

Thread:

Diversity

Post:

[RE: Diversity](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 31, 2010 1:23 PM

Status:

Published

No, but I will put it on my summer reading list. I have noticed far more students dealing with economic hardship in my classes over the last year. To put an extra spin on it, many of them come from families who have not had to deal with it before and are unaware of the resources available to them. I brought it up at the last SIP meeting, but I am not sure if my suggestions will come to fruition :)

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 9 Lecture Response

Post:

[RE: Module 9 Lecture Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 31, 2010 1:21 PM

Status:

Published

Thank you for that! My colleague does have some positive examples, but the last year or two has been interesting for her.

Andrea

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Lecture 9

Post:

[RE: Lecture 9](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 31, 2010 10:16 AM

Status:

Published

I feel as you do because I don't teach in a school with much cultural diversity. I feel compelled, however, to make sure that those few students have a voice that they can connect with in the curriculum. It is amazing how many students suddenly pipe up and show excitement when they have such a connection. Every year when I teach my Bean Trees unit and I introduce Sherman Alexie's Smoke Signals and "This Is What It Means To Say Phoenix, Arizona" I suddenly find out that there are numerous Native Americans in my class. They won't have said a peep before then and probably wouldn't had I not had that voice in my curriculum. Ever since that first experience I have really worked hard to beef up my short story supplements.

Andrea

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 9 Lecture Response

Post:

[Module 9 Lecture Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 30, 2010 12:48 PM

Status:

Published

**Module 9 Lecture Response: From The Multicultural Classroom to the Multicultural School**

Professor Mvududu begins her lecture by referring to Culturally Responsive Teaching as a moral imperative. She also asks us to recognize that we may need to become the leaders in this area amongst the staff in our schools if we hope to see a difference (slide 1). She also connects these ideas to the current democratic reforms efforts, meaning that they naturally fit into the ideas presented by that movement. If we have high expectations for ALL students combined with a positive and supportive attitude, we are heading in the right direction. It also is important for teachers to make efforts to provide a variety of materials and ideas in their curriculum. The instruction of that curriculum should include attention to learning styles of different cultures as well as the variety of languages present in the classrooms. Assessment of student performance and knowledge should also reflect a consideration of those things. Finally, the goals of the students should be respected because they could be a reflection of their cultural identity. It is not right to assume that all of our students should follow the same path (slide 2-3). The efforts on behalf of the students should also be focused on encouraging professionals from minority groups to enter into the educational profession. Future Teachers of Color is a group that is trying to tackle that issue.

Dr. Mvududu mentions that parents are also a significant part of the solution, that they should be involved in their student's education. I agree with this, but I know how difficult this can be. I have a colleague who teaches ELL. For many years, her program was dominated by students who were Hispanic and Latino. She made a great effort to get her students' parents to come to curriculum night. Letters were sent home in English and Spanish, calls were made, and materials in both languages were sent home and made available on the website. She has yet to have a single parents from those classes come to parent night. Needless to say, she is very frustrated and does not know what else she can do. While I agree that the parents can be the authoritative cultural sources, they need to make themselves available before there can be any contribution. There is also an issue of parent phone numbers being incorrect and, for some, there is the question about whether they are not communicating because they are not here legally. Her students know that she doesn't feel it is her responsibility to report it, but there is a fear that prevents some parents from coming.

**Tags:** None

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Thread:

Diversity

Post:

[RE: Diversity](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 28, 2010 1:41 PM

Status:

Published

I wish that our school would focus more on diversity. I think that it is especially hard for us because we have so little diversity in the realm of race and culture. I have, however, brought up the issue of economic diversity to other staff leaders because I feel that this is an area where we could do more. Our staff today was looking at our numbers. The population that is having the most difficulty with academic success (at least 2 final F's in Fall term) is between 15 and 25% in the last five year, specifically with the subgroup Free and Reduced Lunch. We were talking about the high correlation between engagement and academic success. The number of students who are engaged and are also recipients of FRL is very low. I am hoping that we can come up with some ways of involving these students on our campus.

**Tags:** None

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Thread:

Module 9 SR/-Q Chenfield

Post:

[Module 9 SR/-Q Chenfield](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 26, 2010 1:28 PM

Status:

Published

Module 9 SR/-Q: "Metaphors of Hope"

Summary:

In the article "Metaphors of Hope", Mimi Brodsky Chenfield offers four examples of teachers who have successfully created classroom communities that are caring, supportive, and celebrate diversity. These stories are meant to inspire and convince the audience, teachers and administrators, that such a thing is possible and a worthwhile goal. She uses as examples Mr. T's Town Meetings, Cathy Arment's practice of helping students verbalize feelings, Dee Gibson's practice of sending welcome notes to all her students before class begins, and Anne Price and Claudette Cole's efforts to encourage staff communities to influence school climate and culture from the top down. Chenfield refers to them as "examples of courageous, confident, hopeful educators who, like our four brave little flowers, insist on growing through hardened and lava-crusted times!" (Chenfield, 2004, p. 34)

Response:

The quote that spoke to me the most came from the example about PEACE. Anne Price "warns, 'you can't give it if it's not in you to give. That's why we constantly have to think about our commitments, beliefs, and goals. How we feel about those deeper questions will generate our behavior'" (Chenfield, 2004, p.34). I believe that this idea fits with what I believe about my own practice. I can see possible improvements for my school. This idea is also supported by the other reading for this module. If I can't look critically at myself, my practice, and how I am participating in school improvement, there will be very little that changes between now and when I decide to retire. In addition to the professional implications of this, there is also a personal element as well. If I don't take care of myself as a person, there is no way I will have anything left to help enact change in my work.

#### Reference List

Chenfield, M.B. (2004, December). Metaphors of hope. Phi Delta Kappan, pp.32-35.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Ovando and Gourd SR-Q

Post:

[RE: Ovando and Gourd SR-Q](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 23, 2010 4:15 PM

Status:

Published

Oh yes. As an English teacher the differences are so apparent to boggle the mind sometimes! But I think that learning other languages helps me with my own. I credit many of my language structure abilities to my knowledge of Spanish. I spent 3 years learning the language in high school and 4 college level courses (I stopped just short of a lit course in favor of other grad requirements). I miss the language and I wish that I had the opportunity to practice it as I did when I lived in CA. But, ASL is definitely one that I want to learn. Andy teaches me what he can and I always have his class come through when they volunteer to do Christmas carols around the holidays. I have already planned to do some continuing ed after grad school in the area of language development :)

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Ovando and Gourd

Post:

[RE: Ovando and Gourd](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 23, 2010 4:10 PM

Status:

Published

I appreciate your story about Chai. My friends mother was a teacher in Chile, but her experience did not transfer over here. Carmella is now an IA in a kindergarten classroom. Ironically, her husband Tom, taught in the U.S. and then moved down to Chile to teach. He ended up dropping the profession when he came back to the U.S. because they would not accept his years of teaching in Chile, 10 years, as part of his professional experience and were only willing to hire him as a beginning teacher. A beginning teacher who had been in the profession for 15 years!! So, he ran his parents ranch and now owns a successful winery:) He and Carmella were lucky to have family support when they moved to my home town.

**Tags:** None

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Thread:

Banks

Post:

[RE: Banks](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 23, 2010 3:43 PM

Status:

Published

Brian,

I agree that we Language Arts teachers have many more opportunities than other disciplines to do what Banks suggests. But, I believe that it is also possible to make use of Banks' ideas in the science and math classroom as well. Perhaps it would be possible to discuss mathematics principles in terms of how they are used in various cultures or how they originated? Do you think that mathematics plays a role in certain types of art forms that come from various places?

Andrea

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Ovando and Gourd SR-Q

Post:

[RE: Ovando and Gourd SR-Q](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 23, 2010 3:35 PM

Status:

Published

Vanessa,

I am fortunate to teach in a district that has a very strong ASL program. Many of our students choose to learn about and take part in this culture. It has really enriched our students. They perform services for the theatre arts program. There are always at least two performances of each production that are ASL interpreted. I am friends with the ASL teacher at our school and he is constantly trying to raise awareness amongst his students. He has them read about the ASL community and its struggles etc. I personally wish that I could learn the language, but, for now, I will have to make do with the small number of signs he teaches me:)

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Ovando and Gourd

Post:

[RE: Ovando and Gourd](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 23, 2010 3:20 PM

Status:

Published

Vanessa,

I think that family linguistic culture is to some extent also connected to education and economy, though I do believe that we are at a dangerous time where English only is becoming more of a threat to family culture. I have a good friend that I have stayed in touch with since junior high. He grew up in a bilingual household. His father speaks English and Spanish and his mother speaks Peruvian and English. In the morning they spoke English and in the afternoon they spoke Spanish. I think that the fact that both his parents spoke both languages made a huge difference. Sadly, I think that it was also because both of his parents were well educated. His father taught in Chile for many years, where he met his wife Carmella. Matt has spent a couple summers with his grandfather in Peru as well. His grandfather, from what I remember, was the chief of medicine in Lima. I think that his family had the luxury of continuing this part of his culture. It may not be so easy for those students and families who are all working very hard to have a different life.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Lecture 8 Response

Post:

[Lecture 8 Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 23, 2010 3:10 PM

Status:

Published

## Module 8 Lecture Response

While it is important to recognize that some cultures approach learning in distinctly different ways, it is still important not to fall into the pit of "lazy stereotypes" and recognize that people should still be seen as individuals (slide 3). Nevertheless, it is important to become familiar with all different types of learning styles so that we can be prepared for the individual students. In order to help us prepare for such circumstances, Dr. Mvududu outlines some specific teaching styles that do not work well for the learning styles of many people of color. First, she lists individualistic/competitive modes of organization, pitting students against each other to motivate them. Secondly, she mentions presenting information only in a linear fashion. I will need to pay heed to this one because this is how I process and learn information, so I might have a tendency to favor this in my instruction. Finally, she cites visual/written input sources (slide 3). I don't think that this suggests I change everything about how I teach. I think that Dr. Mvududu is suggesting I be aware of these ideas and do my best to create a balanced learning environment that supports ALL students' learning styles. That is my goal as an educator in the first place, but I need to learn more to be aware and I need to act on that information. I could, for example incorporate family interaction as part of some of my lessons. In a recent mythology unit, I had my students find a myth of their own that they wanted to use. One of my students is from Nigeria, she came up to my desk every day to tell me a new story she had learned from her father. I could tell this had been a meaningful learning experience for her and I am definitely doing it again next year. I am also going to keep my classroom geared towards a more collaborative approach, which I have shifted to in the last two years. I ask my students every year if they like what they are doing in those units, the majority respond that they do. I am also glad that my style of encouraging questions to which there is more than one answer is also a method of culturally sensitive teaching. I teach in a school that is predominantly white middle class (about 90%), so many of my students struggle with this concept, but I see it as a healthy way of promoting the formation of ideas and perspectives. I do have to break down information initially, but as long as its goal is open ended questions I think I am headed in the right direction. With *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, for example, one unit goal is to discuss whether conflict shapes people or if people shape conflict. The students will need information prior to this discussion, but they can get that information in a variety of ways, not just through text books and handouts.

Tags: None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

[Ovando/Gourd SR/-Q](#)

Post:

[Ovando/Gourd SR/-Q](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 20, 2010 4:27 PM

Status:

Published

### SR/-Q Module 8-

#### Chapter 16- "Knowledge Construction, Language Maintenance, Revitalization, and Empowerment"

##### Summary:

This chapter by Carlos J. Ovando and Karen Gourd argues for "the recognition of the complex, interactive model of education and the acknowledgment of the centrality of language and culture as an educational issue"(p.317) To that end, the authors outline previous policies in the American education that specifically deny the use of native languages in classrooms. They present the argument of the opposing side, which is that by teaching student in the language of power, most often English, there is a creation of unity. They state that "some people argue that language loss may be a good thing, and that fewer languages will promote easier communication and provide opportunities for world peace" (p.303). But, the authors refute that argument by stating that learning a second language while keeping their first is a viable alternative and empowering to the students. The authors use four examples of language programs that prove what they are saying. They cite the cases of Rough Rock (Navajo), Peach Springs(Hualapai), New Zealand ( Maori), and Hawaii(Hawaiian). The results of the efforts of these programs to include native languages in instruction and activities lead the authors to believe that language is a central component in " perceiving, processing, and storing information" because they are "culturally influenced" (p.315). Acknowledging a student's native language empowers them and encourages them to achieve. The authors suggest that this has profound implications for how we approach education of a pluralistic society, but they recognize that limited resources will be a key factor in any possible changes. But, they do suggest that the nature of these programs has insights for how we approach education. They believe that "these programs also lend support to modern school reforms that focus on shared decision-making models in which teachers are viewed as professionals able to make appropriate decisions. . . teacher training that prepares educators to teach in culturally and linguistically sensitive ways"(p.315).

##### Response:

I found this article especially interesting because of its connection with my undergraduate English major courses as well as some of what I teach in the classroom. In my undergraduate studies, I took a few linguistic courses. One of those was a sociolinguistic course in which we studied the evolution, transformation and connection of language to culture. Part of what we studied was the disappearance of specific languages and how it affected the members of that culture. Based on that course and the reading for this module, I tend to agree with the connection between knowledge construction and language because of its connection to cultural identity. I liked their suggestion that the integration of native languages, in whatever capacity, should be treated as an opportunity to acknowledge students and invite them to share instead of treating it as a remediation. I am thinking of a student that I have currently. She is Greek and very much identifies herself with that culture. While I know that the Greek language is not in danger of disappearing, I think it is an example of a community that has pulled together as the authors suggest. The Greek people have not relied entirely on the schools to tackle it alone. Parents, churches, etc. have worked together to keep the language alive. I also had a roommate in college who taught Hebrew at her synagogue. It is my job as a teacher to provide this student with an opportunity to express herself using her language. We just completed a mythology unit. She asked if she could do her final assignment in Greek (summarizing two myth stories and illustrating them—we are practicing summarization). She did this for her project and put a translation of her summary on the back. Opportunities like this are a small step towards what the authors were describing, but I feel it is important to do what I can with what I have.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 7 Lecture Response

Post:

[RE: Module 7 Lecture Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 16, 2010 3:13 PM

Status:

Published

I risk parents going to the school board, and then I would face a formal reprimand that would go into my record. Also, if we stick with the approved literature, we are supported, for the most part, when parents "opt out" their student from the classroom lessons regarding a particular novel.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Recent Events in Arizona

Post:

[RE: Recent Events in Arizona](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 16, 2010 1:03 PM

Status:

Published

I would agree with your uncertainty. If I was positive that the identification was really a requirement for everyone, that it wasn't singling out and identifying individuals as "other", I could be more sure. But the world has a history of using identification of people to single them out for negative purposes. We want people to be legal immigrants so that we know they are taking part in the system (voting and paying taxes). That I don't see as a negative thing. But, it is the underlying attitudes and fears that scare me. I liked how the article mentioned that, in the case of the Arizona curriculum legislation, there was the assumption that any class that dealt with a multicultural perspective would be advocating for dissension. Fear of what is different has manifested itself in very negative ways throughout history. Sometimes people take advantage of that fear to tout their own agenda. This is where my uncertainty comes from.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 7 Lecture Response

Post:

[Module 7 Lecture Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 16, 2010 12:55 PM

Status:

Published

### Module 7 Lecture Response: Authentically Multicultural Curriculum

Curriculum debate extends to traditionalists versus multiculturalists. It is also a "negotiation between what society desires students be taught and their own interests and desires"(slide 2). The second aspect of this "negotiation", identified by John Dewey, is supported by multiculturalists. I have the benefit of more choice in my texts. There is not a book that I am required to use 90% of the time, so I should be very conscious about what choices I make in regards to diverse texts. I should constantly ask myself how diverse those choices I make really are. This is important because I am affecting the manner in which my students construct knowledge simply by the choices I make regarding what I have them read.

While I am limited by the list of approved literature, I can make an effort to point out whether an author is writing from an insider or outsider perspective. There will also be opportunities to talk about the assumptions authors make about people and how we can see that in their development, or lack of development in characters. For example, every year my students and I have a conversation about why Curly's wife's name is never given in Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men* and why there is a "woman in a red dress" as the root of George and Lennie's troubles. This involves a discussion of the author's perspective and society's history of treatment of women. This will be a way for me to "model the knowledge construction process that we've been talking about" (slide 7). I believe that with literature, like the media, it is important for me to help my students become "selective consumers" (slide 8). When the students are watching films, conversations about how characters and events are portrayed are just as important as talking about developing themes in novels.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 7 SR/Q: Banks

Post:

[RE: Module 7 SR/Q: Banks](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 15, 2010 9:48 AM

Status:

Published

Philip,

I agree with you, they stem from two separate fields (law and education), but I also feel that one is response to the fear generated by another. I grew up in California, so I have some familiarity with the emotions involved with the issue of immigration, specifically people who do not follow the formal process. It seemed interesting that these two events in the same state happened so close together and it made me wonder if some of the fear of "other" was what was driving these forces. I have not yet had a chance to look at the CNN post, but will this weekend and will hopefully have more clarification for my post. Thank you for your thoughts!

Andrea

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 7: Howard

Post:

[RE: Module 7: Howard](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 13, 2010 8:33 AM

Status:

Published

Kristin,

I found this article to be interesting as well, especially the part where it discussed the generation gap among European immigrant families. Mine falls under the "we are American, but we are Irish too". Genealogy is huge with my mom. She has pictures that date back to my great great great aunt (who, we discovered, is where my brother's features came from). It is really interesting to talk to my relatives on my mothers side about heritage. On my fathers, they are American with a vague sense of "where they come from". I would be really interested to learn about my ancestors in that family tree, but that part of the family has been here many more generations.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread: Module 7 SR/Q: Banks  
Post: [Module 7 SR/Q: Banks](#)  
Author: Andrea Freeman  
Posted Date: May 12, 2010 12:11 PM  
Status: Published  
Module 7 SR/-Q: "The Intergroup Education Movement"  
Cherry A McGee Banks

It was easier to follow the information in this chapter having read all the previous information about the multiculturalism movement. Because of the previous information about transformative knowledge and current trends in the multicultural education movement it was easier to recognize the reasons why the intergroup (including the intercultural part) was not continued after the mid-1950's. While this chapter did cover the differences between intercultural and intergroup ideas, the main focus was on the common ideas of both. Some common goals were: 1) lessening the tension between racial and cultural groups, 2) helping to create an appreciation for aspects of different cultures, and 3) helping young students appreciate diversity so that they would be less likely to engage in conflict when they left school. Many studies were done, like The Springfield Plan, The College Study, and The Project in Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools, the Center for Intergroup Education, and the Philadelphia Early Childhood Project. While many of the efforts of people in this group contributed to more knowledge about culture and race relations, they were mainly content integration efforts and not long lasting (Banks, C.A., p.272). The work in this movement, however, set the stage for future leaders to explore justice and unity and to build the multicultural movement. Banks suggests that "Identifying and utilizing common values can motivate diverse people who are at different levels of privilege, power, and inclusion in society" (Banks, C.A., p.273), a sentiment which is echoed in the chapter by Gary Howard. Banks makes another important point about the intergroup movement. She mentions that even though the efforts of the movement served as a springboard for the multicultural movement, it was also responsible for creating the idea of "other", a lesser entity than the group in power. This idea arises out of the context in which the movement developed.

It was interesting reading these two chapters together. On the one hand, we read about the groundwork laid by the intergroup movement for the multicultural movement. On the other, we read about what future steps need to be taken in order to have unity and justice in an increasingly pluralistic society. In the Banks chapter, she mentions that the intergroup movement needs to be placed in context as happening at a time where the idea of recognizing the importance or value of another race or culture was anathema. Then there was the counterculture movement of the 60's which confused things even more. In the second article, Howard also mentions that we are in some ways returning to that state of fear. I was interested by an article which came out in the Associated Press today regarding the legislation in Arizona that "prohibits classes that advocate ethnic solidarity, that are designed primarily for students of a particular race or that promote resentment toward a certain ethnic group" (Cooper, J.J., May 12th 2010). This news follows a recent Arizona legislation regarding illegal immigration. I am definitely going to read more about these two things because I feel they might highlight many of the things we have been talking about in our discussions.

#### Reference List

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Cooper, J.J. (May 12, 2010). Arizona gov. signs bill targeting ethnic studies. Retrieved from [http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US\\_ARIZONA\\_ETHNIC\\_STUDIES?SITE=WHIZ&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US_ARIZONA_ETHNIC_STUDIES?SITE=WHIZ&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT)

Tags: None

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Thread: Multicultural Education and Banks  
Post: [RE: Multicultural Education and Banks](#)  
Author: Andrea Freeman  
Posted Date: May 9, 2010 11:24 AM  
Status: Published

Whitney,

I also have struggled with your question. How do I balance out the need to have my students see that there are many sides to the same story with the fact that I only have a certain number of hours during the week and the top down requirements push me towards coverage rather than depth. My efforts to date have been to use content that shows the same ideas from different perspectives and also showing my students



how an author's point of view influenced their writing. I feel that if I help them discover literature as a point-of-view, they are more likely to recognize this in the world around them.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 6: Banks

Post:

[RE: Module 6: Banks](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 9, 2010 11:17 AM

Status:

Published

I agree, I think we need to find a medium. I also find myself wavering back and forth depending on whether I am reading Banks or Schlesinger! I don't know the answer either, but I think valuing the individual while seeking the formation of a community is a place to start. If I look at the foundations of what makes a community and then find a way to help students create one within my classroom I will go a long way towards encouraging that in the world outside the classroom.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 6 Lecture Response

Post:

[Module 6 Lecture Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 9, 2010 11:12 AM

Status:

Published

Module 6 : Lecture Response "Cross-cultural teacher-student communication"

This lecture was a much needed reminder for me. I always try to be conscious of the ways that I communicate with my students, but I tend to forget that I am communicating even when I am not speaking. When I am having one-on-one conversations I am always conscious of my body language and my interaction with the student, but I remember that I am communicating non-verbally even when I am not speaking with a student. I took a course on this in college entitled "Teacher As Actor", but I needed to be reminded of this now that I have been in the classroom for six years.

Dr. Mvududu mentioned that 90% of instruction is taken up by teacher talk. It was comforting to know that, even though I might have forgotten about my non-verbal communication, I make a very concerted effort to only do direct instruction for about 10 minutes of most periods. I like to design my literary units based on the collaborative/discovery model of instruction. I may not have realized the cross-cultural implications of choosing these methods instead of a more passive student role, but now I am even more convinced that I should step back and help my students interact with each other and I need to be able to ascertain learning in an active learning environment. The non-linear approach is a little more difficult for me though. I recognize that I am a linear thinker and I need to support those students who may not be. A way that I can do this is to vary the types of question technique that I use in class discussion. I will need to be more familiar with these practices in the coming years as the demographics of my classroom change more dramatically from the predominantly middle class white majority that I have been dealing with for the last five years.

I need to be prepared to help all students become familiar with communication patterns that might be different from their own without requiring that they completely abandon the values of their own culture. For example, I have a student that others have labeled "socially awkward". After listening to Dr. Mvududu's discussion of cross-cultural communication I have come to the conclusion that a significant part of this is due to a cultural difference. This young lady is Chinese and moved here from Canada her 10<sup>th</sup> grade year. I believe that she is, in part, shy, but there is also a cultural communication barrier that makes it more difficult for her to take an active role in class discussion. When I first began working with her, she would approach me after school and tell me she didn't understand. I would ask her what she had questions about and she would simply stare at the floor. I was becoming incredibly frustrated by this behavior. I wanted to help her, but I didn't know what she needed. I talked with her former teacher, I spoke with her counselor, and I had a meeting with her parents. All of these things did nothing to help my interactions with her and she was sliding into further silence in the classroom. Finally, I told her that I would like to help her, but I requested that she come to me with her questions written on her paper. I thought that this would be less intimidating. She started coming in after school each day with new questions. She would sit there, looking away from me and asking me what she wanted to know. Now, she has

progressed to asking the questions without having her paper, and I have even seen her voice her opinion in her group discussion. I believe that part of this might be due to some academic difficulties, but I think that a good portion of her difficulty lies in cross-cultural communication. I am relieved to have that clarified for me and I can have more informed communications with this student.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 6 SR/-Q Banks

Post:

[Module 6 SR/-Q Banks](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 6, 2010 11:38 AM

Status:

Published

Module 6 SR/-Q: "The African American Roots of Multicultural Education"

James A. Banks

In this article, James A. Banks traces the origins of the Multicultural Education movement back to African American scholars who set the stage by challenging stereotypes and myths using the scholarship paradigm that was established at that time. The work that was begun by scholars such as Woodson, DuBois and Williams has led to a common overall goal; but, from the beginning, "there is less agreement among them about its exact boundaries, dimensions, and specifics" (p.30). Current multicultural scholarship, like Afrocentric scholarship, is more definitive in these areas, but there are still further steps that need to be taken. Early scholarship may have provided a foundation, but in order to "cement and unify a deeply divided nation", students need to be familiar with the questions about positionality and sources of bias (p.41). If they are familiar with the questions, it is more likely that they will not simply be satisfied with the status quo. Banks suggests that this will be a challenge in the 21st century because of the changes that are occurring and the political support that is needed.

This article was interesting because it helped deepen my understanding of how transformative knowledge fits into the idea of multicultural education. It was clear in this article that multicultural education is undergoing a transformation of its own and that I need to understand its roots and facets in order to have an accurate picture. It was also interesting to read about the intellectual discrimination that was visited upon early African American scholars and how that struggle has not really gone away, just changed. I also agreed with the quote, "our understanding of a group remains incomplete when the perspective of either the insider or outsider is overlooked"(p.52). I think that is true even in this course. Having read Schlesinger's book, I found myself recognizing the discussion of similar questions within the two articles in this module. It has strengthened my ability to think about the issues and questions presented.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Eleanor Roosevelt (Black)

Post:

[RE: Eleanor Roosevelt \(Black\)](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

May 3, 2010 7:41 AM

Status:

Published

I first thought of her in regards to that question, but then I thought she has been less subtle than Eleanor Roosevelt. I think that there may have been periods of her political career when Clinton has taken a quieter road to make herself heard, but I came to the conclusion that she seems different from the earlier First Lady.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Bethune SR-Q

Post:

[RE: Bethune SR-Q](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 29, 2010 2:47 PM

Status:

Published

I also had a few moments where I wondered about her husband and family. I also struggle with keeping a balance and I was wondering how much she had to sacrifice to do what she did. The article focuses on her economic hardships and her leadership success, but it does not mention the impact that all of that had on her personal life.

Tags: None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Roosevelt

Post:

[RE: Roosevelt](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 29, 2010 2:45 PM

Status:

Published

I agree with your assessment of Eleanor Roosevelt's ability to provide measured responses and to avoid grandstanding. I think that her career is a good lesson that loud isn't always the best way to make yourself heard. Sometimes a quiet voice in the room is more likely to be listened to and respected. That's not to say that loud doesn't have its place, but subtlety has its place too. I also liked that she set out to be an example of change. Her resignation from the DAR was not a power move, it was simply a statement of belief and taking action in support of that belief.

Tags: None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Bethune SR/-Q

Post:

[Bethune SR/-Q](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 29, 2010 2:34 PM

Status:

Published

## SR/-Q Module 5-

### Chapter 12- "Mary McLeod Bethune: Feminist, Educator, and Activist"< /span>

#### Summary:

This article by Elizabeth F. Barnett outlines the life of a very influential leader in American history. Mary Bethune spent most of her life as an educator, but not always in a classroom. While much of the information about her life is not verifiable, the general description of her accomplishments is impressive. She began by opening her own school which eventually turned into a college, Bethune-Cookman Institute, in 1941. She moved beyond being a leader in the classroom and the school by taking on many national responsibilities. She was the president of the National Association for Colored Women, where she "became involved in working to end educational segregation, lynching, and discrimination in voting rights"(p. 221). She also was given the opportunity to influence President Roosevelt when she became his advisor regarding minority affairs in 1936.

Despite her rise on the political stage, she never failed to model her personal beliefs about women's' rights and seeking equal liberties for African Americans. Her actions blended these agendas together. She worked to gain access for women by encouraging and providing African American girls with an education. She saw this as serving dual purposes. She felt that educating African America women was necessary for the survival and strength of the African American community. But, she also saw this as a move towards universal rights that included women of all cultures.

#### Response:

I enjoyed reading about both influential women in this module. Eleanor Roosevelt is one of my hero's. But, I especially enjoyed reading about the influence of Mary McLeod Bethune because I felt she embodied the soul of culturally responsive teaching. She had the ability to uplift her

culture while still contributing to the unity of the nation. She fought for the rights of all women, an inequality which was doubly felt by African American women. As I read about her, I kept thinking about the novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, written by Zora Neale Hurston, which describes the journey of a young African American woman to find personal freedom and identity. This is one of my all time favorite books. I have a feeling that she would have believed in Bethune's vision of equality, freedom and justice, especially as it regards women. I am not sure, however, whether Bethune and Eleanor would have seen eye to about how to further the cause of civil rights. I think that Eleanor Roosevelt might have been more passive than Bethune, though no less influential. Bethune would support an approach to multicultural education that included both information relevant to the lives of individual students and the dominant culture.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

"Race, Gender and Calling..."

Post:

[RE: "Race, Gender and Calling..."](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 26, 2010 7:28 AM

Status:

Published

I love how you related the conflict to today's world!!

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Insights from the Sunday Paper

Post:

[RE: Insights from the Sunday Paper](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 25, 2010 6:30 PM

Status:

Published

That was a very interesting read. I was not surprised to find the phrase "it's xenophobic, it's not overly rational and it's really shades of McCarthyism all over again" at the end. I was thinking it all the way through. The fear of the unknown can bring hidden ideas out into the open. It just shows that many attitudes have not changed, they have just gone underground (which was mentioned in Yu's article).

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 4 Lecture Response

Post:

[Module 4 Lecture Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 25, 2010 6:22 PM

Status:

Published

Module 4 Lecture: Twin Pillars of Justice and Caring

While listening to Dr. Mvududu's lecture "The Twin Pillars of Justice and Caring, I was struck by the quote from Marva Collins, "I believe that my students will become like stars that will light the world with excellence". I really liked this quote and I am going to put it on my quote board in my classroom at the beginning of the year next year. I completely agree with and believe in the idea that students respond to our faith in them. I have conversations with some of my special education colleagues who believe that I am too challenging for their students. I tell them that, with support, those students can achieve more than what is expected of them. This is also true for any of my other students. I know that it makes a difference, because they have told me. I also feel validated in my policy of not accepting late work. A few years ago I decreased the number of my assignments, made each assignment more meaningful and stopped accepting late work. It was amazing how the students rose to that mark and they felt they had achieved something at the end of the year. Their grade meant more to them than a contribution to their

average. I also agree with her idea that a culturally responsive teacher still includes critical thinking while giving basic skills support. She called it "warm demandingness" and "potential is not fixed". There are things that I need to continue to remind myself to do. I need to keep many things in the back of my mind while interacting with my students. For example, how I divide my attention between my male and female students. I should keep track each period of how many times I call on each, to make sure that they are receiving equal consideration. I was especially interested in Dr. Mvududu's insight about eye contact. It had never occurred to me that people in some cultures do not make eye contact when talking. I always assumed one of the young ladies in my class was too shy. She always talks to me, but never looks up at me. This explains a lot and gives me reassurance.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

The Oriental Problem

Post:

[RE: The Oriental Problem](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 25, 2010 10:31 AM

Status:

Published

Vanessa,

You might be very interested in Amy Tan's autobiography. It illustrates the concept of role switching. There were some elements of her own life in her novels, but hers was different altogether in some ways. I highly recommend the book. It has Amy Tan's wonderful writing style, but offers a different perspective on her as a person of Chinese descent growing up in the United States.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Constructing the "Oriental" Problem

Post:

[RE: Constructing the "Oriental" Problem](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 25, 2010 10:27 AM

Status:

Published

I had the same experience growing up, my parents pulling me aside and explaining why my grandparents used the words they did and why I was not supposed to. It was disconcerting to hear them talk sometimes. My grandfather on my mom's side (son of Irish immigrants), for example, used the term "oriental". I remember my mom explaining that there were a lot of reasons why he did this but that I was not to repeat what he said because it was wrong. I was really little and I loved my grandpa, but he often said things that confused me. I think back on holidays and remember how unique that experience was. There were four generations in one room: My great grandmother (spoke Gaelic), my grandfather, my mother and myself. Lots of different ways of thinking in that one room!

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

"Race, Gender and Calling..."

Post:

[RE: "Race, Gender and Calling..."](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 24, 2010 11:05 AM

Status:

Published

I agree! I also think it would be good for educators to read more about teachers like these. They are truly an inspiration and remind us of why many of us come to the profession and why many of us stay. It is a calling, it is a sense of something beyond ourselves that motivates us to enter the classroom each day. These women knew that they were going to make a difference, no matter how hard that calling was. It was also a humbling experience to read this article. I think about all the seemingly petty complaints I make and hear about each day. The copier is broken, my papers haven't come back from the copy center on time, I have a student who seems to be late every time we have extended lunch. It's good to put my concerns in perspective every once and a while.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Mod. 4 Lecture

Post:

[RE: Mod. 4 Lecture](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 24, 2010 10:58 AM

Status:

Published

Vanessa,

While I can't completely identify with your situation with the health impaired student, I see and witness some of the same attitudes. I had a wonderful student a year ago who is challenged by autism. My classroom and a social studies classroom were the first mainstream rooms he had ever been in. This young man struggles with making connections beyond basic fact memorization. His parents, however, are determined that he get the best possible education, as they should. He did wonderfully! at his own pace and level. He rose to the challenge. He is now in his senior year. I am friends with his English teacher and I know that she appreciates his efforts and works around his limitations as I did. I know, however, that many of his other teachers are not happy about the concessions they have to make and feel that he doesn't belong in their room if he is unable to perform, with accommodations, at the same level as other students. I feel as if they aren't seeing the bigger picture with this student. He has much to offer, in his way and would benefit from any interaction he has with them.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 4 SR/-Q

Post:

[Module 4 SR/-Q](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 20, 2010 4:45 PM

Status:

Published

#### SR/-Q Module 4-

#### Chapter 9- "Constructing the 'Oriental Problem' in American Thought, 1920-1960"

##### Summary:

In this reading by Henry Yu, he reviews the formation of the idea "the oriental problem", beginning with a group of sociologists, including Robert Park, in the early 1920's. Park and other sociologists defined the "oriental problem" as "the shared experiences of Chinese and Japanese in being excluded from the White experience of successful assimilation" (157). On the opposite side, missionaries defined it as "the prejudice and misunderstandings of Whites concerning 'Orientals,'" (158). There was a survey developed in order to gather information about this problem and Parks' assimilation cycle influenced the content of the survey. Parks believed that assimilation was inevitable when two groups came together after a process of competition, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation. Parks suggested that Asians were unable to complete this cycle because people assumed that they couldn't (161). Parks attributes this belief to the fact that the public saw them as physically "other". Parks states that they "cannot become a mere individual, indistinguishable in the cosmopolitan mass of the population" as groups like the Irish had been able to do (161). Parks' pursuit of the "problem" in the Asian experience eventually involved scholars who were Asian American. This group of academics was eventually classified as a different type of person in society and academia, the "marginal man". The article identifies the "marginal man" as an individual who is "between worlds", and thus able to offer a unique and unbiased perspective to the research process. Parks' work and the eventual inclusion of Asian American scholars laid the foundation for both the deterioration of the goal of assimilation and for the inclusion of Asian Americans in the academic field of sociology. It also provides a unique perspective into the historical marginalization of Asian cultures in America, like the Chinese, Japanese and others. The shared discrimination of these people in the United States "had a great effect on how Chinese and Japanese Americans were seen, on how they saw themselves, and on how those who no longer wanted to see themselves as "Oriental" would come to redefine themselves" (173).

##### Response:

I remember growing up and learning about assimilation in my history classes. We discussed how groups came to the United States and were marginalized, legally, by the "native" people who did not want them to take their jobs. I am the granddaughter of an Irish immigrant. My grandfather, Bernard Francis Casey, was the first person on my mom's side of the family born in America. I have included a picture of him in his Liberty Suit, a symbol of "successful" assimilation (I share this with my students). I mention this because I learned about the experiences of other immigrants from learning about my own family history. The Irish are mentioned in the article because, according to Yu, they were able to complete the assimilation cycle outlined by Parks. I was also reminded of the westerns I watched growing up and the stereotyped roles that Asian Americans were forced to play. I found it interesting that the Asian American scholars mentioned in the article were not considered mediated authorities, like Mourning Dove or Ella Deloria. I can't imagine how difficult it must have been for those individuals to be forced to compromise their own identities in order to be accepted into the academic world.

**Attachment:**  [Bernard-John-Francis-Casey-.gif](#) (92.664 KB)

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

SR/-Q Module 3: Mediation and Authority

Post:

[RE: SR/-Q Module 3: Mediation and Authority](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 18, 2010 11:32 AM

Status:

Published

Jessie,

Thank you for your question! I teach 10th and 11th grade English and I wish that we could coordinate the way that you do, but we are not able to for a variety of reasons; textbook availability, for one. However, we are able to make connections. For example, when I go over *The Crucible*, we talk about the McCarthy trials and the 5th Amendment. In that discussion we talk about how minority groups (race, income, culture) were at a disadvantage and targeted by the majority in power. Arthur Miller, the author of the crucible, was targeted as well. Many of my students are able to make connections later in the year with their social studies unit that focuses on the same time period. I would not recommend my stories and novels because of their reading level and complex themes. I think, however, that "Dead Man's Path" would be a good story for lower grade levels, I use it with my English 10 students. All the others that I mentioned are part of my English 11 literature.

Andrea

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Mod. 3 Lecture Response

Post:

[Mod. 3 Lecture Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 18, 2010 11:23 AM

Status:

Published

Lecture Response: Module 3

The lecture presentation made me feel even more grateful for this course. In my teacher training courses that I completed for my BA, there were very few multicultural resources provided. In fact, the only training I received, now that I think about it, was a few afternoons reading through a folder of articles in my university's Multiculturalism Center. Those articles did nothing to provide me with strategies and barely raised my awareness. The readings for the last few modules have been both enlightening and affirming. It has been helpful to learn about the evolution of the multicultural education movement and about the current issues that affect my classroom and my school. I was reading an article in *The Economist* about California's schools and it was shocking to hear some of the statistics, many of which can be connected to the need for culturally responsive teaching. The article mentions that "Los Angeles Unified, which happens to be the second-largest in the country, has just become the first to be investigated by the Federal Office for Civil Rights about whether it adequately teaches pupils who have little or no English" ("California's Schools", 34). This is important because the state is currently suffering from a severe budget crisis and equality in education is likely to further suffer. In the same issue there is also an article about the desegregation of schools in Wake County North Carolina, a school district that decided that their solution would be to assign students to school based on income level. They thought they were successful, but a closer look shows that they are still doing a disservice to their non-white population ("Desegregation and Schools", 34-35). I am thankful that I am in a position to analyze my own teaching and I am looking into getting a copy of Geneva Gay's book, *Culturally Responsive*

*Teaching.* I also appreciated the breakdown of the current positions and misunderstandings about multicultural education. I have heard many of those misconceptions come from the mouths of teachers that I know, and I am glad to have some background that will allow me to engage in conversation about those issues. While I feel that I have done a good job of talking to the students about being "one among many" and that there are "alternative ways to see the world", it is also important that I be aware of how learning styles can vary across culture, something I know I have not really considered. It will be important for me to take that into account when I am thinking about how activities and information are presented in my classroom.

#### Reference List

California's schools: From bad to worse. *The Economist*, 8676(395), 34.

Desegregation and schools: Has Wake County thrown out the baby with the bathwater. *The Economist*, 8676(395), 34-35.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

SR/-Q Module 3: Mediation and Authority

Post:

[RE: SR/-Q Module 3: Mediation and Authority](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 17, 2010 2:32 PM

Status:

Published

That is a great idea! I wish that I had a similar resource for my classes.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Murillo and equal opportunity

Post:

[RE: Response to Kari](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 17, 2010 9:53 AM

Status:

Published

I agree, we need to do the best we can to support them with any resources we are given (beyond simply reading and writing). I guess I should add that school attendance is an additional frustration. My friend has good relationships with her ELL students; however, she struggles to keep them coming to school. Her goal is to give them the skills they will need to be successful in school and work, but many of them are not legal and/or have families that do not value education. I feel that these students, who begin with such drawbacks, are hurt even further by testing. I listen to my friend as she talks about administering standardized tests to these students, I can hear her deep frustration. Many of her students decide ahead of time that there is no reason to take the test because, as they have told her, they are not going to be here long enough for it to matter or they know they won't understand the questions. The portion of the article that stuck out to me was the part about testing, my friends students popped into my head.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 3 presentation

Post:

[RE: Module 3 presentation](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 16, 2010 6:14 PM

Status:

Published



I have run into this situation as well. I grew up in the country and my students get a kick out of some of my stories, but sometimes I have to do mini lessons on country living to help them contextualize (fresh eggs or sending meat to a butcher).

Andrea

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Murillo and equal opportunity

Post:

[Response to Kari](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 16, 2010 6:01 PM

Status:

Published

I understand what you are saying about the need for parents and families to be involved. I have a friend who is an ELL teacher part-time. She teaches English 10 in her other classes. On Curriculum Night, she waits outside her door and is lucky if one parent shows up in all of her first three classes. Her last two, the parents of the English 10 students, almost fill her classroom. This is one of her many frustrations as an ELL teacher.

Andrea

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

SR/-Q Module 3: Mediation and Authority

Post:

[SR/-Q Module 3: Mediation and Authority](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 15, 2010 7:35 PM

Status:

Published

### SR/-Q Module 3-

#### Chapter 8- Mediation and Authority: The Native American Voices of Mourning Dove and Ella Deloria

##### Summary:

In this reading by Carol Miller, she uses two case studies to illustrate how American Indian tradition and culture studies, especially the early ones, should be critically examined for outside influences of mediation. She cites these two studies for the purpose of recognizing the ways that Native people counterbalanced the mediation and, in the instance of the two case studies mentioned, reveal "two characteristics of cultural being-sharing and the stamina to survive" (149). Miller argues that the authority of culture is shoved aside when another force of power seeks to mediate the voice of the source (141). The first case study involves Mourning Dove, author of *Cogewea the Half-Blood and Mourning Dove, A Salishan Autobiography*. The second case study focuses on Ella Deloria's *Speaking of Indians and Waterlily*. In both of these studies, the authors' works are mediated by a non-Native person, and so their voices are rendered unrecognizable to themselves. But in both cases, "when the insider voice is accounted for", it is possible to reconstruct the knowledge and identify the customs and traditions that the authors were trying to communicate (149). Another common thread that identifies the authority of the authors' voices is the fact that these two authors adhere to American Indian storytelling traditions, such as the lack of literary closure for conflicts. The implications of this type of critical reading, texts by authors and writers who are trying to record knowledge about their cultures, in the classroom are the purposeful engagement of teachers and students in the process of identifying contexts of texts and seeking to clarify "what and how we know" (154). After identifying these elements, we are more likely to get authoritative information about culture.

##### Response:

I chose to summarize this article because I felt that it directly relates to some of the literature that my students read, write and discuss. I was grateful to this article for helping me identify an area of my curriculum where I needed to improve my own teaching practices regarding reconstructive knowledge. I teach Sherman Alexie's short story "This Is What It Means To Say Phoenix, Arizona" from his collection *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight In Heaven*. I picked this story because I felt that, in a class dedicated to American literature, the Native voices should be heard. I chose Sherman Alexie because his stories take place so close to home, involve teenagers, and capture some of the struggles of the

American Indian in Washington State. I talk with my students about his purpose for writing the stories, who the audience is supposed to be, and how this story represents the tradition of Native American storytelling. At the end of our discussion of the story (it is the last of three short stories) they watch and discuss the film *Smoke Signals*. I think that I need to further discuss with them the author's voice and the mediation that could have occurred in the production of the film, even though Sherman Alexie wrote the screenplay for Sundance Film Festival. We already discuss the way that Alexie is trying to reconcile the new with the old in his stories, but I think further discussion of Alexie's voice and perspective will be important.

**Question:** After reading these articles, were there any areas in your curriculum where you felt compelled to immediately make changes?

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Mod 2 Presentation Feedback

Post:

[RE: Mod 2 Presentation Feedback](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 13, 2010 9:20 AM

Status:

Published

I second that! I am already altering some of the units that I do with my juniors and sophomores and I am hoping it is for the better!

Andrea

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 2 SR/-Q Allison Davis

Post:

[RE: Module 2 SR/-Q Allison Davis](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 11, 2010 5:49 PM

Status:

Published

Thank you both for your interest! "Dead Man's Path" is actually a short story by Chinua Achebe. His famous literary novel is *Things Fall Apart*, which I have not yet read. The students really like the short story a) because it is so short, b) they can have a great discussion and in some ways disagree about parts of it.

Andrea

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Mod 2 - Lecture Response

Post:

[RE: Mod 2 - Lecture Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 10, 2010 12:41 PM

Status:

Published

Susan,

There are times were I wonder the same things that you do about basic knowledge skills. Each year I am faced with students of decreasing vocabulary and writing skills. Often I find myself returning to "the basics", when I get them as sophomores. But, I think that we can't discount popular culture as a source of this deficit. I deal with a decreasing attention span and a lack of care in writing. Students often use their "text-speak" in their writing.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Module 2 Lecture Response

Post:

[Module 2 Lecture Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 10, 2010 12:32 PM

Status:

Published

Module 2 Lecture Response: The Need for Multiculturally Literate Teachers

While I was listening to the lecture about the need for teachers to be multiculturally literate, I had a couple of thoughts running through my mind. One was, "what am I currently doing in my classroom that would be an example of my own efforts towards multicultural literate teaching?" Another thought was, "what more can I be doing with my curriculum?" I felt that there were a couple parts of the lecture that I personally identified with in regards to those two questions. I appreciated the reminder that multicultural literacy is an ideal, something we should strive for but would never be able to fully accomplish. This set my heart to rest a little bit but also motivated me to further any efforts that I am currently making. In response to the lecture, I realized that I see more socio-economic diversity than anything else; which doesn't mean that I shouldn't be seeking to broaden my students' horizons about other types of culture.

My own curriculum has had to undergo a change in the mere six years that I have been teaching, in response to this socio-economic diversity, and will continue to change. Homework is one of the major changes that have occurred. I have a large number of students who have part-time jobs outside of school to help out their families; in some cases, older siblings are responsible for raising their younger siblings. I have had to rethink how students practice the skills we go over in class and how I assess them. The number of assignments that I give my students has been reduced by 50% and the amount of class time dedicated to working on those assignments has gone up dramatically. Classroom expectations have also had to change in response to that shift. In order to increase students' vocabulary and reading skills, parts of class time are also dedicated to personal reading. Many students do not have the luxury of enjoying a good book when they are at home; our department tries to provide an opportunity for them to experience that. I have been working on other changes to the focus of my curriculum as well, in response to the rising socio-economic diversity in my classroom. When we talk about themes in literature, I need to make more of an effort to help students with personal connections. In *The Great Gatsby*, for example, many of my students may feel, as consumers did in the 1930's Great Depression, that they are not interested in reading about the glitz and glamour of the 1920s. They might actually feel resentful of a time when there was careless spending and outrageous behavior. So, instead we need to focus on the illusion v. the reality of that time. They may feel more connected to the idea of reality and can apply that to their current experience.

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Woodson SR-Q

Post:

[RE: Woodson SR-Q](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 8, 2010 7:23 PM

Status:

Published

I also like Woodson's efforts to make his ideas public. I liked the fact that he was the mediator for his own knowledge. Sometimes, when the mediator is someone else the information can be skewed and become biased by the mediators ideas and interpretations. Which, of course, I feel that I need to remind myself to be careful of as a teacher!

Andrea

**Tags:** None

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Mark as Unread](#)



Thread:

Response to Presentation

Post:

[RE: Response to Presentation](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 8, 2010 7:19 PM

Status:

Published

Jessie,

For me it is usually independent research. I ask students to share their experiences as well. My sophomores do a writing assignment where they create a personal Rite of Passage, or they can describe one that is already important to them. Most of them talk about graduating high school or getting their driver's license, but often they share some really unique experiences, which are opportunities for me to learn from them. This year I have a student who comes from a Greek family. The students asked her questions about her rite of passage, a wedding, and asked her to tell us whether the movie "My Big Fat Greek Wedding" was accurate. She loved the opportunity to talk about her culture and why it was important to her.

Andrea

**Tags:** None

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Thread:

Poverty vs. Race Presentation Response

Post:

[RE: Poverty vs. Race Presentation Response](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 8, 2010 7:14 PM

Status:

Published

Robin,

In response to your question about whether or not others experience the same socio-economic diversity, rather than race or culture, I would say that I do. Due to the economic downturn our number of students with FRL has definitely increased. I remember teaching *Of Mice and Men* and the Great Depression at the beginning of the year. Many of my students really identified with some of the struggles that people dealt with in the 1930's here in the U.S. I have had to alter many of my approaches to some of the themes because I know that the dynamics in my classroom have changed somewhat over the last few years. They had a deep understanding of, as they saw it, the illusion of the American Dream.

Andrea

**Tags:** None

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Thread:

Module 2 SR/-Q Allison Davis

Post:

[Module 2 SR/-Q Allison Davis](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 11, 2010 6:42 PM

Status:

Published

## SR/-Q Module 2-

### Chapter 6- Allison Davis and the Study of Race, Social Class, and Schooling

Summary:

This article outlines the professional career of Allison Davis and the foundations that were laid down for his contemporaries in the area of research about multicultural education. The author, Michael R. Ellis, credits Davis' research with being a necessary beginning for current thought about multicultural education theory and practice. Ellis claims that "education is strongly influenced by societal factors such as race, class, and the sociocultural context in which it occurs" (p. 115). The article moves from Davis' academic training to the research activities from which he produced his pivotal works, including *Children of Bondage* and *Deep South* and his Inglis Lecture at Harvard University. In these works, Davis explored his ideas about the limiting nature of schooling that is centered on a middle-class white perspective. Educators need to work hard to break away from doing things the way that they have always been done. He presents Davis' ideas in a way that leads to recognition that simply incorporating the perspective of other groups is simply perpetuating the original practice of identifying another. Instead, groups should also be acknowledged as a diverse collection of beings and ideas within themselves. He believed that the middle-class perspective was institutionalized and that all participants in the educational system needed to work together to find ways of helping all students feel involved in

their environment so that they could find value in their education. Ellis proceeds to show how Davis' work impacts or could affect current study on multicultural education in the areas of curriculum, testing, and cultural learning. Ellis believes that Davis' work supports the idea that multicultural education is "about recognizing that knowledge is a social construction . . . and that we can more closely approximate the truth by presenting views in the curriculum that are representative and comprehensive" (p. 123).

Response:

I found this article especially interesting because I teach in a middle-class suburban school. Every day I am faced with the results of students growing up in that environment and I am thankful for growing up in the community that I did. I find myself searching for texts that will open up my students' eyes to not only diverse perspectives, but also help them recognize the influence that a person's perspective has on the information in the text. My example would be a short story that we read by Chinua Achebe titled "Dead Man's Path". The main theme of the story is tradition, but it also emphasizes that they need to recognize that everyone is different and they need to seek common ground for communication without dismissing individuality within traditions. The students discuss the story from the perspectives of both the headmaster, the headmaster's wife, and the villagers. My hope is that they come away from the story recognizing that everyone has traditions, many which are different from their own, and it is not a good idea to force people onto "their" own path (not meaning that they can never present their own ideas or beliefs).

**Tags:** None

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Thread:

The Historical Reconstruction of Knowledge About Race

Post:

[RE: The Historical Reconstruction of Knowledge About Race](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 5, 2010 8:54 AM

Status:

Published

I agree with you about [To Kill A Mockingbird](#), it is the perfect opportunity to talk about how our communities can influence us as we grow up. In the case of the novel, Atticus and Ms. Maudie help the children move beyond the attitudes and prejudices of the town. The expectations of Scout that come through her Aunt Alexandra are also food for discussion. I am currently discussing the novel with my students. This is the first year that I have shown the film "Scottsboro Boys" by PBS as a supplement to chapters 18-22 (the trial). It has been a great discussion starter! The students notice the different forms of discrimination happening and the different ways that injustice occurred. They are particularly shocked to find out that the boys' attorney struggled with their case in the southern court because of his religion. This is one of those rare moments when a student approached me after class and thanked me for helping them understand the depth of the situation in the book. I wish I had those reactions from students more often, but I'll keep working at it!

**Tags:** None

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Thread:

Module 1: Cannon Debate

Post:

[RE: Module 1: Cannon Debate](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 1, 2010 8:43 PM

Status:

Published

I agree with what you said about looking at literature that has been written from another perspective. I love it when I can find two pieces of literature about similar situations that have been written from two different perspectives. Or, sometimes I can find media that challenges the students to think more deeply about their perceptions of what they have just read.

**Tags:** None

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Thread:

The Historical Reconstruction of Knowledge About Race

Post:

[The Historical Reconstruction of Knowledge About Race](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 1, 2010 6:29 PM

Status:

Published

*The Historical Reconstruction of Knowledge About Race: Implications for Transformative Teaching*

In this article, James A. Banks outlines the manner in which knowledge about race has been formed and reformed during the period between the late Nineteenth Century and the middle of the Twentieth Century. He begins by describing how the viewpoints of intellectuals are not just the product of those individuals; they are also subjective because they are also created by the society in which that individual is a member. This occurrence is referred to as positionality. As a result, ideas about race are also a product of those societies. Banks mentions the famous W.E.B. DuBois as an example of an intellectual who was able to transcend the constraining influence of his society because he, and other African American scholars, "were victimized by institutionalized racism and discrimination, they constructed ideas about race that would help to liberate themselves, as well as their communities, from institutionalized discrimination and oppression" (78). Banks describes the rise of this institutionalized racism that DuBois and others were able to cast aside, beginning with the conquering of Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas in the name of Christian Europeans' expansion and colonization. The belief that "others" were inferior justified the subjugation and enslavement of native peoples. This is evident in Columbus' journals, written during his exploration. Supposed scientific studies of physical attributes were conducted and believed to support this belief and continued into the 1940's and even into the 1990's. Banks suggests that we can learn from DuBois. We can help our students question where their knowledge and understandings come from and help them figure out how that knowledge was built. If they can see how knowledge is constructed, they will be better equipped to develop their own ideas and understandings.

This article was interesting to me because I teach English 11, which in our school is American Literature. There are certain novels that I am expected to teach and some supplements that I am able to slip in. While I was reading Banks' discussion of Madison Grant's book I was reminded of a passage in the first chapter of *The Great Gatsby* in which Tom Buchanan is telling Nick Carraway about his concerns that the "Nordic race" would disappear. It was almost like I was reading that page of dialogue from Tom all over again. This is a section of the novel that my students struggle with. I also appreciated the discussion of positionality. I like to encourage students to think about the context of the books they are reading. Who wrote it? Why did they write it? How did the time period in which they lived influence their writing? How did the way that the author lived their life affect their writing? The novels we teach are an excellent opportunity for us to review our ideas about society and where they come from. I also remembered an American Literature course that I took during my undergraduate studies, during which I read many of Columbus' journals. That was a startling revelation for me at that time. The Columbus in those journals was not the Columbus I had learned about in grade school, the man who "sailed the ocean blue".

Tags: None

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Thread:

Precourse perceptions of multicultural education

Post:

[Precourse perceptions of multicultural education](#)

Author:

Andrea Freeman

Posted Date:

April 1, 2010 1:37 PM

Status:

Published

During my teacher training, we were taught to see multicultural education as an addition to set curriculum. We were encouraged to find ways of including pieces of outside perspectives in our curriculum. That seems a bit inadequate to me. It seems more helpful to encourage students to always look for other points of view, to consider the source of the information and to form understandings of their own. When they read literature, we are always talking about "perspective" and "point of view"; therefore, all materials used for these types of activities should, to fulfill that goal, be diverse. The students should be encouraged to have conversations and listen to each others ideas, sharing their personal experiences.