

# Culture Abilities Resilience Effort

## *Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps*



**ENDURING  
UNDERSTANDINGS**



**STUDENT  
ACTIVITIES**



**REFLECTIONS**



**RESOURCES**

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*C.A.R.E.: Strategies for Closing the  
Achievement Gaps*

*Third Edition, 2007*

The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing 2.7 million elementary and secondary teachers, education support professionals, college faculty, school administrators, retired educators, and students preparing to become teachers.

Copies of this guide are available at  
<http://www.nea.org/teachexperience/careguide.html>

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# Foreword

Foreword

by Reg Weaver, President, and John I. Wilson, Executive Director  
National Education Association

Not all students are learning and succeeding in school. This comes as no surprise to educators, to parents, to potential employers, and—most profoundly—to students themselves. The reasons why are as diverse and complex as the students we see in our communities and classrooms each day. So, too, are the reasons why we cannot shake our heads, sit idly by, and hope the problem will correct itself.

From its beginnings, our nation's school system has treated students differently, depending on their race, social class, and gender. Today, despite gains in educational opportunities, significant gaps in academic achievement persist among groups. As a nation, we have struggled to correct the flawed doctrine of "separate but equal" and the inequitable policies and practices that persisted for decades. As educators, we must now understand and interrupt the systematic ways that groups of students are still being treated inequitably today. We must explore new ways of thinking about what and how to teach. This publication—*C.A.R.E.: Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps*—will help us do just that.

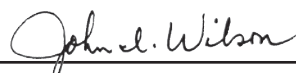
Research-based and developed through the collaborative efforts of teachers, education support professionals, researchers, community advocates, parents, and practitioners, *C.A.R.E.: Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps* offers concrete ways to examine and change curriculum and classroom practices. C.A.R.E. stands for culture, abilities, resilience, and effort. As we learn about the cultures that students bring to school, and how to connect these cultures to what students learn, we must also learn about the culture that permeates school and how it advantages or disadvantages certain students. As we learn about the abilities that students possess and how to build on them, we must also learn about what abilities are valued in school and look at alternative ways to assess what students have learned and can do. As we learn about how students are resilient and how to direct that resilience toward academic achievement, we must also learn about how resilience can manifest itself as a rejection of school success and how protective factors differ in different contexts. Finally, we must learn about how students find the motivation to put effort into their studies and discover ways to foster that effort.

As educators working together to make these changes, we are not only advancing our profession, we are advancing the very goals of social justice. Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. NEA's commitment to great public schools for every child means that every child will have access to the benefits that a quality education can provide. We envision a society in which individuals are able to develop their full capacities, fully prepared to live in communities with others, and contribute fully to society. The measure of our success is not in the end results such as scores on standardized tests, but in the immeasurable ways that students experience school: how students feel about themselves, interact with others, and prepare for their futures.

We know that closing the gaps to student achievement is a process and a goal. The many contributors to the pages that follow do not pretend to have all the answers, but it is their hope that this publication will continue the discussion. Advancing social justice requires asking very different questions about what and how to teach. *C.A.R.E.: Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps* provides concrete examples of how to do just that.



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In the summer of 2003, NEA gathered a diverse group of researchers, practitioners, Association staff, and community-based advocates in Washington, D.C., to identify research-based instructional strategies, school change activities, and family/school engagement efforts for closing the achievement gaps. The result of this work is the *C.A.R.E.: Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps* guide. We would like to thank the C.A.R.E. Advisory Committee for its valuable contributions to this effort.

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# Chapter 1

## Chapter 1

### Opportunities and Challenges in Public Education

Over the last several years, student achievement has increased for all groups in all subjects, yet the gaps between rich and poor, White and minority remain a persistent problem. A number of events have occurred on the national, state, and local levels that have made an impact on how schools and teachers approach the issue of closing the achievement gaps. The growing ethnic, racial, and economic diversity of our classrooms is demanding new strategies and skills in communication, instruction, and curriculum development. At the same time, standards-based reform, budget and program cuts, federal and state accountability laws, the “adoration” of test scores as the sole measure of school success, and overwhelmed parents and educators have placed a heavy demand on public education’s and educators’ resources.

The current version of the federal education law, “No Child Left Behind,” has created many challenges for educators. Helping students meet standards and pass tests has become a central activity in many of our lives. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides more information than ever before about the relative performance of students on state standardized tests and highlights the need to ensure that all students succeed even beyond what the tests require.

The National Education Association is placing an expanding emphasis on building support systems and providing resources to NEA affiliates and members to help close the achievement gaps. NEA works with families, local communities, business leaders, and state and national politicians to close the gaps and turn around low-performing schools. These efforts resulted in the creation of the NEA Priority Schools Initiative in

2001. The initiative has yielded several products and services aimed at assisting schools in closing the gaps.

Among the products generated from the Priority Schools Initiative is *Making Low-Performing Schools a Priority: An Association Resource Guide* (available in print or online at [www.nea.org/prioritieschools](http://www.nea.org/prioritieschools)). This guide supports local and state efforts to change low-performing schools into priority schools with high academic achievement for all. The guide provides concrete and practical steps for identifying and assisting schools and districts in crisis and includes a resource section to help teachers, parents, and communities leverage support from organizations, business alliances, and others who have a stake in public education.

Another outgrowth of the Priority Schools project is partnerships with states to provide technical and financial resources to assist affiliates and school districts in turning schools around. Using research-based training for members in effective strategies for community outreach and school improvement, NEA is helping states focus school improvement activities on closing the student achievement gaps.

In 2004, NEA’s leadership placed closing the student achievement gaps at the center of its professional development and policy agenda. This agenda has facilitated the creation of partnerships with civil rights groups, foundations, community-based organizations, and others. These partnerships can support putting the best practices to work for improving the academic and social environments of students in struggling schools and for building stronger relationships among schools, families, and communities.

Through its programs and policies, NEA is working to improve public education to provide great public schools for all students.

“What can I do in my classroom?” That is the question we hear most often when educators confront the reality of the achievement gaps in their school. The purpose of this guide is:

- to offer research-based suggestions for what you can do tomorrow to create a learning environment in which diverse students can learn;
- to challenge educators to meet accountability demands while still offering quality instruction to those students who need the most help; and
- to delve into additional resources to spark even more ideas for how to be successful with all students.

Chapters will include references to original research, Web sites, books, and other publications that will help build educators’ knowledge base as they work with diverse groups of students. In addition, there is a resource section at the end of the guide.

## Closing the Achievement Gaps

A major challenge confronts those of us who work in today’s schools. That challenge is the gaps in academic achievement that exist among students by race: White, Hispanic, Black, American Indian/Alaska Native and Asian/Pacific Islander students. The challenge also extends to schools based on the economic status of their neighborhoods, with achievement differences often occurring between affluent and high-poverty schools. A picture of these gaps emerges when federal and state laws require schools to break down the data and identify groups of students who are not achieving at high levels.

In order to close the achievement gaps and help these students to be successful, schools need a new vision of these under-achieving students. The work of researchers like Dr. Belinda Williams focuses on the need to move beyond the restructuring of schools to the “re-culturing” of education. Dr. Williams notes that it is important to understand the difference between “improving achievement” and “closing the gap.” (Williams 2003). “Improving achievement” might involve putting in a new program, or some strategies for parental involvement, or even introducing standards. All of those are important. If they are introduced in a fragmented way, however, what you will typically find is only slight improvement in achievement.

“Closing the gaps” involves not only improving achievement for all students, but taking the steps needed to significantly raise the achievement of traditionally under-achieving groups of students, so that their achievement is on the same level as that of mainstream groups of students. As identified in reviews of the research literature, significant changes are needed to close these gaps. In order to take a leadership role in closing the achievement gaps, there are several things you can do:

- Embrace an agenda that focuses on all children and on targeting those strategies that have been shown to close the achievement gaps among groups of students.
- Revisit assumptions about how learning occurs, and integrate a broad range of disciplines, such as sociology, brain research, and cultural anthropology, including research on human development in different environments and contexts.
- Reflect upon the ways you think about your students and the causes of low student achievement. How can we focus more on factors within the system, rather than within children, that create barriers to

effective schooling for poor and/or culturally and linguistically diverse students? What aspects of the system (e.g., classroom instruction, assessment, curriculum, school leadership) can educators influence? For example, what changes can you influence in your classroom, school, district, community, or NEA affiliate to promote equity in schooling? Educators can contribute to overall changes in the system to promote equity in schooling by targeting what is within their sphere of influence, and then working to expand that influence.

- Research innovative, truly comprehensive approaches to school reform. Most school improvement plans focus on issues like class size and special programs. By embracing an “all children” agenda, looking at integrating a range of theories, and focusing on the system, you can engage in comprehensive planning that includes, but goes beyond, these issues. Comprehensive reform can be redefined by requiring accountability beyond one-dimensional strategies (e.g., standardized tests) and toward approaches that address the multidimensional issues facing schools, classrooms, and students today.
- Reflect on the types of learners in your classroom. How do they learn best? In what ways can educators redefine outcomes and results to enable all groups of individuals to contribute productively to society? How can educators enable all learners with the knowledge and interpersonal skills required to successfully participate in the workforce and in varying social, community, and family contexts?

## C.A.R.E. for All Students

Research suggests that utilizing best practices connected to culture, abilities, resilience, and effort—what we call the “C.A.R.E. themes” in this guide—can close the achievement gaps. These themes represent a current and solid research founda-

tion on what works best for poor and/or culturally and linguistically diverse students. This guide will help you to reflect, plan, and implement approaches that address the C.A.R.E. themes of cultural, economic, and language differences; unrecognized and undeveloped abilities; resilience; and effort and motivation.

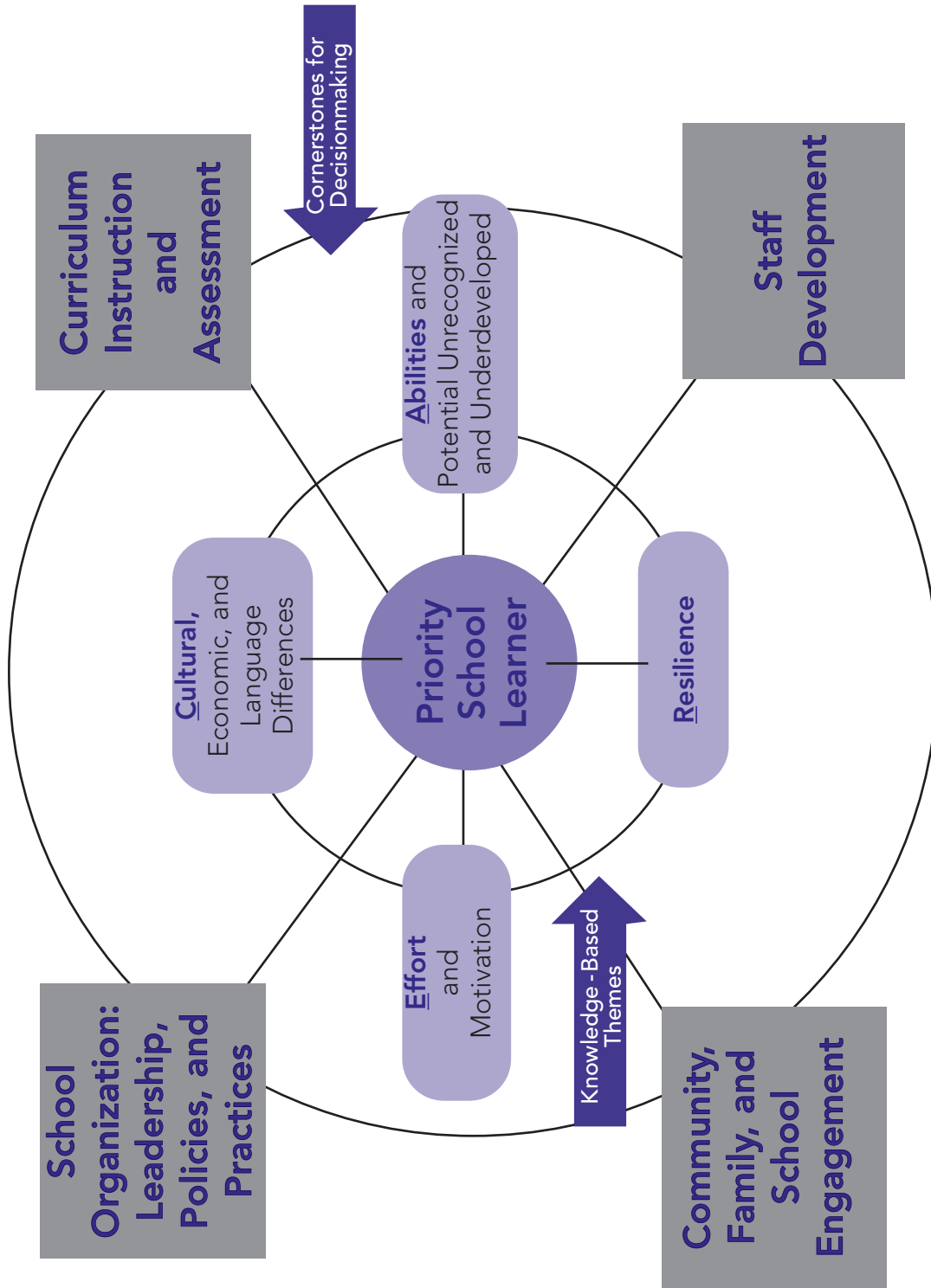
Traditional school reform has focused on four “cornerstones” for improvement: (1) curriculum, instruction, and assessment; (2) staff development; (3) family, school, and community engagement; and (4) school organization. When we combine what research tells us about the C.A.R.E. themes with these cornerstones, we can change schools so they can address students’ unique needs. The Priority Learner Framework that follows (page 1-4) shows how all of these pieces fit together.

The framework helps to pose such questions as:

- How would we engage families differently if we valued their cultural differences?
- How would instruction change if we were focusing on what students know, rather than what they don’t know?
- What would staff development be like if we wanted to increase the resilience of all students?

In this guide we hope to help you reflect on the causes of low student achievement and how we can change the system of public education by using innovative, comprehensive approaches to school reform. We will encourage you to reflect on the types of learners you have in your schools and classrooms, revisit your theoretical assumptions on how learning occurs, and integrate and embrace strategies that have been proven to close the achievement gaps. By using research-based, classroom-proven strategies to address the C.A.R.E. themes, we can help all students to achieve at high levels, close the achievement gaps, and meet accountability standards.

# Priority School Learner Framework



Source: Belinda Williams, Psy.D., Consultant  
NEA Priority Schools Initiative

# CREDE Standards for Effective Pedagogy

Each C.A.R.E. theme correlates to one or two key Standards for Effective Pedagogy, developed by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE). Building on over 30 years of extensive research on pedagogy for culturally and linguistically diverse students and students living in poverty, CREDE has gleaned five core principles of pedagogy that are critical for the success of students historically at-risk of being “left behind.” CREDE has also identified two additional

standards that are specifically relevant for the success of American Indian/Alaska Native students.

CREDE’s Seven Standards for Effective Pedagogy, in brief, are listed in the chart below. The standards marked with an asterisk are particularly important when working with American Indian/Alaska Native students.

The CREDE standards align with the C.A.R.E. themes to create a coherent map for classroom practice that leads from the research on systemic change to classroom practices that promote success for diverse students.

## C.A.R.E. Themes and CREDE Standards for Effective Pedagogy

C.A.R.E. Themes	CREDE Standards
<p><b>Culture:</b> The sum total of one’s experiences, knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, language, and interests. Learning is greatest when the cultures of home and school connect.</p>	<p><b>Contextualization:</b> Connect teaching and curriculum to the experiences, values, knowledge, and needs of students.</p> <p><b>* Learning through Observation-Modeling:</b> Promote student learning through observation by modeling behaviors, thinking processes, and procedures.</p>
<p><b>Abilities:</b> Intelligence is modifiable and multi-dimensional. Abilities are developed through cultural experiences; culture affects thoughts and expression.</p>	<p><b>Challenging Activities/Teaching Complex Thinking:</b> Challenge students toward cognitive complexity.</p> <p><b>Language and Literacy Development across the Curriculum:</b> Develop student competence in the language and literacy of instruction across the curriculum.</p>
<p><b>Resilience:</b> Displayed when protective factors alter a person’s response to risk factors (poverty, crime, etc.) in the environment. Resilient students exhibit social competence, problem-solving skills, and a sense of future.</p>	<p><b>Instructional Conversation:</b> Teach through conversation.</p>
<p><b>Effort:</b> The energy used in reaching a goal. Maximized when students receive teacher encouragement and high expectations for quality work.</p>	<p><b>Joint Productive Activity/Teachers and Students Producing Together:</b> Facilitate learning through activity shared by educators and students.</p> <p><b>* Student Choice:</b> Encourage student decisionmaking.</p>

## How C.A.R.E. Theme Chapters Are Organized

The heart of the *C.A.R.E.: Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps* is divided into four main chapters aligned with the themes. Each of the theme chapters has a similar structure with key sections that are described below:

1. **C.A.R.E. Theme Introductions:** A brief orientation to the C.A.R.E. themes is given that underscores their importance in effectively closing the student achievement gaps, defines each theme, and references what research has identified as key factors in that theme.
2. **Enduring Understandings:** These emphasize the understandings we want to be sustained in the classroom and are drawn from the research on effective pedagogy for teachers of low-income and/or culturally and linguistically diverse students.
3. **Optimal Instruction for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students:** This section describes the knowledge and skills that educators of low-income and/or culturally and linguistically diverse students need in order to be most effective, drawing from the research in culturally relevant pedagogy.
4. **Educator Check-In: How Am I Doing?:** The Educator Check-In is a self-assessment that includes a series of questions about the chapter theme and is designed to help you reflect on your practice and think honestly about what you are doing in each of these areas.
5. **Approaches, Strategies, and Activities At-a-Glance Grid:** This matrix is a ready-reference to sample activities that illustrate each theme and is designed so that educators can review the contents and quickly access what they need.
6. **CREDE Standards for Effective Pedagogy:** Each C.A.R.E. theme correlates to one or two key Standards for Effective Pedagogy, building on over 30 years of extensive research on instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students and students living in poverty by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE).
7. **Ready-to-Use Approaches, Strategies, and Activities:** This section consists of learning experiences that help educators (a) develop a culturally competent learning community in their classroom; (b) recognize and strengthen students' abilities; (c) promote students' resilience; and (d) engage student motivation and effort. The strategies and activities presented are intended to be only a starting point for educators to strengthen their success with culturally and linguistically diverse students.
8. **Chapter References:** This summary of resources will help you to expand your repertoire and understanding of each C.A.R.E. theme.

**Please note:** Use state or district curriculum standards to guide the development of your own activities. We have included examples for elementary and secondary classes.

For more information on any topic or activity, please refer to the resource cited.

# Chapter 2

## Chapter 2

### Culture, Language, and Economic Differences

Culture is the sum total of experiences, knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, and interests represented by the diversity of students and adults in our schools. While culture is often defined and perceived by schools as the celebration of important people, religions, traditions, and holidays, as well as an appreciation of the customs of different groups, it is also more than that. Culture is as much, or as little, as the everyday experiences, people, events, smells, sounds, and habits of behavior that characterize students' and educators' lives. Culture shapes a person's sense of who they are and where they fit in their family, community, and society.

Helping learners make the link between their culture and the new knowledge and skills they encounter inside school is at the heart of ensuring that all students achieve at high levels. In addition, appreciation of diverse cultures is a philosophical concept built on the American ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity, and human dignity. This is acknowledged in documents as varied as the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

#### Why is it important for educators to know and understand diverse cultures?

Knowledge and understanding of the varied cultures represented in our public schools:

- affirms our need to prepare students for their responsibilities in an interdependent world;
- recognizes the role schools play in developing the attitudes and values necessary for a democratic society;
- values cultural differences and affirms the

pluralism that students, their communities, and teachers reflect; and

- challenges all forms of discrimination in schools and society through the promotion of social justice.



#### Enduring Understanding:

Effective teachers of low-income and/or culturally and linguistically diverse students find ways to connect school to their students' lives every day.

Optimal instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students:

- contextualizes or connects to students' everyday experiences, and
- integrates classroom learning with out-of-school experiences and knowledge of life inside the community.

#### Why is an understanding of the role of culture in learning so important now?

Most educators across the country, whether rural, suburban, or urban, can attest to the changing demographics in America's schools. About two of every five public school students are Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander or American Indian/Alaska Native. The urgency for educators to expand their understanding of the role of culture in learning is increased by recent findings that "when students of color are taught with culturally responsive techniques...their academic performance improves significantly" (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). Yet, there are not enough educators of color to accomplish this task; 90 percent of the public school teaching force is white. This long standing disproportion led Paul Barton of the Educational



Testing Service to declare 10 years ago that, “all schools must support their teachers, no matter what race and culture, to become more knowledgeable about diversity so they can be better equipped to work with the changing student populations in their classrooms” (quoted in Coker-Kolo, 2002). This need for the enrichment of all educators’ knowledge- and skill-base is even more pressing today as the demand for the closing of the student achievement gaps abounds.

## CREDE Standards for Culture

- **Contextualization:** Connect teaching and curriculum to the experiences, values, knowledge, and needs of students.
- **Learning through Observation-Modeling:** Promote student learning through observation by modeling behaviors, thinking processes, and procedures.

### How is culture connected to language?

The primary medium of culture is language. How a child or adult processes his or her unique values, beliefs, everyday experiences, and childrearing conventions is mediated through their primary or home language. Thus, in a learning environment that increases the connection between home and school culture, students benefit from:

- a) some use of home language and culture especially in the instruction of English Language Learners;
- b) opportunities for student-directed activities;
- c) teaching strategies that enhance understanding; and
- d) parent and community engagement in the education of their children.

We recognize the difficulty of involving culturally and linguistically diverse parents and community members, yet students thrive when we are successful in engaging the

important adults in their lives. Developing a curriculum that promotes interaction between students and their families can go a long way toward creating a culturally responsive school and high-achieving classroom.

### What can educators do?

Developing cultural sensitivity and competence can be both a difficult challenge and an exciting opportunity for expanding one’s knowledge, skills, and beliefs. Training and professional development opportunities can be sought for school, district, and state level educators. NEA offers cultural diversity training that can help staff recognize the value of multicultural literacy and create an environment that is supportive of multiple perspectives, experiences, and democracy. Diversity training and the necessary self-reflection and persistent engagement with arising issues that follow can result in equitable education opportunities for students and significant personal and professional growth for educators.

Educators who understand culture can help students develop a positive self-concept by providing knowledge about the histories, cultures, and contributions of diverse groups. Thus, schooling has the potential to lay the foundation for eliminating all forms of discrimination and intolerance.

High expectations communicated regularly and consistently to students affect the achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Students in classrooms in which educators encourage them and expect excellence from them do, indeed, excel. And, students learn best when they understand the larger purpose or meaning for their learning — when they know why they have to learn something, and it’s not just for the test.

### Why is advocating for the understanding of the culture of our students important?

Understanding culture in our schools advances the practice of placing students and their life histories and experiences at the

center of the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, infusing cultural knowledge into instruction promotes pedagogy that occurs in a context that is familiar to students and that addresses multiple ways of thinking. As advocates for cultural understanding, teachers and students join as partners in critically analyzing oppression and power relations in their communities, society, and the world.

This chapter offers principles and strategies that begin to address the issues raised here. They help you to understand and to teach from the answers to the following questions:

1. What is culture?
2. How does culture shape identity?
3. What is culturally responsive teaching?
4. How can teachers effectively build upon students' cultural identities to facilitate learning?



NEA Human and Civil Rights offers a variety of trainings and materials that can help educators and education support professionals work more effectively with culturally diverse students and families. Provided by experienced trainers from the Diversity Training Cadre and/or NEA staff, training modules include:

- Understanding Cultural Diversity
- Developing Cultural Identity
- Reacting to Differences
- Valuing Diversity in the NEA
- Our Diverse Community: Living, Working, and Learning Together — A Diversity Module for NEA Education Support Professionals

To request Diversity Training, contact:

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The principles and strategies in this guide are only an initial step on a longer journey toward cultural competence, multicultural awareness, and a social justice perspective in your teaching. Our intent is to open a door to what is possible in meeting the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

### Culture References:

Doyin O. Coker-Kolo, "A Systems Analysis Approach To Integrating Cultural Diversity into Colleges of Education," *Multicultural Perspectives* 4(2):35-39.

National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, *Assessment of Diversity in America's Teaching Force: A Call to Action*, (Washington, D.C.: National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004).  
[www.communityteachers.org](http://www.communityteachers.org)



# Educator Check-In on Culture

## “How am I doing?”

**Directions:** Review the list below. Place a check by each item to reflect your practice. Then indicate the three items you would like to explore in order to improve your practice.

Indicators	“I do this a lot”	“I do this a little”	“I haven’t done this”	My priorities to explore
1. I know the cultural background of each of my students and use this knowledge as a resource for instructional activities.				
2. I know the culture of my classroom environment and behaviors and how it affects all of my students.				
3. I design lessons that require students to identify and describe another point of view, different factors, consequences, objectives, or priorities.				
4. I integrate literature and resources from my students’ cultures into my lessons.				
5. I know the English language level of each of my students (e.g. Language assessments such as Bilingual Syntax Measure, LAS, Woodcock-Munoz, IPT, CELDT).				
6. I provide instruction that helps to increase the consciousness and valuing of differences and diversity through the study of historical, current, community, family, personal events, and literature.				
7. I consistently begin my lessons with what students already know from home, community, and school.				
8. I design my instructional activities in ways that are meaningful to students in terms of their local community norms and knowledge.				
9. I incorporate local norms and perspective into my classroom instruction on a daily basis by talking to students, parents, and community members, and reading relevant documents.				
10. I collaborate with students to design activities that build on community resources and knowledge.				
11. I provide opportunities for parents to participate in classroom instructional activities.				
12. I vary activities to address students’ learning styles (e.g., multiple intelligences, differentiated instruction).				
13. I understand the differences between school academic language and my students’ social language and I use scaffolding techniques to bridge between the two.				

## Culture: Approaches, Strategies, and Activities At-a-Glance

Approaches	Strategies	Activity Number
<b>Establish a Community of Learners and Leaders</b>	Incorporate student perspectives in creating a classroom community	1. Community Agreements, page 2-6
	Establish classroom procedures and routines	2. Template for Procedures Lesson, page 2-6
	Identify unspoken classroom cultural norms and assumptions	3. Educator Reflection—Mismatches in Cultural Expectations, page 2-7 4. Educator Reflection—Power Relationships, page 2-9
	Gather student/community data	5. Student Data Gathering Instrument, page 2-11
<b>Know Your Students and Families</b>	Implement community service projects	6. Community-Based Projects, page 2-13
	Engage families as a resource for learning.	7. Features of Culture, page 2-14
	Establish positive communication with families	8. Educator Reflection—Parent Interviews, page 2-19
	Explore cultural identity	9. What's in My Name?, page 2-20 10. "I am from...." Statements, page 2-22

# Ready-to-Use Approaches, Strategies, and Activities

## Activity #1 Community Agreements

This activity can help each diverse student feel a part of the classroom community, especially if the teacher elicits a response from each child regardless of physical, academic, or language ability.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: K-12  
Duration: 10-30 minutes  
Grouping: Whole class  
Materials: Chart paper, pens  
Objective: Co-create community agreements/classroom norms between teacher and students.  
Assessment: All students participate in the process.

### Lesson Delivery

#### Briefing

1. Give students the objectives of the lesson (e.g., Today we are going to think about how we want to treat each other).
2. Briefly explain “the how” (e.g., We are going to develop a list of classroom norms).

#### Instructional Frame

1. Ask students to brainstorm the following prompt:  
*What would help us work best together in the classroom?*
2. Teacher records responses on chart paper.
3. Teacher and students work together to categorize the responses into community agreements/norms for the classroom.

4. Teacher and/or students rewrite the classroom norms onto a chart to be displayed in the classroom at students’ eye level. For English language learners, be sure to include simple pictures/graphics to illustrate each of the agreements.
5. Teach and model the norms throughout the day.

### Debriefing (Reflection/Closure)

1. Ask students to respond to the following questions:
  - What worked well in this activity?
  - What norms did we follow?
  - What could we do next time to work better together?

## Activity #2 Template for Procedures Lesson

Setting out expectations for how the classroom will operate helps students to understand their role in the learning process. You can work with your students to create procedure charts for common classroom routines such as:

- Group work
- Lining up
- Transition times
- Unfinished homework
- Student-to-student disagreements
- Turning in papers
- Heading papers
- Individual work
- Activity centers

This activity helps to share the responsibility for an orderly classroom among students and teachers.

## Lesson Preparation

- Grades: K-12  
Duration: 5-20 minutes  
Grouping: Whole class  
Materials: Chart paper or tag board, markers
- Objectives: To establish, model, and reinforce classroom procedures and routines
- Assessment: Student participation and following through with classroom procedures

## Lesson Delivery

Briefing: Explain objectives of lesson to students so that they will help you to create a procedure for a classroom routine (e.g., "Today we are going to think about how we line up for recess. What would that look like?").

## Instructional Frame

1. Ask students to develop the steps: "When it is time to line up, what do we do first? What is the second step?"
2. Continue asking students to sequence the steps, as you write these procedures on a chart.

### **Sample Lining Up Procedures**

1. Put work away.
2. Push chair in, and stand behind chair.
3. Wait for signal from line leader to go to line (by table group).
4. Quiet voices until you reach the playground.



## **Activity #3** **Educator Reflection—** **Mismatches in Cultural** **Expectations**

Use this activity to understand and celebrate the differences that may exist among students that reflect their varying cultures.

### Directions

1. In a small group, read the vignette and discuss the "Questions for Reflection."
2. Review the chart on "Individualist Perspective/Collectivist Perspective."
3. Answer the "Discussion Questions" with your colleagues.
4. Would you change any of your answers on the vignette based on what you've learned?

### **Vignette: Mismatches in Cultural Expectations**

In a linguistically diverse, urban neighborhood, parents (and their preschool children) remained with their elementary school children during the school's morning breakfast program. During that time, the students shared their food with their family members. School administrators and teachers felt that the parents were taking advantage of the subsidized breakfast program. Stating that parents were violating federal and district guidelines, administrators decided to close the school doors to the parents in the mornings. Parents protested the action, and teachers felt that the breakfast incident was another example of the school's failure to foster parental involvement.

### **Questions for Reflection**

1. What beliefs might the parents have had that led to their decision to stay at school and eat breakfast with their children?
2. What beliefs might have guided administrators when they prohibited the parents and siblings from

eating breakfast with their school-age children?

3. How did the school personnel and the parents judge each other?
4. How might the situation been dealt with differently by school personnel taking cultural perspectives into account?

### Discussion Questions—"Individualist Perspectives/Collectivist Perspectives"

1. What makes sense to you about the expectations in the "Individualist Perspective" column?
2. What makes sense to you about the expectations in the

"Collectivist Perspective" column?

3. Elaborate on some of the expectations and explain why you agree or disagree with them as an educator. What factors from your own cultural background might influence your opinions?
4. What kinds of conflicts might occur in a classroom because of these different cultural values? How might you deal with such conflicts? What might you do in your classroom to allow for different cultural values?

The LAB at Brown University. *The Diversity Kit: An Introductory Resource for Social Change in Education, Part II: Culture* (Providence, RI: Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002), 25-26.

Individualist Perspective	Collectivist Perspective
Student should "achieve her potential" for the sake of self-fulfillment.	Student should "achieve her potential" in order to contribute to the social whole.
Student should work independently and get his own work done. Giving help to others may be considered cheating.	Student should be helpful and cooperate with his peers, giving assistance when needed. Helping is not considered cheating.
Student should be praised frequently. The positive should be emphasized whenever possible.	Student should not be singled out for praise in front of her peers. Positive feedback should be stated in terms of student's ability to help family or community.
Student should attain intellectual skills in school; education as schooling.	Student should learn appropriate social behaviors and skills as well as intellectual skills; education as upbringing.
Student should engage in discussion and argument in order to learn to think critically (constructivist model).	Student should be quiet and respectful in class because he will learn more this way (transmission model).
Property belongs to individuals, and others must ask to borrow or share it.	Most property is communal and not considered the domain of an individual.
Teacher manages behavior indirectly or emphasizes student self-control.	Teacher has primary authority for managing behavior, but also expects peers to guide each other's behavior.
Parent is integrally involved with student's academic progress.	Parent believes that it is teacher's role to provide academic instruction to student.



## Activity #4 Educator Reflection—Power Relationships

Social change in education requires us to examine the relationships between individuals and groups. The following activity provides research on this issue and a real-life perspective into how that research plays out. Use it with a group of your colleagues or as an individual reflection to improve your practice.

### Directions

1. Read “Historical Power Relations and Their Impact on Development and Learning.”
2. Read the vignette “Letter from Kai James (1998).”
3. Discuss the questions with your colleagues.
4. How can you use what you have heard to make improvements in your classroom?

### **Historical Power Relations and Their Impact on Development and Learning**

Greenfield et al. (1996) and Bartolomé (1995) draw our attention to another key variable in minority child development and learning: the historical power relationships between dominant and non-dominant cultural groups. Frequently, Asian Americans have been touted as the “model minority,” that is, as an undifferentiated group, Asian Americans have not experienced the widespread school failure commonly observed among Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, African Americans, and American Indians/Alaska Natives. Ogbu (1994) offers a distinction between voluntary and involuntary minorities. Voluntary minorities are those who freely immigrate to the U.S., such as Asian Americans. Involuntary minorities are those who have been conquered, colonized, or subjugated by the U.S., such as Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, African

Americans, and American Indian/Alaska Natives. There is a clear parallel between those groups that are involuntary minorities and resulting school failure. For involuntary minorities, participation in public institutions (like schools) that value the culture of the dominant group may result in further loss of culture, language, and power. Thus, in the case of involuntary minorities, it is of utmost importance to create a climate that values students’ cultures and that follows culturally responsive pedagogy. Villegas (1991) elaborates:

A culturally responsive pedagogy builds on the premise that how people are expected to go about learning may differ across cultures.... Cultural differences present both challenges and opportunities for teachers. To maximize learning opportunities, teachers must gain knowledge of the cultures represented in their classrooms, then translate this knowledge into instructional practice. (page 13)

Bartolomé (1995) proposes that culturally responsive pedagogy alone is not enough to mediate the effect of historical inequity on involuntary minorities. Bartolomé emphasizes that methods by themselves do not suffice to advance the learning of involuntary minorities. She advocates what she calls “humanizing pedagogy,” in which a teacher “values the students’ background knowledge, culture, and life experiences and creates contexts in which power is shared by students and teachers.” This power sharing and valuing of students’ lives and cultures may provide a positive counterforce to the negative sociocultural experiences of students; it can enable them to see themselves as empowered within the context of school and allow them to retain pride in their cultural heritages.



## VIGNETTE: Letter from Kai James (1998)

Kai James was a freshman in high school when he wrote the following letter.

“Dear High School Teacher”

I am a new high school student, and I am looking forward to these next years of my schooling. I feel the need to write this letter because I seek a different experience in high school from that of elementary school. One of the things I would like to see changed is the relationship between students and teachers. I feel that a relationship that places students on the same level as teachers should be established. By this I mean that students’ opinions should be taken serious [sic] and be valued as much as those of teachers, and that together with the teachers we can shape the way we learn and what we learn...

After years of being ignored, what the students need, and in particular what Black students need, is a curriculum that we can relate to and that will interest us. We need appropriate curriculum to motivate us to be the best we can be. We need to be taught to have a voice and have teachers who will listen to us with an open mind and not dismiss our ideas simply because they differ from what they have been told in the past. We need to be made aware of all our options in life. We need to have time to discuss issues of concern to the students as well as the teachers. We must be able to talk about racism without running away from it or disguising the issue. We must also be taught to recognize racism instead of denying it and then referring to those who have recognized it as “paranoid.” We also need to be given the opportunity to influence our education and, in turn, our destinies.

We should also be given the right to assemble and discuss issues without having a teacher present to discourage us from saying what we need to say. Teachers must gain the trust of their students, and students must be given the chance to trust their teachers. We need teachers who will not punish us just because they feel hostile or angry. We need teachers who will allow us to practice our culture without being ridiculed...

## Discussion Questions:

- What is Kai James asking teachers to do?
- What do you think James’ experiences as an African-American student have been like in school?
- Why do you think changing the power structure of schools is important to him?
- After reading this letter, what new thoughts do you have about cultural identity, development, and learning?

The LAB at Brown University, *The Diversity Kit: An Introductory Resource for Social Change in Education, Part II. Culture* (Providence, RI: Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002), 27-29.



## Activity #5 Student Data-Gathering Instrument

This activity helps to broaden our understanding of what students bring to their education experience that we can build on for student success.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 4-12  
Grouping: Individual  
Materials: "What I want..." handout (page 2-12)  
Objective: To gather information that will help the teacher understand how students feel about school and learning  
Assessment: Completed questionnaires reviewed by educator

### Lesson Delivery

- Have students write their answers to the questions on the handout.
- This a non-graded activity; you are looking for any data that will help you understand the perspectives and experiences of your students. Their responses, however, can give you a sample of their writing skills.
- You can also use the completed activity as a discussion starter with students one-on-one. Selected questions can be used with K-3 students in a discussion.



There are lots of great resources available to help educators connect to an increasingly diverse student population. You can read books like *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook* (Adams, Bell, and Griffin) or *Against Common Sense: Teaching and Learning Toward Social Justice* (Kumashiro) to gain a better understanding of the issues or look at Jeanne Gibbs' *Tribes* for more practical strategies to apply in the classroom. Check the resource list in Chapter 8 for these and more materials.



## What I Want Most from School This Year

1. What I want most from school this year is \_\_\_\_\_
2. It would be helpful to me in getting what I want most from school if \_\_\_\_\_
3. The biggest problem I expect to have in getting what I want most from school is \_\_\_\_\_
4. I might be able to overcome this problem if \_\_\_\_\_
5. Some places I might go for help include \_\_\_\_\_
6. I really believe I can get what I want from school if I \_\_\_\_\_

## When I Think about School

1. When I think about school my first thoughts are about \_\_\_\_\_
2. My most memorable experiences in school are \_\_\_\_\_
3. What I like most about my present school is \_\_\_\_\_
4. My most painful or disappointing experience in school was \_\_\_\_\_
5. My favorite subject is \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_
6. The kind of teacher I like most is one who \_\_\_\_\_

## When I Am Not at School

1. When I am not at school what I enjoy the most is \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_
2. When I am not in school I spend most of my time with \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_
3. Of all the people I know, the one person I admire the most is \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_
4. If I could have just one wish granted, I would wish for \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_
5. If I could live any place in the world I would choose \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from E.R. Hollins, *Culture in School Learning* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996).



## Activity #6 Community-Based Projects

This activity can help you learn more about what is happening in your students' communities and what matters most to them.

### Lesson Preparation

Grades: K-12  
Duration: Two weeks or more  
Grouping: Whole class  
Materials: Depends on project  
Objective: To use academic concepts and skills in meaningful contexts such as community-based projects and/or service learning projects

Assessment: All students complete a community-based project

### Lesson Delivery

- Briefing:
- Educator investigates possible projects in community such as recycling, taking care of the local environment, tutoring younger students, and volunteer work with community service organizations.
  - Educator connects with community stakeholders to obtain feedback on potential projects.
  - Explain to students the objectives and rationale for this project.

### Instructional Frame

- Teacher presents possible ideas and asks students to brainstorm additional ideas.
- Teacher and students agree on a project.
- Teacher and students co-create a plan to implement project.

Example: Elementary and Middle School

- Teacher and whole class decide to start a recycling program in the school cafeteria.
- Students and teacher decide to which organization earned money will be donated from the recycling program proceeds.
- They work with school administrators and custodians to set up a "recycling center" in the school cafeteria.
- Students create an "infomercial" about the project.
- In teams of 3-4 students each, they go to other classrooms to present the goals of the recycling program and ask for support and participation in the program.
- Students keep track on a weekly basis of amount of recycled materials (plastic, aluminum foil, etc.) by pounds.

Example: High School Science

- Teacher and whole class decide to start a "recycling car oil" program for their Environmental Science class.
- Students coordinate an "Oil Collection Day" in a nearby community location.
- Students make informational posters, flyers, brochures, and public service announcements on radio and television about responsible ways to recycle car oil.
- Students disseminate the information in the community.
- Students organize their teams to staff the Oil Collection Day.

## Activity #7

### Features of Culture



An example of engaging families as resources for learning is found in the following lesson developed for use by the Peace Corps. The homework activity should be completed by the student with his or her family members, and is appropriate for a variety of grades.

### Lesson 2: Features of Culture

Grades: 6-12

Duration: 45-60 minutes for each worksheet

Grouping: Whole class and individual assignments

Materials: Worksheet #1, Features of Culture (page 2-17) and Worksheet #2, Everyone Has a Culture (page 2-18)

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- Explain some of the features of their own culture;
- Describe their impressions of how the culture of the United States and their own culture have shaped them;
- Explain some of the attributes of culture.

### Instructions

1. Write the following statements on the board:
  - No one is exactly like me.
  - I have many things in common with the members of my family and community.
  - Every person in the world needs some of the same things I need.
2. Point out to students that people in various groups often look at people in other groups as “different.” Ask students whether they have seen this occur in their school or community. If so, why has it happened?
3. Ask students to describe some of these differences. Then ask why people in one group might behave differently from people in another group.
4. Explain that many differences are related to culture—beliefs and ways of living that are handed down from one generation to the next.
5. Working from the statements on the board, explain that all people share basic needs, and ask students for several examples (e.g., food, shelter, love, respect). In addition, each of us learns a set of behaviors and beliefs from the people we grow up with. Ask students for examples (e.g., the manners we’re taught, the way we celebrate holidays, how we are expected to behave toward neighbors). Finally, each individual has unique talents and preferences. Again, ask students for examples (e.g., I’m good at math, I’m good at soccer, I don’t like chocolate).
6. Explain that when we talk about behaviors and beliefs that a group of people have in common (not individual talents and preferences), we are talking about culture.
7. Now have students look at some of the features of culture. Provide each student with a copy of Worksheet #1, Features of Culture, (see page 2-17). Ask the students to complete the worksheet by filling in an example for each feature of culture. Work through a few of the features with the students to ensure they understand that they are being objective observers of their own taken-for-granted customs.
8. Take the five features of culture that follow and ask students to discuss the following questions about these features:
  - **Celebrations:** What kinds of celebrations are important in your family? In the United States?

- **Greetings:** How do you generally greet people you don't know? People you do know?
  - **Beliefs about hospitality:** How do you show hospitality in your community? In your school? In your home?
  - **The role of family:** Is there a particular age at which you celebrate an important event in your life with your family or community?
  - **Attitudes about personal space and privacy:** How important do you feel it is to have personal space and privacy?
9. Conduct a class discussion: what conclusions can you begin to draw about the culture of the United States? What are your impressions about how U.S. culture has shaped you?
10. Review Worksheet #2, Everyone Has a Culture—Everyone Is Different, with students. For homework, ask students to complete the worksheet. This will help them identify unique aspects of their own culture.
11. When the students return with their homework (Worksheet #2), have them form small groups and compare their homework responses. After the groups compare their responses, ask:
- Were your responses to the questions exactly alike?
  - What differences did you find among responses?
  - How can you explain the differences?
12. Explain to students that their responses to the worksheet questions were partially shaped by the culture in which they were raised. Make the point that if these questions were given to students from a different culture, their answers

would be different because they have grown up in a different culture. Perhaps they have already found significant differences among their small groups.

13. Write this on the board: "Everyone has a culture." It shapes how we see the world, ourselves, and others. Ask students now to address these questions:
- What is culture?
  - How does it shape the way we see the world, ourselves, and others?
14. Write the word "culture" in bold capital letters across the board. Ask students as a class to come up with a definition. They may find it easier to list aspects of culture—different elements that are true of culture—than to come up with a full definition. Such a list might include:
- Culture has to do with values and beliefs.
  - Culture involves customs and traditions.
  - Culture is collective, shared by a group.
  - Everyone has a culture.
  - Culture is learned.
  - Culture influences and shapes behavior.
  - Culture is transmitted from generation to generation.
  - Culture is often unconscious; people are sometimes not aware of how their behaviors and attitudes have been shaped by their culture.
  - People in all cultures have common needs.
15. Then provide the following definition: culture is a system of beliefs, values, and assumptions about life that guide behavior and are shared by a group of

people. It includes customs, language, and material artifacts. These are transmitted from generation to generation, rarely with explicit instructions.

16. Use the following questions to focus discussion on the role culture plays in forming our behavior and beliefs:

- How do you think you learned your culture?
- How do you think your culture has shaped you? How has it influenced your values, preferences, and beliefs?
- Despite the differences in culture in our classroom, what are some things that everyone in our classroom has in common?
- How does culture shape the way we see the world, ourselves, and others?

*Building Bridges: A Peace Corps Classroom Guide to Cross Cultural Understanding.* (Peace Corps/Coverdell World Wise Schools, Washington, DC. 2003). <http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/>



You'll find great ideas for incorporating the cultures of your students as well as cultures from around the world in resources developed by the Peace Corps for their Coverdell World Wise Schools.

Go to <http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/> for teacher-friendly materials that will support your curriculum.

# Worksheet #1



## Features of Culture

**Directions:** For each feature of culture, think of one example common to people in the United States or in the country where you were born. Use another sheet of paper if you need more space to write.

Styles of dress	Concept of fairness
Ways of greeting people	Nature of friendship
Beliefs about hospitality	Ideas about clothing
Importance of time	Foods
Paintings	Greetings
Values	Facial expressions and hand gestures
Literature	Concept of self
Beliefs about child raising (children and teens)	Work ethic
Attitudes about personal space/privacy	Religious beliefs
Beliefs about the responsibilities of children and teens	Religious rituals
Gestures to show you understand what has been told to you	Concept of beauty
Holiday customs	Rules of polite behavior
Music	Attitude toward age
Dancing	The role of family
Celebrations	General worldview

*Building Bridges: A Peace Corps Classroom Guide to Cross-Cultural Understanding.* (Washington, D.C.: Peace Corps/Coverdell World Wise Schools, 2003). [www.peacecorps.gov/wws/](http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/).



### Everyone Has a Culture—Everyone Is Different

**Directions:** Respond to each question. Use another piece of paper if you need more space.

1. What languages do you speak?
2. What music do you listen to? What dances do you know?
3. What foods do you eat at home?
4. In your family, what is considered polite and what is considered rude? What manners have you been taught? (Think about such things as table manners, behavior toward guests in your home, what to say when answering the telephone, how to say thanks for a meal.)
5. What do you wear on special occasions?
6. How often do you see your extended family (for example, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins)? What role do they play in your life?
7. What holidays and ceremonies are important in your family?
8. Describe something very important to you. It could be a value, such as respect or honesty. It could be a person, such as a parent, brother, sister, or friend. It could be a goal, such as going to college or designing a Web site. It could be a hobby.
9. Based on what you've written, how would you describe the characteristics of the culture you're a part of?



## Activity #8 Educator Reflection—Parent Interviews

One way to establish good communication with families and parents is to think about the conversations that you have with parents during conferences, home visits, “back-to-school” nights, and other interactions. The list below is a checklist of sorts, with issues to think about in preparing for the conversation and conducting the actual discussion.

### Before the interview:

- Does the meeting time allow working parents to attend?
- Is the meeting in conflict with religious or cultural events in the community?
- Have I invited the parent to send a representative, such as an older child, if the parent is unable to attend the interview?
- Have I telephoned those people for whom it would be more common to convey messages orally?
- Have I invited translators and cultural interpreters?

(Cultural interpreters are people who are familiar with the official and unofficial cultures of the school and the cultures of the home. Cultures here include the meanings, values, and practices that are common not only to the ethnic group from which the parent comes but also to their social class.)

- Do I attempt to hold some meetings with parents in the school and others in community buildings (i.e., community centers or recreational rooms of apartment buildings).
- Have I ensured that the doors of the building are unlocked so that parents can enter?

- Have I learned the correct last name and pronunciation of the parent’s name?
- Do I have several examples of the students’ work on hand?
- Have I placed signs in appropriate languages, or appointed guides to escort parents to my room?
- Have support staff been made aware that members of the community will be in the school?

### At the interview:

- How specific and candid am I in giving a parent information about her child’s performance?
- Do I believe in the student’s ability to learn?
- Am I conveying that confidence to the parent?
- How clear am I at explaining what I am attempting to do in class?
- Am I using the opportunity to learn about the parent’s hopes for his/her child?
- Am I using parents’ comments to rethink my teaching strategies?
- Am I giving the parent a chance to ask questions?
- Am I listening/Am I paraphrasing and giving back to the parent my understanding of what is being said?
- Am I allowing time for the parent whose mother tongue is not English, or who speaks a variety of English different from mine, to convey her meaning?
- Am I noting the parent’s non-verbal cues?
- Am I using the opportunity to learn from the parent about the strategies which work well with the student in the area of work habits and conduct?

- Am I using the opportunity to discover ways in which the parent might contribute to the student's learning and the life of the school?
- Am I open to the fact that the parents' economic / social reality may make it impossible for them to participate in school life in the traditional ways?
- Am I using the occasion to provide a parent with more information about the school and about their rights as parents, in order to empower them to participate significantly in the life of the school?
- Am I inviting parents to express their expectations of the school?
- Am I inviting a parent to express dissatisfactions and explore conflicts which he or she has experienced with the school?
- Am I using the opportunity to explain the school's race relations policy to parents from all cultural and racial backgrounds?

Irene McGinty and Noni Mendoza-Reis, *Towards Equity: A Guide for Teaching and Learning in a Multicultural Society: Classroom Applications*. (Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1998), 1105-1106.

## **Activity #9** **What's in My Name?**

Activities #9 and #10 are opportunities to explore both your own and your students' cultural identities.

### Lesson Preparation

Grades: 3-12  
 Duration: 60 minutes  
 Grouping: Whole class  
 Materials: "What's In My Name" worksheet (page 2-21)  
 Objective: To build community among students  
 Assessment: Participation of all students and teacher/ESP

### Instructional Frame

1. Day 1: Explain to students that we are going to use our names to learn about each other.
2. Have students complete the worksheet "What's In My Name" as homework.
3. Day 2: Tell students the story of your name. Explain that today they will get to know each other by sharing their own stories. (Based on worksheet: "What's in My Name?").
4. Ask students to share the story of their names by responding to the questions from the assignment.
5. With older students, you may want to share in small groups and have them respond to the "debriefing" questions, then report to the large group.

### Debriefing

Ask students to process the activity by responding to the following questions:

- Why do you think it is important to know the stories of our names?
- What do we learn about each other through our names?
- How did we do in this activity?
- How can we work better together?

Jeanne Gibbs, *TRIBES: A New Way of Learning and Being Together*. (Windsor, CA: CenterSource Systems, 2001), 276-277.



Name/Nombre \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

## What's in My Name? ¿Qué Hay en Mi Nombre?

Interview your parents. Then, answer the following questions about your name.

*Entrevista a tus padres. Después, contesta las siguientes preguntas sobre tu nombre.*

1. Why did your parents choose your name?  
*¿Por qué escogieron tu nombre tus padres?*
  
2. If you were named after someone, who was it?  
*Si te pusieron el nombre de alguien, ¿de quién fue?*
  
3. Do you like your name? Why or why not?  
*¿Te gusta tu nombre? ¿Por qué, o por qué no?*
  
4. If you could choose another name, what would it be? Why?  
*Si Pudieras escoger otro nombre, ¿cuál sería? ¿Por qué?*

# A+ Activity #10

## "I am from..." Statements

This activity builds on the exploration of cultural identities and incorporates writing skills.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 6-12  
 Duration: 60 minutes  
 Grouping: Whole class  
 Materials: Paper, pencils, copy of "I Am From..." matrix, "I am from..." statement on either overhead or chart paper
- Objectives:
- Help students examine the variety of cultural factors that shape them
  - Learn more about your students
- Assessment: Completion of "I am..." statement by all students and the teacher/ESP

### Lesson Delivery

#### Briefing:

- Explain purpose of lesson to students
- Point out that each of us is influenced by a variety of factors in our lives
- Focus of activity is expression and creativity vs. punctuation and grammar

### Instructional Frame

1. Show students a sample of an "I am from" statement. (Your own, or see sample below).
2. Show students matrix of sample categories/factors.
3. Ask students if they have any more categories to add to matrix.
4. Give students time to write their

own "I am from" statements.

5. Students share their statements at tables.
6. Students discuss ways their statements were alike and different.

### Debriefing

Process this activity by asking students the following:

- How are you like your classmates?
- How are you different from your classmates?
- What did you learn about your classmates?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- What did you learn that surprised you?

### I AM FROM...

Southern ways  
 Music  
 Soul food  
 People of all shades  
 Slaves  
 Bright colors  
 Loud voices  
 Concerts  
 "Go on Girl"  
 Sweet potato pie and  
 Turkey in the oven  
 Chitterlings on the stove  
 stinking up the house  
 Dancing all night  
 Racism and small slights.

(W. Gary, October 2001)

### "I am from..." Matrix

Category/factors

Places	Events
Products	Phrases
Food	Smells
People	Sounds
Common things	Sights
Pictures	Ouches



# Educational Support Professional Check-In on Culture

## "How am I doing?"

**Directions:** Review the list below. Place a check by each item to reflect your practice. Then indicate the three items you would like to explore in order to improve your practice.

Indicators	"I do this a lot"	"I do this a little"	"I haven't done this"	My priorities to explore
1. I know the cultural background of the students and/or parents I come in contact with and use this knowledge to be more effective in our interactions.				
2. I reach out to parents to help them access services and information in our school.				
3. I am familiar with the variety of languages our students use and understand.				
4. I know the English language level of the students with whom I work.				
5. I work to help increase the awareness and valuing of differences and diversity between students through training and by participating in community events and school activities.				
6. I understand the value of the differences and diversity in our school staff and population.				
7. I incorporate local norms and perspectives into my work on a daily basis by talking to students, parents, and community members and reading relevant documents.				
8. I collaborate with students, families, and teachers to design activities that build on community resources and knowledge.				
9. I make connections with parents to help them feel at home in our school.				
10. I understand the differences between school academic language and my students' social language and I help teachers make connections between the two.				



# Chapter 3

## Chapter 3

### Unrecognized and Undeveloped Abilities

The challenge facing every educator is ensuring that each student reaches her or his fullest potential. Often we cannot clearly see what that potential is, but it is still our responsibility to coach, guide, encourage, and support a student to achieve at the highest possible level.

This section of *C.A.R.E.: Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps* will give educators concrete ideas about how to fulfill the responsibility of helping a diverse array of students meet high standards. But first, it may be worthwhile to question a few longstanding assumptions about student ability. In this questioning, we are likely to find that all students have the capacity to achieve at high levels...if we change the way we think about them.

Let's begin by challenging a few closely held beliefs about student learning.

**Belief #1:** "How Sally scores on the standardized test tells me what she knows and what she can learn."

**Challenge:** Robert Sternberg (2001), a noted testing psychologist at Yale University has said, "There is no test that can tell you what a child's potential is. It can only give a glimpse of what the child *currently* knows and can do." Standardized achievement tests give only a snapshot of what a child knows and say nothing about the child's potential for learning and growth.

When educators appreciate the broad array of students' interests, communication styles, and ways of knowing the subject matter, they recognize the need for multiple approaches to instruction and assessment. They know that standardized tests seldom allow for tapping into the wide range of what their students know and are able to do. Alternative assessments develop from a

recognition that learning is as much a social event as a cognitive one. For example, in one alternative assessment strategy, educators engage students in the assessment of their own work through student-led parent-teacher conferences (Stiggins 2003).

**Belief #2:** "We all know what intelligence is. You either have it or you don't. Whatever a child's IQ is, well, that's it."

**Challenge:** Despite much debate, research, and opinion, we really do not know what intelligence is. All we really have are theories about intelligence, and some researchers suggest there are multiple kinds of it—all kinds equally useful and supportive of student achievement.

This is a vitally important piece of information for educators who have students with diverse backgrounds and experiences, and thus, many ways of knowing and interpreting the world. With an appreciation for the many variations in how students learn, you have the opportunity to be successful with all your students—if you have access to multiple ways of teaching.



**Enduring Understanding:** Effective educators of culturally and linguistically diverse students find ways to connect school to students' lives and recognize that intelligence can be changed by learning experiences.

Optimal instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students:

- acknowledges that students come with unrecognized abilities and underdeveloped potential;
- integrates multiple abilities and higher order thinking skills, and fosters autonomy.



Research at major universities over the past 10+ years has resulted in the dismantling of long-held notions about the nature of intelligence. This has been good news for educators who know that many students are smarter than they “test.”

For example, Howard Gardner, a Harvard-based researcher, has been one of the scholars (and perhaps the most familiar) to rethink the idea that intelligence is a single concept that can be measured by a traditional Intelligence Quotient (IQ) test. In Gardner’s view of intelligence, students are able to solve problems and create products using:

- verbal/mathematical/logical abilities (what is usually measured on an IQ test);
- musical, spatial, and bodily movement abilities;
- abilities for understanding oneself and others; and
- abilities to understand the natural world and spiritual ideas (Chen, et al. 1998).

But Gardner’s is not the only theory of intelligence that suggests that 1) intelligence has more than one major aspect; and 2) intelligence can be developed—that you are not limited by what you are born with. Other researchers suggest that intelligence is something that can be grown, developed, and learned (Perkins 1995; Sternberg 2000).

As you work with students from different cultures, economic backgrounds, and home languages, you may find that they are adept at demonstrating what they know using a wide variety of abilities. In addition, you may find that students may start out slow, pick up speed, and catch up with their peers. This can happen when what they are taught builds on what they know from their everyday experiences.

For example, Haberman’s (1991) view of good teaching is contrasted with a “pedagogy of poverty.” A pedagogy of poverty, in

## CREDE Standards for Abilities

- Challenging Activities/Teaching Complex Thinking: Effective educators of culturally and linguistically diverse students challenge students toward cognitive complexity.
- Language and Literacy Development Across the Curriculum: Effective educators of culturally and linguistically diverse students develop student competence in the language and literacy of instruction across the curriculum.

Haberman’s view, entails many familiar teaching practices like assigning and reviewing homework, giving and reviewing tests, and marking papers and giving grades. The balance of teacher control and student autonomy is weighted toward the teacher (Ferguson 2004). “Good teaching,” in Haberman’s view, helps students see major concepts and general principles while applying new ideas to their real-life problem. Good teaching helps students to be engaged with issues they see as vital and develops their capacity to plan their own learning. Furthermore, a ‘pedagogy of promise’ also engages students with applying ideals such as fairness, equity, and justice to their world. For example, effective reading teachers engage students in challenging discussions of the meaning of reading materials that reflect on their direct experiences (Taylor, et al. 2002).

Challenging our assumptions about student intelligence(s) and abilities opens the possibility for students to use their unique ways of understanding the world to grow their intelligence.

**Belief #3:** “My students don’t speak English: how can I expect them to grasp math concepts and other complex topics?”

**Challenge:** When educators use appropriate teaching strategies, English language learners (ELLs) can become proficient writers and readers and successful in math, sci-

ence and other core subjects. Sometimes these strategies require that ELLs learn the mechanics of a subject matter using their own language before they make the transition to English. For other students, joining subject matter instruction with language development provides the key to opening students' full potential.

When we consider the central importance of language in learning and in understanding culture, we find a need to become more familiar with our students' everyday lives, beliefs, and values. In their cultures, we are likely to find a foundation for students' grasping of complex concepts and processes.

These common misconceptions about abilities often stand in the way of educators being fully successful, resulting in students missing the opportunity to meet their highest potential. This guide offers practical classroom and school strategies, coupled with suggestions for partnering with families and communities, which enable educators to challenge these beliefs with action.

#### **Abilities References:**

Jie-Qi Chen, Mara Krechevsk, and Julie Viens, *Building on Children's Strengths: The Experience of Project Spectrum* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1998).

Ronald Ferguson, *Necessary Policies and Practices to Close the Student Achievement Gaps*, Presentation to NEA Symposium on Critical Issues for Educators, Washington, D.C., 2004.

Martin Haberman, "Pedagogy of Poverty Versus Good Teaching," *Phi Delta Kappan*, 73 (1990): pp. 209-229.

David Perkins, *Outsmarting IQ: The Emerging Science of Learnable Intelligence* (New York: The Free Press, 1995).

Robert J. Sternberg, Presentation to American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C., 2001.

Robert J. Sternberg, *Wisdom, Intelligence, and Creativity, Synthesized* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Richard J. Stiggins, *Balanced Assessment: The Key to Accountability and Improved Student Learning* (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 2003).

Barbara M. Taylor, Barbara J. Fry, Debra S. Peterson, and P. David Pearson, *Steps for School-wide Reading Improvement* (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 2003).



# Educator Check-In on Abilities

## “How am I doing?”

**Directions:** Review the list below. Place a check by each item to reflect your practice. Then indicate the three items you would like to explore in order to improve your practice.

Indicators	“I do this a lot”	“I do this a little”	“I haven’t done this”	My priorities to explore
1. I provide on-going opportunities for students to set their own learning goals.				
2. I set my own learning goals in order to increase my ability to work with diverse students and periodically take time to assess how well I am doing.				
3. I provide on-going opportunities for students to assess their own work using self-assessment measures such as rubrics, checklists, etc.				
4. I help students learn about their individual cognitive strengths through learning style inventories, explicit teaching of thinking skills, and student self-monitoring.				
5. I design instructional tasks that advance student understanding to more complex levels.				
6. When I assist students in critical thinking and complex activities I help them advance their understanding by relating the task to their real-life experiences.				
7. I promote language development in my lessons through the use of modeling, praising, eliciting, probing, paraphrasing, clarifying, etc.				
8. I interact with students in ways that reflect their preferences for speaking such as wait-time, eye-contact, turn-taking, etc.				
9. I model and encourage students’ use of academic content vocabulary.				
10. I provide many opportunities throughout the school day for student-student and student-educator interaction focused on academic content.				
11. I encourage and understand the need for students to use their first and second languages during learning activities.				
12. I provide immediate and explicit feedback to students on an on-going basis.				

## Approaches, Strategies, and Activities At-a-Glance Grid

Approaches	Strategies	Activity Number
<b>Promote Higher Order Thinking</b>	Comprehension strategies  Student goal-setting/portfolios	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Venn Diagram, page 3-6</li> <li>2. Models of Different Types of Paragraphs, page 3-7</li> <li>3. Text Representation, page 3-14</li> <li>4. Learning and Assessing, page 3-14</li> </ol>
<b>High Expectations</b>	Hold high expectations for all students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Educator Reflection—Educator Expectations, page 3-19</li> <li>6. Student-Generated Rules for Punctuation, page 3-21</li> </ol>
<b>Assessment</b>	Multiple measures  Multiple intelligences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Educator Reflection—Formative and Summative Assessment, page 3-22</li> <li>8. Educator Reflection—Multiple Intelligences, page 3-24</li> <li>9. Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom, page 3-27</li> </ol>

# Ready-to-Use Approaches, Strategies, and Activities



## Activity #1 Venn Diagram

Conceptual understanding beyond rote learning helps to expand struggling students' ability to use their higher cognitive functions. The following activity illustrates one way to do this.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: K-12  
Duration: 20- 45 minutes  
Grouping: Whole class or educator-led small groups  
Materials: Chart paper, pens  
Objectives:
- To compare and contrast characteristics or qualities between two concepts (e.g., story characters, geometric shapes, geographical areas, animals, plants, etc.)
  - To develop critical thinking skills through analyzing similarities and differences
  - To teach academic language
- Assessment: Student participation in the process; student completion of Venn diagram; student ability to interpret the information (orally or in writing) presented in the Venn Diagram

### Lesson Delivery

Briefing: Introduce the objectives of this lesson. "Today we are going to study the similarities and differences between \_\_\_\_\_." Briefly explain to students how they are going to do this. "We are going to use our critical thinking skills to create a Venn Diagram that will show how concepts are alike and different."

### Instructional Frame

#### • **Part A:** Introduction to Venn Diagram

To introduce elementary (K-3) students to the Venn Diagram:

1. Educator can bring in a set of the following: hula hoops/jump ropes/yarn and make two intersecting circles.
2. Educator introduces and models vocabulary of "same" and "different" ( \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ both have long hair. Their hair is the same. \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ are wearing different shoes).
3. Educators ask students to identify similarities and differences from items in the classroom (blocks, shoes, etc.).
4. Students place items in the Venn Diagram according to the similarities and differences between the items. The space where the two circles overlap is for items that hold characteristics in common. The external spaces of the circles where they do not overlap are for items that are different from each other. Be sure to give students the vocabulary term "Venn Diagram" so that you build academic language.

To introduce upper elementary and secondary (4-12) students to the Venn Diagram:

1. Educators can provide students with a Venn Diagram worksheet with two intersecting circles.
2. Educators can ask students to think about the similarities and differences between two concepts the class is currently studying.

3. During whole group discussion, model on an overhead or on the board how to use the Venn Diagram to show the similarities and differences between the two concepts. As you model, students follow along, completing their own Venn Diagrams.
4. After the modeling and guided practice, have students work in pairs to complete a Venn Diagram.

• **Part B:** Instructional Application:  
Character Analysis

This can be done as a whole group activity or as an educator-led instructional conversation with 3-7 students.

1. Students read two stories by same author and/or different versions of the same story (e.g., *The Three Bears* by different authors, etc.).
2. Educator creates a Venn Diagram on chart paper with titles of books. Educator also provides a worksheet version for each student.
3. Students brainstorm similarities and differences between the main characters of each story.
4. Educator and students discuss similarities and differences.
5. Follow-up activity: Students create a Venn Diagram comparing themselves to one of the characters.

Debriefing

- What worked well in this activity? In what ways did we follow our classroom norms?
- What was challenging for you?
- What are other uses for Venn Diagrams?
- How could we do better next time with this activity?



## Activity #2 Models of Different Types of Paragraphs

Providing students with templates or models as they are learning a new skill can be a good way to help them gain confidence in their ability. The templates in this activity were developed for English language learners but are useful for learners of varying ability levels. The “Expository Text Structures Chart” can be used to help students compare different approaches in writing.

Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 2-12  
 Duration: 20-40 minutes  
 Grouping: Small group, pairs, or whole group  
 Materials: Chart paper, markers, “Models of Different Types of Paragraphs” (English and Spanish, (pages 3-10 - 3-13), “Expository Text Structures Chart” (page 3-9)  
 Objectives:
  - To learn ways to use different writing structures to communicate a variety of purposes
  - To teach academic language
 Assessment: Use a rubric rating to assess the quality of students’ completed paragraphs.

Lesson Delivery

Briefing: Introduce the objectives of this lesson. “We are going to learn an easy way to write a paragraph to describe \_\_\_\_\_.” Briefly explain to students how they are going to do this. “We are going to use a paragraph frame to help us learn how to write our paragraphs.”

## Instructional Frame

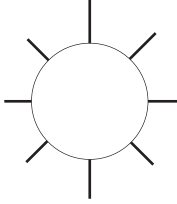
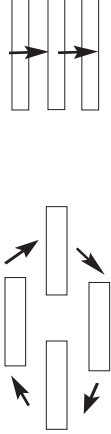
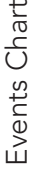


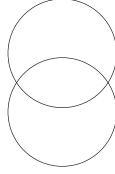

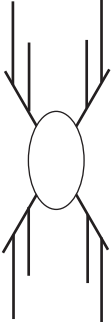

1. Engage students in a conversation about the topic they will be writing about in their paragraphs. Ask the students to share their background experiences and knowledge about the topic. List their ideas using a Web or other graphic organizer on a piece of chart paper. (See "Expository Text Structures Chart," page 3-9).
2. Distribute "Models of Different Types of Paragraphs" to students. Ask students to write a paragraph on the topic they just discussed using the paragraph frame structure to guide their writing. Model this process as guided practice if students are not ready to do this as an independent or partner activity.
3. Ask student volunteers to read aloud their paragraphs to a small group or the whole class. After each one shares, allow students to give appreciations or feedback, such as: "I like the part where you said \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_." Or "I have a question about \_\_\_\_\_."

## Debriefing

- What worked well in this activity?
- In what ways did we follow our classroom norms?
- What was challenging for you?
- What are other things we might use a paragraph frame for?
- How could we do better next time with this activity?

Cristina Sanchez-Lopez, Ph.D., *Education Consultant*, Illinois Resource Center, (2003).

# A+ Expository Text Structures Chart

Type of Text Structure	Purpose	Key Words	Graphic Organizers that Fit the Purpose
Description	Tells how something looks, feels or acts. Identifies characteristics or components.	Appeared, behaved, felt, acted	Web 
Time Order/Sequence	Lists sequential information or a series of events. Gives directions for doing or making something.	Before, then, after, following, finally, first, next	Sequence Cycle  Events Chart 
Cause/Effect	Explains reasons. Tells why something happens or exists.	So, so that, since, thus, because, in order to, therefore, as a result	Fishbone  Arrows 
Compare/Contrast	Shows similarities and differences.	Both, also, while, whereas, however, yet, but	Venn Diagram  Comparison Matrix 
Enumerative/Listing	Provides main topic, supporting details, and examples.	First, another, next, also, most important, finally	Spider Map 
Problem Resolution/ Persuasion	Identifies need and importance, suggests resolution, persuades, enlists support, and describes consequences.	Solution, problem, answer, so that, because, as a result	Problem/ Solution Chart 





# Models of Different Types of Paragraphs

## Sequential:

In order to \_\_\_\_\_, you must follow several steps.

First, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Then, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Next, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Finally, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## Chronological:

At the beginning, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

After that, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Next, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ ended when \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Cristina Sanchez-Lopez, Ph.D., Education Consultant, Illinois Resource Center, (2003).



# Models of Different Types of Paragraphs

## Compare-Contrast:

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
are alike and are different in several ways. First, they are alike because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ but they are different because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Secondly, one is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ while the other is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Finally, they are alike because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

But they are different because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## Problem-Solution:

The problem began when \_\_\_\_\_  
The \_\_\_\_\_ tried to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

After that, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Then, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

The problem was finally resolved when \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



# Modelos de Diferentes Tipos de Párrafos

## Secuenciales:

Para \_\_\_\_\_, usted tiene que seguir varios pasos. Primero, \_\_\_\_\_.

Luego, \_\_\_\_\_.

Después, \_\_\_\_\_.

Por último, \_\_\_\_\_.

## Cronológicos:

Al principio, \_\_\_\_\_.

Después de eso, \_\_\_\_\_.

Luego, \_\_\_\_\_.

El \_\_\_\_\_ termina cuando \_\_\_\_\_.



# Modelos de Diferentes Tipos de Párrafos

## Compare-Contraste:

\_\_\_\_\_ y \_\_\_\_\_  
son similares y diferentes de varias maneras. Primero, son similares porque \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ pero son diferentes porque \_\_\_\_\_

Segundo, uno es \_\_\_\_\_

Mientras que el otro es \_\_\_\_\_

Por último, son similares porque \_\_\_\_\_

Pero son diferentes porque \_\_\_\_\_

## Problema-Solución:

El problema comenzó cuando \_\_\_\_\_

El \_\_\_\_\_ trató de \_\_\_\_\_

Después de eso, \_\_\_\_\_

Luego, \_\_\_\_\_

El problema fue finalmente resuelto cuando \_\_\_\_\_



## Activity #3 Text Representation

There are lots of ways to test the reading comprehension of students beyond standardized tests and traditional “read and respond” activities. This activity is a reminder to look for alternative ways for your students to demonstrate their mastery of text and their varying ways of understanding and communicating what they have learned.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 1-8  
Duration: 30–60 minutes  
Grouping: Whole class or educator-led small groups  
Materials: Dependent on activity  
Objectives:
- To demonstrate comprehension of a story using students’ words and creative representations
  - To teach academic language

Assessment: Use a simple rubric to rate the quality of the representations that students produce.

### Lesson Delivery

Briefing: Introduce the objectives of this lesson. “Today you are going to learn new ways to show what you learned from the story we just read.” Briefly explain to students how they are going to do this. “You are going to use your creativity to select a way to re-tell the story.”

### Instructional Frame

1. Students read a story.
2. Students work in pairs to recreate the text using their own language. Activities can include: role-play, written summary, diorama, cartoon sequence.

3. Students present their representation to whole class or small group.

### Debriefing

- What worked well in this activity?
- In what ways did we follow our classroom norms?
- What was challenging for you?
- How could we do better next time with this activity?



## Activity #4 Learning and Assessing

Use the following resources to help your students set learning goals, reflect on their work and progress, and develop assessment portfolios:

- “Week in Review”(page 3-15)—Use this worksheet each week to help students reflect on their learning. This develops metacognition and critical thinking skills.
- “Self-Assessment for Second Nine Weeks”(page 3-16)—Have your students use this worksheet to help them reflect on their learning over the past semester, and set goals for the next semester.
- “Step-by-Step Decisions and Preparations in Using Portfolios for Student-led Conferences”(page 3-17)—Use this tool to help you plan and develop your student portfolio system. This tool also helps you prepare the students to conduct parent conferences based on portfolio work.
- “Reflections”(page 3-18)—Use these questions to help students reflect on their assignments, projects, and pieces they select for their portfolios.

# Week in Review

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

## This week in English I learned:

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

## This week in Math I learned:

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

## This week in Social Studies I learned:

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_

## This week in Science I learned:

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_

## Two good things that happened this week were:

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_

## Two things I would like to change about this week would be:

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_



# Self Assessment for Second Nine Weeks

1. What have you learned these nine weeks that will help you the most in the future?

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2. What gave you the most problems these last nine weeks?

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3. What was your biggest success?

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4. How do you learn best?

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5. What can you do well enough to teach another student?

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6. List five things you are going to do next semester that will improve your grades.

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7. Next semester I would like to do more of

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8. If I could study anything I wanted I would study

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---

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9. The person I admire the most in the whole world is

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Irene McGinty and Noni Mendoza-Reis, *Towards Equity: A Guide for Teaching and Learning in a Multicultural Society: Classroom Applications* (Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1998).



# Step-by-Step Decisions and Preparations in Using Portfolios for Student-Led Conferences



1. Inform parents, students, and administrators about the conference and the portfolio.
2. Decide how you will handle the daily/weekly work and how you will inform parents of weekly progress.
3. Decide how many, when, and where your conferences will be held.
4. Decide how you will handle the day-to-day process of taking up and handing out of papers. Decide details like using sticky pads for reflections, how many assignments students will reflect on, and when they will reflect on them.
5. Choose what kind of storage you will use for daily work and for the portfolio. How will you store these and handle them?
6. Determine what pieces of work you will want to require in the portfolio, and what pieces you will allow the children to choose.
7. Establish when you will build the portfolio and train the children for their conferences.
8. Select what type of invitation you will send and how you will confirm the conference.
9. Conduct the conferences. Plan ahead what to do in the event you cannot get a parent to the conference even after repeated contacts.
10. Analyze, discuss, and reflect on the successes of the conference and how it can be improved. Save these to review before the next conference.



# Reflections

These are just a few examples of the kinds of questions and open-ended sentences to use as the children reflect on individual assignments, projects, or pieces chosen to go in the portfolio.

- What makes this piece of work well done?
- What could you do on this assignment to improve?
- What was difficult about this piece?
- What did you learn doing this assignment?
- How can you use this lesson when you grow up?
- What gave you problems on this piece?
- What did you do on this assignment that shows you are working on your personal goal?
- If you could do this assignment over, what would you do to make it better?
- What helped you learn how to do these problems?
- Why did you choose this piece to put in your portfolio?
- How did you solve this problem?
- What did you learn from doing this assignment that you could share with another student to help them?
- I can improve my grades next semester by\_\_\_\_\_.
- What I liked most about this assignment was\_\_\_\_\_.
- I should have done better on \_\_\_\_\_.
- I can improve how I learn by\_\_\_\_\_.
- My personal goal is to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Next semester I would like to do more \_\_\_\_\_.
- Next semester I would like to learn more about \_\_\_\_\_.



## Activity #5

### Educator Reflection— Educator Expectations

Educators are often unaware of their expectations for individual students, but they play a critical role in nurturing the abilities of diverse students. Take a few minutes to reflect on the ways that you can hold culturally and linguistically diverse students to high expectations.

#### Reflection Process

1. The chart “Holding Students to High Expectations” (page 3-20) lists four kinds of student performance for which teachers have expectations.

2. Review the reflective questions and examples on the chart.
3. Think of examples that illustrate how you practice each of these in your classroom.
4. As you reflect, think about what you have learned about the impact of cultural influences on ability development.
5. In a small group of colleagues, share your examples and listen to what your colleagues do to see what you can apply in your classroom.



## Holding Students to High Expectations

Area of student performance for teacher expectation	Reflective Questions	Examples of how I practice these in my classroom
<b>1. Quality and quantity of work</b>	Am I teaching to content and/or state standards?  Do I focus on standards that build both skills and higher order thinking?  Are my students aware of what good quality work looks like?  Have I been explicit with my students about how they can produce high quality work?	I show my students samples of good quality work.
<b>2. Work habits and work procedures</b>	Do my students know the procedures for starting and finishing their work?	I have baskets with labels for "Completed Work."
<b>3. Business and house-keeping routines</b>	Do I co-create classroom norms with my students?  Are my students following the class norms?	I do a daily check in with my class about following norms.
<b>4. Interpersonal behavior</b>	Do I teach my students how to communicate, problem solve, and collaborate with their peers and other adults?  Do my students relate well to others?  Do my students exhibit a sense of confidence and positive self-esteem?	I teach my students active listening skills.



## Activity #6 Student-Generated Rules for Punctuation

Frequently, students make the same grammatical errors—punctuating dialogue, capitalization, commas, etc. One way to deal with these errors is to ask students to generate the rules. They remember their own rules far longer than when they read the rule and correct the errors in a punctuation exercise.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 6-12  
Duration: 45-60 minutes  
Grouping: Small groups  
Materials: Copies of story, chart paper, markers
- Objectives:
- To help students understand grammar and punctuation
  - To identify patterns of errors students are making and correct them

### Lesson Delivery

1. Copy a page from a short story or novel that demonstrates the rules you want students to learn—for example, to teach about punctuating dialogue, choose a piece of dialogue interrupted by an attribution, a question, a dialogue where the speakers change but there is no attribution.

2. Put the students in small groups and distribute the passage. Ask them to imagine that they are creating a new book to help students punctuate correctly.
3. Ask them to write up five rules that explain punctuation for your area of focus (like punctuating dialogue) and to include an example for each rule from the selected passage. Give them hints to help them start: for example, on punctuating dialogue, look at where the commas, quotes, and capitals are located.
4. After checking to see if the rules are correct, consolidate where possible and post the rules on the wall as a reminder during writing time. Students also learn that if they forget the rules, they can just pull down a novel that has dialogue and figure them out again.
5. See the “Patterns of Errors Check List” (page 3-22) for areas you may want to focus on with your students. You can identify your own list based on what you see in their work.

Linda Christensen, “*The Politics of Correction*,” *Rethinking Schools*, 18, 1 (2003): 20-24 [www.rethinkingschools.org](http://www.rethinkingschools.org)



## Patterns of Errors Check List

Adapted from Mina P. Shaughnessy's book *Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing* (NY:Oxford University Press, 1977).

Using this list as a template, look for patterns of errors under each category: punctuation, grammar, spelling, and syntax. You can add categories for essay and narrative writing as you move into this instruction.

### Punctuation

- Capitalization
- End punctuation
- Commas
  - series
  - participles
  - adverbial clauses
  - adjective clauses
- Dialogue quotation
- Academic quotation

### Grammar

- Subject/verb agreement
- Basic verb tense (consistency)
- Irregular verbs
- Special usage (case with pronouns, agreement in unusual contexts)

### Spelling

- Basic spelling patterns (doubled consonants, silent e, i before e, etc)
- Key standard/nonstandard variations
- Demons

### Syntax

- Sentence completeness
- Basic word order (including direct and indirect questions)
- Basic modification (phrases, words, clauses)
- Advanced sentences (parallel structures, periodic structures, variety)

Linda Christensen, *The Politics of Correction*. (Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools, 2003), Volume 18, #1, Pgs. 20-24, [www.rethinkingschools.org](http://www.rethinkingschools.org)



## Activity #7 Educator Reflection— Formative and Summative Assessment

Use multiple measures to assess students' knowledge, mastery, instructional needs, and learning progress. Some examples of such measures might include:

1. Formative Assessment: measures that assess student progress throughout the year. These measures are important to help inform educators of instructional needs of students on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis:
  - rubrics, (for example, see "Analytic Rubric of Prewriting Skills," page 3-23)
  - checklists,
  - observations,
  - curriculum-based tests (e.g., chapter tests), and
  - portfolios
2. Summative Assessment: typically, these are measures that evaluate student progress at the end of the school year or the end of units, or are used to determine specific levels of student understanding. Summative assessment helps educators and schools evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs for individual students, as well as overall classroom, school, and district progress each school year:
  - standardized tests,
  - chapter tests,
  - English language development assessment



## Analytic Rubric of Prewriting Skills

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Task:

Now that you've finished your writing assignment, take a look at the chart below and find which prewriting skill you used.

	Novice	Developing	Expected	Mastery
<b>Idea Generation</b>	I thought of one idea and started writing.	I thought of a few ideas and then chose one.	I thought of many ideas and then chose one.	I thought of several ideas, solicited ideas from others, and then chose one.
<b>Organization of Ideas</b>	I began writing without a plan.	I jotted a few notes but did not use a graphic organizer.	I used a graphic organizer to develop a detailed plan.	I used a detailed graphic organizer that included my ideas as well as suggestions from others.
<b>Consideration of Audience and Purpose</b>	I did not identify an audience or a purpose.	I identified an audience and purpose but did not write with them in mind.	I wrote with my audience and purpose in mind.	I gathered additional information about my audience and/or purpose before I began writing.
<b>Writing Form and Format</b>	I selected neither the appropriate form nor format.	I selected either the appropriate form or format.	I selected both the appropriate form and format.	After considering possible alternatives, I selected the most appropriate form and format.

Developed by Lori Windler, East Tipp Middle School, Lafayette, IN March 2002

Patti Ralabate, *Meeting the Challenge: Special Education Tools that Work for All Kids*, NEA Professional Library, 2003.

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## Activity #8 Educator Reflection–Multiple Intelligences

Think about your own “multiple” intelligences – how did you develop them inside and outside of school? This activity encourages you to reflect with your colleagues on strategies for developing abilities in your students, recognizing the impact that cultural diversity may have on how students demonstrate their abilities.

### Reflection Process

1. Think of a typical day in your classroom. Jot down the activities associated with each subject-area block or whatever blocks your day falls into. Use “Eight Ways of Teaching” (page 3-26) to map your activities in terms of the intelligences they call upon. If something calls upon more than one intelligence, put it in all the appropriate cells.
2. Talk with a colleague about his or her understanding of intelligence.

What is “intelligent behavior?”  
How do they know what their own intelligence is? How do they use it?

3. Examine the “Summary of the Eight Ways of Teaching” (page 3-25) and discuss with colleagues the strategies you have used with your students. Do you use all sensory modes—visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic—when teaching concepts and skills?
4. Think of a specific skill or objective that your English language learners are encountering. Review and discuss what teaching activities, teaching materials, and instructional strategies you would use in planning a lesson for a group of English language learners, using the “Eight Ways of Teaching” as a guide.

The LAB at Brown University, *The Diversity Kit: An Introductory Resource for Social Change in Education, Part I* (Providence, RI: Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002), 54, 47.



# Summary of the “Eight Ways of Teaching”

Intelligence	Teaching Activities	Teaching Materials	Instructional Strategies
<b>LINGUISTIC</b>	lectures, word games, discussions, storytelling, choral reading, journal writing, independent reading in many genres	books, tape recorders, stamp sets, books on tape, CD player, keyboard	read about it, write about it, talk about it, listen to it
<b>LOGICAL-MATHEMATICAL</b>	brain teasers, problem solving, science experiments, mental calculation, number games, critical thinking	calculators, math manipulatives, science equipment, math games	quantify it, think critically about it, conceptualize it
<b>SPATIAL</b>	visual presentations, metaphor, art activities, mapping, imagination games, mind visualization	graphs, maps, videos, LEGO sets, art materials, optical illusions, cameras, picture library	see it, draw it, color it, mind-map it
<b>BODILY-KINESTHETIC</b>	hands-on learning, drama, dance, sports that teach, tactile activities, relaxation exercises	building tools, clay, sports equipment, manipulatives, tactile learning resources	build it, act it out, touch it, get a “gut feeling” of it, dance it
<b>MUSICAL</b>	rapping, songs that teach	tape recorder, tape collection, musical instruments, CD player, CD collection	sing it, rap it, listen to it
<b>INTERPERSONAL</b>	cooperative learning, peer tutoring, community involvement, social gatherings, simulations	board games, party supplies, props for the role-plays	teach it, collaborate on it, interact with respect to it
<b>INTRAPERSONAL</b>	individualized instruction, independent study, options in course of study, self-esteem building	self-checking materials, journal, materials for projects	connect it to your personal life, make choices with regard to it
<b>NATURALISTIC</b>	outdoor explorations, observations, experiments, tours of particular environments	notebooks, binoculars, tape recorders, books about nature and environments, photographs and films, CD player	observe it, explore it, listen to it, describe it, gather data or impressions about it

Adapted from T. Armstrong, *Multiple Intelligence in the Classroom* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1994).





# “Eight Ways of Teaching”

Intelligence	Teaching Activities	Teaching Materials	Instructional Strategies
LINGUISTIC			
LOGICAL-MATHEMATICAL			
SPATIAL			
BODILY-KINESTHETIC			
MUSICAL			
INTERPERSONAL			
INTRAPERSONAL			
NATURALISTIC			

Adapted from T. Armstrong, *Multiple Intelligence in the Classroom* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1994).



## Activity #9 Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom

Educators are not the only ones who need to understand that there are different ways of learning that students bring to the classroom. It is important for culturally diverse students to understand that they each bring different skills and approaches to learning. This understanding helps them build on their strengths and not feel that they must all fit into the same learning mold.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 3-12  
Duration: 1 hour  
Grouping: Whole group, individual  
Materials:
- Worksheet – “Multiple Intelligences: Find Someone Who...” (page 3-29)
  - Worksheet – “Survey on Multiple Intelligences” (pages 3-30 - 3-33)
- Objectives:
- To understand learning strengths and differences among classmates
  - To assess personal learning strengths and areas to develop
  - To help students think critically about how they can demonstrate their “intelligences” and strengthen intelligences that are less-developed
- Assessment: Student participation in activities; student reflection during debriefing.

### Lesson Delivery

**Briefing:** Introduce the objectives of this lesson. “Today we are going to learn about all the different ways we can show that we are smart.” Briefly explain to students how they are going to do this. “First we are going to play a detective game called ‘Find Someone Who...’ and

then I will give you a worksheet to help you find out all the ways you are smart.”

### Instructional Frame

1. Have students play the “Find Someone Who...” game.
  - a. Try to find a classmate who can actually perform the tasks on the list, not just say he/she can do them.
  - b. Once the person has performed the task, ask them to sign on that line.
  - c. An individual may only sign your paper once.
2. Debrief:
  - What did you learn about your classmates during the “Find Someone Who....” activity?
3. Briefly describe the different Multiple Intelligences. Have them written on chart paper or large cards. Point to the written “intelligence” as you introduce each one.
4. As you introduce each Multiple Intelligence, ask students to share examples of ways they might demonstrate that intelligence. You may want to ask students to work in groups to create illustrations for each of the Multiple Intelligences. These can be used to create a class book so that students can review these ideas throughout the year.
5. Distribute worksheet: “Survey on the Multiple Intelligences.”
  - a. Students complete the survey individually without talking to other classmates.

- b. Once completed, ask students to share their assessments with a partner.
- c. Make sure students understand there are no “right” answers. We all use more than one way to learn and may depend more heavily on one than another.
- d. As a group, have students create a chart of the different intelligences and brainstorm ways that they could show their abilities. Some possible prompts to use are (modify these as appropriate for your age group):
  - What did you learn about yourself after doing the survey on Multiple Intelligences?
  - What are some ways that you show that you are smart?

- What kinds of smart do you feel you need to develop, or do more of?

### Debriefing

- What worked well in this activity?
- In what ways did we follow our classroom norms?
- What was challenging for you?
- How could we do better next time with this activity?

Irene McGinty and Noni Mendoza-Reis, *Towards Equity: A Guide for Teaching and Learning in a Multicultural Society, Classroom Applications* (Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1998), 308-312.



# Multiple Intelligences:

*Find Someone Who...*

## Inteligencias Múltiples:

*Encuentre a alguien que...*

Directions:

- Try to find someone who can actually perform the following, not just say he/she can do them.
- Once the person has performed the task, ask them to sign on that line.
- An individual may only sign your paper once.

Direcciones:

- Trate de encontrar a alguien que pueda hacer lo siguiente, no tan solo decir que puede hacerlo.
- Cuando la persona haya hecho la tarea, pídale que firme en esa línea.
- Una persona solo puede firmar su papel una vez.

Find someone who can...

Encuentre a alguien que pueda...

- whistle a few notes from a song.
- chiflar unas pocas notas de una canción.

---

- stand on one foot with eyes closed for at least 5 seconds.
- pararse en un solo pie con los ojos cerrados por los menos 5 segundos.

---

- say at least 2 lines from a rap, poem or story she/he has learned.
- decir por lo menos 2 líneas de un "rap," poema o cuento que haya aprendido.

---

- draw a quick diagram explaining how a pencil sharpener works.
- dibujar un diagrama rápido explicando cómo funciona un sacapuntas.

---

- briefly share a dream she/he had in the past 2 weeks.
- contar brevemente un sueño que tuvo en las 2 semanas últimas.

---

- complete the pattern: 10, 13, 16, 19, \_\_\_\_, and explain why.
- completar el patrón siguiente: 10, 13, 16, 19, \_\_\_\_, y explicar por qué.

---

- honestly say they are not embarrassed during this activity.
- decir con toda honestidad que no ha sentido vergüenza haciendo ésta actividad.

---



# Survey on the Multiple Intelligences

## Sondeo de Inteligencias Múltiples

Directions: Check off the statements that apply to you.  
Direcciones: Marque las frases que se apliquen a usted.

### Inteligencia Lingüística

#### Linguistic Intelligence

- Los libros son muy importantes para mí.  
 Books are very important to me.
- Leer y escribir son importantes para mí.  
 Reading and writing are important to me.
- Recientemente, escribí algo de lo cual me siento orgulloso(a).  
 Recently, I wrote something of which I am proud.
- Me gusta contar cosas a otras personas sobre lo que he leído.  
 I like to tell things about what I have read to other people.
- Antes de hablar, leer o escribir, escucho las palabras en mi cabeza.  
 Before speaking, reading, or writing, I hear the words in my head.

### Inteligencia Espacial

#### Spatial Intelligence

- Tengo sueños vividos por la noche.  
 I have vivid dreams at night.
- Prefiero leer libros con muchos dibujos.  
 I prefer to read books that have many pictures.
- Me gusta dibujar, colorear o pintar.  
 I like to draw, color, or paint.
- En general, sé cómo dirigirme en mi vecindario.  
 Generally, I know how to get around in my neighborhood.
- Me gusta hacer rompecabezas y laberintos.  
 I like to do puzzles and mazes.



# Survey on the Multiple Intelligences (continued)

## Sondeo de Inteligencias Múltiples (continuación)

### Inteligencia Corporal Bodily Intelligence

- \_\_\_ Yo juego por los menos un deporte fuera de la escuela cada semana.  
\_\_\_ I play at least one sport outside of school each week.
- \_\_\_ Es difícil para mí estar sentado(a) mucho rato.  
\_\_\_ It is difficult for me to sit for a long time.
- \_\_\_ Disfruto haciendo actividades manuales como el coser, construir modelos o trabajar con madera.  
\_\_\_ I enjoy doing activities with my hands like: sewing, building models, or work with wood.
- \_\_\_ Necesito tocar cosas para saber cómo funcionan.  
\_\_\_ I need to touch things to learn about how they work.
- \_\_\_ Prefiero pasar mi tiempo libre al exterior.  
\_\_\_ I prefer to spend my free time outdoors.

### Inteligencia Lógica y Matemática Logical and Mathematical Intelligence

- \_\_\_ Los matemáticas y los ciencias son mis temas favoritos.  
\_\_\_ Math and science are my favorite subjects.
- \_\_\_ Estoy interesado(a) en ciencias y tecnología.  
\_\_\_ I am interested in science and technology.
- \_\_\_ Me resulta fácil hacer cuentas en mi cabeza.  
\_\_\_ It is easy for me to do math in my head.
- \_\_\_ Me gustan los juegos de lógica, como el ajedrez o las damas.  
\_\_\_ I like games of logic, such as chess or checkers.
- \_\_\_ Creo que casi todo se puede explicar usando la ciencia.  
\_\_\_ I believe that almost everything can be explained using science.



# Survey on the Multiple Intelligences (continued) Sondeo de Inteligencias Múltiples (continuación)

## Inteligencia Intrapersonal Intrapersonal Intelligence

- \_\_\_ Prefiero hacer cosas solo(a) en lugar de con un grupo.  
\_\_\_ I prefer to do things alone rather than with a group.
- \_\_\_ Escribo en un diario en mi la casa para llevar un registro de mi vida.  
\_\_\_ I write in a diary or journal at home to record my life.
- \_\_\_ Prefiero pasar mis vacaciones en las montañas en lugar de Disneylandia.  
\_\_\_ I would rather spend my vacation in the mountains than in Disneyland.
- \_\_\_ Tengo algunas metas que quisiera hacer en mi vida.  
\_\_\_ I have some goals that I want to do in my life.
- \_\_\_ Creo que sé cuáles son las cosas en las que hago un buen trabajo.  
\_\_\_ I believe that I know in which things I do good work.

## Inteligencia Interpersonal Interpersonal Intelligence

- \_\_\_ Mis amigos (amigas) vienen a preguntarme mi opinión.  
\_\_\_ My friends come to me for my opinion.
- \_\_\_ Prefiero los deportes en equipo, como el fútbol o el or béisbol, más que aquellos en los que juega uno solo.  
\_\_\_ I prefer team sports, like soccer or baseball, more than those that you do alone.
- \_\_\_ Tengo por lo menos 4 buenos amigos (buenas amigas).  
\_\_\_ I have at least 4 good friends.
- \_\_\_ Prefiero trabajar con un grupo en vez de solo(a).  
\_\_\_ I prefer to work with a group rather than alone.
- \_\_\_ Cuando tengo un problema, uso a mis amigos (amigas) para resolverlo.  
\_\_\_ When I have a problem, I use my friends to resolve it.



# Survey on the Multiple Intelligences (continued)

## Sondeo de Inteligencias Múltiples (continuación)

### Inteligencia Musical Musical Intelligence

\_\_\_ Me gusta cantar.  
\_\_\_ I like to sing.

\_\_\_ Con frecuencia escucho música en el radio, en casetes o en CDs.  
\_\_\_ I often listen to music on the radio, on cassettes, or on CDs.

\_\_\_ Sé tocar un instrumento musical.  
\_\_\_ I know how to play a musical instrument.

\_\_\_ Cuando estoy trabajando o estudiando, acostumbro a llevar ritmos con mis manos o en mi cabeza.  
\_\_\_ Often, when I am working or studying, I make rhythms with my hands or in my head.

\_\_\_ Me conozco las melodías de muchas canciones.  
\_\_\_ I know the melodies of many songs.

### Inteligencia Naturalista Naturalist Intelligence

\_\_\_ Las plantas y los animales son importantes para mí.  
\_\_\_ Plants and animals are important to me.

\_\_\_ Me gusta estar con mascotas.  
\_\_\_ I enjoy being with pets.

\_\_\_ Disfruto estando en la naturaleza (el bosque, en la playa, en el parque).  
\_\_\_ I enjoy being in nature (the forest, at the beach, at the park)

\_\_\_ Me gusta aprender cosas sobre los animales, las plantas, la naturaleza o el espacio exterior.  
\_\_\_ I like to learn about animals, plants, nature, or outer space.

\_\_\_ Con frecuencia me pregunto por qué los animales hacen lo que hacen.  
\_\_\_ I often wonder about why animals do what they do.

\_\_\_ Con frecuencia trabajo afuera, cuidando plantas, flores, árboles o jardines.  
\_\_\_ I often work outside, taking care of plants, flowers, trees, or gardens.

\_\_\_ Me gusta desarmar cosas para saber cómo funcionan.  
\_\_\_ I like to take things apart to find out how they work.





# Educational Support Professional Check-In on Abilities

## “How am I doing?”

**Directions:** Review the list below. Place a check by each item to reflect your practice. Then indicate the three items you would like to explore in order to improve your practice.

Indicators	“I do this a lot”	“I do this a little”	“I haven’t done this”	My priorities to explore
1. I provide support for students to set their own learning goals.				
2. I set my own learning goals in order to increase my ability to work with diverse students and periodically take time to assess how well I am doing.				
3. I help students learn about their individual strengths through discussion, encouragement, and student self-monitoring.				
4. When I assist students in classroom activities, I help them increase their understanding by relating the task to their real-life experiences.				
5. I promote language development in my work with students through the use of modeling, praising, probing, paraphrasing, clarifying, etc.				
6. I interact with students in ways that reflect their preferences for speaking such as wait-time, eye-contact, turn-taking, etc.				
7. I model and encourage students’ use of academic content vocabulary.				
8. I provide opportunities throughout the school day for student-educator interaction focused on academic content.				
9. I encourage and understand the need for students to use their first and second languages during learning activities and around the school.				
10. I provide immediate and specific feedback to students on an on-going basis.				

# Chapter 4

Chapter 4

## Resilience

Closing the achievement gaps and helping all students to be successful creates large demands on educators. One of these demands is the need to develop a deep appreciation for the variety of cultures, languages, and economic circumstances from which their students come. Research and practical experience show that these students have abilities that have not been recognized or are yet to be fully developed. Yet they often show a resilience—an ability to bounce back from adversity—in their everyday lives that holds them in good stead.

### *What is resilience and why is it important?*

Resilience is “a set of qualities and circumstances that foster success despite risk and adversity” (Benard, 2004). Students who are resilient have strengths and characteristics that help them succeed in school despite the difficulties they may face in their lives. Parents and educators can build on these strengths and help develop them in less resilient students. One way to do this is through the power of caring adults and schools that convey high expectations and provide opportunities for students to actively participate in the learning process.

### *What can your school do to build resilience in students?*

When schools are places where the basic human needs for support, respect, and belonging are met, motivation for learning is enhanced. According to research, there are three things that are critical to healthy development and school success for students: caring relationships, high expectations, and opportunities for participation.

### *How do schools provide caring relationships for students?*

Caring educators provide trust and the message of “being there” for a student. You can show respect for your students by acknowledging them for who they are, and making a one-on-one connection with them. Caring educators look underneath the negative behavior of a student and refuse to take this behavior personally. By listening and getting to know your students, you tell them that they are important and they matter to you. Students excel when they believe that you will help them succeed, show interest in their lives outside of school, and care about what they think about their classes (Ferguson, 2004). The resilience research has shown that the presence of just one caring adult in the life of a child can make the difference between success and failure in school (Gay, 2000).



**Enduring Understanding:** Effective teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students understand that they must find ways to support their students to build both academic as well as personal resilience.

Optimal Instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students:

- promotes problem-solving, social competence, identity development and a sense of control, purpose and future
- holds high expectations of students
- develops and maintains caring relationships with students
- utilizes methods that increase student interaction and participation

### *Why are high expectations important?*

Teachers who have high expectations for all of their students help them learn to believe in themselves and in their futures while developing self-esteem, independence, and optimism. By providing consistency in discipline policies, teaching methods, and curriculum, your students know where they stand both behaviorally and academically. Time and again, research has shown that students can and will rise (or sink) to the expectations that educators hold for them, whether we are talking about teaching algebra to inner city elementary students or reducing violence in troubled high schools. We are learning that even students who are struggling to complete homework or understand assignments want you to both demand high quality work from them and encourage them to do well (Ferguson, 2004).

### *How can you provide students with opportunities for participation?*

Practices such as making learning more hands-on, involving students in curriculum planning, cooperative learning, peer helping, mentoring, and community service can provide opportunities for participation that will actively involve students in their own learning. You can involve students more actively in learning by providing curriculum that is challenging and inclusive of different perspectives to build on your students' strengths, interests, and experiences. Encouraging questioning—even by low achievers, asking students to help each other, and thinking ahead about how well students will enjoy your lessons all create opportunities for student participation (Ferguson, 2004).

## **CREDE Standard for Resilience**

- **Instructional Conversation**—Teaching through conversation.

### *What can you do to help build resilience in your students?*

Research has identified five key characteristics of resilience that you can use to help students be successful:

1. **Social competence:** you can help your students build relationship skills like communication skills, a sense of humor, and caring to give them the ability to work successfully in school, as well as the community.
2. **Problem-solving skills:** you can help your students develop the ability to effectively plan their work, think critically, and know when to seek help from others.
3. **Critical consciousness:** you can help your students build positive strategies for overcoming challenges such as abuse, neglect, discrimination or oppression.
4. **Autonomy:** you can help your students develop a sense of their own identity as someone who can act independently and exert control over their environment. Autonomy is not valued equally in all cultures, however. Therefore, when promoting autonomy in the classroom, it is important to be sensitive to its varying value for different students.
5. **A sense of purpose and future:** you can help your students learn how to set goals that will motivate them to succeed academically and personally, expose them to culturally-appropriate successful role models, and emphasize the value of persistence, optimism, and hopefulness.

## **Schools That Close the Achievement Gaps**

In Bonnie Benard's chapter "Turnaround Teachers and Schools" (Benard, 2003), there

are several common strategies used by schools that are able to build resilience in students and close the achievement gaps. These strategies describe schools that have a vision and mission that are based on high expectations, caring relationships, and opportunities for participation:

- There is support for teachers including time, resources, professional development opportunities, and the same factors that are important for students – caring, high expectations, and opportunities for participation.
- There is consistency across the school in discipline, teaching strategies, and curriculum content.
- The school has a shared mission based on meeting the needs of the whole student.
- The school is organized in small learning communities.
- School-based mentoring is provided.

- The school provides students with career exploration and high school transition programs.
- Early intervention services are available.
- Diversity is seen as a strength and is celebrated.
- After-school programs promote school-community partnerships and support students.
- There is ongoing assessment of how students feel the school is doing in meeting their needs.
- Family-school-community partnerships are valued and recognized as important to the success of students.
- Students are out in the community doing service-learning.

Benard and Burgoa provide the following list that details the kinds of strengths that educators should work to develop in their students in order to foster resilience.



## Personal Resilience Strengths

SOCIAL COMPETENCE (Relationship Skills)	AUTONOMY (Sense of Self/Identity)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Responsiveness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cross-cultural competence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Empathy/caring</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Communication skills (both verbal and written)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sense of humor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Accomplishment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Self-awareness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Detachment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Resistance (refusal to accept negative messages about one's self, family, gender, culture)</li> </ul>
<p><b>PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS</b></p>	<p><b>SENSE OF PURPOSE AND FUTURE</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sees alternatives</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Critical thinking</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Insight</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Resourcefulness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Special interest/hobby</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Goal directedness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Achievement motivation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Educational aspiration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Persistence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Optimism</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Compelling future</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Faith (spiritual connectedness)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sense of meaning</li> </ul>

Bonnie Benard and Carol Burgoa, WestEd, Oakland, CA, 2002

## Resilience References

Bonnie Benard, "Turnaround Teachers and Schools" in Belinda Williams, Ed., *Closing the Achievement Gap: A Vision for Changing Beliefs and Practices, 2nd Edition* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2003).

Ronald Ferguson. *Necessary Policies and Practices to Close the Student Achievement Gaps*, Presentation to NEA Symposium on Critical Issues for Educators (Washington, D.C., 2004).

Geneva Gay, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2000).



### I CAN DO IT!

#### Classroom Management Training

"I Can Do It!" is professional development created by teachers and delivered by teachers, and is designed to be used with new K-12 teachers within their first five years of teaching. The topic, classroom management, is relevant to teachers and education support personnel, and is delivered by cadre members who are experienced trainers and successful educators. Included in the curriculum is information about the elements necessary for successful classroom management, communication or learning styles, interventions for difficult behaviors, hints to create the smoothly flowing classroom, tools to begin building positive parent / teacher relationships and an opportunity to link with a partner for future support. The training is designed to impart as much information as possible while maintaining an interactive approach. To access the training, contact Nikki Barnes ([nbarnes@nea.org](mailto:nbarnes@nea.org)) or Lisa Long ([llong@nea.org](mailto:llong@nea.org)) in NEA's Teacher Quality Department.



# Educator Check-In on Resilience

## “How am I doing?”

**Directions:** Review the list below. Place a check by each item to reflect your practice. Then indicate the three items you would like to explore in order to improve your practice.

Indicators	“I do this a lot”	“I do this a little”	“I haven’t done this”	My priorities to explore
1. I work with small groups of students on a regular basis.				
2. I facilitate small group conversations or dialogues that have instructional goals.				
3. I vary ways of grouping students to promote interaction and participation.				
4. I organize instruction that assists in the development of academic language.				
5. I build positive, caring relationships with my students by acting as a role-model, nurturer, mentor, or friend.				
6. I develop instructional activities that value students’ experiences and abilities.				
7. Most of my instructional activities support my students to develop problem-solving skills.				
8. I provide opportunities for students to become independent learners by planning lessons that incorporate student choice.				
9. I help students communicate a sense of future by having them understand the purpose/rationale for the lessons and set goals for their own learning.				
10. I model caring and support in my relationships with students and their parents.				
11. I structure the class norms and activities to build trusting and caring relationships between students.				
12. I implement instructional activities that promote success for all students.				
13. I hold high expectations for my students in the following areas: quality and quantity of work, work habits and work procedures, classroom norms, and interpersonal behavior.				

## Resilience: Approaches, Strategies, and Activities At-a-Glance

Approaches	Strategies	Activity Number
<b>Building Resilience</b>	Foster resilience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tools for Teaching Resilience: How Do Trees Get So Tall?, page 4-7</li> <li>2. Stress Buffer Shield, page 4-9</li> <li>3. “Cutting Out” Stress, page 4-11</li> <li>4. Be Gentle with Yourself and Others, page 4-13</li> <li>5. Believe It...or Not!, page 4-16</li> </ol>
	Develop strengths-based practices	6. Educator Reflection—Deficits into Strengths, page 4-18
<b>Instructional Conversation</b>	Engage students in dialogue about their learning	7. Educator Reflection—Teaching Through Conversation, page 4-22
	Develop resilience	8. Educator Reflection—Resilience-Based Pointers for Communicating with Youth, Staff, and Parents, page 4-25

# Ready-to-Use Approaches, Strategies, and Activities

## **A+** Activity #1 Tools for Teaching Resilience: How Do Trees Get So Tall?

NEA's Health Information Network has developed a variety of tools and resources for fostering resilience in students and adults. This activity helps students understand how to "bend with the breezes" in times of stress.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 3-5  
Grouping: Whole class or small groups  
Materials: Word puzzle (page 4-8)  
Objective: To help students understand the aspect of "bending not breaking" in resilience and recognize that stress "symptoms" can be normal reactions to an abnormal situation

### Lesson Delivery

1. An old adage states that "tall trees bend with the breeze." Children who face taxing situations with a resilient attitude are much more likely to deal with those challenges effectively, much like tall trees during a storm.
2. When working with students, discuss how trees and other plants react to storms and strong winds.
3. Ask what they have witnessed during and after storms. Compare and contrast the plant discussion to what people can do to remain undamaged during stressful times.
4. Ask students to share their ideas about what it means to "bend without breaking." Ask them to come up with examples.

5. Have students complete the worksheet "How Do Trees Get So Tall?" Tell them to think about the discussion you had on dealing with stress as they unscramble the words.

Ruth Brannigan, illustrations by Mary Garner-Mitchell, *Tools for Teaching Resilience: Strategies for Life's Ups and Downs Activity Book: Grades K through 5*, NEA Health Information Network, (Washington, DC: 2002), pp 5-6.

### "How Do Trees Get So Tall?"

#### Answer Key:

Trust  
Safety  
Feelings  
Heart Friends  
Help  
Health Love  
Happiness  
Self Talking  
Goals  
Dreams Peace

They Bend During Bad Storms



NEA's Health Information Network offers several tools and resources on resilience, including a "Stress Self-Assessment" for educators to take. So take care of yourself, and go to <http://neahin.org/programs/mentalhealth/index.htm> to download a free copy and the scoring guidelines. You'll also find posters and other materials for your classroom.



# RIDDLE: How do trees get so tall?

TRSUT



TYSAEF



LEISENFG



THRAE



FESNRDI



PHLE



OYJ



LATHEH



VELO



PISNAEHPS



LSEF



GANTILK



AOGLS



RAMSED

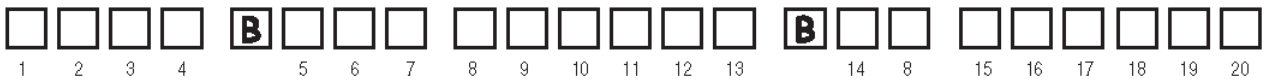


CAEPE



Unscramble each of the clue words.

Copy the letters in the numbered "leaves" to the blocks below with the same number.



## **A+** Activity #2 Stress Buffer Shield

Another way to foster resilience is to help students recognize and develop strategies for dealing with stress. Activity 2 provides an example of one way to do this.

### Lesson Preparation

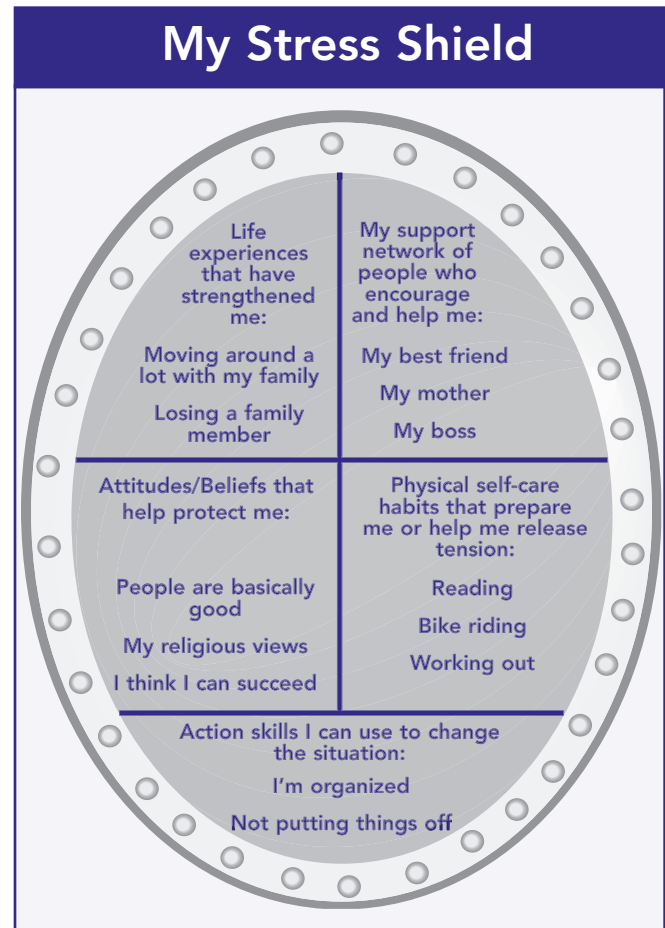
- Grades: 6-12  
Grouping: Whole class or small groups  
Duration: 30-40 minutes  
Materials: Blank shield handout (page 4-10)  
Objective: To understand how coping skills help transform stress into a positive force and protect them from being overwhelmed by pressure

### Lesson Delivery

Stress buffers: personal store of constructive coping skills

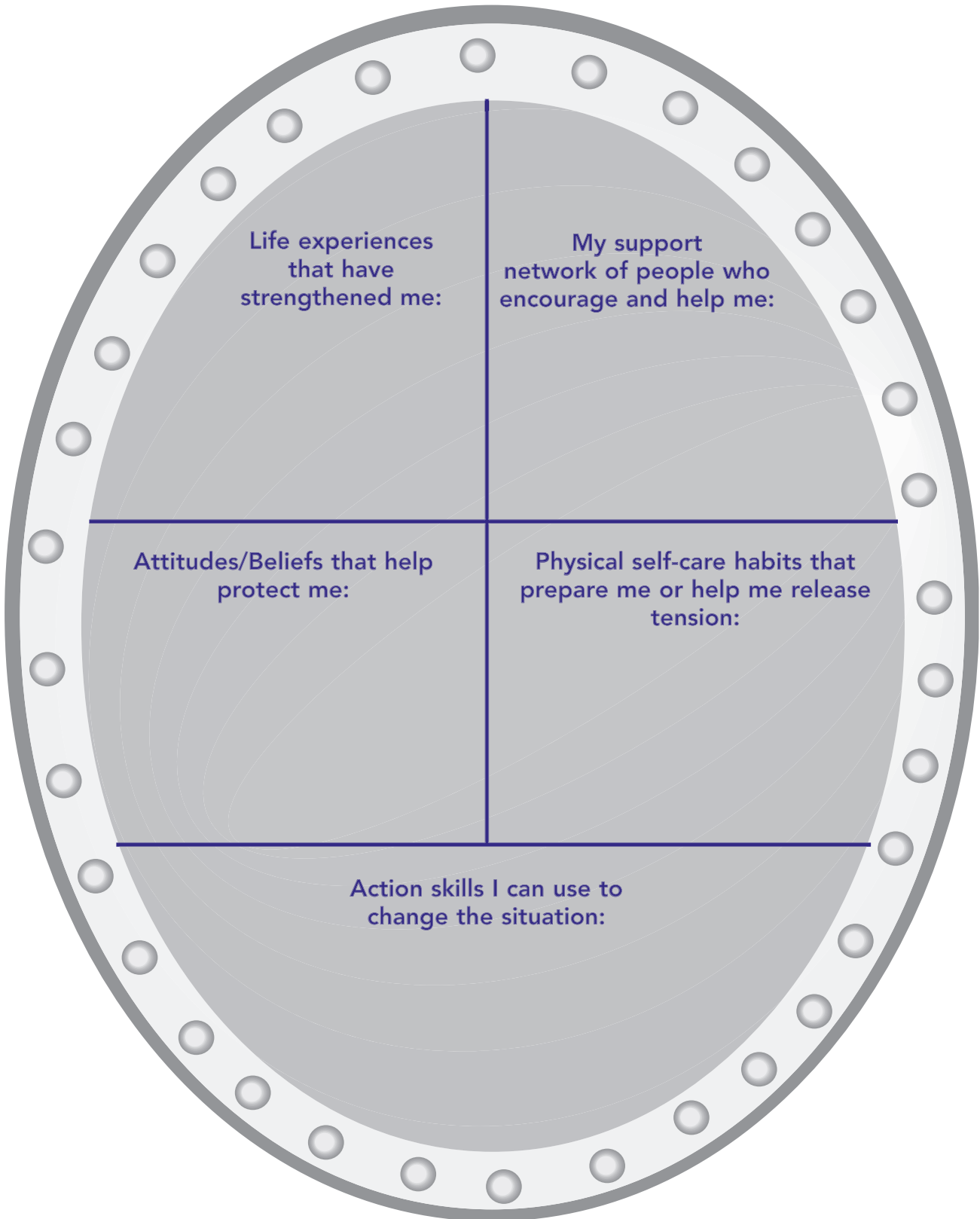
1. Distribute the "My Stress Shield" handout to each student.
2. Share examples with them of your own buffers.
3. Ask students to think about the qualities that make up their own personal stress buffers. You may want to discuss how students define stress.
4. Direct students to record their stress buffers in the appropriate sections of the shield.
5. Give them 10-15 minutes to complete this.
6. Ask students to form groups of three.
7. Have them share their shields with one another—they may hear things that they want to add to their own shields.

8. Give them 15 minutes to share.
9. Have students return to their seats.
10. Ask students to share any observations, insights, particularly good ideas they picked up.
11. Emphasize the importance of using these buffers to help them handle stress.





# My Stress Shield



## A+ Activity #3 "Cutting Out" Stress

Elementary grade students and linguistically diverse students also need to develop strategies for coping with stress. Use this puzzle to begin a conversation with your students, particularly when they are feeling stressed over standardized testing. Feel free to create your own puzzle, modify the language, or make other changes to meet the needs of your students.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 3-5  
 Grouping: Whole class  
 Materials: Scissors, puzzle to cut out (page 4-12)  
 Objective: To help children create a plan of action for times when there's more to "process" than their "processor" can handle

### Lesson Delivery

1. Have students cut out the blocks in the puzzle and match them to create a picture.
2. Examine the picture clues and talk about the activities listed. Have the students share which activities help them when they are feeling stressed.
3. Brainstorm a list of other activities that could help children feel relieved from stress. Imagine various everyday stressful situations and how some of these stress-relieving activities could help them to feel reassured and comforted. Ask, "What do you do to 'take your mind off things?'"

### Debriefing

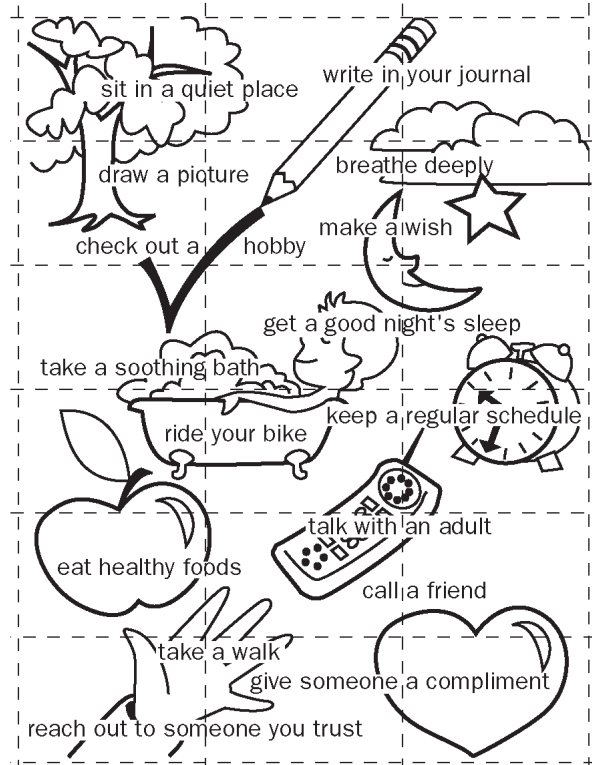
- What worked well in this activity?

- What was challenging for you?
- How could we do better next time with this activity?

Ruth Brannigan, illustrations by Mary Garner-Mitchell, *Tools for Teaching Resilience: Strategies for Life's Ups and Downs Activity Book: Grades K through 5*, NEA Health Information Network, (Washington, DC: 2002), 7-8.

### SOLUTION

### Activities help "CUT OUT" stress and make us feel better

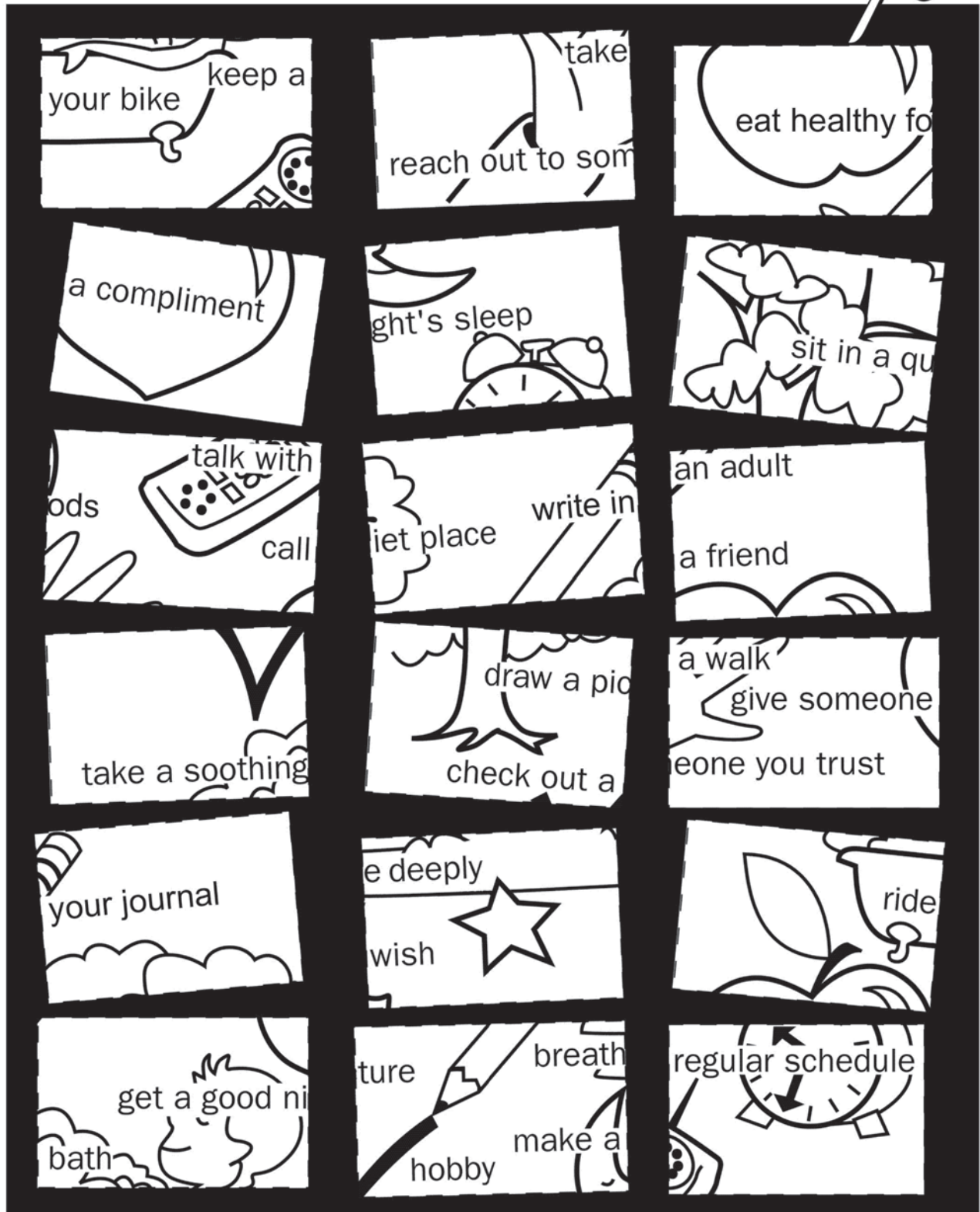


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# Activities help "CUT OUT" stress and make us feel better

Cut out the blocks below. Match them and the puzzle's picture clues.





## Activity #4 Be Gentle With Yourself and Others

Even the youngest students are confronted with stressful or disadvantaged situations on a far-too-frequent basis. Here's an easy way to lead those students into a discussion of dealing with stressful times.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: K-2  
Grouping: Whole class  
Materials: "Be gentle with yourself" story (page 4-14) and dot-to-dot picture, (page 4-15), crayons  
Objective: To help students understand how we can know when to be gentle with ourselves and others, and how to develop that skill, in order to deal with stress, trauma or loss

### Lesson delivery

1. Many people attempt to deal with stress, trauma or loss by trying to

avoid it. For example, some people escape into their work. Unfortunately, people can make things more difficult when they push themselves to keep going when what they really need to do is relax. The Saint Bernard is beloved for its dedication to completing difficult tasks during threatening situations, as well as for its loving personality.

2. Share the story with the students. Use the story of Barry, a famous Saint Bernard, to start a discussion about how we can know when to be gentle with ourselves and others, and how to develop that skill.
3. Let the students complete the dot-to-dot picture.

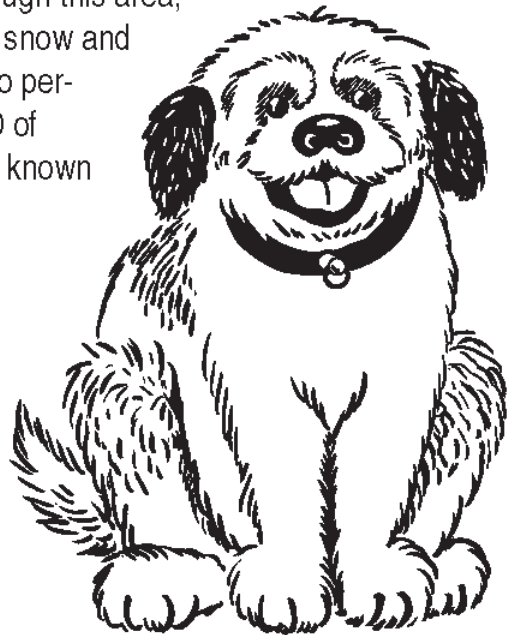
Ruth Brannigan, illustrations by Mary Garner-Mitchell, *Tools for Teaching Resilience: Strategies for Life's Ups and Downs Activity Book: Grades K through 5*, (Washington, DC: NEA Health Information Network, 2002), 17-18.

## Be gentle with yourself and others



**D**ogs: “Man’s Best Friend.” When we come home, dogs are always glad to see us. They love us no matter what. There are many breeds of dogs. The breed that’s perhaps best known for its gentle, loving personality and keen sense of bravery is the Saint Bernard.

Barry, one of the most famous Saint Bernards ever, lived more than 200 years ago in the mountains between Italy and Switzerland. Known for narrow, dangerous roads and trails, this region frequently gets fierce snowstorms. So, it’s no surprise that, during his long life, Barry rescued many people who, while traveling through this area, got lost or found themselves trapped because of the snow and rugged terrain. Barry isn’t the only Saint Bernard who performed such wonderful, heroic acts. More than 2,000 of these dogs worked in this part of the Alps that’s now known as “Saint Bernard Pass.”



Saint Bernards are known not only for doing brave rescue work but also for being fun friends and loving companions. With their big, broad chests, they are good at clearing pathways and they are strong enough to pull people out of deep snow. Dogs like Barry also have an excellent sense of direction. They can navigate through thick fog and heavy, blinding snowstorms better than most people can. Besides being great rescue dogs, Saint Bernards are also a lot of fun. They enjoy running after thrown sticks, chasing balls, and cuddling with kids.

The point is, Saint Bernards are powerful and skilled yet they are also gentle with themselves and others. When in difficult or scary situations, people rely on Saint Bernards not only for being strong and skilled but also because of their sensitive and gentle manners. And, as “man’s best friend,” dogs like Saint Bernards count on people to be the same in return.

# Be gentle with yourself and others

Dogs like Barry, a big, brave Saint Bernard, have an excellent sense of direction and can trek through the toughest conditions. On the fun side, they also run after thrown sticks, chase balls, and cuddle with kids.







## Activity #5 Believe It...Or Not!

Part of building critical consciousness among culturally and economically diverse students is helping them understand how to deal with the barrage of information they confront through newspapers, television, radio, and the Internet.

### Lesson Preparation

Grades: 3-12  
Grouping: Whole class  
Materials: Believe It...Or Not! (page 4-17)  
Objective: To help students to be "critical consumers" of information, and decide whether they should believe every headline they read or every story they hear on television or radio

### Lesson Delivery

Grades: 3-5

1. Discussion for this activity is directed toward student's own responsibilities where media is concerned.
2. Ask "Is it wise to watch the news over and over when negative news is presented?"

3. How should students decide how to screen what they watch, read, and listen to, especially during stressful times?
4. As a related activity, students could make up their own "believable" and "unbelievable" headlines.

Grades: 6-12

Use actual headlines from the local newspaper to guide your discussion of questions 1-4 above.

Ruth Brannigan, illustrations by Mary Garner-Mitchell, *Tools for Teaching Resilience: Strategies for Life's Ups and Downs Activity Book: Grades K through 5*, (Washington, DC: NEA Health Information Network, 2002), 17-18.

# Believe It... Or Not!

You are in charge of how you react to headlines. Read the ones on this page and ask yourself: Is it fact or is it fiction?

## NEWS

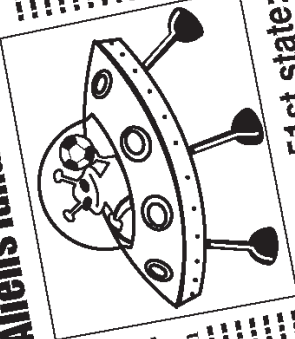
**Weather forecast:**  
Partly cloudy.  
Sunshine in  
the afternoon.

**Inside:**

- Knowledge is power
- Spelling bee takes flight

### Aliens land on soccer field

... ..



### Learning math adds to your intelligence

... ..

### Dog wins election

... ..

### President announces 51st state: Confusion

... ..

### School - a safe place to be

Teachers keep students protected

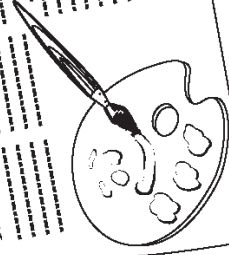
... ..

### Cafeteria serves palka-dot potatoes

... ..

### Art expresses feelings

... ..



There's news you can use, but choose wisely. Circle the headlines you think are believable.

# Believe It... Or Not!

You are in charge of how you react to headlines. Read the ones on this page and ask yourself: Is it fact or is it fiction?

## NEWS

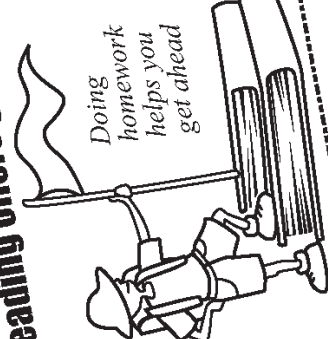
**Weather forecast:**  
Sunshine all  
the live-long  
day!

**Inside:**

- Teachers' high expectations equal faith in students' abilities
- Moonbeams give you sunburn

### Reading offers great adventures

... ..



### Bus wheels: still going round and round

... ..

### PE: helps students stay physically fit

... ..

### Traveling elephants pack their own trunks

... ..

### New shampoo cures the common cold

... ..



### Magnets win beauty contest: found attractive

... ..



There's news you can use, but choose wisely. Circle the headlines you think are believable.



## Activity #6 Educator Reflection—Deficits into Strengths

Too often, we tend to see only the negative traits—the “deficits”—of certain students, rather than focusing on the skills that they bring to the classroom. Behavioral problems, academic struggles, language difficulties—these can all become barriers to learning if we only focus on what is not working. To help turn those perceived deficits into strengths that support students, let’s consider a new view of students.

### Reflection Process:

1. Review the list of “deficits” in “Our Words Matter!” (page 4-19) Can you change your perspective and find a way to describe each of these deficits as a strength?
2. When you finish, compare your answers to a colleague’s; you may find another way of looking at a challenging student. Talk about your responses. You can also refer to the “answer key” at the end of this activity, for more ideas (page 4-20).
3. Look at your list again. Do any of these words describe a student in your class? A student you see in the cafeteria? A student out on the playground? One who rides your school bus? Think about the strengths this student brings to school. What could you do to turn the deficits into strengths for this student? What could you change in your classroom, cafeteria, in the playground or bus environment that might make a change in this student?
4. Look at the “Self-Reflection Resilience Checklist.”(page 4-21) This self-assessment lists practices that have been shown to build resilience in students. Which ones do you do on a regular basis? Which ones do you need to add or do more often? Complete the checklist for yourself and use it to think about improving your practice and guiding you in choosing staff development opportunities.



### What Is My School Doing To Foster Social and Emotional Learning?

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) provides a number of online and print resources that support the development of resilience. CASEL’s mission is to enhance children’s success in school and life by promoting coordinated, evidence-based social, emotional, and academic learning as an essential part of education from pre-school through high school.

Go to [www.casel.org/downloads/selfassessmentguide.pdf](http://www.casel.org/downloads/selfassessmentguide.pdf) to access a brief guide that is intended to help educators evaluate how their school is doing in fostering social and emotional learning.



# Our Words Matter!

## DEFICITS

## STRENGTHS

Short attention span

Irresponsible

Distractible

Hyperactive

Unpredictable

Impulsive

Loud

Stubborn

Poor planner

Disorganized

Willful

Bossy

Argumentative

Tests limits

Manipulative

Anxious

Impatient

Explosive

Disobedient

Rebellious

Defiant

Angry



# Our Words Matter!

## DEFICITS

Short attention span  
Irresponsible  
Distractible  
Hyperactive  
Unpredictable  
Impulsive  
Loud  
Stubborn  
Poor planner  
Disorganized  
Willful  
Bossy  
Argumentative  
Tests limits  
Manipulative  
Anxious  
Impatient  
Explosive  
Disobedient  
Rebellious  
Defiant  
Angry

## STRENGTHS

Many interests  
Carefree  
Perceptive  
Energetic  
Flexible  
Spontaneous  
Enthusiastic  
Persistent  
Present-oriented  
Unstructured  
Determined  
Takes leadership  
Committed  
Risk-taker  
Negotiator  
Cautious  
Eager  
Dramatic  
Self-directed  
Non-conformist  
Bold  
Activist



# Self-Reflection Resilience Checklist

Place a ✓ by the items that demonstrate your strengths-based practices.  
Place a + by items you would like to improve or strengthen.

## I demonstrate **CARING AND SUPPORT** for my students by:

- Creating and sustaining a caring sense of community
- Creating one-to-one connections
- Actively listening/Using eye contact
- Paying attention and showing interest
- Praising and encouraging
- Getting to know hopes, interests, and dreams
- Showing respect
- Being nonjudgmental
- Looking beneath "problem" behavior
- Using humor/smiling/laughing
- Creating small, personalized groups
- Creating opportunities for peer-helping and cross-age mentoring

## I communicate **HIGH EXPECTATIONS** to my students by:

- Believing in the innate resilience of every child
- Seeing culture as an asset
- Challenging and supporting ("You can do it; I'll be there to help.")
- Connecting learning to students' interests, strengths, experiences, dreams, and goals
- Encouraging creativity and imagination
- Seeing student behavior as driven by basic needs (love, belonging, etc.)
- Setting clear expectations/boundaries/structure
- Using rituals and traditions
- Using a variety of instructional strategies to tap multiple intelligences
- Conveying to students they have power to change and determine their own behavior and thoughts

## I provide opportunities for my students' **PARTICIPATION** and **CONTRIBUTION** by:

- Providing opportunities for students to plan, make decisions, and problem-solve
- Empowering youth to help create after-school program rules
  
- Creating opportunities for creative expression:
  - Art
  - Music
  - Writing/Poetry
  - Storytelling/Drama
  
- Inviting the active participation of often excluded groups:
  - Girls/Women
  - Youth of color
  - Youth with special needs
  - Infusing service learning
  - Offering peer-helping, cross-age helping, and peer support groups
  - Using cooperative learning
  - Providing ongoing opportunities for personal reflection
  - Providing ongoing opportunities for dialog/discussion
  - Providing ongoing opportunities for experiential/active learning



## Activity #7 Educator Reflection—Teaching Through Conversation

Instructional conversation (IC) is teaching through conversation to guide students to construct more complex understandings of a topic, text, problem, or other activity. The following information provides an introduction to this instructional strategy that is very effective in developing the abilities of diverse students.

### Reflection Process:

1. Read “Getting Started with Instructional Conversation”
2. Reflect: does the “teacher talk” resemble your own way of speaking to students?
3. Think about how you can improve your own Instructional Conversation with your students.
4. Look at the chart “Suggested Teacher Talk.” (page 4-24) Practice an instructional conversation with a colleague around a current curricular objective that you are working on in your classroom.

### **Getting Started with Instructional Conversation**

Instructional conversation (IC) takes advantage of conversation’s appeal for students when topics are interesting, and participation is comfortable and inclusive. Ordinarily, IC takes place in small groups, though a teacher may have Instructional Conversations with larger groups or individuals. For example, teachers may work on a unit or thematic topic with the whole class, followed by small group ICs that focus on researching and analyzing selected aspects of the topic. In engaging diverse students through dialogue, the teacher:

1. arranges the classroom to accommodate conversation between the teacher and a small group of students on a regular and frequent schedule;
2. has a clear academic goal that guides conversation with students;
3. ensures that student talk occurs at higher rates than teacher talk;
4. guides conversation to include students’ views, judgments, and rationales, using text evidence and other substantive support;
5. ensures that all students are included in the conversation according to their preferences;
6. listens carefully to assess levels of students’ understanding;
7. assists students’ learning throughout the conversation by questioning, restating, praising, encouraging, and so forth; and
8. guides the students to prepare a product that indicates the Instructional Conversation’s goal was achieved.

A teacher begins IC by simply asking students to talk about a selected activity, text, or experience from their point of view, that is, based on their knowledge from home, community, or school. The teacher encourages every student to talk specifically about personal and school experiences that relate to the text and to the concepts the teacher plans to develop. Students are encouraged to participate in the IC using language forms and styles that are comfortable for them. Those forms and styles vary enormously; after all, many cultures have very different styles for how people talk with each other, and for how children talk with adults. By accepting students’ preferred participation formats, teachers can elicit more student speech. That gives teachers more opportunities to promote precise and complex student language expression. Precise and complex thought is developed simultaneously.

## Learning Academic Language Instructional Conversation Example

Haitian students learn to listen selectively in a seventh-grade beginning English language study class. In a “Welcome to School” unit emphasizing school vocabulary, reading a school map, and listening to school announcements, the teacher converses with students about a learning strategy called Listen Selectively, to help students plan their own learning. Using students’ home language, she asks them how they learn and how they can learn better. They discuss action steps for achieving their learning goals. The teacher guides students to connect their action steps with what it means to listen selectively. They use a chart with important features of selective listening, such as attending to key words and phrases, to words or themes that repeat, or to words that give clues, such as first, finally, for example, and so forth. Students listen to the teacher read the school announcements to fill out the chart for the information they need. After discussing the chart, they follow it for the rest of the school day. (Ann S. Rosebery, B. Warren and F. Conant, “Appropriating Scientific Discourse: Findings from Language Minority Classrooms,” *The Journal of Learning Sciences*, (2,1 (1992) : 61-94.

## Selecting an Instructional Goal

Instructional conversation requires a clear instructional goal and a plan for assistance and assessment that guides students to the goal. If students have little common knowledge on a selected topic, a teacher will provide appropriate direct or indirect experience in the form of hands-on activities, field trips, or complex real-world problems, or through resource books, media, or other sources. Such an experience provides all participants with a shared notion of the intended IC topic, the basis for initiating IC conversation. While any good conversation requires some latitude and drift in the topic, the teacher’s leadership is used to continue to focus on the topic goal. While the goal remains firm, the route to the goal is

responsive to students’ participation and developing understanding.

Here are some of the varied ways in which students can participate in instructional conversation:

## Student Participation Formats in Instructional Conversation

- Students bid to answer.
- Students co-narrate.
- Students respond chorally.
- Students take turns.
- Students speak simultaneously.
- Students use overlapping speech.
- Students are called non-routinely.
- Students self-select.

Stephanie Stoll Dalton, *Pedagogy Matters: Standards for Effective Teaching Practice* (Santa Cruz, CA: Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence, 1998), 26-33.



## Instructional Conversation's Balanced Participation

TEACHER TALK	STUDENT TALK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• occurs less than total student talk</li> <li>• sets up opportunities for students' talk</li> <li>• has a topic focus</li> <li>• is responsive to students' talk and language proficiency, scaffolding the discussion when needed</li> <li>• models proper forms (syntax and grammar) of the language of instruction</li> <li>• elicits students' language on the topic through probes about reasoning and feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• occurs more than teacher talk</li> <li>• is every students' product</li> <li>• addresses the topic</li> <li>• uses own preferred style of talking such as co-narration, simultaneous, choral, or overlapping speech</li> <li>• uses proper forms of the language of instruction in response to models</li> <li>• uses content lexicon and concepts in response to models, probes, and the flow of conversation</li> </ul>

## Suggested Teacher Talk for an Instructional Conversation

<p><b>Paraphrasing:</b> summarizing, restating, communicating your understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• So...</li> <li>• In other words...</li> <li>• What I hear you saying...</li> <li>• As I listen to you, I'm hearing...</li> </ul>	<p><b>Clarifying:</b> need more information, checking assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell me a little more about...</li> <li>• Let me see if I understand...</li> <li>• So, what you are saying is...?</li> <li>• Can you give me an example of...?</li> <li>• I'd be interested in knowing more about...</li> <li>• Tell me what you mean by...</li> <li>• To what extent...?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reflective:</b> analyze, reflect on cause and effect, metacognition, promote sense of self-efficacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When _____ happened, what thoughts went through your mind?</li> <li>• What do you think led up to...?</li> <li>• How do you know?</li> <li>• What would you like to have happened differently?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mediational:</b> forecast what might happen, imagine possibilities, analyze, compare and contrast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What would happen if...?</li> <li>• What would it look like if you were to....?</li> <li>• What's another way you might...?</li> <li>• What might you see happening if...?</li> </ul>

\*Adapted from CREDE *Teaching Alive! Foundations of Coaching*. (Santa Cruz, CA: Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence, 1998).



## Activity #8

### Educator Reflection—Resilience-Based Pointers for Communicating with Youth, Staff, and Parents

Educators can use instructional conversations to support students in building resilience skills. Talking to students about common stressors, like adapting to a new environment, preparing for a test, or talking with teachers or peers, can help to build trust. How we talk to students, and each other, can help to shift a student from risk to resilience. What follows are ideas for how to shape your conversations to build resilience.



### Resilience-based Pointers for Communicating with Youth, Staff, and Parents

<b>STEP 1</b>	<b>I CARE...</b>	Let the person know that he/she is important to you and to the group. However this is done, it must be credible and sincere.
<b>STEP 2</b>	<b>I SEE...</b>	Focus on observable behavior. What did you see or hear that caused you to be concerned?  SAY: You missed class for 3 days... DON'T SAY: You are not living up to your commitment.  SAY: You don't manage to get your homework done anymore... DON'T SAY: You are really lazy and waste too much time. You are only giving 10 percent.
<b>STEP 3</b>	<b>I FEEL...</b>	Let the person know how you feel about his/her behavior. Feelings are best expressed by a single word. "I feel angry." "I feel worried." This makes it clear to the person that what she/he is doing is affecting someone else. This reduces the chance of raising defenses and helps to avoid an argument.
<b>STEP 4</b>	<b>LISTEN</b>	Listen to the person. Show this with facial expressions and other body language. Ask questions. Resist distractions.  Caution: Be prepared for silence. Since you probably chose the time and place for addressing the issue, the person may or may not be prepared to talk at the time. They may be ready to talk at another time if you don't alienate them now.
<b>STEP 5</b>	<b>I WANT...</b>	When you have heard the person's perspective let him/her know what you would like to happen. This is an opportunity to reinforce rules and expectations and make clear how you want the behavior to change.
<b>STEP 6</b>	<b>I WILL...</b>	Let him/her know how you will provide support. What are you willing to do? Your willingness to provide support will help create a bond and make change possible. Relationships and interpersonal process are the keys to changing behavior, not facts, warnings, or hysteria.

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# Educational Support Professional Check-In on Resilience

## “How am I doing?”

**Directions:** Review the list below. Place a check by each item to reflect your practice. Then indicate the three items you would like to explore in order to improve your practice.

Indicators	“I do this a lot”	“I do this a little”	“I haven’t done this”	My priorities to explore
1. I work with small groups of students on a regular basis.				
2. I build positive, caring relationships with students by acting as a role-model, nurturer, mentor, or friend.				
3. I assist the teacher in developing instructional activities that value students’ experiences and abilities.				
4. I help students communicate a sense of future by having them talk about their goals for their own learning.				
5. I model caring and support in my relationships with students and their parents.				
6. I help build trusting and caring relationships between students through interactions inside and outside the classroom environment.				
7. I hold high expectations for students in the quality and quantity of the work that they do.				
8. I hold high expectations for students in their work habits and work procedures.				
9. I hold high expectations for students in their interpersonal behaviors.				
10. I communicate high expectations to students by challenging them to do their best and letting them know I believe they can succeed.				

# Chapter 5

## Chapter 5

### Effort and Motivation

We have each, at some time, taught a class that just did not go over well. What went wrong, we wonder. We prepared carefully, knew the material well, delivered the information precisely, but our students didn't get the information, and didn't care. We may have walked away assuming the students just weren't motivated; they just didn't try to understand.

How do our personal experiences and viewpoints color what we see in our students? Let's examine some of the assumptions we share about the effort our students exert and what energizes them to learn. We may find out that nothing went wrong—except our assumptions about effort and motivation.

#### **Assumption #1: Students don't put a lot of effort into the work that they turn in**

It's easy to jump to this conclusion when we look at the papers that are handed in by some of our students. But demonstrated achievement doesn't necessarily equate to the amount of effort that a student puts into his or her work. Recent surveys of middle and high school students found that African American and Hispanic students often put in the same amount of time on their homework but are less likely to complete it because they understand less of what is taught or what they read (Ferguson 2004). As a result, many of us assume that an incomplete or missing homework assignment always means less effort was made when it may not mean that at all.

From another view, we have learned over the years that students perceive their capacity to do work quite differently. Some students see capacity in terms of their innate ability ("Girls just can't do math.") while oth-

ers see it in terms of effort ("If I just try hard, I can accomplish anything.") Educators have a critical role in helping students and encouraging parents to emphasize the role of effort over ability when students confront new or difficult tasks. (Corbett, Wilson, and Williams 2002).

#### **Assumption #2: My students are unmotivated**

Who hasn't heard a student say, "I'm bored – why do we have to do this?" What motivates you may not be exactly the same as what motivates your students, but that doesn't mean that your students aren't motivated. Often, the key to success is recognizing that all students are motivated for success in some area, and we have to find ways to tap into that area to build a motivation for academic success.



**Enduring Understanding:** Effective educators of culturally and linguistically diverse students understand the importance of building on students' interests, experiences, and knowledge to motivate and engage them in their learning.

Optimal instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students:

- Recognizes the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
- Allows the expression of student interests and uses those interests to guide instruction
- Provides constructive and regular feedback, using errors as opportunities for learning in ways that honor and respect students' developmental levels

## CREDE Standards for Effort

- Joint Productive Activity – Educators and Students Producing Together: Facilitate learning through joint productive activity among educators and students.
- Student Choice: Encourage student decisionmaking.

One key strategy has been identifying research or service projects that are relevant to students' communities. Berman (1997) reports on long-standing strategies to engage students by offering realistic courses on contemporary social problems, discussions of current issues where divergent points of view are shared, cooperative learning projects where students learn about and address social problems in and outside of school, service learning projects, cross-age tutoring and mentoring of students new to the country. Not only do such teaching strategies help to motivate students to develop new skills and knowledge, but they also help them to develop responsibility for their community and society.

### **Assumption #3: There is nothing I can do to motivate my students**

We all understand the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. We provide extrinsic motivation in a number of ways (e.g., grades, rewards for success, gold stars for compliance to rules)—some of them work for all students, some don't. But what about intrinsic motivation—the continuous effort that is driven by students' own desire for excellence and achievement? According to Jere Brophy of the University of Chicago Department of Teacher Education, motivation to learn is a competence acquired "through general experience but stimulated most directly through modeling, communication of expectations, and direct instruction or socialization by significant others—especially parents and teachers" (quoted in Lumsden, 1994). Thus, we find that there is something educators *can* do to help increase students' intrinsic motivation:

- Be explicit in what you expect of students, letting them know what excellence looks like;
- Communicate through action and words that you will not give up on the student; and
- Encourage students to help each other when they are having trouble (Ferguson, 2004)

### ***Moving beyond these assumptions, what does the research tell us?***

In *Effort and Excellence in Urban Classrooms: Expecting—and Getting—Success with All Students* (Corbett, Wilson, and Williams, 2002), the authors look at the assumptions that we make about the capabilities of culturally diverse learners, including students from low-income families. They share examples of teachers and schools that capitalize on students' intrinsic motivation with a focus on what the students can do rather than what students can't do, and build on the fact that success builds the motivation in students to succeed.

Some researchers have argued that students who have developed an "entity" view of ability—they see their ability as fixed and limited—can benefit if they receive training that shifts them to an "incremental" view of ability. This incremental view helps students see ability as something that can be developed—little by little—through practice. To encourage this incremental view and help students improve their effort, educators can act more as resources for their students than judges, focus students more on learning processes than on outcomes, and help students see errors as natural and useful parts of the learning process rather than as evidence of failure. (Dweck and Elliott, 1983)

### ***How does an understanding of our students' culture help us motivate them to excellence?***

How does culture—the language, ethnicity, economic circumstance, and daily experiences of a student—affect motivation? Having some understanding of what is happening in students' lives can help you understand what would affect their effort and motivation to do well in school. Knowledge of what that student has to overcome to complete schoolwork can give you an idea of what you could do to help the student overcome those obstacles. For example, is the student expected to work after school to help support the family? Does the student have responsibility to care for siblings? Are there adults in the family who speak English and can help the student with homework? Has the student moved from school to school, making it difficult to keep up with the curriculum? What about the effect of traumatic events such as the loss of a parent? You can't "fix" most of these things, but knowing about them can help you to make adjustments and provide support for the student.

Based on research findings, we know that motivation depends on the extent to which teachers are able to satisfy students' needs to feel in control of their learning, feel competent, and feel connected with others. Ferguson (2004) counts as one of the central tasks of classroom social and intellectual engagement the balance between teacher (educator) control and student autonomy. When educators allow students to have significant input into learning goals, classroom activities, and daily routines and procedures, students are likely to feel more autonomous and motivated to participate.

In fostering competence and industriousness, educators can provide learning experiences that involve both creativity and critical thinking. Connectedness involves strategies such as advisory programs, cooperative learning, peer mentoring and counseling,

and community service. A climate of care, concern, trust and respect also engenders a feeling of connectedness in a classroom.

### ***How can we tell if students are making an effort when we can't see them doing it?***

How many times have you struggled to complete some task, only to watch another individual breeze through it almost effortlessly? As educators, it's helpful to remember that a student getting a lower grade may have actually put more effort into their work than a student receiving a higher grade. That struggling student may need more encouragement and positive feedback to sustain their motivation to keep trying. You can acknowledge and recognize the effort they put out, even if they don't reach the standard that is set.

The Tripod Project at Harvard University found that African American and Hispanic middle and high school students actually put as much time and effort into their incomplete homework as other students invested in their completed assignments (Ferguson, 2004). Why the difference? Hispanic and African American students often did not understand the material enough or did not have parents who could help them understand and therefore couldn't finish the homework. So who made the greatest effort: those with completed homework or those without? The answer is not immediately clear.

### ***Are grades the only reward students should be trying for?***

Despite the emphasis placed by state and federal mandates on accountability systems, student effort is important not just in terms of grades and standardized tests. Effort is important for character development, life skills, and success in work and the community. While many students are not motivated by the assignment of grades, we can look outside the classroom to see what does motivate them and find ways to build on those activities in meaningful ways that

will affect students' lives as well as their academic success.

### ***How much do other school staff understand about effort and motivation?***

OK, so you understand how hard your students are working, but what happens when your principal walks in the door and doesn't see every student working in the same way? Other adults in the school—administrators, teachers and ESPs, even parents and volunteers—need to recognize that there are variations in the way students work and differences in what student effort looks like. For example, administrators would benefit from understanding variations in effort and how that impacts what may be happening in a classroom—not all students and classrooms will look the same, and there needs to be dialogue with the teacher to avoid problems when evaluations are made, feedback is given, etc. You may have to take the initiative in sharing this information and starting the conversation.

It's also important for you to have a good working relationship with families to support students and motivate them to do their best. You can learn from parents about what motivates their child, and what levels of effort they are seeing at home when their child is working on homework, family responsibilities, and hobbies. You can help parents understand what's going on in the classroom and how to help their child do their best work. But as you talk to families, you need to be careful not to fall into the trap of making assumptions about what is influencing the student based on their culture – not all poor students have parents who are uninterested in what happens in school and not all Asian students are motivated to be straight "A" students. Effective family-school communication requires us to shape our conversations carefully with families to enlist them as partners in their child's success.

## **Chapter References**

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Ronald Ferguson, *Necessary Policies and Practices to Close the Student Achievement Gaps*, Presentation to NEA Symposium on Critical Issues for Educators (Washington, D.C., 2004).

Linda S. Lumsden, "Student Motivation to Learn," *Eric Digest* 92 (June, 1994): 94.



## Educator Check-In on Effort "How am I doing?"

**Directions:** Review the list below. Place a check by each item to reflect your practice. Then indicate the three items you would like to explore in order to improve your practice.

Indicators	"I do this a lot"	"I do this a little"	"I haven't done this"	My priorities to explore
1. I provide regular opportunities in which I, as teacher/facilitator, collaborate with students on meaningful projects.				
2. My students play an active role in generating ideas for curriculum and help to develop some learning activities.				
3. I encourage students to not feel limited by their perceived ability, but to put forth their best effort in their work.				
4. I differentiate my instruction to maximize the learning of each of my students and ensure that I am addressing each student's approach to learning.				
5. I use my own errors as opportunities to improve my teaching.				
6. I use instructional methods that build on students' strengths and interests as well as their cultural experiences.				
7. I communicate expectations about classroom participation and students' ability for mastery, as well as time frames for task completion for each of my lesson activities.				
8. For each lesson, I provide students with a rationale for learning concepts, skills, or tasks and how the instructional activities relate to their lives.				
9. I get to know my students so that I am familiar with the emotional and social barriers they may face to putting forth their best effort.				
10. I use students' errors as opportunities to advance learning.				
11. I provide frequent feedback and monitor student progress regularly.				
12. I communicate often with parents regarding their children's progress, success, and difficulties.				
13. I examine my instructional practices to ensure that I am not favoring certain groups of students over others.				
14. I include families and members of the students' cultural communities in classroom activities.				
15. I vary my instructional groupings to allow for maximum student participation and interaction with me and with other students.				
16. I act as a facilitator, guide, mediator, and knowledgeable consultant to my students as opposed to being a "Sage on the Stage."				



## Effort: Approaches, Strategies, and Activities At-a-Glance

Approaches	Strategies	Activity Number
<p><b>Build on Students' Unique Interests</b></p>	<p>Cooperative learning</p> <p>Promote intrinsic motivation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carousel Brainstorm, page 5-7</li> <li>2. Think-Pair-Share, page 5-8</li> <li>3. Numbered Heads Together, page 5-9</li> <li>4. Educator Reflection—Praise vs. Encouragement, page 5-10</li> </ol>
<p><b>Incorporate Authenticity in the Curriculum</b></p>	<p>Incorporate curriculum and activities that draw on students' lives and experiences</p> <p>Use multicultural literature and materials</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Say Something, Write Something, page 5-12</li> <li>6. Educator Reflection—Diversity in Literature, page 5-13</li> </ol>
<p><b>Differentiate Instruction Based on Students' Academic Needs and Their Interests</b></p>	<p>Assess and activate students' prior knowledge for each lesson</p> <p>Implement activity centers for diverse learners</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. K-W-L, page 5-16</li> <li>8. Educator Reflection—Guidelines for Designing Effective Activity Centers, page 5-18</li> </ol>

# Ready-to-Use Approaches, Strategies, and Activities

## **A+** Activity #1 Carousel Brainstorm

The “Carousel Brainstorm” is an information sharing structure that allows participants to brainstorm various topics while benefiting from the ideas of others at the same time. It is well-suited to the instructional or scaffolding needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students, as well as shy students.

### Lesson Preparation

Grades: 2-12  
Duration: 30-60 minutes  
Grouping: Small groups of four  
Materials: Chart paper, markers  
Objective: To encourage equity of participation in generating a variety of ideas about a topic  
Assessment: Individual student participation; equity of participation in small groups

### Lesson Delivery

Briefing: Introduce the objectives of this lesson. “Today we are going to brainstorm ideas about \_\_\_\_\_.” Briefly explain to students how they are going to do this. “We are going to collaborate in small groups to create brainstorm lists on the chart paper you see on the walls.”

### Instructional Frame

1. Assign each group to a chart on the wall. Each chart has a different prompt or question.
2. One member of the group (the “Recorder”) should have a marker color that no other group has.
3. Remind students that brainstorming means a flow of ideas, thus:
  - All answers are acceptable
  - Everyone participates

- Everyone listens to each participant’s contribution
  - No discussion or judging of ideas
4. The recorder writes the ideas that group members brainstorm in response to the prompt on the chart.
  5. At the educator’s signal, students move to their next chart as a group and do the following:
    - Rotate the role of recorder
    - Read the prompt
    - Read the ideas written on the chart
    - Record additional ideas
  6. Each group must add something to every chart (it should be a new idea), and may also place a star next to an idea that already has been written that their group strongly agrees with.
  7. Activity finishes when groups return to their original charts.
  8. Optional extension: When groups return to their original chart, ask them to circle their top three favorite ideas. Each group selects a Reporter. Then, the reporters from each group take turns to share the top three ideas from their chart.

### Debriefing

- What worked well in this activity?
- In what ways did we follow our classroom norms?
- What was challenging for you?

- What are other things for which we might use a Carousel Brainstorm?
- How could we do better next time with this activity?

**Note:** Educators should allow about 1-2 minutes per rotation, and perhaps add on 30 seconds to each as the activity nears the end. To keep up motivation, do not allow the activity to drag.

Irene McGinty and Noni Mendoza-Reis, *Towards Equity: A Guide for Teaching and Learning in a Multicultural Society: Classroom Applications*, (Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education, 1998), 771.

## Activity #2 Think-Pair-Share

For the next activity, you may want to develop some ways to pair students with classmates they don't always work with in order to provide a variety of experiences and stimulate different ideas. This activity helps to scaffold or bridge content with academic language, especially for English language learners.

### Lesson Preparation

Grades:	K-12
Duration:	10-40 minutes, depending on number of prompts
Grouping:	Partners
Materials:	Depends on activity
Objective:	To provide an opportunity for students to build academic and conversational language

### Lesson Delivery

**Briefing:** Introduce the objectives of this lesson. "Today we are going to work in partners to help us think about \_\_\_\_\_." Briefly explain to students how they are going to do this. "We are going to first think about \_\_\_\_\_, and then find a partner, and share your ideas."

### Instructional Frame

1. Educator poses a prompt or question about the concept and unit of study. For example, if a class was studying the fire department and its relationship to the community, the educator might ask:
  - *Elementary:* What does a fire-fighter do? Think about this for a moment, and share with your partner.
  - *Middle:* When we visit the fire department next week, what will be most interesting to you and why? Think about this for a minute, and share your responses with your neighbor.
  - *High School:* If you were a fire-fighter, what equipment would you be sure to point out to students on field trips and why? Think about this for a minute, and share your response with a partner.
2. To ensure that all students participate, you may want to have an objective process for picking partners (choose someone wearing the same color, who has a pet, etc.)
3. Allow each student one minute to share with his or her partner after hearing the prompt. You may want to remind them about good listening skills and ask them to listen without responding while the student's partner is sharing.
4. With older students, you may want to give them another minute to respond to what they heard, get clarification, ask questions, etc.
5. When pairs finish, ask students to share some of the ideas they heard. Allow students to discuss

or ask questions as you connect this to the unit.

6. You may want to use several rounds on the same or different prompts. Students can stay with the same partner to discuss the next prompt, or you can have them choose a new partner.

### Debriefing

- What worked well in this activity?
- In what ways did we follow our classroom norms?
- What was challenging for you?
- How could we do better next time with this activity?

## **A+** Activity #3 Numbered Heads Together

“Numbered Heads” is a cooperative learning structure for the introduction, mastery, or review of important information. It encourages engagement, accountability, and cooperation of diverse students.

### Lesson Preparation

Grades:	1-12
Duration:	10-30 minutes
Grouping:	Small groups of 3-5
Materials:	Depends upon the content
Objective:	To help students work together to master or review concepts in a manner that ensures equitable participation
Assessment:	Individual student participation, equity of student contributions within the group

### Lesson Delivery

- Briefing: Introduce the objectives of this lesson. “Today we are going to work in small groups to help us learn more about \_\_\_\_\_.” Briefly explain to students how they are going

to do this. “First, I will ask you a question. Then, everyone in your group will put your heads together to choose a response. One person in your group will share your response to the rest of the class.”

### Instructional Frame

1. In advance, determine a process for forming heterogeneous groups of three to five students, ensuring that you have culturally and linguistically diverse groups.
2. Students number off within their small team or group. Each student on the team will have a different number.
3. The educator poses a question of the students and asks that they make sure everyone in the group can answer it.
4. Students share among themselves to make sure everyone in their group knows the answer.
5. The educator calls a number at random and the students with that number raise their hands to be called upon to share their groups’ response (the educator calls a different number for each question, or “round”).

### Debriefing

- What worked well in this activity?
- In what ways did we follow our classroom norms?
- What was challenging for you?
- What are other things we might use “Numbered Heads” for?
- How could we do better next time with this activity?

Adapted, Irene McGinty and Noni Mendoza-Reis, *Towards Equity: A Guide for Teaching and Learning in a Multicultural Society, Classroom Applications* (Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education, 1998), 891.



## Activity #4 Educator Reflection–Praise vs. Encouragement

Praise is from educator to student and has an external, general focus, but doesn't address the specific behaviors that you want to reinforce. This activity focuses on turning praise into encouragement to build on effort and motivation in diverse students.

### Reflection Process

1. Think about the ways in which you provide positive feedback to students in your classroom. Write down some of the phrases you hear yourself say:

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2. Read the chart that describes praise and encouragement (page 5-11). Do your positive remarks sound more like "praise" or like "encouragement"?
3. Remember that encouragement focuses on specific student behavior (their work or performance), and does not put a label on the student. Praise is good; but to build self-efficacy, use encouragement.
4. What are some ways you can transform your praise phrases to encouragement phrases? Write some examples below:

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**Praise Sounds Like:**

**Encouragement Sounds Like:**

<p>"I loved your paper. You are so creative."</p>	<p>"I especially liked the way that you included the background of the characters. Do you think you can explain how you did this to your table group?"</p>
<p>"You are always so cooperative. I like that."</p>	<p>"Your hard work really shows on this. I noticed how you helped your team with each of the stages of writing."</p>
<p>"That's just perfect. Wow!"</p>	<p>"Please check your work. You'll know if you need to spend more time on this if you check it against the rubric."</p>
<p>"You are so organized, great!"</p>	<p>"Your essay showed great organization. Each idea was clearly developed. Your paragraphs had a topic sentence and were followed by two or more supporting sentences."</p>

## **A+** Activity #5 Say Something, Write Something

Culturally and linguistically diverse students learn best when there is an authentic purpose in the lesson being taught. Authenticity is best developed when educators incorporate diverse students' lives and experiences into their lessons. The writing process offers opportunities for educators to draw upon the students' lives and experiences.

This is an alternative strategy to help English Language Learners and other students to master curriculum content as they read.

### Say Something

#### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 2-9  
Duration: Depends on content  
Grouping: Pairs or small groups  
Materials: Assigned reading materials for content  
Objective: To provide students with an oral strategy for responding to literature and nonfiction texts (science, social studies, etc.)

#### Lesson Delivery

1. Students choose a selection to read.
2. Students select their reading partner.
3. Partners decide how much of the text to read silently before stopping to "Say Something."
4. Both students comment on what was read, author's style or tone, comprehension problems, personal connections, what the passage made them think of, images that came to mind, etc.
5. Process is repeated.
6. Can also be done in a large group when teacher is reading aloud and stops for quick oral responses.

7. Can use the same process when showing a short video clip as a pre-reading activity.

### Write Something

#### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 3-12  
Duration: Depends on content  
Grouping: Pairs or small groups  
Materials: Assigned reading materials for content  
Objective: To provide students with a writing strategy for responding to literature and nonfiction texts.

#### Lesson Delivery

1. Copy a page of text and allow space for large margins in which students can write their comments.
2. Students may write their comments while they read and follow the same procedure as in the "Say Something" activity.
3. Students may also use "post-it" notes to write their comments and leave them on the pages of the book rather than copying the actual text.
4. The notes students produce will serve as guides for "Say Something," for studying for a test, or for writing summaries.

Cristina Sanchez-Lopez, Ph. D.; Education Consultant, Illinois Resource Center, 2003.



## Activity #6 Educator Reflection—Diversity in Literature

Why is multicultural literature so important? Children need every kind of role model that is appropriately available. Our children come from an incredibly wide range of backgrounds and have many different ways of experiencing the world. We need to read and experience, with authenticity, things that come from their point of view to be a fully rounded human being.

Sometimes books are written by people who imagine a world they've never lived. As a result, we get books full of factual errors, stereotyping, and pictures that are not helpful to anyone. Look at the sources cited and the acknowledgements made by the author. It's important to get a clear and detailed citation—if that's missing, be suspicious. If you come across a story that is described generically as "an African story," for example, instead of being tied to a specific tribe or region, you should question its authenticity.

Unfortunately, even today, we see books with pictures of other cultures that are the equivalent of Italians wearing kilts and speaking with German accents.

Educators and parents can make multicultural literature a part of the fabric of everyday life by taking a few simple steps:

- Check the culture connection. Read author bios from flap copy, reviews, and publishers' Web sites to see if the author/illustrator has more than a casual connection to the culture.
- Cross cultural borders. Don't wait for Black History month to recommend a book about African American culture, or go looking for a book about Native Americans at Thanksgiving. Offer a child balanced reading that incorporates books about other cultures all year round.
- Infuse multicultural books across the curriculum and in read-at-home activities. During math, try a counting book with an

ethnic flair. Experience history from another's cultural standpoint. Have readers role play characters from cultures outside their own during social studies.

- Broaden your own palate. Model reading on your own. As adults, we all have our favorite genres and authors. But when was the last time you read out of your comfort zone to explore another culture?
- Buy and recommend multicultural books – for yourself, your kids, to donate, as gifts for others. Bottom line, publishing decisions are based on simple economics: If you buy it, they'll print more!
- Befriend your school library media specialist. These children's literature specialists can recommend quality multicultural books from authentic sources as well as share book reviews, catalogs from multicultural publishers, and other trade resources such as the *MultiCultural Review*, *Horn Book*, and *School Library Journal*.
- Stay abreast of trends. Seek out professional forums, periodicals, online journals, discussion groups, book fairs, and trade shows to help expose you to the wide range of good choices that are available.

NEA's Read Across America is a year-round literacy program that celebrates the joy and importance of reading. NEA's Read Across America has helped to establish the National Education Association as a leader in the literacy field with bilingual programs, community service literacy programs, literacy materials for all ages, and its national celebration of reading on March 2, Dr. Seuss's birthday.

Read Across America provides educators with a variety of resources on multicultural literature. For a list of publishers of children's books in languages other than English, check out the Read Across America Web site, [www.nea.org/readacross](http://www.nea.org/readacross).

On the following pages you will find a list of Web sites that promote multiculturalism through literature.





## Celebrate Reading 365 Days a Year: Multicultural Web Resources

Resources for promoting multiculturalism through literature in the classroom abound on the Internet! They don't call it the World Wide Web for nothing! Browse for a bit at any of the following sites and you're sure to find ways to open windows on the world for your students.

- *Celebrating Cultural Diversity through Children's Literature* contains links to annotated bibliographies of children's multicultural books appropriate for the elementary grades (kindergarten through grade six). Cultural groups currently listed include: African Americans, Chinese Americans, Latino/Hispanic Americans, Japanese Americans, Jewish Americans, Native Americans, and Korean Americans.  
[www.multiculturalchildrenslit.com/](http://www.multiculturalchildrenslit.com/)
- *The Multicultural Pavilion* by Paul Gorski features teacher resources, original essays and articles, educational equity information, classroom activities, Listserv, poetry, songs, film reviews, and more. <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/index.html>
- Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese, "Examining Multicultural Picture Books for the Early Childhood Classroom: Possibilities and Pitfalls," *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, Fall 2001, vol. 3, no. 2. <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v3n2/mendoza.html>
- Mary Northrup, "Multicultural Cinderella Stories," *Book Links*, May 2000, vol.9, no.5.  
[www.ala.org/ala/booklinksbucket/multicultural.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/booklinksbucket/multicultural.htm)
- *The Multicultural Review* is dedicated to a better understanding of ethnic, racial, and religious diversity." Features articles and book reviews. [www.mcreview.com/index.html](http://www.mcreview.com/index.html)
- Culture for Kids offers products for teaching about languages and cultures, but also includes a Multicultural Holidays and Events calendar on its Web site.  
[www.cultureforkids.com/resources/multiculturalcalendar.tpl?cart=1088047347812367](http://www.cultureforkids.com/resources/multiculturalcalendar.tpl?cart=1088047347812367)
- Students can take the "Culture Quest World Tour" from the Internet Public Library.  
[www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/cquest/](http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/cquest/)
- "How to Choose the Best Multicultural Books" article from *Scholastic Instructor* with leads to 50 great books, plus advice from top educators, writers, and illustrators on how to spot literature that transcends stereotypes.  
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/instructor/multicultural.htm>
- Scholastic offers tips, lesson plan ideas, and ready-to-go activities in its *Teachers' Timely Topics for Multiculturalism and Diversity*.  
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/diversity/index.htm>
- The Assembly on Literature for Adolescents (ALAN) offers booklists for middle and high school readers. [www.alan-ya.org/](http://www.alan-ya.org/)
- Judy McDonald, "A Multicultural Literature Bibliography," *The ALAN Review*: Spring 1996, vol.23, no. 3. <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/spring96/mcdonald.html>

- With the online Scholastic activity, “Global Trek,” students can read and learn about countries around the world and share thoughts, feelings, and opinions with students from other nations and cultures through “Classport,” an electronic classroom exchange. [http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/globaltrek/classport\\_tips.asp](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/globaltrek/classport_tips.asp)
- From K-Read School and Library Promotions, a bilingual word search that incorporates English and Spanish words into a literacy-themed word find at <http://www.kread.com>
- At Reading Online, learn more about “Bilingual Books: Promoting Literacy and Biliteracy in the Second-Language and Mainstream Classroom” from Gisela Ernst-Slavit and Margaret Mulhern. <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/ernst-slavit/>
- English/Spanish bilingual books booklist for children from the Fairfax County, Virginia Public Library. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/reading/elem/bilingualbooks.htm>
- Interested in what other countries do to promote reading and literacy? Visit <http://www.ekebi.gr/main21/xi.html> for names, addresses and Web sites for reading promotion organizations from around the world!
- At the Global Café, a partnership between the Peace Corps and NewsHour Extra, teens can find out what it is like to go to school in Lesotho, Africa, or check out world views from other countries at <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/globalcafe/peacecorps/>.
- *Building Bridges: A Peace Corps Classroom Guide to Cross-Cultural Understanding* includes short, adaptable lesson plans and activities for grades 6-12 that build cross-cultural awareness, respect, and communication in the classroom. <http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/bridges/index.html>
- “The International Peace Museum” developed by students at Indian Hill Primary School in Cincinnati, Ohio, offers a look at being a new student in a new country and at its International Day celebration at <http://www.ih.k12.oh.us/ps/PEACE/Eastwing.htm>.

Adapted from November, 2000 *NEA Today* interview with Joseph Bruchac, Abenaki storyteller, publisher, and children’s book author, and the 2005 NEA’s Read Across America Member Kit.

## Activity #7 K-W-L

Students who come from low-income and/or culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds learn best when their prior knowledge is activated for lessons. Educators can best access prior knowledge by finding out what students already know about the topic being studied.

### Lesson Preparation

Grades: K-12  
Duration: 20-30 minutes  
Grouping: Whole class or individual  
Materials: Chart paper and markers (whole class); or K-W-L worksheet (page 5-17, individual)

Objectives:

- To access students' prior knowledge on a topic and build on it to enhance learning
- To engage students in shaping the development of a unit of study

### Lesson Delivery

1. Introduce students to the general topic for the unit of study.
2. Introduce students to the concept of K-W-L:
  - K – “What do I know about this topic?”
  - W – “What do I want to learn about this topic?”
  - L – “What did I learn about this topic?”

Grades K-2: For younger students, complete the activity together as a group on chart paper.

3. Ask the class “What do you know about \_\_\_\_\_?” Record their answers on the “K” chart. Be sure to allow opportunities for all students to contribute.
4. Now ask the class “What do you want to learn about \_\_\_\_\_ that you don’t know, or that you want to know more?” Record their answers on the “W” chart, again making sure all students can add to the list.
5. Review the “W” list with the class and connect what is listed to the upcoming unit. If there are items that you can’t address, you may want to let students know this or use these for supplemental activities. This is the time to let students know about concepts that must be included in the unit to address content area standards.
6. Post the charts where students will be able to see them throughout the unit of study.
7. After the unit is completed, review the lists on the “K” and “W” charts. Ask students “What did you learn about \_\_\_\_\_ during our unit?” List all of their responses. Compare the results to what students said they wanted to learn. What can you do to address any gaps?
8. After explaining the K-W-L concept, provide each student with a K-W-L worksheet. Ask them to complete the “K” and “W” sections individually.

Grades 3-12: With older students, you can use the same group process as listed above. However, K-W-L can be very useful for students to do on an individual basis in order to track their own achievement.

9. Ask students to share 1 or 2 things they want to learn in this unit. Let them know if there are areas that you won't be able to cover.
10. Ask students to file their individual K-W-L in the appropriate place (folders, student work file, etc.) for later use.
11. At the end of the unit, ask students to complete their sheets by listing what they learned. Ask "Did you learn about all of the areas you were interested in? If not, what could you do to accomplish that?"

12. This informal assessment helps students to measure their learning with more than just a test score or grade. Students can keep these sheets as part of their portfolio.
13. You can also do a mid-unit assessment using either the whole class or individual process in order to check on students' progress and adjust your instruction.



K—What do I KNOW about this topic?	W—What do I WANT to learn about this topic?	L—What did I LEARN about this topic?



## Activity #8 Educator Reflection— Guidelines for Designing Effective Activity Centers

Activity Centers are an effective way to design learning experiences that capitalize on students' interests, achievement levels, and motivation. Small group activities that promote joint productive activity (collaboration) provide opportunities for students to use their talents to contribute to a group product. In addition, working in independent activity centers can provide students practice in leadership, interdependency, communication, language development and interpersonal skills.

Activity Centers, when done well, provide the educator time to facilitate small-group instruction.

Activity Centers do take time to establish in the classroom, but they are certainly worth the educator's effort once they are in place. Most students are highly motivated when working in Activity Centers, especially when the tasks are engaging and require creativity. Activity Centers are not the place for rote kinds of learning activities, but rather activities that require collaboration, creative thinking, hands-on activities, and interaction.

It is also recommended that Activity Centers be phased-in over time. Typically, it will take between four and eight weeks to implement an Activity Centers classroom with Activity Centers taking up part (1 or 2 hours) or most (but not all) of the school day. The educator begins this process by spending one to two weeks in creating a classroom community through teambuilding, norm setting, and establishing procedures and routines. The educator then begins to incorporate activity center activities, one or two each week, while teaching students to work independently without educator guidance. Once students are successful in working in centers, the educator introduces procedures for the

educator-led small group (Instructional Conversation). The timeline for implementation will vary among educators and is also dependent upon student readiness. It is important that the educator ensure all students are successful in each phase of implementation before moving on to the next phase.

It is important to include a task card for each Activity Center so that students have a written set of instructions that they can easily refer to. This also helps to prevent students from constantly asking the educator, "What do I do?" thus developing a sense of student collaboration and autonomy within their small group. The task card should include the activity center title, language objectives, content standards, materials needed, any activity products to be produced, an assessment, specific directions, and any relevant references. Students need to be able to do the activity with very little teacher direction.

Finally, triple check to ensure that all the resources students might need are available—oversupply! You might want to make a checklist for yourself with a list of supplies needed for each center, including the task card or instructions, the assessment criteria, and all necessary materials.

What follows are some recommended guidelines for creating Activity Centers, developed by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE).

*Teaching Alive*, 2nd Ed., (Santa Cruz, CA: Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence, 2004), 108.



## CREDE Guidelines for Designing Effective Activity Centers: Facilitating Learning and Ensuring Success

- Determine the content standards or benchmarks and learning objectives this Activity Center (AC) will meet.
- Decide the learning outcomes students will achieve by completing the tasks at this AC.
- Design a 'challenging' activity. Challenging Activities are those in which students generate new knowledge by using information to perform complex tasks that require various forms of elaboration such as analysis, synthesis or evaluation. Challenging Activities also include (a) clearly stated, high expectations for student performance; (b) assessment (e.g., rubrics or checklists) by educator, peer, or self; and (c) assistance through modeling, explaining, interacting, and feedback (educator, adult, peer, or self).
- Include tasks that provide opportunities for students to apply content vocabulary and use content language in discussions or extended reading or writing assignments.
- Design activities that are relevant to students by connecting new content to students' lives and interests, or drawing on students' prior knowledge and experience.
- Determine what product students will generate. In many activities, have students collaborate with a partner or in small groups to create a shared product to facilitate student dialogue and peer assistance.
- Break each task into manageable subtasks to ensure that all students are successful! For some tasks, provide different levels of challenge for students of different ability levels.
- Include optional extensions for students who work quickly, or those who may benefit from additional, more challenging work.
- Determine how the product will be assessed, such as with a rubric, points, or a checklist; the criteria for assessment; and whether the assessment will be done by the student, a peer, or the educator.
- Make activity center instructions (e.g., signs, task cards, or instruction sheets). Design the instructions with the student in mind, considering students' ability levels and language proficiency when determining factors such as font size, number of words, vocabulary, or the need for diagrams, icons, or visual representations.
- Clearly state your assessment criteria on the task card.
- Gather and organize resources for each activity center.

*Teaching Alive*, 2nd Ed., (Santa Cruz, CA: Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence, 2004).



# Educational Support Professional Check-In on Effort

## "How am I doing?"

**Directions:** Review the list below. Place a check by each item to reflect your practice. Then indicate the three items you would like to explore in order to improve your practice.

Indicators	"I do this a lot"	"I do this a little"	"I haven't done this"	My priorities to explore
1. I take advantage of opportunities to collaborate with students on meaningful projects.				
2. I encourage students to not feel limited by their perceived abilities, but to put forth their best efforts in their work.				
3. I use my own errors as opportunities to improve my work.				
4. I get to know my students so that I am familiar with the emotional and social barriers they may face to putting forth their best efforts.				
5. I use students' errors as opportunities to advance learning.				
6. I provide frequent feedback on student progress around academic, social, and behavioral goals regularly to the appropriate staff.				
7. I examine my work practices to ensure that I am not favoring certain groups of students over others.				
8. I include families and members of the students' cultural communities in activities as appropriate.				
9. I communicate expectations about participation, behavior, and students' ability for each activity in which students are engaged with me.				
10. I find ways to use students' interests to engage and motivate them in their class work.				

# Chapter 6

## Chapter 6

### Community Support for C.A.R.E. Strategies

The research evidence is compelling in its support of the idea that partnerships which increase engagement of parents and the community in the public schools are essential to closing the Achievement Gaps. When schools, families and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more.

The C.A.R.E. themes (Culture, Ability, Resilience, Effort) are instrumental in helping to close the Achievement Gaps and are supported in part by decisions made at the school and district level. These decisions are essential to sustaining the changes and improvements that the C.A.R.E. themes foster.

This section of the strategy guide is focused on the decisions made at the school and district level to improve community, family and school engagement, to enhance the ability of schools to close the Achievement Gaps and cultivate improvement solutions.

Educators realize that the job of educating students cannot be achieved by schools alone; a collaborative effort combining schools, families and community agencies is most effective. Schools, families and, more importantly, students benefit from community engagement that connects with students' cultures, allows students' abilities to emerge, promotes students' resilience, and motivates them to excellence.

Although parent and community involvement has always been a cornerstone of our schools, that involvement has usually been controlled by the schools. For the most part, "involvement" has focused on fundraising initiatives, volunteering, and supporting school activities. We now understand that new roles for families and the broader community must include deci-

sion making, school governance and supportive home learning activities. Thus, we aspire to family engagement that goes beyond involvement.

A recent research report analyzes parent involvement over the past decade, confirming the increase in the display of children's ability when families, parents and the community are engaged in schooling. (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2003) The research indicates that when families are engaged, students:

- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Enroll in higher-level programs
- Pass their classes, are promoted, and earn credits
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school
- Graduate and go on to postsecondary education

The need to increase family and community support comes at a time when many families and communities are challenged by changing demographics and income gaps. Fewer jobs are providing wages sufficient to meet basic needs, and 21 percent of children live in poverty. More than one million U.S. children ages 5-14 care for themselves during non-school hours and 19 percent of them are growing up in households where a parent is not a high school graduate. Families are stressed by immigration, acculturation, and assimilation pressures.

Children and families that are at the short end of the wealth and income gap, however, display a level of resiliency that must be



acknowledged, supported and nurtured. Research in the area of family resilience has shown that families demonstrating perseverance and resourcefulness in the face of challenging situations can bounce back from stress, crises, and trauma to experience life successes (Hernández-Alarcón, 2004).

Resilient families have a flexible structure, connectedness across the family, and various social and economic resources. Resilience is fostered in the family by belief systems that increase options for resolving problems and promoting healing after a crisis. Communication processes can foster resilience by encouraging open emotional expression and collaborative problem-solving (Walsh, 2003). Schools recognizing these factors in families build systems to support and maximize this resilience. Engaging the community in school decision-making, while creating connections between the school, parents and families also has a positive impact on the effort and motivation of children.

*“More than 30 years of research indicate that children benefit from family-school collaborations, which provide parents with opportunities to shape their children’s learning.”*

Heather Weiss,  
Harvard Family Research Project

A number of studies have been conducted on the connection between family-school-community partnerships and various aspects of student achievement. On the whole, these studies have confirmed that there is a positive relationship between these partnerships and improved achievement for students, including families of all economic, racial, ethnic and educational backgrounds (Henderson and Mapp, 2003). Additional research found that the grade point average of 10th grade students was significantly affected by parental involvement in the early grades. While the results were true for



### Educational Support

**Professionals**—paraeducators, teacher aides, bus drivers, janitors, and others—are often able to connect to the community in ways that teachers and administrators cannot. ESPs tend to live in the community surrounding the school more often, living with the students they serve. They often represent the community that the school serves in their language, ethnicity, and connections to neighborhood organizations. Immigrant parents who are intimidated by teachers because of the language barrier or other cultural issues may be much more willing to talk to their child’s bus driver, or teacher aide, or cafeteria worker. Teachers and ESPs should collaborate on building strong community-family-school connections.

all ethnic groups, the research shows that parental involvement is particularly important for Native American students and will actually lead to larger increases in GPA for them than for other ethnic groups.

No matter what their race, ethnicity, or income, most families have high aspirations for their children’s success; however, those aspirations may not easily translate into a positive impact on student success and often are reflected in different engagement strategies. While families from ethnic and racial minorities are often actively engaged in their children’s schooling, that engagement can differ from the involvement of white, “mainstream” families and may be hidden from the school staff. For example, Chinese-American parents tend to be very active in home-based involvement, drawing on family and community resources to compensate for what schools lacked instead of raising concerns with teachers and administrators.

Research has identified several barriers to the engagement of minority and low-income families in their children’s schooling, and these barriers can be overcome. Time

constraints, child care needs, transportation problems, language differences, lack of knowledge and understanding of how U.S. schools work, and varying cultural beliefs about the role of families in the schooling of children are all areas that schools can address.

Schools can build stronger relations with families and communities and strengthen achievement among minority and low-income students by addressing several areas:

- Adopt formal policies at the school and district levels that will promote family involvement and emphasize engaging families that represent the diversity of the student population.
- Ensure the active and on-going support of the school principal in providing leadership for family engagement.
- Focus on identifying ways to honor the hopes and concerns that families have for their children, including an acknowledgement of the commonalities and the differences among students and families.
- Strengthen the capacity of educators to work well with families and develop systems for making outreach to families a priority.
- Identify ways to provide support for immigrant families in understanding how schools work as well as helping families and students understand what schools expect of them.
- Provide families with training and resources that will support early literacy and help them monitor homework.
- Encourage and support student involvement in after-school and extracurricular activities.

- Help low-income families obtain the support and services they need to keep themselves healthy, safe, and well-fed.
- Recognize that it will take time to build trust between families, communities, and schools.

In addition to the research cited above, Dr. Joyce Epstein (1997) addresses six areas of parent involvement that can help in closing the Achievement Gaps:

1. **Parenting**—Assist families with parenting and child-rearing skills, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that support children as learners at each age and grade level. Assist schools in understanding families.
2. **Communicating**—Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective two-way communications. (School to home, home to school)
3. **Volunteering**—Improve recruitment, training, work, and scheduling to involve families as volunteers and audiences at the school or in other locations to support students and school programs.
4. **Learning at Home**—Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.
5. **Decisionmaking**—Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through PTA/PTO, school councils, committees, and other parent organizations.
6. **Collaborating with the Community**—Coordinate resources and services for families, students, and the school with businesses, agencies, churches and

other groups, and provide services to the community.

Some of the strategies necessary to promote and generate support for community and parental involvement as we work to close the Achievement Gaps include:

1. create a comfortable climate for partnerships
2. enhance family/community access to schools and school personnel
3. enhance learning opportunities for families
4. strengthen communication channels between schools, families and communities.

Our success in closing the student Achievement Gaps grows when we apply what research tells us about the importance of family and community partnerships, looking at them through the lens of culture, abilities, resilience and effort. In the next section, you will find activities and resources to help you build on what research has taught us and use the C.A.R.E. themes in helping us build successful partnerships.

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## Community Support: Strategies and Activities At-a-Glance

Strategy	Activity Number
Encouraging engagement in schools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Educator Reflection—Assessing Partnerships, page 6-5</li> <li>2. Educator Reflection—100 Ways to Make Your School Family Friendly, page 6-8</li> </ol>
Family support for learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Educator Reflection—Family Support for Learning, page 6-11</li> <li>4. Interactive Homework—Math in My House, page 6-14</li> <li>5. Educator Reflection—Learning About Your Community, page 6-17</li> </ol>



### Activity #1 Educator Reflection— Assessing Partnerships

This form can be used in a school to assess the climate that exists for family and community partnerships. Teachers also can use this evaluation form to assess their own classrooms and the climate that they have created for partnerships.

#### Directions

1. If possible, involve all staff members in this activity – instructional, support professionals, and administrators – in order to get a broad perspective of the climate of the school.
2. Break the staff into several small groups and give each participant a copy of the handout “Assessing Partnerships (pages 6-6 - 6-7).” If possible, the groups should include representatives of each employee type.
3. Assign each group a specific section of the assessment form (“school climate,” “outreach,” etc.) and ask them to complete the assessment as a group. Give them ten minutes to

complete their portion.

4. Ask each group to report out on their assessment; if more than one group was responsible for a particular section, have both groups share their responses. Reports should include how they answered each question and issues or areas of concern they identified.
5. Allow participants from other groups to respond to what they hear and come to consensus on how each item is rated.
6. When all groups have reported out, use the data generated to discuss how to improve the climate for partnerships and develop an action plan for addressing areas of concern.



## Assessing Partnerships

Directions: For each statement, write "yes," or "no," or "unsure."

### The School Climate

- \_\_\_ 1. There are signs and welcoming messages that say parents and community are welcome here.
- \_\_\_ 2. Signs and messages are provided in languages other than English if applicable.
- \_\_\_ 3. Family members and community members are welcomed as observers in the classroom.
- \_\_\_ 4. Family members and community members are welcomed as volunteers in the classroom.
- \_\_\_ 5. Adult-sized chairs, besides the teachers', are located throughout the school.
- \_\_\_ 6. Our school has a parent room or parent corner where information is provided to parents in a variety of ways.
- \_\_\_ 7. The mission and vision of our school are posted throughout the school and distributed to parents and the community.
- \_\_\_ 8. Our school has a parent/community involvement plan or policy.
- \_\_\_ 9. Our school parent involvement policy or plan was developed with the input of parents and community members.
- \_\_\_ 10. All school staff are provided staff development opportunities in family-community involvement.

### Outreach

- \_\_\_ 11. Special efforts are made to involve women and men from different racial and national origin groups in all parent activities.
- \_\_\_ 12. Linkages have been made with community organizations and religious groups which serve the families of children enrolled in our program.
- \_\_\_ 13. Our school buildings are open for use by the community.
- \_\_\_ 14. Liaisons are available to help with parent involvement activities and outreach.
- \_\_\_ 15. A particular effort is made to involve male family members in program activities.
- \_\_\_ 16. Some parent involvement activities take place out in the community.
- \_\_\_ 17. There are efforts to reach families often stereotyped as "hard-to-reach."

### Communicating with Parents and Community Members

- \_\_\_ 18. All staff make an effort to communicate regularly and positively with parents.
- \_\_\_ 19. There is a regular school newsletter with information for parents and the community.
- \_\_\_ 20. Parent communications are written clearly and simply using language the family can understand.
- \_\_\_ 21. Curriculum standards and school procedures are clearly communicated to parents at the beginning of each year or when children are enrolled.
- \_\_\_ 22. Positive communication channels are promoted and encouraged with families early in the school year.
- \_\_\_ 23. Communication with families and communities is expressed in multiple ways.
- \_\_\_ 24. School support staff are provided training in communicating with families and community members.
- \_\_\_ 25. Teachers and administrators are provided training in communicating with families and community members.

## Assessing Partnerships

(continued)

### Policy and Procedures

- \_\_\_ 26. There is an active parent-led organization supported by school staff.
- \_\_\_ 27. Members of the parent organization are representative of the school population by race, gender, and national origin.
- \_\_\_ 28. Parents are trained to be effective team members.
- \_\_\_ 29. Parents and community members are involved in school decision-making teams.
- \_\_\_ 30. Funds and resources are provided to support parent and community involvement.

### Parent and Community Activities

- \_\_\_ 31. There are equal opportunities for working parents and community members to attend meetings and activities.
- \_\_\_ 32. Parents are involved in recommending parent and family activities.
- \_\_\_ 33. There are educational activities and training for parents which enable them to work with their own child at home.
- \_\_\_ 34. There are social activities for families and community members that promote interactions with school staff.
- \_\_\_ 35. There are adult education classes for the parents themselves (ESL, GED, exercise classes, etc.).
- \_\_\_ 36. There are parenting-skills workshops for the parents themselves.
- \_\_\_ 37. Parents and community members are involved in assessing the parent/community partnership initiative.
- \_\_\_ 38. There is an updated file of community services and resources for parents and families (e.g., health, social services, financial aid, emergency assistance, etc.).

### Reporting Children's Progress to Parents

- \_\_\_ 39. Teachers make an effort to say positive things about the child and emphasize the child's strengths in their progress reports to parents.
- \_\_\_ 40. Teacher concerns about a child's progress are communicated clearly to parents.
- \_\_\_ 41. Parents participate in decisions affecting their child's education.
- \_\_\_ 42. All educational programs and services for their child are explained clearly to parents.
- \_\_\_ 43. Meetings are arranged at the parents' request to discuss parent concerns regarding their child.
- \_\_\_ 44. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at times convenient to the parents as well as the teachers.
- \_\_\_ 45. Transportation arrangements are made for parents to attend parent-teacher conferences if needed.
- \_\_\_ 46. Child-care arrangements are made for meetings and other parent activities if needed.
- \_\_\_ 47. There are teacher/parent/community recognition programs for service to the school.
- \_\_\_ 48. Some parent-school activities offer refreshments and an opportunity for communicating information between school staff and parents.

(From NEA Membership and Organizing, *Family-School-Community Partnerships Training Manual*, 2004).



## Activity #2

### Educator Reflection—

## 100 Ways to Make Your School Family Friendly

Here is a “tip sheet” that educators can use to make their schools open and inviting for families.

### 100 Ways to Make Your School Family Friendly

- 1) Create a policy for family involvement in your school.
- 2) Use the word “family” instead of parent when communicating with families.
- 3) Make sure family involvement is part of your school mission and vision statements.
- 4) Celebrate the cultures in your community with specific school programs and practices.
- 5) Celebrate families-of-the-month or week.
- 6) Create a family or parent center within your school.
- 7) Designate special family parking to make access to your school easy.
- 8) Make sure your school entrances and directions are clear and in languages spoken within your community.
- 9) Train teachers, administrators, and students about the importance of family involvement in schools.
- 10) Involve families in staff development programs with staff.
- 11) Give positive feedback to show appreciation to families through notes, telephone calls, and special events.
- 12) Approach all families with an open mind and positive attitude.

- 13) LISTEN!
- 14) Learn children’s strengths, talents, and interests through interactions with families.
- 15) Explain expectations to families in a manner they can understand and support.
- 16) Set aside appointment times that are convenient for working families.
- 17) Make family conferences student-led and mandatory at all grade levels.
- 18) Understand the best ways families receive information from the school and then deliver it that way.
- 19) Explain school rules and expectations and ask for home support.
- 20) Create opportunities for informal dialogue with families.
- 21) Address concerns honestly, openly, and early on.
- 22) Show support for PTA and other parent and family organizations by attending as often as you can.
- 23) Create classroom, grade-level, and school newsletters.
- 24) Maintain and update your Web page.
- 25) Publish and post your school and office hours.
- 26) Create a family handbook similar to your student handbook.
- 27) Have all information available in languages spoken within your school.
- 28) Use available technology to promote your family involvement goals.
- 29) Work with families to understand cultural practices that will promote better communication.

- 30) Listen to family perceptions of how they feel when they visit your school.
- 31) Listen to family perceptions of how families feel they are treated at your school.
- 32) Modify school climate based on family and student input.
- 33) Know the students in your school and their various peer groups.
- 34) Provide programs on topics of interest to families.
- 35) Evaluate all of the family meetings you have and move two from the school into the community.
- 36) Provide family support programs or groups to help families work with their children.
- 37) Keep abreast of parenting issues to offer assistance to families.
- 38) Offer parenting classes in child development, discipline, and similar topics.
- 39) Create and attend fairs and events especially designed to bring all families together.
- 40) Create a database of families and their special talents, interests, and ways in which they can support school activities. Use this database when calling families to assist in school.
- 41) Start a family book club.
- 42) Be available before and after school, and in the evening at specified times and dates.
- 43) Help teachers understand the importance of family involvement.
- 44) Evaluate and spruce up the exterior and entrances to your building.
- 45) Evaluate and repaint areas that need repainting.
- 46) Remove all graffiti and vandalism within twenty-four hours.
- 47) Suggest your school be used as a polling place on Election Day.
- 48) Provide displays and information when community groups are using your school.
- 49) Create bookmarks with important school information and pass them out to visitors.
- 50) Evaluate and create a plan for appropriate lighting for evening activities.
- 51) Allow all families access to your school computer labs and library.
- 52) Make sure the "reduced speed" signs in the school zone are visible.
- 53) Allow family members to be involved in the governance of your school.
- 54) Train parents to participate in school planning and decisionmaking.
- 55) Provide biographical information about the principal and administration.
- 56) Publish important telephone and fax numbers in at least five different places.
- 57) Publish the names of administrators and their phone numbers in every newsletter and on the school Web site.
- 58) Publish a monthly newsletter.
- 59) Place all printed information on the school Web site.
- 60) Increase the number of events geared to families for whom English is their second language.



- 61) Promote your school logo or mascot on all publications.
- 62) Create a “brag about” that promotes your school and its programs. Have copies in every visitor area of your school.
- 63) Provide all staff with business cards.
- 64) Provide all teachers with telephones in their classrooms.
- 65) Evaluate the clubs and cocurricular activities at your school to ensure that all students have opportunities for involvement.
- 66) Increase the percentage of students in clubs and student activities.
- 67) Schedule a club fair during the school day.
- 68) Create a plan to articulate more closely with your feeder schools.
- 69) Find five ways to celebrate and promote your school’s diversity.
- 70) Identify all of the peer groups in your school. Have lunch with each of them monthly.
- 71) Create a program to bring diverse students together.
- 72) Ensure school governance opportunities are open to students.
- 73) Publish a school calendar with pictures that promotes activities about your school.
- 74) Evaluate all of your school publications for school “jargon.”
- 75) Create classes that help families understand school curriculum.
- 76) Promote visitation days for families.
- 77) Publish your school safety and security plan.
- 78) Train security personnel in family friendly concepts.
- 79) Establish a nonthreatening sign-in or entrance policy.
- 80) Send letters home to all families the same day as a problem or negative occurrence in school.
- 81) Use telecommunications technology to send messages home about school activities.
- 82) Create family invitations to school functions.
- 83) Increase the number of school staff involved in student activities and family programs with incentives and grants for extra pay.
- 84) Provide opportunities to expose students to school activities within the school day.
- 85) Celebrate the history of your school by providing information to all students and families.
- 86) Ask families to share their experiences if they attended your school.
- 87) Involve grandparents in school functions.
- 88) Ask families to share their cultures with students during the school day.
- 89) Create experiential learning opportunities by using families in the process.
- 90) Fill the walls of your school with motivation to families and students.
- 91) Always thank families for their involvement in your school.
- 92) Handwrite five thank-you notes to families per month.
- 93) Create opportunities to recognize and reward all students, staff, and their families.

- 94) Allow students to organize and implement new student orientation programs.
- 95) Ask businesses to help you promote family involvement.
- 96) Find ten businesspersons to provide mentors for your school.
- 97) Make sure your school governance council has a business liaison.
- 98) Create a budget for all school assemblies.
- 99) Increase by 20 percent the number of opportunities for families and teachers to communicate.
- 100) Believe that family involvement improves the achievement of every student.

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NEA's Minority Community Outreach Project (MCOP) reaches out to minority communities in selected states with projects jointly organized and implemented by NEA and its affiliates. Its goal is to create and support a network of NEA members who will organize in the minority community to forge collaborative relationships supportive of public education. In the summer of 2003, Hillsboro, Oregon began meeting in housing project community centers with 20 parents. By December their monthly meetings had moved to an Elementary school and more than 400 parents were attending. The meetings are conducted in English and Spanish with child care activities available for parents while they meet. Meeting topics help educate parents in such matters as enrolling their child, getting vaccinations early, helping children with homework, nutrition, and summer jobs for secondary students. The program has been so successful that one of the organizers was hired by the school district as the district's fulltime community outreach person. Initial results show that there has been less absenteeism and fewer dropouts in the targeted group.



## Activity #3 Educator Reflection— Family Support for Learning

Schools can create family learning programs that provide support for student achievement. Parents create a learning environment for their children through the natural, everyday activities and experiences that occur in the home. All families, even families with low literacy skills, are capable of building rich home learning environments. The list on pages 6-12 and 6-13 shares some characteristics of good home learning environments and can be shared with parents in a number of ways, for example:

- Educators can share this information verbally and in writing at open house in a large group presentation.
- Educators can share this information verbally and in writing at a parent conference. This may open up a dialogue that allows teachers to identify areas where they can assist parents.
- The characteristics can be shared and discussed as part of a parent education class.

It may also be useful to have a discussion of these characteristics among the school staff, to identify possible barriers parents may encounter, assistance that schools may need to provide, training opportunities, etc. Education Support Professionals (ESPs) can be especially effective in communicating expectations about home learning environments because they most often come from the neighborhoods and communities of the students. Engaging ESPs in creating events to reach out to family members about what they can do to promote student achievement helps to bridge the gap between home and school.



# Family Support for Learning

## Creating Successful Home Learning Environments

- Establishing a Daily Family Routine
- Providing time, space, quiet and materials for child's studying, reading and hobbies
- Assigning chores and regular household tasks
- Encouraging good health habits: proper balance of rest and activity, regular breakfast and dinner schedule, good nutrition, health care as needed

## Monitoring Out-of-School Activities

- Guiding the constructive use of leisure time: after-school activities, use of TV, and time with friends
- Setting clear rules and standards
- Discussing rules with child
- Rewarding success and applying sanctions appropriately and consistently

## Modeling the Value of Learning and Hard Work

- Setting an example by reading at home and engaging in other learning activities
- Encouraging effort for long-term gains vs. short-term benefits
- Playing games together (e.g., Scrabble, Monopoly, dominoes) that require planning ahead and problem solving rather than pure luck
- Communicating openly and encouraging verbal give-and-take

## Expressing High but Realistic Expectations for Achievement

- Setting developmentally appropriate goals and standards for child's conduct
- Discussing regularly topics concerning education, careers, life skills, rules
- Affirming personal worth through positive messages and affirming the child as a winner

## Encouraging the Child's Overall Development and Progress in School

- Cultivating a warm and supportive home atmosphere
- Expressing interest in child's education both at home and by attending school events
- Urging child to work hard in school
- Staying in touch with child's teachers
- Expressing affection and approval
- Noticing and rewarding achievement in school

# Family Support for Learning

## Reading, Writing, and Discussion among Family Members

- Reading and listening to children read
- Discussing school day, family members' lives, and current events
- Storytelling, recounting experiences, and sharing problem-solving strategies
- Writing of all kinds (e.g., grocery lists, telephone messages, letters, diary entries)
- Relating everyday experiences to what is being learned in school, and using these experiences as teaching opportunities
- Helping students expand their vocabulary
- Conducting family activities that help students expand their view of the world

## Using Community Resources to Meet Family Needs

- Exposing children to cultural activities (e.g., visits to library, museums, movies, concerts)
- Enrolling children in youth enrichment programs (e.g., after-school sports or lessons, community programs, clubs)
- Introducing children to responsible mentors (e.g., coaches, counselors, friends, staff of local organizations or churches)
- Using visits to the library to expand learning opportunities and develop interests

(From NEA Membership and Organizing, *Family-School-Community Partnerships Training Manual*, 2004).



## Activity #4 Interactive Homework—Math in My House

Successful family learning programs involve both generations. In some learning programs, children and adults learn side by side. In others, they learn separately. In still others, they do both. Adults acquire skills, as needed, for their own benefit and to model learning for their children. They also acquire specific skills they can apply in helping their children learn. What unites all of the activities under the heading “family learning” is the goal to assist children, directly or indirectly, in acquiring the skills necessary to become life-long learners. One way to do this is through a “homework partnership” as you see in the following handout. By structuring homework to be more interactive between families, students, and teachers, learning can be enhanced for both students and their families.

### Interactive Homework: A Three-Way Partnership

#### Requires students to:

- Talk to someone at home about what they are learning in class
- Share their work, ideas and progress with their families
- Think, write, then teach parents the lesson and discuss the outcomes

#### Requires parents to:

- Become involved in their child’s learning
- Share thoughts, ideas, insights and experiences with their child
- Comment on their child’s work and progress
- Request information from teachers in a communication session

#### Requires teachers to:

- Communicate with families about how to work and interact with their children at home
- Guide involvement and interaction
- Design homework that elicits family participation
- Clarify homework objectives, processes and evaluation procedures

(From NEA Membership and Organizing, *Family-School-Community Partnerships Training Manual*, 2004).

One example of interactive homework is found in this math activity developed by the WEEA Equity Resource Center.

### Activity: Math in My House

Grades: 3-9

Duration: 20-40 minutes

Materials: Graph paper or chalkboard, “Math in My House” worksheet (page 6-16), calculator

Objective:

- To make students aware of the various ways their family members use mathematics in their daily lives
- To help involve parents in their children’s math education
- To reinforce math concepts and skills (Computing and interpreting statistics, calculating percentages, constructing bar and circle graphs)

#### Preparation

1. Design a tally sheet on which students may record their answers.
2. Plan the questions students will use to interview their parents or other family members about the ways their family members use mathematics or math skills. Prepare some key questions such as:

- How do you use math to pay bills?
  - How do you use math to do taxes?
  - How do you use math to invest?
  - How do you use math to budget?
  - How do you use math to cook?
  - How do you use math to sew?
  - How do you use math to do woodworking?
  - How do you use math to garden?
3. Using their math books as a resource, students might also prepare a list of key topics, for instance, rounding whole numbers and decimals, addition and subtraction of decimals, problem solving, reading graphs and charts, using geometric concepts, and so forth. They can ask their parents how they use these skills at home.
4. After the interview, have each student categorize and tally their family data. Have students prepare data summaries, graphs and charts, and figure averages. Ideas for data summaries are listed below. The summaries can be done in small groups or by the whole class.

#### Ideas for data summaries

1. What math skills are used most often at home? Have students count and tally the number of times each math skill was mentioned by their family members, and combine to find class totals. Make a bar graph to display the data for the 6 to 12 most frequently used skills.

2. Which family member uses math skills in the most ways at home? Have the class tally the number of ways math skills are used by their fathers, mothers, aunts, uncles, etc. They can then compute averages for each type of family member and make a table to display their findings.
3. Which types of home activities are most often mentioned as requiring math skills? Have the class decide on how they want to categorize home activities. Suggestions include:
  - Housework—cooking, yardwork, and repairs
  - Financial—paying bills, preparing taxes, and creating budgets
  - Shopping—for groceries, clothes, gifts, or household needs
  - Leisure activities—woodworking, sewing, gardening, and other hobbies
4. Combine the data for the entire class, and make a circle graph that shows the major types of activities and the percentage of times each was mentioned by family members. For example, your students may find a class total of 600 ways math is used at home. They might determine that 50 percent of these “ways” were in the financial area, 15 percent in housework, 30 percent in shopping, and 5 percent in leisure activities.

This activity can be expanded to survey the ways parents or other family members use math on their jobs.

WEEA Equity Resource Center at EDC, Newton, MA,  
[www.edc.org/WomensEquity/pubs.htm](http://www.edc.org/WomensEquity/pubs.htm)



## Math in My House

**Ways My Family Uses  
Math at Home**

**Family Member**

**Math Skills Needed**



## Activity #5 Educator Reflection—Learning About Your Community

The following suggestions and questions are intended to serve as guides for the teacher to have ways to draw upon the knowledge, culture, language, and experiences of families and other members of the school's community:

### Classroom Applications

#### I. Relationships/Building a Community of Learners

In order to build a community of learners there must be a trusting relationship in place. The following are suggestions about how to develop a community of learners with the families in a particular classroom.

- **Community Building**
  - Invite families to attend an evening of entertainment and information where students present what they are learning and family members have the opportunity to interact informally.
- **Recognition**
  - Develop ways to recognize positive things students do in school (awards assemblies, recognition awards.)
  - Develop ways to recognize parents for the positive things they do to help their children succeed.
- **Ongoing Contact**
  - Develop regular communication with parents via phone calls, home visits, newsletters.
  - Schedule regular meetings throughout the year where parents contribute to the agenda.

#### II. Defining the Community

How will you define the "community?" How can you find out what the issues are in the

community and bring them to the classroom? (e.g. immigration, zoning, new commercial developments, community events). The following give suggestions about how to answer these questions:

- Use community newspapers as a resource.
- Listen to people who know the community and use them as bridges.
- Plan community field trips.
- Listen to student voices through such activities as the "morning message" where students have opportunity to give news about their communities.

#### III. Teachers/Students As Ethnographers

How will you gain information about the households of your students? How will you negotiate the topics with parents and students? Some suggestions are:

- Teacher gains information through home visit.
- Students interview their parents through homework logs. Topics might be:
  - histories (family, residential, labor)
  - chores
  - interaction styles
  - daily activities
  - literacy

#### IV. Developing Authentic Curriculum

How will you develop curriculum from household knowledge gained through ethnographic methods? (Refer to III above.) What types of support will you need?

Jeanne Gibbs, *TRIBES: A New Way of Learning and Being Together*. (Windsor, CA: CenterSource Systems, 2001) p.1095.





# Chapter 7

## Chapter 7

### Developing a Systems Perspective for School Organization

Every school is unique in how it is affected by diverse factors such as the socioeconomic level of students, the experience level of the staff, the condition of the physical facilities, levels of funding from local, state, and national programs, the diversity of languages and ethnicities in the school community, and other characteristics. Even while district, state, and national policies drive many of the systems of schools (e.g., personnel, purchasing, transportation), each school shapes itself to meet the needs of the population it serves. Every school needs a unique method of organizing the work of educating its own students.

What do we need to keep in mind as we think systemically about the structure of our schools and how they operate? First, we have to recognize that in any system, one part has an impact on all the other parts – they are interdependent. Next, there are several important features of a system that, when working well together, result in high productivity (read: high achievement in schools) and greater satisfaction among the people in the system (students, staff, families, etc.). Let's look now at what several strands of research tell us about what contributes to making schools highly productive and satisfying to the people who are a part of them.

**Core values:** Effectively operating schools have clearly defined values – they know what is important to support their own and their stakeholders' (e.g., families, communities) success. Policies, classroom practices, and behaviors are all consistent with the core values that they have explicitly identified. Sharing and articulating a school's core values is one function of leadership.

**Leadership:** Schools where all students achieve have good leadership at many

levels: school-wide, department, classroom, and other parts of the school. Good leaders create and sustain clear and visible values, an environment for innovation and learning, and they focus on the needs of all stakeholders in the school community. They connect to families and key community groups to address issues and concerns, and promote communication and collaboration. Leaders encourage careful planning geared toward success.

**Planning:** Schools and classrooms that set and meet high goals develop strong, highly-focused plans for improvement that are living documents, not something that is written and filed away on the shelf. Plans are developed collaboratively to reflect the views and needs of all groups. Classroom plans drive instruction by being aligned to state and district standards and community expectations, providing direction for the work of teachers, education support professionals, and students. In this way, all the parts of the school community have a stake in the school's success.

**Stakeholder focus:** Educators, students, families, and community members are all stakeholders in the education process – they all have much to gain or lose by what happens in the classroom. Achievement Gaps-closing schools and classrooms focus on developing appropriate relationships with stakeholder groups, addressing their unique needs and ensuring they have “bought into” the school's and classrooms' plans. Promoting stakeholder buy-in to the school's plan requires effective communication and management of information.

**Information systems:** Effective schools have systems to manage and use data and information for improvement, not just as once-a-year snapshots of testing results.

Classroom and student data are collected and analyzed to guide the teacher and students in making decisions, shaping instruction, and managing improvement efforts. Information is freely shared with students and parents in order to give them a well-rounded picture of student learning and achievement. Key decisions about staff and student development are made based on the reliable data that is collected.

**Human resources:** Successful schools motivate and enable educators and students to develop and realize their full potential. They maintain an environment that promotes cooperation, innovation, and excellence, supporting not only the learning needs of students but the training and development of teachers and educational support professionals. They also provide a climate that values the satisfaction and well-being of students, staff, and families. Families, students, and staff who have a say in how schools are run are generally more satisfied with their outcomes.

**School and classroom procedures:** Schools that support high achievement have clearly defined, well-managed procedures that are easily understood by and available to all stakeholders. Students understand and often help develop the procedures that are used in their classrooms. This increases the likelihood that the needs of students from diverse backgrounds and varying abilities are met and that the schools get the outcomes they desire.

**Outcomes and results:** Schools committed to excellence look at a variety of measures not just standardized tests, to determine if desired outcomes are being met. They measure all of their goals (staff professional development, student and staff satisfaction and well-being, etc.) and use the results to improve how they work. "The teacher, students, families and other key stakeholders of the classroom learning system can answer the question 'how are we doing on the things we determined are important' at any point in time." (Shiple, 2002). They can

also determine if the school community's results are lining up closely with their core values.

Well-functioning systems have all these aspects working together, supporting each other, aligning with each other so a change in one reinforces a positive change in the other. Schools that seek to be successful with culturally and linguistically diverse students are most in need of making sure that these parts of the school's system work well and harmoniously. One approach to ensuring that this occurs is by developing a 'culture of continuous improvement.'

## Developing a Culture of Continuous Improvement

One core value that guides highly successful systems is Continuous Improvement. In a high achieving school this core value would manifest as students and staff always asking, "how can we do better?" Schools, their staff, and students are able to continuously improve their practice and their performance because they have clear goals, they plan how to meet their goals, they assess how well they are meeting their goals, and they change what they do when they see how they could do even better.

Let's look more closely at how a culture of continuous improvement can help culturally and linguistically diverse students and their schools reach and sustain high levels of achievement. In a culture of continuous improvement:

- Mistakes are seen as opportunities for growth. There is a focus on learning from our mistakes, analyzing what happened, and taking action on what we learn.
- Understanding the cultural, language, and economic differences of the students and families who make up the school community leads to success when these factors are addressed in setting goals and planning for student success.

- Schools provide staff development to help educators change their practice to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students, develop leadership skills in teachers and ESPs to take on new roles in the school, and build on the capacity of a diverse staff to bounce back and overcome obstacles.
- Leaders understand that research shows that when students and staff are happy, they actually tend to be more successful. Finding ways to tap the motivation of staff members can lead to staff well-being and satisfaction, more involved and productive students and staff, and a more successful school. Finding ways to tap the motivation of students can lead to higher achievement.
- Everyone understands that strategic planning and goal setting are critically important to the success of the entire school community.
- Classrooms are organized to help students take responsibility for their own learning. Students are involved in creating a classroom mission, and start from the first day of school to take an active role in the learning process. The classroom mission is a living document that students and teachers regularly use to guide what happens in the classroom.

Students and educators work together to PLAN how they will achieve goals, DO the work, STUDY what happened and how well they did, and ACT on what they learned, analyzing the outcome of their efforts and learning from their mistakes. There are no surprises; students understand what they are going to be learning about the outcomes and expectations for the curriculum and are actively involved in determining how they will meet those expectations. Working both independently and in teams, students take responsibility for their learning and their discipline as part of a non-threatening, non-competitive environment

with a focus on assessing growth and change.

One way to support continuous improvement is through the KEYS process, which can provide you with valuable data in improving the teaching and learning conditions in your school and classroom.

## KEYS To a Quality School

In order to implement the C.A.R.E. themes, each school could consider several of the elements that research shows are essential for creating a quality school. The NEA KEYS2.0 (Keys to Excellence in Your School) research has identified six “KEYS” made up of 42 indicators of a quality school.

### The six KEYS are:

**Key 1:** Shared Understanding and Commitment to High Goals

**Key 2:** Open Communication and Collaborative Problem Solving

**Key 3:** Continuous Assessment for Teaching and Learning

**Key 4:** Personal and Professional Learning

**Key 5:** Resources to Support Teaching and Learning

**Key 6:** Curriculum and Instruction

The focus of the KEYS2.0 approach, as distinguished from the strategies, described in the other chapters, is the emphasis on collective action to improve teaching and learning. While the C.A.R.E. theme chapters highlighted what individual educators might do in their respective classrooms, the following indicators, activities, and questions are intended to be considered by the entire school community, either as a whole or in small groups. In this way, the school can become organized to address the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students systemically and move them to their full potential as learners.

The KEYS survey instrument is a good way to identify high priority areas among the quality indicators that the school can address. When educators, students (at the high school level), parents, and community members take the KEYS survey, they receive specific information about their school community that helps them to know what are the strengths and areas in need of improvement. They can then choose to reflect, then act on those areas that they determine will help them improve.

Through several years of working with schools, we have found, however, there are a number of indicators that have critical importance for every school that is struggling to be successful. We have arranged those indicators here to align with the C.A.R.E. themes.

What follows are:

- The KEYS2.0 Indicator that aligns with the CARE themes
- What: The school elements that the indicator measures
- Why: The rationale for paying attention to these elements
- How: A suggested way to incorporate the school elements
- Questions to consider: as you move forward in dealing with this category of elements

## Culture

**Indicator:** Teachers work closely with parents to help students learn and to improve education

### What:

- Measures the level of effort school staff makes toward building trust with parents
- Looks into the working relationship between teachers and parents in under-

standing and meeting the needs of students

- Measures if regular communication between the school and parents exists related to helping children learn

### Why:

Trust between the school and home is essential and if it doesn't exist, it must be built. Some low-income and minority parents have had such negative experiences with school that they carry distrust with them when they bring their children to school. School personnel have a responsibility to reach out to parents on their own territory, in supportive, familiar environments. Whatever steps are taken to build trust require sensitivity to the distance—whether real or imagined—between home and school.

Ultimately the goal of parent involvement is parent empowerment. Parents' voice in how their children are educated is critical to the school's success. Family members may not initially come ready to collaborate in decisionmaking, but this is where their engagement can lead.

### How:

To maximize the school's success, the management and planning teams develop a plan for involving and working with parents in the school. Another strategic opportunity may include establishing communication with:

- Independent advocacy groups to lobby and work for school reform and improvements
- District-level councils and committees for family and community involvement
- Teacher association building representatives to inform families about school board or other local elections

- Networks to link all families with parent representatives
- Neighborhood or ethnic organizations that have strong ties to the parents your school serves

### Questions to Consider:

1. What can be done to establish trust and build partnerships with parents?
2. How would you communicate the need for parents to take a greater role in assisting their school in meeting student learning needs?
3. How can parents, students and other staff get involved in making decisions for their school goals?
4. What changes to current practices will be necessary to ensure a participatory process for decision making in school?

### Ability

**Indicator:** School operates under the assumption that all students can learn

#### What:

- Assesses whether the school operates under the assumption that ALL students can learn regardless of parent involvement or student motivation
- Explores how instruction is tailored to individual student learning needs
- Measures the extent to which the school staff believes that success in school-related activities is due primarily to factors within a school's control
- Evaluates whether there is active involvement of all teachers in the education of students

#### Why:

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 2001 explored educator's opinions about

their school environment and found that teachers in heavily minority and low-income schools generally hold lower expectations for students than teachers in high-income schools. The survey also found that there is a gap of expectations between elementary and secondary school levels.

#### How:

In a meeting of all the school's staff, discuss your beliefs about students' ability to learn and the kinds of expectations you have for students. Explore in small groups how your expectations may affect your behavior toward students from diverse cultures.

### Questions to Consider:

1. How should instruction be tailored to meet individual student learning needs?
2. To what extent should the school focus on **how** to teach versus **what** to teach?
3. How should teachers and staff collaborate to assess student progress and determine content for professional development in their school?
4. What do teachers and educational support professionals need to know about brain-based approaches to learning for diverse students?

### Resilience

**Indicator:** Teachers and staff collaborate to remove barriers to student learning

#### What:

- Appraises the extent of cooperation among teachers across grade levels, subject matter and school to solve problems affecting student learning
- Measures if teachers feel prepared to address individual student differences and use faculty meetings to collectively solve problems

## Why:

Building resilience in students involves the cooperation of all staff in the school and can help students to be successful socially and academically. Communication among staff who may know the relative strengths of students can help students build on those strengths to overcome temporary setbacks.

## How:

### Questions to Consider:

1. What can be done to encourage educators to work together in new ways to positively affect learning for diverse students in your school?
2. How could educators prepare themselves to address individual learning styles among students in your school?
3. What resources are available to help educators to develop the protective factors of resilience in students?

## Effort

**Indicator:** Instruction includes interventions for students who are not succeeding

## What:

- Determines whether there are “avenues of access” for students coming to school with differing needs, motivations and readiness skills for learning
- Evaluates if opportunities exist for school staff to work together to find and apply alternative teaching strategies to help struggling students succeed rather than attributing their lack of success to external conditions

## Why:

Student success, or lack of success, can best be understood as a result of interaction between students and the world in which they live, of which the school is a part.

Motivating students to high achievement may result from school staff creatively working together to identify alternative learning opportunities to help diverse students succeed.

## How:

Form study teams to research individual needs of students. Share the research with the staff, and in small groups work on plans to make curricular and/or social modifications as needed by the study.

### Questions to Consider:

1. What happens to students who are not progressing as expected academically?
2. Do teachers and other school employees assume individual and collective responsibility for helping under-achieving students progress?
3. How does an understanding of our students’ culture help us motivate them to excellence?
4. How can we tell if students are making an effort when we can’t see them doing it?

## Systemic Change Begins with Us.

The tools of system change can lead to real transformation for students and educators. But systems don’t change unless the people in them do. Michael Fullan captures a fundamental truth about systemic change and how we should approach it:

“The starting point for what’s worth fighting for is not system change, not change in others around us, but change in ourselves. This is both more achievable and paradoxically is the first step towards system change because it contributes actions, not words.” (1998)

## School Organization References

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### NEA's KEYS 2.0 Initiative

What makes a quality school? In 1989, NEA researchers set out to answer that question by identifying the conditions a school needed to have in place for students to achieve at the highest levels. The result of this ground-breaking research is the KEYS2.0 Initiative. Short for Keys to Excellence for Your Schools, KEYS is:

- A survey tool that lets schools measure for themselves the extent to which the quality indicators are present
- A process that brings educators, parents and the community together to improve their local schools.

Across the nation, schools are using NEA's KEYS2.0 program to put themselves on the road to quality and ultimately to improve student achievement. To learn more about the KEYS2.0 Initiative and to see a demo of the survey, visit [www.keysonline.org](http://www.keysonline.org).

## Activities for School Organization

Topic	Activity
Culture of continuous improvement	1. Using an Affinity Process To Develop a Mission Statement, page 7-7 2. The Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle, page 7-9
Stakeholder focus	3. Student Climate Survey, page 7-11



### Activity #1

#### Using an Affinity Process To Develop a Mission Statement

Developing a classroom mission statement helps to create a focus for students' learning goals and objectives. The activity on page 7-8 helps to ensure that the diverse views of all your students are honored.

The basic elements of this process could also be used to create a school mission statement as well.





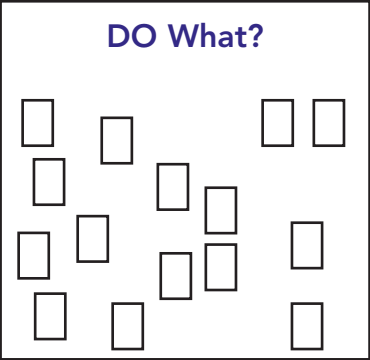
# Using an Affinity Process To Develop a Mission Statement

## Tool Time

1. Post the questions on chart paper, one question per chart:
  - Why are we here? What do we have to do well together? How will we make it happen?

OR

  - The mission of our class is to DO WHAT? FOR WHOM? HOW?
2. Individually and silently record single responses to each of the questions on a single "Post-it" note. It is perfectly acceptable to tackle one question at a time.
3. Post all notes on the chart paper or bulletin board.
4. Take turns grouping similar responses together.
5. When all students are satisfied with the groupings, label the group of notes. Reach agreement that the labels reflect the key ideas of the class. Use the group labels as the elements of the class mission statement.

<p style="text-align: center; color: blue; font-weight: bold;">DO What?</p> 	<p style="text-align: center; color: blue; font-weight: bold;">DO What?</p> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Be good readers</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Think</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Be good writers</td> </tr> <tr> <td>□ □</td> <td>□ □</td> <td>□ □</td> </tr> <tr> <td>□ □</td> <td>□ □</td> <td>□ □</td> </tr> <tr> <td>□</td> <td>□</td> <td>□ □</td> </tr> </table>	Be good readers	Think	Be good writers	□ □	□ □	□ □	□ □	□ □	□ □	□	□	□ □
Be good readers	Think	Be good writers											
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<p>The mission of Mr. Smith's class is to be the best readers, thinkers, and writers that we can be by working and learning together.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Mr. Smith's 5th Grade Class</p>													

## Just a reminder...

- The **process** of teachers and students working together to compose a statement of mission or purpose is more important than the final product.
- Mission statements define a **constancy of purpose** for teachers, students, parents, and other key stakeholders of the classroom learning system.
- **Short, sweet, and memorable** is better than long, jargon-filled, and forgettable.

Reproduced from *Classroom PDSA in Action: The Fast Track to Improving Results* with permission from Jim Shipley and Associates, Inc.



## Activity #2 The Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle

What is continuous improvement? The activity on page 7-10 walks you through the basic steps for keeping track of what you are doing and changing your behavior as you go along to move closer and closer to success. Familiarizing culturally and linguistically diverse students with this process has the potential to empower them to halt a failure cycle before it becomes a habit.

# A+ Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle

**S**<sub>TUDY</sub>

1. Assist students in analyzing their personal performance toward the learning standards and class/course/program goals.

Show the learner where he or she is performing and where he or she needs to be.

**P**<sub>LAN</sub>

2. Work with students to develop personal learning goals aligned to class/course/program goals—at least one learning goal per student.

Help the learner set a short-term target for getting closer to where he or she needs to be.

3. Assist students in determining how they will measure their progress on a regular (weekly or monthly) basis.

Show the learner how a quiz score, project grade, or rubric score is a sign of his or her learning performance.

4. Provide students with a template for graphing their progress on a weekly or monthly basis.

Give the learner graph paper and teach him or her how to chart their score or grade.

5. Provide students with a template for personal action planning for how they will work toward their goal(s).

Give the learner an action plan form, and teach them how to describe what they're going to do to improve.

**D**<sub>O</sub>

**Let them 'do' their plan!**

6. Establish a regular time and process for students to review their personal goals and update their data folders based on new levels of performance.

Make data analysis a regular part of the classroom schedule.

**S**<sub>TUDY</sub>

7. Provide parents with a way to document their review of their student's performance.

Teach parents how to look at their student's learning results.

**A**<sub>CT</sub>

8. Establish a regular time for students to develop new action plans based on new levels of performance.

Make action planning a regular part of the classroom schedule.

**Let them 'do' their plan!**



## Activity #3 Student Climate Survey

There are many surveys available for gauging “customer satisfaction” – how students feel about their daily experiences in school. The survey on page 7-12 was developed by teachers in Pinellas County, Florida, as a simple way to periodically monitor their classroom atmosphere. The data are used by the teacher to make improvements or address classroom issues – they are not reported or shared with anyone else.

You can adapt the language to reflect the reading level of your students. Develop survey questions that will provide you with the information you need in order to improve your classroom.

This survey could be adapted for use with parents to gather data on how they feel about their connection to your classroom.

### Lesson Preparation

- Grades: 3 -12  
Duration: 10 -15 minutes  
Grouping: Individual  
Materials: Student Climate Survey (page 7-12)  
Objective: To obtain feedback from students in order to make improvements in classroom climate and processes

### Lesson Delivery

1. Distribute surveys to students. They should not write their names on these.
2. Ask students to answer each question based on how they feel about the classroom environment.
3. Encourage students to provide specifics about any problem areas in order to help you make improvements.
4. Assure students that the surveys are confidential.

5. Have a student collect all of the surveys for you to review after class ends.

### Debriefing

1. Use the survey results to help improve your classroom environment.
2. Let students know if there are concerns they have raised that you cannot address.
3. Let students know how you plan to use their feedback.
4. Determine how often you will survey students in order to have useful data – once each semester? Once each grading period? Other?
5. Remember – these are data that can help you in developing a culture of continuous improvement.



# Student Climate Survey

Please complete the following survey by circling the response that best expresses your feelings about this class:

**The teacher treats me with respect.**

strongly agree      agree      not sure      disagree      strongly disagree

**I am proud of my work.**

strongly agree      agree      not sure      disagree      strongly disagree

**I feel the teacher wants me to be successful in this class.**

strongly agree      agree      not sure      disagree      strongly disagree

**I feel the teacher wants my opinion.**

strongly agree      agree      not sure      disagree      strongly disagree

**I think the class works to achieve our mission.**

strongly agree      agree      not sure      disagree      strongly disagree

**I am encouraged to be creative and think for myself.**

strongly agree      agree      not sure      disagree      strongly disagree

**I think my teacher is helpful to me.**

strongly agree      agree      not sure      disagree      strongly disagree

**There is a system in place to help me understand and complete my assignments.**

strongly agree      agree      not sure      disagree      strongly disagree

**I set goals for myself to help me achieve at my highest level.**

strongly agree      agree      not sure      disagree      strongly disagree

**I keep data about my progress and improvement.**

strongly agree      agree      not sure      disagree      strongly disagree

**Comments:**

NEA also provides several surveys for members and local associations to use as tools to improve school climate, staff development, safety, and other areas. The OPSCAN Surveys Program must be requested through your local or state NEA affiliate and is available at no charge. It provides pre-packaged surveys on optical scan forms which are processed at NEA, with results provided within three weeks after the forms are received by NEA Research. Contact your local Association office for more information on the OPSCAN Surveys Program.

## **OPSCAN Surveys Program**

This list briefly describes the surveys that schools will find most useful in addressing school organization issues:

- School culture survey: to assess the conditions (culture) of school operations and activities
- School restructuring survey: to assess school programs and resources in areas related to school reform
- Technology issues survey: to provide information in the general area of technology issues and schools
- Professional development issues: to obtain information about the experiences, needs and interests of members pertaining to professional development and training
- School safety and student discipline: to obtain information about issues impacting safety in schools and potential ways to help ensure student discipline
- Staff satisfaction survey: to obtain information about issues impacting job and workplace satisfaction
- Parent and community involvement in schools: to help local Associations assess levels of involvement, satisfaction, and expectations in schools



# Chapter 8

## Resources and References

The following collection of references and resources offers a sampling of articles, books, curricula, and Web sites that support the ideas and approaches of *C.A.R.E.: Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps*. It is not able to contain everything you will need to move forward in enriching your practice to better serve culturally and linguistically diverse students, but it will help get you started.

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*Northwest Native American Reading Curriculum*. CD-Rom. The Evergreen State College and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Washington, 2002. This collaboration between higher education and state government has produced a culturally-appropriate K-2 reading curriculum that can be adapted to the experiences of many Native and non-Native culturally and linguistically diverse students. Based on three interdisciplinary thematic units of hunting and gathering, the canoe, and the drum, the CD offers lesson plans, reading materials and other resources to help educators to be effective in building early literacy skills. Contact [dhurtado@ospi.wednet.edu](mailto:dhurtado@ospi.wednet.edu) or (360) 725-6160.

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niques, adjusting expectations of education and business partnerships, and assessing district and classroom learning systems. Call (972) 431-1313 or E-mail [bdrenna2@jcpenny.com](mailto:bdrenna2@jcpenny.com). Find out more about the Leadership Institutes at <http://www.jcpenny.net/company/commrel>

*Studies in Native American Education: Improving Education for Zuni Children.* Video. Center for Applied Linguistics, 2002. This video is a valuable resource for educators working with Native American students, presenting effective strategies, derived from the CREDE Standards for Effective Pedagogy, for improving classroom instruction. It explores the vision of a classroom community in the Zuni Public School District that works for the success of everyone, where students work together on a variety of challenging activities. Available at [www.cal.org/crede/pubs](http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs)

*Systems Thinking/Systems Change.* Game or CD-Rom. This kit, containing a board game and facilitator's guide, is designed to help educators understand and gain experience in planning and leading organizational change in educational systems. Contact ST & C Associates [cbers@comcast.net](mailto:cbers@comcast.net) or (508) 652-9954

*Teaching Alive!* CD-ROMs. Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence, 2003. A study of CREDE's Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy, featuring real-life, in-the-classroom examples from elementary school settings, with expert commentary by the researchers. Available from Center for Applied Linguistics [www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)

*Teaching with TRIBES.* Video. Center Source Systems. The tape illustrates the strategies used to fulfill the purpose of the TRIBES process, which is to assure the healthy development of every child so that each one has the knowledge, skills and resiliency to be successful in a rapidly changing world. Go to [www.tribes.com/shopping/](http://www.tribes.com/shopping/) to purchase.

## WEB

The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement's mission is to help schools improve by providing them with accurate and practical information and helping them to use it. Currently, the site houses a variety of information, tools, guides, and links relating to comprehensive school reform and school improvement. In the near future, the site will feature online technical assistance including frequently asked questions (FAQ's), facilitated discussions, online workshops, and self-study modules. This site is a successor to the National Center for Comprehensive School Reform Web site. [www.csrclearinghouse.org](http://www.csrclearinghouse.org)

Center for Research on Education, Diversity, & Excellence (CREDE) builds on its previous work as a federally-funded research and development program by focusing on improving the education of students whose ability to reach their potential is challenged by language or cultural barriers, race, geographic location, or poverty. [www.crede.org](http://www.crede.org)

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has a mission to enhance children's success in school and life by promoting coordinated, evidence-based social, emotional, and academic learning as an essential part of education from preschool through high school. CASEL fulfills this mission through research, program development, publications, and an electronic newsletter. [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)

The Education Alliance at Brown University promotes educational change to provide all students equitable opportunities to succeed. The Alliance advocates for populations whose access to excellence has been limited or denied. The Education Alliance conducts applied research and offers technical assistance in the areas of secondary school redesign, professional learning, and education leadership, all of which reflect equity and diversity issues found within schools. [www.lab.brown.edu](http://www.lab.brown.edu)



Jim Shipley & Associates, Inc. specializes in the design and delivery of Baldrige-based consulting and training for all levels of educational systems. Each workshop is supported by training and materials that support teachers, principals, district staff, parents, students, and business partners. These services support a systemic approach to school change that fosters continuous improvement. [www.jimshipley.net](http://www.jimshipley.net)

The Learning First Alliance is a partnership of 12 national education associations (including NEA) dedicated to improving student learning in America's public schools. The Alliance's goals focus on ensuring high academic expectations, safe and supportive schools, and parent and community engagement for all students. The Alliance has several publications (most available on their website) dealing with the Federal education legislation, reading, math, safe and supportive schools, district-wide improvement and promoting public education. [www.learningfirst.org](http://www.learningfirst.org)

The Learning Cooperative provides a variety of products and services, including an array of tools, products and information services designed to help your classroom, school, or district create and maintain a culture of continuous improvement (CI), coaching in creating and maintaining a culture of continuous improvement; certification as a practitioner or coach of CI processes; and an assortment of CI e-services including on-line coaching and threaded discussions led by educators. [www.learningcooperative.org](http://www.learningcooperative.org)

Learning Point Associates, Inc. is a nonprofit educational organization that empowers educators to transform student learning by equipping them with research-based strategies and services that are user friendly, cost effective and responsive to the unique needs of the field. Its latest product is *All Students Reaching the Top: Strategies for Closing Academic Achievement Gaps* (see references for Culture chapter). [www.learningpt.org](http://www.learningpt.org)

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) makes a difference in education by delivering the best in field-based research and product development, workshops and training, technical assistance and consulting, evaluation and policy studies, information resources, and community education and public outreach. [www.mcrel.org](http://www.mcrel.org)

The National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) has the mission to provide educational leaders with state-of-the-art resources, tools, and support services to enhance and promote student growth and school improvement through accreditation. One key resource is DataPoint, a Web-based tool for collecting, managing and analyzing student data. It integrates your reports of data into your school improvement plan so that you can evaluate student performance, prioritize areas for improvement, and implement best practices and research-based instructional strategies to improve student achievement. [www.nsse.org](http://www.nsse.org)

The NEA Health Information Network Mental Wellness program collaborates with national mental health organizations and programs to provide NEA members with information, education, and training about timely mental health topics. Of special note is the wealth of resources dealing with building resilience in students and the adults who work with them. <http://neahin.org/programs/mentalhealth/index.htm>

The NETtrain System is designed to share standards-based, technology-driven learning modules which are created by teachers to be used by students in the classroom. Most of the students in the Education Technology Improvement Project, of which NETtrain is a part, are of Navajo heritage and thus the modules are infused with multicultural themes and methodologies. <http://nettrain.unm.edu>

New Horizons for Learning (NHFL) is an international network of people, programs, and products dedicated to successful, innovative learning. Based in Seattle, NHFL acts

as a positive change in education by working to implement proven strategies (e.g., brain-based teaching and learning, multicultural education, multiple intelligences) for learning at every age and ability level.  
[www.newhorizons.org](http://www.newhorizons.org)

[The Northwest Regional Education Lab](#) improves educational results for children, youth, and adults by providing research and development assistance in delivering equitable, high-quality educational programs. The Lab houses the Centers of Excellence which focus on Classroom Teaching & Learning; School & District Improvement; School, Family, and Community; and Research, Evaluation, and Assessment.  
[www.nwrel.org](http://www.nwrel.org)

[Oyate](#) is a Native organization working to see that Native lives and histories are portrayed honestly, ensuring that all people will know their stories belong to them. Their work includes evaluation of texts, resource materials and fiction by and about Native peoples; conducting teacher workshops, in which participants learn to evaluate children's material for anti-Indian biases; administration of a small resource center and library; and distribution of children's, young adult, and teacher books and materials, with an emphasis on writing and illustration by Native people. [www.oyate.org](http://www.oyate.org)

[The Resiliency Education Program \(REP\)](#) trains school teams in a five-day intensive approach that is designed to mirror the brain-based learning process. This is the same process that school staff will utilize to implement the program in their school. The REP is competency-based, outcome-driven, and intensive. The program addresses student assessment, staff development, and specific programs that should be implemented in successful educational reform.  
[www.resiliencyinc.com](http://www.resiliencyinc.com)

[The Rural School and Community Trust](#) works in rural communities and small towns across America, but especially in those rural places stressed by historical patterns of

poverty and racism, declines in population, major changes in population composition, and fundamental economic change. The Trust provides a variety of services -- training, networking, technical assistance, coaching, mentoring, research, policy analysis -- and materials to increase the capacity of rural schools, teachers, young people, and communities to develop and implement high quality place-based education.  
[www.ruraledu.org](http://www.ruraledu.org)

[TRIBES](#) is a network of learning communities that are safe and caring environments in which students can do well. TRIBES moves beyond "fix-it" programs focused on reducing student violence, drug and alcohol use, and absenteeism, etc., to create positive school or classroom environments that improve behavior and learning. The TRIBES TLC® process is a community building process whose purpose is to assure the healthy development of every child so that each one has the knowledge, skills and resiliency to be successful in a rapidly changing world. [www.tribes.com](http://www.tribes.com)





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