Chapter 1: Introduction

Bird's-Eye View

Transcript:

This is a module on developing the identity of a change agent in education. It is part of a series of six modules on culturally responsive pedagogy, or CRP.

This module is one of three that is focused on developing essential mindsets and dispositions for culturally responsive teachers. If you have not done so already, we suggest you begin by watching a short video called “An Introduction to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.” If you have already seen this introduction, you may continue on to chapter two.
Optional: Introduction to CRP

What is It?

What is culturally responsive pedagogy?

- Using cultural experiences and perspectives of students to teach them more effectively
- Placing student cultural and social identities at center of one’s teaching
- Working toward academic achievement, cultural competence, and critical consciousness

(Bennett, 2012; Gay, 2002; Irizarry, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009)

Transcript:

Culturally responsive pedagogy is using “the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students” in order to teach them more effectively (Gay, 2002, p. 106).

It is a pedagogical perspective that places students’ social and cultural identities at the center of one’s teaching.

It is oriented toward social justice, and works toward the outcomes of student academic achievement, cultural competence, and critical consciousness (Bennett, 2012; Irizarry, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009).

Student Diversity

Why culturally responsive pedagogy?

49.8%

student population

87%

teaching force

white

other

(Griner & Stewart, 2012; Klein, 2015)
Transcript:

Why is culturally responsive pedagogy important, and why does it matter for 21st century teachers and students?

With each passing day, the U.S. student population becomes more racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse. The teaching force, however, does not.

The U.S. teaching force is approximately 87% White, while the student population is only 49.8% White (Griner & Stewart, 2012; Klein, 2015).

Twenty-one percent of U.S. schoolchildren primarily speak a language other than English at home, while the teaching force is overwhelmingly made up of monolingual English speakers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013).

Cultural difference between teachers and students can cause students to experience a tension between their cultural identity - or, who they are outside of school - and their academic identity - or, who they are expected to be inside of school (Gay, 2002; Nasir, McLaughlin, & Jones, 2009).

Racial/Ethnic Disparities
Transcript:

This disconnect is one factor that contributes to ongoing racial and ethnic disparities in academic achievement, dropout rate, school discipline, and referral for special education services (Cochran-Smith, 2004). Click on each card for statistical information about these disparities.

**CRP Role in Change**

Transcript:

Culturally responsive pedagogy, or CRP, seeks to address the current and historical trends responsible for inequities like these. Teachers seek to make their instruction responsive to the lives and experiences of students, and bring students’ academic identities into harmony with their cultural identities.

There is no single right way to “do” culturally responsive pedagogy. Rather, it is a way of thinking about and approaching work with students, families, and communities (Ladson-Billings, 2011).
This series of modules is intended to develop the key mindsets, dispositions, and instructional actions needed to enact CRP in your life and in your classroom.

Before we continue, a word on cognitive dissonance.

It is impossible to talk about CRP without talking about things like race, racism, privilege, inequity, and oppression.

As you work through the modules in this series, you may experience some cognitive dissonance. This is when you hear information that seems to challenge or contradict a belief you have.

When a person experiences cognitive dissonance, a common response is to shut down, or reject the new information out of hand because it creates mental discomfort.

Instead, consider creating a space for two contradictory thoughts to exist in your mind at the same time. Think about them, then talk about them with others. Working through cognitive dissonance is how we expand our consciousness, and a high level of consciousness is necessary for CRP (Bennett, 2012; DiAngelo, 2012; Gay, 2002).

**Chapter 2: Change Agents vs. Technicians of Change**

*Change*

![Academic Achievement Gap Diagram with Racism and Classism](image)
In the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress, there was a 21-26 point gap between White and Hispanic students in math and reading. There was a 26-31 point gap between White and Black students.

(National Center for Education Statistics, 2014)

In the 2011 National Indian Education Study, American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students scored 13-19 points lower in reading, and 16-19 points lower in math, than non-AI/AN students

(National Center for Education Statistics, 2012)
Transcript:

Nearly all teachers get into the profession because they want to make a positive difference in the lives of children. They see education as a force that can change things for the better.

This module is called “Teachers as Agents of Change.” A natural question might be, “What is it, exactly, that we’re trying to change?”

Many people - both in and outside of education - speak of an “achievement gap.” By this, they usually mean statistical data highlighting the difference in achievement outcomes for white students and students of color, as well as middle-class students and children living in poverty.

Teachers who are agents of change seek to not only address these inequities, but also the forces that created them and serve to maintain them.

The national high school dropout rate is 7.5% for Black students, 12.7% for Latino/Hispanic students, 4.3% for White students, and 14.6% for AI/AN students. [National Center for Education Statistics, 2015].

The gap in reading achievement between high and low-income students has grown by 40% since the 1960s. [Reardon, 2013]
Click on the tabs at the top of the screen to review some statistics related to inequitable educational outcomes for students.

Consider this question: In what ways might schools and teachers actually contribute to these outcomes?

**Failure**

“Perpetual urban school failure is tolerated because deep down our nation subscribes to the belief that someone has to fail in school.”

(Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008, p. 2)

**Transcript:**

Take a moment to read and consider the following quote. To what extent does it resonate with you, given your experiences as both a student and a teacher?
Let's return to the concept of “change agent.” The quote you just read refers to the idea of changing systems and practices - on both the classroom and the school level - that marginalize students and keep them from reaching their full potential (Nasir, 2008).

When we talk about being an agent of change, we do not necessarily mean changing students. Many discussions of the “achievement gap” are rooted in deficit-based beliefs about students of color, and an assumption that gaps exist because these children are culturally deficient or in need of “fixing” (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008). On the contrary, agents of change view all students as capable learners who have valuable knowledge to draw upon in the pursuit of new learning.

With that in mind, let’s begin the journey of becoming change agents. The journey begins with our beliefs about the role of a teacher.
Transcript:

In their book *Educating Culturally Responsive Teachers* (2002), Ana Maria Villegas and Tamara Lucas contrast the role of teacher as “change agent” with the role of teacher as “technician.”

Teachers who are technicians operate from the assumption that schools are basically neutral spaces that function as a meritocracy; that is, schools don’t privilege any one group of students over others. Technicians equate good teaching with the proficient use of different technical skills like lesson planning, management and assessment strategies, and so on. In the view of a technician, the teacher’s job is to implement the curriculum, not critique it. The student’s job is to cooperate and accept the “deal” offered by school in exchange for future rewards (Cammarota, 2011; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).
Change Agents

Transcript:

By contrast, teachers who are change agents understand that schools and the broader society are interconnected. That is, schools can either challenge or reproduce social inequities. Change agents absolutely believe that skills like planning, management, and assessment are important; however, they also understand that teaching is a political endeavor. To that end, they conceive of good teaching as helping students develop the knowledge and skills they need to gain power in their own lives and challenge unfairness in the world around them (Lee, 2014).

Change agents believe that it’s their job to make the curriculum responsive to students rather than students responsive to the curriculum (Cammarota, 2011; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).
Objection

Transcript:

But what about teachers who say, “My job is just to teach my content”?

To address this objection, let’s hear from a teacher. This is Silvio, a former middle school math teacher and current assistant principal. He identifies as working toward an identity as a change agent.

Silvio: My response would be, “What is math?” What is your understanding of what it truly means to learn math? Where I was, years ago when I was teaching math, was at a place where math was what the textbook told me it was. But the reality is, what I understand math to be now, is a broader understanding of the world. And if I want my students to truly understand that conceptual understanding of math, there is so much more we need to be doing than just flipping through pages and understanding how to solve one through twenty.
### Check for Understanding

#### Teachers as Agents of Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Change Agent</th>
<th>Technician</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>A teacher forges ahead with a novel unit even though students dislike the book and have become increasingly disengaged. The novel is part of the school’s mandatory grade level curriculum.</td>
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<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Transcript:

Take a moment to check your understanding. Read each of these short scenarios and decide if the teacher is acting primarily as a technician or a change agent. Press “Submit” when you are finished.

Feedback

#### Teachers as Agents of Change

Click on any statement for additional explanation.

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</table>
A teacher pushes ahead with curriculum even though it is not meeting the needs of students. To act as a change agent, the teacher could modify the unit. He could supplement the novel with texts and activities that make it more relevant to students.

Five students in a teacher’s class are failing because they have several incomplete assignments. The teacher works to understand how he needs to change his instruction to help them be more successful.
Chapter 3: Domains of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Mindsets and Dispositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mindsets/Beliefs of Change Agents</th>
<th>Actions of Culturally Responsive Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Believe that schools (and teachers) can either reproduce or challenge social inequities.</td>
<td>• Use cultural experiences and perspectives of students to teach them more effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Believe that good teaching helps students develop the knowledge they need to acquire power in their lives and challenge inequity.</td>
<td>• Place student social and cultural identities at the center of their instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Believe that their job is to make curriculum responsive to students.</td>
<td>• Work toward social justice-oriented goals: academic achievement, cultural competence, critical consciousness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transcript:

Let’s make an explicit connection. Teachers can be change agents through the use of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Take a look at some of the mindsets and dispositions held by change agents. Then, look at the actions of culturally responsive teachers.

Pause and think: In what ways are the mindsets of change agents linked to the actions of culturally responsive teachers?
Before we continue, let’s consider two common concerns that teachers raise when they begin learning about culturally responsive pedagogy. Click on each concern for a brief explanation of how it can be addressed.

When you are ready to continue, click “Proceed.”
**Broad Actions**

In the slides that follow, you’re going to learn some broad actions and strategies that you can use to enact CRP in your classroom. You’ll also see a few examples of what they look like in practice, and in the resource section you’ll hear real-life teachers talk about how they’ve applied these ideas in their own context.

This is not a “how-to” guide. Gloria Ladson-Billings, one of the intellectual architects of culturally responsive pedagogy, once shared a story about a group of student teachers who asked her how to “do” this type of teaching. She told them that there’s no single answer to that question - and even if there was, she wouldn’t give it to them (Ladson-Billings, 2011).

This is because CRP can and should look different depending on the context in which you teach and the needs of your students. The process of becoming a culturally responsive teacher is one of learning how to see your classroom through the eyes of your students. Then, adjusting your instructional practices to ensure that all of your students are affirmed and supported.

With that in mind, let’s examine some ideas that you can begin to implement…

---

Transcript:

In the slides that follow, you’re going to learn some broad actions and strategies that you can use to enact CRP in your classroom. You’ll also see a few examples of what they look like in practice, and in the resource section you’ll hear real-life teachers talk about how they’ve applied these ideas in their own context.

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With that in mind, let’s examine some ideas that you can begin to implement…
How to be culturally responsive in the content we teach:

Click the buttons to see examples of using culturally relevant content.

- **Example 1**
- **Example 2**
- **Example 3**

A science teacher helps students understand the scientific method by using it to debunk the racist conclusions drawn by members of the eugenics movement in the early-20th century.
“Content” refers to curriculum - or, what we teach. To be culturally responsive, the content we choose should be relevant, and rooted in topics and issues that are most meaningful to our students’ lives. (Cammarota, 2011; Duncan-Andrade, 2009). Research shows that when a student believes his identity is connected to the setting in which he’s learning, he is more engaged and learns more. For this reason, a central task of culturally responsive pedagogy is choosing relevant content and connecting it to students’ identities and experiences (Nasir & Hand, 2008).

We should also strive to choose content that is counter-hegemonic, and that actively combats stereotypes and biases related to racial, ethnic, or linguistic inferiority (Cammarota, 2006).

(See images above for additional content.)
Methods

How to be culturally responsive in the methods we use:

- Involve students in the construction of knowledge.
- Build on students’ background knowledge and strengths.
- Engage students in problem-posing, critical inquiry.

(Commarrota, 2011; Commarrota & Romero, 2006; Freire, 1983; Nair & Hand, 2000; Oakes & Rogers, 2006; Villegas & Lucas, 2002)

In a math lesson, a teacher invites students to identify alternate ways of solving a problem, then decide which one is most efficient.

A high school teacher uses a Socratic seminar to have students collaboratively interpret a piece of literature.
If content is “what” we teach, then methods are “how” we teach it. There are at least three things we can do to make our methods more culturally responsive.

(See images above for additional content.)
Relationships

How to be culturally responsive in our relationships with students and families:

• Operate with empathy; understand and share students’ concerns.

• Connect with families to determine what students need to succeed.

• Demonstrate authentic caring.

(Bendy et al., 2012; Cammarota & Romero, 2006; Duncan-Andrade, 2009)

Transcript:

The last domain of culturally responsive pedagogy we’re going to examine is relationships - or, the connections a teacher builds with her students and their families.

To build strong relationships, teachers should develop a sense of empathy for all of their students, and work to understand and share their concerns (Cammarota & Romero, 2006).

They should also connect with families in order to determine the supports different students need to succeed.

Finally, teachers should strive to demonstrate authentic caring in all interactions with students and families. This involves attending to students’ emotional experiences as well as their material needs. (Duncan-Andrade, 2009). For example, if a family is homeless and a student is coming to class hungry each day, a teacher can seek out people or resources at the school to connect them with the help they need. Authentic caring means we do not ignore or turn a blind eye to the conditions in which our students are living and learning.
Transcript:

In the video that follows, you’ll hear a veteran, culturally responsive high school social studies teacher share ideas about how to demonstrate this type of caring.

John: Try to find out what a student does with his or her life outside of the classroom. If you see a student is involved in dance, ask him or her about their next concert. Maybe you can’t go, but ask them how it went. If they’re in a league, any kind of sport - outside of school - ask them how it’s going. I tell all of my students: “Each of you is more than just a student in this class, and you should do your best to develop all the talents you have. And I support you in your talents. I want to know about what you do outside the classroom.” That’s how students know teachers can go that extra step and care.
Transcript:

Let’s pause to summarize and connect. We enact the identity of change agents by striving to be culturally responsive in the content we teach, the methods we use to teach it, and the relationships we cultivate with students and families.

Doing this is hard. Several structures in schools—like standardized testing, scripted programs, and culturally insensitive curricula—almost encourage teachers to function as technicians. Not coincidentally, these are all structures that marginalize culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Just remember: culturally responsive teaching is about disrupting the status quo in both big and small ways. And disrupting the status quo to bend it toward equity is the definition of what a change agent is.
Transcript:

As you work toward the identity of a culturally responsive change agent, keep two things in mind.

First, make sure that you are not approaching the work of culturally responsive teaching with the idea that you are going to “save” students who are in need of help or fixing. This reflects a deficit perspective, and makes the work more about the teacher’s own vanity than equitable outcomes for students (Matias, 2013).

Second, beware of taking action with insufficient reflection and understanding. The resource that accompanies this module contains several ideas for culturally responsive actions in the classroom. However, these actions should be preceded by careful reflection and research on how to make them work for your students, as well as inquiry into your own identity and biases.
Chapter 4: Case Studies

View the Resource

Becoming a Change Agent: Enacting Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

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.

Transcript:

This is the Becoming a Change Agent Resource. It is a tool designed to help you begin enacting culturally responsive pedagogy in three domains of your practice: content, methods, and relationships.

Purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTUMN</th>
<th>SILVIO</th>
<th>ALISHA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd grade ELD teacher</td>
<td>Elementary school administrator (former middle school teacher)</td>
<td>Middle school teacher (self-contained, all subjects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th year of teaching</td>
<td>2nd year as an administrator (8th year in education)</td>
<td>4th year of teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifies as White</td>
<td>Identifies as Latino</td>
<td>Identifies as mixed-race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is new to the concepts and issues discussed in this module.</td>
<td>Has taught teachers about the concepts and issues discussed in this module.</td>
<td>Has spent significant time thinking about the concepts and issues discussed in this module.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transcript:

We have gathered interviews from three practicing teachers who spent some time using the Becoming a Change Agent Resource.

Here is a little bit about each teacher’s background. We’ve provided some information about each teacher’s level of experience thinking and talking about some of the major topics of this module. We’ve also indicated the domains from the resource that he or she responded to questions from.

Think about the teacher whose responses you’d like to explore, then select that case study by choosing from the side menu or by clicking on his or her picture.

Autumn

Meet Autumn

Transcript:

Meet Autumn. Autumn teaches a third-grade ELD class at a Title I elementary school in a large urban area, and her students are predominantly Latino.

Autumn has decided to prioritize the “relationships” component of culturally responsive pedagogy.
Transcript:

I think at the beginning of the year we get really excited and we have all this anticipation of the new students coming in, and we get all of these getting-to-know-you and building your classroom community things ready for them, and you hand out their questionnaire that asks them questions about what’s their favorite color and what they like to do at home. And then you collect those, and then you’re kind of like “Okay, now what do I do with them?”

I think this activity is really important because it gives students a valuable talking point. So when we’re doing our get-to-know-you activities there are specific things that are important to each of the kids, and that allows for meaningful questions from the other students. So, not only are we learning a little bit about each student by the photography that they take, but we’re also getting questions from some of the other kids who might not be as willing to talk. So, if there’s a picture of a car, some other kids might actually like a car and want to know “Why is that important to you? Why did you take a picture of a car?”

So, in my class specifically since I teach the ELD room communication is really important because not all of the students will speak English. But through this activity I’m hoping that there will be meaningful pictures or things from each child that can really bridge the gap for those students who are less likely to talk.
**Next Steps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMAIN</th>
<th>QUESTION or RESOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>“Classroom Culture” resources page from Teaching Tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>QUESTION: How can I use my students’ background knowledge as the starting point for new learning?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- These resources describe things teachers can do to make their classrooms safe and inclusive for all students.
- Examples: Allowing students to share their stories and experiences; creating classroom norms based on empathy and mutual respect; teaching students social-emotional skills.

**Transcript:**

In this clip, Autumn spoke of the power of letting students use images to convey important aspects of their lives and identities, and break down potential language barriers. She also makes the following statement: (On-screen: "When we’re doing our get-to-know-you activities, there are specific things that are important to each of the kids…and that allows for meaningful questions from the other students.")

Here is a question and a resource that Autumn could explore as a next step. Click on each to see how it would be useful.
In the next part of her interview, Autumn actually did respond to this question from the “methods” domain:

**How can I use my students’ background knowledge as the starting point for new learning?**

And so, when I was younger I watched some of that so I knew some of the characters, I guess or the wrestlers.

**Transcript:**

*So, what I did last year is we were working on character traits, and my class was really struggling with what a good character is and the different traits that character may have, and the same thing with what a villain might...*
be like. So, when I was learning about my class from their questionnaire, a lot of my students had mentioned that they really enjoyed watching WWE at home. And so, when I was younger I watched some of that so I knew some of the characters.

I knew a lot of my kids really liked John Cena, and then I knew that a large number also liked Rey Mysterio Jr. So, when I was getting ready to introduce character traits so that we had a deeper understanding for it, I had the kids that liked John Cena on one side of the room and the kids that liked Rey Mysterio Jr. on the other. And we just went through that character, and talked about different adjectives that they would say described them. So then that was also really nice because I could tie in what an adjective is, and then when we were doing that later in our grammar lesson the kids would reference, “Oh, I know that Rey Mysterio Jr. is the underdog, and he’s very caring.” When we were talking about adjectives the kids were like, “I’m using an adjective to describe this character.”

So, really having something that the kids already know and they’ve already built that background knowledge and that interest in helped me because then I could transition the little things they already knew into the broader scope of what we were trying to get through in the lesson.

Optional: Learn More

Autumn identified a common interest among her students (WWE) and used it to introduce the concept of characterization. This is a strong example of building on background knowledge.

Keep in mind: although many students might share a common piece of background knowledge, others might not.

Be careful about inadvertently positioning some students as “outsiders.”

Transcript:

If you’d like to see some optional commentary on Autumn’s reflections, click “Learn More.” Otherwise, click “Proceed.”
Transcript:

In this final video, you’ll see Autumn share some of her final reflections from using the Becoming a Change Agent Resource.

As the clip begins, she is reflecting on a realization she made. She discovered that she had a tendency to mainly call on students who she thought could provide the answers she was looking for during a lesson, rather than students who might provide more divergent responses.

And just…the different types of thinking and responses that I was getting.
I had to stop and think, “Well, am I doing that because I know they’re gonna give me the answer that I want to hear, and that’s what I’m using to help me guide my lesson, or am I not calling on these kids because they’re gonna give me the wrong answer and I don’t want to stop and spend the time to really explain why that’s not correct?” And just…the different types of thinking and responses that I was getting.

So, when I was looking through some of the resources, I was kind of like “Oh.” It just gives you an opportunity to stop and really think, “What am I doing? Am I doing this because I want to hear what I want to hear, or am I doing this because I really want them to be in charge of what they’re learning?”

And I think just along that, in general, really making sure that I’m listening to what the kids are saying and internalizing that on a different scale as opposed to just, them asking a question and me kind of going through the motions of answering it.

Final Next Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>QUESTION or RESOURCE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>How can I position myself as a co-learner with my students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>How can I position students to question assumptions, and examine topics from multiple perspectives?</td>
</tr>
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</table>

- Promotes a mindset shift
- Provides opportunities for students and teacher to learn from each other.
- Can help ask fewer leading questions, build more effectively on contributions of students.

Proceed
### Transcript:

Autumn’s reflections in this clip highlight the tension that many teachers feel between the drive to be a change agent versus the pressure to act as a “technician.”

Specifically, she describes how the pressure to cover all of the content in a lesson can affect the way a teacher calls on - and even thinks about - her students.

Based on Autumn’s final reflections, here are two questions she might consider thinking about to continue her development as a change agent. They are both from the “methods” section of the resource.

Click on each question to see why it might be helpful to consider.

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- Can ask students to consider issues and questions from different points of view.
- Can prompt students to question which points of view are not represented.
Meet Silvio

Silvio is a former middle school math and science teacher, and is currently the assistant principal at a K-8 elementary school with a large population of Latino students. He has decided to respond to these questions from the “Relationships” section of the resource.

Transcript:

Meet Silvio. Silvio is a former middle school math and science teacher, and is currently the assistant principal at a K-8 elementary school with a large population of Latino students. He has decided to respond to these questions from the “Relationships” section of the resource.

Video 1

Transcript:

like we would do in a classroom, we treat it like a community circle.
So there were a couple of questions that really caught my eye, the first one being, “How can I help students learn about one another, and see each other’s humanity?” And as an administrator I feel like it’s particularly important, especially when we’re dealing with things like discipline or consequences in a school. One of the things I value very much is having conversations with a group of students who might have had a fight, argument - whatever the case may be - in a classroom across the school, and when we’re having that conversation, making sure that, like we would do in a classroom, we treat it like a community circle. Where, each student has a voice that has value. So nobody interrupts the other person, including myself. And at the very beginning of the conversation I let all the students know, “I will follow the exact same expectations that you are following, and the only time I will interrupt somebody is to make sure somebody else isn’t interrupting you.” And we have a conversation, and we get to know one another, we get to know the situation, and we find out - from multiple perspectives - how we each saw a certain situation. And each party respects that voice.

And, the second question that really caught me was, “How can I show students that I am seeking to understand and respond to their concerns?” I think the first way we do that is modeling. Because, students are brilliant and they catch anything and everything that adults are doing around them. So if I am seeking to understand and responding to their concerns and I’m showing them how to do that and how it’s important to me, I make sure that if they tell me something in a conversation in this office, I’m following up with them later. And when I follow up with them, it’s not just with “Here’s a solution that I found.” It’s asking them, “Where are you now with that particular situation? Here are some ideas that I had. What do you think?” Because I think the misconception that I’ve had in the past is that I’m here to listen so I can solve. But the reality is, we’re both here to listen to each other so that we can move forward together. And what that forward movement looks like is unknown. And I need to believe that entering into that conversation because I have no idea where they’re coming from and they have no idea where I’m coming from. And it’s together that we’re going to find that movement.

Broad Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How can I help students see each other’s humanity?</th>
<th>How can I show students that I am seeking to understand their concerns?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Believing that each student has a voice that has value.</td>
<td>Model authentic caring: ask questions to understand a concern or problem a student has.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating space for students to share different perspectives and points of view with each other.</td>
<td>Following up when students express a concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model vulnerability.</td>
<td>Listen to students without necessarily trying to solve a problem/issue for them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transcript:

Here are a few of the broad actions Silvio described in his response. Which of these are things that you’re already doing? Which of these are things that you could do? What other actions might be helpful, beyond those that Silvio described?

Pause and think, then click “Proceed” when you are ready to continue.

Video 2 Introduction

Transcript:

In our conversation with Silvio, he transitioned from talking about relationships with students to the way that knowledge of students informed his teaching methods.

As you watch the following video, think about the ways that Silvio’s teaching practices demonstrate some of the actions suggested in the “Methods” section of the Becoming a Change Agent Resource.
Transcript:

To be honest, I think when I sought to connect my content to students’ lives, it was difficult. But, when my only intent was to learn more about my students, I started seeing how my content connected without even trying - which sounds kinda weird. But, when my intent was just to learn about the environment in which my students live and the community we are working together in, I just started seeing that there are so many ways we can bring in that environment, that community, that space, into these very same four walls. For example, when I was in the classroom the easy connection was things that they liked - whether it was color, music, food. That was so easy to pull out and tease out of students - like, having those easy conversations. But, when I kinda took a pause and realized, “I know nothing about the high school options for my students,” and I started learning about the high schools and really dug into what it meant for my students to go to high school, I started seeing things and practices that I - to my core - disagreed with. And it made sense to bring it in to my classroom. So, for example, having conversations with my students who went to high school in a very affluent area, knowing exactly what their GPA was and how they got it. And then having conversations with my students who went to high school in…who had no idea what their GPA was, or how to get it. And I came to find out that students who were in this affluent area were provided their GPA every semester on their report card and students in…weren’t provided their GPA on their report card, even though it was something that was calculated and put on their transcripts when they were going to college. So it was a lesson on the importance of mean, median, and mode…became that much more valuable because it was coupled with a writing assignment to the superintendent to talk about why it needs to be on there. And then conversations outside of the class then got spurred. And if you were to ask my students if they remember what mean, median, and mode really is, I’m not exactly sure if they could give you a definition. But I believe they know how to find it because they attach meaning to it.
Video 2 Debrief

Transcript:
Click each tab if you’d like to see how Silvio showed evidence of each of these actions in his response. Click “Proceed” when you’re ready to continue.

Alisha (4:00)

Meet Alisha

How can I use the exploration of topics that are of interest or concern to my students to teach academic knowledge and skill?
Transcript:

Meet Alisha. Alisha teaches a self-contained 8th grade class at a Title I elementary school with a large population of Latino students. She has decided to respond to this question from the “Content” section of the resource.

Video 1

Transcript:

So since my students are thirteen and fourteen, they’re going through a lot of different changes, so I’m gonna go through, like, where do I see a lot of changes happening to characters. Where do I see things like…for example, we read a book called Inside Out and Back Again, which is about a Vietnamese refugee - a young girl who comes from Vietnam to America. So we talk a lot about immigration. We talk about what legal immigration looks like, what it means to be undocumented. We relate these things back in because this matters to my students. My students are highly interested in that. And because they’re highly interested in it, I can sit there and take that content and be like, “We need to learn how to cite evidence. We need to learn how to summarize a text.” And all of these things are gonna come out through this, but what matters is the content I’m choosing to use it for. So if we’re gonna study something like the DREAM Act, I’m gonna be like, “Let’s summarize what the DREAM Act was about.” Like, what did it mean to certain people? Why was it important? What did the legislation actually say? And then I’m gonna sit there and say, “Okay, now we’re gonna cite evidence to say, like, would you have been for or against the DREAM Act? Why? Use evidence from the text that you just used.” So we’re practicing that skill, but we’re doing it through content that matters to students.
Transcript:

In many ways, Alisha’s response can be summed up in this single sentence: [On-screen: “We’re practicing that skill, but we’re doing it through content that matters to students.”]

Click each tab if you’d like evidence of each of these actions, and click “Proceed” when you are ready to continue.

Video 2 Introduction

How can a teacher identify the topics and issues that are of greatest concern to students?
Transcript:

In order to choose culturally relevant content, it’s important to consider this question from the “Content” section of the Becoming a Change Agent Resource.

It is vitally important that your answer to this question be based on what you actually learn from students and their families, not what you assume to be true about them. Choosing “relevant” content based on stereotyped conceptions of students is problematic at best, and tangibly damaging at worst.

With this in mind, we posed the following question to Alisha:

**How can a teacher identify the topics and issues that are of greatest concern to students?**

Video 2

Transcript:

So, that goes back to relationships with students. It also goes back to you as an instructor listening to your students. So, like, your students are going to tell you things that matter to them, that are important to them, as long as you’ve opened up and created a really safe classroom environment. Like, created a space where discourse happens constantly. It’s not just, like, every week we’re gonna have one conversation about this. Conversations happen daily. They happen frequently. They happen over and over - and you’ve reaffirmed that, you’ve reinstituted that every single day in your classroom. Like, that’s gonna happen - where they tell you things. But I think it’s also like…get out into your community. Don’t be afraid of being in your community. There are places that are great…So, for example, here we have Chicanos Por La Causa right down the street. I’ve volunteered there, my students have volunteered. If you can go into the community and see what’s important to your students - like, what’s actually around your students - you’re gonna know what issues they’re probably gonna want to talk about - what are gonna matter to them.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

Recap

Recap: What we’ve learned.

- Actions and mindsets associated with change agents.
- “Change agent” vs. “technician.”
- Enacting culturally responsive pedagogy in content, methods, and relationships.
- Resource: actions, guiding questions, readings

Transcript:

Let’s recap where we’ve been so far.

We learned about the actions and mindsets associated with the teacher identity of “change agent,” and contrasted it with the role of “teacher as technician.” We examined the ways that teachers can operationalize the role of change agent by enacting culturally responsive pedagogy in the domains of content, methods, and relationships. Finally, we examined a resource containing broad actions, guiding questions, and accompanying resources to assist teachers in each of these domains.
“It looks like endless dedication, an unyielding belief in the brilliance and potential of every student, and the commitment to stop at nothing to get kids to learn. It demands the energy and passion to present learning as an amazing opportunity for young people to prepare themselves to be engaged citizens and social actors.”

(Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008, p. 187)

Transcript:

As we close this section, it should be said that being an agent of change, fundamentally, is about love. To be an agent of change, a teacher must love his or her students. In this context, we are not using the word “love” in a sentimental or romantic way. Rather, we are talking about a “revolutionary love” that ultimately has the power to bring about change in classrooms, schools, and society (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008).