Cultural Bias and Education

Introduction

Teachers must be culturally responsive, utilizing materials and examples, engaging in practices, and demonstrating values that include rather than exclude students from different backgrounds (Richards, Brown, & Ford, 2007). In this content activity, you are going to learn about factors that contribute to cultural bias. Your first task is to read a short article entitled, Addressing Diversity in Schools: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. This article will define culturally responsive pedagogy and explain how it might be used effectively to address the instructional needs of a diverse student population (Richards, Brown, & Ford, 2007). You will be accessing the article from the SFA Library using the directions provided below. Be sure to read the directions in their entirety before you access the library link.

Directions for accessing the article:

1. Access the SFA Library by clicking on the following link: http://libweb.sfasu.edu/

2. Type Teaching Exceptional Children in the Search box and bullet the radial button for Journals. Then click on Search

3. Click on Wilson Select Plus.

4. Copy and paste the following article name into the Title space: Addressing Diversity in Schools: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. Then click on Search.

5. By the words Full Text, click on View Full Text in PDF format.

6. The article, Addressing Diversity in Schools: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy will appear in a PDF format. You may be read the article as is or print it.
Ethnocentrism

The first factor that contributes to cultural bias is ethnocentrism. The previous article listed a number of specific activities that teachers could engage in order to become more culturally responsive. One of the activities suggested engaging in reflective thinking and writing in order to discern factors that contribute to personal motivations and behaviors. The personal motivations and behaviors, that we all have, can be referred to as ethnocentrism. Awareness of this concept will begin your journey of becoming a culturally responsive teacher who creates a climate of acceptance and understanding in his or her classroom. The following link will define and describe ethnocentrism. Now access the web site below and read the site's information:

http://www.iupui.edu/~anthkb/ethnocen.htm

Next, you will watch a series of very short videos (approx. 1 minute in duration) that further depict ethnocentrism and offer suggestions for overcoming ethnocentrism.

Video 1: How to Improve Intercultural Sensitivity: Overcome Ethnocentrism Through Avoiding Assumptions

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqFv1aM8vqU

Video 2: How to Improve Intercultural Sensitivity: Overcome Ethnocentrism Through Acknowledging Distinctions

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hxb-2Vs513s

Video 3: How to Improve Intercultural Sensitivity: Overcome Ethnocentrism Through Avoiding Judgments

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTWX1rce8kk
Prejudice

The second factor that contributes to cultural bias is prejudice. This is probably not a new term for many of you; however, knowing how prejudice affects the classroom/learning environment and exploring your personal prejudices is something that you may not be aware of. To begin your study of prejudice, you will visit a web page that has been designed to inform preservice teachers about factors that contribute to cultural bias in the classroom. As you read through this web page, you will not only learn definitions of prejudice, racism, and discrimination but also behaviors portrayed by victims of prejudice. Lastly, you will be informed of research approaches for reducing prejudice in students. Now access the link below and read the web page in its entirety.

http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/presrvce/pe3lk7.htm

Next, you will explore your personal and/or societal prejudices by participating in either Option 1 or Option 2 listed below. Now read the descriptions for each of the options and then choose one in which to complete the activities.

Option 1

This activity will take you to an Understanding Prejudice web site. You are required to participate in two demonstrations of your choice. Note: some of the demonstrations ask you to answer a few questions before you are able to participate in the actual demonstration. If this is your chosen option, access the link below:

http://www.understandingprejudice.org/demos/

Option 2

This activity is a quiz comprised of 20-items that assess your knowledge of the prevalence of prejudice in society. If this is your chosen option, access the link below:

http://www.beyondprejudice.com/assess.html
Cultural Consciousness in American Classrooms

The previous activities have helped you develop your awareness of factors that contribute to cultural bias. Now, you will read a short article entitled, Teaching Refugee and Immigrant Children. This article will inform you of factors that create multicultures within the classroom and cultural adjustment issues that students face. Now access the link below and read the article in its entirety.

http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/multicultural/adkins_dunn.htm

The following link is a video created by college students regarding cultural consciousness in American schools. In this video, the college students are performing a skit that will inform you about the "dos and don'ts" regarding cultural consciousness. Now access the Web link below:

http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-5139957430400251149
Linguistic Diversity

To begin your study of linguistic diversity, you will watch a video that introduces the Stages of Oral Language Acquisition and demonstrates the abilities of ESL learners as they are acquiring English language skills. The video begins with language proficiency skills of elementary age students and then progresses to an adult ESL learner who has obtained advanced fluency in English. Now access the video and watch in its entirety.

http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=1335065316329253169&q=English+language+learners&total=210&start=10&num=10&so=0&type=search&plindex=7

Now that you have been introduced to the concept of Stages of Oral Language Acquisition, you will access the following link and read language acquisition information on 3 different charts. Chart 1 depicts student characteristics and behaviors for Stages 1-4. Chart #2 describes teacher behaviors for Stages 1-4. Chart #3 suggests teaching strategies for stages 1-4. I strongly recommend that you print these charts and save them for future study purposes. The information is very valuable. Now access the link below:

http://tapestry.usf.edu/Nutta/data/content/docs1/NaturalApproachChart.pdf

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Summary

You have completed your introduction to cultural and linguistic diversity. As a result, you have become aware of factors that contribute to cultural bias as well as having explored some of your own ethnocentric beliefs. You have been given strategies for creating a culturally responsive classroom and are aware of the stages of language acquisition and how to tailor your instruction to meet the learning needs of your ESL students. Feel free to revisit this module as often as you like in order to keep this information within your repertoire and/or to study for your ESL TExES exam.