

Resource Guide: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness in Social Studies

Vision:

The goal of ensuring cultural and linguistic responsiveness in social studies instruction is to encourage students to relate the lesson (course) content to their cultural context to make learning more effective, relevant, and meaningful for students. Cultural and linguistic responsiveness is the validation and affirmation of a student's home culture and language, lived experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles, particularly for students that are culturally and linguistically diverse, in order to build connections with others and provide opportunities to succeed in school and meaningfully contribute to society.

*Cultural and linguistic responsiveness (CLR) is a **lens** that should be used to look at all that we are doing in schools—organizationally and instructionally. This lens makes the case that CLR is not something that you do but **something you have in all that you do.***

*--Dr. Sharroky Hollie, **Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning***

Purpose:

Just as the quote above states, being culturally and linguistically responsive is a mindset that exists in all the work of teaching and learning. Selecting the “right text” doesn’t just make your instruction culturally and linguistically responsive. The topics, texts, and connections below are meant to inspire ideas for how culturally and linguistically responsiveness can begin to exist in your classroom with recognition for the identities of your specific students. When selecting texts, you want to be sure to offer “mirrors” and “windows.”

*“Books are sometimes **windows**, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created and recreated by the author. When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a **mirror**. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience. Reading, then, becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books.” -Rudine Sims Bishop “Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors” originally appeared in Perspectives: Choosing and Using Books for the Classroom, Vo.6 no.3.Summer 1990*

Text Analysis:

The basis for the text analysis for Culturally and Linguistically Responsiveness (CLR) is from the CLR Scorecard for Curricular Materials. This equity tool details four criteria that rate a given item for how it meets expectations for CLR. These four criteria include representation, portrayal, critical consciousness, and teacher support. When selecting a text for Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness, you want to be sure you are referring to four key questions to ensure a thorough analysis. These key questions were derived from the four criteria detailed in the CLR Scorecard for Curricular Materials. You can see examples of this analysis in your grade level's Assessment Guide found within the New Mexico Social Studies Instructional Scope 1.0

Questions for Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness Text Analysis:

CLR Scorecard for Curricular Materials Criterion		
Representation	<i>This question allows a teacher to ensure that a diverse collection of people whose identities encompass a variety of cultures, structures, and orientation show up in a selected text(s).</i>	Who is represented in the text used to assess this cluster/group of standards?
Portrayal	<i>This question pushes a teacher to analyze the extent to which a text(s) accurately reflects the complex, multi-dimensional histories and experiences of the people it includes.</i>	How are those groups and individuals portrayed?
Critical Consciousness	<i>This question allows a teacher to determine if a text(s) demands awareness of historical and present stereotypes and biases to allow students to reflect critically on our global society.</i>	Does the text provoke critical questions about cultural and linguistic diversity, especially within marginalized communities?
Teacher Support	<i>Doing this analysis helps identify what support may be present in a given text(s) that may assist a teacher in delivering culturally and/or linguistically responsive instruction.</i>	What supports are provided to teachers to identify blind spots?

Planning with a Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Text:

Geneva Gay defined culturally responsive teaching as, “the use of cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to, and effective for, them. It teaches to and through the strengths of these students. It is culturally validating and affirming.” In order to consistently meet this definition when planning with a culturally and linguistically responsive text, there are four areas that a teacher should plan for in terms of student interaction with a text. These areas allow for teachers to plan around text-dependent questions and exemplar student responses to ensure that all students are accessing and benefitting from the information within a selected text.

<p style="text-align: center;">Validate</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The intentional and purposeful legitimization of the home culture and language of the student.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Affirm</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The intentional and purposeful effort to reverse the negative stereotypes, images, and representations of marginalized cultures and languages promoted by corporate mainstream.</i></p>
<p>Ask a question that pushes students to find and understand specific areas of a text that legitimize the home culture of the student/reader. <i>Student responses should cite the specific language from the text and elaborate on connections the student is making to themselves and/or their home culture.</i></p>	<p>Ask a question that engages students in critically thinking about how explicit and/ or implicit messages of a text may or may not be aligned with the corporate mainstream. <i>Student responses should include their own interpretation of the messages (explicit/implicit) within a text as well as a citation of a specific text that supports their interpretation(s).</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Build</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Create the connections between the home culture/language and the school culture/language through instruction for success in school and the broader social context.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Bridge</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Create opportunities for situational appropriateness that provides the academic and social skills that students will need to have success beyond school culture.</i></p>
<p>Ask a question that supports students as they look for connections within a text. Include wording that pushes students to find value in the connections they are making. <i>Student responses should be focused on stating specific connections made as well as citing specific textual evidence that supports those connections. Connections should reinforce broader social context with a lens of validation and affirmation of the student and/or their home culture.</i></p>	<p>Ask questions that push students to deeply think about how to find situational appropriateness within a given context. Include wording that could push students to think about their specific communities or themselves in a personal and positive way. <i>Plan for a variety of student responses but select specific criteria that all responses should have that support connection around situational appropriateness. Push students to think beyond the mainstream culture and initial stereotypes or beliefs within that culture. All student responses should be supported by text evidence.</i></p>