



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Social Justice Standards | Unpacking Diversity

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOPIC: CLASSROOM CULTURE, INSTRUCTION
SOCIAL JUSTICE DOMAIN: DIVERSITY

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What is diversity?
- How is diversity experienced in different ways?

Objective

Learners will:

- Define diversity.
- Develop respectful ways to discuss similarities and differences with others.
- Understand the five Diversity anchor standards in the Social Justice Standards.
- Begin to think about how diversity affects relationships within the school building and the classroom.

This is the second in a series of self-paced presentations for individuals, easily modified for a group.

You need:

- ability to access audio and video on your device;
- pen and paper;
- and about one hour.

Learn

What is Diversity?

- The condition of having or being composed of different elements; variety, especially the inclusion of different types of people (as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization
- An instance of being composed of differing elements or qualities; an instance of being diverse

Source: *Webster's Dictionary*

Think about how diversity influences our interpersonal relationships as we learn how to express ourselves with people who are similar to and different from us.

Understanding diversity can be challenging, so before we go further, it is important to identify the words that we sometimes use in place of diversity. They include:

- Assortment
- Dissimilarity
- Distinction
- Distinctiveness
- Divergence
- Diverseness
- Diversification
- Heterogeneity
- Medley
- Mixed Bag
- Multeity
- Multifariousness
- Multiformity
- Multiplicity
- Range
- Unlikeness
- Variance
- Variegation
- Variousness

What makes it important to keep all these words in mind when we think about diversity?



Working in a cohort? Share your thoughts with a partner.

Go Deeper

Think about the following questions as you move through the next activities:

- How do you explain diversity in your classroom?
- What examples do you use to demonstrate the different types of diversity that exist in our world?
- How do you facilitate respectful student discussions about similarities and differences around them?

Often our language impacts how we view diversity. What we sometimes fail to observe is how that diversity overlaps and connects with our multiple identities and the multiple identities of those around us.

For the next activity, do your best to match each expression from around the world with its counterpart from the United States. While matching the different sayings, pay attention to the process you use to match them.

Expression From Countries Other than the U.S.	United States Expression
1. Even a tiger will appear if you talk about him.	All in good time.
2. You can force a man to shut his eyes, but you can't make him sleep.	What goes up must come down.
3. A little in your own pocket is better than much in another's purse.	Every cloud has a silver lining.
4. If you climb up a tree, you must climb down that same tree.	You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink.
5. My house burned down, but it was a relief the bedbugs died.	Speak of the devil and he will appear.
6. He who is not in sight is not in the heart.	The early bird gets the worm.
7. Two captains sink the ship.	Too many cooks spoil the soup.
8. A person who arrives early to the spring never gets dirty drinking water.	A bird in the hand is better than two in the bush.
9. Every seed knows its time.	Out of sight, out of mind.

While these paired sayings originate from different places in the world, the messages are the same. Think about how cultures often seem different from one another yet share similar elements.

Check your answers below.

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Apply

Name three ways language diversity is a part of your classroom.

How can you use sayings like these to celebrate differences as well as highlight the connections that exist in your classroom?

Now let's think about how this comparison might translate among people. For this activity, you will read a personal profile and view a photograph.

Study the picture and read the accompanying story.



Hi! My name is Melina and this is Melanie. When people see me, they think that I am a teen mom, and they often compliment me on how well behaved my daughter is. What they don't know is that Melanie is actually my sister, not my daughter. I spend a lot of time caring for her because my parents work. Melanie has Down syndrome.

I help my parents coordinate her therapy schedule and doctor appointments and do my best to attend all these appointments because my parents are not comfortable communicating in English, and I want to make sure we are doing everything we can for Melanie to be successful.

My parents have been married for 24 years and even though they sometimes fight, they are funny and supportive, and we try to spend as much time together as a family as we can. I also have an older brother.

I am going to be a sophomore in college, and I want to teach special education preschool when I am older. I am fluent in Spanish. I have run cross-country, been a cheerleading coach, acted, danced and taken honors math, science and psychology classes all through high school and college. I work, and in the fall, I will be going out of state to participate in an internship program in hospitality.

On a sheet of paper, draw a Venn diagram, list the things that are unique about you on the left side, the things that are unique about the person in the profile on the right side. Add similarities in the middle.

Reflect

- What did you discover when creating the Venn diagram?
- Was it easier to identify the things that were the same or the things that were different?
- What do you still want to know about the people in the photograph?
- How does identifying differences and similarities in this way encourage respectful conversations about those differences?

Learn

The Social Justice Standards establishes five anchor standards within the Diversity domain. The students will:

DI.6. Express comfort with people who are both similar to and different from them and engage respectfully with all people.

DI.7. Develop language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including themselves) are both similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.

DI.8. Respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.

DI.9. Respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection.

DI.10. Examine diversity in social, cultural, political and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified.

As you listen to the following teachers talk about their practices, think about the five Social Justice standards.

How does what Darnell Fine discusses about language, power and culture influence student writing to address the Diversity anchor standards?

Think about what Fine says about the class activity, iWrite. How does this instructional approach celebrate the differences in his classroom?

- Why does Fine say he created iWrite in his classroom?
- Think about how Fine's classroom practice compares to your classroom practice.
- How does this activity explore classroom diversity?



Working in a cohort? Share your thoughts with the group.

Learn

Listen as Anna E. Baldwin discusses using Socratic seminar with her students.

How does Baldwin's use of Socratic seminar facilitate development of the following Social Justice Standard's 9-12 grade-level outcomes for her students?

- I interact comfortably and respectfully with all people, whether they are similar to or different from me.
- I have the language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including myself) are both similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.
- I respectfully express curiosity about the history and experiences of others and exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.
- I relate to and build connections with other people by showing them empathy, respect and understanding, regardless of our similarities or differences.
- I understand that diversity includes the impact of unequal power relations on the development of group identities and cultures.

Go Deeper

Next, listen as Robert P. Sautter talks about using writing conferences with his students.

Think specifically about Social Justice standard 7, under the Diversity domain: *Students will develop language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including themselves) are both similar to and different from each other and others in their identity group.* How are students encouraged to develop this standard through Sautter's use of individual writing conferences?

What do you do in your practice to encourage student growth in this area?



Working in a cohort? Share your thoughts with the group.

Apply

To consider what these anchor standards might look like in a school setting, read the following scenario.

As children are funneling into her classroom on a Monday morning, Ms. Franklin overhears a conversation between two students.

"What did you do last weekend?" Kevin asks Lisa.

"My moms took me to the zoo!" Lisa replies.

"You have two moms? Do you call both of them Mom?"

"I call them Mamma Kendra and Mamma Sam," Lisa says.

Think about Kevin and Lisa's story. Which of the five Diversity anchor standards are demonstrated?

What do we know about Kevin's understanding of the diversity around him, based on this exchange with Lisa?



Working in a cohort? Share your thoughts with a partner.

Consider another scenario:

Ms. Ramirez has divided her class into small groups for a mapping activity. As the students are gathering to begin work, she overhears one student, Joao, tell the others that he doesn't want Jonah, a classmate who uses a wheelchair, in his group. Just as Ms. Ramirez is about to intervene and facilitate a discussion with Joao and the rest of the group, she hears another student say, "Joao, Jonah has a lot to share with our group. It's important for us to all work together. You shouldn't think that his physical disability makes him a less important member of our group."

Think about Joao's story. Which of the five Diversity anchor standards are demonstrated?

Reflect

If you observed this scenario with your students, what would you have done?

Read the following:

Darius tells Melissa that he thinks he might be gay. Melissa is taken aback. She and Darius have been close friends for many years. No one in Melissa's circle identifies as LGBT, and she feels that her family would not approve. After gathering her thoughts, she hugs Darius and tells him she wants him to know he can be himself with her. She just wants him to be happy with himself. Because neither knows much about what it means to be gay, Melissa accompanies Darius to see their history teacher, Mr. Gilbert, who has a safe zone sticker on his door.

Think about Darius' story. Which of the five Diversity anchor standards are demonstrated?

How does your school create LGBT-safe spaces?

Take it to your campus challenge:

Read the guide *Best Practices: Creating an LGBT-inclusive School Climate*. Pick one of the "Get Started" activities — check your dress code or school privacy policies, review current anti-bullying policy, map "hot spots," plan to implement *Speak Up at School* or plan a professional development session for your staff — to implement in your school this semester.

A final scenario to consider:

Sheri is a student ambassador, welcoming new students and showing them around the school. She mentions to one new student, Kyle that she helped found the school's Gay Straight Alliance (GSA). Kyle tells her that he is actually transgender and changed schools after beginning transition. Sheri tells him that she will be discreet and assures him that the administration is welcoming. Kyle recounts this story fondly at a later meeting with the school's counselor.

Think about Kyle's story. Which of the five Diversity anchor standards are demonstrated?

How do students at your school know the faculty and administration are welcoming?

Reflect

Think about each of the scenarios. Reflect about your classroom and your students.

How do your students display these skills? How can you help your students further develop these skills?

Learn

Next we will look at what the anchor standards look like in texts.

Read each text. Identify the anchor standard [DI.6].

DI.6 *Express comfort with people who are both similar to and different from them and engage respectfully with all people.* "There are lots of different kinds of families. I'd be fine with a mom and a dad. I'd be fine with two dads. And I'm fine with two mothers. That's just the way it is." ("Zack's Story: Growing Up with Same-Sex Parents" Keith Elliot Greenberg).

DI.7 *Develop language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including themselves) are both similar to and different from each other and others in their identity group.* "America is home to one of the most diverse Muslim populations in the world, including people of almost every ethnicity, country and school of thought.

Although Muslims are widely viewed as recent immigrants, the demographics tell a different story. Approximately one-third of the community is African-American, one-third is of South Asian descent, and the rest are from all over the world, including a growing Latino Muslim population. While exact numbers are difficult to establish, there are between 3 and 6 million American Muslims. About half of this population was born in the U.S., a percentage that continues to grow as immigration slows and younger individuals start having families." ("What is the Truth About American Muslims?" Interfaith Alliance).

DI.8 *Respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and will exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.* "Learn how to listen and how to see things from another point of view." ("Peace Begins With You" Katherine Scholes).

DI.9 *Respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection.* "What you call a dangerous animal is just a melon," said the boy. "Melons are very nice to eat. We've got lots of them in our village, and everyone eats them." ("The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal" Jeff Sapp).

DI.10 *Examine diversity in social, cultural, political and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified.* "We ask only that our story be told in fairness. We do not ask you to overlook what we did, but we do ask you to understand it. A true program of America First will give a generous place to the culture and history of the American Indian." ("The First Americans" The Grand Council Fire of American Indians).

Go Deeper

Connect the text on the left with the Anti-bias anchor standard on the right.

Text	Anti-bias Standard
"Call a person by his or her first name only when extending familiarity to all others present." Disability Rights and Resources <i>Disability Etiquette</i>	[DI.6] Express comfort with people who are similar to and different from them and engage respectfully with all people.
"With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day." Martin Luther King, Jr. <i>I Have a Dream</i>	[DI.7] Develop language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including themselves) are similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.
"Some children have lots of aunts and uncles and cousins. Others have fewer." Ann Morris <i>Families</i>	[DI.8] Respectfully express curiosity about the history and experiences of others and exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.
"The majority were white Anglo-Saxon Protestants who came in search of economic opportunity or to escape religious or political persecution." Patricia Smith <i>The Great Immigration Debate</i>	[DI.9] Respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection.
"Always keep an open mind. Listen to what others have to tell you. Respect them." Gloria Ng <i>Letter from a Young Queer Working-Class Woman of Color</i>	[DI.10] Examine diversity in social, cultural, political and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified.

Apply

Think about the texts you use with your students. How do those texts facilitate students' understanding of diversity? How can you use one of the previous texts to facilitate students' understanding of diversity?

Reflect

Now that you have explored the Social Justice standards in texts and listened to Sautter and Baldwin discuss how their practices help facilitate the development of these skills for their students, think about your materials and your practice.

Below are some examples from the earlier videos of how Sautter and Baldwin address various Social Justice anchor standards. Complete the chart to include how you address each ABS in your classroom. [Learning for Justice Social Justice Standards in Related Resource]

ABS	Robert	Anna	Me
DI.6	"Who are these people?"		
DI.7	Community writing		
DI.8		Providing a probing question to discuss	
DI.9		Inner Circle/Outer Circle Tasks	
DI.10		Going back to the text to support answers	

Review the five Social Justice standards for Diversity.

Evaluate your practice. Identify a text or instructional strategy for each of the five Diversity anchor standards, OR search the *Perspectives* text library and choose grade level-appropriate texts to add to your classroom resources.

ABS	Central Text/Classroom Activity
DI.6	
DI.7	
DI.8	
DI.9	
DI.10	

Commit to implementing the text or strategy in your classroom instruction in the next six to eight weeks.

In closing, let's revisit our goals and objectives.

- Define diversity.
- Develop respectful ways to discuss similarities and differences with others.
- Understand the five Diversity anchor standards in the Social Justice Standards.
- Begin to think about how diversity affects relationships within the school building and the classroom.

Complete the following:

- Name three new ideas you gained from this professional development module.
- Name two new ideas you will bring back to your practice.
- Name one colleague with whom you will share the learning in this professional development module.

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