

## Annotation & Evaluation

[Go Back](#)

**Agey, Anasstasja**  
**AP5 - Diversity**

**Status: Evaluated**

EVALUATION				
	Emergent	Bridging	Fulfilled	Proficiency Level
<input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient  <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> 5.E.1 Demonstrate knowledge of varied cultures and linguistic backgrounds in P-12 settings  <input type="checkbox"/> 5.E.2 Identify elements and methods of communicating with families and community members  <input type="checkbox"/> 5.E.3 Identify strategies that foster acceptance and tolerance AND Identify strategies for mediation and resolution	<input type="checkbox"/> 5.B.1 Design instruction that demonstrates knowledge of varied cultures, ethnicities, and linguistic backgrounds and diverse learning needs in P-12 settings  <input type="checkbox"/> 5.B.2 Recognizes and describes the specific needs of families and values of the community members to enhance communication  <input type="checkbox"/> 5.B.3 Design strategies that foster acceptance, tolerance AND Design strategies for mediation and resolution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.F.1 Implement instruction that applies knowledge of varied cultures, ethnicities, linguistic backgrounds and diverse learning needs in P-12 settings  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.F.2 Implements strategies to communicate with families and community members  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.F.3 Implements strategies that foster acceptance and tolerance AND Implements strategies for remediation and resolution	<input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary <input type="checkbox"/> Emergent <input type="checkbox"/> Bridging <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fulfilled

**Comments from Evaluator:** These are wonderful lessons. It sounds like you got your families involved and made things like geography come alive. It sounds like you really understood that classroom climate needs worked on as well.

One thought to help--Immigrants know where they come from. It is possible that if you have African-American students, they may or may not know their country of origin. Just to keep in mind.

Please email Dr. Unal if you are willing to allow us to use this as a sample annotation.

### ANNOTATION

**1. Type and description of evidence(s) (e.g. assignments, activity)**

- 1st evidence-  
Social Foundations paper: This final paper satisfied a requirement for the course Social Foundations of Education, a course I completed in Fall 2007. The purpose of this paper was to justify the legitimacy of a democratic education in which all student populations are considered, represented, and provided for in an egalitarian manner.
- 2nd evidence-  
Classroom Management Plan: This assignment was completed as a requirement of Classroom Management, Safety, Ethics, and School Law in Spring 2008. It was readapted and implemented in My Level II Internship which took place during Fall 2008. The Management Plan was designed to propose strategies for classroom arrangement, procedures, and student behavior.
- 3rd evidence-  
ELL Case Study: This ELL case study was completed during Summer 2008 for my Language Principles, Acquisition, and Teaching course. In this two-part case study, I evaluated the reading and writing literacy, pragmatics, discourse, phonology, morphology, semantics and syntax of a kindergarten student's speech and language. This student was in between the late Early Production and early Speech Emergence level of language acquisition. Enclosed in the case study is a language interview of the student, a writing sample, a reading sample, and a lesson plan designed specifically for her language needs.
- 4th evidence-  
Family Involvement Activity: This assignment was completed for Health & PE for the Child in Summer 2008. The purpose of this activity was to design a family involvement activity to extend student learning about a health related issue. For the purpose of this assignment, I created a KWL chart for students to fill out with their families about the health issue of bullying, teasing, and self-esteem.
- 5th evidence-  
ESE/ESOL article: This article reflection was completed in Spring 2008 for Integrating the Exceptional Child. However, I have listed it under student's own selection because there was no choice for it in the menu. The purpose of this assignment was to summarize and critique an article about ESOL students with special needs. I chose the article Action Research in the Classroom: Assisting a Linguistically Different Learner With Special Needs by Schoen and Schoen. The article provides a case study about a Korean student who is juggled around to various classrooms

because of his indeterminate language and academic needs. The authors of the article discuss strategies the used with the special needs ELL student to help him succeed.

Updated 12/16/08

6th evidence-

Student's Own Selection/Thematic Unit: This thematic unit met an assignment requirement for Classroom Management, Safety, Ethics, and Law completed in Spring 2008. The objective of this assignment was to create a week-long theme that incorporated all subject areas. The theme I chose for this thematic unit is called All About Us and designed for Kindergarten students. The theme was inspired by the book We Are All Alike, We Are All Different written by the Cheltenham Elementary School Kindergartners. The purpose of this unit is to help the students recognize and benefit from learning about the diversity in their classroom. This unit is designed to facilitate an environment of acceptance by educating students about embracing diversity.

Updated 4/10/2009

7th evidence-

Student's Own Selection/Cultural Heritage Lesson: This lesson plan was implemented during my final internship in Spring 2009. Enclosed in the document is the lesson plan and reflection, a bilingual parent letter explaining the activity, and pictures of the students engaging in the activity. The purpose of this activity was to help students build a foundation for understanding culture and to see how the distribution of world cultures in our classroom and in our country enhances our lives.

8th evidence: Student's Own Selection/Inclusion Success Plan:

This assignment was completed as a requirement of my Final Internship in Spring 2009. The Inclusion Success Plan was an activity in which I was required to design and implement a technique that would foster acceptance and tolerance in the classroom. Additionally, the strategies implemented were also designed to help students mediate and resolve issues amongst themselves to increase positive interaction. The evidence includes the plan, my reflection of the plan's effectiveness, pictures of the data chart and student reflections, and my Cooperating Teacher's conclusive observation of the plan.

2. How did the evidence(s) address the Accomplished Practice? (Why are you using the evidence(s) to prove you met the practice and rubric criteria?)

1st evidence-

This final paper for Social Foundations meets the Accomplished Practice of Diversity because in my paper, I used resources such as Van Doren and Kozol to support my position that an equal education must be available to all students regardless of race, culture, academic achievement, gender, language, socioeconomic background, or disability. This is the concept of a democratic education: one in which all students of various backgrounds and needs are given equal opportunity to succeed. Education should be the goal of every society. We must prepare citizens that can make informed decisions about their lives and their government. If we do not afford these opportunities to all students, we create a society of haves and have-nots. A good education should not be limited to those with vast financial resources and social statues. In my paper, I address in the inequality of American education in which student populations are still stratified because of race, achievement, and poverty. This is most noticeable in how rewards for standardized testing success are delegated. Schools with the highest achievement tend to have a collective of students who do not experience deprivation of their basic needs. We reward these schools with more money and opportunities. However, the lower-performing schools are punished for their performance. These lower-performing schools tend to be located in areas where there is poverty. If we do not give poverty-stricken schools the resources and opportunities to succeed, how can we expect them to perform at the same level as their peers who have their basic needs met? Acceptance and tolerance of diversity begins in the classroom because there are a variety of cultures and backgrounds in a contemporary classroom. In my paper, I explain that it is the duty of the classroom teacher to be the impetus that creates a safe environment for students of many cultural and linguistic backgrounds in which they can reach their highest possible achievement. Teachers need to be advocates of social justice in their classroom by modeling a democratic education in which all students are valued and have the same opportunities as their wealthier or more academically-prepared peers.

2nd evidence-

This Classroom Management Plan meets the Accomplished Practice of Diversity because it addresses tools for fostering acceptance, strategies for conflict resolution, needs of at-risk students, and methods for family communication. In the plan, acceptance is fostered by team-building strategies such as a set of class rules developed by the students, rotation of classroom jobs, and a reward system for both whole-group and individual accomplishments in behavior. This helps promote a sense of community in which all students are valued and encouraged. It also provides a sense of ownership to students because they know they will be held accountable for their responsibilities. Strategies for conflict resolution are addressed in the plan as well. There is a zero-tolerance approach to any and all acts of harassment or violence. Some strategies for mediation include direct intervention from the teacher in which it is explained that hitting, yelling, or fighting are not acceptable ways for solving a problem. Instead, the teacher encourages the students to talk about a better choice and work it out in a peaceful way that satisfies both parties. The needs of at-risk students are addressed specifically in how I would demonstrate and model mutual respect, measurable boundaries, and respectful speech. Ways to communicate with families are included in the plan via a parent welcome letter and student survey in which families tell me about their child's likes/dislikes, personalities, and what is important to them as a family. These combined topics specifically address diversity because the aforementioned variety of ways to meet students' needs is critical to a classroom in which diversity is appreciated, respected, and valued.

3rd evidence-

The ELL Case Study meets the Accomplished Practice of Diversity because it required me to design instruction for an ESOL student based on their cultural and linguistic needs. The student I interviewed was a kindergartener, age six, whom I had very little background knowledge of. I did not know much about her except that her heritage language was Spanish and she was in between the late Early Production and early Speech Emergence level of language acquisition. Her own teacher could not tell me which country her parents came from or how long she'd been speaking English. Her culture and linguistic needs became clearer during the case study in which I found out that very little English was spoken at home. Her speech was impeded due to L1 transfer in which there was a communication error because of her heritage language. For example, in my case study I discuss how the student's incorrect pronunciation of English phonemes such as /b/ for /v/ (such as ober instead of over) or /l/ for /ll/ (such as leetle instead of little) are correct in her heritage language, Spanish. In Spanish, the letter V for the word verde (green) is pronounced as berde or a B beginning sound. The letter l in the Spanish language is pronounced as a long E such as in chico (boy). To better engage the student in the interview, we talk about her family, her favorite books and movies, and what she likes about school. I also try to communicate with her in a couple of Spanish words to show my interest in her and her language. In my case study, I also discuss her specific learning needs. This student needed assistance writing organically and writing with confidence. Additionally, words in English needed to be presented to her in a comprehensible way so that she would develop automaticity in reading. To address these learning needs, I designed a lesson plan (enclosed at the end of the case study) in which the student learns color words. They are presented to her in both visuals and text. The text is organized on a graphic organizer and each color word is written in the corresponding color. This instruction was designed to meet her cultural and linguistic needs.

4th evidence-

The Family Involvement Activity meets the Accomplished Practice of Diversity because the assignment is a technique designed to help students communicate with families and community members about the emotional dangers of bullying, teasing, and lowering someone's self-esteem. The assignment comes with a parent letter and the K-W-L chart for students to take home. K-W-L (know, want to know, learned) is a great strategy

for organizing information for ESE and ESOL students. First, the students in their own classroom community would discuss what teasing is and how it makes them feel. Then the students take it home to their families to discuss how bullying or teasing affected their parents or siblings. This invites discussion between the child and their parent about a pressing health issue in schools. It allows them to gain perspective about the how teasing can hurt someone and their parents can offer them some insight on how they would prevent it. When the students return with their responses, the classroom community discusses ways to prevent bullying and teasing in the classroom. This activity not only engages the class, but the community outside the class because the students bring the values and perspectives of each of their families into the room when they complete the chart and then discuss it with the class. This activity enhances communication between the classroom and the community because of the parental involvement that takes place. This activity also fosters strategies for tolerance and conflict resolution by asking students to brainstorm ways they can support each other and mediate a conflict without hurting one another.

5th evidence- This ESE/ESOL article reflection meets the Accomplished Practice of Diversity because the reflection discusses how confusing the classroom environment can be for a student who is not only experiencing language barriers but also has a learning disability. The student in question is a 10 year old boy who's native language is Korean. The authors of the article indicate that he has a learning disability but they do not specify what his disability is. The 10 year old boy, Andy, needs constant redirection and assistance in writing because the English Language structure does not match his native language of Korean. The authors collect data about Andy's life such as his classroom teacher, placement experiences, family, testing, and cultural and language differences. For example, his classroom teacher indicated that he was originally tested as moderately mentally retarded and had language deficiencies. This led to a series of confusing placements in a life skills class and then eventually a learning support classroom for students with disabilities. He has supportive parents who provide him with a tutor and engage him in extracurricular activities. The authors address a major cultural difference for Andy. In US schools, students are expected to look at their teacher when they are talking to them. However, in Korean cultural this is intolerable. Additionally his native language has no plurals, feminine/masculine forms, or articles of speech (such as a and the). The Korean language is arranged subject-object-verb. Armed with this data, the authors prepared whole-group lessons that benefited the entire class as well as Andy. Then, they provided individualized instruction that included practicing sight words, vocabulary games, and labeling objects around the room with articles of speech. At the end of the article, they provided tips for working with ESOL students who have learning disabilities to keep them focused and challenged.

Updated 12/16/08

6th evidence- The Diversity Thematic Unit meets the Accomplished Practice of Diversity because the evidence has been submitted to show that I can design instruction that demonstrates knowledge of various cultures, ethnicities, linguistic backgrounds and diverse learning needs. These lessons are infused with art, math, writing, reading, social studies, and science. Accommodations have been designed for English Language Learners such as a visual word wall containing pictures, the word in English, and the word in their native language. Other accommodations include buddy work and alternative assessment. There are specific accommodations for a variety of ESE students including physically, mentally, and visually impaired children. For example, visually impaired children would experience different skin colors through different food tastes instead of sight because this would be a pleasant way for them to perceive different skin colors and include them in the lesson. The book that inspired the theme "We are all Alike, We are all Different" by Cheltenham Elementary School Kindergartners shows a diverse classroom of children of different ethnicities and capabilities, their families, where they live, what they eat, and what they like to do. This allows children to see that all kinds of people come into their classes with different experiences for a common goal and that is to learn.

Updated 4/10/2009

7th evidence- The cultural heritage lesson activity meets the Accomplished Practice of Diversity because the evidence has been submitted to show that I can implement instruction that applies knowledge of varied cultures, ethnicities, linguistic backgrounds and diverse learning needs. The instruction was modified for each level of language acquisition to ensure optimal comprehensibility, for the ESE students in my room who require extra wait time or a special pencil grip, and for students who are gifted and need more challenging tasks to keep them motivated. I am also submitting this evidence to show that I can implement strategies to communicate with family and community members. Enclosed in the lesson is a bilingual parent letter written in both Spanish and English. Since my Spanish was rusty, I showed this letter to a bilingual teacher on my team, the bilingual ESOL para-professional, and a bilingual parent volunteer to ensure that the Spanish letter would be comprehensible to non-English speaking parents. When they all assured me it was fine and made a few minor verb changes, I developed the lesson. The lesson centers on the bilingual tale, La Isla by Arthur Dorros. The story is about a little girl who takes an imaginary trip to her abuela's (grandmother's) country of origin. The tale is told in both Spanish and English dialogue. Since a major subgroup at my internship placement is the Hispanic subgroup, I felt that this story would be a great way to help students feel a part of the lesson experience by hearing words in both languages. In this lesson, I ask students to think about what culture truly means and why it is a uniquely human characteristic. Students were required to find out what their own cultural heritages were and to share their knowledge with the class. Just like the little girl in La Isla, I wanted them to picture the places of their ancestors even if they had never been there. In addition to discussing culture in class and with their families, students were to bring an artifact from their ethnic or cultural heritage that represented the values, beliefs, traditions, or language of the culture. Students brought in artifacts from Puerto Rico, Honduras, Mexico, Ireland, Spain, and Italy including pictures, flags, and research. During each oral presentation, students were able to share a piece of their culture with everyone.

8th evidence- The Accomplished Practice of Diversity is met with the Inclusion Success Plan because I was required to design and implement a strategy that would foster acceptance and tolerance, as well as help students develop techniques for resolution and remediation. I spent six weeks teaching students how to speak and act respectfully, how to solve disagreements or problems, and how to be kind to each other by utilizing role-playing examples and non-examples, team-building strategies, and modeling how to engage one another in respectful ways. After observing student to student interaction and the classroom environment as a whole for the first week, I determined that students needed a crash course in respect. During cooperative group times, most of the students were often engaging in speech and actions that were aggressive, judgmental, and hurtful. I interviewed several students during this time and asked them why they acted in a disrespectful way and they revealed that they were not friends with this person and did not want to work with them. I decided that I needed to motivate students to interact with everyone positively, not just students they liked. This exercise in acceptance and tolerance would be crucial for class success. With the approval of my Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor, I created this plan to help students become aware of their actions and word choices toward other students.

Another requirement of this assignment was to record data to prove the effectiveness of the plan. I decided that I would like to see the class as a whole motivated by the successes of other students. Therefore, I created a sticker chart so that students could visualize their success as a class. Stickers were earned when students were nominated as good role models of respect by their classmates. The nominated students were recognized individually with ribbons that had their name on them.

As a whole, students become more respectful in the course of six weeks. During our daily meetings in which we nominated students or role-played situations, I also mapped out my expectations to students in order for them to be successful. I explained that our classroom would only be successful when the environment was positive and when we could learn to resolve our problems in a way that was kind and accepting. This meant that students were forbidden to use negative insults or hurtful language to gain favor or power over another student. I structured the environment in a way that would only allow and encourage acceptance and tolerance. In my reflection of the plan, I point out that: students have begun to understand the weight of their words and actions. They look forward to our group time together each afternoon to celebrate examples of respect and use critical thinking to determine if something should be classified as respect or friendship. Often, we can classify the kind action as both since the class is learning the positive team work functions best when everyone gets along (page 2 of ISP). The reflection from my Cooperating Teacher, Ms. Aguis, also indicates that: students became more positive when interacting with one another. I (Ms. Aguis) see students more accepting of one another and reminding others to be respectful. This in turn has led to a better classroom environment. (page 3 of ISP).

Therefore, the plan was effective because the whole classroom atmosphere has improved. The quality of work done by groups is much better. Students are more engaged in completing their tasks instead of bickering over who they are forced to work with. The way they interact with one another is encouraging and empathetic to each other's needs. Students have begun encouraging one another to succeed and do their best when they feel like giving up, as opposed to chastising that person for being lazy and annoying.

### 3. Answer the question below that best fits your evidence

a - If your evidence involved your direct work with (P-12) students, answer this question: How did the evidence/s impact students' (P-12) learning? (How would/did the evidence(s) help students learn?)

b - If your evidence did not involve your direct work with (P-12) student, answer this question: How could the evidence/s impact students' (P-12) learning? How could the evidence(s) help (P-12) students learn?)

b- While my paper did not involve direct work with students, I have used the principles of a democratic education in my own internships and experiences with students. I believe student success is directly tied to how much a teacher invests in engaging all students by showing acceptance, tolerance, and interest in their lives. In my first internship, I was placed at a Title I school where the achievement levels of poorer students were markedly lower than their counterparts from more affluent backgrounds. Knowing the principles of a democratic education, I did my best to teach to all students and encourage them to reach their highest level of achievement. I modeled acceptance by taking time with each of these students to help them learn to read, cut out pictures, and practice letter sounds. Writing this paper helped me better empathize with my students who experience academic difficulties because of their varied backgrounds. This knowledge will help my students learn in an environment that fosters acceptance and tolerance of differences. It will be my responsibility to plan instruction that meets every student's social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and language needs and promotes cultural awareness. Having a teacher who is passionate about teaching all students regardless of their differences is the most important aspect of a democratic, egalitarian education.

a- I had the opportunity to implement some of this classroom management plan in my Level II internship which involved direct work with 4th and 5th grade students. This classroom had a variety of achievement levels, socio-economic backgrounds, and cultural experiences. I modeled acceptance of all students by making my classroom expectations for respectful language and attitudes clear on my first day of teaching. My students who were struggling were offered the same encouragement and support as those who were achieving. My students from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds felt safe in my presence and talked to me about their families, ambitions, and home-life. Also, I had the opportunity to utilize my conflict resolution strategies directly following the 2008 Election. My students were divided because of the candidate they supported and were throwing out hurtful accusations to one another. This was especially heated because one of my students accused a few of her classmates of being racist for supporting the candidate she did not and then other students were throwing accusations of sexism. That day, we had a class meeting discussing the importance of respecting the values of others. I explained that any accusatory and hurtful language would not be tolerated and that despite our differences we must respect that whomever we voted for was our democratic right, not to be judged by other people. I met directly with the students who were using accusatory language and asked them to explain why they were saying such hurtful things to one another. After each student had a chance to speak, I mediated and said that it was important for them to talk about this. I asked them to remember to value and respect the beliefs of others without being hurtful. I told them that it was okay to disagree, but they should never use words that promote hatred or division. The students agreed that it was unfair to say those things, but they had become very involved in the candidate they believed in. I felt that this was an exercise in diversity, acceptance, tolerance, and mediation for all students involved. They learned that it is never okay to use hurtful language and that if they disagree, they must do this on respectful terms. The environment in my classroom changed shortly after and luckily, these students went back to working together and talking respectfully as they had done before.

a- I directly worked with an ESOL student in a kindergarten class to complete this course requirement. When I interviewed and assessed the student, I obtained a more accurate insight to her learning needs than when I had been in her classroom for my Level I Internship. I already knew that she was bright, adventurous, and sweet but I did not know that she was not receiving resources to help her with her academic language proficiency. She was receiving the same instruction as low-achieving students with hardly any comprehensible support via pictures or visuals. Her instruction in sight words had been solely text-based and the word wall contained no visuals to help her figure out the words. As a kindergartener and English Language Learner, she could not accurately make guesses about words without some kind of visual. She did not have the background knowledge to decode the letter sounds and determine the words. When I discussed color-words with her, she did not tell the difference between the text red and green. She read red as green. This indicated to me that the student needed something to connect the text to something comprehensible. So, when I did the individualized lesson with her, I created cards that had the text in the corresponding color. When we came to red, she no longer called it green. Rather, she recognized that I had written it in red so it must be red. By making these simple accommodations to help the student recognize the text, she was able to correctly identify every color. For fun, we also practiced them in Spanish. I felt that her needs would be better met if she received instruction that provided visuals and text correspondence through pictures or objects as well. So in addition to writing the words in the corresponding color, we referenced the reader for pictures of objects in color. Through this case study, I was able to learn about developing, assessing, and planning for developmentally and linguistically appropriate instruction that benefited the student's cultural and linguistic needs.

b- Though this activity has not been implemented, it was designed to recognize a critical social and health issue in the community: bullying. The purpose of the activity would be to have students meet with their families to discuss how bullying makes them feel and the ways to prevent it. Hopefully, this activity would not only engage students but parents as well because it would help them build communication with their child and show them support. Students would learn that they have a lot to learn from their parents and their values when it comes to handling conflict situations. This activity would create a dialogue between two communities: the classroom and families. The dialogue would help students understand that bullying or teasing is never acceptable and that in order to have a cohesive classroom, we must support and encourage one another. This real-life application to a health issue would create a climate of openness and acceptance among students to help them recognize that despite any differences we encounter in our classmates, we must always be supportive and respectful.

b- This article reflection and critique gave me the opportunity to learn how I would work with a student who was an English Language Learner and had a learning disability. Often, the strategies we provide for ESOL students such as graphic organizers, labeling, and vocabulary practice are beneficial to students with learning disabilities as well. To extend this for the ELL who is learning disabled, we must consider their cultural and linguistic needs as well. To help them achieve academically, we must encourage more wait time or think time so that they have an opportunity to organize their thoughts. Additionally, we must be culturally sensitive to students of Asian descent because it is difficult for them to look directly at their teachers because this is disrespectful and humiliating. Having students of diverse cultural backgrounds requires that the teacher let go of their Western cultural experiences and provide opportunities and accommodations for all students.

Updated 12/16/08

b- Though this unit was not implemented, it was specifically designed to promote diversity in the classroom and involve children of various ethnicities such as African, Asian, and Hispanic-American descent and children with disabilities. This would impact learners because often schools take a color-blind approach to diversity. Rather than openly acknowledge, celebrate, and learn from our differences we pretend they are not there. This is called the hidden curriculum. This hidden curriculum ignores people of color, disability, and female gender. When we acknowledge our differences, we can create an environment that embraces and accepts differences because it enhances our learning to discuss different cultures and experiences. "We are all Alike, We are all Different" by Cheltenham Elementary School Kindergartners is written by kids for kids, so this would be a great way to demonstrate that children as young as five can learn to appreciate the uniqueness of others. In this book, children can see themselves. They see Kindergartners of every skin color, with different values, coming together to write a book about their differences and similarities. The book pauses after each page to ask students things about their own eye, hair, or skin color. The teacher and children can talk about the different features they notice that they have like the children in the book. The teacher can extend the questions in the book as well by asking: We all have different kinds of families. I notice that this child looks different from his mother. (The book features an Asian child with a Caucasian mother) I think his mother must have adopted him. To adopt someone means to take someone into your family that wasn't born to you, but you love them just the same. This engages the diverse learners in the classroom to consider their own differences, share them with the class, and be proud of their unique background. After reading the book, children learn about melanin the substance that makes skin color. This

shows children that our differences are genetic and therefore we should never judge someone for what they look like because it is how they were born. This unit activity wraps up by children creating their own pages in a classroom book that encourages the celebration of our differences. This unit activity promotes a classroom that advocates for social justice because acceptance at an early age is the key to helping children overcome bias as they grow. Additionally, it will help them see their place in the world as a unique individual.

Updated 4/10/2009

a- This cultural heritage activity involved direct work with 3rd graders in my final internship. It impacted their learning because they had a chance to see the wide distribution of cultures that made up our classroom. This variety of ethnicities and language differences was initially a barrier in the class. As I reference in my reflection: Lately, there have been a lot of conflicts and bullying in the class. Students were mocking other students for their accents or perceived inferiority because they were not native speakers of English. In my class, I have three native speakers of Spanish and two of them have parents that do not speak English. One student is at the early production stage and the other two students are at intermediate fluency. I thought the students could do with a lesson in how our cultural differences enhance our classroom and our world. I felt it was critical to engage students in dialogue about why people come from different places and what those cultures were like. Prior to implementation of the lesson, I explained to the children that each of us has a family member either now or hundreds of years ago that immigrated to this country. When they came, their values, beliefs, traditions and languages, the things that shaped their culture made them Americans, not what country they came from. I continued by telling students that I was a first generation American. My mother is from Italy and her values and beliefs have helped me become a hard-working American citizen. I then broke down what culture meant. We completed a frayer diagram to answer the question of culture. We discussed that a foreign country is not a culture; rather the beliefs, values, traditions, and languages are inclusive of that culture. We also discussed how every human has a culture and that it is something unique about humankind because animals, while they have families and hierarchies, do not have traditions or values.

When we read *La Isla*, it gave my Spanish-speakers a chance to be experts. They were able to be teachers to the other children on how to correctly pronounce words in their language. One student who grew up in Puerto Rico provided background knowledge about what it is like to live on a tropical island, just like the one described in *La Isla*.

The cultural heritage presentations enlightened everyone. After placing ourselves on the map, we talked about our cultures and compared the similarities and differences among all of the cultures our classmates presented to us. We shared our cultural artifacts and students asked one another thought-provoking questions about their families and traditions.

Overall, this crash-course in culture made our classroom a better place. Students are more cognizant of the fact that differences are not bad, neat and interesting. Different languages can be fascinating and fun to try. Though I tailor-made this lesson for my class, it could very easily be adapted for other lessons in teaching children acceptance.

a- The Inclusion Success Plan involved direct work with 3rd graders in my Final Internship. It impacted student learning because, prior to the implementation of the plan, students did not have the skills to treat each other with respect and empathy. I specifically set up this plan to ensure an effective learning environment. This inability to work cooperatively negatively influenced their learning time. Group work was often incomplete or not up to par because so much time was spent arguing and insulting one another. When students indicated that they could not work with someone who was not their friend, I knew that the tremendous barrier to the success of the class was their lack of respect to each other. We spent six weeks developing a definition for respect. Students agreed that respect was treating someone how you want to be treated, however they did not understand that someone meant EVERYONE. At first, students were aversive to working with someone they did not like because it forced them out of their comfort zone. I explained that throughout their lives as students and then someday future employees of a business or institution, they would be required to work with people they did not know or did not always agree with because they were a part of a team. I emphasized the importance of these skills by having them role-play situations in which they would have to work together to accomplish a common goal, whether it was dividing responsibilities for a project or playing on a sports team.

Every afternoon, students and I gathered on the carpet to reward each other for being role models of respect by awarding the respectful individuals with a ribbon. For each ribbon earned, the class earned a sticker on the respect chart. Our common goal as a team was to beat our previous week's ribbon earning and increase it. The best part of this project was that students learned to give one another specific praise. Some of my favorite examples included: During reading block when I asked to read the passage aloud, Mia didn't roll her eyes at me like she usually does. Donovan said excuse me instead of pushing Kaitlyn out of the way. Kevin encouraged Alyssa to keep trying even though the math problem was really hard. Alonzo always lets Shelya sit next to him when everyone else says they saved their seat for somebody else. These student comments really touched me. It showed me that they had begun to show empathy toward one another, toward students they normally refused to interact with. This impacted their learning because after six weeks of a crash course in respect, they had developed the tools to work successfully with one another. My ESE students felt more appreciated and respected. Rather than being taunted for not completing something, they were offered assistance and encouragement by their other classmates. In our culminating activity, students reflected on what they had learned about respect. They were asked to respond to four questions: what is respect, a time I showed respect, a thank you to someone who showed me respect, and how it feels to be respected. Student responses (page 6 of ISP) indicated a great deal of learning and insight. They recognized what it meant to respect and be respected. This activity increased the quality of student work and the effectiveness of our learning times. Much less time was spent remediating conflict during lessons because students became aware of what they were saying and doing to one another. Implementing this activity made the classroom environment effective because students learned to positively interact with one another.

4. Reflect on what you learned about this Accomplished Practice? (Write a reflection about what it means to you now that you've selected evidence(s) and have written this annotation about it)

I wrote the Democratic Education paper for Social Foundations because I had a personal investment in the concept of education for all despite adversity. Growing up, I experienced poverty. My single mother worked and went to school so that my brother and I could have better lives. Writing this paper and having this perspective will help me to better understand the backgrounds of my students who are deprived. Knowing what their parents experience will help me better communicate with them, because my goals are to provide their children with the tools for success. Students benefit from a classroom that promotes equal opportunities and positive reinforcement. It breaks my heart to come into classrooms where students of various backgrounds are not valued or appreciated because of things that are out of their control such as their language, ethnic identity, or socioeconomic background. In one classroom experience, the teacher told me that one of her poorest ESOL students had a low IQ and she had no hope of him achieving. To top it off, she said she taught to the higher achieving students because she did not know how to reach the lower-achieving ones who tended to be language learners or poverty-stricken. I remember crying about this to a trusted instructor who assured me that my presence in the classroom could help make a difference in those children's lives. I believed in what I had written for my Social Foundations course because I have seen unequal education first hand. It can be devastating to the students who need the most support. I have learned that acceptance and tolerance in my classroom starts with me. If I strive for a democratic education, my students will feel valued, heard, and appreciated. Only then can true learning begin after that trust is established.

Implementing my classroom management plan helped me better plan for and meet the needs of diverse learners in my classroom. Creating a classroom environment that promotes the diversity of all learners begins with a plan that emphasizes boundaries, community, safety, and respect. Cultivating the needs of all students is done when the teacher models respect and values differences. I feel that I have had the opportunity as a pre-service teacher to create a comfortable environment that values differing perspectives, ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds by promoting openness, discussion, and peaceful resolution strategies when there is a major classroom crisis, such as the one that took place in my class following the election. Respect is paramount in order for diversity to truly flourish in a world in which we are often divided by our values and experiences. In my own classroom, I will never accept language or attitudes that divide the classroom community. For example, when prompted by my students to disclose who I voted for, I chose not to tell them because I felt it would create bias or influence of their views and diminish the mutual respect between myself and my students. As a classroom teacher, I will always value the differences of my students and demonstrate a lack of bias by modeling impartiality.

Through the ELL Case study, I learned that providing comprehensive input is the key to meeting the diverse cultural and linguistic needs of ESOL students. We teachers must pull out all the stops to ensure that learning is taking place in way that is developmentally and linguistically appropriate. With this knowledge, I can begin to incorporate multi-cultural resources and a pedagogy that embraces diversity. I learned that ELL students need a bottom-up approach to meeting their needs. First, we must help students decode words through practicing letter sounds and

providing visuals for the words we present. Also, I learned that a print-rich environment makes all the difference for students learning about words in their new language. To increase the lexicon of the ESOL student, I feel teachers need to label the important objects in their classroom such as the door, restroom, and computer. That way they can reinforce the language and point to the object that corresponds to the word such as when you tell the student to line up at the door. In my own classroom, I will strive to provide these accommodations for my ESOL students so that they are not left behind or feel like they do not belong. The goal of every classroom should be to provide an inclusive, accepting environment. This can only take place when we take the steps to meet every need.

Family involvement is imperative to student learning. It is so valuable for students to have the support and involvement of their families. Nowadays, it is difficult for parents to assist their children with homework assignments because parents are so bogged down with responsibilities and job commitments. The activity I chose engages parents because it will not require a great deal of their time and it will open an effective dialogue between parent and child about how serious the emotional effects of teasing and bullying can be. I hope that this particular family involvement activity would encourage students to feel like they can talk to adults about their feelings and problem solve together on how to fix the situation. Family involvement activities for health are different compared to other subject areas because they engage families in relevant social and emotional issues regarding their lives.

I learned that having a student with both a language deficiency and learning disability does not have to be a problematical challenge for the classroom teacher. If the needed accommodations are made, students like Andy can succeed if teachers use best practices. Approaching learning from different angles benefits all learners despite their cultural and linguistic differences. This article provided some great ESOL/ESE learner tips that I would love to implement in my own inclusive classroom such as TPR (Total Physical Response) and advance organizers such as KWL and semantic webs. Students learn best by doing and providing different options for learning reaches all students.

Updated 12/16/08

After completing the unit plan, I learned that recognizing and discussing diversity is imperative to creating a classroom environment that fosters acceptance for learners of many backgrounds, abilities, and languages. You can never start early enough in teaching children how to accept the differences of others. These differences make the classroom representative of the global society. It is important to show children that the world extends beyond their classroom and that they will encounter many people who look and like different things. If we can show children that this is okay, that differences enhance our world rather than make it bad, we can make children advocates of social justice. They need this basic background to understand why our society has encountered and gone through such terrible struggles in the equality of all people.

Updated 4/10/2009

After completing this cultural heritage activity, I recognized the value of engaging students and families in discussion about their cultures. I learned so much about all of my students and they got a chance to get to know each other better too. While it was initially a challenge to plan, I decided that the only way to ensure parental contribution was to reach out to them in their own language. Since the Spanish-speaking subgroup is large in my school, I thought it would be beneficial to all students to read a piece of literature that was bilingual. I realized that it was not as hard as I thought it was going to be and the amount of parent contribution (even sending their children in with research in Spanish) was proof that even a little bit of effort shows a lot of care. I feel implementing this activity made me more culturally aware and sensitive to the needs of all of my students, even the ones who needed a lesson in acceptance in the first place.

The completion of the Inclusion Success Plan taught me that in order to have an effective learning environment, tolerance of one another is paramount. Giving students the tools to succeed does not just include teaching them how to read, write, and solve math problems. Let's face it; no learning is done in isolation anymore. Therefore, students must learn how to engage in cooperative learning to succeed not only in school, but in society. In order to ensure that this is taking place, my students needed guidance to learn how to speak and interact with one another in a manner that was respectful and kind. I feel pointing students in the right direction has helped me grow as a teacher. I learned that I am capable of structuring an environment that promotes empathy and respect toward one another. I was merely the facilitator of respect. I did not allow myself to step in to disagreements unless students needed guidance on how to solve their problem. This helped me recognize that even children can learn to overcome petty bickering and power struggles. My hope is that each and every one of them can utilize these skills as adults and make our society a more empathetic one.

**Status:** Evaluated **Last Modified:** 04/21/2009