

Designing for Representation

A Professional Learning Module on the Windows and Mirrors Curriculum Audit

Application Project Proposal

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Context and Learners

The learners are in-service K–8 classroom teachers at a school engaged in a year-long equity and inclusion initiative. They complete the module asynchronously online during a designated professional learning window, fitting it around full teaching schedules. The cohort spans content areas, experience levels, and comfort with conversations about race, and it includes both white teachers and teachers of color; most select or design their own unit materials.

Consider a representative learner, Mr. Daniels: a fifth-grade teacher in his sixth year, organized and well-liked, who teaches a literature unit he inherited and has changed little since. He is open to inclusive materials and assumes his unit is already balanced, but he has never had a structured way to check. He has almost no planning time and is wary of “one more initiative.” A short, self-paced module that hands him a reusable rubric and produces something he can use on a rushed Monday meets him exactly where he is, which is why a mobile-friendly Articulate Rise 360 tutorial, completable in a single sitting, suits his needs better than a live workshop or a lengthy course.

Across the cohort, the recurring barrier is not resistance but the absence of a concrete, repeatable way to evaluate existing materials and act on the gaps, which then leaves Black and brown students without “mirrors” that reflect their identities and white students without “windows” into the experiences of others (Bishop, 1990). Because the audit skill is observable and transferable to any grade or subject, it is well suited to a short, self-contained professional learning experience.

Instructional Product

The product will be a self-paced, interactive online module built in Articulate Rise 360. The module presents the Windows and Mirrors Representation Audit rubric, models a completed audit of a sample unit as a worked example, guides teachers through a practice audit with feedback, and then requires teachers to audit one of their own current units as a culminating performance task. The rubric itself is embedded as a downloadable job aid so teachers can reuse it independently after the module ends. Because the module asks teachers to produce and submit a completed audit and a

justified substitution, it evaluates learner success against the objective rather than simply delivering content.

Instructional Objective (ABCD) and Bloom's Classification

Objective. Given one of their current instructional units and the Windows and Mirrors Representation Audit rubric (*condition*), in-service classroom teachers (*audience*) will evaluate the unit's texts and materials for cultural representation by scoring each of the rubric's five dimensions, identifying the representation gaps, and selecting one justified replacement or supplementary resource that adds a mirror or a window (*behavior*), such that the teacher's gap analysis matches the facilitator's exemplar audit on at least four of the five dimensions and the proposed substitution satisfies all of the rubric's criteria (*degree*).

Bloom's category: Evaluate. The core cognitive process is making judgments about instructional materials based on established criteria (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). The task draws on lower-level processes, recalling the rubric's dimensions and analyzing a unit into its component voices and perspectives, but the targeted outcome is evaluative: appraising the materials against a representation standard and defending a curricular decision.

Learning Theory and Justification

This module adopts Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1991, 1997). Mezirow argued that the most significant adult learning occurs when a "disorienting dilemma" prompts learners to critically examine the assumptions and frames of reference they have taken for granted, producing a more inclusive, revised perspective that guides future action. A representation audit is, by design, a disorienting dilemma: when teachers systematically examine a familiar unit and discover whose stories are absent, the taken-for-granted "way we have always taught this" becomes visible and open to revision. The reflective prompts built into the module — *Whose perspective is centered here? Whose is missing? Why?* — and the required curricular change mirror Mezirow's movement from critical reflection to transformed action.

Transformative Learning is a stronger fit for this context than behaviorist or purely cognitivist approaches because the goal is not only a discrete procedure but a durable shift in how teachers see their own curriculum, as one that should continue to shape their material choices long after the module ends. This aligns with the broader culturally responsive teaching literature, which holds that equitable practice begins with educators examining their own assumptions and widening the range of voices students encounter (Gay, 2018; Hammond, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Instructional Design Framework

This project applies the Successive Approximation Model (SAM), which is an agile, iterative approach that is increasingly expected of instructional designers (Allen & Sites, 2012; Dousay & Stefaniak, 2018). SAM was chosen over a strictly linear application of ADDIE because this module's success depends less on front-loaded planning than on testing how real teachers respond to its reflective prompts and examples. Its three phases map directly onto the project's workflow:

- **Preparation:** gather background on the representation gaps in current units, collect sample units and exemplar texts, and draft the audit rubric.
- **Iterative Design:** prototype the Rise module, rubric, worked example, and practice audit, and cycle through review-and-revise rounds with an equity coordinator and a small group of teachers, refining the wording and reflective prompts before development.
- **Iterative Development:** build the module in successive alpha, beta, and gold versions, piloting each with a few teachers and adjusting the performance task and feedback based on the audits they actually produce.

References

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