



# MODULE ON MAINSTREAMING INTERCULTURALITY

## LECTURER'S MANUAL



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## Contributors

- BRENNAN, Aimie
- CSEREKLYE, Erzsébet
- DE PAOR, Cathal
- KELLY, Susannah
- KOMJÁTHY, Zsuzsanna
- MARCOS, Juan
- MOUNIR, Hakima
- NGUYEN LUU, Lan Anh
- VIDRA, Zsuzsanna

A decorative graphic on a solid blue background. It features several thick, curved arrows in various colors: pink, red, grey, teal, lime green, white, brown, and purple. The arrows are arranged in a dynamic, overlapping pattern, some pointing upwards and to the right, others in different directions, creating a sense of movement and flow.

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# **INTERCULTURAL APPROACHES TO DIVERSITY**

**PART 1**



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# PART 1

## INTERCULTURAL APPROACHES TO DIVERSITY

This chapter gives an introduction to the theories of interculturalism and related fields, overviews European policy documents on intercultural approaches, and briefly presents national policies and approaches to interculturality. The second part of the chapter focuses on the field of education, discovers and reviews diverse approaches to interculturality in education, analytically introduces various intercultural education initiatives, and discusses the concepts of intercultural competencies in the field of education.

### CHAPTER 1.1. INTERCULTURALISM – ORIGINS, APPROACHES

This unit looks into the origins of interculturalism. As Coulby (2006) describes, the term *intercultural* was created to break with a common interpretation of multiculturalism in the 1980s, but actually the two concepts overlap since the diversity of approaches within both concepts are wide and can be compared to each other. The real difference in attitudes towards social and cultural diversity is not in the terms themselves, but rather in the approaches within interculturalism and multiculturalism. While Banks (2014) describes an inclusive concept of multiculturalism and various approaches within it, Gorski (2008) takes a more critical and political approach, and only accepts social reconstructionist initiatives as truly intercultural. Parekh (1999) helps students to understand how cultural diversity may be interpreted and how cultural learning happens in multicultural environments.

#### 1.1.1. Approaches towards social and cultural diversity

Banks, James A. (2014). *An Introduction to Multicultural Education*. Boston: Pearson.

The book is a comprehensive introduction to the concepts and practice of multicultural education by Professor James A. Banks, who is widely considered the “father of multicultural education”. While the perspective of the book is centered around the history, issues and challenges of educational provision in multicultural schools in the USA, it is relevant and can be easily adapted to any other educational system.

A multicultural approach in education refers to a concept and process where all students, regardless of their specific status or characteristics (including their social status, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, or any other cultural characteristics) have access to equal opportunities for learning and developing in the educational institutions.

The goals of multicultural education are manifold. It aims at developing a critical perspective that helps individuals to understand and analytically reflect on their own cultural and

social characteristics, and it also aims at creating a learning environment that provides dynamic and adaptive learning for all students. It includes a culture relative curriculum, instead of the traditionally national culture-centered curriculum, the development of competencies that are necessary to function in the students’ community cultures, and most importantly to encourage students of various non-dominant groups to reflect on their experiences of discrimination, marginalization and being underserved. As Banks (2014) describes, education for active global citizenship is an essential part of multicultural education, where students are enabled to discuss how they are involved in communities and systems locally, regionally and globally, with an emphasis on human rights.

When speaking of multicultural education, Banks describes a whole school approach, where all segments of an educational organization are included in creating a learning environment, where social and cultural diversity is consciously dealt with. Besides the curriculum, the multicultural approach is also present in instruction styles, materials and assessment, but also, outside of the classroom in the hidden curriculum, in the attitudes and actions of the teachers and the staff, and the services offered to the members of the wider school community. A multicultural learning environment is never isolated from the community surrounding it, and is conscious of the politics and policies that have influence on education.

Banks (2014) identifies five dimensions of multicultural education that are present in educational organizations. Three of them are closely related to the process of learning and teaching, while the other two refer to the climate of the leaning community. Historically *the content integration process* is the first step for multicultural education. It refers to the process of incorporating content and examples from various cultural and social groups into teaching, to illustrate the concepts the learners have to understand. The *knowledge construction process* dimension refers to the development of critical thinking skills, and includes reflection on how knowledge is constructed in any discipline, including various perspectives,



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frameworks of reference and biases. This helps learners to understand that all knowledge is constructed, and is influenced by the positions individuals and groups take in a society, since the beliefs, values and norms of those who are contributing to knowledge construction are always present in the knowledge itself. For example, governments or companies fund research and development projects they believe are beneficial. *Equity pedagogy* is a dimension where educators shape their teaching so it offers an empowering learning experience for all students, by adapting their pedagogies to the actual characteristics and needs of the students. Culturally responsive pedagogy, cooperative learning organization strategies and talk story are examples of such adaptive strategies. The *prejudice reduction* dimension refers to the work for more positive attitudes towards diversity, partly by the integration of content related to minority groups into the curriculum, partly by programs developing intergroup relations, such as cooperative learning, and other strategies both in and outside of the classroom. Creating an *empowering school culture and social structure* is a dimension that addresses the education outside of the classroom so all students can have equal opportunities for successful and empowering learning. Aspects of this dimension are multiculturally conscious, fair assessment techniques, the de-tracking of the school, and creating an open, supportive climate for all learners and school staff.

As Banks (2014) describes it, multicultural education may be present in every segment of educational institutions, in their wide, whole school sense. However multicultural education is also not a narrowly defined approach, rather an umbrella term for various approaches to thinking and caring about cultural and social diversity. Through the analytical introduction of various ways to a curriculum transformation, Banks (2014) introduces the concept of multicultural approaches. It is important to know, that while these approaches are well defined and easily distinguishable on a theoretical level in educational practice they are present in a mixed and blended form most of the time. The most common and widespread approach to cultural and social diversity in education is the

*contributions approach*, in which minority group culture is addressed within the framework of formal education, however it is limited to the holidays and celebrations of these groups, such as the Chinese new year, Diwali or Women's History Week. The *additive approach* integrates cultural content into the curriculum, adds cultural concepts and themes to the already existing curriculum, without changing its structure or perspectives. When these approaches are present, interpretations of minority group related content reflect the norms and values of the dominant culture, and do not call for critical analysis or perspective change when learning about minority groups. This is reached by the *transformation approach*, where content about diverse groups is integrated to help students to change their perspectives, and understand non-dominant perspectives, assumptions and interpretations as well. It develops students' skills in critical thinking and helps them to understand that knowledge is a socially constructed phenomenon. This transformative approach may be extended by the *decision making and social action approach*, which enables students to engage in activities that bring social changes in their own environment by taking personal, social and civic actions within the framework of their educational activities. All these approaches may be present simultaneously in any educational institution as teachers may take diverse approaches or several parallel approaches in their educational activities.

Banks (2014) identifies multicultural benchmarks for assessing and maintaining an effective multicultural school. The benchmarks reflect the whole school approach, and all actors and materials that are included in the process of learning and teaching are considered. These include: a multiculturally conscious policy statement; positive attitudes of the staff; a transformative and social action focused curriculum; adaptive, empowering and participatory teaching strategies; multiculturally conscious hiring practices; the participation, and thereby, empowerment, of all parents; multiculturally conscious teaching materials that avoid biases and present a range of socially and culturally relevant content and perspectives.





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Educators can encourage learners to develop their empathy and understanding of diversity. To challenge stereotypes and to reflect upon their biases towards their own culture. Negativity should be questioned and similarities between cultures emphasised. Tolerance, patience and respect should be at the heart of education for these learners.

• Minimization

When operating at the minimization stage, individuals have begun to identify differences and are aware that other viewpoints and cultures exist. They avoid harshly judging other cultures and take the view that people are more similar than they are different regardless of their culture. However, their level of understanding remains superficial. This stage is often the most difficult to move from because people at this stage think that they are doing okay (Cushner, McClelland, & Safford 2012, p. 158). Common phrases that learners might use at this stage are:

«I have this intuitive sense of other people, no matter what their culture.»

«It's a small world after all»

«Technology is bringing cultural uniformity to the developed world.»

«No matter what their culture, people are pretty much motivated by the same things.»

(Cushner, McClelland et Safford 2012,p. 159)

Learners benefit from experiencing other cultures and perceiving diversity accurately. Educators can help to explore cultural sensitivity and cultural difference in more detail and learners can be encouraged to reflect upon their cultural awareness.

• Acceptance

Once individuals reach the stage of acceptance, they are aware that their own culture is just one way to see the world. They recognise and accept that there is value in the perspective of other cultures, but they do not necessarily agree with their viewpoint. They are curious and seek to learn more about cultural differences. Common phrases that learners might use at this stage are:

«The more difference the better- more difference results in more creative ideas.»

«I always try to study about a new culture before I go there or interact with the people.»

«Where can I learn about Mexican culture so I can be more effective in the classroom?»

(Cushner, McClelland et Safford 2012, p. 160)

According to Bennett (1993), "in order to move from this stage, learners need to gain culture specific knowledge. Learners must also have respect for others' values and beliefs and maintain tolerance of ambiguity" (p, 9). Educators can help to explore cultural sensitivity and cultural difference in more detail, with an emphasis on values rather than behaviour.

• Adaptation

Learners have a more nuanced understanding of cultural difference and have the ability to see the world from more than one perspective. They have a greater understanding of the values of other cultures and have learned to be flexible and adaptable in their approach. They can evaluate situations in their own culture and others, allowing them to communicate more sensitively with all people.

At this stage, learners recognize the value of having more than one available cultural perspective. and are able to "take the perspective" of another culture to understand or evaluate situations in either their own or another culture. Learners are able to intentionally change their culturally based behaviour to act in culturally appropriate ways outside their own culture. Common phrases that learners might use at this stage are:

«To really help this student, I'm going to have to change my approach.»

«I interact with my male and female colleagues somewhat differently to account for differences in the way respect is communicated.»

«I can maintain my values and also behave in culturally appropriate ways.»

(Cushner, McClelland et Safford 2012, p. 164)

To excel to integration, educators must facilitate opportunities for learners to empathise with people with differing cultural perspectives and to develop an authentic appreciation for nuanced differences.

• Intégration

It is uncommon for learners to reach the level of integrative cultural sensitivity. From this position, individuals can move in and out of their own worldview. They have more than one cultural mindset and have fluid cultural identity. They can adapt easily to different cultures. Common phrases that learners might use at this stage are:

«Sometimes I don't feel like I fit anywhere.»

«Everywhere is home, if you know enough about how things work there.»

«I feel most comfortable when I'm bridging differences between the cultures I know.»

(Cushner, McClelland et Safford 2012, p. 165)

Hammer et al. (2003) argue that "individuals who have received largely monocultural socialization normally have access only to their own cultural worldview" (p.423). These individuals are unable to understand or value those who are culturally different. In the 21st century, it is important that learners appreciate that their worldview is constructed and that an appreciation of diversity and alternative views can become an active part of their worldview.



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## 1.2.2. Inclusion, Integration and Interculturality in Irish Policy

by Cathal de Paor and Aimie Brennan

Ireland has experienced a long history of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, evident in “the way in which bilingualism in Irish and English has played a part in Irish life, in the long-standing presence of the Traveller community” and since joining the European Union, in the increased number of migrants immigrating to Ireland (NCCA, 2006; 3). Legislative developments, such as the Education Act, 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, and the Equal Status Act, 2000, reflect the reality that Ireland is an increasingly multi-cultural society.

Irish national policy is consistent with European and international efforts. Policies, such as *Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*, the *European Commission against Racism and Intolerance*, the *Bologna Process*, and the *United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination* have all contributed to the development of Irish policy on integration and social inclusion, a selection of which are outlined below.

### • The Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020

Developed by the Department of Justice and Equality, the Irish *Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020* and the Communities Integration Fund were launched in 2017 and are aimed at providing support to migrants, refugees and persons of migrant origins. The Strategy outlines the government's commitment to supporting the integration of migrants in the areas of employment, education, health and community engagement. “The Strategy provides a framework for a range of actions to support migrants to participate fully in Irish life” (2017:2). There is now an office dedicated to the *Promotion of Migrant Integration* who have a ‘cross-Departmental mandate to develop, lead and co-ordinate migrant integration policy across other Government Departments, agencies and services’.

To read the strategy, see: <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/ireland-2017-2020-migrant-integration-strategy>

### • The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007–2016 (updated 2015-2017)

Developed by the Department of Social Protection, the NAPInclusion sets out a comprehensive plan of action to improve the living standards of Irish citizens who experience social exclusion by reducing consistent poverty. The NAPInclusion identifies 12 high level strategic goals in key areas across the lifecycle, targeting; older people, people with disabilities, people living in disadvantage and minority groups including members of the Travelling community and migrants. One goal of the policy was to develop a strategy ‘aimed at achieving the integration of newcomers in our society’ and to provide language/translation support for children and adults for whom English is a second language (2007:15). The policy was updated in 2016.

NAP Inclusion 2007-2016, see: <http://socialinclusion.ie/documents/NAPinclusionReportPDF.pdf>. <http://www.socialinclusion.ie/documents/NAPinclusionReportPDF.pdf>  
Updated NAP Inclusion, see: <http://www.socialinclusion.ie/UpdatedNAPinclusion2015-2017.html>

### • Planning for Diversity National Action Plan Against Racism 2005-2008 (DOJ)

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform introduced the NPAR in 2005 as a ‘whole system approach’ to interculturality. The NPAR aimed to implement specific strategies to overcome inequalities by ‘benchmarking progress and including groups who represent cultural and ethnic minorities’ in the development process.

The policy presented an ‘Intercultural Framework’ underpinned by five actionable objectives:

- Protection – Effective protection and re-dress against racism
- Inclusion – Economic inclusion and equality of opportunity
- Provision – Accommodating diversity in Service Provision
- Recognition – Recognition and awareness of diversity
- Participation – Full participation in Irish Society (2005: 27)

For more detail, see: <http://justice.ie/en/JELR/NPARen.pdf/Files/NPARen.pdf> <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/NPARen.pdf/Files/NPARen.pdf>

### • The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

The IHREC is an independent public body charged with equality issues and bringing about change through legal, policy and legislative means. The IHREC notes that ‘the benefits of cultural diversity can only be realised where a successful integration of different cultures is achieved in the workplace. Integration means doing business in a way that values all cultures in the workplace and enables the contribution of all cultures to business success in a context characterised by non-discrimination and equality’. The purpose of the Commission is to ‘promote and protect human rights and equality in Ireland and build a culture of respect for human rights, equality and intercultural understanding in the State’. The IHREC make the below legislation on equality and inclusion accessible to the public. See their website: <https://www.ihrec.ie/>.

### • Irish Human Rights and Equality Act (2014)

*The Irish Human Rights and Equality Act (2014)* puts a legal obligation and positive duty on public sector bodies to eliminate discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and treatment and to protect human rights for all citizens.

To Read the Act, see: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/25/enacted/en/html>

### • The Equal Status Act (2000 -2015)

*The Equal Status Act* prohibits discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and education. They cover the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.

To read the Act, see: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/bills/bill/1999/19/>

- Policy on Intercultural Education in Ireland

Intercultural Education in Ireland is defined as “education which respects, celebrates and recognises the normality of diversity in all areas of human life. It sensitises the learner to the idea that humans have naturally developed a range of different ways of life, customs & world views, and that this breadth of human life enriches us all. It is education, which promotes equality and human rights, challenges unfair discrimination, and promotes the values upon which equality is built” (NCCA, 2005: 3).

Building upon the articles outlined in the *UN Convention of the Rights of the Child* (1989), the Department of Education and Skills has developed policies on intercultural education across various levels of the Irish education system. These policies centralise the needs and culture of all children, and aim to enable young people to ‘appreciate the richness of a diversity of cultures and be supported in practical ways to recognise and to challenge discrimination and prejudice where they exist’ (2002; 34). The following sections highlight some of the key policies in the education system.

- Intercultural Education Strategy 2010-2015

In 2010, the Department of Education and Skills launched Ireland’s first Intercultural Education Strategy (IES) covering the period 2010-2015. The strategy was informed by an extensive national and international policy review of migrant integration and intercultural education, along with a stakeholder submission process. The resulting IES reinforces educational legislation (Education Act, 1998), by ensuring that ‘all students experience an education that respects the diversity of values, beliefs, language and traditions in Irish society’. The IES presents a *Framework for Intercultural Education* that contains ten key components and five high level goals of intercultural education in Ireland (See pages 6 and 56). The Goals of the strategy are as follows:

1. Enable the adoption of a whole institution approach to creating an intercultural learning environment
2. Build the capacity of education providers to develop an intercultural learning environment
3. Support students to become proficient in the language of instruction
4. Encourage and promote active partnership, engagement and effective communication between education providers, students, parents and communities
5. Promote and evaluate data gathering and monitoring so that policy and decision making is evidence based (IES, 2010: 57)

For more detail, see: [https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Intercultural-Education-Strategy/mig\\_intercultural\\_education\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Intercultural-Education-Strategy/mig_intercultural_education_strategy.pdf)

- Policy on Intercultural Education in the Early Years  
- Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2009)

Developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, *Aistear* is Ireland’s curriculum framework for children from birth to six years. The framework is aimed at early years practitioners, parents and infant class teachers to help them plan quality learning experiences for children to develop as ‘competent and confident learners’ (2009:6).

*Aistear* is underpinned by 12 principles, and four key themes of learning and development. Theme 2 ‘Identity and Belonging’ provides a range of sample learning opportunities to help practitioners celebrate difference and promote a fair inclusive environment for babies, toddlers and young children. In partnership with the practitioner, children should be able to ‘express their rights and show an understanding and regard for the identity, rights and views of others’ (2009: 26).

For more detail see: <https://www.ncca.ie/en/early-childhood/aistear>

- Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Childcare Providers (OMCYA, 2006)

Developed by as part of the *National Childcare Strategy 2006- 2010*, the guidelines are aimed at supporting early years practitioners, managers and policy makers with knowledge and understanding of diversity and equality issues in the early years. The guidelines aim to ‘foster awareness about diversity and equality issues, to stimulate discussion about bias and discrimination and to encourage the development of services that are inclusive of all children and their families. Through a critical reflection process, the guidelines encourage practitioners to enhance their understandings of diversity, equality and discrimination; to challenge discriminatory issues in practice; to create diversity and equality policies for their settings which promote inclusion.

For more detail, see: [https://www.multifaiths.com/pdf/childcarediversity\\_and\\_equality.pdf](https://www.multifaiths.com/pdf/childcarediversity_and_equality.pdf)

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education (2016)

Developed by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, *the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter (2016)* invites everyone working in the early childhood care and education sector to ‘embrace, promote and embed principles of inclusion’ in everyday practice and setting policy. Part A of the document presents the sector’s commitment to promoting the values of diversity, equality and inclusion for all children attending early childhood services, while Part B contains practice guidelines for early years practitioners, with clear links to *Aistear* - the National Curriculum Framework (2009), and *Síolta* – the National Quality Framework (2006) and the *Pillars of Best Practice (2015)*. The guidelines highlight the need for continuous, critically reflective practice and the importance of promoting children’s positive identities and abilities through “the celebration of diversity and difference, and the provision of an inclusive, participative culture and environment” (2016:4).

For more detail, see: <https://aim.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Diversity-Equality-and-Inclusion-Charter-and-Guidelines-for-Early-Childhood-Care-Education.pdf>

- Policy on Intercultural Education in Primary School  
- Intercultural Education in the Primary School (2005)

Produced by the National Council of Curriculum and Assessment, these guidelines are targeted at all those with a responsibility for and interest in primary education. The guidelines support the aims of the Primary School Curriculum in the context of “a growing cultural and ethnic diversity in a way that will maximise and enrich learning for all children, and make the curriculum as accessible as possible for children from minority ethnic groups” (2005: 5). The guidelines for Primary Schools are accompanied by guidelines for Post-Primary School to ensure there “is continuity and progression in intercultural education” in Ireland



(2005:7). The approach taken centres on the belief that intercultural education is for all children and requires a real-world focus that must be integrated into the daily life of the school, in the school environment, across all subject areas and in the values, beliefs and attitudes evident in school ethos.

*For more detail, see: <https://developmenteducation.ie/resource/intercultural-education-in-the-primary-school-guidelines-for-schools/>*

- [Guidelines on Traveller Education in Primary Schools \(2002\)](#)

Replacing the *Guidelines on the Education of Traveller Children in National Schools (1994)*, the *Guidelines on Traveller Education in Primary Schools (2002)* aim to support Traveller children as a minority group in the Irish education system. Introduced by the Department of Education and Science, the guidelines were part of an overall strategy on social inclusion, promotion of equality and tackling educational disadvantage. The Guidelines emphasise the importance of recognising, respecting and reflecting the Traveller cultural and traditions in the educational system in Ireland. Presenting a whole-school approach to learning, the policy centralises a collaborative and consultative approach to progress.

*For more detail, see: <http://scotens.org/sen/articles/travellereducationprimary.pdf>*

- [Policy on Intercultural Education in Post Primary School - Intercultural Education in the Post Primary School \(2006\)](#)  
Produced by the National Council of Curriculum and Assessment, these guidelines are targeted at all those with a responsibility for and interest in post-primary education. The guidelines aim to enable students to respect and celebrate diversity, to promote equality and to challenge unfair discrimination. They are used by schools to create an inclusive culture and environment by considering all aspects of linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity in Ireland. The policy provides guidance for teachers in the areas of classroom planning; assessment in an intercultural context; school policy development; the integration of intercultural themes into the post-primary curriculum, such as human rights, identity, discrimination, justice; and teaching methodologies suited to intercultural education.

*For more detail, see: <https://developmenteducation.ie/resource/intercultural-education-in-post-primary-schools-guidelines-for-schools/>*

See also, accompanying guidelines providing a thematic approach to integrating intercultural education across the curriculum:

- [Policy on Intercultural Education in Higher Education The National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education \(2015-2019\)](#)

Developed by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), in line with the Bologna Process, the remit of the NP for Equity of Access is to increase access to higher education for under-represented groups, including people with disabilities, people disadvantaged by socio-economic barriers, mature students, part-time students, students from further education, and Irish Travellers. The objective of the policy is to ensure that the

students entering and completing higher education reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population. The policy has been central to the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and the Higher Education System Performance Framework (2014-2016). The policy highlights the need for consultation with students and prospective students in the development of access policy.

*For more detail, see: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/National-Plan-for-Equity-of-Access-to-Higher-Education-2015-2019.pdf>*

- [Higher Education System Performance Framework \(2014-2016\)](#)

Developed by the Department of Education and Skills, the Higher Education System Performance Framework highlights the fact that "European and Irish educational policies have set the objective that student bodies are to be more reflective of diversity within national populations" (2014: 5).

*For more detail, see: <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/Higher-Education/HEA-Higher-Education-System-performance-Framework-2014-2016.pdf>*

- [National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030](#)

Developed by the Department of Education and Skills, the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* looks primarily at how Ireland can enhance the three core roles of higher education – teaching and learning, research, and engagement. While the policy focuses primarily on the governance, structure and context of higher education in Ireland, the strategy does note that "the increasing diversity of students, including those from overseas, will have to be matched by teaching and assessment methods that will enable students from a range of backgrounds to discover, exploit and build on their strengths. (2011: 52).

*For more detail, see: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/National-Strategy-for-Higher-Education-2030.pdf>*

- [The DICE project](#)

The Development and Intercultural Education in Initial Teacher Education (DICE) project is a national education initiative, promoting the integration of development education and intercultural education at primary level in Ireland. DICE works to support teacher educators and student teachers from four partner higher education institutions to integrate global and intercultural perspectives and themes into their teaching practice. Supported by Irish Aid, DICE provides practical resources for teachers in the areas of human rights education, development education, intercultural education and education for sustainable development.

*For more detail, see: <http://www.diceproject.ie/>*



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### 1.2.3. Intercultural Approach to Education in Ireland

by Aimie Brennan and Cathal de Paor, MIC

Devine, Dymna. 2011. *Immigration and schooling in the Republic of Ireland - making a difference?* Manchester: Manchester University Press. ISBN: 978-0-7190-8101-9, 200p

This book addresses the impact of recent rapid social and economic change on the education system in Ireland. It highlights the key role played historically by education in shaping the 'Irish' nation and how this has governed responses to those who have come from the 'outside'. It includes a thought-provoking critique of how Ireland's attempt to position itself as a leading-edge knowledge economy influences both the nature of immigration and responses to immigrants in the education system.

*Murray, Collette. 2012. Diversity and Equality in Early Childhood: An Irish Perspective. Gill & MacMillan. ISBN 978-0717149940, 176p.*

Positions diversity and equality as an integral part of early childhood care and education for students, trainers and practitioners in Ireland. Presents up-to-date examples of innovative practice, developed by the eist project, the Equality & Diversity Early Childhood National Network (EDeNn), and gathered from early childhood settings and learners in Ireland. Presents a framework for what adults need to know to proactively address diversity beyond culture, and contextualises children's stories in legislation, policy and practice. Provides insights into existing and innovative practices in the Irish ECCE sector, demonstrating that change for adults and children is possible. Draws on the discussions, examples and insights of the previous sections and proposes recommendations for steps to be taken by policy-makers, trainers, educators and practitioners in early childhood settings and services in Ireland.

*Crotty, Ríoghnat. 2013. Introduction to Intercultural Studies. Dublin: Gill & MacMillan. ISBN: 9780717156306, 208p.*

A focus on the Irish experience of intercultural issues compares our own past as emigrants worldwide to the current reception of immigrants in Ireland. Carefully selected cases and examples, revision questions and project and learner record tips feature in each chapter. Introduces the key definitions underpinning interculturalism: culture, nationalism, colonialism, ethnicity, racism, segregation, sectarianism and xenophobia. Encourages analysis of one's own attitudes, values and culture as well as developing a respect for diversity.

*Fiedler, M., Gill, B., O'Neill, C., and Pérez-Piñán, A. 2008. Global Dimensions: A Guide to Good Practice in Development Education and Intercultural Education for Teacher Educators. Dublin: DICE Project.*

This book was produced by the Development and Intercultural Education (DICE) project team after four years of collaboration with five colleges of education in the Republic of Ireland. Primarily aimed at initial teacher education (ITE) providers in primary education, it is also relevant and useful to all practitioners of development, intercultural or global education. The overall purpose of the resource is to develop skills and knowledge 'necessary for understanding and responding to inequalities, injustice and discrimination both locally and globally'.

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#### 1.2.3.1. Teachers' guide: Discussing Diversity

by Amie Brennan, MIC

**Activity:** Reflect on each of the statements below. Follow this up by choosing individual statements and discuss these with colleagues

**Instruction:** The teacher can choose one or two questions upon which learners will reflect and respond as a group. Responses can be fed back from each group to conclude the session.

**Format:** This is a group task.

**Time:** 25 min (15 minutes per question group discussion plus 10 minutes whole class feedback)

- 1) Diversity is a majority issue, with relevance for everyone.
- 2) Everyone can learn to be comfortable with difference.
- 3) We are all influenced by the prejudicial views that exist in society.
- 4) The education system, religion and the media have a strong influence on how our attitudes and values are formed.
- 5) Everyone has a culture. Culture is learned. We are all culture bearers.
- 6) Values differ across cultures, social classes, families and communities.
- 7) Discrimination hurts and influences how we relate in the world.
- 8) Sometimes, people say we don't have any diversity here, so we don't need to address diversity, equality or inclusion. But there is diversity in every setting (e.g. gender, ability/disability, family structure). Diversity is not just about culture.
- 9) Barriers to inclusion can be both internal and external.

**Reference:**

*The above reflective questions are an amended form of those included in the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Education. 2016. Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Dublin: The Stationary Office. Pages 17-19*



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#### 1.4.3.2.3.1 Evaluate a human rights education activity

Time frame: 60-90 min

Purpose of the task: To understand the structure of an activity, and discuss how it may be used with young people.

Description of the task: *In groups of 3, students choose an activity from the Compass (2002, 2012) and analyze it using the perspectives on the handout. They should also add 3 more perspective they consider important. After they finish the analysis, ask them to present the exercise itself, and the results of their analysis to the group. Once all exercises have been discussed, ask the students what they learned, and how they would use this in the future.*

#### 1.4.3.2.3.2 Handout: Evaluate a human rights education activity

*Choose an activity from the Compass (2002, 2012), and analyze it using the perspectives listed below. Please add 3 more perspectives that you consider important to your analytical framework.*

Perspectives for evaluation:

- Is the task sensitive to social and cultural diversity? How?
- What groups are addressed by the activity?
- What can young people learn from this activity?
- Does the activity help participants to contextualize the issue within their social reality?

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### 1.3.5. Approaches to Diversity and Interculturality – school types

by Aimie Brennan

Mac Naughton, Glenda M., and Gillian Williams (2003), *Teaching Young Children: Choices in Theory and Practice*. Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press

Mac Naughton, Glenda M., Sheralyn Campbell, Kylie Smith and Heather Lawrence (2002), *Equity Adventures in Early Childhood: Teaching and Learning for Equity in Early Childhood*, compact disk. Melbourne: Centre for Equity and Innovation in Early Childhood, University of Melbourne.

Mac Naughton, G.M. 2006. *Respect for diversity: An international overview*. Working Paper 40. Bernard van Leer Foundation: The Hague, The Netherlands

Associate professor in the University of Melbourne, Glenda MacNaughton, prepared an international overview entitled 'Respect for Diversity' (2006) for the Bernard Van Leer Foundation. Drawing from an extensive literature review, MacNaughton presents dominant discourse or 'broad schools of thought' on issues of respect for diversity in the education, specifically for young children. These schools of thought can be used as a lens to examine the educational and policy approach to diversity which is dominant across cultures and throughout different decades. The five schools of thought outlined mirror Bennett's stages of intercultural competence, progressing through a process of change from inactive to proactive when responding to inclusion. Here, MacNaughton's review has been adapted in order to be used as a reflective tool for educators, to assess and

evaluate where they locate their own approach to diversity and inclusion in their classroom.

- Laissez-Faire School

Educators who adhere to the laissez-faire approach attempt to create equity in their classrooms by treating all children equally, treating all children the same. Laissez-faire, the French term 'to do nothing' translates into treating everyone equally or 'the same'. In reality, treating everyone the same, means treating them as the majority group. Falling within an assimilationist field, cultural, religious, gender, racial or class difference are not acknowledged by adults. The nuanced identity of learners from minority groups goes unrecognised. Negative experiences of racism or discrimination are not aired in the classroom and educators do not seek resources, activities or materials that celebrate difference.

- The Special Provisions School

Educators adhering to the special provisions school see teaching and learning as an equalising opportunity. Learners who struggle or who are not excelling within a mainstream setting are provided with additional support or 'special provisions' in order to enhance their performance. "Educational practices within special provisions programmes are broadly based on an image of the child as deficient" (2008, p.31). This approach is often outcomes driven and while educators adhering to this school of thought do recognise that learners

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have differing needs and abilities, when a learner's outcomes do not reach the standard of the majority, then they are at risk of being treated as deficient. Learners with disadvantaged or minority status are particularly at risk and can experience lower expectations and feelings of rejection and isolation from the majority group.

- The Cultural Understandings School

"The 'cultural understandings' school of thought links with humanistic approaches to education that emphasise growth and development as keys to the individual's understanding and tolerance" (2008, pp. 35-6). Educators who adhere to the cultural understandings school wish to generate a learning environment that acknowledges and celebrates difference. Educators try to introduce learners to different ways of seeing the world, often manifesting in cultural days or events. While learners are likely to increase their awareness of individual differences and similarities, attention is often turned outwards and lacks cultural nuance. This approach can be tokenistic when discussing the lived experience of 'the other' rather than the diversity that exists inside the classroom walls. Cultural, gender and religious stereotypes may still be used when superficially discussing difference, which can reinforce a 'them vs. us' mentality. Policy supporting a 'cultural understandings' approach can be found in Irish intercultural education and should be approached with caution.

- The Equal Opportunities School

The equal opportunities approach to diversity proports that all individuals, regardless of cultural, religious, gender or racial backgrounds should have an equal opportunity to access resources. "This approach reflects a liberal view of social change, that is, equality derives from equal access by all to the experiences positions and economic resources of a society" (2008, p. 38). Standing in opposition to the laissez-faire school of thought, the role of the educator is to treat all learners fairly rather than equally. Taking a strength-based approach, educators strive to remove barriers that prevent learners from achieving their potential, and they attempt to expose learners to positive social messages about diversity and difference. Recent education policy reflects a shift from the special provisions school to the equal opportunities school, particularly in the area of special needs education.

- The Anti-Discrimination School

A more pro-active approach to diversity in education, educators who adhere to the anti-discrimination school see it as their role to challenge inequity and injustice as it arises and to empower learners to do the same. "Adherents of the 'anti-discrimination' school of thought build on the cultural understandings and equal opportunities approaches to acknowledge diversity. They also address the negative effects of discrimination and provide descriptions of experiences and other materials that challenge discrimination" (2008, p. 42). This approach acknowledges the lived experience that the learner brings into the classroom and the contribution they can make to the learning environment. An effort is made to expose learners to experiences that challenge the norm, or their own expectations. Issues of diversity and difference are integrated into the daily life of the classroom and are celebrated and discussed actively. "Intercultural education cannot be just a simple 'add on' to the regular curriculum" (UNESCO 2006, p. 19). Educators challenge learners to critically reflect upon their bias, their biography and their roles in order to better understand and empathise with the other. Educators and learners treat "the heritages, experience, and contributions of different ethnic groups with comparable dignity, integrity, and significance" (Gay 1998, p.17).

Changes in Education Policy in relation to Intercultural Education and respect for diversity indicate a movement away from the laissez-faire and special provisions schools of thought and more towards equal opportunities and anti-discrimination approaches. The anti-discrimination approach, which emphasises the social responsibility of educators and learners is evident in recent early years and primary level education policy development in Ireland (Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter 2017, and Intercultural Education in the Primary School 2005) and internationally (UNESCO Intercultural Guidelines 2006).



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### 1.3.5.1. Teachers' guide: Self-Reflection

by Amie Brennan, MIC

Activity: Reflect on each of the statements below. Ask yourself... Can I?

Instruction: The learner will reflect upon each statement.

Format: This is an individual task.

Time: 60-90minutes

- 1) Can I stand back, examine and discuss objectively my own ethnicity and culture?
- 2) Can I be comfortable sharing feelings and experiences about my first awareness of difference?
- 3) Can I discuss my understanding of how stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination work in society?
- 4) Can I explain what stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, racism, sexism and homophobia mean?
- 5) Can I stand up for myself if I am a target of stereotyping, prejudice or discrimination due to my gender, ability, physical appearance, ethnicity, sexuality, family status or class?
- 6) Can I identify unfair and untrue images, comments and behaviours made about people from minority backgrounds in discussions, on the TV or radio, in newspapers, or on social media?
- 7) Can I identify and empathise with people affected by stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and racism, sexism, or homophobia, and understand the impact of these?
- 8) Can I recognise, acknowledge and understand influences on peoples' attitudes and values from home, community, media and the wider world?
- 9) Can I identify and discuss what constitutes acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours in a professional context? (room for discussion)
- 10) Can I recognise that there are unequal power relations within society?
- 11) Can I demonstrate and support learners to understand stereotyping and prejudice in a meaningful and appropriate manner?
- 12) Can I demonstrate and support learners to stand up for themselves in difficult situations, including prejudice and discrimination, in a meaningful way?
- 13) Can I recognise where messages about diversity came from in my life, and explore any misinformation, stereotypes, or prejudices that I have learned?
- 14) Can I explain how my beliefs affect my work with learners?
- 15) Can I recognise excuses or objections in order to avoid working with diversity, equality and inclusion by myself or others?

Reference:

*The above reflective questions are an amended form of those included in the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Education. 2016. Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Dublin: The Stationary Office. Pages 17-19*



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### 1.3.5.1. Handout: Self-Reflection

by Amie Brennan, MIC

Reflect on each of the statements below. Ask yourself... Can I?

- 1) Can I stand back, examine and discuss objectively my own ethnicity and culture?
- 2) Can I be comfortable sharing feelings and experiences about my first awareness of difference?
- 3) Can I discuss my understanding of how stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination work in society?
- 4) Can I explain what stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, racism, sexism and homophobia mean?
- 5) Can I stand up for myself if I am a target of stereotyping, prejudice or discrimination due to my gender, ability, physical appearance, ethnicity, sexuality, family status or class?
- 6) Can I identify unfair and untrue images, comments and behaviours made about people from minority backgrounds in discussions, on the TV or radio, in newspapers, or on social media?
- 7) Can I identify and empathise with people affected by stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and racism, sexism, or homophobia, and understand the impact of these?
- 8) Can I recognise, acknowledge and understand influences on peoples' attitudes and values from home, community, media and the wider world?
- 9) Can I identify and discuss what constitutes acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours in a professional context? (room for discussion)
- 10) Can I recognise that there are unequal power relations within society?
- 11) Can I demonstrate and support learners to understand stereotyping and prejudice in a meaningful and appropriate manner?
- 12) Can I demonstrate and support learners to stand up for themselves in difficult situations, including prejudice and discrimination, in a meaningful way?
- 13) Can I recognise where messages about diversity came from in my life, and explore any misinformation, stereotypes, or prejudices that I have learned?
- 14) Can I explain how my beliefs affect my work with learners?
- 15) Can I recognise excuses or objections in order to avoid working with diversity, equality and inclusion by myself or others?

Reference:

*The above reflective questions are an amended form of those included in the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Education. 2016. Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Dublin: The Stationary Office. Pages 17-19*

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### 1.3.6. Anti-Bias Curriculum (ABC)

by Aimie Brennan

In striving to locate contemporary educational approaches within an anti-discrimination school of thought, respecting and celebrating diversity and actively challenging racism and discrimination in the learning environment, it is suggested that elements of the 'anti-bias curriculum' developed by Louise Derman-Sparks (1989) for early years education, could be used, adapted and enhanced for other educator sectors. The "Anti-bias curriculum embraces an educational philosophy as well as specific techniques and content. It is value based: differences are good; oppressive ideas and behaviours are not. It sets up a creative tension between respecting differences and not accepting unfair beliefs and acts. It asks teachers and children to confront troublesome issues rather than covering them up. An anti-bias perspective is integral to all aspects of daily classroom life" (Derman-Sparks 1989).

Taking an ABC approach requires the educator to acknowledge the social and cultural context in which a child develops and in which bias is learned. A learner's social background is intrinsic to their self-identity and should be supported during their learning experience. The educator must believe in the value of human dignity, respect and empathy and should be adept at thinking critically about bias. The specific goals of the anti-bias curriculum are:

- To foster each child's construction of a knowledgeable, confident self-identity.
- To foster each child's comfortable, empathic interaction with people from diverse backgrounds.
- To foster each child's critical thinking about bias.
- To foster each child's ability to stand up for themselves and for others, in the face of bias. (Derman-Sparks ).

#### • Implementing the anti-bias curriculum

For an educator to implement an anti-bias curriculum, they go through four phases. Each phase can be supported by a series of activities and reflective exercises to support the process.

#### • Creating the Climate

Fostering an anti-bias approach to intercultural education firstly requires the educator to reflect upon their own biography, their social identity and their innate bias. They must also acknowledge that there is a formal curriculum to which they adhere and a 'hidden curriculum' which can dictate the experiences, positive or negative, of the learners in their class. Educators must familiarise themselves with potential biases (gender, culture, religious, race) which they may bring to the classroom. There are a multitude of reflective exercises that educators can use to identify their self-identity, bias and privilege e.g. McIntosh's Knapsack of White Privilege (1989) outlined below.

Educators must then assess the intercultural beliefs of the learners in their class. From an early years perspective, "we know with relative certainty that children are racially aware by 3 years of age and that they can display both positive and negative attitudes towards racial diversity in early childhood" (MacNaughton 2006, p.v). Probing questions and discussion topics can help to assess learner's assumptions, bias and knowledge. Depending upon the age of the learner, educators can pre-prepare exercises and activities or can simply observe behaviour e.g. a young child enforcing stereotypical gendered behaviour during dramatic play or dress-up.

The educator must also assess the learning environment. A review of resources, images, texts, colours, labels and toys must accurately reflect the diversity of the learners in the classroom and should actively challenge stereotypes. A more advanced approach would be to integrate the learner into the environment, asking - how can the classroom represent the learners within it? This works particularly well in early years and primary education settings where learners can bring in pictures, materials and objects that represent their diverse individual, family and community identities. However, preparing the environment is not enough, educators must also address ingrained attitudes to broaden learner's worldview and encourage self-reflection.

#### • Non-systematic Implementation

The second phase of anti-bias teaching is when the educator begins to do anti-bias activities with children. Firstly, in a non-systematic way, simply by questioning learner behaviour when it arises during 'teachable moments'. Educators may also initiate activities that will spark a response from learners around diversity, inclusion, bias and discrimination. For example, providing a cross-cultural case study for discussion or reading a non-traditional book in primary or post-primary education. Educators open a dialogue with parents in relation to anti-bias activities and goals and invite parents to participate.

#### • Systematic Implementation

Once educators have identified their own biases, reflected on their biography, prepared an inclusive environment, assessed the learner's knowledge and invited parents to engage with their anti-bias approach, they then begin to systematically plan for the integration of anti-bias goals into their daily curriculum. The individual needs and backgrounds of the learners in the setting are considered and the parents or guardians of those learners are invited to get involved in planning and preparation. Educators plan to raise issues about differences, similarities, discrimination, inclusion and empathy throughout their lessons, creating a culture of acceptance and reflection.

#### • On-going Integration

Once all previous conditions are met, the educator begins to use the anti-bias goals as a lens through which to plan all future teaching. Educators pro-actively address negative, discriminatory and exclusionary behaviour as it happens during 'teachable moments'. They also plan for the integration of reflective exercises throughout the curriculum by engaging parents and learners in dialogue. "Learning about diversity and equity permeates all activities" (Derman-Sparks 1989).



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### **1.3.6.1. Teachers' guide: Social Influence and Self Reflection**

by Aimie Brennan (MIC)

#### **Part (a)**

**Activity:** Learners should be given access to computers and asked to look for unfair and untrue images, comments and behaviours made about people from minority backgrounds in discussions, on the TV or radio, in newspapers, or on social media.

**Instruction:** In groups, learners should share and discuss the images, comments and behaviours they identified online and talk about how they feed into the creation of stereotypes and bias.

**Format:** This is a group task

**Time:** 90 minutes

#### **Partie (b)**

**Activity:** Reflect on the two statements below.

**Instruction:** The learner will keep a reflective diary which identifies experiences which influenced them in their lives. This is a personal account and should not be shared publicly. However, it could inform an assessment which asks – 'how does your biography influence your approach to creating an inclusive environment'?

**Format:** This is an individual task.

**Time:** On-going

1. Can I recognise where messages about diversity came from in my life, and explore any misinformation, stereotypes, or prejudices that I have learned?
2. Can I explain how my beliefs affect my work with learners?

**Reference:**

*The above exercise has been inspired by the reflective exercises included in the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Education. 2016. Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Dublin: The Stationary Office. Pages 17-19*

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### **1.3.6.1. Handout: Social Influence and Self Reflection**

by Aimie Brennan (MIC)

*Reflect on the two statements below.*

*Keep a reflective diary which identifies experiences which influenced you in your life. This is a personal account and should not be shared publicly. However, it could inform an assessment which asks – 'how does your biography influence your approach to creating an inclusive environment'?*

1. Can I recognise where messages about diversity came from in my life, and explore any misinformation, stereotypes, or prejudices that I have learned?
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**Reference:**

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### 1.3.6.2. Teachers' guide: Reflecting on Anti-Bias Curriculum

by Aimie Brennan (MIC)

**Activity:** Becoming a Culturally Responsive Early Childhood Educator: A Tool to Support Reflection by Teachers Embarking on the Anti-Bias Journey

**Instruction:** Each section should be taken in isolation and time/space given for reflection and discussion.

**Format:** This can be a group task or an individual task.

**Time:** 60 minutes per section

#### Section A. Raising self-awareness—taking a look within:

1. Am I aware of my own cultural identity and history? How comfortable am I about who I am?
2. Am I aware of biases I may hold?
3. Do I view diversity and exceptionalities as strengths and believe that ALL learners can succeed?
4. a. Am I able to give accurate, honest answers to learners' questions about differences?  
b. Am I comfortable admitting when I do not know the answer to a question?
5. a. Am I able to intervene with ease when I hear comments that exclude someone, show bias, or are discriminatory?  
b. Do I model ways for responding to bias?
6. Do I have access to a colleague who can act as a trusted ally in my diversity and anti-bias work, offering support and challenges to my thinking and actions?

#### Section B. The physical environment:

1. Are the materials and equipment in my classroom easily accessible to ALL?
2. Do ALL learners have equal opportunity to participate in activities?
3. Does my classroom display pictures of the learners, their families, and include materials that relate to their background and experience (i.e., pictures of familiar places)?
4. Does my classroom provide equal representation of images and materials reflecting:
  - a. different cultures and ethnicities?
  - b. different family styles and compositions?
  - c. different age groups across different lifestyles?
  - d. different genders in non-stereotypical roles?
5. Is there a wide variety of art media that learners can use to accurately represent their physical characteristics?

#### Section C. The pedagogical environment

1. Are my verbal and non-verbal messages free of stereotypes and hidden biases?
  - a. Do I effectively provide opportunities for learners to value and explore diversity in themselves and others?
  - b. Are the colours black and brown as equally valued as other colours in my classroom?
  - c. Do I actively encourage critical thinking about differences, stereotypes, and biases?
  - d. Do I teach about minority and non-minority groups who have devoted their lives to ending injustice?
2. Do I equally respect and acknowledge ALL learners on their efforts and accomplishments?
3. Do I hold and convey high expectations for learning for ALL learners?
4. Do I see and treat EACH learner both as an individual and as a member of different social and cultural groups?
5. In my communications and curriculum, do I recognize that learners may have differing family compositions and life experiences?
6. Do I recognize and respect learners' individual and culturally based learning styles:
  - a. Do I effectively differentiate instruction to reach diverse learning styles?
  - b. Do I integrate multiple methods of communication to support learning?
  - c. Do I use a variety of methods to evaluate learning?
7. Do I promote cooperation between and among learners from diverse groups through the curriculum and classroom routines?
8. Do I help children critically think about and problem solve fairness issues in daily classroom activities and routines?

#### Section D. Relationships with families and community:

1. Do I initiate conversations in a culturally responsive way with all people?
2. Do I provide the option for providing translations of newsletters and at meetings for families who do not speak English?
3. Do I support different traditions, while being aware of school/centre policies, responding to learners'/families' requests respectfully and fairly, and genuinely work to negotiate an agreement when there is a conflict?
4. Do I truly welcome family participation in my classroom? If they are unable to come in, do I encourage it in other ways?
5. Do I include families in creating the learning environment for learners?
6. Do I know enough about the local community to extend learning beyond the classroom walls?
7. Am I able to effectively use resources and other adults in the community to enhance learning about diversity and bias?

#### Reference

*The above reflective questions are an amended form of those created by Chen, Dora W.; Nimmo, John & Fraser, Heather. (2009) Becoming a Culturally Responsive Early Childhood Educator: A Tool to Support Reflection by Teachers Embarking on the Anti-Bias Journey, Multicultural Perspectives, 11:2, 101-106, DOI: 10.1080/15210960903028784*



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### 1.3.6.2. Handout: Reflecting on Anti-Bias Curriculum

by Aimie Brennan (MIC)

Becoming a Culturally Responsive Early Childhood Educator: A Tool to Support Reflection by Teachers Embarking on the Anti-Bias Journey

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