Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching:
A Guide for Elementary Teachers

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Abstract

Schools in America are faced with an ever-increasing rate of student suspensions, widening achievement gaps, and diminishing student engagement. Teachers struggle daily to meet the intensifying demands of academics, behaviors, and societal needs for each of their students. Many teachers are unaware of their own cultural biases and lack the training to effectively incorporate culturally relevant teaching into their classrooms to address student engagement and behaviors. *Effective Implementation and Strategies For Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide For Elementary Teachers* addresses those needs for the teachers by providing insight on the aspects of recognizing a person's own biases, as well as strategies to incorporate into teachers' daily lessons to further engage students effectively and with fidelity. An expert panel, made up of six members, evaluated the guide developed, and provided comments and suggestions through a survey. The expert panel suggested clarifying the five aspects of culturally relevant classroom management and to include examples of the effectiveness of the strategies. The results of the feedback were used to revise the guide, which is attached as Appendix C.
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Overview

Schools in America are faced with an ever-increasing rate of student suspensions, widening achievement gaps, and diminishing student engagement. Teachers struggle daily to meet the intensifying demands of academics, behaviors, and societal needs for each of their students. Low-income, African-American students increasingly exhibit negative school behaviors, resulting in higher suspension rates and widening achievement gaps.

Statement of the Problem

The research of Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings brings to light the importance of utilizing cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and learning styles of all students to enhance appropriate and effective learning through the strengths of the students (Hollie 2010). However, many teachers are unaware of their own cultural biases and lack the training to effectively incorporate culturally relevant teaching into their classrooms.

The problem investigated in this project was to bring to light ways teachers increase student engagement, while decreasing negative behavior just by incorporating culturally relevant teaching in their classrooms. This project places culturally relevant teaching strategies into an instructional guide for elementary
teachers to utilize while implementing culturally relevant teaching within their classrooms.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this project was to provide an instructional guide and culturally relevant teaching strategies for teachers to use while implementing culturally relevant teaching in the elementary school setting.

**Guiding Questions**

The questions that guided this project included:

1) What can teachers do to increase their sociocultural consciousness in a way that will create positive culturally relevant learning environments?

2) Which culturally relevant strategies can be used in an attempt to create a positive learning environment within the classroom?

3) Which culturally relevant instructional strategies can be used in an attempt to effectively engage all students?

4) What essential elements of an instructional guide are imperative to ensure teachers implement the strategies effectively and with fidelity?

**Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this study:
Parental involvement was defined as various forms of participation in education, the schools, and their student's education by parents. Parents can be active in their student's education by monitoring their student's homework, as well as attending school functions and fulfilling parental school obligations, such as arranging for appropriate study space and times, actively tutoring their child, providing encouragement, and modeling desired academic behaviors such as reading daily, and practicing something to get better.

Parent is defined as the one who begets, gives birth to, or nurtures and raises a child. This includes not only birth parents, but also guardians, grandparents, foster parents and anyone who takes responsibility for the care and raising of a child.

Culturally relevant teaching is using prior experiences, performance styles, frames of reference, and cultural knowledge to make learning relevant and effective to all students.

Chapter One Summary

In this chapter, the researcher introduced the general topic of culturally relevant teaching and the need for the use of culturally relevant teaching within today's classrooms. The purpose statement, the statement of the problem, and the definition of terms were also disclosed.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this project was to develop and evaluate an instructional guide of culturally relevant teaching strategies for teachers to use while teaching in the elementary school setting.

Culturally Relevant Teaching

The awareness and demand for culturally relevant pedagogy has been on the rise for the past twenty years. Gloria Ladson-Billings and Geneva Gay have been predominate leaders in researching and advocating for changes in this country’s education; more specifically, instructional practices to increase culturally relevant educational opportunities for students of all cultures. These instructional practices include using the cultural knowledge, prior experience, and performance styles of students from ethnically diverse backgrounds to make learning more effective, or relevant to them (Hollie, 2010).

In responding to the diverse student populations, a professional development framework of six qualities guides teachers in incorporating cultural relevancy into their instructional practices (Villegas & Lucas, 2007). This frameworks consists of:

1. Understanding how a student structures knowledge
2. Ascertaining information about students' lives
3. Being mindful of the sociocultural experiences of the students
4. Upholding views about diversity
5. Using culturally diverse instructional strategies
6. Advocating for every student.

Understanding how students structure knowledge is imperative to teachers building bridges between new concepts and students' prior knowledge and experiences. When teachers use materials and ideas to make relevant connections to what students already know about a topic, students become more engaged and achievement increases. As students make connections to new ideas and concepts through their own experiences, they share their connections with their peers; thus expanding their peers' knowledge and assisting their peers in making their own connections.

Most teachers in the United States are white, middle class, and only English speaking, which is in direct contrast to the demographics of many of their students' lives. As students interact with their teachers, they quickly discover distinct differences between themselves and their teachers, making the assumption that their teachers do not understand or care about them. To overcome these assumptions, teachers need to self-reflect on their own personal attitudes and beliefs about other cultures (Montgomery, 2001). A teacher's limited cultural understanding negatively affects students' abilities to be productive learners.
Teachers evaluate their cultural assumptions and biases to create opportunities for encompassing diversity within their classroom and school.

Creating a culturally relevant learning environment within the classroom and school, additional methods need to be utilized by teachers in order to gather individualized information about their students. Ladson-Billings (2009) suggest that teachers who practice culturally relevant techniques consider themselves part of the community and view teaching as their way of giving back to the community. These teachers shop in the neighborhoods in which their students live, attend community events that are important to the students' families, as well as make home visits with the students' parent(s) or guardian(s). The home visits yield important information about the individual student, their strengths and weaknesses, as well as their cultural beliefs and customs.

Another effective method of gathering student information that teachers may use as they create the proper learning environment is using student interest surveys. These interest surveys give the student the opportunity to communicate their likes, dislikes, ambitions, fears, cultural beliefs, and motivations. Teachers may use the data gathered from the surveys to not only to create a culturally relevant learning environment for all students, but also to drive instructional strategies and practices. Teachers ascertaining students interests also helps eliminate faulty assumptions that teachers do not care about the students. The surveys also demonstrate to the parents and students a desire, on the teacher's part, to
Developing sociocultural consciousness requires teachers to explore beyond their students and families to comprehend the disparities in society. Schools personate the challenges and perpetuating inequalities in society (Villegas & Lucas, 2007). Schools can challenge these inequalities through teachers implementing strategies acquired from reading and discussing successful diverse teaching and learning environments. Ladson-Billings describes these teachers as having “fluid and equitable” relationships with their students, which broaden beyond the classroom (2009).

All of these practices and procedures help teachers create an environment of mutual respect and active culturally relevant learning. Teachers who hold affirming views about diversity demonstrate these views by teaching students through a rigorous curriculum, providing strategies for the students to monitor their own educational advancements, as well as establishing high expectations for the students with clear accountability for those expectations. “Teachers have an ethical obligation to help all students learn,” according to Villegas and Lucas (2007), therefore teachers advocate for students regardless of cultural affiliation, social or academic status level. These teachers also believe that the strategies will help students and that all students will be successful. This attitude is revealed in Ladson-Billing’s book, The Dreamkeepers, where one of the selected teachers, Gertrude
Winston, adamantly revealed, "she has never met an unsuccessful student" and "they are all successful at something" (2009, p49).

Instructional strategies, techniques, and other considerations are imperative to the implementation of culturally relevant teaching. Teachers provide purposeful, intellectually stimulating activities that build on students' individual and cultural assets (Villegas & Lucas, 2007). These activities can include cooperative learning groups, cultural exchanges utilizing the Internet, as well as collaboration through guided or informal group discussions (Montgomery, 2001). Teachers activate prior knowledge and personal experiences of students through discussions and projects that encompass new ideas and concepts with meaningful connections for the students. Culturally relevant teachers facilitate students making connections between their global, national, and community distinctiveness.

Doug Lemov (2010) discussed several techniques, or instructional strategies, which stimulate and support culturally relevant teaching in Teach Like a Champion. Technique nineteen (At Bats) describes teachers giving students numerous practice opportunities to master new skills until students can solve the problems independently as well as in multiple formats and with many variations. Technique twenty introduces exit tickets as a source of quick data collection, which drives further instruction.

Instructional scaffolding is an intrical part of culturally relevant teaching. This scaffolding is apparent in strategies such as “think alouds” and reciprocal questioning, which engage students in self-questioning to further comprehend texts.
Interdisciplinary, or cross-categorical units intertwine consequential reading, listening, speaking, and writing activities through the use of diverse activities and literature emulating the students' interests and lives within the curriculum (Montgomery, 2001). When students are positively engaged in their own learning, they begin to see themselves as productive, contributing members of the community with the corresponding behaviors to accompany this realization.

Professional development opportunities should include strategies for learning about the students, sociocultural consciousness, utilizing community resources as teaching opportunities, and most importantly, employing students' interests beyond school in order to increase academic success.

**Parental Involvement**

In his article, "Making a Strong Home-School Connection by Being Culturally Responsive", David R. Cox briefly examines twelve tips to ensure cultural responsiveness when establishing and maintaining home-school relationships. These tips include honoring and valuing the parents for the important roles they play in their children's education, establishing clear, concise communication systems for the adults, providing assistance with completing paperwork, and extend a simple, warm smile.

In order to support parents further, Cox suggests teachers and administrators must be cognizant of the various cultures they encounter, while not passing judgment based on clothing or actions, such as not looking someone in the
eyes or not shaking someone’s hand. Cox explains that some cultures require one to
demonstrate modesty over bragging about one’s wealth or level of education
whereas in other cultures, eye contact or specific physical contact is considered
disrespectful, thus Cox suggests awareness and understanding of a parent’s cultural
beliefs and customs helps build a mutual trust and willingness to work towards a
common goal, the education of the student. “Being culturally responsive is essential
to creating a strong home-school connection,” states Cox (2011).

There are teachers who view parents as obstructions to their student’s
education. Some teachers complain about students moving often, students not
having the supplies they need, parents not exhibiting interest in their child’s
education, and parents not attending conferences or volunteering within the
classroom or school.

Before making assumptions, teachers need to ask questions as to why these
obstructions are taking place.

1. Are parents moving to obtain better living conditions or work?
2. Do parents have the financial resources to provide school supplies for
   their children?
3. Do parents know how they can be involved with their children’s
   education that is acceptable to the school?
4. Do parents have adequate transportations to travel to and from the school for conferences, programs, and volunteering opportunities?

5. Does their work schedules allow for them to attend conferences, programs, or volunteer during school hours?

Once answers are established for these questions, teachers need to then ask themselves what they can do to accommodate and assist to enable parents to be involved in their children’s education. Ladson-Billings (2009) encourages teachers to look more broadly at the causes of student behaviors, cultivate multiple perspectives, and pledge to provide a quality education for all students in spite of parental involvement.

“One of the persistent complaints among today’s teachers is that parents are not involved enough in the schools. Teachers lament the fact that more and more children come from households where both parents work. One statistic suggests that 75 percent of parents never visit their children’s schools. I don’t recall my parents going out of their way to come to school. Perhaps once a year they came for a conference or a student performance, but neither my mother nor my father was very visible. They were too busy working. They expected me to do what the teacher told me to do. However, if my teachers needed my parents for something, all they had to do was call.” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p43)
Chapter Two Summary

Culturally relevant teaching integrates multiple facets of a student’s life. The student’s cultural beliefs and ideas, how their parents interrelate with their educational endeavors, and the support received from teachers and administrators determines the success of the student. Teachers need to have a greater understanding of students, believe in students, and use techniques that will assist student in learning. When teachers utilize positive instructional strategies and parents obtain support and understanding from teachers and administrators, students reap the benefits. Teachers need to evaluate their own thinking and beliefs about culture and broaden their perspectives so that they may infuse culturally relevant materials and strategies into their daily lessons.
Chapter 3

Criteria

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to provide an instructional guide for culturally relevant teaching strategies for teachers to utilize during the implementation of culturally relevant teaching in an elementary school setting. Information in the guide was a collection of carefully considered current research and multiple web sources.

After examining all of the information from the current research and various websites, four guiding questions emerged regarding the content included in the guide. The first question addressed the impact a teacher’s sociocultural consciousness has on the learning environment. Questions two and three concentrated on strategies to create a positive learning environment and effectively engage students. The fourth guiding question focused on essential elements of an instructional guide to ensure effective implementation of the teaching strategies with fidelity.

Expert Panel

A panel of six experts was used to review the guide. The members of the panel were chosen for their work within multicultural elementary environments in Southeastern Wisconsin. Five of the panel members were first grade through fifth
grade elementary teachers from an urban school district. Two of those educators teach dual language classrooms, while another was a Special Education teacher. The final panel member was a professor from an Institution of Higher Education whose concentration is culturally relevant teaching in an urban educational settings.

Each member of the expert panel was invited to examine the guide and evaluate, comment, and make suggestions on several aspects of the guide. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

The expert panel was asked to evaluate and comment on specific questions pertaining to the content, appendix, wording, appearance, organization, and mechanics of the whole guide document. Specific questions were asked for each of these sections:

Guide Content

- Is the information accurate and complete?
- Are there any key elements that are missing that should be included?
- Is there any redundancy in the content that should be eliminated?

Appendix

- Does the appendix include important and relevant information?
EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES FOR CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING: A GUIDE FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

- Is the information complete and useful for teachers?

Wording

- Is the guide written in a language that is easy to understand and appropriate for teachers?
- Are there any areas of wordiness?
- Are there any confusing or misleading areas that need to be reworded?
- Is the meaning of the content clear and to the point?

Appearance

- Is the font (size and style) the best choice for this document?
- Do the section names establish an understanding of the content that follows it?
- How could the appearance be improved?

Organization

- Is the material organized in an appropriate progressive order?
- Is there a clear flow between sections of the guide?

Mechanics

- Is the point of view consistent throughout the document?
- Are there any grammatical errors?
A copy of Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers was emailed to each member of the expert panel along with the survey. They were asked to evaluate the guide and submit their comments on the survey.

**Results of the Expert Panel Evaluation**

The panel of six experts evaluated the *Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers* and returned their responses via email within two weeks of receiving. Each expert submitted critical evaluations and suggestions for improvement of the guide.

One of the concerns raised by a dual language elementary teacher was the guide lacked multi-cultural references. The specific concern was that society is pluralistic; therefore the content and bibliography should reflect a wider variety of the cultures within our society. The teacher suggested the guide should include, but not be limited to, Native American, Asian, Indian, and Hispanic cultures. Research has shown culturally relevant teaching strategies incorporate all cultures in order to enhance every student's learning based upon their prior knowledge and experiences.

Another concern, brought forth by the Special Education teacher, as well as the Higher Education professor, was the indistinguishable definitions of the five
aspects of culturally relevant teaching. Both experts recommended clarifying the five aspects by creating a list format to better characterize each aspect.

The survey asked the expert panel to evaluate the content of the guide, including the Appendix for accuracy and completeness. Four of the five elementary experts indicated the research was thorough and complete. The Appendix was cited by four of the expert panel members as organized logically and straightforward for elementary teachers to utilize. One teacher recommended enhancing the Appendix by inserting additional resources as they become available. Two of the panel members suggested incorporating examples of how the culturally relevant teaching strategies have been effectively assimilated into classrooms, as well as the student outcome as a result of utilizing the strategies.

The researcher acknowledged the concerns and used the feedback from the survey to make revisions to the guide. Several examples of how culturally relevant teaching strategies have been effectively implemented into classrooms were inserted in the revised version of the guide. The five aspects of culturally relevant classroom management were amended to a list format for better clarity as suggested by two expert panel members. The revised guide can be found in Appendix C.

Chapter Three Summary

The criteria used to develop Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers came from multiple
sources. With the four guiding questions at the forefront, the guide was developed as a collection of information and strategies from multiple resources in order to assist elementary teachers in implementing culturally relevant teaching strategies. In addition to the criteria discussed in this chapter, the results of the expert panel were reviewed.
Chapter 4

Culturally Relevant Teaching Guide

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a guide for elementary teachers to effectively implement and utilize culturally relevant teaching strategies within their classroom. Culturally relevant strategies provide different ways to connect with students by appealing to each student's learning style, prior knowledge, and more importantly, their real life experiences.

Getting Started

Prior to implementing culturally relevant teaching strategies, a teacher must examine five aspects of culturally relevant classroom management. The five aspects are recognizing one’s own cultural lens and biases, obtaining knowledge of the students' cultural backgrounds, being aware of the broader, social, economic, and political context and how they affect education, have the ability and willingness to use culturally relevant materials and management strategies, and a strong commitment to build caring classroom communities.

Teachers request referrals for special education for students of other cultures more frequently due to the teacher not being aware of their own cultural assumptions, biases, and attitudes (Voltz, Brazil, and Scott, 2003). Through examining their own beliefs, teachers gain a better understanding of the
misinterpretations and inequalities of the behavior and treatment of students who are culturally different from them. Teachers can investigate their beliefs further through reading and discussing "White Privilege and Male Privilege" by Peggy McIntosh (1988). During a teacher's cultural relevancy journey, they can utilize the "Cultural Proficiency Receptivity Scale" (Lindsey, 2008), which is designed to encourage self-reflection and examine policies and practices of schools.

A teacher's limited cultural understanding negatively affects students' abilities to be productive learners. Researching general information about a culture or ethnic group will enable teachers to understand the cultural views and rules of behavior, communication, and etiquette in which the students are learning at home. One way to gain cultural understanding is to conduct home visits, which enables the teacher to explore the students' family background and dynamics, discipline, religion, food, health, hygiene, and education. Study groups can also be established to investigate culturally relevant literature that echoes the students' identities.

Teachers need to be aware of the broader, economic, social and political context that affects their students' lives. Many students, especially students of color, are referred for special education services because they are viewed as being disrespectful, when in fact they are not being disrespectful according to their culture. In order to avoid mislabeling students, teachers need to analyze current discipline practices and policies that could lead to unwarranted special education referrals due to cultural differences.
As a teacher commits to providing culturally relevant materials and classroom management, he/she needs to look at his/her environmental decisions through the discernments of cultural diversity. The physical environment must support the establishment and maintenance of behavioral expectations, academic and social goals, as well as family involvement. Some tools that may assist in the creation of a culturally relevant environment may include:

- Highlighting students' countries of origin on a World map
- Displaying signs and banners to welcome students in their native language
- Arrange desks in "pods" to encourage students to work together, small-group discussions, share materials, and assist each other
- Exhibit literature that stimulates discussions about diversity, community, and tolerance.

The fifth aspect of a teacher's cultural relevancy journey is committing to creating a caring classroom community. Marzano (2003) determined that positive teacher-student relationships are vital to successful classroom management. Classrooms directed by culturally relevant classroom management provide a stable environment for respectful and meaningful student learning. Students are more inclined to successfully engage in the classroom activities when they feel connected to the school and develop positive, respectful relationships with their teachers.

Lesson preparation is an important part of engaging students in effective positive culturally relevant learning opportunities. When preparing lessons, the
primary question to focus on is "How does this relate to the lives of my students?"
This question will assist in developing lessons based upon student backgrounds, cultural experiences, as well as various learning styles to create the most effective learning experience for each student. Lessons that enable students to talk about what they are learning, write about what they are learning, relate their learning to their own past experiences, and apply the learning to their daily lives are utilizing active teaching methods. In other words, take what you are already doing and turn it into an applicable activity.

The handbook is designed to provide culturally relevant strategies and activities in four areas of instruction. These areas include:

1. Building Classroom Community
2. Collaborative Discussions
3. Classroom Games
4. Writing

Although the strategies and activities are introduced in one category, they can be implemented cross-categorically, as well as modified to create highly effective instruction to meet the needs of the students.

**Building Classroom Community**

This is the ultimate starting point for creating a culturally relevant classroom. Teachers need to create a bridge between home and school for several reasons. Students are increasingly engaged in their academic learning when they
are encouraged to incorporate their own experiences and feel as if they are accepted as part of a larger community. Teachers who have background knowledge about their students' home lives obtain an expanded understanding of each student, as well as a basis for designing lessons to adequately challenge each student academically. There are many activities and strategies to enable the creation of a positive classroom community; these are just a few:

**Student Interest Surveys**: There are many variations of interest surveys, which can be adapted to fit the needs of the teacher, students, and grade level. The important information to obtain is personal family data, likes and dislikes of the student, as well as things that are important to the student. Teachers can find ready to use interest surveys and survey examples online at little to no cost.

**Learning Style Profiles**: Students learn through various methods – visual, auditory, read/write or kinesthetic. By administering a learning style profile assessment to the students, a teacher can plan effective lessons based on each individual student's learning style, therefore providing relevant learning opportunities. Educationplanner.org, Acceleratedlearning.com, bucks.edu, and vark-learn.com are various websites that offer learning style profile assessments. Edutopia.org is another good resource for learning style profile information.

**“Checking In”**: (Guy, 2015) Students share their level of “presence” in the classroom: ready to learn, at school, but not fully ready to engage in activities, or do not want to be in school at all. Each student expresses the level of presence through a short answer share-out. In a large group or small groups of three to five students,
each student states their own name and then responds to a posted question. When the student finishes their answer, they sign off by saying, “Checking In”. The questions should allow students to express their own ideas and feelings, as well as the opportunity to explain why they answered the way they did. Some examples of a question would be, “If I could spend one hour with any athlete from any sport it would be...” or “If I could invite any historical person to a birthday party it would be...”

_class motto, chant, greeting, handshake, rules*: (Guy, 2015)_
Incorporating a class motto or chant into the daily classroom routine creates an environment in which students can feel they are part of a larger community outside of their immediate families. A website that would be helpful in creating a class motto or chant is [http://www.byrdseed.com/creating-a-class-motto/](http://www.byrdseed.com/creating-a-class-motto/). This website provides steps in constructing a positive class motto or chant by utilizing the school rules.

Teachers who greet their students with a special, personalized greeting or handshake also create a feeling of being a part of a larger community, as well as letting each individual student know that they are cared for and important to the teacher and the class. The greeting can be as simple as “Good morning, scholars!” or welcoming each student personally by name and asking them how they are today. Handshakes can also vary from a simple one hand from one person clasping the other person’s hand and shaking it up and down two or three times to two people
bumping their fists together. Teachers need to utilize multiple strategies to find what will work effectively for their students.

Classrooms establish rules, to apply within the classroom in addition to the entire school rules, which are laid out in the student handbook. These classroom rules enable students to feel as if they are part of a larger community on different levels. They also provide structure and guidance for students learning proper social behaviors. Some rules that may apply to a classroom are “Pencils are sharpened during breakfast time, snack time, and lunch time”, “One person speaks at a time”, and “One person leaves the classroom at a time to use the restroom.” The classroom rules must be discussed, modeled and revisited multiple times for students to understand and remember without reminders.

"Throwback Thursday"/First Friday: (Guy, 2015) This is a great way to share and learn about each member of the classroom. Students (and teachers) take turns bringing in items from their past that is important to them to share with the class. Students can explain what the item is, who gave it to them, when they acquired it, why it is important to them, and how it has impacted their life. This activity provides additional insight into each student’s life outside of school, as well as extra group or writing activities.

Song Playlists (Instrumental Only)/CD Soundtrack: (Guy, 2015) Students love listening to music and most students are surrounded by music throughout their day at home. Students are more likely to focus and work quietly when music they enjoy is playing. Teachers can create playlists of songs or soundtracks that students
take pleasure in listening to which can be played during quiet work times, breakfast/morning work time, and transitions. The songs, especially those with inappropriate language, can be downloaded as instrumental pieces from online for little to no cost.

**Lunch with the Teacher:** Students relish the opportunity to spend time individually or in a small group with the teacher. Lunchtime is a good chance to learn more about a student, find commonalities, and build relationships. Teachers can request a student or students eat lunch with him/her periodically to share information and strengthen the rapport between the teacher and student.

**Caught You Learning Calls:** (Roschke & Walker, 2015) The teacher explains to the students that each night the teacher will randomly call a minimum of one student. When the teacher calls, if the student is studying, reading, or doing homework, the student or class can earn points, prizes, or another type of incentive. Parents or other adult guardian can confirm for the teacher that the student is actually engaged in academic activities at the time of the call. During the call, the teacher may touch base with the student to see how things are going, answer any questions the student may have, or listen to the student read.

**Celebrate Birthdays:** (Roschke & Walker, 2015) A simple acknowledgement of a student’s birthday can go a long way in building a positive relationship. Teachers can tell a student “Happy Birthday”, give a small treat, card, or balloon or have the entire class sing “Happy Birthday” to the student. Younger students may enjoy a birthday crown or badge to wear on their special day.
**T-shirt Labels:** (Guy, 2014) The teacher creates a t-shirt template with a focus on the label. Students will write a label that represents their own ethnicity, racial background, values, and personality. For example: 100% Caucasian, Durable in most conditions, Humor and Serious blend, In your best interest to handle with care...

When completed, students can share their labels with their peers or display them within the classroom for other people to learn about them. This activity is a good lead-in for a class discussion about diversity and how we are all different.

**I AM, I AM NOT:** (Roschke & Walker, 2015)(Appendix) Each student starts with a piece of paper with five circles drawn on it – one circle in the middle and the other four circles around the middle circle. The student writes one word in each circle that represents who they are (sister, brother, athlete, Christian, Muslim, student, etc.). When each circle is filled in, the student chooses one of the words from the circles and thinks of a stereotype or negative view society may connect to that word. The student writes a statement, “I am ____________, but I am not ________________” to help the class understand the student and to breakdown the stereotypes that are related to who the student is.

**“What’s in a Name?”** (Roschke & Walker, 2015) At the beginning of the school year, give each student a “What’s in a Name?” form (Appendix) to take home and have their parents help them answer the questions. When the students bring back the forms, everyone shares information about their name with the class in a Morning Meeting or Community Circle. The students share their name and two
other pieces of information from their form. If a student is shy or nervous, allow them to just share their name without the additional information in efforts to avoid a stressful situation for the student. The students’ “What’s in a Name?” forms can be posted on a bulletin board in the classroom or hallway to enable other people to get to know them.

*The ME Poem:* (Raschke & Walker, 2015) Students create a poem utilizing the template (Appendix) The poem tells who they are, where they live (use streets or cross streets), three descriptive words about them, three activities they enjoy, where they would go if they could go anywhere, and what they would try if they could try something new. Areas of sensitivity for students may include not knowing who a parent is or being homeless. These students can who they consider to be their parent or, in the case of homelessness, they can skip the line or use a cross street.

*Me, By the Numbers:* (Raschke & Walker, 2015) Students select 5-10 numbers that communicate something about themselves. For example:

3 – the number of sisters I have

7 – I was born in the seventh month

10 – the number of miles from my house to school

0 – the number of pets I have

Students create a poster, a word document, or a PowerPoint to share their information. Students should include a picture of themselves on their presentations
and the final project should be displayed in the classroom or hallway. The following website has examples of student work:

https://teachrefinerepeat.wordpress.com/2013/08/10/first-day-icebreaker-me-by-the-numbers/

**The ME Bag:** (Roschke & Walker, 2015) Students are given a paper bag to decorate in any way they choose. The students take their own bag home and place 3 – 5 items that characterize who they are into the bag. These items could include, but are not limited to awards/certificates, a favorite toy or video game, pictures, sentimental objects, etc. The students bring the bag back to school to share with the class. If a student does not want to share, offer the student an option of not sharing or to share with the teacher privately.

**Collaborative Discussions**

Students learn best from their peers, therefore providing students with opportunities to discuss and share their knowledge and experiences increases student learning potentials. Collaborative discussions enable students to share their own opinions, viewpoints, experiences, and beliefs, as well as listen to the opinions, viewpoints, experiences, and beliefs of other students. Collaborating with other students reduces the fear some students have about participating in large group activities or getting the answer incorrect in front of the entire group.

**Facebook/Blog Post** encourages student collaboration, while reducing student fear of participating in the large group because students work together to
respond to the question or prompt. The teacher creates three to five groups and generates several questions for the students to answer. The teacher writes one question per large paper and gives each group one question to answer and each group gets a different color marker or pencil to write their answers. For example, group one starts answering question one using a blue marker, group two answers question two using an orange marker, etc. The teacher monitors the time interval allowing each group to answer their question. At the end of the time interval, the papers containing the questions rotate to the next group. The process continues until every group has answered each question at which time the papers should be posted in the classroom. The students should do a gambit walk to view the responses of the other groups for each question and then reconvene as a class to read the responses and discuss the answers, as well as the evidence from the text.

**Numbered Heads Together** (Guy, 2015) encourages students to collaborate to produce the answer to a given question. The teacher begins by dividing the students into groups of four and giving each member of the group a number from one to four. The teacher poses a question or problem to the class and instructs the students to gather within their groups to think about the question and make sure everyone understands and can provide an answer. After a specified time period, which allows the groups substantial time to discuss and derive an answer to the question, the teacher asks the question, calling out a number from one to four randomly. The students with that number raise their hands and answers for his/her team when called on.
Heads In, Butts Up is most effective when student desks are arranged in pods of four to six. The students are given a question or problem to answer with a specified time period that they can work together to discuss and solve the problem. The students kneel on their chairs, placing their heads toward the center of their pod, which in turn places their butts up in the air. While their heads are together, they discuss the problem or question and collaborate to find possible ways to solve the problem.

Turn and Talk provides a quick student-to-student discussion about a given question or topic in a very short amount of time. Once a question or problem is posed to the class, the teacher says to “turn and talk to your elbow partner”. At this time, the students will turn to their predetermined “elbow partner” who is sitting directly next to them or directly across the table to discuss the question quietly. When the teacher calls the class back together, the teacher will call on students to share what they discussed with their “elbow partner” with the whole class.

Classroom Games

When students are engaged in activities that are familiar to them in their daily lives, they are more invested in their own learning. Classroom games enable students to do activities that are familiar to them outside of school, while learning and demonstrating their knowledge on a given topic within the classroom environment. Many students learn more effectively through kinesthetic activities, which allows the students to move around as part of the learning process.
Classroom games incorporate fun, engaging, familiar activities with interactive lessons, as well as collaboration with peers.

**Tic Tac Toe** can be used as a two-team game. One team is X and the other team is 0. As each team attempts to answer questions, the team with the correct answer gets to place their letter strategically on the board until one team has three of their letters in a row. This game can be played as an entire class or in smaller center groups.

**Cake Walk** begins with placing a specific number of numbers on the floor or large table. While music is playing, the same numbers of students as numbers on the table/floor walk around until the music stops. The teacher calls out a number and the student that is stopped at that number must correctly answer the question to continue playing the game.

**Talk a Mile a Minute** is an activity that encourages students to interact with vocabulary. By utilizing Robert Marzano's sixth step of his "Vocabulary Six-Step Process", a teacher can increase vocabulary knowledge through the use of classroom games (Marzano, 2004). To play Talk a Mile a Minute, the teacher creates lists of five to six vocabulary words. One student is chosen to guess the vocabulary words in a particular list while the rest of the class or a selected group of students call out clues for each vocabulary word without saying the word itself.

**Categories** (Guy, 2015) involves the teacher creating a list of cards with a letter on each card, repeating some letters such as m, t, s, l, n, b, and c. Then the
teacher generates categories based on the content and poses questions. The students will respond with answers that adhere to the category and begin with the corresponding letter selected.

**Stand up Meeting/Blind Date** (Guy, 2015) is a good way to engage students is sharing their work, answers, or thoughts with their peers. The students stand up and find a partner. Standing next to their partner, each student takes a turn sharing their work, thoughts, or answers. The teacher can play music to signal the students to find a different partner to share their work.

**Multiple Choice Around the Room** empowers students to move about the classroom to demonstrate their knowledge. The teacher must prepare questions appropriate to the lesson prior to teaching the lesson or reading the text with the students. As the teacher poses the questions, students will walk to the choice that best represents the correct answer. Each choice will have a predetermined designated location within the classroom. The choices can vary based on the need of the question, such as A-B-C-D, 1-2-3-4, Strongly agree, agree, disagree, Strongly disagree, etc. The students should discuss their proof that supports their choice.

**The Human Game Board** can be designed to be played by multiple teams or individual players. The teacher creates a game board from a popular game, such as Chutes and Ladders, Monopoly, Sorry, or Life on the floor of the classroom using paper, tape, a marker, and a large set of dice. The teacher constructs questions from the topic of a given subject in which the players must answer correctly in order to move along the game’s pathway. The questions could consist of basic math facts,
possible test questions, questions from the previous day’s reading, or identifying the letters of the alphabet. The winning team or individual is the player who reaches the end of the pathway first.

**Cash Cab** enables students to answer questions with optional support from their peers. One to four players are chosen to play. The teacher gives the players one question at a time with the difficulty level of the question corresponding to an appropriate dollar amount or point value. The easier questions are given lower points/dollar amounts and are asked first. The question difficulty level and point/dollar amount increases with each correct answer. The players may talk among themselves to derive the correct answer. If they need additional assistance they have two aides they may use each one time throughout the game: mobile shout out and street shout out. The mobile shout out enables the players to call a friend for help with an answer, while the street shout out allows the players to ask classmates (people on the street) for advice answering the question. At anytime the players incorrectly answer three questions, the game is over. For a variation, if a player has earned at least $200/points and the teacher has to stop for a “red light”, a Red Light Challenge begins. A trivia question with a correct answer made up of multiple parts is asked, and the players have 30 seconds to provide all of the answers. This challenge is worth $250/points for all of the correct answers, and does not count against the players if answered incorrectly.
Writing

Writing is a productive method of sharing thoughts, ideas, and beliefs with other people. When students are encouraged and provided additional support so they feel secure in their environment, they willingly share their thoughts, ideas, opinions and beliefs through their stories and short writings. Although there are many strategies for encouraging writing skills, strategies that incorporate the students’ interests and enable group/partner collaboration make writing less overwhelming, especially for students who struggle with their writing skills.

The 2-way Journal (Roschke & Walker, August 2015) enables students to write freely about their own ideas, thoughts, feelings and questions. Each student writes in their own journaling notebook with the option of placing a post-it note on any entries he/she does not want read by the teacher. The teacher reads the students entries with their permission and writes back sharing similar thoughts, asking questions, giving advice, reassuring, or encouraging comments.

Challenge Paragraph (Guy, 2015) is a good way to encourage those struggling writers. The students work with a partner to write a paragraph using all of the words in a given list in the order the words are listed. One partner writes, but both partners work together to design their paragraph using the given words within the allotted time period established by the teacher.

Pass a Story/Silent Rally/ “Silence is Golden” (Guy, 2015) creates a multitude of stories by involving the whole class in the writing process. The teacher
posts a story starter on the board for each student to copy on their own paper. The story starter could be “Once upon a time” or “One day I stepped out into my backyard ...”. Once each student has copied the story starter and their name on their paper, the teacher instructs the students to write to continue the story for the designated time period and to stop at the signal. The teacher will monitor the time interval and use a bell, chime, or clap to prompt the students to stop writing. The students will pass their papers to the next person and continue writing as it relates to the story being created on the new paper. The process continues for several more rounds and afterwards the students return the papers to the original owner. The stories can be read to the whole class, small groups, or partners and also be posted to share with the school community.

**Silly Sentences** is an activity to promote writing various sentences such as simple, compound, and complex sentences. The student rolls a die to determine the number of words they need to include in their sentence. On a lined paper, the student creates a silly sentence using the number of words rolled on the die. The teacher could provide pictures for the students to fashion their sentences about or a particular story. For struggling writers, this activity could be completed with a partner or small group.

**Instagram Post/#Hashtag Discussion** incorporates the technology concepts into the students writing skills. The teacher provides photos, pictures, political cartoons, current events, etc. and instructs the students to write an Instagram post or #Hashtag entry to critique, analyze, or discuss textual evidence
the provided image. The entire class could utilize one image or each student could use a different image. The final posts could be matched with the appropriate image and displayed for other classes and staff to view.

**Picture Story/Prompts** involves providing students with old calendar pictures or newspaper pictures that are fun, engaging, and relatable images for students to write about. These writings can be used to improve opinions, descriptions, narratives, informative, or explanatory writing skills.
References


Cultural Proficiency Receptivity Scale – A Process of Self-Reflection

Indicate your level of agreement. A response of 1 indicates strong disagreement, and a response of 7 indicates strong agreement. This survey will not be collected. It is for your own private, professional growth and reflection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 I believe that all children and youth learn successfully when informed and caring teachers assist them and make sufficient resources available to them.</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 I want to do whatever is necessary to ensure that the students for whom I am responsible are well-educated and successful learners.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 I am committed to creating both an educational environment and learning experiences for our students that honor and respect who they are.</td>
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</table>
### EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES FOR CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING: A GUIDE FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to ask myself uncomfortable questions about racism, cultural preferences, and insufficient learning conditions and resources that are obstacles to learning for many students.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I am willing to ask questions about racism, cultural preferences, and insufficient learning conditions and resources that may be uncomfortable for others in my school or district.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I believe that all students benefit from educational practices that engage them in learning about their cultural heritage and understanding their cultural background.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I believe that all students benefit from educational practices that provide them with hope, direction, and preparation for their future lives.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<td>-------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is important to know how well our district serves the various cultural and ethnic communities represented in our schools, and it is also important to understand how well served they feel by the educational practices in our schools.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important to know how the various cultural and ethnic communities represented in our schools view me as an educational leader and to understand how well my leadership serves their expectations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our district and schools are successful only when all subgroups are improving academically and socially.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural discomfort and disagreements are normal occurrences in a diverse society such as ours and are parts of everyday interactions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 I believe that lack of cultural understanding and historic distrust can result in cultural discomfort and disagreements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 I believe we can learn about and implement diverse and improved instructional practices that will effectively serve all our students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14 I believe we can use disaggregated data to understand more precisely the achievement status of all students in our schools, and that we can use that information to identify and implement effective instructional practices for each of them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15 As a leader, it is important for me to be able to communicate across cultures and to facilitate communication among diverse cultural groups.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Culturally Proficient Inquiry, Lindsey, 2008
I Am, I Am Not

Write one word in each circle that represents who you are. Examples: sister, Christian, father, runner, Muslim, teacher, etc.

Choose one of the words that represents who you are and think of a stereotype or negative view people may connect to it. Write a statement "I am ____________, but I am not ____________ to help us understand you and to break the stereotypes that are associated with who you are.

Gloria Roschke & Dustine Walker, August 2015
What's In a Name?

What's your full name?

Were you named after someone? If so, who?

What does your name mean?

What names did your parents consider before deciding on the one you have?

Why did they choose your name?

What is your name's country of origin? (ex. "Ivan" has Russian origins)

What is your nick-name? How did you get that nick-name?

If you could change your name, what would you name yourself?

Now.... on a separate paper, please write your name in a creative way. Can you use color? Fancy writing? Swirls? Block letters? A pattern? Design something as special as YOU are!

If possible, please attach a small picture of yourself to this form. (photo will be returned.)

Gloria Roschke & Dustine Walker, August 2015
The Me Poem

Have students create a poem with the following template. Take a picture of each student (only if they’re willing) to include with the poem. Print it and post it inside your classroom or in your hallway. Parents love to see this during Open House. Be sensitive to students who may not know one parent. Let them know they can write who they consider to be their parent. Do not have students list their whole address. A street or cross streets are fine. Also be sensitive to students who may be completely homeless or living in a homeless shelter. They can skip that line or just give a cross street.

First Name
Son/Daughter of ________
Living on ____________
I am ________, ________, and ________ (3 adjectives)
I enjoy ________, ________, and ________ (3 activities)
If I could go anywhere, I’d go to ____________
If I could try something new, I’d try __________

Last Name

Gloria Roschke & Dustine Walker, August 2015
Purpose

The purpose of this thesis was to bring to light ways teachers can increase student engagement, while decreasing negative behavior just by incorporating culturally relevant teaching strategies in their classrooms. This project placed culturally relevant teaching strategies into an instructional guide for elementary teachers to utilize while implementing culturally relevant teaching within their classrooms. Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers was designed for this project. The information collected for the guide was directed by four guiding questions addressing four areas of concern: teachers’ own sociocultural consciousness, strategies to create positive learning environments, strategies to effectively engage all students, and essential elements to ensure effective implementation of the strategies with fidelity.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Based on the responses of the survey, the panel of experts identified both strengths and weaknesses of Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers. One acknowledged strength was the accuracy and completeness of encompassing the strategies and information for elementary teachers to effectively implement culturally relevant teaching in
their classrooms. One panel member indicated the guide was written with "teacher language" while maintaining its easiness to understand. Three expert panel members singled out the accessibility of the multiple resources provided in the Appendix.

A weakness of the guide, which was discussed by two of the panel members, was a need for clarity of the five aspects of culturally relevant teaching. By simplifying the presentation of each of the five aspects of culturally relevant classroom management, the teacher gains a clearer understanding of the information. Two panel members recommended incorporating examples of how the culturally relevant teaching strategies have been effectively implemented into classrooms. Another concern of one of the dual language panel members was the lack of information and focus on the linguistic facet of culturally relevant teaching strategies. Although linguistics is an important aspect of culturally relevant teaching, the researcher chose to concentrate on the implementation and strategies, which are imperative for teachers to begin making the needed changes within their classrooms.

As a result of the survey feedback, the researcher utilized the comments and suggestions to revise the guide. Examples were added to demonstrate the effectiveness of a strategy within the classroom. The five aspects of culturally relevant classroom management were amended to a list format for better clarity and understanding. The revised guide can be found in Appendix C.
Next Steps

The guide was created to assist elementary teachers to effectively implement culturally relevant teaching strategies within their classrooms and provide those teachers with multiple strategies to incorporate within their lessons. The next step would be to publish the guide and distribute one to every elementary teacher in a selected school or district. After monitoring the implementation of culturally relevant teaching strategies within one school, additional research and data collection could be completed and inserted a revised guide to enhance the guide by including more strategies, as well as supplementary resources.

Another step is to expand professional development opportunities for all teachers and administrators that would focus on evaluating their own cultural assumptions and biases to encompass diversity within their classrooms and schools. As discussed in the literature review, Ladson-Billings (2009) suggests that teachers who practice culturally relevant techniques consider themselves part of the community and view teaching as their way of giving back to the community.

Implications

Culturally relevant teaching is imperative to effectively engage students in their individual learning progression. The literature review highlights the impact teachers’ biases and assumptions have on the implementation and effectiveness of each student’s learning progress. Teachers set the tone and direction of their classroom; therefore teachers who self-reflect on their own biases and assumptions...
and advocate for cultural relevancy create positive learning environments in which students are free to explore and learn. This project was designed to guide this process in an effective manner to ensure implementation with fidelity.

There is a substantial amount of information available regarding culturally relevant teaching and the implications cultural relevancy has on students and their academic achievements. Numerous publications provide information for specific academic subjects with a few strategies that pertain to that specific subject area. Very few of the texts uncovered during the literature review contain a broad scope of information that can be utilized cross-categorically, such as found in this guide.

The intended purpose of the Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers is to provide elementary teachers with an easy to use resource to utilize within their classrooms for culturally relevant lessons and activities. The guide is only the first step. One possibility for future research would be to explore how linguistics factors into culturally relevant teaching strategies, as well as what it would look like in the educational setting. Another possible concept to explore would be the role technology takes in culturally relevant teaching strategies.

Teachers need resources that are easily accessible and relevant to their students needs to provide effective learning experiences. This guide strives to provide the connections and the essential collection of applicable strategies teachers search for to establish positive learning opportunities for their students.
Chapter Five Summary

This project was developed to increase student engagement through culturally relevant teaching strategies, while providing teachers with a valuable resource to utilize within their classrooms and assist in lesson planning. Although *Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers* has some weaknesses, the guide is a starting point for teachers to begin implementation of culturally relevant teaching. Additional research and data collection could be incorporated into the guide to enhance the information available to teachers.
References


Appendix A

Survey
After examining the "Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers", please evaluate and comment on the following areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guide</th>
<th>Please consider the following for this document:</th>
<th>Comments/Suggestions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the information accurate and complete?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are there any key elements that are missing that should be included?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Is there any redundancy in the content that should be eliminated?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the appendix include important and relevant information?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the information complete and useful for teachers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Wording** | Is the guide written in a language that is easy to understand and appropriate for teachers?  
Are there any areas of wordiness?  
Are there any confusing or misleading areas that need to be reworded?  
Is the meaning of the content clear and to the point? |
|---|---|
| **Appearance** | Is the font (size and style) the best choice for this document?  
Do the section names establish an understanding of the content that follows it?  
How could the appearance be improved? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Is the material organized in an appropriate progressive order?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there a clear flow between sections of the guide?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>Is the point of view consistent throughout the document?</td>
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<td>Are there any grammatical errors?</td>
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<td>Are there any typographical errors?</td>
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</table>

Additional comments or suggestions:
Appendix B

Survey Feedback
Survey

After examining the "Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers", please evaluate and comment on the following areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guide Content</th>
<th>Please consider the following for this document:</th>
<th>Comments/Suggestions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the information accurate and complete?</td>
<td>Well done providing an explanation and examples of how to address each of the 5 aspects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there any key elements that are missing that should be included?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Is there any redundancy in the content that should be eliminated?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>Does the appendix include important and relevant information?</td>
<td>I think it is great that you have copies of materials ready to use as well as references for further materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the information complete and useful for teachers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wording</td>
<td>Is the guide written in a language that is easy to understand and appropriate for teachers?</td>
<td>Something on page 9 to consider changing because it could be taken as racist by some who read this handbook: 100% Caucasian. I would use another example because many could see this statement as another example of &quot;White Privilege&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there any areas of wordiness?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there any confusing or misleading areas that need to be reworded?</td>
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<td>Is the meaning of the content clear and to the point?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>Is the font (size and style) the best choice for this document?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Do the section names establish an understanding of the content that follows it?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How could the appearance be improved?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On page 2 to make the 5 aspects of cultural learning more clear in the introduction I would put (1) and write out the description the (2) write out the description, etc. Then it is very clear for those reading and maybe they will see immediately an area that they personally need to explore to become more culturally sensitive.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Is the material organized in an appropriate progressive order?</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>Is the point of view consistent throughout the document?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are there any grammatical errors?</td>
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<td>Are there any typographical errors?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional comments or suggestions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

On page 2 I would insert the following word which I have in ()

*Teachers request referrals for special education (services)*...

On page 8 I would change the following in () to make the sentence grammatically correct: *bringing in items from their past that is (are) important*...
Survey

After examining the “Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers”, please evaluate and comment on the following areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guide Content</th>
<th>Please consider the following for this document:</th>
<th>Comments/Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the information accurate and complete?</td>
<td>Research is very thorough. Nice job organizing the content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there any key elements that are missing that should be included?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there any redundancy in the content that should be eliminated?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>Does the appendix include important and relevant information?</td>
<td>I think the appendix is organized very logically, and that it is very accessible and useful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the information complete and useful for teachers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wording</td>
<td>Is the guide written in a language that is easy to understand and appropriate for teachers?</td>
<td>The guide is very easy to understand and navigate. It is written with “teacher language” but is still easy to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there any areas of wordiness?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are there any confusing or misleading areas that need to be reworded?</td>
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<td>Is the meaning of the content clear and to the point?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>Is the font (size and style) the best choice for this document?</td>
<td>The font and set-up of the guide is very easy to read and follow.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do the section names establish an understanding of the content that follows it?</td>
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Additional comments or suggestions: You did a great job putting this guide together, and in providing a helpful resource for teachers to utilize.
**Survey**

After examining the "Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers", please evaluate and comment on the following areas:

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<td>Are there any key elements that are missing that should be included?</td>
<td>Include more about different cultures; Native American culture, Asian culture, Indians, Hispanics.</td>
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<td>Is there any redundancy in the content that should be eliminated?</td>
<td>It is a plurastic society and it should reflect it in your content and in your bibliography.</td>
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<td>Appendix</td>
<td>Does the appendix include important and relevant information?</td>
<td>If you can include how examples of how you have incorporated it into your practice an or enhanced students lives then, it would be easier to read and digest as a reader.</td>
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<td>Yes. The guide is easy to understand</td>
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<td>Are there any confusing or misleading areas that need to be reworded?</td>
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<td>Please include vignettes to further personalize the information.</td>
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<td>How could the appearance be improved?</td>
<td>Include anchor charts (games that would be used in the classroom) Pictures of students</td>
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### Organization

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Additional comments or suggestions: Please include parent support/engagement strategies and or mention it. So critical.

Have you seen this from DPI’s website?


You may want to have a PreK teacher look at it. School starts with PreK learning (Head Start!!!)

Didn’t see anything for appendix. ??
Survey

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<td>Yes, teachers could take your example activities right out of the appendix rather easily and use them! Thank you!!</td>
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<td>The Appearance is clear, simple, and friendly. Some illustrations of students working on the activities would be the finished touch so that teachers could see kids “doing” some of these activities.</td>
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Additional comments or suggestions: Great job!
Survey

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A+ overall. Wonderful job!

Additional comments or suggestions: After thoroughly examining and reading the guide, I believe the work is outstanding. I could find no errors. I think the premise is excellent as we all must be much more culturally aware during our instruction. We must be culturally sensitive to the many needs of our students. The guide addresses all of these concerns and more, and provides solutions.
**Survey**

After examining the "Effective Implementation and Strategies for Culturally Relevant Teaching: A Guide for Elementary Teachers", please evaluate and comment on the following areas:

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### Additional comments or suggestions:

There are a lot of great activities in your guide. You should share them with your teachers at your school. The one thing that caught my attention is on the first page the paragraph under Getting Started. The five aspects are a bit confusing to read. I would use seriation and label each a, b, c, d, e. Another option is to make it two or three sentences. Include the citation as well for the five aspects. Also delete the spacing between the sections. I am not sure my computer did that or that’s how it was.
Appendix C

Revised Guide
Effective Implementation and Strategies For Culturally Relevant Teaching:
A Guide For Elementary Teachers

Revised

Kristine Hobson
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Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a guide for elementary teachers to effectively implement and utilize culturally relevant teaching strategies within their classroom. Culturally relevant strategies provide different ways to connect with students by appealing to each student’s learning style, prior knowledge, and more importantly, their real life experiences.

Getting Started

Prior to implementing culturally relevant teaching strategies, a teacher must examine five aspects of culturally relevant classroom management. The five aspects are

a. Recognizing one’s own cultural lens and biases,

b. Obtaining knowledge of the students’ cultural backgrounds,

c. Being aware of the broader, social, economic, and political context and how they affect education,

d. Have the ability and willingness to use culturally relevant materials and management strategies,

e. A strong commitment to build caring classroom communities.

Teachers request referrals for special education services for students of other cultures more frequently due to the teacher not being aware of their own cultural assumptions, biases, and attitudes (Voltz, Brazil, and Scott, 2003). Through examining their own beliefs, teachers gain a better understanding of the misinterpretations and inequalities of the behavior and treatment of students who
are culturally different from them. Teachers can investigate their beliefs further through reading and discussing "White Privilege and Male Privilege" by Peggy McIntosh (1988). During a teacher's cultural relevancy journey, they can utilize the "Cultural Proficiency Receptivity Scale" (Lindsey, 2008), which is designed to encourage self-reflection and examine policies and practices of schools.

A teacher's limited cultural understanding negatively affects students' abilities to be productive learners. Researching general information about a culture or ethnic group will enable teachers to understand the cultural views and rules of behavior, communication, and etiquette in which the students are learning at home. One way to gain cultural understanding is to conduct home visits, which enables the teacher to explore the students' family background and dynamics, discipline, religion, food, health, hygiene, and education. Study groups can also be established to investigate culturally relevant literature that echoes the students' identities.

Teachers need to be aware of the broader, economic, social and political context that affects their students' lives. Many students, especially students of color, are referred for special education services because they are viewed as being disrespectful, when in fact they are not being disrespectful according to their culture. In order to avoid mislabeling students, teachers need to analyze current discipline practices and policies that could lead to unwarranted special education referrals due to cultural differences.

As a teacher commits to providing culturally relevant materials and classroom management, he/she needs to look at his/her environmental decisions through the discernments of cultural diversity. The physical environment must
support the establishment and maintenance of behavioral expectations, academic and social goals, as well as family involvement. Some tools that may assist in the creation of a culturally relevant environment may include:

- Highlighting students’ countries of origin on a World map
- Displaying signs and banners to welcome students in their native language
- Arrange desks in “pods” to encourage students to work together, small-group discussions, share materials, and assist each other
- Exhibit literature that stimulates discussions about diversity, community, and tolerance.

The fifth aspect of a teacher’s cultural relevancy journey is committing to creating a caring classroom community. Marzano (2003) determined that positive teacher-student relationships are vital to successful classroom management. Classrooms directed by culturally relevant classroom management provide a stable environment for respectful and meaningful student learning. Students are more inclined to successfully engage in the classroom activities when they feel connected to the school and develop positive, respectful relationships with their teachers.

Lesson preparation is an important part of engaging students in effective positive culturally relevant learning opportunities. When preparing lessons, the primary question to focus on is “How does this relate to the lives of my students?” This question will assist in developing lessons based upon student backgrounds, cultural experiences, as well as various learning styles to create the most effective learning experience for each student. Lessons that enable students to talk about
what they are learning, write about what they are learning, relate their learning to their own past experiences, and apply the learning to their daily lives are utilizing active teaching methods. In other words, take what you are already doing and turn it into an applicable activity.

The handbook is designed to provide culturally relevant strategies and activities in four areas of instruction. These areas include:

1. Building Classroom Community
2. Collaborative Discussions
3. Classroom Games
4. Writing

Although the strategies and activities are introduced in one category, they can be implemented cross-categorically, as well as modified to create highly effective instruction to meet the needs of the students.

Building Classroom Community

This is the ultimate starting point for creating a culturally relevant classroom. Teachers need to create a bridge between home and school for several reasons. Students are increasingly engaged in their academic learning when they are encouraged to incorporate their own experiences and feel as if they are accepted as part of a larger community. Teachers who have background knowledge about their students' home lives obtain an expanded understanding of each student, as well as a basis for designing lessons to adequately challenge each student.
EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES FOR CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING: A GUIDE FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

academically. There are many activities and strategies to enable the creation of a positive classroom community; these are just a few:

**Student Interest Surveys:** There are many variations of interest surveys, which can be adapted to fit the needs of the teacher, students, and grade level. The important information to obtain is personal family data, likes and dislikes of the student, as well as things that are important to the student. Teachers can find ready to use interest surveys and survey examples online at little to no cost.

_The first day of school Mr. Jones begins the morning by distributing a student interest survey to his 3rd grade students. He asks them to answer the questions on the survey to the best of their ability, while helping a couple of students with their responses. When the students were finished, Mr. Jones collected the surveys and reviewed them later in the day. He discovered seven of his students love playing Minecraft, five of the girls enjoy drawing, and two students live with a grandparent. He learned one of his students is involved with an Irish dance club, while eight students celebrate Cinco de Mayo every year. With the survey information in hand, Mr. Jones uses the student responses to plan his lessons throughout the year to include Minecraft as a math project, integrate art into Science and Reading, and performances during various cultural holidays. His students were more engaged and looked forward to each new lesson due to their own personal interests in each lesson._
Learning Style Profiles: Students learn through various methods – visual, auditory, read/write or kinesthetic. By administering a learning style profile assessment to the students, a teacher can plan effective lessons based on each individual student’s learning style, therefore providing relevant learning opportunities. Educationplanner.org, Acceleratedlearning.com, bucks.edu, and vark-learn.com are various websites that offer learning style profile assessments. Edutopia.org is another good resource for learning style profile information.

"Checking In": (Guy, 2015) Students share their level of “presence” in the classroom: ready to learn, at school, but not fully ready to engage in activities, or do not want to be in school at all. Each student expresses the level of presence through a short answer share-out. In a large group or small groups of three to five students, each student states their own name and then responds to a posted question. When the student finishes their answer, they sign off by saying, “Checking In”. The questions should allow students to express their own ideas and feelings, as well as the opportunity to explain why they answered the way they did. Some examples of a question would be, “If I could spend one hour with any athlete from any sport it would be...” or “If I could invite any historical person to a birthday party it would be...”

Class Motto, Chant, Greeting, Handshake, Rules*: (Guy, 2015)
Incorporating a class motto or chant into the daily classroom routine creates an environment in which students can feel they are part of a larger community outside of their immediate families. A website that would be helpful in creating a class motto or chant is http://www.byrdseed.com/creating-a-class-motto/. This website
provides steps in constructing a positive class motto or chant by utilizing the school rules.

Teachers who greet their students with a special, personalized greeting or handshake also create a feeling of being a part of a larger community, as well as letting each individual student know that they are cared for and important to the teacher and the class. The greeting can be as simple as “Good morning, scholars!” or welcoming each student personally by name and asking them how they are today. Handshakes can also vary from a simple one hand from one person clasping the other person’s hand and shaking it up and down two or three times to two people bumping their fists together. Teachers need to utilize multiple strategies to find what will work effectively for their students.

Classrooms establish rules, to apply within the classroom in addition to the entire school rules, which are laid out in the student handbook. These classroom rules enable students to feel as if they are part of a larger community on different levels. They also provide structure and guidance for students learning proper social behaviors. Some rules that may apply to a classroom are “Pencils are sharpened during breakfast time, snack time, and lunch time”, “One person speaks at a time”, and “One person leaves the classroom at a time to use the restroom.” The classroom rules must be discussed, modeled and revisited multiple times for students to understand and remember without reminders.

“Throwback Thursday”/First Friday: (Guy, 2015) This is a great way to share and learn about each member of the classroom. Students (and teachers) take turns bringing in items from their past that are important to them to share with the
class. Students can explain what the item is, who gave it to them, when they acquired it, why it is important to them, and how it has impacted their life. This activity provides additional insight into each student’s life outside of school, as well as extra group or writing activities.

**Song Playlists (Instrumental Only)/CD Soundtrack:** (Guy, 2015) Students love listening to music and most students are surrounded by music throughout their day at home. Students are more likely to focus and work quietly when music they enjoy is playing. Teachers can create playlists of songs or soundtracks that students take pleasure in listening to which can be played during quiet work times, breakfast/morning work time, and transitions. The songs, especially those with inappropriate language, can be downloaded as instrumental pieces from online for little to no cost.

**Lunch with the Teacher:** Students relish the opportunity to spend time individually or in a small group with the teacher. Lunchtime is a good chance to learn more about a student, find commonalities, and build relationships. Teachers can request a student or students eat lunch with him/her periodically to share information and strengthen the rapport between the teacher and student.

*Every Monday morning, Ms. Kirk would leave a personalized invitation in the desk of an unsuspecting student for he/she to join Ms. Kirk for lunch that day. During the student’s lunch period, the selected student comes to Ms. Kirk’s classroom to eat and have a casual conversation with Ms. Kirk. These lunch conversations*
EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES FOR CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING: A GUIDE FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

have revealed additional student interests, family dynamics, as well as each student's insecurities.

**Caught You Learning Calls:** (Roschke & Walker, 2015) The teacher explains to the students that each night the teacher will randomly call a minimum of one student. When the teacher calls, if the student is studying, reading, or doing homework, the student or class can earn points, prizes, or another type of incentive. Parents or other adult guardian can confirm for the teacher that the student is actually engaged in academic activities at the time of the call. During the call, the teacher may touch base with the student to see how things are going, answer any questions the student may have, or listen to the student read.

**Celebrate Birthdays:** (Roschke & Walker, 2015) A simple acknowledgement of a student's birthday can go a long way in building a positive relationship. Teachers can tell a student "Happy Birthday", give a small treat, card, or balloon or have the entire class sing "Happy Birthday" to the student. Younger students may enjoy a birthday crown or badge to wear on their special day.

**T-shirt Labels:** (Guy, 2014) The teacher creates a t-shirt template with a focus on the label. Students will write a label that represents their own ethnicity, racial background, values, and personality. For example: 100% Reliable, Durable in most conditions, Humor and Serious blend, In your best interest to handle with care...

When completed, students can share their labels with their peers or display them within the classroom for other people to learn about them. This activity is a good lead-in for a class discussion about diversity and how we are all different.
I AM, I AM NOT: (Roschke & Walker, 2015) Each student starts with a piece of paper with five circles drawn on it – one circle in the middle and the other four circles around the middle circle. The student writes one word in each circle that represents who they are (sister, brother, athlete, Christian, Muslim, student, etc.). When each circle is filled in, the student chooses one of the words from the circles and thinks of a stereotype or negative view society may connect to that word. The student writes a statement, “I am ____________, but I am not ______________” to help the class understand the student and to breakdown the stereotypes that are related to who the student is.

“What’s in a Name?”: (Roschke & Walker, 2015) At the beginning of the school year, give each student a “What’s in a Name?” form (Appendix) to take home and have their parents help them answer the questions. When the students bring back the forms, everyone shares information about their name with the class in a Morning Meeting or Community Circle. The students share their name and two other pieces of information from their form. If a student is shy or nervous, allow them to just share their name without the additional information in efforts to avoid a stressful situation for the student. The students’ “What’s in a Name?” forms can be posted on a bulletin board in the classroom or hallway to enable other people to get to know them.

The ME Poem: (Roschke & Walker, 2015) Students create a poem utilizing the template (Appendix) The poem tells who they are, where they live (use streets or cross streets), three descriptive words about them, three activities they enjoy, where they would go if they could go anywhere, and what they would try if they
could try something new. Areas of sensitivity for students may include not knowing who a parent is or being homeless. These students can who they consider to be their parent or, in the case of homelessness, they can skip the line or use a cross street.

**Me, By the Numbers:** (Roschke & Walker, 2015) Students select 5-10 numbers that communicate something about themselves. For example:

- 3 – the number of sisters I have
- 7 – I was born in the seventh month
- 10 – the number of miles from my house to school
- 0 – the number of pets I have

Students create a poster, a word document, or a PowerPoint to share their information. Students should include a picture of themselves on their presentations and the final project should be displayed in the classroom or hallway. The following website has examples of student work:

https://teachrefinerepeat.wordpress.com/2013/08/10/first-day-icebreaker-me-by-the-numbers/

**The ME Bag:** (Roschke & Walker, 2015) Students are given a paper bag to decorate in any way they choose. The students take their own bag home and place 3 – 5 items that characterize who they are into the bag. These items could include, but are not limited to awards/certificates, a favorite toy or video game, pictures, sentimental objects, etc. The students bring the bag back to school to share with the class. If a student does not want to share, offer the student an option of not sharing or to share with the teacher privately.
Collaborative Discussions

Students learn best from their peers, therefore providing students with opportunities to discuss and share their knowledge and experiences increases student learning potentials. Collaborative discussions enable students to share their own opinions, viewpoints, experiences, and beliefs, as well as listen to the opinions, viewpoints, experiences, and beliefs of other students. Collaborating with other students reduces the fear some students have about participating in large group activities or getting the answer incorrect in front of the entire group.

**Facebook/Blog Post** encourages student collaboration, while reducing student fear of participating in the large group because students work together to respond to the question or prompt. The teacher creates three to five groups and generates several questions for the students to answer. The teacher writes one question per large paper and gives each group one question to answer and each group gets a different color marker or pencil to write their answers. For example, group one starts answering question one using a blue marker, group two answers question two using an orange marker, etc. The teacher monitors the time interval allowing each group to answer their question. At the end of the time interval, the papers containing the questions rotate to the next group. The process continues until every group has answered each question at which time the papers should be posted in the classroom. The students should do a gambit walk to view the responses of the other groups for each question and then reconvene as a class to read the responses and discuss the answers, as well as the evidence from the text.
Numbered Heads Together (Guy, 2015) encourages students to collaborate to produce the answer to a given question. The teacher begins by dividing the students into groups of four and giving each member of the group a number from one to four. The teacher poses a question or problem to the class and instructs the students to gather within their groups to think about the question and make sure everyone understands and can provide an answer. After a specified time period, which allows the groups substantial time to discuss and derive an answer to the question, the teacher asks the question, calling out a number from one to four randomly. The students with that number raise their hands and answers for his/her team when called on.

Heads In, Butts Up is most effective when student desks are arranged in pods of four to six. The students are given a question or problem to answer with a specified time period that they can work together to discuss and solve the problem. The students kneel on their chairs, placing their heads toward the center of their pod, which in turn places their butts up in the air. While their heads are together, they discuss the problem or question and collaborate to find possible ways to solve the problem.

Mrs. Barclay presents four questions pertaining to the cause of the Revolutionary War to her 5th grade students. The students are instructed to work for five minutes independently to answer the questions. Sam moaned because he knew he did not know the answers, while Kira, who was in the same group as Sam, started writing immediately. After the five minutes, Mrs. Barclay says, “Heads in, butts
“up” in which each group of students moved within their seats to put their heads together in order to discuss the questions as a group. Sam and Kira, along with the other two members of their group began sharing their answers, discussing whether each response was correct and supported properly. Sam recorded the discussed responses and successfully passed the final assessment taken later in the same week.

**Turn and Talk** provides a quick student-to-student discussion about a given question or topic in a very short amount of time. Once a question or problem is posed to the class, the teacher says to “turn and talk to your elbow partner”. At this time, the students will turn to their predetermined “elbow partner” who is sitting directly next to them or directly across the table to discuss the question quietly. When the teacher calls the class back together, the teacher will call on students to share what they discussed with their “elbow partner” with the whole class.

**Classroom Games**

When students are engaged in activities that are familiar to them in their daily lives, they are more invested in their own learning. Classroom games enable students to do activities that are familiar to them outside of school, while learning and demonstrating their knowledge on a given topic within the classroom environment. Many students learn more effectively through kinesthetic activities, which allows the students to move around as part of the learning process. Classroom games incorporate fun, engaging, familiar activities with interactive lessons, as well as collaboration with peers.
**Tic Tac Toe** can be used as a two-team game. One team is X and the other team is O. As each team attempts to answer questions, the team with the correct answer gets to place their letter strategically on the board until one team has three of their letters in a row. This game can be played as an entire class or in smaller center groups.

**Cake Walk** begins with placing a specific number of numbers on the floor or large table. While music is playing, the same numbers of students as numbers on the table/floor walk around until the music stops. The teacher calls out a number and the student that is stopped at that number must correctly answer the question to continue playing the game.

**Talk a Mile a Minute** is an activity that encourages students to interact with vocabulary. By utilizing Robert Marzano's sixth step of his "Vocabulary Six-Step Process", a teacher can increase vocabulary knowledge through the use of classroom games (Marzano, 2004). To play Talk a Mile a Minute, the teacher creates lists of five to six vocabulary words. One student is chosen to guess the vocabulary words in a particular list while the rest of the class or a selected group of students call out clues for each vocabulary word without saying the word itself.

**Categories** (Guy, 2015) involves the teacher creating a list of cards with a letter on each card, repeating some letters such as m, t, s, l, n, b, and c. Then the teacher generates categories based on the content and poses questions. The students will respond with answers that adhere to the category and begin with the corresponding letter selected.
Stand up Meeting/Blind Date (Guy, 2015) is a good way to engage students is sharing their work, answers, or thoughts with their peers. The students stand up and find a partner. Standing next to their partner, each student takes a turn sharing their work, thoughts, or answers. The teacher can play music to signal the students to find a different partner to share their work.

Multiple Choice Around the Room empowers students to move about the classroom to demonstrate their knowledge. The teacher must prepare questions appropriate to the lesson prior to teaching the lesson or reading the text with the students. As the teacher poses the questions, students will walk to the choice that best represents the correct answer. Each choice will have a predetermined designated location within the classroom. The choices can vary based on the need of the question, such as A-B-C-D, 1-2-3-4, Strongly agree, agree, disagree, Strongly disagree, etc. The students should discuss their proof that supports their choice.

The Human Game Board can be designed to be played by multiple teams or individual players. The teacher creates a game board from a popular game, such as Chutes and Ladders, Monopoly, Sorry, or Life on the floor of the classroom using paper, tape, a marker, and a large set of dice. The teacher constructs questions from the topic of a given subject in which the players must answer correctly in order to move along the game’s pathway. The questions could consist of basic math facts, possible test questions, questions from the previous day’s reading, or identifying the letters of the alphabet. The winning team or individual is the player who reaches the end of the pathway first.
Cash Cab enables students to answer questions with optional support from their peers. One to four players are chosen to play. The teacher gives the players one question at a time with the difficulty level of the question corresponding to an appropriate dollar amount or point value. The easier questions are given lower points/dollar amounts and are asked first. The question difficulty level and point/dollar amount increases with each correct answer. The players may talk among themselves to derive the correct answer. If they need additional assistance they have two aides they may use each one time throughout the game: mobile shout out and street shout out. The mobile shout out enables the players to call a friend for help with an answer, while the street shout out allows the players to ask classmates (people on the street) for advice answering the question. At anytime the players incorrectly answer three questions, the game is over. For a variation, if a player has earned at least $200/points and the teacher has to stop for a “red light”, a Red Light Challenge begins. A trivia question with a correct answer made up of multiple parts is asked, and the players have 30 seconds to provide all of the answers. This challenge is worth $250/points for all of the correct answers, and does not count against the players if answered incorrectly.

Writing

Writing is a productive method of sharing thoughts, ideas, and beliefs with other people. When students are encouraged and provided additional support so they feel secure in their environment, they willingly share their thoughts, ideas, opinions and beliefs through their stories and short writings. Although there are many strategies for encouraging writing skills, strategies that incorporate the
students' interests and enable group/partner collaboration make writing less overwhelming, especially for students who struggle with their writing skills.

**The 2-way Journal** (Roschke & Walker, August 2015) enables students to write freely about their own ideas, thoughts, feelings and questions. Each student writes in their own journaling notebook with the option of placing a post-it note on any entries he/she does not want read by the teacher. The teacher reads the students entries with their permission and writes back sharing similar thoughts, asking questions, giving advice, reassuring, or encouraging comments.

**Challenge Paragraph** (Guy, 2015) is a good way to encourage those struggling writers. The students work with a partner to write a paragraph using all of the words in a given list in the order the words are listed. One partner writes, but both partners work together to design their paragraph using the given words within the allotted time period established by the teacher.

**Pass a Story/Silent Rally/ “Silence is Golden”** (Guy, 2015) creates a multitude of stories by involving the whole class in the writing process. The teacher posts a story starter on the board for each student to copy on their own paper. The story starter could be “Once upon a time” or “One day I stepped out into my backyard ...”. Once each student has copied the story starter and their name on their paper, the teacher instructs the students to write to continue the story for the designated time period and to stop at the signal. The teacher will monitor the time interval and use a bell, chime, or clap to prompt the students to stop writing. The students will pass their papers to the next person and continue writing as it relates to the story being created on the new paper. The process continues for several
more rounds and afterwards the students return the papers to the original owner. The stories can be read to the whole class, small groups, or partners and also be posted to share with the school community.

_Silly Sentences_ is an activity to promote writing various sentences such as simple, compound, and complex sentences. The student rolls a die to determine the number of words they need to include in their sentence. On a lined paper, the student creates a silly sentence using the number of words rolled on the die. The teacher could provide pictures for the students to fashion their sentences about or a particular story. For struggling writers, this activity could be completed with a partner or small group.

**Instagram Post/#Hashtag Discussion** incorporates the technology concepts into the students writing skills. The teacher provides photos, pictures, political cartoons, current events, etc. and instructs the students to write an Instagram post or #Hashtag entry to critique, analyze, or discuss textual evidence the provided image. The entire class could utilize one image or each student could use a different image. The final posts could be matched with the appropriate image and displayed for other classes and staff to view.

**Picture Story/Prompts** involves providing students with old calendar pictures or newspaper pictures that are fun, engaging, and relatable images for students to write about. These writings can be used to improve opinions, descriptions, narratives, informative, or explanatory writing skills.
References


Cultural Proficiency Receptivity Scale –
A Process of Self-Reflection

Indicate your level of agreement. A response of 1 indicates strong disagreement, and a response of 7 indicates strong agreement. This survey will not be collected. It is for your own private, professional growth and reflection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  I believe that all children and youth learn successfully when informed and caring teachers assist them and make sufficient resources available to them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2  I want to do whatever is necessary to ensure that the students for whom I am responsible are well-educated and successful learners.</td>
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<td>3  I am committed to creating both an educational environment and learning experiences for our students that honor and respect who they are.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4  I am willing to ask myself uncomfortable questions about racism, cultural preferences, and insufficient learning conditions and resources that are obstacles to learning for many students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5  I am willing to ask questions about racism, cultural preferences, and insufficient learning conditions and resources that may be uncomfortable for others in my school or district.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6  I believe that all students benefit from educational practices that engage them in learning about their cultural heritage and understanding their cultural background.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7  I believe that all students benefit from educational practices that provide them with hope, direction, and preparation for their future lives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8  It is important to know how well our district serves the various cultural and</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<td>ethnic communities represented in our schools, and it is also important to understand how well served they feel by the educational practices in our schools.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 It is important to know how the various cultural and ethnic communities represented in our schools view me as an educational leader and to understand how well my leadership serves their expectations.</td>
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<td>10 Our district and schools are successful only when all subgroups are improving academically and socially.</td>
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<td>11 Cultural discomfort and disagreements are normal occurrences in a diverse society such as ours and are parts of everyday interactions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 I believe that lack of cultural understanding and historic distrust can result in cultural discomfort and disagreements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 I believe we can learn about and implement diverse and improved instructional practices that will effectively serve all our students.</td>
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<td>14 I believe we can use disaggregated data to understand more precisely the achievement status of all students in our schools, and that we can use that information to identify and implement effective instructional practices for each of them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 As a leader, it is important for me to be able to communicate across cultures and to facilitate communication among diverse cultural groups.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Culturally Proficient Inquiry, Lindsey, 2008
Name ________________________

I Am, I Am Not

Write one word in each circle that represents who you are. Examples: sister, Christian, father, runner, Muslim, teacher, etc.

Choose one of the words that represents who you are and think of a stereotype or negative view people may connect to it. Write a statement "I am ____________, but I am not ____________ to help us understand you and to break the stereotypes that are associated with who you are.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Gloria Roschke & Dustine Walker, August 2015
What's In a Name?

What's your full name?

Were you named after someone? If so, who?

What does your name mean?

What names did your parents consider before deciding on the one you have?

Why did they choose your name?

What is your name's country of origin? (ex. "Ivan" has Russian origins)

What is your nick-name? How did you get that nick-name?

If you could change your name, what would you name yourself?

Now.... on a separate paper, please write your name in a creative way. Can you use color? Fancy writing? Swirls? Block letters? A pattern? Design something as special as YOU are!

If possible, please attach a small picture of yourself to this form. (photo will be returned.)

Gloria Roschke & Dustine Walker, August 2015
The Me Poem

Have students create a poem with the following template. Take a picture of each student (only if they’re willing) to include with the poem. Print it and post it inside your classroom or in your hallway. Parents love to see this during Open House. Be sensitive to students who may not know one parent. Let them know they can write who they consider to be their parent. Do not have students list their whole address. A street or cross streets are fine. Also be sensitive to students who may be completely homeless or living in a homeless shelter. They can skip that line or just give a cross street.

First Name
Son/Daughter of ______
Living on ____________
I am ________, ________, and ________ (3 adjectives)
I enjoy ________, ________, and ________ (3 activities)
If I could go anywhere, I’d go to ____________
If I could try something new, I’d try ____________

Last Name

Gloria Roschke & Dustine Walker, August 2015