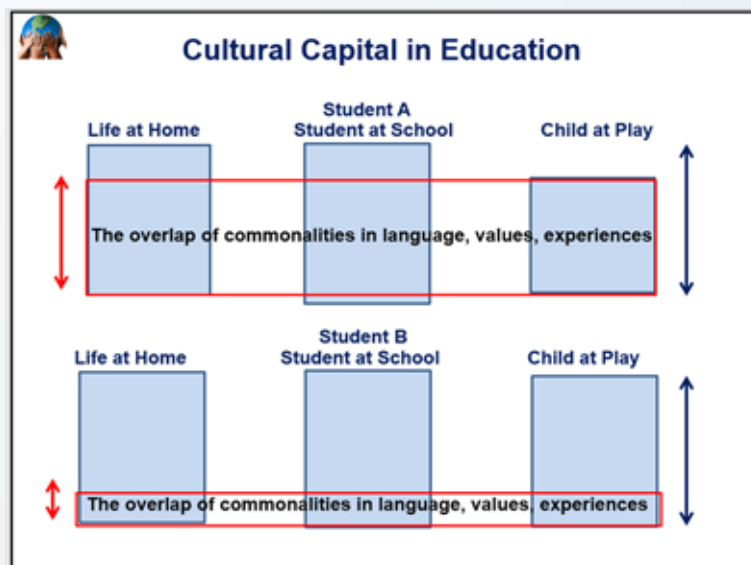


Figure 1: Cultural Capital in Education

A culturally responsive pedagogy uses these cultural practices and attributes in instructional planning, motivational strategies and examples of where and how the content can be applied. Doing so answers the traditional question posed by students universally, "Why do we need to learn this?" A significant aspect of culturally relevant teaching is asset-based education, where the focus is on what students are capable of doing rather than a focus on any perceived student deficit. When the instructional focus is on what students of color can do rather than on the areas where they have not yet gained proficiency or mastery, they have a better chance of attaining a higher level of academic achievement. Students of color may be culturally different, but that does not in any way translate into culturally disadvantaged instructional planning. When teachers assume that they will see success in the student rather than deficits, more success follows. Any experienced educator knows that students will often live up to or down to a teacher's expectations of him/her. The "pervasive, profound, and persistent" achievement gaps have been difficult to close, partially because:

- (a) school districts are sometimes focused exclusively on raising the test scores of students of color who are negatively impacted by the cultural bias that is fundamentally a part of content delivery that is presented as curriculum.
- (b) Professional development in Culturally Responsive Teaching and/or Culturally Relevant Teaching has not been a priority for most school districts.
- (c) The historical disparities in education cannot be ignored. The “separate but equal” implementation of educational funding and practices cannot be omitted from the discussion of the long-term consequences brought about by decades of educational inequities and disproportionate per-pupil funding for schools serving students of color.
- (d) When the unpleasant reality of the effects of these events is confronted, the next question is, “What is the role of education in helping to right these past wrongs?”

Culturally responsive teaching, which involves the cultural responsiveness of teachers to culturally diverse students, is among the proposed teaching methods and theories to narrow the achievement gap (Forster-Scott, 2011).

The How

Among the struggles teachers have when developing a lesson is thinking about:

- What content must be presented as “neutral”?
- What content can be modified to make it more relevant to the students?
- How do I address the philosophy that there may be multiple perspectives that can be accommodated within the content under study?



- In what ways do I make certain that content and culture are mutually important goals to pursue simultaneously?

When planning and introducing a unit of study with CRT in mind, it is essential to plan from the beginning about how the content and concepts might relate to the real worlds of students who represent both the dominant culture as well as students of color. Understanding and presenting topics from both perspectives is essential to preparing students for life in the interconnected, multinational, and multicultural world we live in today. Relevance is often discussed in terms of one's eventual career path but making content relevant to their current lives is just as important in keeping students engaged in learning that will be important for academic success today.

Over the past two decades, many well-respected educational researchers and leaders have written extensively about Asset-based pedagogies. However, they labeled the concept differently, including the following descriptions:

1. Funds of Knowledge (Moll and Gonzalez),
2. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Ladson-Billings),
3. Culturally Responsive Teaching (Gay and Hammond)
4. and most recently Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies (Paris and Alim).

These schools of thought directly counter "deficit" approaches to teaching and evaluating students of color, which viewed their cultures and backgrounds as "deficiencies" that needed to overcome in order for students to be successful in school. Deficit-based orientations are thought to be a dominant factor in why teachers tend not to refer racially and culturally diverse students to gifted programs.

Students come to school with "funds of knowledge" from their communities and homes (Moll et al., 1992). These "fund sources" offer a wealth of opportunities to link the students' family and culture to any relevant school curriculum (See figure 2). The home is an educational setting with a gold mine of rich connections to content, skills, literature, facts found in the curriculum. Understanding the students' culture can help reduce alienation from their "in-school" experience and dispel stereotypes and inaccurate assumptions held about the students' culture. (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). As a teacher learns the students' backgrounds, home situations, community, accumulated life experiences, personal strengths, and interests outside of school, the teacher validates each student as a whole person, and not just as a "student" enrolled in his/her classroom from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

Dr. Ronald F. Ferguson, the director of the Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University, has conducted extensive research on the structural barriers that make school achievement difficult for black, Latino, and Native American boys. He found that young men in these demographic groups face political, sociological, psychological, and economic barriers to success that cut across socioeconomic status. However, teacher training and more CRT opportunities can mitigate the impact of these obstacles.

A study by researchers Thomas Dee of Stanford University and Emily Penner of the University of California, Irvine, published in the Sage journals demonstrated that high school students enrolled in an ethnic studies course improved their school attendance by 21% year-to-year, as well as an increase in earned credits and GPA. Opportunities to join in such courses run by culturally competent educators are unfortunately rare. Similarly, students who spend time in high-quality CR classrooms benefit in comparable ways.

- (1) They are more engaged and more active learners.
- (2) They build knowledge of their community's culture and history.
- (3) They recognize and are more responsive to issues of justice and equality.

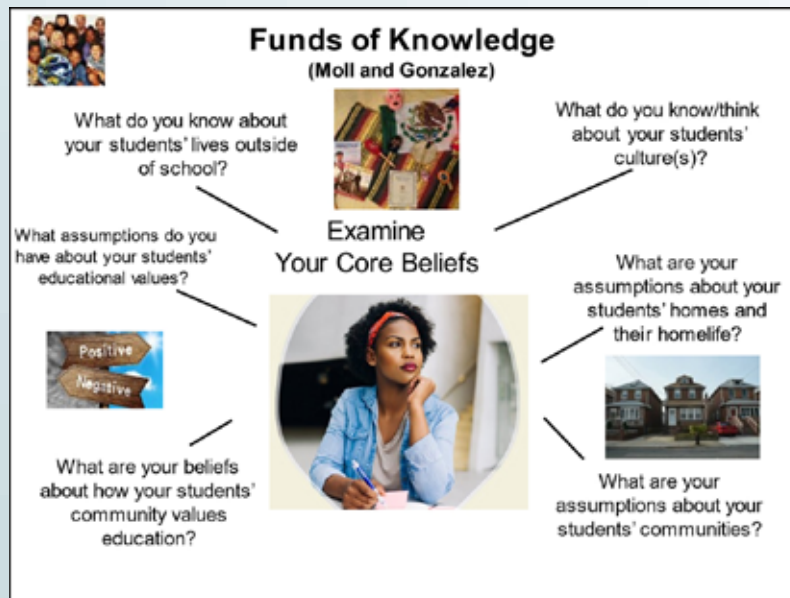


Figure 1: Sources for the Funds of Knowledge

Many immigrant students from East and Central Asia, as well as Africa transact education in a hierarchical fashion where a child's relationship with a significant authority figure is stressed by compliance. Posing questions and looking into the eyes of an authority constitutes facing off for a challenge of his/her power and is highly discouraged. Consequently, many of these students do not raise their hands in class nor do they speak to teachers in a face-to-face fashion. While their behaviors are not intended to give testimony to an unwillingness to engage in class participation, that is frequently the interpretation (Sunar & Fişek, 2005).

Multiple researchers have crafted a variety of strategies for meeting the goals of culturally relevant teaching. Culturally Responsive Teaching implies constructing culturally relevant curricular learning events and designing culturally responsive instruction to make learning more relevant and effective (Gay, 2002). What are ways to make lessons more relevant to students' lives? Students should be invited into the process of their own learning. In their article "A Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching" published by the ASCD, Wlodkowski and Ginsberg describe a model of CRT with four motivational conditions that the teachers and students must continuously create or enhance, including:

1. Establishing inclusion—creating a learning atmosphere in which students and teachers feel respected by and connected to one another.
2. Developing attitude—creating a favorable disposition toward the learning experience through personal relevance and choice.
3. Enhancing meaning—creating challenging, thoughtful learning experiences that include student perspectives and values.
4. Engendering competence—creating an understanding that students are effective in learning something they value.

Students are involved and integral to each facet of the learning process that results in lessons that reflect the values, traditions, language, and identity of a diverse student body, rather than the competing needs and interests of the teacher who may be culturally different than his/her students. By opening the door to the construction of instructional lessons and content and by including students in the process (inclusive learning) makes the learning experience relevant to their culture and their lives outside of school.

Education author, Larry Ferlazzo advocates applying a short list of instructional practices that promote cultural relevance by validating a student's language and culture. He recommends that teachers can do so by:

1. Using diversity in stories, literature, and text chosen for students.
2. Using student-centered stories and examples.
3. Incorporating relatable aspects of students' lives into instruction.
4. Establishing a classroom atmosphere that respects individuals and their cultures

When we take this approach to instruction, the learning becomes increasingly more relevant, not only for students who are eager to learn, but for teachers as well.

Field Guide #4 - Planning Forward with Cultural Relevance in the Classroom

Field Guide Overview

Description and purpose:

In the mid-1960s, the civil rights movement pivoted from civil rights to campus rights, focusing on meeting the needs of the next generation of African Americans. In 1969, the demand for justice and equality at UC Berkeley led to the longest campus strike in history. The mission of the protesting students was to establish a curriculum for Third World people (people of color). The goal was to establish a curriculum that would be designed for, and by, faculty members of color. At that time, there was a scarcity of peer-reviewed research that was conducted by scholars of color. The studies about people of color were filtered through the lens of the dominant group members, and presented from their perspective, which was one of a limited scope.

Although it was not stated on every occasion, the underlying objective was to offer coursework that students of color found relevant, meaningful, and purposeful. This movement set the stage for subsequent courses in ethnic studies, Black studies, Mexican American studies, and Asian-American studies. Educators in the K-12 arena were also energized and insisted on including multicultural education in the elementary and secondary curriculum throughout the country. (Culturally Relevant Teaching can be considered a methodological arm of multicultural education).

This Field Guide offers answers to the following questions concerning Culturally Responsive Teaching and learning over the past year and a half during the COVID-19 pandemic. The statistics for student engagement during at-home learning were not encouraging for a variety of reasons identified by both teachers and students. Among the more frequently identified reasons for withdrawal from active participation during class time over the 14 months-long remote learning experience included the student assessment that it was (a) boring, and (b) not engaging, to learners.

In all fairness, with the March 13 announcement that we were shifting to virtual learning, most teachers had no time and no training for delivering instruction online. As teachers scrambled to create lessons appropriate for remote learning, relevance was not an essential lens through which those lessons were necessarily examined. However, in retrospect, educators realize that culturally relevant and engaging lessons would have made the remote learning experience more successful for a greater number of our students of color.

Keeping in mind that remote learning may continue, for we may be forced to resume at-home learning, should a variant of the COVID-19 virus create a follow-up pandemic. Thus, the questions striving is field guide are:

- What have we learned?
- How have we grown?
- What helped us make progress?
- What obstacles did we encounter?
- How do we get all students on a positive learning trajectory by deploying CRT?



Learning Objectives:

1. Be able to participate in/lead a school site discussion on Culturally Relevant Teaching and learning.
2. Understand various strategies that can be deployed to create culturally relevant instruction for students in your classroom.
3. Be able to discuss with colleagues why cultural relevance is critically important for engaging students in learning content.
4. Be able to identify both the types of content and practices that run counter to Culturally Relevant Teaching and learning.
5. Be able to develop a list of talking points that could be used to promote CRT at your school site or within your school district.
6. Devise plans for implementing more Culturally Responsive Teaching practices at your school site.

Field Guide Overview: Components:

The Field Guide #4 - Planning Forward with Cultural Relevance in the Classroom is built around the following components:

- A. The verbatim “Voices” -- excerpts from interviews with students, parents, and teachers. The focus is on how their learning experiences intersect with Culturally Relevant Teaching.
- B. How and if Culturally Relevant Teaching was adapted to support at-home learning during the pandemic.
- C. Lessons learned – analyzing the experiences of parents, teachers, and students during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on what worked with cultural relevance and virtual learning, what did not work well, and how we can apply those “lessons learned” to improve education in the future.
- D. Each of the above professional learning experiences will be accompanied by
 - Questions and written responses, to be completed individually or in small groups (with an opportunity to share responses with colleagues)
 - “Reflections and Applications.”
- E. Videotaped excerpts from the “Advancing Equity in an Era of Crisis” webinar conducted by distinguished California educational leaders.
- F. The recommendations of additional printed and video resources related to Culturally Relevant Teaching.
- G. A survey tool to evaluate Field Guide #4.

The contents of this Field Guide are designed to assist classroom practitioners, administrators, and school district policy-makers in coalescing around culturally responsive and evidence-based strategies that will improve instructional practices in the classroom and consequently, student achievement. Completing this Field Guide can be one important step that members of your school community can take in unison, to get your school back onto a path that leads to equity and educational excellence for every child. This concerted effort is fueled by CAAASA’s faith in our collective power to improve education for all students in general and students of color in particular.

Introduction to
**Lifting Our
 Voices**
 Videos
 Bryan A. **Brown, Ph.D.**
 Professor of Science Education
 Stanford University
Click to Play

“Lifting our Voices” is about the personal experiences of students, teachers, and parents with Culturally Relevant Teaching.

As we make plans for schools to resume in-person instruction at all school sites, below are some of the questions we should be asking.

- (a) What were some of the most important lessons that you and your colleagues learned about the Culturally Relevant Teaching and how it can be implemented in your school/ school district?
- (B) What did we discover about the benefits of Culturally Relevant Teaching when it was used for remote instruction?

The interviewees



Shunna **Bradford**,
Teacher



LaToya **Flowers**
Teacher



Jacques **Cormier**
Teacher



Nicole **Brown**,
Parent of high school
 student (Tatumn)



Tatumn **Brown**,
Student (daughter of
 Nicole Brown)

Video #1 - Building relationships through Cultural Relevance Teaching

Click to Play - <https://bit.ly/buildingfieldguide4>

Video #2 - Including cultural relevance in the classroom

Click to Play - <https://bit.ly/fieldguide4include>

Video #3 - Enhancing student learning with CRT and passion

Click to Play - <https://bit.ly/enhancingfieldguide4>

Video #4 - Culture, economics, and CRT

Click to Play - <https://bit.ly/variousfieldguide4>

Professional learning: Participant Responses

- a. What were your two or three key “take-aways” from the interviewees concerning the ways in which Culturally Relevant Teaching can and/or should impact:
 1. Students
 2. Teachers
 3. Parents and families
- b. What strategies have you or your school put into place to implement and support Culturally Relevant Teaching?
- c. In what ways does CRT promote a healthy and productive learning environment for students?
- d. We have long been cognizant of the fact that most teacher preparation programs have, in theory at least, embraced diversity training. How does CRT improve teaching effectiveness? What should all schools do in that manner?
- e. How were you, your school and your students impacted by Culturally Relevant Teaching for the challenge of teaching with relevance required to learn remotely this past school year?
- f. What are some of the biggest challenges you would envision that could be posed by implementing CRT in your school?
- g. Schools are already wrestling with competing demands for time on the daily schedule. On your school’s list of top instructional priorities, where would CRT fall? What priorities would be considered more important?
- h. What can parents do to support Culturally Relevant Teaching and learning for their children? How can parents support teachers?
- i. Do you think student learning will be increased, decreased or about the same when CRT is fully implemented?
- j. If you were assigned the task of planning a daily instructional model for your school that included Culturally Relevant Teaching, what would that plan look like?

Reflections and Applications

- a. What are some simple things that can be done in the classroom that will help students prepare for learning with Culturally Relevant Teaching as a feature of instruction?
- b. What strategies have you and/or your school put into place to prepare students for a shift towards more relevant learning?
- c. If you were given an opportunity to make the final decisions, describe what your educational day/week would look like with CRT as a critical component to instruction in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies?

- d. What are some of the positive contributions that Culturally Relevant Teaching will likely make in support of student learning at your school?
- e. What were some of the “lessons learned” about the importance of Culturally Relevant Teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- f. Professional development for teachers in Culturally Relevant Teaching must be ongoing. Where would you start a drive for more CRT in your school? What obstacles would you anticipate?
- g. How might you integrate more Culturally Relevant Teaching opportunities into your regular classroom day when school resumes?
- h. How do you think teachers can best address the crucial issue of “learning loss” with Culturally Relevant Teaching?
- i. How can teachers in your school/district address the achievement gap by implementing more Culturally Relevant Teaching?



Using culturally relevant settings as examples for instruction.

Synchronous Professional Learning: Discuss the following questions in your small group and report out to the larger body when you reconvene.

Asynchronous professional Learning: Write your individual answers to each of the following.

- What role do culturally relevant examples play in student learning?
- When students see homes that are completely different than their homes as examples, what impact might that have on students and their motivation to learn?
- What are some examples of culturally relevant settings that you use during instruction?
- In the subjects that you teach, how might you include more culturally relevant examples by which your students can learn?

- Is there any particular subject area where that you think lends itself more to culturally relevant experiences than others or should it be integrated into all areas of teaching and learning? Explain your answer.

Title: Digital diversity in instructional images

Synchronous Professional Learning: Discuss the following questions in your small group and report out to the larger body when you reconvene.

Asynchronous professional Learning: Write your individual answers to each of the following questions.

- How might/does digital diversity influence student learning?
- What role do you think digital diversity plays in student engagement/disengagement?
- If you were to examine the degree of digital diversity in the instructional materials that you currently use, what percent of those materials would you estimate to be digitally diverse?
- What are some of the resources that you might use to find more digital diversity for inclusion in your daily lesson plans?
- As you prepare your child/children for a return to in-person learning, where would you say that “cultural relevance” should be in the list of school and classroom priorities?

The four digital basics

Synchronous Professional Learning: Discuss the following questions in your small group and report out to the larger body when you reconvene.

Asynchronous professional Learning: Write your individual answers to each of the following questions.

- What are the four digital basics? How do they enhance student learning?
- If you were to submit a districtwide proposal to improve instruction using the four digital basics, what would be your top three priorities?
- Can you describe a culturally relevant learning exercise that could be incorporated into your teaching that would utilize the four digital basics?

Cognitive Apprenticeship Lesson Planning

Synchronous Professional Learning: Discuss the following questions in your small group and report out to the larger body when you reconvene.

Asynchronous professional Learning: Write your individual answers to each of the following questions.

- Can you describe how you could use cognitive apprentice lesson planning in your classroom/school?

- How might cognitive apprenticeship lesson planning support culturally relevant experiences in the classroom?
- Which aspect of this lesson planning do you think is easiest to implement? Which would be the most challenging?

Digital diversity and instructional videos

Synchronous Professional Learning: Discuss the following questions in your small group and report out to the larger body when you reconvene.

Asynchronous professional Learning: Write your individual answers to each of the following questions.

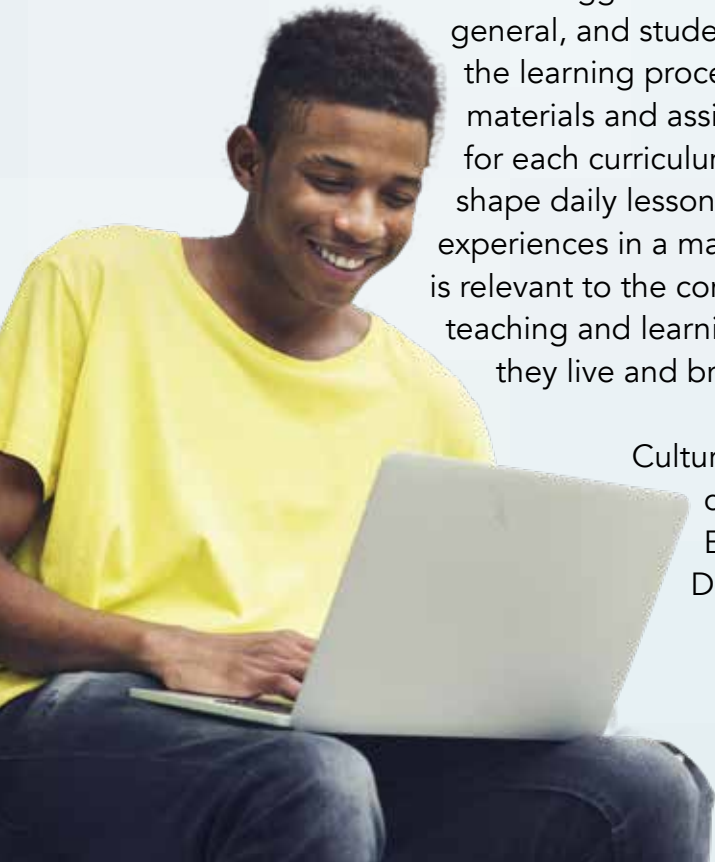
- What do you think is the greatest obstacle to incorporating culturally relevant content into the current school curriculum?
- Do you think your students would learn and remember (a) more, (b) the same, or (c) less from culturally relevant digital content and experiences? Why?
- When students are experiencing academic difficulties, what part of that challenge would you say is attributable to a lack of culturally relevant pedagogy or content? How might videos help?

Geneva Gay (2004) describes poor achievement as not necessarily shortcomings in our students of color, but rather a reflection of the inherent inequalities in the schools they attend for a variety of reasons including the lack of cultural relevance.

Conclusion:

Research suggests that one of the most effective ways to engage students in general, and students of color in particular, in learning is to invite them into the learning process through culturally relevant experiences, instructional materials and assignments. While school districts have adopted materials for each curriculum area, teachers are given some latitude in how they shape daily lesson plans, which presents opportunities for shaping learning experiences in a manner that reflects a student's culture in a manner that is relevant to the content under study. Cultural relevance is about linking teaching and learning to what students already know, experience, and how they live and breathe every day.

Culturally Relevant Teaching comes with its own set of classroom caveats. Professor Michelle Barker, and Dr. Elisha Frederiks, with contributions from Brona Farrelly Dr. Linda Shallcross, advocate the following:



- Avoid stereotypes and overgeneralized descriptions of other nations/cultures.
- Practice “appreciative inquiry,” in which values and beliefs of all cultures are respected and treated equally.
- Practice and foster respect for student diversity in all its forms among the class (e.g., religion, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation).
- Establish ground rules for group discussions and actively discourage student language or behavior that is ethnocentric, racist, or discriminatory.
- Emphasize the value of student diversity in the learning context and how learning from different individual and cultural viewpoints and perspectives can be beneficial.
- Acknowledge and reiterate that all students bring meaningful experience, valid concerns, and legitimate questions to the learning and teaching process.
- Speak clearly and calmly (rather than raising your voice), as students may find it difficult to understand your accent, word usage, and meaning.
- Remember that language and humor are highly specific to each culture. Avoid using slang, jargon, or verbal jokes.

Most important, culturally relevant instructional practices assume that the culture of every student, the home and community of every child, collectively serve as a gold mine of opportunities to connect to the curriculum. These are assets as resources and references, and not deficits to the learning. Research has found that the practical strategies presented in this Field Guide can result in increases in the number of students who attend school regularly, complete their homework, earn better grades, and have higher self-esteem. Redesigning learning experiences to validate a student’s out-of-school experiences, not only enhance student learning, but new knowledge will also be gained by the teacher as well, impacting his/her students of the future in a positive manner.

Resources:

- Culturally Responsive Teaching and The Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students 1st Edition by Zaretta L. Hammond. Corwin Press.
- Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice (Multicultural Education Series) Third Edition. By Geneva Gay. Teachers College Press.
- Cultural diversity: Dr. Geneva Gay <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjMMpriR16s>
- Dr. Geneva Gay and Dr. Valerie Kinloch Interview <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsyMbSiphTo&t=1089s>
- Eight characteristics of an effective student engagement strategy. Classcraft. March 2019. <https://www.classcraft.com/blog/student-engagement-strategies/>
- Equity Thought Leaders Series (California Department of Education) <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ee/equitythoughtleaders.asp>

- Science in the City <http://scienceinthecity.stanford.edu>
- Science in the City: Culturally Relevant STEM Education (Race and Education) by Byran A. Brown. Harvard Education Press.
- Social and Emotional Learning in California: A Guide to Resources. October 2018. California Department of Education. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/documents/selresourcesguide.pdf>

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Evaluation-Survey

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc-jvZ0HGMnbu9artqFOrMn5X6TGfKphTNqQTik-qi6YxEoiw/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0>

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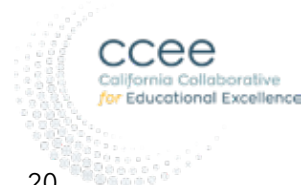
Presenter:

Dr. Bryan A. Brown, Ph.D.
Professor of Science Education
Stanford University

*Field Guide #4:
Planning Forward with Cultural
Relevance in the Classroom*



*School Re-orientation for Post-COVID Learning:
What to Know, Do, and Expect as In-Person
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