

Diversity



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Diversity Self-Knowledge I define diversity as what makes a person different and unique from others. The differences range from a person's religious affiliation to their race and culture. Foster (2006) suggests that people tend to feel the need to categorize things, and to label everything with a name. Foster (2006) goes on to say that labeling things and people comes with many negative consequences. I feel the reason we, as a society, feel the need to categorize people is because we want to set an order to the world around us.

By doing this, it allows us understand how and why certain people act and respond to different situations. The unfortunate part is that this type of reasoning does not allow for us to take into an account for a person's uniqueness as an individual. I do believe I am a unique and diverse person. I am an English speaking Caucasian male with a very gentle spirit. I am a patient person that is slow to speak and quick to listen. I have a high tolerance level, yet I do not accept excuses for low achievers.

I am a Christian that loves the Lord with all my heart and know that I am making a preference here on Earth. I am a task oriented person and am project driven. I am a quick learner and am not afraid to Jump into a task head first. I am an outdoors that enjoys hunting and fishing with my family, and fishing is one of my largest forms of entertainment. All of these things make up who I am. I surround myself with many friends and family members that have many of the same characteristics that I have, but none are exactly like mine.

My characteristic combination is what makes me unique. My diversity influences the way I teach and how I go about responding to my students. This can be a good thing, but sometimes not so good, so at times I have to "check" myself. Because of the background I have and "labels", a student may be able to identify with me, but sometimes they misread my intentions. For this same reason, there may be times I misread the actions and intentions of my students. I must be able to keep in mind all the differences we have that make us all unique.

Personal SOOT Analysis Strengths Open-minded Empathy Patience
Weaknesses Negative stereotypes Different Perspectives Differences
Opportunities Personal Development Sharing differences and similarities
Learning Threats Personal Perceptions Misconceptions Cultural Mores Part 2:
Addressing Diversity Demographic Diversity Portrait Total Student Population
1, 819 Gender Male: 47. 5% Female: 52. 5% Race/ Ethnicity African
American: 25. 6% Hispanic: 3. 5% White: 66. 5% Asian: 1. 6% Other: 2. 8%
Socioeconomic Status Free/Reduced Lunch: 47. % Language English:
Spanish: 3% Other: 1% Ability Regular Education: 86. 1% Special Education:
13. 9% Gifted/Talented Education: I teach at Columbia High School which is
located in north Florida. By Columbia High School being in a rural location it
has little diversity when it comes to language and culture. The main cultural and
ethnic groups are White and African American. Columbia does have some
Spanish speakers, but they are only 3% of the total population. By looking at
all the other areas of diversity, teaching and learning is still greatly impacted
by the diversity of the students.

One area of diversity that is great in our school is with the student's socioeconomic status. Some of the students receive free or reduced lunch because of their low socioeconomic status. I have found that oftentimes these students are not prepared for class, or mentally ready to focus on school due to outside distractions. Teachers that ignore the impact that diversity has on learning often lose the opportunity to teach this type of student. Ways a school can use diversity to its advantage could be by taking advantage of opportunities, taking chances, and not following the norm.

By schools allowing others to share their respective will only widen everyone's viewpoint, and this includes the teacher's as well. As of now, Columbia does not take full advantage of the diversity we have to help direct our lesson plans to direct us in teaching. This is partially due to the lack of perceived diversity that we have. Usually diversity is looked at as a difference in race and gender. If we were to take a look just a little deeper in areas such as religion and socioeconomics, we would be able to identify where our diversity lies.

Columbia High School needs to take a look at areas where we can widen our horizon and study student's different backgrounds and perspectives.