

## Foundations of Culturally Responsive Teaching

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### Assessment C: Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) Classroom Plan

**Due by the end of Week 5**

#### Overview

For this assessment you will complete a two-part CRT Classroom Plan. Each part of the plan will focus on a different area of culturally responsive teaching. **Part 1: Culture and Principles focuses on how your students' cultures enhance and challenge teaching and learning and considers initial ideas for infusing CRT into your teaching practice.** *In Part 2: Culturally Responsive Teaching, you will select strategies that you might use to foster actions related to principles of culturally of culturally responsive teaching.*

Note: While you will not submit Assessment C until the end of week 5, you should complete Part 1 during Week 4 and Part 2 during Week 5.

#### Part 1: Culture and Principles

From the Week 4 resources and discussion, you have begun to develop a mindset of honoring each student as a cultural being and a belief that you can play a role in helping your students realize their hopes and dreams. Having such an influence does not come by chance. You must plan for culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in your classroom. The two CRT frameworks you explored in Week 4 provide a strong basis for your planning.

**Part 1: Culture and Principles, focuses on how your students' cultures enhance and challenge teaching and learning and considers initial ideas for infusing CRT into your teaching practice this week.**

To complete Part 1 of this assessment:

- Make a list of four (or more) elements of your students' cultures that **enhance** or **contribute to the quality of your learning environment and to students' academic, social, and emotional growth.**
- Make a list of **four** (or more) elements of your students' cultures that pose **challenges** to the quality of your learning environment and to students' academic, social, and emotional growth. (You may decide that elements that enhance learning also challenge learning.)
- *With these elements in mind, complete the CRT Classroom Plan Part 1. Be specific and use examples from your classroom and your students. This assessment is not an exercise*

*in abstract writing but an opportunity to bring forth an honest depiction of the culture-related realities that you and your students experience.*

- Be sure to make explicit connections between resources from this module and your insights about each student and properly cite the original author/source. This is not so you can rote regurgitate information from the resources, but to ensure you provide a clear synthesis of how the ideas/concepts in the resources connect to your development as an educator.
- **The response for each element should be approximately 200-300 words.**

- Culturally Responsive Teaching
  - Teacher as facilitator
  - [Communication of high expectations](#)
  - Positive perspectives on parents and families of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students
- Fostering Cultural Sensitivity
  - Cultural Sensitivity AND Learning within the Context of Culture
  - Culturally Mediated Instruction
  - Student-Controlled Classroom Discourse
- [Culturally mediated instruction](#)
  - Active teaching methods
  - Reshaping the curriculum
  - Student-Controlled Classroom Discourse
  - Small Group Instruction
  - Academically-Related Discourse Instruction

### **What**

- Identify and describe CRT principle that contributes (brings richness) to teaching and learning in your classroom.
- Give examples that help to define each strategy that you are describing to help me get on the same page as you. Remember, language (word choice) is powerful when we consider cultural responsiveness.

Since the passage of NCLB, racial disparities in school discipline have become more extreme, with more students of color being suspended or expelled relative to their white peers (crego)

**CRT Classroom Plan**  
**Part 1: Culture and Principles**  
**Cultural Elements That Enhance Learning**

For each element, elaborate on the following bullet points:

- **Identify and describe an element of culture that contributes (brings richness) to teaching and learning in your classroom.**
- **Explain specifically what/how the element contributes to teaching and learning in your classroom.**
- **Describe an initial idea for further enhancing the richness the cultural element brings and explain how you would implement it.**
- **Explain the expected outcome—in other words, what you would hope to see as a result of implementing the strategy.**

**Required Element: Gender**

Gender leads a strong role in my classroom culture through the constant reflection on historical narratives in relation to our class demographics. For example, gender in my classes generally split 50/50 and many of our conversations relate to the increase in women's rights with connection to whether issues remain today. Often, my female students lead the conversation by recognizing that many breadwinners in our community are single-parent mothers. The mother's role models a sense of strong independence that blossoms in their children's personalities. For instance, my female students are quick to fearlessly control the conversation and inject their thoughts during class discussion. The independence of my female students alludes to a sense of pride and confidence in their unique perspective. On the other hand, male students with primary mother role models tend to show more empathy and understanding towards the disenfranchisement of women in history. Whereas some male students' belief's in two-parent households may take on masculine traits of their father's such as emotional repression or apathy

towards gender inequality. Students bring in their own unique experiences with their family dynamics and how that shapes their perspective on gender roles.

One way to enhance the role of gender in my class begins with student's spending time reflecting on specific role models in their lives and the characteristics consistent in their reflection.

Spending time exploring specific people and how those role models inform each student's beliefs about gender roles in their community. Historical narratives favor men over women, so finding informational pieces like the breadwinning single mother and comparing it to different moments in history where women could not work will help shed insight on student knowledge about the progressive history of gender. More importantly, allow students to explore and shape their biases and prior knowledge about the role of gender in our community.

### **Required Element: Race/Ethnicity**

In a school where the demographic is 99% African American and with a limited number of racially different teachers, discussing the white elephant in the room is expected and encouraged.

While teaching social studies, the opportunity to engage in conversations about race and diversity is endless when recognizing racial differences already existing in our classroom.

Conversations ranging from multicultural exploration to minority disenfranchisement lead to deep-surface understanding and newfound knowledge. In addition, students find comfort in seeing peers who look the same as them and share other cultural similarities (e.g. music tastes or geographic location). The combination of exploring African American history influences student engagement, too because often history is portrayed from a white man's perspective. All these factors play a major role in defining my student's perspective of history and the understanding

that history is more than the conquests of European nations. Racial diversity leads a strong role in structuring our understanding, too.

Gay (2002) discusses the necessary “explicit knowledge about cultural diversity” to meeting students educational needs (102). One way to enhance racial exploration begins with independent research and an art-integrated approach. I envision students taking specific themes or individuals and creating collages or poems celebrating their untold stories. These works of art act as a catalyst for greater conversations about race, and add another layer of comfortability through physical representation on classroom/hallway walls.

### **Required Element: Religion**

Teaching in the bible belt presents both richness and challenges but for the sake of religion itself, I will emphasize cultural richness. The role of Christianity in the school, community, and households is strikingly apparent. Students willingly share stories about their relationship with God and use biblical references as a defender of their beliefs and actions. I am by no means a religious person, so bridging the gap between their deep devotion started off slow. However, the opportunity to learn about their religious interests and activities outside school promote a greater relationship with many of my students. Some invite me to attend their Sunday mass or encourage me to attend church affiliated events. These moments of relationship building help build the bridge for future learning as I learn about and meet my student’s families and church families. These same students show up the next week willing to engage in small talk or explore the daily lesson with greater enthusiasm because of our stronger relationship.

Moving forward, I want to push myself to plan more home and church visits and meet the people/communities who shape my students. This influence personal development with my students and show a greater willingness to spend time learning about them outside of school settings.

### **Required Element: Social Economic Class Status**

Our school shines on the lower side of the socioeconomic scale. In some areas, one may think this is a bad factor in school culture (and in some ways plays out that way) but students recognize the struggle of their peers. Multiple students privately discussed the impact that SES has on their family and friends, and how they avoid judging people who do not have a lot to share. In fact, most willingly share their resources, even if already scarce, and support their peers. For example, students will share food, school supplies, and money to support their friends without second thoughts. This leads to greater cultural unity in class and connection to conversations discussing historical SES narratives. When discussing the industrial revolution, students found connections within their own communities via living situations, types of jobs, or food scarcity. Most of the Delta operates as a food desert so students fixate on conversations about access to food. The combination of SES similarity and connection to content inspires greater richness in their learning. Students sit on the edge of their seats during portions of lecture or primary source imagery because it speaks to them. In the past week, students expressed gratitude in how I convey histories story through imagery and tone (Davis, 2012, 115). I speak passionately about histories SES narratives because my background consists of low SES status, so the content feels real and allows me to emotionally engage my audience. My student's

feedback will help enhance and continue my style moving forward because made an emotional connection to the content and how I presented it. Finding ways to explore tone in all areas of content not simply SES will lead to greater student engagement and the desirable “edge of seat, eyes gleaming” type class engagement.

**CRT Classroom Plan**  
**Part 1: Culture and Principles**  
**Cultural Elements That Present Challenges**

For each element, elaborate on the following bullet points:

- **Identify and describe an element of culture that creates challenges to teaching and learning in your classroom.**
- **Explain specifically what/how the cultural element creates a challenge(s) to teaching and learning in your classroom.**
- **Describe an initial idea that you could use to address the challenges the cultural element creates and explain how you would implement it.**
- **Explain the expected outcome—in other words, what you would hope to see as a result of implementing the strategy.**

**Required Element: Disability**

Learning disabilities can plague my attempts to unify classroom culture. Some students may harp on my SPED students for not participating in the same manner or completing the same work. My attempts to reconcile student thinking and engage their attention towards learning differences are unsuccessful. Issues regarding what is fair often come into discussion. Davis (2012) mentions one strategy, “snaps and taps”, which may provide some support to combat the stigma (120). Providing an outlet for positive student affirmation may show love and acceptance for my SPED students while also highlighting their unique input and talents. Finding a space to allow students an opportunity to spin positive narratives will inspire a habit and culture of positivity rather than negative name calling. Moreover, explaining in-depth the difference between what is equal and equitable may provide greater insight to my students who feel unfairly wronged by specific accommodations or modifications of other students.



### **Required Element: Sexual Orientation**

Sexual orientation challenges my classrooms safety and comfortability. Some students identify beyond heterosexual orientation, but many students are accepting. Biblical references lead the opposing perspective on sexual orientation and create a standstill between complete classroom unity. Homophobic remarks and naming calling run rampant in our school culture fueling even further divide. LGBTQ+ students mention insecurity and safety concerns with little expectation for cultural norms to change. Student comments like “you’re so gay” or worse confirm their beliefs and the failure to effectively respond adds more problems. Therefore, taking advice from Nadal (2014), I plan to actively promote LGBTQ+ allyship in my class using visuals (e.g. symbols or infographics) and showing my LGBTQ+ students that I am a safe person to approach. Moreover, figuring out effective strategies to help students explore their biases through empathy and reflection. Homing in on the damage that microaggressions may cause someone is a start to emotionally connect my more biased students. Students will either confront their beliefs or at least learn to respect people within our space aside from their contradicting beliefs.

### **Required Element: Geographic Location**

My students reside in small-town, rural America. The Mississippi Delta is one of the most poverty stricken and isolated places in the country. The challenge occurs when students lack exposure to the world outside of our small community. This lack of exposure may lead to isolated views about the world without much insight about how other cultures operate. This idea may tie in well with the argument on sexual orientation as many students’ perspectives are

shaped by their community. When geographically isolated without much exposure, perspective rarely changes or adapts like major urban cities or more populated suburban areas. Therefore, my role as a teacher must push students to explore the world beyond our small community.

Introducing content and information that challenges students' ways of thinking is one start.

However, finding ways to physically explore opportunities (e.g. field trips or simulated trips) adds a more memorable experience. Sharing my travel experiences is one strategy that I utilize often (Davis, 2012, 16). My experiences help incorporate more imagery and storytelling into the content and inform my students about myself while promoting future visions for their own travel experiences. Whether or not this community is where they want to permanently reside, exposure to travel and regional experiences will motivate students to step out of their comfort zone.

### **Required Element: Language**

Language in our school primarily consists of English, Spanish-learning, and Arabic/English-learning students. Language expands beyond textbook norms and ventures into an African American English vernacular. The issue arises in areas of communication inconsistency and cultural separation between me, other students, or ESL students. For starters, I recognize that I struggle to understand some of my student's vernacular, which may present misunderstandings or poorer communication. Also, I recognize the need to adjust my vocabulary at times when presenting information. Some students may be labeled as "speaking white", mocked for struggling to pronounce certain words, or speak grammatically clear sentences. Overcoming these challenges is first learning to find concise, clearer ways for me to communicate information and confronting cultural shaming between students. Part of this is

raising awareness and exposing students to the value of language, too. Therefore, using strategies to influence positive interactions like lingual wall visuals (Davis, 2012, 16) and culturally relevant content to explore language and the cultural roots attached. This exploration exposes students to the normal reality that people speak differently, and we must learn to both accept and celebrate lingual differences.

## Part 2: Culturally Responsive Teaching

The three areas, or principles, of culturally responsive teaching that you focused on in Week 5 resources—Teacher as Facilitator, Communication of High Expectations, and Positive Perspectives on Parents and Families—work together to create a context for teaching and learning that honors the diversity of all students.

In Part 2 of your Culturally Responsive Teaching Classroom Plan, you will select strategies that you might use to foster actions related to these principles. You will explain how you might implement the strategies and what results you would expect/hope to achieve that would make a true difference in the lives of your students.

**Select 4 strategies that you will use to foster actions related to CRT principles. You also explain how you will implement the strategies and what results you would expect/hope to achieve making a true difference in the lives of your students (Christi).**

To complete Part 2 of this assessment:

- Reflect on the strategies presented related to the following principles of culturally responsive teaching. As you reflect, consider the strategies that you may want to begin using to forge new efforts in these three areas.
  - **Culturally Responsive Teaching**
    - Teacher as Facilitator
    - Communication of High Expectations
    - Positive Perspectives on Parents AND Families
  - **Fostering Cultural Sensitivity**
    - Cultural Sensitivity AND Learning within the Context of Culture
    - Culturally Mediated Instruction
    - Student-Controlled Classroom Discourse
  - **Culturally Responsive Curriculum and Instruction**
    - Active Teaching Methods
    - Reshaping the Curriculum
    - Student-Centered Instruction
    - Small-Group Instruction
    - Academically Related Discourse
- For each of the CRT framework principles listed:
  - Name and describe the strategy you have selected.
  - Explain how you would implement the strategy.
  - Explain the expected outcome—what you would hope to see as a result of implementing the strategy, the “*so what*,” the difference in terms of your students.
- Be specific and use examples from your classroom and your students. This assessment is not meant to address the generalities of today’s classrooms. It should target real situations and dynamics in your classroom and focus on the unique aspects of diversity among you and your students.

- Each section of your Classroom Plan (Culturally Responsive Teaching, Fostering Cultural Sensitivity, and Culturally Responsive Curriculum and Instruction) should be between 1 and 2 pages double spaced, excluding references. 2 strategies

**CRT Classroom Plan**  
**Part 2: Culturally Responsive Teaching**  
**Culturally Responsive Teaching**

**Principle: Positive Perspectives on Parents AND Families**

Teachers need to explore outreach opportunities with one of the primary stakeholders, parents. Family engagement operates as a critical factor in supporting student development. Since, students spend a large portion of the day with teachers, schools become the second home away from home. However, unlike individual parents, teachers are often responsible for hundreds of students at a time. With crowded classrooms and time constraints, teachers must establish greater connection with our family stakeholders to learn the unique needs and goals of our students and families.

Strategies to support family engagement:

1. Improve family communication and outreach
  - a. Davis (2012) mentions multiple strategies to invest students in the idea of “respeto” (115). Taking a page from Davis’s research, I plan to schedule more home visits with my families to establish a firm partnership in our student’s development.
2. Become an active member of my family’s community.
  - a. Becoming an active affiliate of my family’s community begins with stepping out of my comfort zone and attending specific events and immersing myself in community traditions. One example includes attending the community homecoming events and supporting students outside school hours (sports, church). These efforts will fundamentally improve my relationship with family stakeholders and inform ways to

invest family culture into my curriculum (Education Alliance, Brown University, n.d.).

### **Principle: Teacher as Facilitator**

Reflecting on my first-year teaching, hindsight recognized my lack of student voice in the classroom. I felt the insatiable need to be in complete control. Every lesson needed to run accordingly, and students needed to be attentive and working. Clearly, my mindset led my class astray, so finding ways to incorporate student voice is a top priority.

Strategies to support student voice:

1. Increase opportunity for student input

Setting up opportunities for students to lead an active role in their learning. One way involves utilizing Socratic Seminar style lessons and hosting consistent class meetings for check-ins, feedback, and shout-outs.

2. Learn more about student interests and apply it to the curriculum

- a. Mary Fran's story (Education Alliance, Brown University, 2008) introduces reflective writing to explore student interests and promote cultural sensitivity (8).

My approach will utilize an art-integrated strategy based on two poems, "I am Raised By" and "I am". Then, using student photos and class photos to create a student work board displaying their unique cultural identity.

### **Principle: Communication of High Expectations**

Avoiding unintended messages of low expectations begins with embracing a positive tone of voice and affirmation for student work ethic (Davis, 2012, 121-122). Part of this involves avoiding the sympathy train over simple tasks and enforcing strong work ethic over leniency

(Education Alliance, Brown University, n.d.). As a result, students recognize their capabilities pushing them to invest their time and energy into opportunities for growth. Leniency avoids learning the necessary mechanics of work ethic and academic skills perhaps needed later down the road.

Strategies to support communication of High Expectations:

1. Assign clear expectations (Education Alliance, Brown University, n.d.)
  - a. Generally, providing students with clear expectations for behavior and academic performance on a consistent basis for every student. No excuses. Moreover, tone and body language must remain consistently positive or neutral regarding student interaction (Davis, 2012, 116). Lean into all students the same way and recognize responses to avoid negative differences (117).
2. Cultivate a positive learning environment of “respeto” (Davis, 2012).
  - a. One phrase that I use in my classroom refers to having a “positive mental attitude” (PMA). Respeto fits in similarly because students must listen with empathy and understanding despite our differences (114). One strategy to reinforce positive framing is applying positive imagery in the classroom. Simply posting positive phrases or imagery on the wall and greeting students at the entryway support immediate, daily positivity.



**CRT Classroom Plan**  
**Part 2: Culturally Responsive Teaching**  
**Fostering Cultural Sensitivity**

**Principle: Cultural Sensitivity AND Learning within the Context of Culture**

Brown University (2008) discusses the immense value behind teachers who “gain knowledge of [student’s] cultures” and find unique ways to reinforce the curriculum using their student’s experiences (10). Teachers who invest time and energy into adapt their lessons to fit their students unique learning styles will maximize learning opportunities and reduce emotional pressure (Brown University, n.d.).

Strategies to support cultural sensitivity and learning within the context of culture:

1. Develop culturally responsive teaching characteristics (Lucas, 2002)
  - a. Part of this process follows Lucas’s (2002) six characteristics with emphasis on socio cultural consciousness and affirming diverse cultures (22-24).  
Emphasis on teacher development will promote greater awareness of cultural differences and strategies to celebrate differences within the classroom.
2. Learn about your students and their family’s cultural identity
  - a. “Cultural Sensitivity” is based on “ways of communicating and learning that are familiar [and of interest] to the student” (Brown University, 2008).  
Teachers who learn about their student’s interests “can systematically tie the children’s interests...into their teaching” which promotes greater student investment (Lucas, 2002, 26).

**Principle: Culturally Mediated Instruction**

Emphasizing multiculturalism in the classroom using a variety of resources to communicate and represent information. Multiculturalism operates as a guide for students to understand and

empathize with different viewpoints (Brown University, n.d.). By meeting the interests and needs of students, teachers derail behavioral issues relating to identity exploration or microaggressions related to cultural stereotypes.

Strategies to support Cultural Mediated Instruction:

1. “Match instructional techniques to learning styles of diverse students” (Gay, 2002, 112).
  - a. Part of this strategy builds off the perception that teachers are investing their time to “understand cultural characteristics among ethnic groups” (Gay, 111). This reassures students of their natural communication styles and promotes role modeling scenarios for student’s awareness of multicultural differences (Gay, 111).
2. Set realistic expectations and support student driven goals for learning
  - a. Students must hold some level of autonomy within their learning. One way to reinforce access is to provide dutiful opportunities for students is topic choice. Provide some level of flexibility within projects and push students to formulate connections to their own lives.

### **Principle: Student-Controlled Classroom Discourse**

Expanding student-controlled discourse relies on teachers recognizing student communication styles (Gay, 2002, 111).

Strategies to support Student-controlled discourse:

1. Learn about student’s communication styles and effective teaching approaches
  - a. Interact with other teachers who may come from similar cultural backgrounds and ask for student input (Brown University, n.d.). This will shed some insight on how

to best support student's communication styles and avoid disregarding student voice.

2. Vary teaching practices and assessments

- a. Simply finding ways to target student learning through different modes of instruction. For example, utilizing an “active participatory” where students engage with the speaker via call and responses or other unique ways (Gay, 111).

**CRT Classroom Plan**  
**Part 2: Culturally Responsive Teaching**  
**Culturally Responsive Curriculum and Instruction**

**Principle: Active Teaching Methods**

Empowering students to lead a role in their instruction begins with teachers willing to take a step back. Students understand what engages them, so setting clear expectations of potential learning goals or project ideas but with free reign to use a comfortable mode of presentation.

Strategies to support Active Teaching Methods:

1. Utilize multiple modes of presentation
  - i. For example, Tik Tok takes the world by storm, so one student may create an informative Tik Tok video to meet the assignments criteria. Another student may simply write a report or create a slide deck. Providing choice for students to explore content through their own cultural lens promotes greater investment in their learning.
2. Consistent forms of reflection
  - i. Reflection via journaling or simple mood meters provides an opportunity for students to inject their own experiences to the content. Free flowing reflection or guided reflection allow students to communicate their thoughts and make emotional connections to what they are learning. As a result, students feel greater investment in their learning because it relates to their identity and interests.

## **Principle: Reshaping the Curriculum**

Teaching social studies content through a multicultural narrative provides for a diverse learning experience connected to student interests. Access to resources is more available via internet accessibility. Adapting curriculums in minor ways to meet student's interests and finding resources currently available to avoid reinventing already formed curriculums (NEA, 2006b).

Strategies to support curriculum development:

1. Incorporate a wide variety of diverse primary and secondary sources
  - a. Going beyond the common textbook narrative and pulling in multicultural sources that broaden student's viewpoints, while providing opportunity for student connections to their own cultural identity. For example, beginning classes with relevant do-now questions that open students up for cultural exploration and then comparing it to content resources (Brown University, n.d.).
2. Explore authentic conversations about diversity
  - a. Catherine Carney's story (Brown University, 2008) asks about the possibility of having authentic conversations about diversity considering often painful experiences. However, historical narratives drive opportunity to explore the depth and roots of painful experiences through time. This establishes an emotional connection to content and revolutionizes student's perspective about histories many examples of cultural disenfranchisement.

## **Principle: Student-Centered Instruction**

Finding methods to relax the reigns and give greater autonomy to student-centered discourse leads to greater self-confidence and socially conscious students.

1. Fostering greater student engagement

- a. Part of this falls in line with pushing students to generate their own topics of interest (Brown University, n.d.). However, teachers may provide greater student investment through application of joyful practices (Lemov, 2010). Implementing minor moments of suspense or dramatic action may push students to work hard through challenging situations. As a result, students feel a sense of excitement in their responsibility as a scholar leading to ingenuity and cultural investment.
2. Culturally relevant student interests
  - a. Lucas (2002) provides an example of one teacher's comparison of poets and rappers. This example derives from her student's appreciation for rap music, thus providing a intersection of interests for learning (29). In this instance, students can collaborate over similarities between lyrics in poems or the story told through primary sources. Within history, students may recognize the challenges of an archaic period and their continuation in modern day. Further opportunity to generate new ideas may occur during a Socratic seminar or jigsaw-based activity where students explore through conversation or present and teach their unique findings.

### **Principle: Small-Group Instruction**

Small-group instruction operates as the glue to great student-centered discourse. Using a multitude of methods between wing-man style to jigsaws, students collaborate together to decipher and learn the content.

Strategies to support small-group instruction:

1. Student-led exploration of content

- a. Setting clear expectations on the task at hand, students navigate the content through the comfort of their own communication style. As a group, they draw generalizations about the content and formulate that information in a way accessible to their learning style. Brown University (2008) acknowledges this action as student-controlled time where a bridge between individual and academic language meets, leading to rigorous yet self-confident learning (17).
2. Reflection on student learning
  - a. Whether collaboratively or individually, students must spend time reflecting on the learning process. In small-group settings, students reflect on their teamwork and work ethic. These moments of reflection support student habits and raise awareness of progress or opportunities of growth. The action of learning and deriving at answers or conclusions becomes a routine practice, but supported by a peer who shares their own ideas. This may lead to greater confidence and affirmation of ideas for students less inclined to speak whole group (Brown University, 2008).

### **Principle: Academically Related Discourse**

The buildup of culturally responsive instruction connects student interests and identity to an established criterion of learning. Students who feel overwhelmed by academic language or complexity may naturally make connections to their prior knowledge and cultural experiences.

1. Assessments of learning
  - a. Structuring our lessons assessments of learning allow students to meet the target objective while experiencing rigor and exploration of a topic. The language of rubrics or assessment outlines may adapt to satisfy students communication styles

(Lucas, 2002). Ensuring this level of comfort and confidence, students willingly engage with the content drawing connections to their prior knowledge.

## 2. Learning from student thinking

- a. One strategy to promote an understanding of our students train of thought begins with utilizing open-ended questions that reveal their thinking. ASSIST (n.d.) highlights an effective tool for posing questions and engaging student reflection. Utilizing student answers to steer them towards academic related discourse. For example, economic conversations regarding needs and wants may be an opportunity to use an open-ended question about being stranded on an island with three belongings. Student are then required to think about what they may bring, and the class will decide whether it meets a need or want.



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