

Three-Phase Self-reflection Process: Reflect, Recharge, and Renew

Critical Self-Reflection about Multicultural Education and Teaching

Reflect This tool will support you in spending time in the process of continual self-reflection and developing an Action Plan for being a more effective multicultural educator.

To embody a critical multicultural educator identity, you have to be engaged in a continual cycle of critical self-reflection that enhances your educator identity by growing your: a) critical consciousness about cultural diversity and social inequality and b) equity pedagogy and practice.

Too often our implicit biases and assumptions about students who are most unlike us prohibit us from optimally meeting their needs. Spending time responding to these statements regarding culture, power, and privilege will help you to:

- gauge your comfort level with discussing these constructs, and
- consider how these constructs shape your thoughts about teaching and learning—about who you are teaching and what you believe students are capable of learning.

Begin your self-reflection by finishing the following statements to determine where you are in your thinking. Know where you're starting, but don't end there. Write and examine your responses to the following statements:

I consider my biggest strengths working with students of diverse racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds to be. . .

I consider my biggest challenges working with students of diverse racial/ethnic socioeconomic backgrounds to be. . .

I do/do not consider my pedagogy and practice to be multicultural, because. . .

Additional Questions Responding to these questions can help you set personal and professional goals for creating a more culturally inclusive classroom setting where issues of race, socioeconomic status, gender, etc. are at the forefront of your mind at all times. These reflections will also move you toward being a more equitable educator and are essential for embodying traits of a culturally responsive leader.

How does my social identity (e.g., race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) inform/shape my pedagogy and practice?

In what areas do I need to learn more about culture, power and difference?

How might I be a more critically (race) conscious educator?ⁱ

ⁱ Carter Andrews, D. J. (2014). *The consciousness gap in education – an equity imperative.*

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Recharge As part of the self-reflective process, celebrate your successes from years past in the area of multicultural education – no matter how small. It is important to begin the recharging process with celebration. Celebrate your successes by writing and responding to the following statement:

I consider my successful practices in support of multicultural education from years past to be. . .

Part 1. Setting Goals Use the following template to develop an Action Plan that identifies your short- and long-term goals for growing your critical consciousness and equitable pedagogy and practice. Set goals that are measurable, and be specific about how you will measure them.

Target Areas	Short-term Goals (within 30-60 days)	How will I measure these?	Long-term Goals (beyond 60 days)	How will I measure these?
Student Background and Identity <i>Identify strategies for getting to know students and their families better.</i>				
Content Integration <i>Identify strategies for integrating content material in your teaching that resonates more closely with students' lived experiences and helps them examine social inequalities in society.</i>				
Empowering Classroom Culture <i>Identify strategies for creating a classroom environment in which students take ownership of their learning and are empowered as leaders.</i>				
Prejudice Reduction <i>Identify strategies for examining and reducing your biases and assumptions about students that are harmful to their learning and achievement.</i>				
Other				

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Part 2. Tracking Progress Use the following template to track your progress in accomplishing the short- and long-term goals you set in Part 1 of your Action Plan.

Target Areas	Short-term Goals	What evidence do I have of success/challenge?	Long-term Goals	What evidence do I have of success/challenge?
Student Background and Identity	Successes and/or Challenges			
Content Integration	Successes and/or Challenges			
Empowering Classroom Culture	Successes and/or Challenges			
Prejudice Reduction	Successes and/or Challenges			
Other	Successes and/or Challenges			

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Renew Revive your commitments to fostering a culturally inclusive learning environment in your classroom and embodying and practicing an equity pedagogy to maximize your effectiveness with your students. Some ways in which you might do this include:

Deciding that not committing to being a critical multicultural educator is NOT an option. Too many students of color and students living in high-needs communities cannot afford for you to be any other kind of educator. Accept that developing and maintaining this type of educator identity will be a long and arduous journey but so rewarding across your professional career.

Identifying trusted colleagues who can be part of a critical friends group and serve as an accountability partner in your journey to be a more effective multicultural educator and maintaining weekly or bi-weekly check-ins on the goals you set for yourself. These should be colleagues (perhaps even your principal) who are not afraid to ask you the hard questions about culture, power, and privilege and how these things are operating in and around your practice. They also shouldn't be afraid to offer you constructive criticism that moves you forward in your journey. You should be able to see your progress along the way if you stick with it, and continue to celebrate your successes!

What can I do to create opportunities to regularly check-in with a group of trusted colleagues to share our successes and challenges as well as hold one another accountable in our journey to be more effective multicultural educators?

Renewing your commitment to be a critical multicultural educator and persisting in continual self-reflection will lead you to being a better educator and leader. The only thing you have to lose is your ability to maximize your effectiveness with next year's students. And no one can afford for you to do that. So go forth! Reflect! Recharge! Recommit!!