

Six Daily Essential Practices for Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching

1. **Create a Culturally Sustaining Environment:** Create a positive and welcoming classroom environment that exudes respect for—and promotes sustainment of—cultural, linguistic, and all types of diversity.
 - *Example:* When the school year begins, create a class-generated list of norms that encourages respect for diversity, collaboration, support, patience, empathy, and kindness. Establish a classroom culture where terms such as “unique” are used in lieu of disrespectful and shaming terms such as “weird” or “gross” to ensure cultural sensitivity and inclusion.
2. **Connect with Students as Whole Individuals:** Know each student by name, and take the time each day to greet students so they feel welcome in school.
 - Do not make assumptions about students based on their perceived culture or single students out as “representative” of a culture.
 - Spend some time understanding the multiple layers of students’ identities, particularly if their backgrounds differ from your own, including their cultural, linguistic, and disability assets and how individual students interact with their primary languages, home cultures, and various communities.
3. **Promote Pride in Students’ Cultural and Linguistic Heritage:** Use students’ primary languages or home dialects of English, as appropriate, to acknowledge them as valuable assets and to support all learners to engage meaningfully with the curriculum.
 - Initiate open dialogue with students on their cultural experiences and practices with health subject matter and content.
Example: Western versus traditional medical practices or healthcare in one’s home country or the U.S. Traditional health beliefs, practices, and values of individuals should be recognized and integrated in teaching practice.

4. **Prioritize Culturally Relevant Texts and Topics:** Use texts that accurately reflect students' ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and familial backgrounds, as well as other variables that contribute to their identities, such as gender expression, so that students see themselves as belonging and valued in the school curriculum.
 - It is especially important to deliberately include culturally relevant topics and texts and to celebrate the contributions of historically marginalized cultures to health education topics since these contributions are typically left out in school curricula.
5. **Address Racial Inequities and Language Status:** Address implicit and explicit racial bias, and if racially-charged topics occur, do not ignore them. Students may benefit from a class meeting or seminar in which they have an opportunity to discuss issues dealing with racial inequities or dynamics as they relate to health education topics. In addition, address language status issues and emphasize that multilingualism and multidialectalism are assets.
 - Establish a classroom climate where students are not discouraged from using their primary languages or home dialects of English (e.g., African-American English, Chicana/o-American English) but instead encouraged to add new language and ideas to their existing repertoires.
6. **Support Students' Development of Academic English:** Focus on intellectually rich and engaging tasks that allow students to use academic English in authentic and meaningful ways.
 - Make transparent to students how academic English works to make meaning in health education topics.
 - Help students develop register awareness so that they understand how to shift the type of language they use, based on purpose, topic, and audience.
 - Making the “hidden curriculum” of language visible in respectful and pedagogically sound ways is one way of ensuring the educational civil rights of culturally and linguistically diverse students.