Chapter 8

Curricular Efforts

Understanding the material and activities in this chapter will help the reader to:

- Distinguish between the purported changes and the actual progress people from culturally different backgrounds have achieved in U.S. society.
- Prepare a multicultural teaching unit that addresses the needs of learners from culturally different backgrounds and teaches European American learners about diversity.
- State several reasons a school needs a multicultural education program that emphasizes an “across-the-curriculum” approach and encompasses the total school environment.
- List and describe several methods for extending the multicultural education curriculum to the community and having it pervade extracurricular activities.
- Understand the importance of having school administrators, faculty, and staff reflect the cultural diversity of the student body.

Overview

The tremendous cultural diversity that characterizes U.S. school systems sends a strong message to educators and curriculum developers at both elementary and secondary levels. They must develop a curriculum that addresses the needs of learners and creates a school environment that reflects cultural diversity. To implement such an across-the-curriculum approach, they must carefully select bias-free teaching materials, choose evaluation instruments that take into account cultural differences, encourage appropriate community involvement, and provide extracurricular activities that involve all learners. Just as important as these
THE CULTURE QUIZ: Multicultural Education Curriculum Efforts

Directions: Mark each statement true or false.

1. Multicultural education should involve a total curricular and instructional approach, because learners might construe less ambitious approaches as less than a serious effort.

2. The "hidden curriculum" is exemplified by decisions and instructional practices that indicate the school favors middle-class white learners.

3. Current levels of racism, discrimination, and injustice in the United States indicate that relations between cultures are good and may be at an all-time high.

4. Even if relations between children and adolescents are positive and without serious incident, multicultural education is nonetheless necessary so that learners acquire knowledge of and respect for cultural diversity.

5. Homogeneous ability grouping may result in an insidious form of segregation by which children and adolescents are separated by race or socioeconomic class.

6. Textbooks and other written materials that portray middle-class white characters and values rarely affect culturally diverse children and adolescents, because learners expect instructional materials to reflect the majority culture.

7. Ethnocentrism is the belief that one person's culture is in some way better than another person's culture.

8. Multicultural education efforts should avoid adopting an interdisciplinary focus (that includes all subject areas) because individual teachers have their own strengths, weaknesses, and interests.

9. Multicultural education efforts should focus on extracurricular activities so as to provide equal access and opportunities to all learners, regardless of cultural background.

10. The curriculum should endorse bilingual education and a multilingual society.

(Answers to the Culture Quiz are located at the end of the chapter.)

tangible aspects are those of the “hidden curriculum” and the acts of unconscious (or perhaps even conscious) racism, discrimination, and prejudice that continue to plague our schools.

Toward Cultural Diversity

Overall school curriculum and teaching and learning situations should reflect the cultural diversity of our nation. Although the Brown desegregation case and the civil rights legislation (Ornstein & Levine, 1993) of a number of years ago contributed to better treatment and acceptance of groups from culturally different backgrounds, there is much room for improvement. Educators should place change and progress in proper perspective.
IMPLEMENTING RESEARCH 8-1 Diversity in the Curriculum

Wills and Mehan (1996) examine the challenge of including diversity in the school curriculum, particularly the history and social studies curriculum. In their discussion, they consider the debate about whether history is natural, fixed, context-free, and timeless or whether the concept should be (as multiculturalists suggest) expanded to include alternative and competing narratives. Multiculturalism calls for history that is more perspectival, constructed, and relative to time and setting.

Wills and Mehan propose an alternative way to teach history and social studies that maintains a unified historical narrative but also includes previously omitted voices as active participants in significant historical events.

Wills and Mehan explain a number of features in their sociological approach and offer several recommendations:

1. Teaching from a sociological perspective requires a focus on society. Students should not study individual groups in isolation, but rather groups interacting.
2. Teaching from a sociological perspective requires teachers and students to recognize that they are constructing a narrative of events about the struggle for rights that constitutes history.
3. Teaching from a sociological perspective requires a conversational (Why did this event turn out the way it did? What events contributed to a particular event?) and multiperspectival approach, the goal being to understand and explain U.S. history.

Wills and Mehan make a number of interesting points: “The question is no longer whether culture makes a difference, but what difference did culture make in the interactions between Native Americans and white settlers” (p. 10). It is important for students to learn that “history is about explaining and understanding social life, not on evaluating the cultural worth of civilizations” (p. 10). When such a curriculum becomes a reality, “issues concerning social justice, equality, and discrimination are more easily raised” (p. 11).

Implementing the Research

1. Educators undoubtedly need to consider the sociological perspective approach Wills and Mehan suggest—one that focuses on studying groups as interactive, constructing a narrative of events about the struggle for rights, and asking why particular events occurred.
2. Educators should raise issues concerning social justice, equality, and discrimination in all curricular areas but especially in history and social studies.
3. Educators should emphasize (as Wills and Mehan suggest) the difference cultural diversity makes in the interactions between cultures.


Implementing Research 8-1 calls for diversity in the curriculum, particularly in history and social studies.
FOLLOW THROUGH 8-1 Determining “Significant” Change

Undoubtedly, the U.S. education system has made progress toward providing a culturally relevant curriculum—more materials reflect diversity and provide objective portrayals of females, people from culturally different backgrounds, and disabled people. Visit several schools to determine the extent of the changes—how far have we come? What still needs to be done? Are changes superficial or do they show genuine commitment?

The Illusion of Change and Progress

Without doubt, U.S. education is making progress toward better relations between groups of people. The accomplishments of people of differing cultures and of women are recognized; many educators welcome disabled youngsters into their classrooms; most teachers work to reduce racist and sexist behavior in their classrooms; and many work to develop or obtain curricular materials free from bias and prejudice (Sleeter & Grant, 1988).

Consider, however, the racism and nonacceptance that continue to plague society (Pine & Hilliard, 1990)—the growing popularity of “skinheads” and neo-Nazi groups, for instance. In addition, school practices often document either a lack of understanding of learners from culturally different backgrounds or a lack of acceptance and respect for their cultural differences.

The Continuing Need for Change in Educational Practices

Consider these observations from a number of education researchers:

- African American students suffer academically because their learning styles tend to be oriented toward cooperation, content about people, discussion and hands-on work, and whole-to-part learning (Shade, 1982).
- Young Navajo learners sometimes interpret tests as games (in contrast to Anglo students who approach them with a more serious attitude). This “games” approach is a result of home socialization (Deyhle, 1985).
- Bilingual education teachers often find themselves in conflict with regular classroom teachers over the specific needs of students with limited English proficiency (Sleeter & Grant, 1988).
- Educators interact with, call on, and praise students who are Anglo, male, and middle-class more often than they do other students in the same classroom (Sadker & Sadker, 1982).
- Although curricular materials and textbooks reflect cultural diversity more accurately than they have in the past, Native, Asian, and Hispanic Americans are still barely visible in the curriculum (Sleeter & Grant, 1988).
- Because students are often grouped homogeneously, there is a tendency to segregate learners by culture and by socioeconomic group (Manning & Lucking, 1990).
There continues to be much room for genuine change in teaching and learning situations, compatible treatment of people who are disabled or from culturally diverse backgrounds, improvement of the cultural and ethnic compositions of school faculty and staff, and equitable representation of all people, regardless of culture, in textbooks and other curricular materials. This discussion and the accompanying recommendations do not downplay the significant progress that our society and schools have already made. It is necessary, however, to perceive society and schools objectively and to plan an appropriate agenda for positively reconstructing society and schools during the twenty-first century.

Garcia (1984) contends that schools should accept responsibility for translating illusion into reality and that they can serve as a significant force in countering discrimination and the various "isms" that affect people from culturally diverse backgrounds, women, and the disabled.

From Illusion to Reality: Responding to Racism, Discrimination, Ethnocentrism, and Stereotypes

Racism has many damaging and long-lasting effects on the lives of children and adolescents, the character of society, the quality of our civilization, and peoples' prospects for the future. Before an illusion of racial harmony and justice for all can become a reality, schools must take a powerful and pivotal role in teaching about racism and in working toward acceptance and respect for all people, regardless of racial and cultural background. Schools can play a powerful role in combating racism and educational inequities by confronting and challenging racism, hiring teachers from diverse cultures, developing and implementing a genuine multicultural curriculum, improving pedagogical practices that address the needs of all learners, and teaching character development and improvement of self-esteem (Pine & Hilliard, 1990).

Garcia refers to ethnocentrism as the notion some people hold that their group is better than other groups. Ethnocentrism can extend from mild group pride to extreme arrogance. The response to ethnocentrism is complex; some ethnocentrism is good, but too much group pride can result in a negative force—for example, the claims that the Aryan race is superior to all others. A society and its schools must seek to understand the many forms of ethnocentrism and work toward keeping ethnocentrism under control among individuals and student groups (Garcia, 1984).

Schools' responsibilities in our multicultural society extend to countering the dangers of stereotyping, from which even educators are not exempt. What steps can educators take to transform illusions of equality and justice into reality? First, teachers should be aware of their own biases and stereotypes. Through self-examination or through cultural awareness workshops, educators can gain a better understanding of their attitudes toward people who are culturally different, women, and the disabled. Second, as cultural understandings clarify stereotypical beliefs, educators see the need for expecting as much from learners of differing
cultural backgrounds as they do from other students. Too often, teachers tend to "make it easy for the downtrodden" (Garcia, 1984, p. 107). Although educators should recognize the plight of minorities, they must encourage minority students to excel in all areas of academic pursuit. Third, educators should examine curricular materials for evidence of stereotyping. Specifically, does the material present females and minorities in a realistic, nonstereotypical manner? Does the material accurately reflect a holistic view of the past in terms of the contributions of females and people of differing cultural backgrounds in American history (Garcia, 1984)? Fourth, educators should strive to diversify classes of homogeneous ability levels, which have the potential for segregating students by race or socioeconomic group. Heterogeneous classes and cooperative learning activities are very important (Garcia, 1984; Manning & Lucking, 1990).

Because of landmark court decisions, civil rights legislation, and overall improved race relations, U.S. society is not as divided racially and culturally as it was several decades ago. We must not, however, allow illusions of grandeur to overshadow reality. Racism, discrimination, and stereotypes continue to exist and to take a heavy toll on people of differing cultural background, women, and the disabled. Rather than accepting the status quo as the most equitable we can achieve, school curricula should deliberately instill in children and adolescents a sense of respect and acceptance for all people, regardless of their cultural and individual differences.

Planning and Implementing a Multicultural Education Curriculum

The Total School Environment

Multiculturalism should extend to and permeate all aspects of the school. In fact, multiculturalism should be such a basic part of the school that it becomes a natural and accepted aspect of the daily routine.

One way that multiculturalism can permeate the curriculum is through an approach that incorporates literature that is culturally appropriate for children and adolescents in teaching the various areas of the curriculum. Norton (1999) recommends a multicultural reading and literature program that crosses curriculum areas. Multicultural literature is essential to all areas of the curriculum to help students grow in understanding themselves and others. Through careful selection and sharing of multicultural reading materials, educators help students learn to identify with the people who created the stories, whether of the past or present. Folk tales, myths, and legends clarify the values and beliefs of people. By reading the great stories on which cultures have been founded, learners can discover the threads that weave the past with the present and the themes and values that interconnect people of all cultures.
FOLLOW THROUGH 8-2  Researching Cultural Diversity

Separate into small groups that each selects a different cultural group to research. The following questions may serve as guidelines:

1. Where did the racial, religious, or ethnic group you’re studying originate?
2. Why did they leave their homeland?
3. Where in the United States did they originally settle?
4. What kind of work did they do when they first came here?
5. What was their native language?
6. What was their dominant religion?
7. What is a popular myth or legend from their culture?
8. What are three notable themes from their literature?
9. Who are three notable authors from this group?


Reform Efforts

As stated earlier, teaching units are an appropriate and viable means of reaching specific objectives. Serious reform efforts toward a more realistic portrayal of all people, however, will require a major overhaul of elementary and secondary school curricula (Manning, 1991). What steps can educators take to ensure that elementary and secondary school curricula reflect the cultural diversity of U.S. society? The following suggestions represent guidelines for a curriculum that recognizes, reflects, and respects cultural diversity (Sleeter & Grant, 1988).

Guidelines for Developing Multicultural Curricula*

1. Reform the curriculum in such a way that it regularly presents diverse perspectives, experiences, and contributions. Similarly, present and teach concepts that represent diverse cultural groups and both sexes.
2. Include materials and visual displays that are free of race, gender, and disability stereotypes, and that include members of all cultural groups in a positive manner.
3. Embrace concepts, rather than fragments of information, related to diverse groups.
4. Emphasize contemporary culture as much as historical culture, and represent groups as active and dynamic. The curriculum, for example, should include not

only the women’s suffrage movement but also more contemporary problems confronting women.
5. Strive to make the curriculum a “total effort,” with multicultural aspects permeating all subject areas and all phases of the school day.
6. Make sure the curriculum uses nonsexist language.
7. Support a curriculum that endorses bilingual education and the vision of a multilingual society.
9. Insist on a curriculum that allows equal access for all students. All students, for example, should have the freedom to enroll in college preparatory courses and other special curricular activities.

Diversity comes in many forms, all of which need to be addressed in the curriculum. We maintain that sexual orientation should be included in a definition of multicultural education as well as reflected in curricular efforts. Gay and lesbian adolescents confront many of the same biological, cognitive, and social developmental changes as their heterosexual counterparts. Fear of and misunderstandings about homosexuality can result in negative consequences for adolescents struggling with identity formation that differs from that of the majority of their peers.

By learning about the concerns of gay and lesbian youth, middle and secondary educators can break the barrier of silence that contributes to the difficulties and hurt these teens face. Gay and lesbian adolescents bear a double burden: They experience harassment, violence, and suicidal tendencies because of their age and sexual preference. They sometimes feel fearful, withdrawn, depressed, and full of despair. Curricular efforts should address the needs of gay and lesbian adolescents by including age-appropriate literature to explain sexual orientation as well as others’ experiences with being gay or lesbian. Such books help readers develop self-understanding and gain insight into the special developmental needs of gay and lesbian youth (Vare & Norton, 1998).

As Implementing Research 8-2 suggests, the social studies curriculum can be enhanced by a study of Native American governments.

**FOLLOW THROUGH 8-3 Identifying Practical Approaches to a Culturally Relevant Curriculum**

Many preservice readers of this book have had field experience in schools; in-service teachers already have teaching experience in schools. Working in groups of three or four, prepare a list of practical approaches that could be used to make the curriculum more representative of diversity in the United States and its schools. Include such tools as curricular materials showing diversity and the provision of bilingual language programs on your list.
IMPLEMENTING RESEARCH 8-2  Native American Governments in Today’s Curriculum

David Sahr (1997) reports on Native American governments and how they probably influence government today. He looks specifically at the political organization of the Iroquois, the Muscogees (Creeks), the Lakota (Sioux), and the Pueblos. In doing so, he shows how well-ordered, democratic, inclusive, and effective the governments were. Sahr offers several conclusions:

1. A stereotype of Native American chiefs was that they were supreme dictators. In reality, most ruled by consensus, trying to persuade the various factions within their tribes to follow their policies.
2. Attributes of leaders included bravery, good judgment, fairness, charisma, generosity, and skill at important activities. Leaders were usually not chosen by heredity.
3. Articulateness was an essential quality—a leader had to be articulate to reason with his tribe and to convince them to follow his orders.
4. Other features of Native American governments included sharing of power between localities and the whole tribe, including women as well as men in the decision-making process, and forming policy based on the good of the nation as a whole in preference to individual rights.

Implementing the Research

1. The social studies curriculum needs to explain how Native American governments were well planned and, in fact, influenced U.S. government today.
2. Students today should recognize how Native American leaders were selected on basis of their bravery, good judgment, fairness, charisma, and generosity—attributes that people and leaders should strive for today.
3. Students can study various aspects of Native American government and trace these aspects to U.S. government today (and possibly to the Constitution).


Multicultural aspects must genuinely permeate the entire curriculum and the total school environment. The list Sleeter and Grant (1988) provide goes far toward developing a multicultural curriculum, but Bennett (1986) provides still other perspectives and suggestions for making the curriculum more relevant and responsive to multicultural populations. First, Bennett maintains that the traditional curriculum has contained inaccuracies and omissions concerning the contributions and life conditions of major ethnic groups within U.S. society. Curricular reformers should address this omission for the benefit of learners from culturally different backgrounds as well as majority-culture learners.
IMPLEMENTING RESEARCH 8-3  Multiculturalism and Mathematics

Anthony Piccolino (1998) maintains that teachers daily confront the challenge of instilling democratic ideals in students and enculturating moral values within the context of various disciplines. Mathematics is no exception. Students traditionally have perceived mathematics as a static subject that was fully developed several hundred years ago by European mathematicians such as Newton, Pascal, Descartes, Gauss, and others. Piccolino argues in favor of altering this perception of mathematics and recognizing the contributions of various cultures. Similarly, examining the contributions of women to mathematics through the ages, for example, not only helps to promote gender equity, but also offers students the opportunity to appreciate the struggles that many women have had to make to pursue mathematics.

Implementing the Research

Piccolino calls for increasing student awareness of various cultures and women’s contributions to mathematics. Teach students about:

- Russian-born Sofia Kovalevsky, who left her homeland and migrated to Western Europe and became an outstanding nineteenth-century mathematician.
- Sophie Germain, who in early nineteenth-century France assumed the identity of a man so that she could pursue a career in mathematics.
- Graph theory, which was once commonly believed to have originated in eighteenth-century Western Europe. Recent discoveries indicate that it might also have existed among the African tribes in Zaire.
- Ancient Egyptian sources for solving equations known as the Rule of False Position.
- Ninth-century Arab mathematician al-Khowarizmi who used geometric designs resembling algebra tiles that still appear in contemporary classrooms.
- Edna Lee Paisano, a Native American raised on a reservation, who used her background in statistics to discover that Native Americans were significantly undercounted in the 1980 census.


Some educators think integrating multiculturalism into the mathematics curriculum is difficult. Implementing Research 8-3, however, shows how mathematics can reflect multiculturalism.

The Hidden Curriculum

Although some aspects of the curriculum are readily discernible to children and adolescents attending a school, other aspects are more subtle and may be equally influential. For example, we have little difficulty determining whether people of differing backgrounds are represented honestly and adequately in textbooks and other curricular materials. We can also ascertain with relative ease whether track-
CASE STUDY 8-1 The "Hidden Curriculum"

Mrs. Brunson at Calhoun Middle School knows she will have to take a stand at the faculty meeting. No longer can she let injustice prevail. Her only decision is how to make her point in such a way that positive action will result.

"We have a hidden curriculum," she says calmly and matter-of-factly. Although the school's philosophy purports to promote equality and equitable treatment for all, it does not act on that belief. Young adolescents learn from a hidden curriculum that teaches as much as or more than the planned curriculum.

Mrs. Brunson has numerous examples to substantiate her point: school policies that recognize only middle-class European American expectations; the media center that is oriented predominantly toward European Americans; instructional practices and academic expectations that address European American learning styles; and participants in extracurricular activities are mostly European American. What message is the school sending to learners of diverse cultural backgrounds? While the curriculum seeks to show acceptance and respect for diversity, the hidden curriculum conveys an almost totally opposite picture. Learners from different cultural backgrounds often feel unaccepted and perceive that they must adjust to middle-class, white values and customs.

Although the faculty expresses some skepticism, it is apparent that they have not considered the impact of the hidden curriculum. In fact the school is not as multicultural as some believe.

Mrs. Brunson feels better for having expressed herself. Genuine change will be slow, and supporters of the status quo will challenge efforts, but at least the faculty recognizes the problem. This is a first and significant step.

ing and ability grouping have resulted in the segregation and relegation to second-class status of all people from different cultural backgrounds and lower-class students. There is, however, another equally important curriculum, one that has a powerful influence on children and adolescents. This very subtle "hidden curriculum" affects learners of all races and cultures. Mrs. Brunson in Case Study 8-1 takes a stand against the hidden curriculum in her school.

What specific aspects might be included in a hidden curriculum? It may comprise any number of events, behavior expectations, and attitudes that might appear relatively unobtrusive to white, middle-class learners, but might appear out of character or context to learners of culturally different backgrounds. Representative examples might include teacher behaviors and expectations conveyed both verbally and nonverbally; textbooks and other curricular materials that portray white, middle-class values and orientations; segregation due to tracking or ability grouping policies; educators' and other students' degrees of acceptance and attitudes toward learners from different cultural backgrounds; and the degree of acceptance of language differences. In other words, middle- or upper-class European American students might expect their teacher to encourage them to compete and excel above others in the class; this same teacher expectation, however, might be anathema to Native American learners. Educators must make a deliberate effort to examine all their behaviors (both conscious and unconscious) to determine what hidden messages they are conveying and to carefully assess every aspect of the
FOLLOW THROUGH 8-4 Identifying the Hidden Curriculum

Visit an elementary or secondary school (or consider your own if you already teach) to determine the "hidden curriculum." Try to identify three curricular aspects that might be described as "hidden" and offer possible actions for addressing the problem.

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<th>Problem</th>
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| Sports teams are segregated by culture: African Americans play basketball; European Americans play tennis. | 1. Have orientation sessions for sports teams, making clear that equal access is the policy.  
2. Speak with individual students and encourage their participation.  
3. Teach during physical education classes that students are not limited to specific sports by cultural background. |

curriculum and the total school environment to determine whether learners from different cultural backgrounds are being given a different message from that sent to white students.

Guidelines for a Multicultural Curriculum

As with all curricular efforts, a multicultural curriculum should be carefully matched with goals and objectives and use established guidelines. Although each program should reflect the needs and goals of the respective school, the following guidelines can serve as a basis for multicultural curricular development (Hernandez, 1989; Banks, 1981).

1. Emphasize the interrelationship of multiple groups (i.e., ethnic, religious, regional, socioeconomic, language), rather than treating individual groups separately or in isolation. Such multiple-group emphasis diminishes the likelihood of stereotyping and facilitates integration of multicultural content into the overall curriculum.

2. Integrate multicultural perspectives, as appropriate, in all content areas. Although most frequently associated with the social sciences, language, literature, art, and music, multicultural perspectives are valid and applicable in areas such as mathematics, science, home economics, and physical education.

3. Use a variety of instructional approaches and materials appropriate to the students' maturity level. In particular, teacher strategies should aim to accommodate differences in learning styles and to maximize academic achievement.

4. Focus on the development of cognitive as well as affective skills. Assess learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

5. Emphasize school and area populations, locally oriented activities, and community resources. (Hernandez, 1989, pp. 176-177).
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Banks (1988) contends that ethnic pluralism should permeate the total school curriculum and environment. Similarly, school policies and procedures should foster positive cross-cultural interactions and understanding among students, teachers, and staff members. The entire curriculum and school environment should reflect the learning styles of all learners and provide students with continuous opportunities to develop self-esteem and positive cultural identity. Banks provides the following other guidelines for the multicultural curriculum:

1. It should help students understand the totality of the experiences of individual ethnic groups.
2. It should help students understand that there is always a conflict between ideals and realities in human societies.
3. It should explore and clarify ethnic alternatives and options within society.
4. It should promote values, attitudes, and behaviors that support ethnic pluralism.
5. It should help students develop the skills necessary for effective interpersonal and interethnic communication.
6. It should be comprehensive in scope and sequence, should present holistic views of ethnic groups, and should be an integral part of the total school curriculum.
7. It should include interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches.
8. It should use comparative approaches in the study of ethnic groups and ethnicity.
9. It should maximize use of local community resources.
10. It should include assessment procedures that reflect individual ethnic cultures.

Assessing the Need for Curricular Change

Before planning to adopt a multicultural curriculum, the school must assess its needs to determine the direction and extent of the change. Curricular assessment should also be an ongoing and integral part of curriculum development (Ramsey, 1987). Here are some questions a school should consider in a needs assessment:

1. Do multicultural perspectives permeate the entire school curriculum and environment?
2. Do the attitudes of teachers, administrators, and staff members indicate a willingness to accept and respect cultural diversity?
3. Do textbooks and other curricular materials recognize the value of cultural diversity and gender and social class differences?
4. Do curricular activities and methods provide learners with opportunities to collaborate and cooperate?
5. Do extracurricular activities reflect cultural diversity?
6. Do curricular planning efforts reflect the views and opinions of parents and other community people?
7. Do curricular efforts include bilingual perspectives or provide assistance for students with limited English-speaking skills?
Case Study 8-2  Assessing the Need for Change

The educators at Lockhaven Elementary knew their school was experiencing demographic changes. Many of the European American families had moved to the suburbs, the African American population had grown to some extent, and there had been an influx of Asian and Hispanic American students. The curriculum and educational practices, however, had stayed basically the same.

The school counselor was the first to mention a need for change, but others had also begun to recognize that the school could no longer meet the needs of the current student population. That the school should assess the need for change became clear, but the questions remained of where to begin and what to assess. Suggestions poured in as the counselor took notes:

- the actual cultural composition of the school and the community
- the cultural composition of the administration, faculty, and staff
- the curriculum and the extent to which it addresses cultural diversity
- the instructional practices and the extent to which they meet the learning styles of learners from differing cultural backgrounds
- the school policies and expectations of students
- the extracurricular program and its accessibility to all learners
- the attitudes (recognition, respect, acceptance) of the educators
- the media center and the extent to which its holdings demonstrate a respect for diversity of all types

The list could go on and on, the counselor thought, but the school had made the initial effort. They had recognized the need for change, and the needs assessment was under way.

Case Study 8-2 shows how the educators at Lockhaven Elementary decided to assess the need for change in their school.

Selecting Bias-Free Curricular and Teaching and Learning Materials

This section on textbooks and other curricular materials shows their significance and influence. It provides examples of omissions, stereotypical images, and the outright racism and sexism often found in teaching and learning materials and suggests guidelines for the selection of objective materials. Although this effort and goal are worthy of all elementary and secondary curricula, it might be of greater importance in a curriculum specifically designed to teach the values of cultural diversity.

Providing bias-free curricular and teaching and learning materials sometimes results in the reinterpretation of history, as is seen in Implementing Research 8-4.

Textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, and virtually all the materials teachers use have a powerful impact on learners' cognitive and affective domains. They provide factual information, but through their words and pictures they also affect students' attitudes toward and beliefs about themselves, other people and cultures, and the world. With their power to influence, texts that have ignored cultural diversity or have dealt with individual cultures erroneously or in stereotypical terms have inflicted damage on children over the decades.

Source: Mille Teacher, 52(1)
IMPLEMENTING RESEARCH 8-4 The Interpretation of History

Asking "who owns history" (p. 76), Miller (1998) argues that what appears in textbooks is always based on someone's vision of the truth—the writer's, the editor's, or the publisher's. What teachers choose to teach is based on their own vision of the truth. The study of history is always about someone's interpretation of events, the process of selecting events, inclusion, exclusion, reorganization, and prioritizing, rather than one of merely unfolding the truth. If we permit textbook publishers to "own history" (p. 76), then we must expect a picture of history that reflects a safe, sell-as-many-copies-as-we-can perspective, one that harks back to the theory of the United States as a melting pot of immigrants eager to discard their cultural traditions. At best, Miller thinks textbooks give a watered-down view of the diverse cultural groups that make up the United States. Textbooks offer a narrow, selective view of the world, a shorthand version of history. They feel the need to condense; they often rely on stereotypes or hold up brief heroic sketches of individual members of cultural minorities to represent the entire group.

Implementing the Research

Miller maintains that, faced with this skewed version of history, teachers can take several steps:

1. Educators must fill in the gaping holes for students so as to allow them to develop a broader, more thorough understanding. Teachers can allow students to study and compare various versions of historical events as portrayed in textbooks, magazines, newspapers, and trade books.
2. Educators can introduce students to original documents to which their books refer, but rarely place in full context—these sources can include court documents, important pieces of legislation, and historic speeches.
3. Educators can provide examples of real people telling their own stories—complete with facts, emotions, and outcomes.


Several factors can affect the influence of textbook characterizations on children and adolescents. First, the amount of time spent interacting with the materials seems to determine, at least in part, the extent to which children internalize and retain attitudes and stereotypes. For example, the longer children are exposed to stereotypical images or omissions, the greater the effect the materials have. Second, children vary in their emotional involvement and identification with the individuals and situations portrayed. In reading, mathematics, and social studies, for example, students' performance is enhanced when they perceive content to be relevant and interesting. On the positive side, culturally relevant materials can facilitate the process of learning to read, making it both easier and faster. On the negative side, the absence of characters and situations with which children are able to identify may contribute to and reinforce feelings of security, inferiority, or superiority depending on
an individual’s group identity. These nonacademic aspects of textbook content affect variables associated with academic achievement: perseverance, motivation, retention, and skills development, among others (Hernandez, 1989).

Other equally important concerns related to bias in textbooks are omissions and distortions. Omission refers to information left out of a textbook, and a distortion is a lack of balance or systematic omission. Because of omissions, members of some cultural and ethnic groups are virtually unrepresented in textbooks. Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and women continue to be underrepresented in educational materials (Hernandez, 1989). The “invisibility” of a group implies that it has less value or significance in U.S. society than others. “Invisibility” applies most often to women, culturally diverse people, disabled individuals, and the elderly (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998).

Distortions result from inaccurate or unbalanced impressions. History and reading materials too often ignore the presence and realities of certain groups in contemporary society, or they confine treatment to negative experiences. In some cases, they provide a single point of view about events that may be technically correct but is nevertheless misleading (Hernandez, 1989).

Sexism and sexist language are other factors to consider when selecting textbooks and other teaching materials. Gollnick and Chinn (1998) have called attention to the sexism that often occurs in children’s and adolescents’ textbooks, especially at the elementary school level. Children who were asked to draw an early caveman drew only pictures of cavemen. In contrast, when instructed to draw “cave people,” the children generate drawings of men, women, and children. In classrooms, teachers can point out sexist language to students. When words appear to exclude women as full participants in society or limit their occupational options, teachers can provide alternatives—for example, mail carrier and police officer as alternatives to mailman and policeman (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998).

The challenge facing multicultural educators is to select textbooks and other materials that objectively represent various groups and people who have been traditionally either ignored or misrepresented. Table 8-1 provides educators with a means of evaluating written material to determine its suitability in our increasingly multicultural schools.

### Evaluating Curricular Efforts

Evaluating the multicultural curriculum to determine overall program strengths and weaknesses and to assess how well it meets individual learner needs is as important as the actual content and teaching methods the teacher uses. One basic criterion is to determine whether teaching and learning situations reflect multiculturalism (Sleeter & Grant, 1988).

Other measures of program effectiveness include oral and written tests (teacher-made and standardized), sociograms, questionnaires, surveys, student projects, interviews, anecdotal information, and discussion groups. Indicators such as attendance records, class participation, and incidence of disruptive behavior also provide clues about student acceptance of and interest in the program. Many of these procedures are conducive to staff, parent, and student involvement. Whatever evaluation
TABLE 8-1 How to Analyze Books for Racism and Sexism

These guidelines are a starting point and are designed to help educators detect racist and sexist bias in children's story books, picture books, primers, and fiction.

1. Check the illustrations. Look for stereotypes, oversimplified generalizations about a particular group, race, or sex that generally carry derogatory implications. Look for variations that in any way demean or ridicule characters because of their race or sex.

   Look for tokenism. If there are culturally diverse characters, are they just like Anglo Americans, but tinted or colored? Do all culturally diverse faces look stereotypically alike, or are they depicted as genuine individuals?

   Look at the lifestyles of the people in the book. Are culturally diverse characters and their settings depicted in such a way that they contrast unfavorably with an unstated norm of Anglo American middle-class suburbia? For example, culturally diverse people are often associated with the ghetto, migrant labor, or "primitive" living. If the story does attempt to depict another culture, does it go beyond oversimplifications of reality to offer genuine insights into another lifestyle?

2. Check the story line. Civil rights legislation has led publishers to weed out many insulting passages and illustrations, particularly in stories with black themes, but the attitudes still find expression in less obvious ways. The following checklist suggests some of the various subtle forms of bias to watch for:

   Relationships: Do Anglo Americans in the story have the power and make the decisions? Do culturally diverse people function in essentially subservient roles?

   Standard for success: What does it take for a character to succeed? To gain acceptance, do culturally diverse characters have to exhibit superior qualities—excel in sports, get A's, and so forth?

   Viewpoint: How are "problems" presented, conceived, and resolved in the story? Are culturally diverse people themselves considered to be "the problem"? Do solutions ultimately depend on the benevolence of an Anglo American?

   Sexism: Are the achievements of girls and women based on their own initiative and intelligence, or is their success due to their good looks or to their relationships with boys? Are sex roles incidental or paramount to characterization and plot? Could the same story be told if the sex roles were reversed?

3. Consider the effects of the book on the child's self-image and self-esteem. Are norms established that limit the child's aspirations and self-esteem? What does it do to African American children to be continuously bombarded with images of white as beautiful, clean, and virtuous, and black as evil, dirty, and menacing? What happens to a girl's aspirations when she reads that boys perform all the brave and important deeds? What about a girl's self-esteem if she is not fair of skin and slim of body?

4. Consider the author’s or illustrator’s qualifications. Read the biographical material on the jacket flap or on the back cover. If a story deals with a culturally diverse theme, what qualifies the author or illustrator to deal with this topic? If they are not members of the culturally diverse group being written about, is there anything in the author’s or illustrator’s background that would specifically recommend them for this book?

   Similarly, a book that has to do with the feelings and insights of women should be more carefully examined if it is written by a man, unless the book's avowed purpose is to present a male viewpoint.

   These observations do not deny the ability of writers to empathize with experiences other than those of their own sex or race, but the chances of their writing as honestly and as authentically about the experiences of other genders and races are not as good.

5. Look at the copyright date. Books on culturally diverse themes—usually hastily conceived—suddenly began appearing in the mid-1960s. There followed a growing number of "culturally diverse experience" books to meet the new market demand, but they were still written by Anglo American authors and reflected an Anglo point of view. Only in the late 1960s and early 1970s did the children's book world begin to even remotely reflect the realities of a multiracial society, and it has only just begun to reflect feminist concerns.

is used, the information collected should be well documented, relevant, and useful. The validity of evaluation depends on the questions asked, behaviors observed, and efforts made to sample randomly and to apply common standards.

Gender Perspectives 8-1 examines school girls’ relationship to math and science.

FOLLOW THROUGH 8-5 Evaluating the Curriculum

Evaluating the curriculum for cultural relevance, objectivity, and accuracy should be a major part of any multicultural education program. Suggest eight to ten criteria for evaluating the curriculum to determine whether it recognizes and shows respect for cultural diversity.

GENDER PERSPECTIVES 8-1 Math, Science, and Girls

Careers in math and science may be the best way for women to reach income parity with men. Women make less than men in nearly all areas, but the wage gap is much less in the math and science fields.

Even in light of this evidence, some educators discourage adolescent girls from enrolling in math and science courses. Reasons include peer pressure, low teacher expectations, and girls’ own diminished academic self-esteem. Girls from culturally different backgrounds may feel this discrimination even more. The discrimination against females extends to extracurricular activities as well. While boys learn to repair cars, girls often learn arts and crafts. An international study of computer use revealed that U.S. youngsters learn about computers mostly through home use, but girls are less likely to use their families’ computers.

What implications does this article hold for educators who want to address the special needs of girls?

- Teachers should encourage girls to participate in traditional male-oriented extracurricular activities such as math and science clubs.
- Teachers and counselors should give girls objective career advice.
- Teachers should give special attention to teaching boys to understand girls and to be more encouraging of their participation in math and science.

Readers who want more information may write to:
American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1333 H. Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005
American Association of University Women, 1111 16th Street, Washington, D.C. 20036
Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, 106 Central Street, Wellesley, MA 02181
Women’s Educational Equity Act Publishing Center, Education Development Center, 55 Chapel Street, Newton, MA 02158

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Internet Addresses

Multiculture Nonsexist Education Home Page
http://www.ops.org/mne/multi.home.html
Provides a look at the Omaha Public Schools' efforts to address equity issues and to respect individual differences of all students.

LSU: Multicultural Resources
http://lasalle.edu/services/mcis/multi_a.htm
Provides a wealth of multicultural resources for elementary and secondary schools.

MilbankWeb: Research Resources:
Pathfinders: Multicultural Education
http://lweb.tc.columbia.edu/rr/mc/
Provides access to the Milbank Memorial Library of Teachers College, Columbia University, which contains the world's largest collection of materials on the educating professions.

Multicultural Literature—Secondary Classroom
http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/ieo/bibs/multsec.html
Provides information on multicultural literature in secondary classrooms.

Multicultural Education—Guide
http://www.lps.org/instruction/guide/multiguide.html
Provides a description of multicultural education in the Lincoln Public Schools and the identification, selection, and infusion of specific knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

A Multicultural Education Unit

Our premise in this book is that multicultural education should be a total school curriculum and environmental approach rather than an occasional unit. We do, however, recognize that the situation should not be "either/or," nor should it become a battle of multicultural curriculum versus the unit approach. We firmly believe, however, that a once-a-year (or even an every semester) effort in the form of a multicultural week or perhaps a two- or three-week unit is insufficient to teach knowledge of and respect for cultural diversity. We remind readers, therefore, to consider units as a part of a total curriculum effort, perhaps as a means of addressing one or more specific objectives.

Considerations

Before examining a unit designed to convey knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity, it is important to define the unit approach and to look briefly at what units usually include. First, units (sometimes called modules) are designed to teach a specific body of information over a time lasting more than a class meeting or two. For example, might the unit last one, two, or three days or weeks or years or longer in some instances? Second, units contain goals, objectives, content, activities, materials, enrichment resources, and evaluational instruments. Although educators may differ about what the unit should include, generally speaking, it is a comprehensive guide that differs from the one-day lesson plan.
Example

The next several pages provide an example of an instructional unit. It is important to remember that this unit serves only as an illustration. Educators should assess their students' developmental needs, levels of knowledge, and attitudes and assess the planned instruction accordingly.

The Unit: Unjust Treatment of People of Culturally Diverse Backgrounds

Rationale

African Americans were brought to America to be sold into slavery. Native Americans were forced off their lands. Asian Americans, especially Chinese Americans, worked on the railroad linking the Missouri River to the Pacific Coast in 1862. Hispanic Americans work in “sweat factories” or as migrant workers. Japanese Americans were relocated to internment camps after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Objectives and Activities

1. Have students define the following terms: racism, discrimination, and injustice and identify examples of each that have harmed several groups from culturally different backgrounds.
2. Have students identify three books or songs that describe the injustices that groups from different cultural backgrounds experienced.
3. Have students develop a time line showing culturally diverse people’s responses to unjust treatment; for example, African Americans’ march on Washington in 1963.
4. Have students identify three examples of contemporary racism, discrimination, or injustice and list possible solutions for each.

Individuals, cooperative learning groups, or interest-established pairs or triads may work on these activities.

Language Arts

- Read The Drinking Gourd and Sing Down the Moon and have students write a review of each.
- Have students prepare short stories, poems, skits, and plays on the unjust treatment many people received.
- Ask students to write and give a speech that a Native American might have given regarding land being taken away.
- Keep a class scrapbook of unjust practices that currently exist in the United States.
- Help students write a letter to the editor of a newspaper proposing a solution to an injustice people suffer today.
Mathematics

- Compile a “numbers” list with students: acres of land taken away from Native Americans, numbers of African Americans brought to America to work as slaves, numbers of Asian Americans working on the railroad, and numbers of Hispanic Americans working as migrant workers. Compute estimates of money saved by having workers work in low-paying jobs in poor working conditions.
- On a bar or pie graph, ask students to show numbers of workers from culturally different backgrounds in minimum-wage jobs.
- Have students estimate the value of land taken from Native Americans, and compare the estimate with the amount received (if any money was actually paid).

Science

- Study terrain as part of your lesson plan—for example, land taken away from Native Americans and farming land on which migrant workers grow produce.
- Have students examine climate conditions necessary for growing various types of produce and determine the effects these conditions have on people.
- Study with students the climatic conditions (e.g., temperature, humidity, heat index) of many “sweat shops” and the effect it has on people.

Social Studies

- Examine with students the concepts of racism, injustice, and discrimination, and pinpoint historical and contemporary examples.
- Ask students to gather information on immigration patterns by decade or some other time frame.
- Review with students America’s resistance to immigrants entering the United States. (For examples of resistance today, see Newsweek’s “Immigration backlash” [Thomas & Murr, August 9, 1993], in which a poll indicates that 60 percent of Americans think immigration is bad for the nation, and other news magazines’ reports on the Haitian and Cuban refugees seeking to come to America in 1994.)
- Have students prepare an essay explaining the melting pot concept and its limitations and how we currently support the sald bowl concept.
- Ask students to write a position paper for or against the resistance or unjust treatment people received on arrival to the United States.
- Develop a time line with students showing each cultural group’s important dates or events—the Emancipation Proclamation, for example.
- Ask students to develop a chart listing injustices and offer possible solutions.

Art

- Introduce students to works of art depicting injustices people have suffered and struggled to overcome.
• Assign students to create collages, dioramas, and mobiles showing injustices: the bonds of slavery, the plight of Native Americans, and the menial jobs many Asian and Hispanic Americans have been forced to accept.

**Music**

• Listen to songs of various cultures that have helped people to survive, provided a ray of hope, and communicated pain and suffering.
• Ask students to write lyrics for a familiar melody that deal with a contemporary injustice and offer hope.
• Research musical instruments that slaves and other people in bondage used.
• Develop teaching and learning experiences from using such resources as Haskins, James (1987), *Black music in America: A history through its people*, HarperCollins; or Mattox, Cheryl Warren (Ed.) (1990), *Shake it to the one that you love the best: Play songs and lullabies from black musical traditions*. Warren-Mattox Productions.

**Other Resources**

Selected books appropriate for 10- to 15-year-olds that can complement this unit on unjust treatment of people of culturally diverse backgrounds include:

**African Americans**

Adler, David A. *Jackie Robinson: He was the first*. Holiday House, 1989, 48 pp.

*Nonfiction. This is an accurate and informative account about Jackie Robinson and the time in which he lived.*


*Nonfiction. Burns, a runaway slave, was jailed in Boston and lost his legal case under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.*


*Katz. This excellent book confutes the often-held belief that many slaves accepted servitude as a way of life.*


*Kosof recounts her own experiences during the civil rights movement.*

_Fiction. This story tells about Ras and the challenges he faced living in slavery._


_Nonfiction. Middle-level students will appreciate Hughes's determination to leave home and pursue his desire to become a poet._

**Asian Americans**


_Fiction. This book describes the variety of problems Asian Americans face in today's schools._


_Nonfiction. Eleven teenagers relate their experiences about leaving their homelands and adjusting to their new life in America._


_Nonfiction. This book, adapted for young readers, describes the building of the transcontinental railroad and how the railroad selected the Chinese for the work._

Miklowitz, Gloria D. *The war between the classes*. Delacorte, 1985, 158 pp. _Fiction._

_This book focuses on the injustices resulting from social class structures._


_Nonfiction. This readable and balanced book provides an introduction to the fastest-growing Asian immigrant group in the United States._

**Native Americans**


_Nonfiction. Ashabraner examines Native Americans' reverence for the land and how their land was taken away._


_Nonfiction. Ashabraner examines the contemporary lives of a number of Native American teenagers and young adults._


_Nonfiction. Brown's book corrects the white expansionist view of U.S. history, which Hollywood has reinforced with stereotypes of the Native Americans._


_Fiction. Cannon shows that Native Americans differ as individuals just as individuals do in all cultures._


_Fiction. A raid has left eleven-year-old Carrie orphaned and wounded and her two younger brothers kidnapped._

**Hispanic Americans**


_Fiction. Economic hardships force a family to cross the Rio Grande in search of a better life._


_Nonfiction. Recent economic and political problems have driven increasing numbers of South Americans north._


_Nonfiction. Meltzer examines the Hispanic population from both a historical and a sociological perspective._


_Fiction. Luisa, a fourteen-year-old girl, hides her Cuban American background and her nationality._


_Nonfiction. Pinchot examines issues of importance to Mexican Americans: education, immigration, and civil rights._
This partial unit could serve as a beginning point or a skeletal outline. Teachers working in interdisciplinary teams can tap their professional expertise in particular content areas and offer many exciting and productive activities and ideas within this topic.

**Other Topics for Multicultural Units**

- Contributions of people from culturally different groups (or a specific cultural group)
- Cultural traditions: family and society (in general or for a specific cultural group)
- Books, poems, and short stories (or music or art) by writers from culturally different backgrounds

**Geography and Locations: Pinpointing Locations of Origin**

- *African American Scholars: Leaders, Activists, and Writers* (from NAACP, 4805 Mount Hope Dr., Baltimore, MD 21215)
- *Martin Luther King: A Lifetime of Action* (from Martin Luther King, Jr., Resource Guide, the State Education Department of New York, Long Island Field Services, #1 Regional Field Services, Room 973 EBA, Albany, NY 12234)
- Contemporary contributors from culturally different backgrounds: civil rights activists
- Influential women and their contributions (women in general or women in a specific cultural group)
- Coming to America: immigration in the 1990s. Books we especially suggest for fifth and sixth graders include *If you were there in 1492* (Brenner, Barbara MacMillan, 1991), *Ajemah and his son* (Berry, James. HarperCollins, 1992), and *The Chinese American family album* (Hoobler, Dorothy, and Thomas Hoobler. Oxford University Press, 1994) (Fagella, 1994).

**Extending the Multicultural Education Curriculum**

**Parental and Community Involvement**

Efforts to provide multicultural education curricula and environments must extend beyond the confines of the school. Children and adolescents need to perceive evidence of recognition and respect for cultural diversity in the home and in the community. The home and the community can serve as powerful and positive forces to help reinforce the efforts of the school. Parents and other community members and organizations are valuable resources to help support the school's

efforts to promote respect for cultural diversity. They should be made aware of school efforts and should feel that the school seeks and respects their advice and opinions. These two entities can also provide considerable financial and volunteer support for the multicultural education program.

As parents become involved in their children's education and learn more about the school's goals (especially in relation to the goals and materials of the multicultural education curricula), they are more likely to give overall support for school programs. Parents in all likelihood will become more interested in their children's school success and be better able to assist the school in its efforts.

Parents and educators should ask whether the community supports the school and its academic and social tasks. Is the leadership of the community concerned with school effectiveness? Does the community support efforts toward school improvement? Are the achievements of all students and teachers celebrated in the community at public occasions? Are the role models in the community educated people? If the community is not strongly positive, bring the matter to the attention of progressive community leaders with the suggestion that they sponsor a determined effort to improve the community environment (Tyler, 1989).

As Case Study 8-3 suggests that, involving the community can be a task of some magnitude but one that offers many rewards.

**CASE STUDY 8-3  Community Involvement**

The school personnel at HS 170, an urban secondary school, had reached a basic agreement for their multicultural education program. They established specific objectives for the program, one of which was to involve the community. Extending the program outside the school would show their genuine commitment. Also it would give parents, families, and other community members a chance to provide input and to offer their involvement.

The group decided on several approaches: They sent notices home with the students explaining the basic premises of the program and how parents, families, and the community could respond. They asked radio and television stations to donate brief airtime to inform the community of the effort. They placed posters the students had designed in businesses and other public places.

The group, recognizing the varying work schedules of community members, called meetings at different times and locations. The purposes of the meetings were to:

1. explain the purposes of the program and how it would fit in with the existing academic program;
2. explain the phases of implementation and the rationale and objectives for each phase;
3. explain that all aspects of the program would be subject to evaluation and review for changes and revisions;
4. form a committee to review library and media acquisitions; and
5. explain that the program would be interdisciplinary and would permeate all areas of the school: curriculum, instruction, materials, teaching and learning environment, and teacher attitudes and behaviors.

Perhaps of greatest importance during the meetings, the group demonstrated the objectives of the program itself: recognition, acceptance, appreciation, and respect for all people regardless of differences.
FOLLOW THROUGH 8-6 Involving Parents and Extended Family Members

Name several ways to involve parents and extended family members of culturally different backgrounds in the curricular efforts of the school. Perhaps it would be best to divide the list into two groups, one for classes and one for the overall school programs. Include ways in which special school personnel (e.g., counselor, communications specialists) can most effectively involve parents and extended family members.

Extracurricular Activities

Perceptive educators readily recognize the need for equitable representation of all races and ethnic groups in extracurricular activities.

1. Baker (1983) suggests that athletic programs include minority students and women and that cheerleading teams include both sexes as well as students of culturally different backgrounds.
2. Baker (1983) and Gollnick and Chinn (1998) recommend that clubs and organizations not perpetuate racial or gender segregation and that one group not dominate positions of student leadership.
3. Baker (1983) also recommends encouraging females to participate in all sports and that there be special arrangements for students who are unable to participate for financial or other reasons.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY CHECKLIST

1. Do all the school’s racial and ethnic groups participate in extracurricular activities?
2. Are financial resources equitably distributed among extracurricular activities?
3. Are extracurricular activities segregated along racial lines?
4. Do sponsors or advisers of extracurricular activities encourage learners from culturally different backgrounds to participate in the activities they sponsor?
5. Are arrangements available to support students who lack the financial or other (e.g., travel) resources to participate in extracurricular activities?
6. Are conscious efforts made to include students of differing socioeconomic groups and to involve both boys and girls in the school’s extracurricular program?
7. Do the efforts to involve all children and adolescents in extracurricular activities receive the wholehearted support (not just token support) of all administrators, teachers, special service personnel, and staff members?

FOLLOW THROUGH 8-7 Evaluating Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities can be an important part of the total school day, especially when educators provide culturally relevant curricular activities and involve students from various cultural backgrounds. Evaluate a school’s extracurricular activities to determine their cultural relevance and the school’s commitment to inclusiveness. What suggestions might you offer the school for improving its extracurricular activities, especially as they relate to students from culturally different backgrounds?
**Summing Up**

Multicultural educators planning and implementing culturally responsive curricula should:

1. Reflect and recognize that the United States has experienced considerable progress toward acceptance of cultural diversity; that racism, discrimination, and prejudice continue to exist in the United States; and that curricular efforts and overall school environment should demonstrate an emphatic respect for cultural diversity.

2. Place reform efforts on an across-the-curriculum approach and on the overall school environment, rather than on a once-a-year or unit approach.

3. Have a sound multicultural basis: a careful assessment of overall needs, established guidelines, the selection of bias-free curricular materials, and the provision of evaluative procedures for both learners and curricular efforts.

4. Include extensive involvement of community resources, and permeate extracurricular activities as well as the academic curricular aspects.

5. Respect and build on, as much as possible, individual learners' native language.

**Suggested Learning Activities**

1. Visit a school with considerable cultural diversity and evaluate how well cultural diversity is reflected in the textbooks and workbooks. Answer the following questions to determine whether the school includes appropriate cultural perspectives (feel free to include your own questions):
   
   a. Does the text portray students from diverse backgrounds in a meaningful, non-stereotypical manner?
   
   b. Does the text portray various social classes?
   
   c. Does the text portray women and disabled people in meaningful roles?
   
   d. Does the text portray Native, Asian, Hispanic, and European Americans as well as African Americans?
   
   e. Does the text make provisions for learners with limited English-speaking skills?

2. Interview a curriculum coordinator of a large school (or school district) with a large percentage of students from culturally different backgrounds. What approach is the school taking to implement a multicultural education program? What mechanism is in place to ensure that all levels of educators are involved in the program? After the interview, carefully consider your findings, and write a brief paper that summarizes your findings and offers what you think are appropriate suggestions.

3. Prepare a multicultural unit (designed for perhaps two or three weeks) that a school could integrate into an overall multicultural education program. In this unit, be sure to include goals, objectives, activities, curricular materials, provisions for evaluation (of both students and the unit itself), and provisions for children and adolescents with limited English-speaking abilities.
Suggestions for Collaborative Efforts

Form groups of three or four that, if possible, represent our nation's cultural and gender diversity. Working collaboratively, focus your group's attention toward the following efforts:

1. Have each member of your group select a type of curricular material, for example, textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, audiovisuals, and any other curricular materials that elementary or secondary schools commonly use. Prepare an evaluation form (on textbooks as an example here) to answer such questions as: Is the portrayal of children and adolescents of culturally different backgrounds filled with stereotypes and myths? Of the materials on your list, consider the actual numbers of learners of culturally different backgrounds in the school, the accuracy and objectivity of their portrayal, and whether the material addresses differences among people within cultural groups (e.g., Are all Asian Americans alike? Are all Spanish-speaking people alike?).

2. Think about the curriculum when you were in elementary or secondary school. Did you study people of various cultures? Were the roles and contributions of women portrayed? Did you ever wonder why curricular materials failed to include all people? What effects can the omission of groups have on learners? If you did study people from various cultural groups and women, whom did you study? While some progress has been made in portraying the contributions of all people, progress continues to be necessary. What steps do you suggest for ensuring that all people are represented in curricular materials?

3. As a group, visit a school to determine its efforts to help children of limited English-speaking capability. What special considerations are made for these learners? What language programs are in place? What professional staff is available to offer help? What remedial programs are available? Are learners allowed to speak their native languages in schools?

Expanding Your Horizons: Additional Journal Readings and Books


Gordon argues that the contemporary challenge for the curriculum field and educational policy is to create pedagogy and implement social action that reflects new visions of humankind.


Lee and Fradd call for educational and instruction equity for all students and propose an agenda for research, policy, and practice for all students.

Leuthold explores multiculturalism in art and design education.


Looking especially at middle-level schools, Manning explains how schools' curricula and environment can better reflect our nation's diversity.


Olmedo describes a rationale and an approach for helping teachers use the life histories of parents and community members to teach social studies and history.

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Answers to the Culture Quiz: Multicultural Education Curriculum Efforts

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