Teachers as Agents of Change
Resource Bundle

I. Become a Change Agent: Enacting Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Resource

II. Using Culturally Responsive Methods – Supplement

III. References
How to use this guide:

1. This document is divided into three domains: content, methods, and relationships. Prioritize domains for reflection and action – don’t try to do everything at once. To prioritize, consider questions such as:
   - Based upon my own reflection, in which of these domains do I have the most room to grow?
   - What feedback have I received from students and colleagues that can help me prioritize?
   - Are there some domains where it would be easier or more difficult to begin implementing change?

2. Use the guiding questions in the “Actions” column to help you reflect before acting.

3. Use one or more of the resources in the “Readings and Resources” column to deepen your understanding and brainstorm actionable ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Readings and Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connect academic content to students’ lives.</td>
<td>• What topics or issues are of greatest interest or concern to my students?</td>
<td>Teaching Tolerance Classroom Resources Page – A bank of hundreds of culturally responsive lesson and activity ideas, sortable by topic and theme.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• How can I use the exploration of these topics to teach academic knowledge and skill?</td>
<td>Radicalmath.org – A resource for integrating social justice issues into math classes and curriculum.</td>
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<td>Teach content that is counter-hegemonic(^1).</td>
<td>• How can I choose content that dispels stereotypes, or the supposed inferiority of some groups to others?</td>
<td>Just Science(^2) – A social justice approach to science instruction. (Teaching Tolerance)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• How can I choose content that reflects a range of experiences and perspectives?</td>
<td>The Zinn Education Project – Lesson plans, articles, and resources for teaching culturally responsive history and social studies lessons.</td>
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<td>First Ask, Then Listen – A guide for using interviews to learn more about your students. (National School Reform Faculty)</td>
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\(^1\) Specifically, content that challenges stereotypes, biases, or notions of cultural superiority or inferiority.
\(^2\) See also: Teaching Science for Social Justice by Angela Calabrese Barton.
### Methods

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Readings and Resources</th>
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| **Involve students in the construction of knowledge.**  
- How can I position myself as a co-learner with my students?  
**The Freire Project** – Articles and lesson plans for implementing a problem-posing, critical pedagogy.  
**Socratic Seminars** – A guide, created by the NCTE, on using Socratic seminars as an inquiry-based teaching strategy. |
| **Build on students’ personal and cultural knowledge.**  
- How can I use my students’ background knowledge as the starting point for new learning? | |
| **Engage students in problem-posing, critical inquiry.**  
- How can I have students use the academic skills of my content area to study problems in their social world, and propose solutions?  
- How can I position students to question assumptions, and examine topics from multiple perspectives? | |

### Relationships

<table>
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<tr>
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</table>
| **Foster a classroom culture of empathy and compassion.**  
- How can I help students to learn about one another, and see each other’s humanity?  
- How can I show students that I am seeking to understand and respond to their concerns? | **Building Relationships With Students** – An on-demand module that provides suggestions and resources for building respectful, empathic relationships with students.  
**Classroom Culture** – Resources and activities for creating an inclusive classroom culture that values diversity, respect, and equity. (Teaching Tolerance)  
**How Parents and Teachers Work Together for Student Success** – Online article published by the National Education Association that provides strategies for building cooperative relationships with parents.  
**Family Engagement** – Bank of (free) family engagement resources published by Teaching Tolerance. Includes tips for culturally sensitive communication, how to conduct home visits, survey forms, and other resources. |
| **Work to connect with students and families.**  
- How can I learn about families’ hopes for their children, and their expectations of me as the teacher?  
- How can I establish regular communication with families about their child’s progress? | |
| **Demonstrate authentic caring.**  
- How can I provide ongoing support to students, based on their academic and material needs? | |
NOTE: This document is not meant to provide a comprehensive listing of all culturally responsive teaching methods that teachers might use in their classrooms. Its purpose is to provide some examples of what it might look like to operationalize some of the broad actions described in the module.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Elementary Example</th>
<th>Secondary Example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involve students in the construction of knowledge.</td>
<td>A first-grade teacher is preparing her students to begin writing narratives in their writer’s workshop. She begins by having her students brainstorm a list in response to the question “What makes a good story?” Before going into writing time, she also facilitates a student-led discussion in response to the questions “How can I get started?” and “What if I get stuck?” She charts student responses and keeps them posted as students begin writing.</td>
<td>An 8th-grade social studies class is honing the skills of critical research and inquiry by examining a controversial current event. The teacher has the students read multiple accounts of the event, told from different perspectives and people who experienced it in different ways. The readings are accompanied by a Socratic discussion in which students examine possible sources of bias, or the limitations of the perspective provided in each account. Students then discuss (and write) what conclusions about the event can safely be drawn, as well as what questions remain.</td>
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<td>Build on student background knowledge.</td>
<td>A teacher is preparing his fourth-graders to work in cooperative groups. He begins by asking students to free write about their experience working in groups in earlier grades: what they liked about it and what they didn’t. He then asks students to help brainstorm a list of behaviors that can help a group work effectively. They also discuss “me-first” or competitive behaviors that can harm a group or make it unwelcoming for some of the people in it. The class finishes by synthesizing this discussion into a list of norms or “rules” for group work.</td>
<td>A language arts teacher collaborates with an art teacher to design a unit on prejudice and stereotypes. As part of the unit, students will be reading and writing about several nonfiction texts. Based on their background knowledge, the teacher has students construct a working definition of what stereotypes are. They then hypothesize why stereotypes might be harmful (even if they seem to be positive). Finally, students read different texts to research the origins of different stereotypes, the exaggerations, or inaccuracies within the stereotype, and its impact on the targeted group. In the art class, students analyze the ways in which different paintings, photographs, and advertisements either disrupt or reinforce stereotypes.</td>
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<td>Engage students in problem-posing, critical inquiry.</td>
<td>A 6th-grade class is investigating the ways that some of their textbooks either reinforce or challenge stereotypes or “isms” (racism, classism, sexism). They read and critically analyze different textbooks to determine ways that different groups and perspectives are present or absent, privileged or silenced. Students prepare a report for the school board that rates the extent to which different required textbooks are inclusive, and recommends some alternative texts.</td>
<td>A high school language arts and science teacher collaborate on an interdisciplinary unit on standardized testing. The science teacher has students research the connection between the history of standardized testing and the eugenics movement. Students use the scientific method to challenge early (and modern) claims of a biological basis for racial differences in test performance and intelligence. The language arts teacher has students read texts to research the historical and modern uses of testing, and their effects on students and education policy.</td>
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