Becoming a Multicultural Educator: Developing Awareness, Gaining Skills, and Taking Action

SECOND EDITION
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Learning Objectives

The National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME, 2015) explains in a position paper that multicultural education advocates the belief that students and their life histories and experiences should be placed at the center of the teaching and learning process and that pedagogy should occur in a context that is familiar to students and that addresses multiple ways of thinking. In addition, teachers and students must critically analyze oppression and power relations in their communities, society and the world.

So if we are to be multicultural educators and prepare students for a global society, what does a multicultural curriculum look like? How does one know if the curriculum is multicultural? What steps need to be taken to create a multicultural curriculum? What are the essential elements of a curriculum that is multicultural, and how does one write multicultural lesson plans and units? This chapter will address these and other questions. It is important to keep in mind that whether or not a school district is comprised of racially and ethnically diverse students, a multicultural curriculum benefits all students (Nieto & Bode, 2012). It prepares students for life by providing them with the awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary for a global economy (Howe & Lisi, 1995).

This chapter will address four critical focus areas:

7.1 Developing the School’s Curriculum
What is a curriculum? What is the process for developing a curriculum? How does one choose an appropriate curriculum?

7.2 Developing a Multicultural Curriculum
How can educators create a culturally relevant and responsive curriculum? What should it look like?

7.3 Analyzing Texts and Materials for Cultural Bias
How do educators select textbooks and other resources that will support students in meaningful and culturally relevant learning experiences? How does one screen for bias in these materials?

7.4 Writing Multicultural Lesson Plans
What are the components and characteristics of a multicultural lesson plan? How does it differ from a traditional lesson plan?
A fascinating phenomenon occurred in the beginning of the 2014 – 2015 school year in the United States. For the first time ever, White students were in the minority in public schools. Students of color (or the minority students) made up the majority of students. Both the percentage and number of White students are expected to drop slowly but steadily over the next several years, from 50% in 2013 to 45% in 2022 (Toppo & Overber, 2014). Such a milestone calls for the education system to examine and re-examine what schools teach and how they teach it.

A core function of schools is the development of a curriculum of study (Arends, 1997, 2012, 2014; Kellough & Carjuzaa, 2013; Sadker & Zittleman, 2010, 2012). To teach children, educators must be clear about the content, or the “what,” they are going to teach. However, the process of making decisions about content can be very challenging. Traditionally, curriculum used in schools has appeared to represent the perspectives, values, and experiences of a limited group of people in the United States—primarily White, middle-class males (Loewen, 2000, 2008; Takaki, 1993). When American schools were populated primarily by immigrants from European countries, this type of curriculum may have been fairly representative and appropriate. Students generally could relate to the examples and experiences of the people in the curriculum.

CASE STUDY: SUMMER READING

Summer reading lists, issued by school districts to encourage students to read while on their vacations, are like archeological artifacts. They tell so much about the culture and values of a school system. In the mid-1990s, a large, urban school district comprised of about 98% students of color issued its annual summer reading list. A copy made its way to one of us. On the list were the following books, recommended for an overwhelmingly African American and Hispanic student population: Captains Courageous by Rudyard Kipling (1897), Old Yeller by Fred Gipson (1956), and A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens (1859). The rest of the books were in the same vein.

In another, more recent incident, a school board member from a very wealthy suburban district called me. The district was predominantly White but with a growing population of minority students. He asked me for my opinion on the summer reading list that the school board had approved the night before. He had voted to approve it based upon the recommendation of the school superintendent, but the list made him “uneasy.” The summer reading list had two sections. The first section was copied on white paper and was titled “Summer Reading List.” The second section was copied on yellow paper and was titled “Summer Reading List for Diverse Students.”

During our phone conversation, the school board member started to reflect on his own experiences with summer reading lists. He relayed that his summer reading list was more aligned with the one described in the first paragraph. He remembers having to read what were called “the classics,” which included the books cited in the previous chapter. On further reflection, however, he started thinking out loud about how we have come to define classic. He started to raise such questions as, Who are the people who determine the list of
However, in the current environment of rapidly expanding diversity, with children coming to our classrooms from all nations in the world, we now recognize that a traditional curriculum, while not necessarily presenting wrong information or knowledge, is limited in depth and breadth. Examples and experiences that are presented are not necessarily representative of the experiences of all or even most Americans. And children in schools today may experience great difficulty in relating to and learning from a curriculum grounded in a singular set of experiences and histories (Aaronsohn, 2003; Banks, 2009; Banks & Banks, 2013; Bennett, 2014; Brown, 2002; Gay, 1994; Gollnick & Chinn, 2013; Grant & Sleeter, 2009; Nieto, 2013; Nieto & Bode, 2012).

If schools are to educate all children to achieve at high levels in a global society and to address social inequities, educators must know how to develop and implement curriculum that represents the diverse perspectives, experiences, and values of a changing world (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). A multicultural curriculum reflects the multicultural history of this country and the culture of the students served, and it broadens the perspectives of all students. It provides a fuller picture of the histories, the perspectives, and the achievements of a wide variety of people. Such a curriculum is culturally relevant since it engages all students through examples and experiences to which they can relate, and it prepares all students to address issues of social injustice.

The critical importance and value of a multicultural curriculum is evident at both the preK–12 and college levels. A curriculum that forces assimilation is not the best way to assist students in attaining their educational goals. Research conducted on college campuses indicates that large numbers of respondents support a multicultural curriculum with multiple perspectives and that courses on ethnicity and women's studies have had positive effects on attitudes toward diversity (Mayo & Larke, 2012; Moses, 2002).

The responsibility for the development of curriculum has traditionally been placed, at the local level, in the hands of district administrators. Teacher responsibility for this work has been primarily in the area of lesson planning and curriculum implementation. However, trends have been identified that point more and more to teacher empowerment and ownership vis-à-vis the curriculum development process. And while curriculum development can be a daunting task, with a knowledge base and support in developing relevant skills, teachers can contribute to the development process in meaningful ways. In this chapter, you will learn what a curriculum is and the process for developing one. We will also discuss strategies for avoiding bias in the selection of teaching materials and explore how a multicultural lesson plan differs from a traditional lesson plan. Once again you will be given opportunities to write short reflective pieces and try several exercises to help understand the subject.

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(Continued)

classics? And what are the challenges to changing people’s thinking about what constitutes classics. He seemed to be headed in the direction of some important reflection.

Your Perspectives on the Case

1. There is some good news and some bad news in the opening case study. Can you identify each? Why do you identify parts of the case study positively and other parts negatively?
2. What books are on the summer reading list for a school and/or district with which you are familiar? What messages does that list send to students?
3. How do you think a book is determined to be a classic? Who determines that classification?
4. Consider the classic reading selections with which you are familiar. From whose perspective, in terms of race and ethnicity, are these selections told?
5. What books would you include in a summer reading list for a diverse school district? Would your list be the same for a district that is not very diverse in terms of race and ethnicity? Why or why not?
LEARNING OBJECTIVE 7.1 Developing the School’s Curriculum

THINKING AHEAD

When educators develop a curriculum, that curriculum represents a particular ideology, and it emanates from a commonly held purpose.

Questions

1. How would you define curriculum?
2. What does it mean when we say that a curriculum represents a particular ideology?
3. Briefly describe the curriculum in a particular subject area in a school with which you are familiar. In what ways is that curriculum multicultural? In what ways does it represent a more limited perspective?
4. Explain your thoughts for why curriculum in the United States has been developed in the way it has. Develop an argument for the influences on curriculum development in the United States.

Defining Curriculum

The term curriculum derives from a Latin word meaning “racecourse.” A school or district curriculum traditionally consists of a list of courses that educators pursue throughout the year in their efforts to educate students. In actuality, it is so much more. It is a plan for learning and usually includes goals, specific objectives, and a timetable for implementation. A curriculum indicates the ways in which content is selected, organized, and presented. The curriculum may include a plan for assessment or evaluation of student learning. Some educators see the curriculum as a document. As a whole, curriculum can include what is taught in school, a set of subjects, the content, a program of studies, a set of materials, a sequence of courses, a set of performance objectives, a course of study, everything that goes on in a school, and a series of experiences by learners (Kellough & Carjuzua, 2013; Sadker & Zittleman, 2010, 2012).

If we agree that curriculum is the plan for what is taught in schools, important next questions are these: Who determines what is taught? Do teachers participate at all in the curriculum development and implementation process? Glatthorn and Jailall (2009) pointed out that a fiercely contested battle is being waged over control of school curriculum among educators at a variety of levels.

- At the state level, departments of education are becoming deeply involved in establishing standards, frameworks, curriculum guidelines, high-stakes student assessments, and then sanctions to ensure that schools are addressing the standards.
- At the district level, educators develop curriculum policies or rules and criteria that guide the development and implementation of curriculum in the district’s schools. Also at the district level, specialists work to align district and state curriculum goals, identify programs of study, develop curriculum guides, select instructional materials, develop scope and sequence plans, and provide resources and technical assistance.
- At the school level, educators develop a vision and their own program of studies that align with district curriculum goals. An example of a program of studies is the social studies curriculum at the elementary level in a district. Schools also design school improvement plans that focus on specific curricular areas to be addressed by everyone.
- Finally, at the classroom level, teachers develop units and lesson plans and evaluate their own implementation of curriculum. Teachers work within the guides and frameworks established by the state and district to set specific learning goals and design unit and lesson plans that reflect the school’s particular mission statement.
As illustrated above, teachers have been involved in curriculum development, for the most part, at the school or classroom levels. Primary and legal responsibility for curriculum rests with each state (Grant & Gillette, 2006). One way that each state defines what is important in the curriculum is by developing standards. Standards are expectations of what students should know and be able to do as a result of their engagement in school. Standards can be developed through the state’s department of education and with a focus on that state’s children in particular. Standards have also been developed by national professional organizations, such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and the International Reading Association (IRA). While Grant and Gillette (2009) pointed out that standards are not the curriculum, standards should inform the development of the curriculum in each district and school. States hold districts and schools accountable for aligning the development of curriculum with the standards by requiring public school participation in high-stakes, state-developed assessments that reflect the state standards. The topic of curriculum standards is one of the major by-products of this era of high-stakes testing (Benson, 2009).

Educators such as Ainsworth (2011) and Reeves (2008) have gained national influence in leading major reforms of how schools design curriculum and best practices for classroom instruction. Their work has been boosted by the Common Core State Standards. This state-led effort is coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers (2011). The Common Core State Standards attempt to clearly and uniformly define what preK–12 students need to know in certain subjects to be prepared for postsecondary work. The Common Core State Standards are expectations for what K–12 students need to know and be able to do in English language arts and mathematics. Beginning in 2012, states began to review the standards and determine whether or not they would adopt the national standards. As of June 2014, 43 states; the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA); Washington, D.C.; Guam; the Northern Mariana Islands; and the US Virgin Islands have adopted the Common Core State Standards in English language arts/literacy and math and are in the process of implementing the standards at the local level. Implementation in schools has influenced important changes in teaching and learning. For example, the English language arts standards are designed to support students in learning to use critical thinking skills, cogent reasoning, and evidence collection skills. The standards could influence substantially the approaches teachers take to support diverse learners. What are the implications of an educator’s orientation to, or beliefs about, the purpose of curriculum? In terms of being an educator who is culturally responsive and responsible, they are numerous. If an educator uses behavioral objectives, remains discipline based in the organization of curriculum, and expects students to memorize what he or she delivers, then this transmission orientation will probably result in maintenance of the status quo. In other words, it will support the maintenance of privilege for a select group of students. If, however, an educator develops a student-centered, problem-based approach to teaching and learning, asking students to use their own experiences and histories as the basis for learning, then this transformation orientation will result in the students’ addressing critical social challenges in significant ways.

The Curriculum Development Process

In light of a large body of research that indicates that education should be child centered and grounded in constructivism and cognitive science, what is a recommended process for developing curriculum to achieve those goals? Oakes,
Lipton, Anderson, and Stillman (2012) advocated offering a curriculum and curriculum materials that support students in developing their capacity for higher-order thinking and engage them in real-world problem solving. Such a curriculum builds on what students know, engages students in building knowledge in the context of solving problems, and provides multiple entry points for students to engage in learning.

While individual teachers certainly can develop units of study and multicultural lesson plans for their own classrooms, the recommended process (see Table 7.1) for building a multicultural curriculum at the school level starts with establishing a curriculum development team (Glatthorn, 2000). The team could and should be comprised of representatives of a variety of stakeholder groups, including administrators, teachers, library information staff, special education teachers, and technology educators. The team should be provided with the time and resources to meet regularly. The curriculum improvement team provides leadership in developing a vision of a quality curriculum and the school’s curriculum goals. The goals, and the eventual curriculum, must be aligned with learning standards—that is, expectations of what students should know and be able to do. The team needs to make decisions about whether to revise an existing curriculum or program of studies or create a new curriculum.

At this point, the team is charged with revising or creating a program of studies, which is “the total set of offerings provided for a group of learners at a particular level of schooling” (Glatthorn, 2000, p. 57). In developing the program of studies, the team may decide to use a variety of existing curriculum development models or to develop a new approach. Next, the team makes decisions about content and structures for addressing the goals. Traditionally, the curriculum is based on a set of topics to be learned. More recently, it has been strongly suggested that curriculum development be grounded in concepts or key, broader themes and ideas (Erickson & Lanning, 2013). Concepts are timeless and universal ways of organizing ideas and lend themselves easily to the integration of diverse content, whereas a topics approach keeps learning grounded simply in facts. Structures may include courses or units or other creative ways of encapsulating key concepts and themes. Finally, the team will need to identify potential instructional and assessment strategies and a suggested timetable for implementation of the curriculum.

### TABLE 7.1 The Curriculum Development Process

According to Glatthorn (2000), recommended steps in the curriculum development process are as follows:

| Step 1 | School leaders establish a curriculum development team. |
| Step 2 | The team works to develop a vision of a quality curriculum and curriculum goals. |
| Step 3 | The team conducts a needs assessment and decides whether to continue with what exists, revise an existing curriculum, or create a new curriculum. |
| Step 4 | The team uses existing standards to determine what students should know and be able to do. |
| Step 5 | The team determines appropriate assessments to gauge whether or not students have learned expected concepts and skills. |
| Step 6 | The team designs the program of studies, including structures or ways to convey the program of studies, and selects relevant materials. |
| Step 7 | The team recommends instructional strategies that are relevant. |
| Step 8 | The team develops a schedule for implementation, including monitoring and evaluation. |

Source: Author created.
This process results in multicultural curriculum development when significant consideration is given to addressing and incorporating the unique and diverse needs, backgrounds, and interests of the learners. This applies to the selection of content, instructional strategies, and a variety of assessment strategies. Finally, the members of the curriculum development team need to be vigilant in recognizing how their own values, experiences, biases, and belief systems positively or negatively impact the whole process.

In past chapters, we have explained the rationale for a multicultural curriculum: All students should receive an education of high quality that stresses academic achievement and attainment of skills that will enable them to thrive in a multicultural world (Banks, 2009; Bennett, 2014; Gollnick & Chinn, 2013; Grant & Sleeter, 2009; Nieto & Bode, 2012).

REFLECTING BACK

Consider the curriculum development process described above as you respond to the following questions.

Questions

1. What is your conception of learning standards? Where do they come from? Who develops them? Do you believe that standards take into account multiculturalism?
2. As a teacher, how might you make sure that the curriculum development process is a multicultural curriculum development process?
3. Suggest another way for curriculum to be developed on a systemic basis.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 7.2 Developing a Multicultural Curriculum

THINKING AHEAD

Most teachers receive relatively little training in curriculum development. This is evident as teachers attempt to rewrite a curriculum to make it multicultural. In this section, you will learn about processes for developing a multicultural curriculum.

Questions

1. What do you believe are the key features of a multicultural curriculum?
2. What do you believe are the similarities and the differences between a multicultural curriculum and a traditional curriculum?
3. Prioritize the components of what would go into a curriculum that is multicultural.
Scott (1994) discussed research that reveals students taught from an inclusive curriculum are more eager and engaged in the classroom. Faculty who integrate diversity into their curriculum report that their teaching is energized, students’ evaluations of their teaching improve, and their overall satisfaction with teaching increases. Gorski and Swalwell (2015) emphasize that issues of equity should take precedence over culture in the curriculum stressing the importance of incorporating social justice into the classroom. Lawrence-Brown and Sapon-Shevin (2014) follow the same theme with directions to include issues of income disparity, language and religious rights, and gender identity and expression. Anderson and Davis (2012) write about “culturally considerate schools” where educators demonstrate “sincerity” in not only their words but also their actions, resulting in more equitable academic success.

**Characteristics of a Multicultural Curriculum**

Pritchey Smith (1998), in *Common Sense About Uncommon Knowledge*, provided an excellent conceptual overview of a multicultural curriculum. He described six broad principles of multicultural curriculum development. These address the multicultural aspects of curriculum that are often overlooked in favor of purely pedagogical approaches. According to Smith (1998), a well-designed multicultural curriculum includes the following:

1. activities and teaching that help students navigate from the familiarity of their own culture to learning more about other cultures
2. activities and teaching that promote positive ethnic identity
3. activities and teaching that involve increasingly more frequent and positive relationships among students who are different from one another
4. activities and teaching that build students’ personal knowledge of their culture and the cultures of other people
5. activities and teaching that help students see and understand issues, concepts, and events from the perspectives of other people
6. activities and teaching that help students to use their knowledge of other cultures to better understand and resolve social problems and, ultimately, to lead lives as multicultural persons

The traditional curriculum does not reflect these principles. Culture is rarely addressed, except in reference to attempts to recognize and appreciate diversity on some level. One reason is that the traditional curriculum tends to be Eurocentric and does not incorporate the cultures of other students. Minimal attention is paid to issues of social justice, with exceptions being the civics requirements of many high school programs.

At the request of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), James Banks (1992) wrote a revised set of *Curriculum Guidelines for Multicultural Education*. These guidelines can be particularly useful in curriculum revision or development. Here is a summary of some of the key points:
The entire school community should have a positive multicultural climate and continually strive for meaningful interactions and communications.

The makeup of the faculty and staff should reflect the community and the country.

The cultural learning styles of students should be incorporated into curriculum development.

A student’s education is not complete without learning about and understanding the history and experiences of the many different peoples who make up this country.

A student’s education should provide the cultural competency necessary to live and work in a diverse economy.

The multicultural curriculum should include a strong component of actual experiences to help synthesize knowledge.

The assessment process and methods should reflect the culture of student experiences.

Whether or not a school decides to revise an existing curriculum or create a new curriculum as described in section 7.1 Developing the School’s Curriculum, these guidelines provide an excellent framework within which educators can work to ensure that the result is a multicultural curriculum. By establishing and using a multicultural curriculum, the potential exists for addressing critical problems in education, including the following:

- closing the achievement gap, because students will more readily recognize themselves in the curriculum and thereby be more motivated to engage in learning
- helping students increase their knowledge of, sensitivity to, and appreciation of other cultures, thereby preparing them to participate in a global economy
- identifying bias, stereotypes, and inaccuracies in both the content and process of education, thereby ensuring that the curriculum does not continue to convey negative messages about diverse cultures
- acknowledging varied learning styles among students in order to better serve all students

Whether the curriculum is revised or newly created, to achieve a multicultural curriculum, three key factors need to be addressed (Scott, 1994). First, educators need to increase their own personal knowledge about multicultural issues and diverse cultures. This knowledge helps us understand how to integrate cultural knowledge and practices into the curriculum. Second, educators need to restructure existing course syllabi to add cultural content as a context for teaching and learning. And finally, methods need to be altered and varied to support different cultural learning styles and meet the learning needs and life experiences of a diverse student population while increasing the repertoire of knowledge and skills for all students.

Developing a curriculum of any sort is both challenging and fascinating in that one must cover important knowledge as well as inspire students to learn.

Questions
1. How much of your culture did you see reflected in the curriculum under which you were educated?
2. What key facts about your culture would you like to see reflected in school curriculum?
3. What arguments have you heard against a multicultural curriculum, and how would you respond now, given what you have learned?
4. Predict what might be the reaction of students to a curriculum that is more reflective of diverse cultures.
Many states require that schools have textbook committees or other means for examining texts for cultural bias—racial, ethnic, gender, and so on. The first step in analyzing curriculum and materials for bias is to have a clear understanding of the potential forms of bias.

### Seven Forms of Bias in Curriculum Materials

Bias in instructional materials occurs in many forms. According to Arends (2012), Banks and McGee Banks (2013), and Sadker and Zittleman (2010), bias can be categorized in the following ways.

1. **Invisibility or omission.** Women and people of color were virtually absent in textbooks prior to the 1960s. It is important for students to see themselves and others portrayed in all walks of life and careers. Texts that routinely portray only people of one race do not reflect reality. One only needs to look at current programs on television, which tend to be devoid of people of color, to see that they do not mirror real life or support diverse lives. For example, popular television shows such as *Seinfeld* and *Friends* had people of color only in token roles.

2. **Stereotyping.** People in teaching resources should not be reduced to the stereotypes commonly assigned to them. Unfortunately, stereotyping is common, and it perpetuates prejudice. Domestic or custodial help should not be routinely seen as being provided by women and people of color. Nor should all White males be seen as ignorant racists. Girls need to be seen in strong, heroic roles. Boys should be occasionally seen in positions where they need the help of girls. Sometimes the man needs to be tied on the railroad track and the woman rides up on her black horse to rescue him.

3. **Imbalance and selectivity.** The curriculum should not be one-sided but should tell other versions and perspectives. History should not be distorted to reveal only one point of view. The doctrine of Manifest Destiny claimed that it was the God-given right of settlers to move west to claim land for themselves, to tame the savages, and to bring them Christianity and civilization. How do you claim land where people have been living on it for centuries? Did the Native Americans feel they needed a new religion and that they needed to be civilized? Why was that not taken into consideration?

4. **Unreality.** Texts have historically tended to ignore negative or unpleasant aspects of history or to trivialize them. During World War II, about 120,000 innocent Japanese Americans, many of them US citizens who spoke only English and whose families had been in the country for generations, were rounded up, placed in internment camps, and accused of treason. As the war progressed and more fighting men were needed, the
military appeared at these same internment camps and appealed to the imprisoned people to enlist and fight for their country—the United States. The Japanese Americans did fight for their country in large numbers. In fact, some of the all-Japanese American units liberated Jewish concentration camps in Europe. Meanwhile, their own families languished in prison camps in the United States. Other all-African American units also freed Jewish concentration camps, while their families still lived under the harsh rule of segregation.

5. Fragmentation and isolation. Instead of being infused throughout the curriculum, women and people of color are often inserted as add-ons to the text. A typical example would be a short, highlighted section in a textbook called “Ten Great African American Scientists,” while the rest of the text is devoid of any mention of people of color. This form of tokenism tends to minimize the contributions of diverse peoples instead of emphasizing them. This is often seen in the world of work when a company, wanting to prove its commitment to diversity, brings clerical staff to a meeting or company event for all to see. The clerical staff is often primarily people of color, while the “professional staff” is all White.

6. Linguistic bias. Words are powerful. They can be used in pejorative ways to distort reality. Male pronouns, such as policeman and fireman, reinforce sexist assumptions that these jobs are for boys only. Forefathers ignores the contributions that women made in establishing this country. Ronald Reagan, as president, would often refer to “welfare queens” driving pink Cadillacs, reinforcing the stereotype of unmarried, Black women having numerous babies and living off welfare benefits instead of working. This coded language belied the reality that the majority of people on welfare are single, White women.

7. Cosmetic bias. Textbooks and other teaching resources frequently showcase smiling images of diverse students on their covers. However, the insides of the books, where the content is, do not reflect the diversity on those covers. A picture of a diverse group of students on a college catalog cover was found to be deceptive when it was revealed that the sole Black student in the photo had not actually posed for the photograph. His image had been cut from another picture and inserted into a smiling group of White students in order to promote the college’s assertion that it celebrated diversity.

Checking for Bias

Having a system by which to analyze teaching resources and understand the different forms of bias is essential (Banks, 2009; Gallavan, 2010a, 2010b). Systems adopted by schools can include the use of checklists and guidelines. Some of the more well-known guidelines are included in this focus area. For example, Table 7.2 presents a checklist that can be used to
CHAPTER 7  Curriculum Development and Lesson Planning

identify issues of bias in curriculum materials. An example of bias expressed as inappropriate language would be describing Jewish people as “cunning” or “miserly.” As another example, sometimes Native Americans’ lives are referred to as primitive or aboriginal, but English settlers are lauded for their brave spirit and heroics.

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication (Lu, 1998) outlined a set of Guidelines for Evaluating and Selecting Multicultural Materials. According to this document, multicultural literature should

- avoid portraying people as stereotypes and, instead, give them positive, realistic personalities and behaviors;
- ensure that illustrations are authentic, not caricatures;
- include stories that portray diversity as a strength and an asset to the nation;
- provide historical as well as fictional stories that illustrate the ever-changing role and status of minority groups in society;
- be of high quality with engaging plot lines and strong cultural characterizations;
- be historically accurate;
- accurately reflect the cultural values of the characters; and
- take place in settings in the United States that accurately portray the rich cultural diversity of this country and the legacy of various minority groups.

Another often quoted source for evaluating materials is from the Council on Interracial Books for Children (1980). Children can be taught to look for bias in books. The council provided the following “10 Quick Ways to Analyze Children’s Books for Racism and Sexism.”

### TABLE 7.2 A Checklist for Examining Resources for Bias

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bias: Material reveals a strong preference for one type of thinking.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination: Material singles out or pictures a group in a particularly positive or negative way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prejudice: Material reveals unfairly negative perceptions or viewpoints.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Racism: Material reflects negative attitudes toward or treatment of people based solely on their race.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexism: Material reflects negative attitudes toward or treatment of people based solely on gender.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stereotype: Material reinforces beliefs that all the members of one particular group think and behave in a certain way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tokenism: Certain groups appear only as perfunctory additions, or their contributions appear in a limited way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnocentrism: One cultural group is presented as the ideal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exotica: Focus is on extreme examples of the culture, not on everyday life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Routine aspects of life: Focus is primarily on the Fs (foods, fashions, festivals).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inappropriate language: Materials support prejudice by using derogatory language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authors: Authors and illustrators are not from same cultural group as the people portrayed.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication date: Materials, primarily textbooks, are dated.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Beilke (1986); Harada (1995); Harris (1991); Pang, Colvin, Tran, & Barba (1992).

Extended Explorations: Recognizing Bias

Describe a recent event in the news that might be heavily biased in its interpretations. Locate at least three articles about that event. Single out specific examples that illustrate bias. Point out inconsistencies and ambiguities.

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1. **Check the illustrations.** Watch for people being portrayed in demeaning or stereotypical ways, either obvious or subtle. Images of people should look authentic in terms of coloration and features. People of color or ethnic minorities should not always be cast in stereotypically subservient roles but should occupy powerful positions as well. Girls, in particular, should be seen in capable, active, leadership roles.

2. **Check the story line.**
   **Standard for success.** Does a person of color have to adopt White, middle-class behaviors in order to succeed? Do girls have to act like boys in order to be successful? Are the people of color always seen as superior athletes (particularly African Americans) or extremely book smart (especially Asians)? Among diverse friends, are the children of color most often the ones who have to be patient, understanding, and forgiving of their White peers?
   **Resolution of problems.** If there are problems in the story, what are they and who has them—just girls and people of color? Is it clear that sometimes the problems faced are due to social injustices? Are the people of color consistently “rescued or saved” by White people?
   **Roles of women.** Are girls and women seen achieving independently by using their skills and intelligence, versus using their beauty and the help of boys? Are girls and women assigned to stereotypical gender roles?

3. **Look at the lifestyles.** Are people of color and their lifestyles portrayed negatively, as compared to White, middle-class people and lives? Where do people live? Are suburbs filled with White, middle-class people while cities are characterized as ghettos full of unsavory, poor people of color? Do the lives of people of color seem genuine or stereotypical?

4. **Weigh the relationships between people.** Are White, middle-class people seen as heroic leaders while others are depicted in helpless, supporting roles? In African American and Asian American families, are mothers seen as dominant, maybe even domineering? Are men absent?

5. **Note the heroes.** Are people of color described as quiet and harmless, or are they allowed to express themselves and their outrage at social injustices? When they are depicted as heroes, is it with the same level and type of adulation that is accorded White heroes and for the same qualities, such as bravery, selflessness, concern for others, and so on? Or are they heroes mainly because they have helped White people?

6. **Consider the effects on a child’s self-image.** Is there a message that people must be of a certain hair and eye color, weight or height, or a certain degree or type of attractiveness in order to be superior? How do children who do not measure up to this standard react to the images being portrayed as desirable, such as tall, thin females or White, muscular males? Do children see positive role models that look, think, and act like them?

7. **Consider the author or illustrator’s background.** Check to see who the authors and illustrators are of books with multicultural themes. If they are not members of the cultural group that is being portrayed in the book, what in their background qualifies them to write or draw with authority on that culture?

8. **Check out the author’s perspective.** Some bias is to be expected in any book. Most children’s books have been written by White, middle-class authors, which has led to established notions of ethnicity biased in favor of White, middle-class people and, often, males. Examine the book for inconsistencies, inaccuracies, and vagueness in cultural interpretations. How do they affect the message of the book?

9. **Watch for loaded words.** Loaded words or “coded phrases” can be demeaning, inaccurate, racist, and sexist, among other faults. Watch for the use of descriptive words such as cheap, savage, lazy, old wives' tale, inscrutable, treacherous, and conniving. Sexist terms that promote males only, such as forefathers and policemen, are warning signs of possible bias.

10. **Look at the copyright date.** Books published prior to the 1960s were written mainly by White, middle-class men, lending them a certain ethnic and gender perspective. Caution, therefore, is advised when using materials from that era, especially those that claim to offer an ethnic or female viewpoint. This is not to say that all recently published books are bias-free.
In portrayals of people of color, there is always the risk of stereotyping. People should be seen as having many aspects to their character and to their lives. The story should progress naturally, with cultural aspects included only when appropriate. The language of the characters must be authentic. Terms, jargon, and colloquial expressions must be appropriate for the time period.

The guidelines above apply not just to textbooks but also to other literature and teacher resources used in class, such as videos, CDs, periodicals, computer software, and newspapers. Despite the best efforts of teachers, some biased material may enter the classroom. In these cases, acknowledge the bias and use it to create a teachable moment. Discuss it in class, seeking comments from students.

REFLECTING BACK

Reading multicultural literature can be both enjoyable and educational.

Questions
1. What ethnic or gender stereotypes do you find most often in literature?
2. How do you wish your ethnic background to be portrayed in books? Include gender, religion, age, and other multidimensional aspects in your description.
3. List some books that best illustrate cultural perspectives and some that do not.
4. Predict what would happen if women dominated the membership in congress.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 7.4 Writing Multicultural Lesson Plans

THINKING AHEAD

One way to write multicultural lesson plans is to start with the curriculum that you are required to teach and then adapt the content and activities to infuse cultural content and diverse perspectives. This section will provide a framework for developing lesson plans and examples of multicultural lessons.

Questions
1. What are the features of a multicultural lesson plan? How do these differ from features of a traditional lesson plan?
2. How does one go about developing multicultural lesson plans? Should one follow certain steps?
3. Describe the premise of an Afro-Centric school.
Administrators and teachers will need to focus their attention on developing curriculum that is multicultural, as described in previous sections in this chapter. Tomlinson (2008) stressed that because of the increase of academically diverse schools, with a mixture of students having different learning needs, a practice of differentiated instruction becomes essential. However, individual teachers do not need to wait for a department, grade-level, or schoolwide curriculum development effort before they invest time and energy in transforming the content they teach in their own classrooms.

Interestingly, many teachers believe that to transform the units and lessons in their own classrooms, they need to start all over. Also, teachers who consider developing multicultural lesson plans tend to overthink the process. Some overemphasize the need to infuse race into their lessons. Others focus almost solely on augmenting the content of a lesson, when changing some instructional strategies and adding new activities might be just as powerful. Others infuse issues of diversity into the lesson in crude fashions. A humorous example of this last point might be a science teacher exclaiming, during a lesson on clouds, “Clouds are classified as stratus, cumulus, and cirrus...and oh, by the way, it was partly cloudy on the day Martin Luther King gave his ‘I Have a Dream Speech.’”

A good starting point for teachers who want to become multicultural educators is to create or transform lessons to be multicultural. The more a teacher is involved in this process, the more he or she will want to transform all lessons—and see the need to do so! In fact, all lessons should be multicultural; multiculturalism should not be reserved for special lessons included just for ethnic holidays. A teacher can begin to transform lessons by using the curriculum already designated by the school and/or district.

**Planning Learning Experiences From a Multicultural Perspective**

As described in 7.1 Developing the School’s Curriculum, most schools have established a program of studies and a curriculum for each subject area. That curriculum will address pertinent standards or expectations for student learning, broad goals, and recommended instructional strategies and assessments.

The next step is for teachers, or teams of teachers, to use the established curriculum to develop unit plans and daily learning experiences or lesson plans for students. A unit has been described as
a chunk of content [from the established curriculum] and associated skills that are perceived as fitting together in a logical way. Normally more than one lesson is required to accomplish a unit of instruction. The content for instructional units might come from chapters in books or from major sections of curriculum guides. (Arends, 2009, p. 121)

Unit planning allows the teacher the opportunity to outline a primary theme or big idea (generally seen as the unit title), establish overall unit objectives, select unit content and a series of learning experiences (lessons), identify pertinent materials, and select assessment mechanisms.

Within each unit, the format for those lesson plans may vary, depending on the instructional model or strategy that is used. For example, the lesson plan for a problem-based learning experience will be different from the lesson plan for a direct instruction learning experience. At the same time, lesson plans tend to follow a common format (Arends, 2012; Kellough & Carjuzaa, 2013). In this process, the teacher builds upon an identified unit plan theme, goals, and content. Then for individual lesson plans, the teacher will do the following:

1. Identify instructional objectives (including cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and other skill area objectives).
2. Outline and sequence learning activities, providing for introduction of the lesson, a series of learning experiences, assignments, and closure.
3. Select materials and resources needed to teach the lesson.
4. Determine how student learning will be evaluated.

Teachers who are committed to becoming culturally responsible and to transforming lesson plans to be multicultural use a variation on the typical lesson planning process described above. This variation engages teachers in a conscious effort to include multicultural principles and concepts in the preexisting curriculum. Instead of moving directly from unit goals to lesson objectives, multicultural lesson planning includes a step in which the teacher identifies one or two multicultural principles to be addressed. Addressing those will lead to inclusion of important multicultural concepts in the development of instructional or learning plans. Also, an important variation on the more traditional lesson or unit plan process is the consideration given to assessment. More recently, an effective format for unit and lesson plans is one in which the teacher actually plans for how student learning will be assessed before planning learning experiences and resources. It's important for students to know how they will be assessed prior to beginning work on new content. Learning experiences then can be designed with the objectives, key concepts, and assessments in mind. If a teacher works conscientiously in these areas, multicultural lesson and unit planning looks like this:

1. **Unit theme/title of unit.** The unit theme may already exist as part of a curriculum framework, the curriculum itself, or the textbook.
2. **Instructional goal.** What one or two of the goals are the basis for this unit or lesson plan?
3. **Multicultural principle(s) or goals.** Which one of six multicultural principles/goals may be applied in this lesson and/or unit. Which multicultural concepts are appropriate?
4. **Learning objectives.** Which instructional objectives are important? Which are drawn from the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor and skill domains? Some of the objectives should be designed to address multicultural concepts.
5. **Assessment/evaluation.** Determine the assessment or evaluation methods to be used. By using a variety of assessment strategies to determine what students know and are able to do, you will be in a better position to meet the needs of diverse learners. Variations in assessment strategies are discussed in Chapter 10.
6. **Instructional delivery/student activities.** Outline ways to engage students in learning, including the introduction of the lesson(s), learning activities, assignments to support continued learning, and provision for formative assessment. By making use of a variety of instructional strategies, such as cooperative learning, multiple intelligences-based learning, and problem-based learning, the teacher will be better able to meet the needs and interests of diverse students.
7. **Materials/resources.** List the materials and resources needed to teach the lesson and unit. Care should be taken to use materials that are unbiased and to present content that represents the experiences and perspectives of diverse groups of people. The format for a lesson plan, or set of lesson plans, would look like what appears in Exhibit 7.1.
Multicultural Principles

As indicated in the multicultural lesson plan format shown in Exhibit 7.1, one key feature that makes a lesson plan multicultural is the inclusion of one or two multicultural goals or principles. The principles used in this book are grounded in a set of goals for achieving multicultural perspectives in teaching and learning developed by Bennett (2014). Teachers are encouraged to use the multicultural principles explained below in their lesson planning.

**Principle 1: Develops multiple perspectives.** The traditional Eurocentric curriculum must be balanced with the perspectives and history of women and people of color. Multicultural lesson plans include concepts that help students see events and experiences from diverse perspectives.

**Principle 2: Develops cultural consciousness.** To become culturally competent requires developing the personal awareness that others in the world have different experiences, histories, values, viewpoints, and perspectives. Women, people of color, members of nonmajority ethnic groups, and citizens of other countries may see life differently than do members of the dominant White, middle-class, English-speaking culture.

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**EXHIBIT 7.1 Multicultural Unit and Lesson Plan Format**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area:</th>
<th>Grade Level:</th>
<th>Duration:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s Name:</td>
<td>Lesson Focus:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Instructional Goal**
   
   *Cite specific national Common Core State Standards or other standards that are the basis for teaching and learning in your state/setting.*

2. **Curriculum Objectives**
   
   *Cite specific learning objectives. What are students expected to know and be able to do as a result of their engagement in this lesson or set of lessons? Use verbs that require students to participate at as high a level of critical thinking as possible.*

3. **Multicultural Goal(s) (Check one or more.)**
   
   - Developing multiple historical perspectives
   - Developing cultural consciousness
   - Increasing intercultural competence
   - Combating racism, prejudice, and discrimination
   - Developing awareness of the state of the planet and global dynamics
   - Developing social action skills
   
   *Describe pertinent multicultural concepts.*

4. **Assessment Options**
   
   *What specific assessment strategies will you use? How will you determine if each student has achieved the learning objectives? Make sure to provide a variety of assessment strategies that address diverse learner needs.*

5. **Instructional Delivery/Student Experiences**
   
   *Plan a variety of learning experiences that meet diverse learner needs, interests, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds.*

6. **Materials/Resources**
   
   *Work to include culturally relevant materials.*
Chapter 7: Curriculum Development and Lesson Planning

Principle 3: Increases intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is the ability to interact with people of different cultures.

Principle 4: Combats racism, sexism, prejudice, and discrimination. Lesson plans could be developed to help students become aware of racist and sexist behavior.

Principle 5: Develops awareness of the state of the planet and global dynamics. Lessons address the knowledge about prevailing world conditions, trends, and developments. It is also knowledge of the world as a highly interconnected ecosystem subject to surprise effects and dramatic ramifications of simple events.

Principle 6: Develops social action skills. Social action skills include the awareness, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors needed to work toward social justice.

Upon selection of one or two principles to address in a lesson plan, teachers will also want to select one or more key concepts and begin to include those concepts in their lesson objectives. These concepts can be incorporated into classroom learning experiences directly or indirectly.

Key Concepts for a Multicultural Curriculum

The multicultural curriculum should help students master higher levels of knowledge so that they can better understand race and ethnic relations and develop the skills and abilities needed to make reflective personal and public decisions. Sound multicultural lessons and units focus on higher-level concepts and generalizations and use facts primarily to help students move from fundamental to more sophisticated concepts, thereby mastering higher forms of knowledge and make decisions. Students must be able to make reflective decisions in order to take thoughtful personal, social, and civic action (Banks, 2009).

In addition to including one or more of the five multicultural principles in a lesson plan, teachers will want to select key multicultural concepts as described by Banks (2009). To support students in learning to consider multiple perspectives (Principle 1), any of the following concepts could be included in the lesson:

- Communication—how behaviors and symbols are interpreted by others
- Culture—the beliefs, values, and behaviors of a society
- Diversity—cultural, ethnic, racial, religious, and language differences as well as differences in areas such as gender, sexual orientation, abilities, and others
- Historical bias—recognition that a historian's views of the past are influenced by his or her own social, cultural, and ethnic identities
- Ethnic groups—groups in which members are descended from an ancestry that shares common language, religion, customs, and behaviors
- Perception—viewpoint influenced by culture, experience, bias, cultural values, and other variables

To support students in learning to understand that culture is part of our life (Principle 2), a teacher may elect to focus on concepts that include the following:

- Acculturation—when members of the dominant cultural group adopt cultural traits of a minority group
- Assimilation—when a member of a minority group adopts the customs, behaviors, values, and lifestyle of the dominant culture
- Community culture—the customs, habits, language, and lifestyles of an ethnic community
- Self-concept—how individuals see themselves in terms of assumptions, knowledge, and feelings

To support students in learning to use and incorporate diverse perspectives in their daily lives (Principle 3), the teacher may choose to include the following concepts:

- Intercultural communication—interpretations, misinterpretations, and ways in which miscommunication occurs because of culture differences
- Culture—attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors shared by members of a group
- Values—cultural elements that are given high worth
To support students in learning on many levels about differences (Principle 4), the teacher may focus on the following:

- **Attitudes**—biases and assumptions that influence how one views people or situations
- **Prejudice**—negative feelings and attitudes toward other groups that are not grounded in facts
- **Discrimination**—differential behavior toward a targeted group
- **Racism**—negative beliefs that targeted groups possess certain mental, sociological, and cultural characteristics based upon their biological makeup
- **Power**—who possesses influence, whether for good or bad; uses of power by one group over another
- **Ethnocentrism**—a belief that one's own ethnic group is superior to that of others
- **Socialization**—acquiring values, attitudes, and behaviors based on interactions with others

To help students understand that all people’s success and problems are interdependent (Principle 5), the teacher may focus on the following:

- **Civic responsibility**—the obligation to serve one’s community through efforts to improve the conditions under which people live
- **Equity**—fair and just accommodation of the needs of all
- **Interdependence**—the mutual reliance of one group on others
- **Justice**—fair, ethical, and moral treatment of people
- **Respect**—showing deference to and appreciation of others
- **Social action**—seeking reform of elements of society in the pursuit of equity and justice

So far, we have established that a multicultural lesson plan serves the same purpose and follows the same format as a traditional lesson plan. The goals and objectives come from the approved textbook or curriculum. The difference is that multicultural principles and concepts are infused into the lesson. Exhibits 7.2 and 7.3 show two sample lesson plans on history and social studies, respectively.

**EXHIBIT 7.2 Sample Multicultural Unit/Lesson Plans**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developing Lesson Plans That Are Multicultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject Area: History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level: 10–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration: 4 block classes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Teacher's Name: Eileen McKenzie              |
| Lesson Focus: African American history       |

1. **Instructional Goal(s)**
   1. Students will analyze the development of the identity of African Americans during the 1930s by examining works of art from the Harlem Renaissance.
   2. Students will identify significant themes of the Harlem Renaissance by analyzing music, poetry, and artwork from the time period.

2. **Curriculum Objectives**
   (From the CT Social Studies/History Framework)

   Students will be able to:
   1.1 Identify significant events and themes in US history
   2.2 Interpret information from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including electronic media (maps, charts, graphs, images, artifacts, recordings, and text)
   (From the National Common Core State Standards)

   Students will be able to:
   1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
### EXHIBIT 7.2 (Continued)

2. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

3. Multicultural Goal(s)
   - Developing Multiple Historical Perspectives
   - Developing Cultural Consciousness
   - Increasing Intercultural Competence
   - Combating Racism, Prejudice, and Discrimination
   - Developing Awareness of the State of the Planet and Global Dynamics
   - Developing Social Action Skills

4. Assessment/Evaluation
   1. Students can choose one piece from the unit and create a coordinating piece (e.g., if a student chooses a piece of music or poem, the student should create a coordinating piece of artwork to represent the lyrics/overall tone of the music; if a student chooses a piece of artwork, the student should create a poem or piece of music to represent the artwork).
   2. Students should write a one-page response to describe how the two pieces of artwork go together and how they tie into the overall themes of the Harlem Renaissance (combating racism and discrimination against African Americans, establishing a new African American identity, etc.). Students will be evaluated according to the:
      - Capacity of the writing response to cite specific textual evidence and include information from diverse sources
      - Quality of the connection made between pieces of artwork
      - Connection of individual’s work to overall themes of Harlem Renaissance

5. Instructional Delivery/Student Activities
   1. Introduction: Discuss the causes of the Harlem Renaissance (e.g., the Great Migration and the Response to Discrimination/Racism). Ask students if they were faced with discrimination, how would they combat it? Would they agitate, accommodate, or migrate? What would it take for them to leave their homes for a new life?
   2. Have students watch *Jazz*, a documentary by Ken Burns—Episodes Two (“The Gift”) and Three (“Our Language”). Have students, working in groups, explain the evolution of jazz in the United States. They may develop a timeline about significant events.
   3. Have students participate in an “Art Auction,” where they act as art retailers. Split them into groups and give each group one piece of artwork from the Harlem Renaissance to “sell” to their peers in the class (see Resource list below). Their peers will be given fake money that they will use to try to buy the piece of art.
   4. Compare and contrast:
      a. Pair students. Assign each pair to read one poem by Langston Hughes and then analyze the poem for themes.
      b. As a class, have students listen to “Take The ‘A’ Train” by Duke Ellington. First have students listen to the instrumental version of “Take The ‘A’ Train.” The second time around have them write a brief 1- to 2-sentence reflection. Then have students listen to “Take The ‘A’ Train” with lyrics. After the second time around, have them write another brief 1- to 2-sentence reflection.
      c. Have students compare and contrasts the portrayal of Harlem between Ellington and Hughes.
   5. Have students create advertisements for an upcoming show at the Apollo Theatre.

6. Materials/Resources

   **Movie:** Ken Burns PBS film *Jazz*


   **Music:** “Take The ‘A’ Train” by Duke Ellington

Source: Author created.
EXHIBIT 7.3 Sample Multicultural Lesson Plans

Developing Lesson Plans That Are Multicultural

Subject Area: Social Studies  Grade Level: 10   Duration: 2 weeks
Teacher’s Name: Jennifer Carr  Lesson Focus: Westward Expansion

1. Instructional Goal
Students will understand key concepts, themes, and perspectives of the westward expansion movement by examining and analyzing maps, art, journals, film, and artifacts in a museum.

2. Curriculum Objectives
(From the CT State Social Studies Standards)

Students will be able to:

Strand 1.1-2—investigate the causes and effects of migration within the United States.
Strand 1.13-59—demonstrate the importance of viewing a culture from diverse perspectives.
Strand 1.3-19—assess how a civilization/nation’s arts, architecture, music, and literature reflect its culture and history.
Strand 3.1-2—evaluate primary and secondary interpretations of a historical event.

(From the National Common Core Standards for History/Social Studies)

Students will be able to:

Strand 7—conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating an understanding of the subject under investigation.

3. Multicultural Goal(s)

• Developing Multiple Historical Perspectives
• Developing Cultural Consciousness
• Increasing Intercultural Competence
• Combating Racism, Prejudice, and Discrimination
• Developing Awareness of the State of the Planet and Global Dynamics
• Developing Social Action Skills

4. Assessment

Students will be informally assessed using class discussion, checks for understanding, think-pair-share, and teacher monitoring during group activities. Students will be formally assessed on the proposal they construct in groups during the simulation. These will be handed in and graded based on their content and participation in the simulation. The unit will culminate in a formal assessment in which students will be asked to write an editorial to a local newspaper, supporting their opinion of whether westward expansion was beneficial or harmful to the future of the United States and why.

5. Instructional Delivery/Student Activities

1. Students will engage in a “Think-Pair-Share” in which they consider the questions: What do you already know about westward expansion? Do you think it was beneficial or harmful to the future of the United States? Students will draw on their background knowledge and start to think critically about westward expansion before learning the content in greater depth.

2. Students will be introduced to westward expansion through a PowerPoint presentation which will introduce concepts such as Manifest Destiny, Buffalo Soldiers, the Louisiana Purchase, the Missouri Compromise, Andrew Jackson, the Trail of Tears, the Mexican-American War, etc. As the presentation progresses, students will be asked critical questions and checks for understanding such as “What drove settlers and pioneers to move west?” “What implications do you see there being for westward expansion?” and “What would our country look like today might there not have been westward expansion?”
3. Students will examine the painting *Manifest Destiny* in groups. Each group will be given a small section of the painting (one group will be assigned the train, one group will be assigned the Native Americans, one group will be assigned the western settlers, and one group will be assigned the angel). Each group will be asked to discuss and write a paragraph about the story being told in the section of the painting they were assigned, and then present their findings. The class will discuss how these stories contribute to the larger picture of westward expansion, analyzing how these stories compare and contrast and demonstrate multiple perspectives.

4. Students will take a field trip to the Pequot Museum in Mashantucket, Connecticut. Students will visit the following exhibits: “A Pequot Village,” “Arrival of the Europeans,” and “Mashantucket Pequots Today.” Before visiting the museum, students will participate in an activity in which they list all stereotypes, myths, prejudices, and background knowledge they have about Native American culture. After visiting the museum, students will discuss which of these were confirmed or disconfirmed by the museum.

5. Students will watch portions of the AMC series *Hell on Wheels* from season 1, episode 6 (“Pride, Pomp, and Circumstance”). Students will do a character-shadow in which they focus on the perspective of one particular character or group (i.e., Senator Crane, Hell on Wheels residents, Lily, Chief Many Horses, Cheyenne women).

6. The following class, students will participate in a poster potluck. During this activity, students will be given a colored marker, correlated with their character shadow, and will circulate around the classroom, writing a brief response on each of the posters. The posters will ask questions such as “What are the views of your character on westward expansion?” and “What is the traditional role of your character during the time the series takes place?” Students will discuss their conclusions as a class, touching on the many perspectives and roles that are present during westward expansion.

7. Students will engage in a simulation in which they will be put into groups and represent a range of groups involved in westward expansion. The groups will be given a map and an area of land that will potentially be transformed into part of the transcontinental railroad. Groups will work together to come up with a proposal that outlines their point of view of whether the railroad should be approved or not. They will use all materials, figures, maps, journals, and information that have been gathered throughout the unit to support their point of view. Eventually, groups will present their proposals and come up with a fair compromise among the groups.

8. As a final assessment, students will write an editorial to a local newspaper of the late 1800s. In their editorial students will argue whether they think westward expansion is/was beneficial or harmful to the future of the United States. Students must incorporate a variety of perspectives, arguments, and support in creating their editorials.

6. Materials/Resources


Source: Author created.

**EXERCISE 7.1 WRITING A MULTICULTURAL LESSON PLAN**

1. Using the lesson plan format illustrated in Exhibit 7.3, create a totally new lesson plan. Do not use one that you have done before or one similar to the examples given.
2. Teach what you normally would teach.
4. Pick any subject or grade level.
REFLECTING BACK

Now that you have learned how to create multicultural lesson plans, you can start creating, building, and collecting your favorite plans.

Questions

1. How did the information provided in this section differ from how you used to perceive multicultural lesson plans?
2. What ideas do you have for interesting thematic units that you could create?
3. What multicultural concepts do you find most interesting?
4. Predict what might be the reactions to your work in making lessons more multicultural.

PROFILES IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: CHRISTINE E. SLEETER

Christine E. Sleeter, PhD (University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1982) is Professor Emerita in the College of Professional Studies at California State University–Monterey Bay, where she was a founding faculty member. Formerly a high school learning disabilities teacher in Seattle, she previously served as a faculty member at Ripon College in Wisconsin and at the University of Wisconsin–Parkside and as a visiting professor at Victoria University in New Zealand, San Jose State University, San Francisco State University, and University of Washington–Seattle. She is a past president of the National Association for Multicultural Education and previously served as vice president of Division K (Teaching and Teacher Education) of the American Educational Research Association. Her research focuses on antiracist multicultural education and teacher education, and she is developing a new area of study, critical family history. With a team of researchers at Victoria University, New Zealand, she recently completed an evaluation study of a Maori professional development program for secondary schools. Dr. Sleeter has published over 100 articles in journals and edited books, including Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, Disability Studies Quarterly, Teaching and Teacher Education, and Curriculum Inquiry. Her recent books include Teaching With Vision (with Catherine Cornbleth, Teachers College Press, 2011), Critical Multiculturalism: Theory and Praxis (with Stephen May, Routledge, 2010), and Doing
Multicultural Education for Achievement and Equity (with Carl Grant, Routledge, 2007).

Her work has been translated into Spanish, Korean, French, and Portuguese. She has been invited to speak in most US states as well as several other countries. Awards for her work include the American Educational Research Association Social Justice in Education Award, the Chapman University Paolo Freire Education Project Social Justice Award, the American Educational Research Association Division K Legacy Award, the California State University–Monterey Bay President’s Medal, the National Association for Multicultural Education Research Award, and the American Educational Research Association Special Interest Group on Multicultural and Multiethnic Lifetime Achievement Award.

Authors: What would you say is your most important contribution to the field of multicultural education?

Dr. Sleeter: I think that my most important contribution is helping White people see a place for ourselves in multicultural education, while at the same time pushing us to see the privileges that we bestow on each other because of our race, usually without being aware of it. When I was a classroom teacher, I initially became interested in multicultural education through interactions with a multiracial group of educators who were working with teachers in desegregated schools in Seattle. I could see that building a multiracial group who could collaborate and be honest with each other was very difficult. I recognized that in diverse contexts, Whites too often just take over or assume that we can figure out answers by ourselves. I struggled with whether it would be better just to step back and not become involved or to become involved and, in the process, learn to collaborate and share power. I realized that not becoming involved is not a solution because then things never change. But then I had to figure out how White people can work constructively, which has meant learning to recognize racial privilege in my own life, learning to see myself culturally, learning to confront my own ignorance, and learning to help other White people grapple with the same issues. By the way, this is an ongoing project—it isn’t something I’ve finished or anticipate finishing.

Authors: What is the most persuasive argument that you could give to preservice teachers as to why they should be multicultural educators?

Dr. Sleeter: Preservice teachers will become multicultural educators, whether they intend to or not. All classrooms have diversity within them, even if students are all of one racial background. And increasingly, places that used to be racially homogeneous are not anymore. Teachers today can anticipate teaching racially diverse students at some point in their lives. The question isn’t whether to become a good multicultural educator but rather whether to become a good educator in a multicultural context.

Teachers who avoid grappling with the issues that multicultural education addresses too often do not develop insights and pedagogical tools that will help them teach everyone better. For example, teachers who do not think to identify cultural strengths of students whose backgrounds they are unfamiliar with, or who lack the tools to do so, too often end up seeing such students as deficient and remedial. A good multicultural educator asks what such students bring to the classroom and uses that knowledge as a basis for teaching; a poor multicultural educator not only doesn’t ask that question but doesn’t even know the question should be asked.

Follow-Up Question for the Reader:

What conclusions can you draw about your own practice as a multicultural educator who acknowledges privileges that you may or may not possess? How might you adapt your classroom to meet the indicators raised in Christine Sleeter’s responses?
Key Issues to Be Explored in the Case

1. Understand the process of how to make change in a school.
2. Learn how to infuse multicultural perspectives into different subjects.
3. Learn how to instill social justice concepts into teaching.

There comes a time in many teachers' careers that the Nazi Holocaust comes up in class, either as part of a formal, prescribed curriculum or in discussion around matters of discrimination. The Holocaust was one of the most horrific events of the 20th century. Thanks to popular books such as *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* (Frank, 1947/1952) and movies such as *Schindler's List* (Spielberg, 1993), virtually every schoolchild learns about the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany, the creation of the death camps, and the extermination of 6 million Jewish people and others.

Tom Brunetti was the new curriculum director for a high school. He was aware that, as part of the state guidelines, the Nazi Holocaust needed to be included in the secondary curriculum. In the past, the objective was achieved in history and English classes with coverage of World War II and a reading of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. He was concerned about a rise in anti-Semitism and hate crimes against other groups in the community. Tom felt that a more concerted effort was needed among the faculty to speak out against bias and discrimination. He also felt that the burden of discussing these issues needed to be spread across the faculty and the curriculum.

With the support of the school administration and the curriculum committees, Tom spearheaded a curriculum policy change requiring that the Nazi Holocaust be covered to some extent in each course. He wanted it to be infused into each subject in a natural and meaningful way, rather than taught as an isolated event or mentioned briefly. The curriculum committee insisted that the topic support the curriculum frameworks for that subject. Tom began leading inservice work with department heads on how to do this. As he got started, he began to wonder how he might best incorporate the teaching of the Nazi Holocaust in a variety of subject areas and what kind of advice and guidance he might offer. He came up with a set of brief recommendations for the faculty committees and decided to share them.

**Art:** [Hint: Avoid taking the easy way out by discussing artwork stolen by the Nazis. Think instead of asking students to create some form of artwork that illustrates the horror of the Holocaust.]

**Health:** [Hint: How many calories is the average man or woman supposed to consume in a day? How many calories are there in reducing diets? What was the caloric intake of those in the concentration camps?]

**Mathematics:** [Hint: Think about the math and geometry concepts you normally are required to teach, such as ratios and proportions, percentages, square footage, charting, and Venn diagrams. Use your textbook problems but change the contexts.]

**Music:** [Hint: Avoid taking the easy way out by discussing Hitler’s favorite composer or the musicians forced to perform in the concentration camps. Think instead of asking students to bring in or create or perform music that expresses feelings about the tragedies.]

**Physical Education:** [Hint: Again, use the problems offered in texts but change the context. Repetitive motion?]

**Science:** [Hint: Teach what you normally teach as concepts in science. How can you change the context? Genealogy? Cloning?]
Discussion Questions

1. Critique Tom Brunetti’s initial efforts to help faculty infuse the curriculum in each subject with understanding of the Holocaust.

2. For elementary teachers, what precautions and changes might you make in your lessons in consideration of age-level appropriateness and the sensitivities of the students?

3. Are some subjects more difficult to integrate than others? In the case of the Holocaust, is this a potentially difficult subject because of a lack of familiarity with it or difficulty in infusing it across the curriculum?

4. Use the lesson plan format described in this chapter to write a lesson plan for any or all of the subjects listed in the case study.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

A curriculum is the master plan that teachers use to guide their teaching of students. A skillfully constructed curriculum will provide a strong academic preparation that is culturally responsive. The following are the critical focus areas.

7.1 Developing the School’s Curriculum

What is a curriculum? What is the process for developing a curriculum? How does one choose an appropriate curriculum?

- A curriculum is the master plan or blueprint listing the courses that a school district feels supports state and national standards and the content of what the district feels an educated student should learn.

7.2 Developing a Multicultural Curriculum

How can educators create a culturally relevant and responsive curriculum? What should it look like?

- The content of what is taught to American schoolchildren is a hotly debated topic, one about which there may never be total agreement. Several issues, though, must receive serious consideration. What is taught and how it is taught should reflect the children who are being taught. From a business viewpoint, you must do good market research in order to develop products that the consumer wants and needs. It is the same with schooling. The curriculum needs to reflect the diversity and the multiple perspectives that are in this country, not just the dominant culture.

7.3 Analyzing Texts and Materials for Cultural Bias

How do educators select textbooks and other resources that will support students in meaningful and culturally relevant learning experiences? How does one screen for bias in these materials?

- Closing the achievement gap will never be realized until we adapt our teaching methods to connect with the cultural backgrounds of our students. To end the generations of failure in school, we must address the many different strategies we can use to engage and excite all learners. Biases must be recognized in both what and how we teach to portray an accurate picture of this country past and present. An examination of
the books, videos, and other teaching materials that are used is needed to eliminate bias and promote more positive and accurate portrayals of peoples’ lives.

7.4 Writing Multicultural Lesson Plans

What are the components and characteristics of a multicultural lesson plan? How does it differ from a traditional lesson plan?

- The traditional lesson plan format can easily be adapted to infuse multicultural perspectives, strategies, and materials. Key aspects include adding multicultural goals, multiple instructional strategies, and varied assessment methods. Particular attention is paid to incorporating the cultural backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of students. Also essential are opportunities for students to interact with students different than they are. This will result in more culturally meaningful and enriching lessons that benefit all.

KEY TERMS

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<th>acculturation</th>
<th>205</th>
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APPLICATION: ACTIVITIES AND EXERCISES

Individual

1. Interview someone of another race, ethnicity, or culture and ask him or her the same questions from the journaling activity that you did with respect to your own culture.

2. Immerse yourself in another culture for as much time as you can—an evening, day, weekend, or longer. Choose one that you know very little about or feel uncomfortable about. You could choose a lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) organization or a church, temple, synagogue, or other religious place. Write about your experience. How would you teach about this group?

3. Using objectives from a textbook of any subject, write a multicultural lesson plan.

Group

1. In teams, select a school with which one member of your team is familiar. Use Banks’s (1992) full list of 23 characteristics of a multicultural curriculum to analyze and critique the curriculum and curriculum development process in that school. Summarize your data, and share your findings with educators in that school.

2. Work with three others to create a multidisciplinary plan involving language arts, music, mathematics, and science.

3. Examine a school curriculum and textbooks to evaluate the level of multicultural infusion.

Self-Assessment

1. List aspects of different cultures with which you are possibly not as comfortable. Why do you feel less comfortable with these cultural characteristics?

2. Describe any elements in your school’s hidden curriculum that militate against the success of particular students.
3. Design a curriculum model that represents your own philosophical, social, and psychological beliefs.

4. If you had your way, what major change would you make in the curriculum of your school?

**ANNOTATED RESOURCES**

**Awesome Library**

http://www.awesomelibrary.org

Awesome Library presents 32,000 carefully reviewed resources, including the top 5% in education, in an organized way.

**Bill Howe on Multicultural Education**

http://billhowe.org/MCE

This is a source for lesson plans, videos, poetry, articles, and more.

**Common Core State Standards**

http://www.corestandards.org

The Common Core is a set of high-quality academic standards in mathematics and English language arts/literacy. These learning goals outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade. The standards were created to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college, career, and life, regardless of where they live. Forty-three states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the DoDEA have voluntarily adopted and are moving forward with the Common Core.

**Instructional Consulting**

http://www.indiana.edu/~icy/diversity.html

Indiana University–Bloomington’s School of Education presents tips on teaching and diversity plus links to numerous other lesson-planning websites.

**Lesson Plans With a Multicultural Focus**

http://wwwlibrary.csustan.edu/lboyer/multicultural/lesson2.htm

This compilation of lesson plans available to teachers (K–12) targets multicultural education. Lesson plans for other subjects are offered as well.

**Multicultural Lesson Plans and Resources**

http://www.eds-resources.com/edmulticult.htm

Use this page to find multicultural lesson plans and resources.

**National Association for Multicultural Education**

http://www.nameorg.org/resources.php

NAME’s website contains links to websites with multicultural lesson plans.