

## Navigating and Educating All Ranges of Diversity:

### A Philosophy of Diversity in My Classroom

My mission as a navigator and educator of diversity is to create a willingness in all of my students to accept and learn from others. By achieving this I plan to establish a learning environment that teaches awareness, respect, and equality. My students will work together and get to know one another to create awareness of diversity; they will learn to respect one another and see that they are all equal in my class. Personal relationships among my students will guide them to form friendships. My lesson plans will challenge the students, but also help them recognize diverse cultures. I believe my students will benefit from my philosophy of diversity in the classroom.

It is imperative to be aware of diversity among students and to acknowledge the uniqueness each person possesses. It is beneficial to relate cultures to lessons, and to teach students to be unbiased, to become great listeners, and to be welcoming to others. Creating a safe and student-centered environment is my main goal and to have my students bond and share different perspectives. I will need to be observant and listen to them and their families to help better understand their backgrounds. Youth culture is influenced by the media, peers, environment and so much more that creates a diverse student population. By working through the barriers, and engaging students in conversation, they can progress and come together to create a wonderful learning experience. With socializing in the classroom they will learn to be respectful and improve their listening skills.

Recognition of diversity will be present in my classroom and in my teaching. To influence character building and to better grasp the idea of being unbiased, I will embrace developmental, gender, language, socioeconomic status, and other aspects of diversity that will

help my students. Certain aspects such as age and gender will be greatly emphasized in my class to help my students' sense of self and build up their self esteem. To help students understand their families and each other more I will incorporate multicultural stories into my lesson plans. They will be able to explore different aspects of diversity through resources I supply them with and they will research these aspects and create an artifact to post on our classroom wall called "Extraordinary Cultures".

Leading a class with a multicultural curriculum is exciting because it applies to real life and the people we meet. In my class, my students will progress academically, but they will also become great critical thinkers, and learn how to utilize their resources. Reports and projects will contain several elements in terms of execution. For instance, my students will write papers, make posters of the country or culture they "explore", and they can perform a skit that exhibits the customs or interests of that specific culture. This could be music, dance, customs, myths, or traditions of that culture. At a young age they will learn to research properly, open their minds to new cultures, and see things differently. After they complete the project they will receive a stamp in our class passports. We will have a world map on the wall, and every country we "explore" will be marked, this will be posted on our "Extraordinary Cultures" wall. I will use my own multicultural stories collection of children's literature in my classroom but also allow my students to explore the bookshelf. They will have a book list that they will put together of all the stories they have read in the class. For instance, if they read a children's book about a child who was hearing impaired, then they would have to research hearing loss from the resources I will have in my classroom that will be their grade level.

My classroom environment will be student-centered. The class will have a sense of control because I will offer choices, and they will make the decision when appropriate. This will

not be the case for every decision, but for simple assignments or reports to make them feel empowered and that they can voice their opinions. By building and promoting human rights the students will learn the true meaning of democracy at a young age and essentially problem solve logically. Teaching is an act of social justice benefiting all students and helping them better understand our society and their place in it. Four outcomes of teaching with social justice is equality, fairness, equity, and appreciation of diversity. With high expectations and creating these outcomes for my classroom, my students will have the potential at an early age to create other peace-makers in their peers. Equality will be expressed in my classroom and will help the personal development. For instance, I will encourage my class to do well on their class work because if it is quality work, I would offer a preferred activity. I would give them three activities they could choose one from, they will feel motivated to do well, and they will feel empowered from decision making. This will once again establishes a sense of control, voice, power, and helps their self esteem.

Acceptance in and out of the classroom will be taught to my students. I have zero tolerance for bullying, and to ensure my students will grow on one another, group work will happen frequently. It is essential that students build relationships with one another to experience diversity and to learn to care for people who are not a part of their family. The students and I will have “Share Time” where we discuss our own traditions, family backgrounds, and stories of life. By assigning activities that exhibit their own interests other students will learn they have more in common with other people in the classroom. This will create more of a willingness to participate and learn because they will understand they are not alone, nor are their backgrounds unique.

I believe I have a natural ability to command a classroom, and am able to quickly find a way to relate to a student. I appreciate each student for their uniqueness and the contribution they

make to my class. I love the process of learning and self reflection, which is why I am eager to display my student's work in my classroom and around the school. With high expectations I believe students can achieve more, and not only learn more academically but learn that they can do anything. By testing a child with challenges but guiding them through the process they will become better critical thinkers. I believe that I am progressive, and that I will create a classroom environment of fellow navigators and educators for all ranges of diversity.

The outcomes of teaching with social justice I believe will be a result with my style in the classroom. I believe I will have great relationships with my students, and that all of us will gain more knowledge academically and socially. Overall, I believe the year in my class would have a result of character building on both ends. With contextualization my students will have a better understanding and will be ready for their future years of education. Also, with improved reading and research skills my students will be equipped to analyze and think critically which will help their future teachers. Creating a respectful, safe, and exciting learning environment would bring success because they were challenged each day and learned that mistakes are essential to learn from and move forward in life.

My students and I will be more aware of cultural diversity because of our open-minds and eagerness to learn. Teachers do not only teach math equations, and proper grammar, but they also teach how to be civilized in our society and how to work with others. I believe my students will gain an interest in diversity and an understanding of how important diversity is in the world. My philosophy of diversity in the classroom will create awareness in young learners that could potentially spread throughout the school environment and influence others to become peacemakers.