

# Importance of understanding other cultures

[Experience](#), [Human Nature](#)



Unfortunately there is a lot of concern about whether or not many searchers have the proper knowledge or experience working in or living in diverse environments (Robinson & Clearly, 2011). One way of dealing with this is to integrate ways to approach cultural diversity throughout the teaching program. Once teachers are given the proper techniques then dealing with and approaching diversity will be much easier. Another great way to acknowledge cultural diversity is to integrate it into all aspects of education. Social studies is a great subject to pull from, but it does not end there.

Although the case study was for Korea, Johnson Choc, had some great ideas of how to educate others regarding cultural diversity. He states that the main goal was to " plans are to teach children of multicultural families Korean culture, to help them learn Korean as well as their mother tongue, and to provide after school programs so that the children can adjust themselves to the education system" (Johnson, 2010). The idea of having after school programs to aid ELL's and their families in learning English is terrific.

This will extend the learning time outside of the classroom for those who would be interested in participating, as well as, offering childcare during after school hours. As an educator it is important to reach out to families of English Language Learners and connect with them. Teachers must encourage families to participate in school functions and aid in the success of their child's education. Connecting with families has many positive outcomes, but one in particular is squashing the idea that immigrant and minority cultural values are dysfunctional (Syria, 2011).

Therefore, it is important to work together as a school and community to ensure students and their families feel welcomed. Inviting members of the community into the classroom who are great cultural role models is a great way of accomplishing this. Syria suggest six ideas or target areas that can be helpful, and they are, assisting families with parenting skills, improve communication with families, increase opportunities for families to volunteer at school, help increase family involvement in student learning at home, ensure that families play a role in school decision making, and increase collaboration with the community (Syria, 2011).

With this in mind survey your community and connect with families, then develop activities that will ensure their involvement and cooperation. Below are examples of three activities that honor and respect cultural diversity.

Activity One: Celebrate Cinch De Mayo This will be a two part activity to be done during class time and after school. To begin, as a class we will be creating decorations for a potluck type dinner that evening, and decorating the gymnasium or community hall. We will need different types of paper, material, glue, string, and tape.

This would also be a great opportunity for students to bring things from home that represent their culture. We could use these things as centerpieces on the tables. Prior to these activities flyers will be sent home in both English and Spanish to inform families of the projects, and the celebration. The flyer will not only request their appearance, but to also bring their favorite Cinch De Mayo dish. This activity is addressing the Spanish speaking community

and bringing a part of their culture into the classroom and outside of the classroom.

Let's face it who does not like a celebration with, food, family, and fun. This provides a great opportunity to teach social studies and the history of Cinch De Mayo and its importance. It is also a great tool for art, science, reading and math. Activity Two: Open House Volunteers At the first open house of the year have parents sign up as classroom lepers for days of importance from their culture. You would partner with the parents to gather information on what day they would like to honor from their culture. The parents would be your best resource for what children could learn from them.

You and the parent could meet the week before the event to plan the activities, worksheets, etc. And by doing this you have an ongoing dialogue with parents, parents become active participants in learning, and it gives the English learner student a greater sense of pride and inclusion into an often otherwise difficult transition. This can target all cultural groups within the classroom. The materials are minimal at first and consist of calendars in English and the home language to mark the important dates, pens or markers, and welcome flyers.

Please note that a calendar in each language should be sent home with the families. From there as you develop activities your supply list will change as needed. This again will pull from all subjects within the classroom and involve both students and their families. Activity Three: Homemade Dictionary In this activity you will devise a dictionary to help the students

and their arenas with the transition in English language learning. You could include pictures with the words to help with translation and understanding.

You could ask parents to submit suggestions for words from their language that are commonly used and create a page of English words and their language words for a better understanding of language the student might be using. This would be extremely helpful to you and to other students who are trying to befriend the English language learner and include them in activities in the classroom. This activity will target all cultures within the classroom and will be extremely helpful in all subjects, but mainly in Language Arts.

The materials will be minimal at first, because you want to compile lists that will then be transferred to poster board and located throughout the classroom. So pens, pencils, and paper is all that is necessary to begin. The great thing about this activity is that it will not only help the students, but the teacher as well. It is not uncommon for non-English Language learners to get stuck for words from time to time, so having these prompts through out the classroom in both English and the home language will help everyone in class to monomaniac. Teaching cultural diversity within the classroom is important to everyone.

It is not only helpful to the teacher and English language learner, but it also teaches the other students to respect other cultures and their beliefs. The over all goal here is to teach ELL students the English language, but we do not want them to completely leave out their heritage and beliefs. Inclusion is futile and we can do this by involving their families and educating them on how to take part in their child's education. This can be accomplished by

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making sure teachers are give the proper techniques to approach diversity, and connecting with culturally diverse families, and figures throughout the community.