



Diversity and Engagement:

6th – 12th Grade

**Resources to Support
Equity in the Classroom**

*from
ISBE
Content
Specialists*



<http://www.ilclassroomsinaction.org/equity-access.html>

Diversity and Engagement in Action

Grades 6-12



This resource was created to provide information and inspiration to educators regarding how they can emphasize and support diversity and engagement in their classroom. Each of the following pages provides information about diversity and engagement in the various content areas. Additionally, grade-band specific activities, literature, and resources have been provided for each content area to help inspire 6-12 educators to include more diversity and engagement in their classrooms.

As diversity and engagement for all continues to be a consistent area for all school personnel to address, a systemic approach for implementation will need leadership guidance and support through resources that follow and calendar sequencing such as:

- Multiple weeks in the school year that are designated for all to include additional focus on diversity/equity, with staff and student feedback.
- Offering some discussions for staff around their needs and/or desires to address diversity and inclusion within school improvement days.
- Convening a diversity team of staff/family representatives that models and supports peers for capacity building at each building.

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Diversity and Engagement in Action

Social and Emotional Learning (6-12)

The crucial element of supporting student capacity in awareness and appreciation of diversity is in the facilitation of reflection. Noticing similarities and differences along with actively practicing tolerance of differences are steps towards building a willingness to move beyond co-existence to inclusion. Here are SEL standards/benchmarks supporting students' capacity regarding diversity and equity.

Standard	Developmental Benchmarks (6-8)	Developmental Benchmarks (9-10)	Developmental Benchmarks (11-12)	Example Task
Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.	Explain how individual, social, and cultural differences may increase vulnerability to bullying and identify ways to address it.	Analyze the origins and negative effects of stereotyping and prejudice.	Evaluate strategies for being respectful of others and opposing stereotyping and prejudice.	Read and discuss books that depict all types of people. Ask reflective questions that support standards; offer activities that involve performance around benchmark behaviors. Use resource tools from the Resource Guide listed below to help students practice conversations that include a process to create group meaning and action (See Resource Guide – Appendix <i>The Privilege Walk</i> http://bit.ly/2TJT4Z).
	Analyze the effects of taking action to oppose bullying based on individual and group differences.	Demonstrate respect for individuals from different social and cultural groups.	Evaluate how advocacy for the rights of others contributes to the common good.	
Use communication skills to interact effectively with others.	Analyze ways to establish positive relationships with others.	Evaluate the effects of requesting support from and providing support to others.	Evaluate the application of communication and social skills in daily interactions with peers, teachers, and families.	
	Demonstrate cooperation and teamwork to promote group effectiveness.	Evaluate one's contribution in groups as a member and leader.	Plan, implement, and evaluate participation in a group project.	

Literature

For Students

- *The Absolutely True Story of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
- *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anya
- *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
- *They Both Die at the End* by Adam Silvera
- *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
- *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri

For Teachers

- *Waking up White* by Debby Irving
- *Race Talk* by Derald Wing Sue
- *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain* by Zaretta Hammond
- *Blindspot* by Banaji and Greenwald

Resources

- Equity in Action: Framing Inclusive Conversations – a resource guide <http://bit.ly/2TJT4Z>
- Social Justice Standards - Teaching Tolerance <http://bit.ly/2Im8qAe>

Lessons

- Toolkit for “Straight Talk About the N-word” <http://bit.ly/2ZbNZv4>
- Marriage Equality: Different Strategies for Attaining Equal Rights <http://bit.ly/2V1N1CC>
- Partners Against Hate: Peer Leadership Programs <http://bit.ly/2UZVJB8>
- Getting Out of the Box <http://bit.ly/2UVQ2V1>

Diversity and Engagement in Action

Student-led Assessment



Allowing students to select the way in which they demonstrate their understanding is an excellent way to address equity and diversity.

Using choice boards or simply discussions addressing expectations, students select how best to show what they have learned in a way that works with their world. It is stepping away from the one size fits all assessment model that does not allow for equity or diversity.

Resources

Formative Assessment Strategies

Formative Assessment is another excellent method to address equity and diversity. By allowing students the opportunity to show what they know, then having them continue to learn more about the topic, it allows for a variety of learners.

A few suggestions follow. See the link under Formative Assessment to the right for more.

- **White board responses** – all students record their answer on an individual white board and show it at the same time to the teacher. All students demonstrate their level of understanding and the teacher sees where each student is in their understanding.
- **Exit Slips** – Students respond to a brief question at the end of the lesson, revealing what they do or do not understand.
- **Lists** – Students create a list for the topic or goal, demonstrating their understanding of the significant themes or ideas of the topic.

Standards-based Grading:

- *Connecting Teachers, Students, and Standards* by Deborah L. Voltz, Michele Jean Sims and Betty Nelson
<http://bit.ly/2Z3t3Xi>
- *A Teacher's Guide to Standards-Based Learning* by Tammy Heflebower, Jan K. Hoegh, Philip B. Warrick, Jeff Flygare
<http://bit.ly/2IdonsB>

Choice Boards:

- *How to Use Choice Boards in the Classroom* article
<http://bit.ly/2UVCZmg>
- Samples choice boards for Math grades 2-7
<http://bit.ly/2VFbD0T>

Formative Assessment:

- Formative assessment strategies <http://bit.ly/2Ktbtsf>

Respecting different cultures means recognizing that symbols, traditions, heroes, and idioms differ from place to place.

by Laura Greenstein
Creating Assessments for All Learners <http://bit.ly/2ZgYvBw>

Diversity and Engagement in Action

English Language Arts (6-12)



Stan Steiner, International Literacy Association, states, “Diversity in literature goes beyond ethnicity. Diversity may include the various facets of sexuality and gender, cultural, and societal groups. Whether characters in the books we read reflect others or ourselves, what is most important is connecting with them in ways that help us understand who we are today. Sometimes learning about our history through the eyes of diverse characters can be unsettling or even painful, but it also can be an awakening to the unknown.”

Our Illinois ELA Standards encourage the use of diverse texts that highlight various cultures, perspectives and authors. Consider the following when selecting texts:

- Base your selection on quality. Books should not just teach a lesson but should have a good story, high-quality text, and engaging illustrations.
- Include books that introduce students to new people, places, and concepts that they may not yet have encountered.
- Use text sets to expose students to different perspectives. These book collections may be organized by theme or may feature the work of highly accomplished authors or illustrators of diverse cultures.

Ensuring all students can recognize themselves in books should be a priority for the ELA teacher. Zaretta Hammond, author of *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, urges teachers to “diversify your diverse books.” Seek out books that present multiple or underrepresented perspectives, ones that depict diverse characters having everyday experiences.

Literature

For Students

- *Child Soldier* by Jessica Dee Humphreys
- *Equality & Diversity* by Charles Ogden
- *The Girl Who Escaped ISIS: This is My Story* by Farida Khalaf
- *I will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives* by Martin Ganda

For Teachers:

- *We Got This.: Equity, Access, and the Quest to Be Who Our Students Need Us to Be* by Cornelius Minor
- *Being the Change: Lessons and Strategies to Teach Social Comprehension* by Sara K. Ahmed

Resources

- Equity in Action: Framing Inclusive Conversations – a resource guide <http://bit.ly/2TJT4Z>
- Teaching Tolerance Website <https://www.tolerance.org/classroomresources/texts>
Included are lesson plans, students texts, student tasks, teaching strategies, film kits and printable posters.
- Cultural Relevance Rubric for Literature <https://bit.ly/2YVH1KO>
- “We Need Diverse Books” Website <https://diversebooks.org/>

Diversity and Engagement in Action

Math (6-12)



On April 18, 2014, NCTM released a position statement addressing Access and Equity in Mathematics Education: “Creating, supporting, and sustaining a culture of access and equity require being responsive to students’ backgrounds, experiences, cultural perspectives, traditions, and knowledge when designing and implementing a mathematics program and assessing its effectiveness. Acknowledging and addressing factors that contribute to differential outcomes among groups of students are critical to ensuring that all students routinely have opportunities to experience high-quality mathematics instruction, learn challenging mathematics content, and receive the support necessary to be successful. Addressing equity and access includes both ensuring that all students attain mathematics proficiency and increasing the numbers of students from all racial, ethnic, linguistic, gender, and socioeconomic groups who attain the highest levels of mathematics achievement.” <http://bit.ly/2Z6LEI2>

Preparing our students to be productive citizens includes equipping them with the tools they need to advocate for social justice.

Mathematics can be a powerful tool in the struggle for equity and

Literature

For Teachers

- *The Impact of Identity in K-8 Mathematics: Rethinking Equity-Based Practices* by Julia Aguirre, Karen Mayfield-Ingram, and Danny Martin <http://bit.ly/2KsCGvs>
- *Teaching Mathematics for Social Justice: Conversations with Educators* by Anita A. Wagner and David W. Stinson <http://bit.ly/2lfwEfK>
- *Access and Equity: Promoting High Quality Mathematics in Grades 6-8* <http://bit.ly/2Udv9QD>
- *Access and Equity: Promoting High Quality Mathematics in Grades 9-12* <http://bit.ly/2lfwPI0>

equality. Encouraging students to use mathematics to investigate and solve social injustices not only provides rich and engaging contexts for mathematical exploration, but also provides students with a meaningful purpose for the tasks which can be motivating and empowering.

MS/HS Lesson Ideas

This task, created by Jackie Palmquist and Scott Miller, could be used in any Statistics unit to introduce the idea of experimental probability.

While typical statistics lessons look at the probability of how many male and/or female jurors are selected for a 12-person jury, Jackie and Scott pushed forward to “include tasks that demand quantitative analysis of fairness and civic engagement issues.” They developed their lesson around the trial of Earl McGahee

(<http://bit.ly/2Gg732R>). In 1986, Mr. McGahee, who is African American, was tried by an all-white jury in a county where the African American population was over 55%. Earl McGahee was convicted, but in 2009 the ruling was over turned. This task poses the question, “In a community of 50% African American, how likely is it that 12 white jurors would be selected?” Students are provided with dice, coins, random number tables, cards, and spinners as tools for their simulations. The class data is compiled and analyzed and students use the mathematics to justify their answer to the question “Is this fair?”

Link to task background information PowerPoint: <http://bit.ly/2nnwlmW>

Link to Desmos: student.desmos.com Class Code: 6P9R9

Resources

- Radical Math - <http://www.radicalmath.org/>
- Jonathan Osler’s “A Guide for Integrating Issues of Social and Economic Justice Into Mathematics Curriculum” <http://radicalmath.org/docs/SJMathGuide.pdf>
- The Mathematicians Project: Mathematicians Are Not Just White Dudes - <http://bit.ly/2DcR2Km>
- Culturally Responsive Mathematics Teaching – TM Lesson Analysis Tool - <http://bit.ly/2P76Bli>

Diversity and Engagement in Action

Science (6-12)

"Equity in science education requires that all students are provided with equitable opportunities to learn science and become engaged in science and engineering practices; with access to quality space, equipment, and teachers to support and motivate that learning and engagement; and adequate time spent on science. In addition, the issue of connecting to students' interests and experiences is particularly important for broadening participation in science." — NRC Framework, p. 28 (<https://bit.ly/2crAuBB>)

Our students come to us with very different backgrounds and experiences. When the Illinois Learning Standards for Science are implemented with fidelity, students will experience phenomena-driven

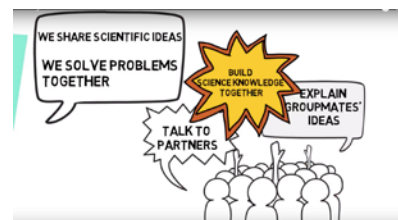
Equitable Practices

Phenomenon: Thoughtfully selected phenomena have the potential to build on the interests and experiences of diverse learners. In order to successfully do this, phenomenon should be experienced as directly as possible. This can be accomplished through student observations and questions, demonstrations, or videos. Review the *NGSS Case Studies* to see examples of teachers using culturally relevant phenomenon to engage “non-traditional” students.

Sense-Making Through Talk: Allowing students to engage in discussion and discourse to share their science explanations honors the ideas of students with differing experiences. Discussion and discourse allows all students to leverage their unique ways of sense-making. Consider reviewing the *Equity in Action: Framing Inclusive Conversations* and *Talk Science Primer* for strategies to promote equitable discussions.

three-dimensional activities, lessons, and units that level the playing field by engaging all learners—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, income, ability, native language, and geographic location—in experiences and conversations where their diverse perspectives are built upon, and revised, to construct a deep understanding of their world.

“Who gets to be a ‘Smart Science Student?’



This video highlights how the use of students' ideas and prior experiences makes for a more inclusive classroom experience. <https://bit.ly/2FS4bZz>

Resources

- Equity in Action: Framing Inclusive Conversations is a guide to educational conversations involving equity <http://bit.ly/2TJT4Z>
- Talk Science Primer includes 9 talk moves to engage students and address common obstacles to discussion: <https://bit.ly/2h1POSJ>
- NGSS Appendix D provides targeted strategies to address the needs of diverse learners: <https://bit.ly/2uNRHxg>
- NGSS Case Studies are case studies that address equity in different cases: <https://bit.ly/2uiSeon>
- Stem Teaching Tools provides a short overview of equity in science education (<https://bit.ly/2K72fSB>) and classroom discourse (<https://bit.ly/2uNYzsk>)
- Framework Chapter 11 is a chapter from the National Academies Press that discusses science education equity: <https://bit.ly/2YY81JE>

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Social Science (6-12)



A 2017 position statement from the National Council for the Social Studies states: “[Learners] need to participate in learning experiences that involve core values of democracy, including freedom of speech and thought, equality of opportunity, justice, and diversity.” <http://bit.ly/2K0Gt2Q>

These ideals were included in the C3 Framework which the Illinois Social Science Standards are based upon. The Illinois standards emphasize that students should be engaged in inquiries that explore issues using a variety of sources from multiple perspectives. Additionally, students should be given the opportunity to take informed action based upon the issues and ideas being studied within the classroom.

One way to begin addressing diversity and engagement within the classroom is to look at the sources used in social science. Many traditional textbooks only portray events from one perspective. As educators, it is important to ensure that other perspectives are

Literature

For Students

- *101 Changemakers: Rebels and Radicals Who Changed US History* by Michele Bollinger and Dao Tran - A collection of 101 brief and accessible profiles of rebels, radicals, and fighters for social justice.
- *50 American Revolutions You're Not Supposed to Know: Reclaiming American Patriotism* by Mickey Z. - A pocket-sized collection of stories about dissent throughout U.S. history.

For Teachers

- *Equity is Fostered Through What We Teach and What We Don't* by Elena Aguilar <https://edut.to/2TPA1v5>
- *Don't try to 'fix the kid,' fix the system* by Katy Swalwell <http://bit.ly/2CQdb00>
- *It's Being Done in Social Studies: Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality in the Pre/K-12 Curriculum* Edited by Lara Willox and Cathy Brant (2018)

included in the curriculum. This may mean using supplementary sources in addition to the textbook. After all, our students need to have accurate and full information in order to have deliberations and discussions within the classroom.

MS/HS Lesson Ideas

Analyzing How Words Communicate Bias: Part of Digital Literacy Series

This lesson focuses on teaching students to identify how writers can reveal their biases through their word choice and tone. Students will identify “charged” words that communicate a point of view. Students will understand how writers communicate a point of view implicitly by writing their own charged news stories. From Teaching Tolerance: <http://bit.ly/2WB43Ew>

Media Consumers and Creators, What Are Your Rights and Responsibilities?

This lesson focuses on the concept of “fake news” and the responsibilities of news and media creators and consumers. Students will explore PEN America's News Consumers' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities and read an article about “fake news” that presents strategies on how to approach digital sources. From Teaching Tolerance: <http://bit.ly/2FTYjR4>

Resources

- Equity in Action: Framing Inclusive Conversations – a resource guide <http://bit.ly/2TJTt4Z>
- Teaching Tolerance webpage <https://www.tolerance.org/>
- Rethinking Schools <https://www.rethinkingschools.org/>
- Zinn Education Project <https://www.zinnedproject.org/>
- Global Oneness Project <https://www.globalonenessproject.org/>
- Facing History and Ourselves <https://www.facinghistory.org/>
- Illinois Holocaust Museum <http://bit.ly/2uGRxHS>
- Bias Toolkit: Unbound Ed <http://bit.ly/2OGh0dE>
- Teaching for Change <https://www.teachingforchange.org/>