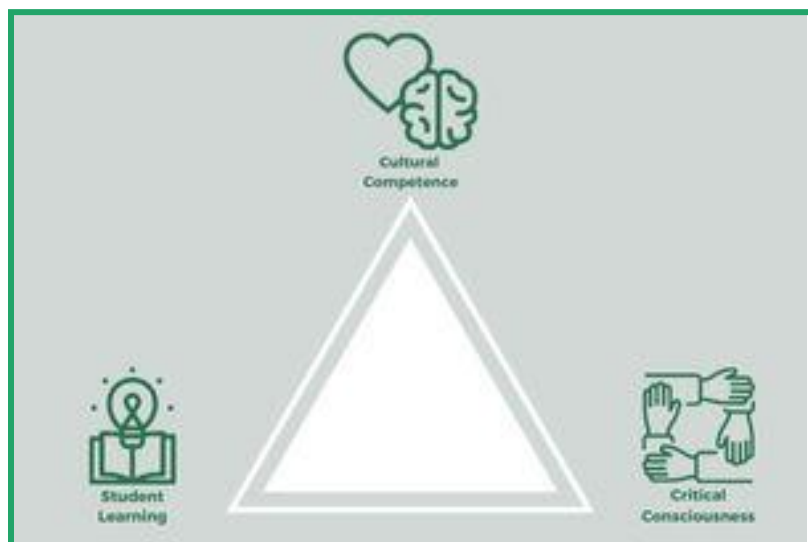


# Culturally Relevant Lesson and Unit Reflection



This planning tool will help you to think about standards-aligned lesson and unit plans through the lens of [Gloria Ladson-Billings' Culturally Relevant Pedagogy](#) framework. Whether you are adapting a lesson from a published curriculum or developing your own unit plan, these questions<sup>1</sup> are intended to encourage reflection and purposeful design of culturally affirming learning experiences for students.

**The questions are not intended to be a prescriptive list that requires answers to analyze a lesson; rather, they are a means to extrapolate opportunities to bridge cultural competence, critical consciousness, and student learning in planning, implementing, and reflecting upon practice.**

All of these tenets are important for culturally relevant practice; however, the relative emphasis of each tenet may depend on the context of the lesson or unit. In this way, we expand the curriculum to include the nuanced craft of *teaching practice*. According to Ladson-Billings, "...it is the way we teach that profoundly affects the way that students perceive the content of that curriculum."<sup>2</sup> With the blend of standards-aligned instruction and culturally relevant practices, the learning environment transforms into one that affirms students' identities, builds a community of learners and encourages interrogation of social inequities.

<sup>1</sup> Development of questions informed by Morrison, K. A., Robbins, H. H., & Rose, D. G. (2008). Operationalizing culturally relevant pedagogy: A synthesis of classroom-based research. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 41(4), 433-452.

<sup>2</sup> Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The Dreamkeepers*. Jossey-Bass Publishers.

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<b>Cultural Competence</b> <i>"Culturally relevant teachers utilize students' culture as a vehicle for learning."<sup>3</sup></i>	<b>Critical Consciousness</b> <i>"Students must develop a broader sociopolitical consciousness that allows them to critique cultural norms, values, mores, and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities."<sup>3</sup></i>	<b>Student Learning</b> <i>"Culturally relevant teaching requires that teachers attend to students' academic needs."<sup>3</sup></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How have I learned about who my students are outside of school (including their funds of knowledge and lived experiences)?</li> <li>• How will the students' funds of knowledge and multifaceted identities inform and be an asset to the lesson or unit?</li> <li>• What is currently relevant with my specific community of learners that may impact how I present the content of the lesson or unit?</li> <li>• How does the lesson or unit create opportunities to affirm students' nuanced and multifaceted identities and cultures (including racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identities)?</li> <li>• How does the lesson or unit encourage students to build relationships between the school and our community?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How have I learned about my students' lived experiences?</li> <li>• How does this lesson or unit support my students to consider multiple perspectives and counter-narratives?</li> <li>• How does this lesson or unit engage students in building their capacity to "read, write, think, and speak in ways that understand power and equity in order to understand and promote anti-oppression"?<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• How does this lesson or unit support students to identify and address injustices/inequities that are relevant to their lived experiences?</li> <li>• How does the lesson or unit create opportunities for sharing power within the classroom as well as the power dynamic in the larger community?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How have I learned about the academic knowledge and skills that my students bring to this lesson?</li> <li>• What is the content knowledge central to this lesson?</li> <li>• How does the lesson scaffold and support students to ensure that students have access to grade-level content?</li> <li>• How will I adapt the lesson to communicate academic expectations and ensure all students are successful?</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But that's just good teaching. *Theory into Practice*, 34(3), 159–165.

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad, G., Love, B. L., & Scholastic Inc. (2020). *Cultivating genius: An equity framework for culturally and historically responsive literacy*.