



The Montessori Classroom as Culturally Responsive Learning Communities-

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Reflect on your school community. In what ways is it a beautiful melting pot and/or wonderful patchwork tapestry?



Breakout Session

Melting Pot Theory

- ❖ This theory is inclusive in that we all come together.
- ❖ All is melted and forms a new substance.
- ❖ What is the new? Who determines the characteristics of the new? Do you lose something in the new?
- ❖ Are all the ingredients accepted in the new as equal? If the final product forgets what made the new substance then all is lost?



The Patchwork Tapestry Theory

- ❖ Each person is a unique individual that bring themselves.
- ❖ No two pieces are alike.
- ❖ Each piece is an equal member of the whole.
- ❖ What is the new? What do we lose / gain in the total tapestry when it is sewn together? How does each pieces contribute to the whole tapestry?



How do We Nurture Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Montessori Education? Examining Social Justice Practices



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Examining the Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Goals in Montessori Education?

- ❖ *Identity*
- ❖ *Diversity*
- ❖ *Justice*
- ❖ *Action*

Identity

- ❖ Goal 1 -Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities.

Identity

- ❖ What is identity?
- ❖ The collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a thing or person is definitively recognized or known.
- ❖ The set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a member of a group.



Identity Characteristics List

- ❖ Think about which of these characteristics are visible, and which are invisible?



- ❖ Gender
- ❖ Ethnicity
- ❖ Race
- ❖ Religion
- ❖ Socioeconomic status
- ❖ Language
- ❖ Marital / relationship status
- ❖ Parent or childless
- ❖ Family size and composition
- ❖ Sexual orientation
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Career

What are important elements of “identity” in the context of Education?

- ❖ This is the starting place for all children, in all settings. A basic goal of quality early childhood education work is to nurture each child’s individual, personal identity.
- ❖ The important idea of nurturing social (or group) identities. -- Strengthens social, emotional, and cognitive development.
- ❖ As children develop a strong sense of both individual and group identity, they also develop more tools for success in school and in life.

Diversity

- ❖ Goal 2 -Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity; accurate language for human differences; and deep, caring human connections.

Diversity

- ❖ What is diversity?
- ❖ Diversity is the empowerment people respecting and appreciating what makes them different, in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, education, and national origin.



What are important elements of “Diversity” in the context of Education?

- ❖ Strike a balance between exploring people’s similarities and differences. We share similar biological attributes and needs (e.g., the need for food, shelter, and love; the commonalities of language, families, and feelings) *and* we live these in many different ways.
- ❖ Broadening children’s knowledge of diversity by acquainting children with groups of people who live and work in their larger neighborhood and city.
- ❖ It is important to explore the many kinds of diversity present among the children in the group, even when they come from similar racial, cultural, economic class, and family backgrounds.

Justice

- ❖ Goal 3- Each child will increasingly recognize unfairness, have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.

Justice

- ❖ What is justice?
- ❖ In the broadest term, Justice is a concept of moral rightness based on ethics, rationality, law, natural law, religion, or equity. It is also the act of being just and / or fair.



What are important elements of “Justice” in the context of Education?

- ❖ Children cannot construct a strong self-concept or develop respect for others if they do not know how to identify and resist hurtful, stereotypical, and inaccurate messages or actions directed toward them or others.
- ❖ Developing the ability to think critically strengthens children’s sense of self, as well as their capacity to form caring relationships with others.
- ❖ Furthermore, being able to think critically about the world is a skill important for later school success.

Action

- ❖ Goal 4- Each child will demonstrate empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and / or discriminatory actions.

Action

- ❖ What is action?
- ❖ Cultivating an ability to stand up for myself and for others in the face of bias.



What are important elements of “Action” in the context of Education?

- ❖ Engage the children in dialogue about their feelings and ideas regarding the specific situation. Provide information about the situation, as appropriate.
- ❖ Consider the interests and dynamics of your group of children. Do they care about the problem? What kind of actions would help them appropriately address the issue?
- ❖ Consider the children’s families. Learn how each family teaches their child to handle being the target of discriminatory behaviors. Explain why you believe it is important for children to learn several ways to respond. Incorporate diverse strategies based on what families do.

Changing Our Lens

- ❖ Notable efforts have been made within the last decade to incorporate diversity and cultural awareness into curriculum instruction.
- ❖ Nevertheless, challenges remain in the design and intentionality of curriculum that fully embraces the changing demographics of the United States.

Intentionality in our Montessori Education

- Without intentionality, the Montessori Curriculum is just a “Tourist Curriculum”.
- We must take a deep dive in curriculum content to examine and explore identity, diversity, justice, and action.
- We must be deliberate in drawing connections and emphasizing the elements of Montessori holistic framework of Peace.
- We must implement Cosmic education as a profoundly moral curriculum, in search for what is good for humanity.



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