

Inclusive Classroom Practices

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Can all students answer these questions in the affirmative? What kinds of practices can help students answer these questions in the affirmative and thus experience a more inclusive classroom culture?

Do You See Me?

1. Representation on the Walls

- Posters that represent the diversity reflected in the classroom and society
- Images that counter stereotypical portrayals (women as engineers, African Americans as scientists, Asian Americans as artists, etc.)
- Works by all students (instead of posting the “best” in teacher opinion, how about wall space designated for each student in which each student can post what is exemplary in the student’s own esteem?)
- “Trophy displays” celebrating all kinds of accomplishments (scholastic, artistic, athletic, activism, etc.)
- Photos of students prioritizing current makeup of student body rather than historical ones, particularly in student-centered spaces
- In elementary classrooms, actual photographs of real people instead of cartoon/animated images that basically look like the same people in different colors and abilities.

2. Representation in the Curriculum

- Leaders and thinkers in the field that represent the diversity reflected in the classroom and society
- Multiple perspectives from diverse lenses in history, literature (telling the Columbus story using primary documents and accounts from Columbus, his funders, the Taino People, etc.)
- Diverse guest speakers and experts, especially counter-stereotypical ones
- Curriculum with more than “the single story” about a group of people, particularly ones of oppression (slavery and African Americans, Pearl Harbor and Internment and Japanese Americans, Trail of Tears and Native Americans, etc.)
- Examples and data that represents the interests of diverse communities (using income disparity data to understand percentages, using Supreme Court cases in which race was defined by courts to limit citizenship as vehicles to understand the nuances, opportunities, and limitations of written laws versus the practice of laws, etc.)

3. Interest in Personal Story (Sharing of Personal Story)

- Sharing personal history that demonstrates experience of marginalization or greater understanding of experiences of marginalization (“When I grew up working class in a wealthy suburban neighborhood...” “I used to think Indian mascots were no big deal until...”)

- Creating opportunities for students to share personal experiences IF THEY CHOOSE
 - Making efforts to connect with students on a personal level if they choose not to share in classroom settings
- 4. Interactions In and Out of the Classroom**
- Noticing and affirming students in non-academic behaviors and attributes
 - Saying hello and connecting in friendly ways in unstructured spaces like hallways and cafeterias
 - Greeting every student when they enter the class
 - Aiming for an overall positive relationship, about 5 to 1 ratio of positive interactions to negative ones (Zaretta Hammond)
- 5. Demonstration of Care**
- Going to student games, concerts, Bat Mitzvahs and other non-classroom or significant events
 - Getting to know families, their values, and significant events
 - Demonstrating curiosity and empathy for students' personal lives
 - Knowing and using the preferred language of love – words of affirmation, quality time, acts of service, gifts, safe touch (Gary Chapman)

Do You Hear Me?

- 1. Incorporation of Prior Knowledge and Experience**
- Pre-unit or lesson questionnaire to discover prior knowledge and experience and incorporating information into the delivery of the lesson and assessment
 - Seeking content and experiences that allow different students to be the experts (but being mindful of identity based expertise that feel like asking students to “speak on behalf of their people”)
 - Utilizing community resources from diverse communities (teaching local history through local elders from various backgrounds)
 - Seeking curricular contributions from all families
 - Looking for “hidden expectations” of previous knowledge (oral discussion of what people already know, all team building challenges being outdoor ed based when the same kids have never had exposure and some kids have had plenty, etc.)
- 2. Seeking and Responding to Student Feedback**
- Regular and anonymous feedback opportunities for students to reflect on the IMPACT of the classroom experience
 - Explicit description of processes that students and families can use to bring things to your attention
 - “Responding out loud” to student feedback (“I’m doing more of this because I heard from many of you...” “I’m trying a new way of doing this because I heard from some of you...” “I appreciate the feedback about... and I wanted to let you know why I am unable to implement it as you might have asked me to.”)
 - Exit tickets to gather understanding as well as classroom experience

3. Student Choice in the Curriculum

- Determining skills or goals for the lesson/unit/project and allowing students to determine how they will fulfill the requirements (“You can demonstrate your understanding of the historical and political pressures surrounding this event through a poster, a movie, a presentation, etc.” “You will demonstrate your knowledge of how organs and tissues within a body system work in conjunction to perform a vital task, but you can choose the body system you are most interested in”)
- Independent projects that allow for student choice in content, methodology, and/or demonstration of that understanding
- Classroom readings centered around themes rather than a single book (The Coming of Age Novels – many experiences, perspectives, cultures that all tell the story of coming of age. Having same-book and cross-book discussion groups to allow for processing of the literature AND the universal human experience of coming of age)

4. Empathy Reflex

- Feedback loop for noticing and responding to student emotional states (“You seem really jazzed by this project. Am I reading that right? What do you like about it? I want to know so I can create more opportunities like this for you.” “You seem pretty frustrated by this activity. Am I seeing that right? What can we do together so you can learn the most from this experience?”)
- Even if nothing can change in the moment, demonstrate empathy (“I can see why you’d be upset, and I am very sorry that you are. We’re so far along the timeline that it won’t be possible to change your thesis; but, I will take notice of how you are trying to make the best of the situation and how you will take the lessons learned from this experience going forward. I know that doesn’t take care of everything, but I do believe you can make good come out of this.”)
- Teach and model empathy when disciplining using CARE:
 - C: Call attention to the behavior (it was very uncooperative of you to not share the supplies with your teammates)
 - A: Assess the impact (what would you think, feel, say, say, or do if someone did that to you?)
 - R: Repair the impact and require reparation (what will you do to make things right?)
 - E: Express disappointment and stress expectations for the future (I am disappointed that you did this, since I know you to be a kind and generous person on so many occasions. In the future, I expect you to share class resources with others in your team and classroom.)
- Empathy is made up of four elements
 - to be able to see the world as others see it
 - to be nonjudgmental
 - to understand another person’s feelings
 - to communicate your understanding of that person’s feelings

5. Authoritative Discipline

- Set only a few strict rules and let the rest be negotiable, especially for older students
- Explain the value orientation for the non-negotiable rules

- Student generated classroom rules for those that are not your “non-negotiable” rules
- Listen fully to student’s cases and then determine whether a bending of the rules is warranted (“I see how you were caught off guard by family obligations you weren’t told about. But considering that this assignment was given a month ago AND ample class time was offered, I can’t give you an extension. Hopefully, you’ve learned some great lessons about not delaying until the last minute and asking more information about family schedules.” “Since this assignment was given only a week ago and you’ve been visiting your sick grandparent in the hospital every night this week, let’s talk about what makes a more logical deadline for you, ok?”)

Will You Treat Me Fairly?

1. Clear and High Expectations

- Use clear rubrics, checklists, exemplars, etc.
- Address students as scholars, scientists, mathematicians, authors, poets, etc.
- Outline expectations clearly in writing, verbal explanations, etc.
- Be wary of lowering expectations to be “nice” to students who struggle

2. Equal Discipline and Rewards

- Analyze patterns around who is achieving and who is not
- Analyze patterns around behavioral discipline
- Standardize responses to behaviors and performances to avoid implicit bias (are you correcting behaviors by addressing the whole class or by calling out individual names?)

3. Support in Struggle and Push in Success

- Make yourself available for student appointments
- Have extension projects ready for high fliers
- Have scaffolding and intermittent check-in opportunities for the strugglers
- Make explicit concrete steps to improve performance
- Create assessment criteria that expects students to get assistance in struggle and get extensions in success

4. Consistent and Predictable Assessment

- Grade assignments without student names (place name space at the end of the assignment instead of the beginning; generate student numbers and have submit work using those numbers)
- Grade students in different order
- Grade with a colleague or have someone else use your criteria to grade
- Use student self assessment to make sure students understand criteria and agree with the fairness of your assessments
- Communicate the following in your assessments to stereotype vulnerable students (Yeager)
 - I have high expectations of you and the other students
 - These are aspects of your work that tells me you are capable of achieving those high expectations

- These are the aspects of your work that need improvement for you to fully achieve those high expectations
 - These are the steps I recommend to improve your work
 - I want to partner with you if you want my input or feedback along the way
- Do more formative assessments and coach students along the way (formative assessments should take more time than final assessments, formative assessments should not count toward the final grade)
- Be explicit with students when they are in a “learning zone” (mistakes are inevitable, you are working on your growth areas in intentional ways to improve them, you are not being graded for whether you “get it” or not, this is a time to take healthy risks) and when they are in a “performing zone” (try to minimize mistakes, you are showcasing your strength areas to demonstrate your best, you are being graded for being correct, this is a time to stick to what you know and take strategic risks). (Eduardo Briceño)

5. Different Kinds of Success

- Define your goals but give students choice in how to demonstrate those goals
- Identify many ways to be “good at school” (being “good at math” is often “getting the right answer, fast” – what about posing interesting questions [Fermat]; making astute connections [Wiles]; representing ideas clearly [Poincaré]; developing logical explanations [Klein]; working systematically [Appel and Haken]; and extending ideas [irrational/complex number systems]?)
- Mix up classroom performance tasks (all group discussions, chalk talks, written assessments, presentations, multimedia, etc.)
- Leave room in your rubric for students to define their own goals and what success looks like in reaching that goal
- Assess content, work habits, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking separately

Will You Protect Me?

1. Understanding of Identity and Experience

- Predict sensitivity to topics (slavery, body image, socioeconomics, etc.) and how they might impact students, as well as strategies to mitigate that impact
- Check with students and families about sensitive topics and bring them into the decision-making process
- Discuss your own or others’ experiences to normalize sensitivities, impacts, and requests for accommodation
- Minimize classic marginalizing experiences (make sure you can distinguish all individuals from the same racial/ethnic group; make sure you can pronounce the names of students from other cultural/ethnic backgrounds; prepare to support students who are the “only” in the classroom, especially when the lesson surrounds their identity)

2. Interruption of Exclusive or Oppressive Behavior

- Call out comments, jokes, or behaviors that are oppressive or exclusive IN THE MOMENT (talking to a student after class educates the individual but teaches other students you didn’t notice or care)

- Utilize “teachable moments” whenever possible
- Have protocols in place for students to bring matters to your attention and how you might respond

3. **Teaching and Discussing Cultural and Power Difference**

- Frame in terms of norm, normal, or good (It is a NORM that most people are right handed. This does not make right handed-ness more NORMAL or BETTER than left handed-ness)
- Give historical or social context (“This canon of classic English literature comes from a time when women and People of Color were often denied education and frequently rejected for publishing, which is why you will see many White male authors.”)
- Separate correlation and causation (“When income is averaged and compared, there is a strong correlation between gender and income. This is caused by a myriad of historical, systemic, and economic factors that impact men and women differently in the workplace. The causation is not women’s inferior intelligence, effort, or ability with money.”)
- Separate individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural (everyone can have individual bias, but only some biases are reinforced through media, laws, education, etc.)
- Teach about standardized tests. What do they measure? What do they not measure? What is test anxiety and stereotype threat? How do you reduce the impact of these phenomena on performance?

4. **Encouragement of and Practice with Collaboration**

- Create meaningful group projects that really benefit from multiple perspectives and have opportunities for meaningful breaking down of activities and deliverables.
- Utilize peer assessments with clear criteria (participation pies, checklists of productive and counterproductive group behavior).
- Make meaningful and appropriate heterogeneous and homogenous groups or randomize groups. Be transparent about why you chose certain groupings for certain tasks or how you are randomizing groups. If you have students choose their own groups, what is your expectation for choosing effective partners?
- Use jigsaw strategies (each person is given different but critical pieces of information, skills, etc. so that the whole group must rely on one another to succeed)
- Create discreet and clear roles for projects and rotate roles (for this lab, we have resource manager, observation and data collection lead, protocol accountability facilitator, and documentation specialist)
- Teach collaboration strategies and behaviors (What does active listening LOOK like? How do you TRULY brainstorm as a group?)