

A FRAMEWORK FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

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An in-depth look into strengthening student engagement

To be effective in multicultural classrooms, teachers must relate teaching content to the cultural backgrounds of their students. According to the research, teaching that ignores student norms of behavior and communication provokes student resistance, while teaching that is responsive prompts student involvement.

A growing number of educational models, including constructivism and multiple intelligences theory, are based on intrinsic motivation. They see student perspective as central to teaching. Unfortunately, educators must often apply these theories within educational systems dominated by extrinsic reinforcement, where grades and class rank are emphasized. And, when extrinsic rewards continue to be the primary motivators, intrinsic motivation is dampened.

Those students whose socialization accommodates the extrinsic approach surge ahead, while those students—often the culturally different—whose socialization does not, fall behind. A holistic, culturally responsive pedagogy based on intrinsic motivation is needed to correct this imbalance.



A Holistic Approach

For culturally different students, engagement in learning is most likely to occur when they are intrinsically motivated to learn.



What Research Says

Research has shown that no one teaching strategy will consistently engage all learners. The key is helping students relate lesson content to their own backgrounds.



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FOUR CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

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We propose a model of culturally responsive teaching based on theories of intrinsic motivation. This model is respectful of different cultures and is capable of creating a common culture that all students can accept. Within this framework, pedagogical alignment—the coordination of approaches to teaching that ensure maximum consistent effect—is critical.

The more harmonious the elements of teaching are, the more likely they are to evoke, encourage, and sustain intrinsic motivation. The Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) framework names four motivational conditions that the teacher and students continuously create or enhance.

FOUR CONDITIONS FOR CRT

ESTABLISH INCLUSION

Creating a learning atmosphere in which students and teachers feel respected by and connected to one another.

DEVELOPING ATTITUDE

Creating a favorable disposition toward the learning experience through personal relevance and choice.

ENHANCING MEANING

Creating challenging, thoughtful learning experiences that include student perspectives and values.

ENGENDERING COMPETENCE

Creating an understanding that students are effective in learning something they value.