

Chapter 2

Diversity in the Classroom: The Children You will Teach

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Multicultural Education

...is the educational strategy in which students' cultural backgrounds are used to develop effective classroom instruction and school environments. It is designed to support and extend the concepts of culture, diversity, equality, social justice, and democracy in the formal school setting.

Gollnick and Chinn (2002)

Multicultural Education

- Tourist approach: special activities or projects related to cultural holiday or observance

Versus

- Multicultural education: students' cultural backgrounds are used to develop instruction and curriculum

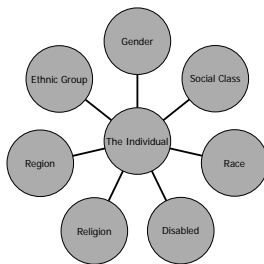
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Cultural Responsiveness

- Membership in any specific group may reflect certain tendencies & likelihoods of expected behavior.
- "Although membership in a gender, racial, ethnic, social-class, or religious group can provide us with important clues about an individual's behavior, it cannot enable us to predict behavior . . ." Banks (1993)

Individuals belong to many
different "microcultural" groups



Cultural and Ethnic Diversity

- Theories of cultural blending
 - "Melting Pot"
 - "Cultural Pluralism" or "Salad Bowl"

Why Multicultural Awareness Is Important

1. Cultural Pluralism: philosophy that likens our society to a salad bowl, pizza, mosaic, or patchwork quilt; each cultural retains identity but contributes to the whole
2. Cultural Identification: culture is reflected in a group's artwork, literature, language, clothing, inventions, and traditions

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Teaching in culturally diverse settings

- “Culturally assaultive” approaches perpetuate biases and stereotypes
 - Discussion of cultures only as they existed in the past
 - Incorrect or stereotypical versions of how people live
 - Emphasis on differences rather than similarities
 - Token representation of the group in the classroom
 - “Holiday” units on minority groups

Culturally Responsive Teaching

- Acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups
- Bridges meaningfulness between home and school
- Uses a wide variety of instructional strategies
- Incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all subjects and skills taught

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Culturally Responsive Strategies

- Know your community
- Seek family support
- Give equal attention to all groups
- Fill your classroom with fascinating things
- Invite visitors into your classroom
- Draw from the vast resources of the arts

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Language Diversity

- Growing bilingual population
- Submersion: the practice of placing second language learners within a totally English speaking classroom
- Bilingual Teaching: using two languages as vehicles of instruction

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Bilingual Instruction

- When two teachers present (English-speaking teacher and aide fluent in 2nd language)
- Preview/teach/review format
 - Preview in English
 - Teach in native language
 - Review in English

Guidelines for Bilingual Instruction

1. Environmental Print: children learn to recognize words written in both English and their native language when they see them in print
2. Culturally conscious literature: helps strengthen cultural values and beliefs
3. Language Buddies: proficiency is enhanced with classmates' explanations, modeling and assistance

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Exceptional Children

- Ten to twelve percent of all children in the U.S. fall into the children with disabilities category
- PL 101-476 defines children with disabilities:
 - A. as those with mental retardation; hearing impairments, including deafness; speech or language impairments; visual impairments, including blindness; serious emotional disturbance; orthopedic impairments; autism; traumatic brain injury; other health impairments or specific learning disabilities
 - B. who by reason thereof need special education and related services

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The Concept of Inclusion

1. State and federal laws mandate, support, and encourage it
2. Some parents of children with special needs were troubled that their children were required to attend separate programs
3. Educators, parents, and children have had rewarding experiences in inclusive environments

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Opponents of Inclusion

1. Not all parents want their children with disabilities taken from their special programs
2. Many teachers feel inadequately prepared to provide for the special needs of children with disabilities in their classroom

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Teaching Children with Disabilities

1. Learn about each specific disability
2. Maximize interactions between children with disabilities and nondisabled children
3. Individualize your program
4. Assess your classroom environment
5. Choose books that help children learn and appreciate diversity

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Gifted Children

1. Verbal Skills: use advanced vocabulary; spontaneously create stories; explain complex processes; exchange ideas and information fluently
2. Abstractions: retain easily what they have heard or read
3. Power of Concentration: attentive to features of a new environment or experience; become totally absorbed in an activity
4. Intellect: carry out complex instructions; focus on problems and seek solutions; store and recall easily; memorize well; learn rapidly; explain ideas in novel ways; curious; ask questions
5. Behavior: sensitive to the needs and feelings of others; strong feelings of self-confidence.

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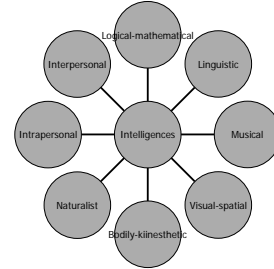
Strategies for Gifted Children

1. Use faster-paced instruction for skills- and content-based learning so they can move more rapidly through the curriculum
2. Use inquiry and independent research projects that encourage independent learning
3. Use more advanced materials
4. Reorganize subject matter so they can explore issues across curricular areas and promote higher order thinking

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Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences



Multiple Intelligences

1. Logical-Mathematical: good problem solvers, discover logical patterns, enjoy numbers and counting; understand cause and effect; curious; enjoy making predictions; ask questions
2. Linguistic Intelligence: master language; love the sound and rhythm of words; love reading and making up stories, poems, jokes and riddles; learn vocabulary easily

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Multiple Intelligences

3. Musical Intelligence: enjoy producing or listening to music; appreciate forms of musical expressiveness
4. Visual-Spatial Intelligence: manipulate and create mental images; draw and paint superbly; enjoy building things; easily interpret and construct maps and models

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Multiple Intelligences

5. Bodily-Kinesthetic: able to coordinate body movements and handle objects; dance, run, jump, throw, catch and climb better than their peers; enjoy making things with their hands
6. Interpersonal Intelligence: outgoing; in tune with others' feelings and emotions; recognize moods and feelings of others; empathetic; understand people and work well with people

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Multiple Intelligence

7. Intrapersonal Intelligence: inner directed; understand themselves and their own strengths, weaknesses, and motivations; often quiet and work alone; confidence in their ability
8. Naturalist Intelligence: able to recognize flora and fauna; understand the natural world; use abilities in hunting, farming, and biological sciences

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Gardner's model suggests that

- Every child has capacities in each of the intelligences
- Most people can develop each of the intelligences to an adequate level of proficiency
- The eight intelligences work together in highly complex ways
- There are many ways to be intelligent in each category
- Instruction should help children develop all eight intelligences

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Gender

- Gender identity emerges from dynamic interactions of biological and environmental forces
- By age 5 or 6 children have already learned much of the stereotypical behavior of their gender
- Developmental Sexism: children grow enormously sexist in their perception of gender roles and choice of play activities
- Children learn that they permanently belong to a category called "boy" or "girl"

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Strategies for eliminating gender bias in the classroom

1. Avoid stereotyping masculine and feminine roles
2. Use gender-free language whenever possible
3. Classroom materials should present an honest view of males and females
4. A balanced view of the contributions of men and women should be presented

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Social Class

- Research shows a strong relationship between SES and school performance
- Contributing factors:
 - Poor health care for mother and child
 - Limited resources
 - Family stress
 - Interruptions in schooling
 - Discrimination

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Other Explanations for Low Achievement

1. Low expectations – low self-esteem
2. Learned helplessness
3. Resistance cultures
4. Tracking

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