

**EMBRACING
DIVERSITY:
A CASE
BOOK
FOR
TEACHERS**



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Table of Contents

1		
2		
3	Acknowledgments	3
4	Introduction	4
5	Chapter One: True Variety	6
6	Chapter Two: What’s the Difference Between Us?	14
7	Chapter Three: MapQuest Me.....	25
8	Chapter Four: Faith Not Assumptions	33
9	Chapter Five: Pink or Blue?	38
10	Chapter Six: I Am a Person First.....	53
11	Chapter Seven: The Voices of the Silent	71
12	Cultural Sensitivity Tips	105
13	Glossary	107
14	Appendix A: Ethnicity.....	114
15	Appendix B: Race	119
16	Appendix C: Geographic Diversity	124
17	Appendix D: Religion.....	127
18	Appendix E: Gender	130
19	Appendix F: Disability	132
20	Appendix G: Sexual Orientation.....	135
21		

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Introduction

In May of 2009, students of the University of Pittsburgh's Professional Seminar in School-Based Behavioral Health expressed a deep concern about a lack of cultural sensitivity in school settings. Human diversity brings with it diversity in our schools. Yet, educators may not have adequate preparation to engage in culturally sensitive encounters with students and their families. Our team decided to write a casebook that might enhance educators' skills and knowledge in communicating and interacting effectively with students and their families who identify with different cultures. Our casebook is designed for use in teacher preparation classes, new teacher induction, or professional development sessions in schools and youth agencies.

Given the limited time available for this work, we focused on these areas of diversity and culture:

1. Ethnicity
2. Race
3. Geographic Diversity
4. Religion
5. Gender
6. Disability
7. Sexual Orientation

Limitations of the Guide

The team recognizes that the casebook is in no way inclusive of all cultural groups and their needs. However, it is our sincere hope that these initial suggestions and resources will be useful to educators as they talk about cultural influences and pursue improved practices.

Methodology

Students and instructors met with local resource persons to discuss the focus areas. In addition, students contacted experts in the field and sought their advice on particular questions. Finally, students engaged in extensive reading of the literature, as reflected in the attached appendices.

1 The major text for this project was Robinson and James' *Diversity in human interactions:*
2 *The tapestry of America*. That book contains essays from contributors based on real
3 stories, anecdotes, lessons, and histories of different groups. The twelve chapter topics
4 include disability, sexual orientation, religion, Native American culture, and Latino/a
5 culture, and many others. This is the citation for the book:

6
7 Robinson, J. D., & James, L. C. (Ed.). (2003). *Diversity in human interactions: The tapestry of*
8 *America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

9 10 **How the Casebook is Organized**

11 The casebook is divided into chapters, each exploring a different aspect of diversity.
12 Each chapter includes an explanation and need for cultural sensitivity, and two cases
13 with questions for discussion. One case involves an interaction with a student, while the
14 other case focuses on a parent-teacher interaction. The cases illustrate missteps that
15 adults may make in their interactions with children and their families. Following each
16 case study is a list of questions that may be used for discussion. In addition, three
17 sections titled "What?", "So what?", and "Now what?" provide information and tips
18 associated with each of the seven content areas. Finally, a resource section within each
19 chapter includes additional resources that teachers and educators may find useful.
20 Books, websites, and films are included in these resource sections.

21
22 Throughout the chapters, bolded terms appear. Definitions for these terms are in the
23 glossary following the chapters. To help facilitate discussion, the document is line-
24 numbered.

Chapter One: True Variety

Case Study: Nikolas

Miss Jones is a first year, second grade teacher in a small rural district. She recently graduated from college and is eager to educate the 22 young minds in her classroom. Miss Jones has a nice group of students in her class, and enjoys coming up with exciting activities for each occasion. As the year progresses, Miss Jones becomes increasingly worried about one of her students, Nikolas. Nikolas withdraws himself from many of the holiday celebrations, and does not seem as excited as the other children. Early in the school year, Miss Jones learned that Nikolas and his parents moved here from Greece two years ago. Nikolas speaks perfect English and fits in well with the other children. Because Nikolas' family is Christian, Miss Jones did not make any exceptions to her holiday celebrations. Nikolas' parents did not make any suggestions or requests about Nikolas participating in any of the events. Miss Jones became confused, however, when Nikolas' behavior was much different during these holiday events.

In November, Miss Jones knew that Thanksgiving may be confusing to Nikolas, especially if his parents had not taught him about the holiday. She did not expect Christmas time to be an issue, however. Nikolas was not excited when Santa Claus came to school, and did not want to sit on his lap. When he did, Nikolas did not know that he was supposed to ask Santa Claus for gifts. Miss Jones did not understand the lack of enjoyment in a young child. When Easter came along, the students were permitted to bring in some of the Easter eggs that they colored at home. Nikolas seemed very excited about this, and Miss Jones was relieved to finally have gotten to a celebration that Nikolas enjoyed. The students brought in their eggs bearing all sorts of colors and designs, but when Miss Jones looked at Nikolas' eggs, they were all red.

"Why did you only use red? That's not even an Easter color!" one little girl commented. Other children giggled when they saw Nikolas' eggs.

The proud look on his face quickly vanished. "They are supposed to be red. I've never seen eggs like yours before," Nikolas responded. Miss Jones had, yet again, another sad celebration.

Throughout the school year, the children got to wear a special hat and bring in treats for the other students on their birthdays. Knowing that Nikolas' birthday was

1 approaching, she hoped that he would be excited, as the other children were on their
2 birthdays.

3 When the day of Nikolas' birthday arrived, Miss Jones greeted him
4 enthusiastically, "Good morning birthday boy! How old are you today?"

5 Nikolas was startled by her greeting, and responded with a short "Eight."

6 Miss Jones tried again, "Did you bring your treats in for your special day?"

7 Nikolas' face turned red, "No, I forgot that today was my birthday. Should I
8 bring some tomorrow?"

9 Miss Jones thought to herself, "What child forgets his birthday? What type of
10 parent forgets their own child's birthday?" Miss Jones told Nikolas not worry, and
11 quickly gathered up some snacks to substitute for Nikolas' birthday treats.

12 Miss Jones decided that she needed to approach his parents about her concerns.
13 Miss Jones did not know anyone from Greece before she met Nikolas' parents.
14 However, she only met Nikolas' parents twice, and very briefly, as their work schedules
15 prevented them from attending parent teacher conferences. Miss Jones was nervous
16 about bringing up Nikolas' birthday. She did not want to imply that they were bad
17 parents.

18 Miss Jones approached carefully, "Did Nikolas tell you what we did at school for
19 his birthday?"

20 His parents shook their heads. Miss Jones described how his birthday just
21 happened to be the day that the fire department came to discuss fire safety.

22 "Nikolas got to sit in the driver's seat and honk the horn, because he was the
23 birthday boy!" declared Miss Jones.

24 His mother responded nicely "Oh he did tell us about the fire truck. I forgot that
25 was the same day as his birthday."

26 Miss Jones continued "I think he forgot that it was his birthday because he forgot
27 his treats at home. But I had enough treats for the whole class so it worked out great!"

28 This time, his father spoke up, "We are Greek! We don't celebrate birthdays like
29 you do. We celebrate **Name Days**."

30 Miss Jones was embarrassed. She assumed that everyone in the world celebrated
31 birthdays, with the exception of certain religions. Miss Jones began to wonder what
32 other mistakes she had made with her elaborate holiday celebrations.

33

34

1 **Discussion Questions:**

- 2 1. How could Miss Jones have handled the situations differently?
- 3 2. What could Miss Jones have done to prevent the mistakes and assumptions that
- 4 she made?
- 5 3. What resources are available to teachers and to parents to help understand each
- 6 other's ethnic cultures?
- 7 4. Think about other assumptions that could be made during these situations. How
- 8 could those be avoided?

9 **What?**

10 "An ethnic group or ethnicity is a population of human beings whose members identify
11 with each other, either on the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry.
12 Ethnicity connotes shared cultural, linguistic, or religious traits." Ethnicity is often used
13 interchangeably with race, but they are not necessarily the same. Race refers to physical
14 characteristics, while ethnicity includes language, beliefs, and traditions.
15 Definition from: http://www.diffen.com/difference/Ethnicity_vs_Race

16
17 **So What?**

18 It is important to consider differences in terms of ethnicity throughout your careers and
19 personal lives. There are nearly one hundred different ethnic groups in the United
20 States, each one participating in their own set of values, beliefs, and customs, which
21 may or may not differ from your own. There are many negative assumptions and
22 **stereotypes** that exist for different **ethnic groups**. Gross (1996) found that students in a
23 school with a large number of minority students, had higher office referrals and
24 behavior incidences due to racial/ethnic slurs and stereotyping. You as a teacher must
25 also be aware of your own attitudes towards others. Eberly, Rand, and O'Connor (2007)
26 cited that "**Dispositions** of teachers strongly affect the impact they have on student
27 learning and development" (p.31). Remember, actions speak louder than words.
28 Experts have also found that many teaching practices are not **culturally sensitive**.
29 Kauffman, Conroy, Gardner, and Oswald (2008) stated that "Carefully designed
30 multicultural education should recognize the uniqueness of majority and minority
31 children, better preparing all children who receive it to live in a world with increasing
32 diversity" (p.241). They went on to say that "careful analysis and planning of how
33 culture is incorporated in instruction is critical" (2008, p. 241).

1 **Now What?**

2 You will meet, work with, and teach many people from different ethnic groups. A
3 person's ethnic identity is not always visible through physical appearance, so it is
4 important to be open-minded and non-judgmental. As a teacher, you want to build
5 positive relationships with your students, parents, and co-workers. It only takes one
6 insensitive act to create a negative relationship, which may take twice as long to repair.
7 Teachers must also encourage other students to be accepting of students from different
8 ethnic backgrounds. This will prevent any negative behavior towards students who are
9 "different," cut down on stereotypes, and minimize **voluntary segregation** (Gross,
10 1996). Encourage your students to get to know one another, and provide activities that
11 allow them to learn about one another. Gross (1996) provided excellent lessons and
12 activities, in her dissertation, that may be extremely useful for these purposes.
13 Conduct your own research to learn about the different ethnic groups in your area,
14 especially those in your school district. Educate yourself through books, websites,
15 articles, and films, to create a better understanding of those around you. These
16 resources will also be useful to learn how to interact with individuals from different
17 ethnic groups. According to Kaufman, et al. (2008), using **scientifically-based behavior**
18 **principals** is the best way to teach all students. Do not stick with a pedagogy that is
19 wrong for the students only because you are more comfortable using it. Explore your
20 resources and teach using practices that have been proven to work for all children.

21

22 **Case Study: The Thompsons**

23 "Mom! I need you to sign this for school!" Jenny shouted as she plopped her
24 backpack down in the hallway.

25 Jenny's mom, busy with dinner preparations, nodded her head and replied,
26 "Okay Jenny. Put your backpack away and set the table for dinner."

27 Two days later at school, Mrs. Shields asked the students to turn in their
28 permission slips for the field trip. Jenny suddenly realized her mom hadn't signed the
29 permission slip!

30 "Mrs. Shields, my mom didn't sign mine yet." Jenny spoke up. "Can I bring it
31 tomorrow?"

32 "I'm sorry Jenny, the deadline was today. All of the students who did not bring
33 their permission slips will have to stay here with Mr. Thompson while our class goes on
34 the field trip" Mrs. Shields announced.

1 The fifth grade classes were invited to go on the field trip at the last minute,
2 giving them only 3 days to get the permission slips signed and returned. Mrs. Shields
3 was tired of her students forgetting their materials and being irresponsible. She had
4 decided to use this as a way to hold them accountable. Mrs. Shields felt bad that Jenny
5 was unable to go on the field trip, because Jenny is an excellent student. But since other
6 students also forgot their permission slips, Mrs. Shields could not make an exception for
7 Jenny. She stood her ground and did not give in.

8 Jenny slumped through the rest of the school day with mixed emotions. She was
9 sad that she could not join her classmates on the field trip, and disappointed in herself
10 for being irresponsible. She felt angry with her mom for not signing the permission
11 slip, but she quickly felt ashamed of her anger, knowing that her mom needs help with
12 school papers. Jenny's anger quickly turned to her father, who was out of town on
13 business.

14 “If dad hadn't taken that stupid trip, I would be on my field trip right now,”
15 Jenny thought to herself. “Dad always signs my papers for school, and it figures that
16 the one time he goes out of town is when I need him to sign the most important paper
17 ever!”

18 When Jenny got home from school that day, she told her mom that she could not
19 go on the field trip because she did not have her permission slip. Jenny's mom felt
20 guilty about the situation, knowing that she should have signed the paper when Jenny
21 asked her to.

22 When Jenny's mother moved to the United States from Japan eleven years ago,
23 she spoke very little English. She now understands and can speak English very well;
24 but she still struggles with reading. Jenny's father usually takes care of all school
25 communication. Unfortunately, he had to go away on a business trip for the week, and
26 was not there when Jenny brought home the permission slip. Jenny's mother was
27 unable to read the due date on the form, and did not realize its urgency.

28 The next week, when Jenny's father had returned from his trip and heard about
29 the situation, he called Mrs. Shields to discuss what happened. Mrs. Shields knew the
30 situation at home but had forgotten that Mr. Thomas was going out of town that week.

31 “You know that my wife has trouble reading the school papers, and I was out of
32 town during that week,” Mr. Thomas stated calmly. “You usually give the children the
33 papers at least a week in advance.”

1 “You’re right Mr. Thomas, but this field trip invite was at the last minute, and I
2 only had a few days to get the forms passed out and returned” Mrs. Shields explained.

3 “I understand that, but Jenny shouldn’t have been punished because I was out of
4 town. She always turns everything in on time!” Mr. Thomas exclaimed. “Jenny was
5 responsible and told her mom the paper needed signed. It’s not her fault that my wife
6 couldn’t read the due date and thought it could wait.”

7 Mrs. Shields apologized but there was nothing she could do. The field trip was
8 last week and Jenny had already missed it. She thought about Jenny’s misfortune for
9 the rest of the evening, her mind flooded with excuses:

10 “It’s not my fault that Mrs. Thomas never learned how to read English. Jenny
11 knew that the paper needed to be returned, she could have been more responsible. And
12 why didn’t Mr. Thomas contact me before hand and let me know that he was leaving
13 town? Maybe this wouldn’t have happened if I knew the situation.”

14
15 **Discussion Questions:**

- 16 1. How do you think Mrs. Shields should have handled the situation?
- 17 2. Was Mrs. Shields wrong not to let Jenny go on the field trip?
- 18 3. Discuss ways that Mrs. Shields and Jenny’s family could have prevention this
19 situation from happening.

20
21 **Suggested Resources:**

22
23 **Websites**

24 <http://www.understandingprejudice.org/readroom/kidsbib.htm>

25 This site lists numerous books for all ages, dealing with diversity.

26
27 <http://www.multiculturalchildrenslit.com/>

28 Celebrating Cultural Diversity Through Children’s Literature-another great site
29 for children’s books on diversity.

30
31 <http://www.globalpittsburgh.org/>

32 Global Pittsburgh is a regional initiative providing news and information about
33 the international character of the Pittsburgh region.

1 www.culturecrossing.net

2 "A community built guide to cross-culture etiquette and understanding." This
3 site is great for a quick reference to many different cultural topics. The reliability
4 is not known as it is "community built."
5

6 http://www.valpo.edu/geomet/geo/courses/geo200/usa_maps.html:

7 This site provides a map gallery of ethnic groups in the United States. It is very
8 useful to see the percentage of each ethnic group in your area.
9

10 [http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/resources/Extended_Eth_Codes_V1](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/resources/Extended_Eth_Codes_V1_Oct06.xls)
11 [_Oct06.xls](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/resources/Extended_Eth_Codes_V1_Oct06.xls)

12 This site provides the codes that are used to identify ethnic minority groups on
13 school forms in the UK. It is useful to see the difference between the "main
14 category" and "approved extended categories."
15

16 **Films**

17 *Freedom Writers*

18 Hillary Swank stars as a teacher who changes the lives of a class of inner city
19 students. She encourages them to learn about themselves and others who have
20 been through the same circumstances and situations. This movie is based on the
21 true story and book *The Freedom Writers*.
22

23 *Gran Torino*

24 Clint Eastwood stars as a Korean War vet, recently widowed, who learns to open
25 his heart and mind to his new neighbors (of an ethnic group that he dislikes).
26 Stereotypes, racial slurs, and harsh language are strong in this film as you
27 witness Eastwood's transformation and learning process.
28

29 *Mad Hot Ballroom*

30 "Ballroom dancing goes from lame to cool for a group of New York City public
31 school kids in this insightful documentary. The film follows a group of 11-year-
32 olds as they learn to dance old-school styles including the meringue, rumba,
33 tango, foxtrot and swing. Candid interviews capture the kids' initial reluctance at
34 learning ballroom dance and their transformation into serious competitors
35 determined to win a citywide competition." (Netflix Review)

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Books

School Girls: Young women, self-esteem, and the confidence gap By Peggy Orenstein

In this book, Orenstein describes a research study that she conducted to analyze the achievement gap between males and females in the public schools systems. She followed around numerous females from two very different schools, each of different backgrounds. Her experiences reveal the shocking similarities and differences between students of different minority groups.

Exploring culture: Exercises, stories, and synthetic cultures By Gert Jan Hofstede, & Paul B. Pedersen

“A unique training book containing over 100 culture awareness exercises, dialogues, stories, incidents, and simulations that bring to life Geert Hofstede's five dimensions of culture. These dimensions are: power distance, collectivism versus individualism, femininity versus masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term versus short-term orientation. Exploring culture also contains new material on Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions and the synthetic cultures. An excellent partner to Hofstede's popular cultures & organizations.” (Amazon.com)

Children’s Books

<http://www.understandingprejudice.org/readroom/kidsbib.htm>

This site lists numerous books for all ages, dealing with diversity.

<http://www.multiculturalchildrenslit.com/>

Celebrating Cultural Diversity Through Children’s Literature-another great site for children’s books on diversity.

Chapter Two: What's the Difference Between Us?

Case Study: Kayla March

Kayla March is an African American 2nd grader. She and her family recently moved from the inner city to a suburban area. Kayla's mother, Darlene, registered Kayla for Catholic school in their area because she wants to offer her daughter the best education available. Darlene believes that her new school will not only provide quality education, but also will give Kayla a good moral foundation, which will prepare her for success as an adult. Kayla entered Bishop Andrews almost halfway through the first quarter of the school year.

After Darlene dropped Kayla off for her first day in the new school, Kayla met her new teacher, Mrs. Simpson. Mrs. Simpson welcomed Kayla and introduced her to the class. The class greeted her and Mrs. Simpson showed Kayla to her curiously isolated seat in the back of the room. Mrs. Simpson continued with her science lesson on animals. She looked to Kayla and told her, "I know you've probably never heard of an aardvark before, but I will fill you in on this later."

Kayla wanted to tell Mrs. Simpson that she does in fact know about aardvarks, but she did not want to correct her new teacher on her first day of school, so instead, Kayla quietly replied, "Okay."

Later in the day Mrs. Simpson called for free time in the classroom. During free time, the children can play board games, puzzles, computer games, etc. if they have completed their class work. Since she was new to the class, Kayla sat in the corner alone playing with some blocks. Her classmate Jessica approached her and began to play with her. The girls got along well, and Kayla was excited at the prospect of a new friend. But suddenly, Jessica pointed at Kayla's arm and asked, "Why does your skin look different than mine? Have you been out in the sun for a really long time? Because my mommy says that staying out in the sun for a long time will give you sunburn and it will hurt really bad!"

"My skin is different because I am black," Kayla replied in a low tone.

"Oh I have heard all about black people! My uncle has told me stories about you," Jessica said excitedly. "He says that you people are lazy, loud, and rude. Is that true?"

1 “No, that’s not true! I can’t believe you would say something like that! Do I look
2 lazy, loud, or rude?” Kayla replied, as tears welled in her eyes. “I don’t want to play
3 with you anymore. Go away!”

4 “Well why would he tell me those things if they aren’t true, huh? My uncle isn’t
5 a liar,” Jessica stated matter-of-factly.

6 “I don’t know. Maybe he is a bad man who doesn’t have any friends,” said Kayla
7 angrily. “I am going to tell the teacher that you said those bad things about me.”

8 “Go ahead, she is the same color as me so she probably knows all about you
9 people, too,” Jessica told Kayla.

10 Kayla ran crying to tell Mrs. Simpson what happened. “Jessica has been calling
11 me names and saying mean things about me and people who look like me!”

12 “It’s okay. I’m sure Jessica did not mean those things she said to you. If it
13 happens again, I’ll have a talk with her, okay?” Mrs. Simpson said, wiping the tears
14 from Kayla’s face. “Now run along and play.”

15 Kayla listens to Mrs. Simpson and returned to the playroom, where Jessica was
16 still playing with the blocks.

17 Jessica, having overheard Mrs. Simpson, said to Kayla, “I did mean it. I don’t
18 know why God made you that way but I don’t like it. You are ugly! Do you *like* looking
19 like that? You should look pretty like me. Everyone else in here does.”

20 “I love the way I look and my mommy tells me that I am beautiful everyday,
21 and she *really* isn’t a liar,” Kayla declared proudly. “I can’t help the way God made me.
22 Why do you hate me for it? I can’t do anything about the way I look.”

23 “Well I still don’t like you and I don’t want to play with you anymore.” Jessica
24 rudely stated. “And I am going to tell everyone else in her not to play with you either.”

25 “But that’s not fair!” Kayla said in disgust. “People should be able to make up
26 their own minds about who they want to be friends with.”

27 “Not here. If I tell them not to be friends with you, they won’t. They’ll listen to
28 me because I will tell them all the bad things I know about you people,” Jessica said
29 with authority.

30 “You are mean to me and I don’t even know what I did to you. I am going to tell
31 my mommy that I do not want to come back to this school ever again because you are
32 so mean,” Kayla said in a sad voice.

33 “Good!” yelled Jessica. “You didn’t belong here in the first place! I hope you
34 never come back here so I don’t have to see your ugly face again!”

1 Again, Kayla ran to Mrs. Simpson to tell her the things that Jessica said to her.
2 Mrs. Simpson comforted Kayla and told her that she would have a talk with Jessica
3 about being mean to others. Having no idea that the issue was more about race than not
4 getting along with one another, Mrs. Simpson told Jessica, "I think you hurt Kayla's
5 feelings when you said all those unkind things about her. We do not say unkind things
6 to each other in our class. Remember; always use your nice words with people. You
7 wouldn't want someone else to hurt *your* feelings, right?"

8 "Yes Mrs. Simpson," Jessica replied.

9 Mrs. Simpson walked away to check on the other children in the classroom
10 leaving the girls to finish playing.

11 "Tattletale!" Jessica taunted in an angry voice, sticking her tongue out at Kayla
12 and then walking away.

13 Darlene picked Kayla up after school and asked, "How was your day
14 sweetheart?"

15

16 **Discussion Questions:**

- 17 1. Do you think the school or Mrs. Simpson prepared for Kayla to come into the
18 school?
- 19 2. What are some other ways Mrs. Simpson could have handled the situation
20 differently?
- 21 3. Do you think the school has ever taught their children about diversity or exposed
22 their children to diversity of any kind?
- 23 4. How do you have a conversation about race and culture with a 2nd grader? What
24 do you say?
- 25 5. Would it have been appropriate to openly express to the class that Kayla is of a
26 different race and talk about what that means rather than trying to ignore or
27 excuse it?

28

29 **What?**

30 Markus (2008) along with his colleague, Paul Moya, defines **race** as a "dynamic set of
31 historically derived and institutionalized ideas and practices that sorts people into
32 ethnic groups according to perceived physical and behavioral human characteristics;
33 associates differential value, power, and privilege with these characteristics and
34 establishes a social status ranking among the different groups..." (p. 654). Race has been

1 described as index of power, authority, and privilege of one group over another. It is a
2 way of categorizing or distinguishing significantly different groups from one another
3 (Markus, 2008). According to the 2000 US Census, there are five main race categories in
4 the United States. The main categories of race in the United States are “White”, “Black
5 or African American”, “American Indian or Alaska Native”, “Asian”, “Native Hawaiian
6 or Other Pacific Islander” (Grieco & Cassidy, 2001). Those who do not identify with one
7 of the categories listed are given the option to choose “Some other race”. Those who
8 identified with more than one race are given the option to choose “Two or more races”
9 (Grieco & Cassidy, 2001). Hispanic/Latino is not used as a central category of race
10 because it makes up so many different cultures from several geographical locations.
11 Therefore, it is considered a concept of ethnicity rather than race. (Grieco & Cassidy,
12 2001).

13

14 **So What?**

15 For years there has been a nature versus nurture debate about race. Race was thought to
16 be biological in nature because society attributed certain traits and characteristics to
17 groups and generalized it to all who belonged to that race. Williams and Eberhardt
18 found that those who held on to the notion that race was biological were more likely to
19 endorse **stereotypes**, had very few friends of different races, and attributed negative
20 qualities of people of other races to biological traits (Markus, 2008).

21

22 Markus (2008) argues that race and ethnicity are not biological in nature; instead, they
23 are the result of society’s way of making sense of systematic behaviors that guide one’s
24 own behaviors and explain the behaviors of others. He makes the case that race is
25 defined by others not associated with a particular group. Categorizing groups has little
26 to do with values, traditions, beliefs, and/or behaviors of those associated with that
27 group. Racial differences are imposed by another group and are not necessarily
28 endorsed by the group itself (Markus, 2008).

29

30 Atwater discusses the work of Steele and Aronson who developed a term called
31 “**stereotype threat**” (Atwater, 2008, p. 248). Individuals experience stereotype threat
32 when they begin to believe that the negative traits attributed to one’s group are true of
33 themselves.

34

1 Race is important because society engages in **racism** and **racial discrimination** both
2 consciously and unconsciously. Racial discrimination is used to define people by social
3 categories and is sometimes used as a tool for discrimination. Racial discrimination
4 occurs in healthcare, the labor force, housing opportunities, as well as in education. It is
5 also used to establish the basis for social privilege. Those not belonging to the **dominant**
6 **race** may be considered by persons engaged in racism as inferior and thus are not
7 afforded the same privileges of one associated with the dominant race. "Attributions of
8 superiority or inferiority to different races have been used as a basis for denying basic
9 human rights to certain groups and entitling others to social privileges" (Trumbull &
10 Pacheco, 2005, p. 7).

11
12 Atwater (2008) provides data from various researchers that confirm teachers generally
13 bring racial and cultural biases and assumptions to their classroom--beliefs they are
14 sometimes unaware of. Regardless of whether the assumptions are conscious or
15 unconscious, they have an impact on teacher attitudes and behaviors and student
16 academic achievement. Some teachers see race and culture as a "deficit" in a student's
17 individual development and academic achievement (Atwater, 2008).

18
19 Race is important because it gives an individual a sense of identity, a sense of self.
20 Research shows that identification with a racial group plays a significant role in identity
21 development (Liggett, 2008). **Racial identity** has shown some relationship to academic
22 achievement (Cicetti-Turro, 2007). Members of non-dominant groups seem to have a
23 strong sense of pride and sense of belonging to their culture (Trumbull & Pacheco,
24 2005). This can be either beneficial or damaging to a student's academic achievement. If
25 a child feels that their racial identity is accepted and valued in the classroom, they may
26 be likely to perform much better academically. If they feel inferior because of their race,
27 they are more likely to do poorer academically and possibly disengage from education.
28 In fact, researchers have made the argument that students are more likely to succeed
29 when their teachers display cultural sensitivity in the classroom (Scott & Mumford,
30 2007).

31
32 **Now What?**

33 Race is not an easy concept to grasp nor is it particularly easy to change people's minds
34 about preconceived notions of race. However, the best way to begin to change people's

1 ideals about race is through education. Education is a very powerful tool that can give a
2 person the ability to reshape beliefs about race.

3
4 Liggett (2008) provides data from the US Department of Education that indicates that
5 over 80% of the teaching profession is comprised of White American teachers, while
6 there remain a relatively low number of teachers of color. In contrast, there is an
7 increase in students of color enrolled in public schools, especially in low-income
8 neighborhoods (Liggett, 2008). In light of this phenomenon, teachers and administrators
9 must begin to embrace multicultural educational training.

10
11 Aside from families, teachers have the most influence on socializing children.
12 Pedagogical models must address diversity from a perspective of cultural awareness
13 and must be careful to avoid blaming or defensive attitudes that may result in
14 miscommunication and ill feelings. Teachers need to learn to move beyond traditional
15 practices of education into respect, care, concern, and open dialogue with students who
16 look different from themselves (Cicetti-Turro, 2007).

17
18 Liggett (2008) suggests helping teachers learn to explore their own racial identities in
19 order to understand diversity and learn how to respond to members of other racial
20 groups. She mentions the idea of “re-contextualizing” interaction with one another
21 (Liggett, 2008). Liggett (2008) says that this happens through self-exploration and
22 shifting education programs to embrace multiculturalism.

23
24 Atwater (2008) offers the idea of diversity training as a way to address cultural
25 sensitivity. The training suggested by Zeichner and others is twofold (Atwater, 2008).
26 The first part encompasses cultural knowledge that seeks to teach about different
27 cultures and learning styles. The second part is color consciousness that encourages
28 self-awareness and reflection of one’s own attitudes and beliefs (Atwater, 2008).

29
30 Some of the key points to remember when dealing with race:

- 31 • Never assume – If you have questions, ASK! (Nermeen El Nokali and Justine
32 Cortez)
- 33 • View a child as a person/individual. (Elizabeth Healy and Ceil Belasco)
- 34 • Challenge people to think about what they believe and why. (Dr. Bob Stump)

- 1 • Be open-minded and genuine about learning about different cultures.
- 2 • Do not use phrases that begin with “Aren’t you. . .?” , “Don’t you all. . .?” , or
- 3 “Shouldn’t you. . .?”; use language like “I’m interested in understanding. . .” ,
- 4 “Can you explain?” , Can you elaborate?” . (Nermeen El Nokali and Justine
- 5 Cortez).
- 6 • Be aware of racial and ethnic slurs (even though they may be unconscious or
- 7 unintended: e.g. “Let’s all sit ‘Indian Style.’”)
- 8 • Race can be thought of as a lens. We zoom in when we acknowledge a person’s
- 9 identity or individualism and zoom out when we make generalizations about a
- 10 group. Learn to find the right focus by getting to know an individual within the
- 11 context of their race. (Dr. Stanley Denton)
- 12 • Allow children to find their own solutions. Provide guidance and assistance for
- 13 them to arrive at their *own* solutions. (Dr. Stanley Denton)
- 14 • Be aware of invisibility and spotlighting. Invisibility is when we see what is
- 15 happening but choose not to address the issue (also referred to as “silenced
- 16 dialogued”). Spotlighting is when we believe that one person speaks for their
- 17 whole race. (Dr. Stanley Denton)

18

19 **Case Study: The McDaniel Family**

20 As Mr. Kingston, the assistant principal at North Central Elementary School,
21 reviewed school attendance for the year’s first semester, he came across a student with
22 an outstanding record of consecutive unexcused absences.

23 “This is unacceptable!” exclaimed Mr. Kingston. “I am going to have to talk with
24 his teacher and call a meeting with this young man’s family about his absences.”

25 Mr. Kingston called Mrs. Jefferson, the fourth grade teacher, into the office. “Mrs.
26 Jefferson, I have been reviewing attendance for the first two marking periods and I have
27 come across one of your students, Corey McDaniel, who has missed a lot of school days
28 so far, and it does not look like he has any doctor excuses to verify the missed days. Are
29 you aware of this?”

30 “Yes sir, I am aware of the fact that Corey has missed several days of school. I
31 have sent several letters home, and the responses simply say that Corey was out of
32 town with family. When I ask him where he has been, he looks to the ground and tells
33 me that he was with his family,” said Mrs. Jefferson. “But I assure you, sir, Corey works

1 diligently to make up his work upon his return. It is as if he never missed a beat. He
2 falls right back into place."

3 "That may be, but this is an unacceptable number of absences. If he keeps this
4 up, he'll be facing truancy," Mr. Kingston told Mrs. Jefferson. "I am going to call his
5 parents and schedule a parent-teacher conference."

6 Later that day, Mrs. Jefferson discussed Corey's situation with a colleague.

7 "Is that Jesse McDaniel's little brother? Jesse did the same thing when I had him
8 a few years ago, back when Dr. Singh was principal. Jesse would miss a ton of class in
9 the fall for 'family stuff', then in the spring it was like nothing ever happened—he was a
10 model student."

11 "Really?" Mrs. Jefferson said, "I hope everything is alright, you know, with their
12 family. I guess I'll find out when his parents come in for the conference."

13 On the day of the conference, Corey, his mother and father, his two younger
14 brothers, Aunt Christine, and Grandmother Ida all attended the meeting.

15 Before Mr. Kingston or Mrs. Jefferson could introduce himself or herself, Corey's
16 grandmother blurted out, "now just what is this meeting about?"

17 Mr. Kingston replied, "Well I asked Corey's parents here to discuss a concern I
18 had about Corey's attendance. My records show that he has missed almost twenty days
19 of school so far, and we are only half way through the school year. Mrs. Jefferson tells
20 me that Corey is a great student, but if these absences continue, there could be serious
21 consequences for him. Is there something the school should be aware of? An illness? Is
22 everything okay at home?"

23 Everyone stared at one another intently. After a long pause, Ida responded,
24 "Corey is healthy and everything is fine at home."

25 "Well, then why is he missing so much school, Mr. and Mrs. McDaniel?"
26 directing his question to Corey's parents. "If we do not find out what is going on here
27 soon, we will be obligated to take action."

28 "And what action might that be, Mr. Kingston?" Grandmother Ida asked.

29 "Well, if Corey continues to miss this much class, he may face failure or
30 expulsion." remarked Mr. Kingston.

31 Silence filled the room once again. Nervous to fill the silence, Mrs. Jefferson
32 interjected, "actually, Mr. and Mrs. McDaniel, Corey is doing very well in my class. He
33 gets along with his peers and his grades are remarkable. He has missed quite a few
34 days but when he does miss class, Corey will come to me upon his return to find out

1 what he needs to do to make up his work. I have not had a problem with Corey
2 finishing his work yet.”

3 “Well, if Corey is doing very well in class, what is the problem?” Corey’s
4 grandmother inquired.

5 Frustrated with Grandmother Ida’s tone, Mr. Kingston stated, “Mrs. McDaniel,
6 our school policy clearly states that a child is not to have more than ten unexcused
7 absences each half of the school year. Furthermore, these mysterious absences fit the
8 pattern for an abusive household. Now, if you can’t tell me why Corey is missing so
9 much school, we are *legally compelled* to inform the authorities of possible child abuse.
10 Now, is there something you’d like to tell me?”

11 “If you must know, and it seems that you must, Mr. Kingston, the days Corey
12 has missed school relate to traditional ceremonies within our tribe. As even *you’ve*
13 surely noticed we are Native American. Every year our tribe holds ceremonies on the
14 reservation that last several days. These ceremonies are very sacred to us and are
15 something we like to keep private and not share with the world,” explained Corey’s
16 grandmother. “Corey’s parents have sent letters to Mrs. Jefferson prior to leaving that
17 indicating that Corey would be absent from school for familial reasons. We understand
18 that school is very important, but our heritage is also important to us and we want
19 Corey to know his history and appreciate his culture. Corey’s old school said they
20 ‘didn’t recognize’ tribal holidays, and threatened to expel him. So if you want to expel a
21 perfectly good student for partaking in cultural traditions, we will take Corey out of
22 this school and place him a more tolerant school.”

23

24 **Discussion Questions:**

- 25 1. Do you think this is the first meeting between Corey’s family and the school?
- 26 2. As the teacher, how would you have handled the situation with the assistant
27 principal and with Corey’s family so that it would not have come to this?
- 28 3. Why do you think other family members came to the conference meeting when
29 Mr. Jefferson only wanted to speak with Corey’s parents?
- 30 4. Why do you think that Corey’s grandmother did all the talking even though Mr.
31 Kingston tried addressing Corey’s parents throughout the meeting?
- 32 5. In what ways could Mr. Kingston handled this situation differently?
- 33 6. Do you think this school is culturally aware or celebrates different cultures?

1 7. As a teacher or school administrator, how would you have handled this
2 situation? Would you excuse the absences in light of cultural traditions or would
3 you continue with school policy and take action?
4

5 **Suggested Resources:**

6
7 **Books**

8
9 Jacobs, B. A. (1999). *Race manners for the 21st Century*. New York: Arcade Publishing.
10 This is a book about race relations in American. It provides examples of attitudes
11 of race in the United States. The book offers ways to bring about meaningful
12 dialogue to confront race issues.
13

14 Trumbull, E., & Pacheco, M. (2005). *Leading with diversity: Cultural competencies for*
15 *teacher preparation and professional development*. Providence, Rhode Island: The
16 Education of Alliance at Brown University and Pacific Resources for Education
17 and Learning.
18

19 This serves as a handguide to help teachers learn and understand the importance
20 of cultural awareness as schools are becoming more diverse. It covers issues
21 related to culture, race, and ethnicity, and how one can learn to be culturally
22 sensitive and acquire the skills to work with diverse populations. The book can
23 also be download online: www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/leading_diversity/

24
25 <http://www.understandingprejudice.org/readroom/kidsbib.htm>

26 A listing of books that encompasses several topics such as race, discrimination,
27 slavery, disabilities, gay and lesbian families, and women's rights.
28

29 Celebrating Cultural Diversity through Children's Literature

30 <http://www.multiculturalchildrenslit.com/>

31 A listing of multicultlural children's literature that includes a number of different
32 cultures.
33

34 **Videos**

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30 Days - Life on an Indian Reservation

<http://vod.fxnetworks.com/fod/play.php?sh=thirtydays>

This is a video about living on the reservation as an American Indian. This is a brief glimpse into the world of the Navajo tribe.

A Class Divided – Jane Elliot Experiment

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/divided/xperiment>

A teacher did this experiment the day after the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King. Some of her children were not sure of the significance of his life so she decided to do an experiment with her children using eye color as a discriminating factor to teach the children about race and discrimination. The video discusses the experiment she did and includes interviews with the children years later to show how this experiment changed their lives.

Websites

Race - The Power of an Illusion

http://www.pbs.org/race/000_General/000_00-Home.htm

This website is a documentary about race in society. It is a valuable tool for videos, lesson plans, history and timelines, facts and knowledge about race, and further resources and additional readings.

Chapter Three: MapQuest Me

Case Study: Jimmy Brown

C City Elementary School is located in an urban area with a population of approximately 500,000 people. C City Elementary educates students from Kindergarten through fifth grade. Mrs. Smith is a fourth grade teacher there, having moved from a slightly larger city to work in her current teaching position. Her class contains 22 students, all of whom have grown up in cities.

Mrs. Jones is the School-Based Behavioral Health Director at C City Elementary. Like many of Mrs. Smith's students, Mrs. Jones has lived in C City her entire life, except while attending college.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown and their son, Jimmy, are from a very small town in a rural part of the state. Mr. Brown recently lost his job of eight years, and after an extensive search for employment, he finally found work in C City. In October, he and his family moved to the City so that he could pursue a new career.

With the move, Jimmy joined Mrs. Smith's class. On Jimmy's first day, Mrs. Smith was discussing a presentation assignment about different occupations:

"Let's talk for a minute about how your reports and presentations are coming along. Now that you all have had a few days since I assigned occupations to everyone, are you starting to find out anything interesting? I'm really looking forward to your presentations; we have a nice mix of occupations this year."

At the end of the day, Mrs. Smith pulled Jimmy aside to talk to him about the occupation assignment.

Mrs. Smith began, "I realize you won't have as much time as the other students to work on your occupation report, Jimmy, but that's why I have the perfect thing for you! I've decided to assign you the occupation of a farmer. I know you and your family moved here from way out in the country, so you should have no trouble doing a report on this job. You should start working on this right away. See you tomorrow!"

When Jimmy got home that night, he told his parents about his assignment.

"Mom, Dad, listen," Jimmy said. "My new teacher gave me an assignment today. She told me I have to do a report and a presentation on an occupation. Everyone else has had more time than me to do this, so she said she wanted to assign me an occupation that I'd already know a lot about. So, she told me I should do mine on a

1 farmer. She said that I should know a lot about being a farmer because we moved here
2 from way out in the country, but I don't know anything about farming. I mean—Dad,
3 you sell insurance, and Mom, you worked at the community college. Neither of those
4 sounds like farming to me.”

5 Upon hearing this, Mr. and Mrs. Brown were pretty offended that Mrs. Smith
6 assumed that they were farmers just because they used to live in a rural area. They
7 couldn't believe that a teacher would jump to such conclusions about a child and his
8 family based solely on where they used to live. They became even more upset because
9 Jimmy knew *nothing* about farming; he was always interested in building things, and
10 wanted to be an architect. With no knowledge of his occupation and less time to do the
11 assignment, they feared for Jimmy's grades.

12 Mr. and Mrs. Brown decided to call the school and complain about the incident.
13 The complaint was relayed to Mrs. Jones, the School-Based Behavioral Health Director,
14 who now faced a very tough situation. Mrs. Jones wants to make sure Jimmy can
15 complete his assignments now, so he doesn't get behind and lose confidence later.
16 Something must also be done about the parent-teacher relationship that is now
17 suffering due to Mrs. Smith's insensitivity and assumptions about the culture of rural
18 life.

19

20 **Discussion Questions:**

- 21 1. What could Mrs. Smith have done to prevent the mistake of making assumptions
22 about Jimmy's background?
- 23 2. How could Mrs. Smith have handled assigning Jimmy a report/presentation
24 topic differently?
- 25 3. What could be done to mend the relationship between Mrs. Smith and the
26 Browns?
- 27 4. What could be done to ensure that Jimmy feels comfortable in class and
28 confident that he can keep up with his classmates?

29

30 **What?**

31 The case study above brings to light the issue of urban and rural differences, which is
32 one form of **geographic diversity**. This type of geographic diversity focuses on the
33 variation among individuals from urban, suburban, and rural cultures. Geographic
34 diversity can take another form when thinking about **intra-racial** and **interracial**

1 cultural differences. That is, individuals who are considered members of the same race
2 based on their skin color and/or appearance, as well as those who are of different races,
3 often have very different cultural practices. These differences stem from the fact that
4 individuals, regardless of race, come from various geographic locations all over the
5 world, each of which has its own unique culture.

6 7 **So What?**

8 Rural and urban diversity is a genuine topic of concern. Substantial variation between
9 these geographic groups has been reported in the literature. Glenn and Hill (1977)
10 revealed that rural individuals tend to have more conservative and religious views than
11 urban while urban individuals tend to have more liberal and less religious views than
12 rural. A new pattern in rural populations emerged more recently; immigrants to the
13 United States are choosing to live in rural areas more so now than ever (Waldorf,
14 Florax, & Beckhusen, 2008). Cultural and economic differences between urban and rural
15 individuals were identified as the source of higher rates of child psychopathology in
16 urban children (Zahner, Jacobs, Freeman, & Trainor, 1993). These findings support the
17 notion that urban and rural geographic diversity is real and exists in various forms. In
18 educational settings, it is important to keep this sort of diversity in mind to ensure that
19 the individual needs of each student are met and interactions with students and their
20 families are smooth, regardless of their background.

21
22 The intra-racial and interracial forms of geographic diversity mentioned earlier present
23 yet another set of issues to consider. In the United States, people tend to group
24 individuals together and make generalizations about them based on race. For instance,
25 black immigrants from the Caribbean, Africa, and Central and South America all tend
26 to be grouped together as Black Americans while their individual values, cultural
27 patterns, and attitudes are ignored (Caldwell-Colbert, Henderson-Daniel, & Dudley-
28 Grant, 2003). The cultures found in different geographic locations make these Black
29 Americans unique. Thus, when this sort of diversity is encountered in schools, it is
30 imperative that educators make an effort to be aware of the unique culture that each
31 student and his/her family represent.

32 33 **Now What?**

34 Now that you see the importance of being sensitive to various forms of geographic

1 diversity, what comes next? As an educator you can set an example for others by
2 learning about the cultures associated with different regions, especially those of your
3 students and their families. Making an effort to understand their values and customs,
4 though they may be different from your own, will help you communicate and interact
5 with them more effectively. Your openness and sensitivity to cultural issues will show,
6 and will make it possible to build good relationships with your students and their
7 families.

8

9 To begin the learning process, you can start by going through the following case study.
10 It is a good example of how cultural insensitivity can make for unsuccessful interactions
11 between educators and families. You may even want to go back through the first case
12 study now that you have a better understanding of geographic diversity. It will be
13 helpful to think about the discussion questions thoroughly for each case study as well.
14 The list of resources at the end of this section should provide you with some good
15 information about geographic diversity and how to deal with it, as well as ideas for
16 incorporating cultural lessons into your teaching.

17

18 **Case Study: The Duttons**

19 Mrs. Watson is a kindergarten teacher at Burb Elementary School. Burb
20 Elementary is a small suburban school. The school environment is not very racially or
21 ethnically diverse. This year is Mrs. Watson's second year teaching at the school. Last
22 year, all of her students were white and most of them came from fairly wealthy families.
23 This year, her students are once again white and mostly from middle or upper class
24 families.

25 The Duttons are a black family that has resided in the city for the past several
26 years. Mr. and Mrs. Dutton decided to move their family to a suburb outside of the city
27 so that their three children could receive what they felt would be a better quality
28 education. They have now enrolled their daughter, Aniyah, in Mrs. Watson's
29 kindergarten class at Burb Elementary.

30 Two months after Aniyah joined Mrs. Watson's class, Mrs. Watson decided to
31 have the students and their parents participate in what she calls an "Ethnicity
32 Celebration." Mrs. Watson held this celebration last year and it went very well; students
33 and their parents shared the food and traditions of everyone's ethnic background
34 including Italian, Irish, and German. In preparation for this year's celebration, Mrs.

1 Watson is calling the parents of each of her students to ask for their assistance with and
2 participation in the event.

3 When Mrs. Watson called the Duttons' home, Aniyah's older brother Zac
4 answered the phone, "Hello, Dutton residence."

5 Mrs. Watson responded, "Oh hello, this is Mrs. Watson from Burb Elementary
6 School. May I speak with Mr. or Mrs. Dutton please?"

7 "Yeah, sure," Zac said. "Hold on one moment."

8 Mrs. Dutton answered, "This is Aniyah's mom. What can I do for you?"

9 "Hello there. I'm actually calling about an event that I'm planning for the
10 students and their parents. I'm contacting all the parents to see if they would be willing
11 to participate and help out. The event is an 'Ethnicity Celebration.' Basically, I'm trying
12 to demonstrate to the children that diversity is something to celebrate and enjoy. I'm
13 asking the parents to contribute a representative dish, along with coming in to talk
14 about the traditions of the ethnicity they represent. So, would you be willing to discuss
15 your African heritage for our celebration?"

16 Mrs. Dutton paused. Then, in a rather aggravated tone, she said, "I think you are
17 a bit mistaken. Not all black people are African! Mr. Dutton and I are originally from
18 Haiti. Being Haitian and being African are two very different things. And, to be honest,
19 I'm quite surprised that you of all people would make that mistake. I would think that
20 being a teacher, you would be more sensitive to these kinds of issues. I mean, how are
21 you supposed to be teaching the children about ethnicity when, you seem to know
22 nothing about it! I'm sorry; I didn't mean to raise my voice. But you should know that
23 so-called 'African-Americans' in the United States have a great deal of geographic
24 diversity. Some do come from Africa, but many of these people come from places like
25 Central America, South America, and the Caribbean, like us. The point is that we don't
26 identify ourselves by our race; we identify ourselves by our ethnicity, which is *Haitian-*,
27 not African-, American." Mrs. Dutton then hung up the phone.

28 Mrs. Watson was speechless. She couldn't believe how insensitive she had just
29 been to Mrs. Dutton. Thinking back, she now realizes how ignorant she has really been
30 about ethnicity and diversity and feels terrible. After such an uncomfortable exchange,
31 she questions whether or not she should do the Ethnicity Celebration at all.

32

33 **Discussion Questions:**

34 1. What could Mrs. Watson have done to prevent the mistake of making

- 1 assumptions about the Duttons' background?
- 2 2. How could Mrs. Watson have handled asking for the Duttons' help and
- 3 participation in the Ethnicity Celebration differently?
- 4 3. What could be done to alleviate the tension caused by this uncomfortable
- 5 conversation between Mrs. Watson and Mrs. Dutton?
- 6 4. Do you think the conversation between Mrs. Watson and Mrs. Dutton will affect
- 7 Aniyah's relationship with her teacher? How so? What could be done that would
- 8 result in maintaining positive parent-teacher and teacher-student relationships?
- 9

10 **Suggested Resources:**

11

12 **Books**

13

14 Dresser, N. (1996). *Multicultural manners: New rules of etiquette for a changing society*. New

15 York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

16

17 This book offers excellent information about rules for effective communication

18 with individuals from other cultures and regions, including a section specifically

19 on classroom behavior.

20

21 Robinson, J. D., & James, L. C. (Eds.). (2003). *Diversity in human interactions: The tapestry*

22 *of America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

23

24 This book contains a collection of chapters on different cultures, races, and forms

25 of diversity. Each chapter provides insightful information about various aspects

26 of the culture, race, etc. in focus.

27

28 **Children's Books**

29

30 Dooley, N. (1996). *Everybody bakes bread*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books.

31 This book showcases the diversity in staple foods and lifestyles of people from

32 different nations.

33

1 Kindersley, B., & Kindersley, A. (1995). *Children just like me*. New York: Dorling
2 Kindersley.

3

4 This book is divided by continent and features pictures of children from all
5 around the world. Each child's picture is accompanied by additional pictures
6 and information about his/her culture, food, school, family, and housing.

7

8 **Video**

9

10 jennamurphee. (2009, April 11). Urban, Suburban, & Rural [Video File]. Video posted to
11 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuF2o7SaRWU>

12

13 This video is for second grade students and explains the differences between
14 urban, suburban, and rural.

15

16 **Websites**

17

18 <http://www.childrenlead.org/>

19 This website provides information and ideas for teachers and students to learn
20 about multiculturalism and diversity.

21

22 <http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/cquest/>

23 This website provides some great cultural information for kids about several of
24 the nations in the world.

25

26 <http://www.ruralstrategies.org/issues/perspective1.html>

27 This website presents information on rural America and dispels myths that exist
28 about people from rural areas.

29

30 <http://www.songsforteaching.com/diversitymulticulturalism.htm>

31 This website has a great list of songs available for purchase that are about
32 diversity and various cultures.

33

34 <http://www.tolerance.org/>

1 This website provides free educational materials to support multicultural
2 education and diversity.

3

4 <http://www.diversitycouncil.org/elActivities.shtml>

5 This website lists several educational activities that can be done with elementary
6 school students to raise awareness and acceptance of diversity.

Chapter Four: Faith Not Assumptions

Case Study: Akeem

"Akeem, it's time to wake up!" his mother screamed up the stairs.

Akeem rolled slowly out of bed and walked over to where his clothes were placed the night before.

As he got dressed, his mother added, "Hurry—we are going to be late. You don't want to be late for your first day of school."

Akeem finished dressing and walked slowly down the stairs.

"We don't have time for breakfast," said his mother, then, "is something the matter with you this morning?"

Akeem responded, "No," as they got into the car and drove off.

Once at school, Akeem's mother kissed him on the forehead, told him to have a good day, and then hurriedly drove off.

It is Monday morning and, like every other morning, Ms. Jacob's 3rd grade class took their seat to begin homeroom. Akeem took a seat in the back of the class. Ms. Jacob stood in the front of the room to greet the class.

"Good morning, class," she said.

The class responded simultaneously by saying, "Good morning, Ms. Jacob."

"We have a new student here today with us. Please everyone join me in welcoming Akeem."

In unison the class responded, "Welcome Akeem!"

"Who would like to pass out the pledge handouts today", she added.

Akeem sat quietly as no one had responded to the request.

"Why do we have to say this every day?" Akeem said to another student. "What if you don't believe in God."

Annoyed by Akeem's side conversation with his peer and the lack of volunteers in class, Ms. Jacob interjected with, "Akeem would you like to pass out the Pledge of Allegiance today?"

Akeem did as he was told and then took his seat. The whole class stood and began to recite the pledge. Akeem, however, remained quietly seated. When Ms. Jacob noticed that Akeem was not joining the group in reciting the pledge, she told the class to stop.

She said from the front of the room, "Do you have trouble reading, Akeem?"

1 All the kids in the class began to snicker to themselves and stared at Akeem.

2 "I don't say the Pledge of Allegiance," he responded.

3 Before he could attempt to explain further, Ms. Jacob added, "Well then, you'll
4 just have to go to the principal's office because I don't tolerate acting out and not
5 following the rules in my class."

6 Akeem was very upset and embarrassed. He stood up and walked by all his laughing
7 peers. Akeem walked out of the door vowing to never step foot in that class again.

8

9 **Discussion Question:**

- 10 1. Is there anything that Ms. Jacob could do to help support this student?
11 2. Should Ms. Jacob require Akeem to say the Pledge?
12 3. Why do you feel Ms. Jacob reacted the way she did?
13 4. Was there anything Akeem could have done differently in this situation?
14 5. What would you have done in this situation if you were Ms. Jacob?

15

16 **What?**

17 Religious diversity is one type of diversity that discriminates against someone strictly
18 because of his or her religious beliefs and practices. Religious and spiritual beliefs take
19 on many different forms for many different groups. Spirituality can be defined in many
20 ways and, in many cases, is left up to the individual to define. It is most often defined
21 as something that gives meaning and purpose to life. Religion usually involves a
22 specific set of beliefs and values that are agreed upon by individuals who collectively
23 participate in that religion. Religion usually includes a supreme being. Some people
24 use the words spirituality, religion, and faith interchangeably but they all involve
25 relationships and are a contributing factor to one's heritage.

26

27 **So What?**

28 So, why is it important to bring awareness to religious diversity? It is a known fact that
29 classrooms are becoming more and more diverse. "During the 21st century, children of
30 traditionally under-represented groups, often called minorities, will constitute a new
31 majority within the United States" (Kirmani & Laster, 1999). This is important for both
32 students and teachers to realize. "Children of different cultures learn, play, interact
33 with peers and adults, and view teachers in different ways" (Kirmani & Laster, 1999).
34 Therefore, students must learn how to participate effectively with students of different

1 backgrounds and teachers must prepare themselves to meet the needs of these students.
2 Only when students become more aware of religious diversity will they acquire the
3 skills needed to be **culturally sensitive** to differences and develop meaningful
4 relationship with others. With the separation of church and state topics of religion are
5 just not discussed. Teachers are afraid to discuss the content and students latch on to
6 false information. "In our global society, it is more important than ever to know about
7 and understand the religious beliefs of others" (Passe & Willox, 2009). In becoming
8 aware of religious diversity, it is very important that teachers assess their own attitudes
9 and beliefs. Through creative changes in the **curriculum**, teachers can help their
10 students grasp the benefits of a **multicultural education**. By doing this we, as educators,
11 promote a happier, safer and more productive environment for our students.
12

13 **Now What?**

14 It is time to work towards creating a classroom that is receptive to religious diversity.
15 As mentioned above, it is important that teachers be prepared to teach the content, and
16 there are a lot of programs and teaching tools like this one that set out to do just that.
17 There are also resources to help with incorporating diversity awareness in the
18 classroom.
19

20 **Case Study: Ms. Johnson**

21 Ms. Johnson's watch reads 3 o'clock as she races to pick her son up from school.
22 She quickly pulls up to the curb as Akeem slowly walks to the car. Noticing a
23 frustrated look on his face, Ms. Johnson asks, "What's the matter?"

24 He replies, "Nothing, can we just go home?"

25 When they got into the house, Akeem threw down his book bag and handed his
26 mother a note before heading to his room. Ms. Johnson opened the note to find a
27 request from Akeem's teacher to meet with her tomorrow morning.

28 "Akeem, what is this about?" she screamed up the stairs.

29 "I got kicked out of class today for not believing in God," he responded. "Can
30 we please talk about this later mom? I'm very tired."

31 Noticing that he was still very upset, she decided to just let it go until tomorrow.

32 When morning came, she tried to wake Akeem up for school but he told her that
33 he was sick. She had no time to argue, so she hired a sitter and hurried off to meet with
34 Ms. Jacob before work.

1 As Ms. Johnson entered the classroom, she was greeting by Ms. Jacob.
2 "Hi, thank you so much for meeting with me on such short notice. I am Ms.
3 Jacob."
4 "Nice to meet you," responded Ms. Johnson.
5 "I'm glad you could make it," added Ms. Jacob.
6 "Yes, well Akeem came home very upset yesterday, so as you can imagine I'm
7 quite concerned," said Ms. Johnson.
8 "I know you have to rush off to work, so I'll get to the point. At some point in
9 the year I do like to meet all of my children's parents but I thought you might like to
10 meet early since I've been having some issues with Akeem," said Ms. Jacob.
11 "What kind of issues?" asked Ms. Johnson.
12 Noticing the agitated look on Ms. Johnson's face, Ms. Jacob blurted out, "I just
13 thought you would be concerned that Akeem seems to have trouble reading and
14 following directions."
15 "What?!" exclaimed Ms. Johnson.
16 "I thought we could work together to figure out what to do about Akeem's
17 behavior in class. Does he have any other difficulties?"
18 "What did he do?" said Ms. Johnson, visibly agitated. "I can't believe what I'm
19 hearing. Akeem is a good student."
20 "Well, his behavior yesterday during the Pledge of Allegiance showed
21 otherwise," said Ms. Jacob. "He refused to participate and follow directions."
22 "No wonder Akeem was so upset yesterday!" said Ms. Johnson. "Did you even
23 give him a chance to explain himself? Did you try talking to him before you kicked him
24 out? I have taught Akeem to be proud of his religion and for that reason he did not say
25 the Pledge. To Pledge something under God would be against our religious beliefs. I
26 have never been so angry in my life. This school may not be the right place for my son."
27 Ms. Johnson stormed out of the door.

28

29 **Discussion Questions:**

- 30 1. What assumptions did Ms. Jacob make about Akeem and about his mother?
- 31 2. How would you have handled this situation?
- 32 3. How would you feel if you were Ms. Johnson?
- 33 4. What can Ms. Jacob do now to re-engage this parent?

34

1 **Suggested Resources:**

2

3 **Websites**

4

5 <http://www.tolerance.org/teach/index.jsp>

6 This is a website for teachers about classroom activities they can use to teach
7 tolerance of religious diversity.

8

9 http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/difficultdialogues/religious_diversity.htm

10 This website is an on-line "mega-source" for religious diversity. The site includes
11 statistical information on faith groups, religious studies, topics in religion,
12 annotated resources, and resources for teaching and learning religion.

13

14 **Children's Books**

15

16 <http://www.understandingprejudice.org/readroom/kidsbib.htm>

17 This website includes a collection of children's books dealing with a wide range
18 of topics of diversity. It specifically includes a section of books on the topic of
19 holidays and religious diversity.

20

21 **Films**

22

23 <http://www.pluralism.org/multimedia/films/index.php>

24 The Pluralism Project at Harvard University. This website includes a list of
25 documentary films on religious diversity and a description of what each
26 film focuses on in terms of different religions.

Chapter Five: Pink or Blue?

Case Study: Sai Pi

Sai Pi recently moved to an urban school district from a refugee camp on the Thailand-Burmese border. His new fifth-grade classroom is a far cry from the familiar open-air classrooms in Thailand. Because the Shan people were never formally recognized as refugees, Sai Pi's family received little help or monetary assistance from the national organizations and charities. They left their country with only the clothes on their backs. When they arrived in Pittsburgh, they depended on refugee organizations for housing and clothing, which are mostly second-hand. With help from his ESL teacher, Sai Pi quickly learned to talk with his classmates.

Sai Pi tells his teacher that he now likes school.

There are new books and pencils and paper to write with. Computers are the best. In gym class, Sai Pi runs and jumps as well and better than some of the other students. One of his classmates, David, sees how well he can kick a soccer ball.

"Sai Pi, why don't you come and try out for our neighborhood soccer team? I think you could help our team make the playoffs."

Sai Pi thinks for a moment and replies, "OK, I will ask my parents if I can play. When are the tryouts?"

David looks over to Daniel leaning against the volleyball net and yells excitedly, "Dan we may have another good player for our team. Sai Pi is going to see if he can try out for our soccer team. Coach Jim will do back flips with a player this good. When is our next practice Dan?"

Daniel responds, "Tonight at 6:00 pm at the Schenley Park soccer field."

Sai Pi goes home after school and gets permission from his parents to try out for the team. They believe that playing soccer will strengthen Sai Pi's friendships with his classmates as well as boost his confidence.

Sai Pi gets ready for the tryout. He and his mother walk to the park to meet the team. David and Daniel are standing together at the water fountain when Sai Pi arrives.

David looks at Daniel and they both start to giggle.

"Hey Sai Pi, what's up with the outfit?" they say.

Sai Pi does not know what is going on. Three of David and Daniel's teammates walk over and start to laugh out loud and point their finger at Sai Pi's clothing. Sai Pi is

1 wearing a pink t-shirt with a daisy on the chest. Sai Pi and his mother have no clue why
2 the soccer team is laughing at them.

3 Coach Jim walks over to the water fountain to find out why his soccer boys are
4 laughing. He has a **smirk on his face** when he greets Sai Pi and his mother.

5 Coach Jim blows his whistle and yells, "You think that's funny? Everyone! Four
6 laps around the field and twenty-five pushups. Now."

7

8 **Discussion Questions:**

- 9 1. Colors have different meanings in each culture. Why would Sai Pi wear a pink
10 top to soccer try outs?
- 11 2. With soccer being an international sport, what could Coach Jim have done to
12 redirect his team from laughing at Sai Pi?
- 13 3. Blue is for boys and pink is for girls. Can you name some colors that have
14 connotations in western cultures?
- 15 4. As David's parent, what could you have done before the practice to help prepare
16 Sai Pi to play on this team?

17

18 **What?**

19 Gender stereotyping, cultural factors, parental expectations, and student learning styles,
20 are factors that impact male and female attitudes towards math and science classes and
21 later career choices in those fields.

22

23 Males and females attending elementary, middle school, and high school learn by using
24 a variety of preferred learning styles. Recognizing environmental, biological,
25 sociological, and physical variables that impact their learning can have a positive
26 outcome for both girls and boys.

27

28 According to the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress math test of fourth
29 grade and eighth grade students, girls are 2 points behind boys (Snyder, 2009). Results
30 of the 2005 National Science Test indicate that girls' science test scores lag behind boys
31 in fourth grade by 5 points, eighth grade by five points, and twelfth grade by five points
32 (Snyder, 2009). Females continue to be under-represented in mathematics, physical
33 science, and engineering-related professions. Women who hold degrees in science and

1 engineering are less likely than men with similar degrees to actually be employed in
2 these fields, constituting 23% of the science and engineering labor force (NSF, 2000).

3

4 **So What?**

5 Girls and boys are different and they have different learning style preferences.

6 Traditional learning style preferences were created by respected male psychologists that
7 used middle and upper class white male students as their subjects. Educators using
8 these traditional styles do not educate boys and girls equally. Over the past 25 years
9 volumes of research have been conducted on individual learning styles. The research
10 has proven that males and females prefer to learn in a variety of ways (Tripp & Moore,
11 2007). Identifying the style preferences of the students will maximize their learning and
12 will have positive effects. Teaching girls and boys by using their preferred learning
13 styles will aid in narrowing the gap in math and science test scores. The Learning Style
14 Inventory by Dunn and Dunn is one of many assessment tools that provide a detailed
15 evaluation of the way students prefer to learn (Honigsfeld & Dunn, 2003). This
16 assessment tool surveys students learning styles in different areas. The LSI model asks
17 students their preferences in the following areas:

18

- 19 • Environmental: noise versus quiet, cool or warm room temperature, bright or
20 low classroom lighting.
- 21 • Emotional: self-motivation, teacher motivation, parent motivation, persistence,
22 responsibility, conformity.
- 23 • Sociological: learning alone versus with a peer, study in groups.
- 24 • Physical: visual, tactile, kinesthetic, auditory senses; moving versus stationary,
25 dietary intake, and time of the day.
- 26 • Psychological: analytical, global, and cerebral.

27 Listed below are some learning style preferences cited in the literature with regard to
28 male and female learners. While one cannot generalize across all males or all females,
29 these observations warrant consideration.

30

31 Male learner preferences may be more visual, tactile and kinesthetic. Males may work
32 better with peer motivation. Boys may prefer moving at their desk and moving around
33 the classroom, standing more than sitting. In addition, boys' attention spans may be
34 shorter than girls.

1 Female learners may prefer auditory lessons. Girls may work better in groups and
2 prefer a quiet environment when studying. Girls may excel at self-motivated, parent-
3 motivated, and teacher-motivated tasks. Girls may listen to and obey authority figures
4 more often than their male classmates, and may be more persistent and more
5 responsible at completing tasks (Honigsfeld, Dunn, 2003).

6
7 Girls and boys are socialized in their home environment by many sources. Parents,
8 relatives, peers, and toys all play a part in the development of children long before they
9 attend school. Parent expectations for their children are present in the activities they
10 have their child participate. For example, boys are encouraged to play football, have toy
11 fire trucks, building blocks, and erector sets that develop a child's analytical and spatial
12 skills. Girls, however, play slo-pitch softball and play with tea sets and dolls; these
13 activities may promote the development of socialization skills. In Damarin's study (as
14 cited in Murphy, P., 2001), *Gender and the learning of fractions* (1990), Damarin observed
15 the different toys preferred by girls and boys. Boys had toys with geometric shapes and
16 various parts that connected together. These toys allowed for the development of part-
17 whole relationships and math fractions. Girls' toys were of a social context, such as tea
18 sets and baby dolls, which promoted and developed communication and
19 correspondence.

20
21 Children see the world through their past and they learn from their experiences.
22 Children raised in a gender-bias environment may have conflict with their academic
23 interests in math and science and career choices in these fields after high school. Girls
24 may be at a disadvantage because they do not have the math and science learning
25 experiences that boys have playing with blocks and shapes.

26
27 Traditional and cultural gender roles still exist in the home environment. Factors
28 affecting females' education include parents having a lower expectation level for their
29 daughters than their sons. In some cultures, girls are expected to marry at an early age,
30 become pregnant, and raise a family. Boys are raised to be wage earners, while girls are
31 raised to be homemakers, resulting in success at school as a lower priority for girls.
32 Girls have been shown to have less confidence in their math abilities, which has
33 resulted in negative attitudes towards math. A 1990 study by the American Association
34 of University Women highlighted the trend of girls becoming less confident of their

1 math skills (AAUW 1992). Recent educational efforts have sought to overcome these
2 barriers.

3
4 Teachers' gender stereotypical biases of girls in math and science education are small
5 but persistent (Forgasz, 2003). Some researchers have determined two distinctive types
6 of sex bias in school. Boys receive more attention and time to discuss issues with the
7 teachers, and boys get more praise and positive responses from the teacher (Sadker,
8 Sadker and Klein, 1991). Boys may get called on more because they are more active and
9 teachers believe they are better at math. Having fewer response opportunities might
10 reduce a girl's motivation to future math classes and career choices.

11

12 **Now What?**

13 It is critical that teachers recognize the differences that exist among males and females
14 in the classroom. For educators, it is important to understand each student's learning
15 style. Designing and presenting lessons using multisensory-stimulating techniques is
16 imperative. Adapting lesson plans to the student's preferred learning style will increase
17 student test scores. Here are some ways that an instructor can adapt the classroom to
18 accommodate each of the preferred learning styles of their students.

19

20 • Create a physical setting in which children want to learn. Examine the classroom
21 temperature and lighting. Research has noted that some children prefer learning
22 at warmer room temperatures. Let those students wear a sweater in class. Some
23 students prefer softer lighting than the florescent lighting that is found in most
24 traditional classrooms. Turn off the lights and teach with the sunlight shining
25 through the windows when that is feasible.

26 • Some research has indicated that females prefer learning in the early morning.
27 Rotate the time of day the subjects are taught. Math and science taught Monday
28 morning, and then rotated to Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. The schedule
29 rotation allows all the students work on different subjects at their preferred time
30 several times during the week.

31 • Female students may be more self-motivated, responsible, persistent, and
32 authority oriented. Girls may prefer working with partners and peers. Partition
33 an area of the classroom where the students can work in groups while providing
34 specific directions for the tasks.

- 1 • Boys may prefer tactile, kinesthetic and visual learning lessons. When designing
2 lesson plans, include strategies and tactics where boys can see and hold onto
3 objects to simplify abstract concepts. Use counting blocks or peg boards with
4 rubber bands to help children understand counting and learning multiplication
5 tables. When teaching the class fractions, for example, hand out cardboard pizza
6 slices in various fractional sizes to allow the students touch them and put them
7 together.
- 8 • Boys tend to prefer more mobility in the class. They may not want to sit still for
9 long periods and concentrate on the task. Within the classroom rules of behavior,
10 permit both boys and girls to stand up at their desks to complete their
11 assignments and to have physical breaks throughout the day.
- 12 • Several researchers have noted that female teachers have a soft voice, but boys
13 are not good auditory learners. Accordingly, boys may quickly lose
14 concentration because they cannot hear the teacher, and then boys may become a
15 discipline problem. This situation makes it less likely those students will grasp
16 the topic being discussed or will not participate in the learning. Consider sound
17 amplification or try to reduce the external noise from the class.
- 18 • Give students a cup of ice or water at their desk, to keep them well hydrated and
19 curb any desire to eat candy or chew gum in the classroom.
- 20 • Choose instructional materials that are unbiased. A better alignment between a
21 student's learning style and a teacher's teaching style will result in better student
22 performance and better understanding of concepts.
- 23 • Provide students with a variety of options and methods for problem solving. A
24 wide range of techniques are available to students to assist in problem solving.
25 Promote students creativity and curiosity which leads to solutions. Encourage
26 and challenge students to think unconventionally or use different perspectives.

27 Utilizing these various techniques and assessment tools will improve the student
28 classroom performance; however, individuals develop differently and are at different
29 developmental stages in the same grade. Teachers must periodically review their
30 students' learning styles because changes occur as students mature. Teachers in the
31 classroom must recognize that although these learning style preferences exist, all
32 children learn in their own way. Identifying the different ways students learns will help
33 them through difficult learning situations. No matter the gender of the student, the
34 teacher must teach to the uniqueness of the learner.

1 Teachers also must look at their own learning style preferences, beliefs, value system,
2 biases, assumptions, and attitudes towards their students. Teachers must reflect on their
3 backgrounds to find gender-bias in their own upbringings to provide an unbiased
4 learning environment.

5

6 Teachers and parents must avoid limiting their children to sex-roles and gender-
7 stereotypes through academic and extracurricular activities. Positive role models should
8 be identified and promoted for both females and males. Meeting the environmental,
9 biological, sociological, and physical variables in learning style preferences creates a
10 positive learning climate in the classroom. Eliminating teacher gender bias and
11 changing parental stereotypical views of their children will reinforce girls' and boys'
12 positive attitudes and perspectives of math and science classes. Changes of this nature
13 are necessary to broaden the educational and career opportunities for females.

14

15 **Case Study: Ali**

16 The Henderson family waited in traffic for thirty minutes at the entrance to
17 Yellowstone National Park. After waiting for ten minutes, the youngest member of the
18 family, Ali, put down the SAT study guide she was reading and picked up the National
19 Parks brochure and began reading about the eruptions of the geysers in the park. In the
20 brochure was a paragraph from the park's ranger commenting on the consistency of
21 Old Faithful.

22 "Dad, this book tells us when the geyser will erupt. This brochure also lists the
23 times the geysers will erupt and it tells us when and where we can see the bears, moose,
24 and bison," exclaims Ali.

25 "Ali, are they the only things to do here?" asked her older sister Lindsey.

26 "There are also hundreds of annoying mosquitoes waiting to attack us," Ali
27 sarcastically replied.

28 "And if we wake up early, we can see foxes, antelopes, boiling mud pots, and hot
29 springs," she added.

30 "But there's no internet or phone reception!" cried Lindsey.

31 "No internet anywhere in the park, but cell service where we are staying," Ali
32 said.

33 "Let's go home," said Lindsey.

1 Mrs. Henderson reassured Lindsey that she would survive the park without the
2 internet for three days.

3 Ali and her family arrived in the parking lot next to Old Faithful just as it
4 finished spouting boiling water. It would be another ninety minutes before the next
5 eruption, so she and the family decided to walk around and explore the area for moose.

6 They were unable to find any wildlife in the thermal areas next to the geysers, so
7 the family walked back to Old Faithful. As if on cue, the geyser began to percolate a
8 little water at its base. Next the water shot out of its hole five feet high, then twenty-five
9 feet high, then one hundred feet in the sky—in total, the eruption lasted for three
10 minutes.

11 Ali sat watching the geyser and pondered how scientists could use the heated
12 water. She spoke first to her father, “Dad, you know, the geysers in the park really look
13 like a solution to our energy problem. Just look at the all heat and steam from the water.
14 See how high the water is shot into the sky. Something down there is producing a lot of
15 energy to send it up that high.”

16 “Ali, how would we harness the power of the geyser without losing the beauty
17 of this park?” he asked.

18 “But think about how many homes this one geyser could heat,” Ali replied.
19 “Mom, wouldn’t this geyser save a lot of water and energy if it was connected to our
20 dishwasher and clothes washer?”

21 “What about me burning my hands when I wash my drinking glass in the sink at
22 night?” Lindsey said sarcastically.

23 Ali’s father looked away from the geyser towards her and noticed that she was
24 completely mesmerized.

25 For the rest of the trip, Ali asked park rangers detailed questions about the
26 boiling mud pots, and the steaming hot pools. She decided that she would research this
27 topic for her long term project in school this coming school year.

28 This wasn’t out of character for Ali. She was a member of her schools science
29 teams Think-a-thon in fourth and fifth grade. In fifth grade she was an alternate
30 member of the “24” team, a game in which participants are given five cards with
31 numbers on them and contestants have to arrange the cards to equal 24.

32 In her middle school years, she participated in the Junior Science Program in
33 seventh and eighth grade. She was elected to the National Junior Honor Society in
34 eighth grade.

1 Ali returned to school that August, well prepared for her rigorous schedule of
2 advanced honors courses. She had read all of the required summer readings. Ali
3 enjoyed school and was always prepared for class. Ali's freshman English teacher, Ms.
4 Sweeny, was impressed with Ali's scholastic abilities and nominated her for the
5 National Honor Society.

6 The first day of school in calculus class, Ali's teacher, Mr. Ward, lectured for
7 thirty minutes with no breaks, then wrote mathematical notations on the board for ten
8 more minutes. Mr. Ward conducted his class this way every day. At the end of the first
9 week, Mr. Ward assigned five problems for homework. Ali began her homework that
10 evening, and solved three of the problems. She had some questions about how the two
11 remaining problems should be set up, so she did not answer them. The next day, Mr.
12 Ward collected the homework assignments and began lecturing. After class, Mr. Ward
13 approached Ali to discuss the homework problems she did not complete for the
14 assignment.

15 Looking down at Ali, Mr. Ward said, "Ali, this is an advanced course that most
16 students don't take until their junior year. If you can't do these simple problems, you're
17 going to be in over your head later on. There's no shame moving to a less demanding
18 course."

19 "Mr. Ward, I believe I can do this kind of math. I just need to know how to setup
20 the problems to solve them," said Ali confidently.

21 "Ali, no one else in this class has missed the homework questions, I'm very
22 concerned that you won't be able to keep up," replied Mr. Ward.

23 "I want to stay in this class, Mr. Ward," Ali emphatically stated.

24 At home that evening, Ali's parents were sitting at the dinner table discussing
25 the new school year with their daughter. Ali talked about how she liked all of her
26 classes and teachers. Well, she liked some teachers better than others. She brought up
27 the issue she had with Mr. Ward. Ali stated with resignation that she would move
28 down to a lower level of math because Mr. Ward was convinced that she would soon
29 fall behind in his class. Ali's parents were startled to hear about her moving down a
30 level so soon in the school year. Ali excelled in math. She tested out of several basic
31 courses in middle school. She was invited by the local university to participate in an
32 advanced math program during the summer. Ali had only given the class a week to see
33 how she would perform, and she was already planning to drop it? Ali's parents decided
34 to speak with Mr. Ward, so they scheduled a parent-teacher conference.

1 The Hendersons arrived at the school and introduced themselves to Mr. Ward
2 then asked what the problem was. “Your daughter is failing my class,” Mr. Ward stated
3 bluntly. Ali’s parents were stunned. “Ali is gifted, to be sure, but I don’t think she has
4 what it takes to succeed in calculus, at least not now.”

5 “But it’s so early in the school year—how is she failing already?” replied Ali’s
6 mom. “What seems to be her problem? Is she cutting class or falling asleep at her
7 desk?”

8 “She isn’t performing up to my standards on the homework assignments and
9 class participation. She failed a quiz on material covered in class. I think the best thing
10 for Ali would be to move to a less rigorous course. I’m sure she could do quite well in
11 Ms. Casatio’s class,” Mr. Ward asserted.

12 “What is the issue with her homework?” asked Ali’s mom. “Is she not doing it? I
13 can get a tutor for her if she is behind.”

14 “She turns in her work, but it is always incomplete,” he replied. “And she sits
15 staring blankly at the board during class.”

16 “Mr. Ward, she has told us she left only two of the homework questions blank
17 because she wanted to speak to you about how to setup the problem,” said Ali’s mom.
18 “If she had trouble with those two problems she will never succeed in my class!”
19 exclaimed Mr. Ward. “I use these early grades as a sort of litmus test. Those two
20 questions and the quiz tell me which students will make it through my class. I’ve been
21 teaching math for thirty years now—students who cannot handle the simple problems
22 early in the course end up failing when we cover more complex material. Yesterday, I
23 tried having Ali work in a group with the two other girls in this class, but they just
24 talked to each other. Don’t waste her time in my class. Ali is talented. She can possibly
25 be successful in another subject but she will fail in calculus. ”

27 **Discussion Questions:**

- 28 1. As Ali’s parents, should they immediately discuss Mr. Ward’s premise of Ali’s
29 failure to perform with the schools’ principal?
- 30 2. Are Mr. Ward’s wall posters promoting diverse role models for students who
31 aspire to become mathematicians and scientists?
- 32 3. Is Mr. Ward’s teaching style satisfying the learning preferences of all students in
33 his classes?
- 34 4. Why does Mr. Ward stereotype Ali as a failure so early in the school year?

- 1 5. As Ali's parents do you believe it would better serve Ali and agree to move her
- 2 to a lower level class or would you let her remain in Mr. Ward's class to see if she
- 3 can improve as the year progresses?
- 4 6. Mr. Ward has thirty years teaching experience, would you recommend he attend
- 5 professional development courses in cultural diversity?
- 6 7. Should the Henderson's seek to have Mr. Ward retire because he is too set in his
- 7 ways and is not an asset to the teaching profession?

8

9 **Suggested Resources:**

10 **Films**

11

12 *Stand and Deliver* [Motion picture]. (1988). Produced and Directed by Ramon

13 Hernandez. Staring Edward James Olmos.

14 True story based on a math teacher in East L.A. who develops an Advanced

15 Placement calculus program for low socioeconomic students. The student's high

16 score on the test prompts insinuations of cheating.

17

18 *The Gender Chip Project*. [Motion picture]. (2005). Produced and directed by, Helen De

19 Michiel.

20 In 1998 filmmaker Helen de Michiel got together with several young women

21 majoring in the sciences, engineering, and math at Ohio State University in

22 Columbus. They agreed to meet regularly over their next three years of college,

23 and create a community to share experiences and struggles as women stepping

24 into traditionally male domains. This documentary reveals how women are

25 finding new ways to honor their own growth, motivations, and experiences as

26 they imagine how to make the science and technology workplace a comfortable

27 environment for women to stay in and influence.

28

29 *A League of Their Own*, [Motion picture]. Directed by Penny Marshall.

30 This film is about an all-female baseball team during the Second World War. This

31 film follows the stories about the team of females and their perspective on life

32 and society (as women) during this time in history.

33

34 *Million Dollar Baby*, [Motion picture]. Directed by Clint Eastwood. Starring Morgan

35 Freeman, Hillary Swank, and Clint Eastwood.

36 Frankie is a former boxing manager, who initially refuses to train Maggie due to

37 her gender and age. With her talent and his coaching, the spirited young fighter

1 rises through the ranks of women's boxing: the pair forms a touching bond in the
2 process.

3
4 *Straightlaced-How gender got us all tied up*, [Motion picture]. Directed by Debra Chasnoff.
5 The first feature-length documentary and educational campaign to explore how
6 gender expectations limit the lives of all teenagers.

8 **Books**

9
10 *Gender, youth and culture: Young masculinities and femininities* by Anoop Nayak and Mary
11 Jane Kehily.

12 This book is about the making and unmaking of gender. It addresses the social
13 topic of how boys become men and girls become women. Drawing upon richly
14 textured ethnographic insights and international studies, this original volume
15 explores how gender is produced, consumed, regulated and performed in young
16 lives.

17
18 *Situated lives: Gender and culture in everyday life*, edited by Louise Lamphere, Helena
19 Ragoné, and Patricia Zavella.

20 Twenty-six feminist and critical essays that discuss the impact of global
21 capitalism and post-colonial social structures on women's' and men's' bodies,
22 their families, and work lives.

23
24 *Girls think of everything: Stories of ingenious inventions by women*, (Catherine Thimmish).

25 An outstanding collective biography of women and girls who changed the world
26 with their inventions. Thimmish surveys unique and creative ideas that were
27 born of necessity or were simply a product of ingenuity and hard work. Included
28 are Bette Nesmith Graham, who invented Liquid Paper, known more commonly
29 as "white-out," and Ann Moore, who emulated the way African mothers carried
30 their babies to create the Snugli.

31
32 *Girls who rocked the world: Heroines from Sacagawea to Sheryl Swoopes*, by Amelie Welden.

33 Thirty-three short biographical sketches of young women who achieved
34 "something extraordinary" before age 20. The entries are in chronological order,
35 beginning with Cleopatra and ending with tennis star Martina Hingis. Some of

1 the names are familiar (e.g., Helen Keller, Anne Frank, and Wilma Rudolf), while
2 others are less well known.

3
4 *The mommy book* by Todd Parr.

5 Moms are celebrated here; a variety of mothers with short hair and big hair,
6 driving minivans and motorcycles, swimming and dancing, and hugging and
7 kissing their children.

8
9 *The crayon box that talked*, by Shane DeRolf.

10 Although there are many different colors, the crayons in a box discover that
11 when they get together they can appreciate each other and make a complete
12 picture.

13
14 *Chrysanthemum*, by Kevin Henkes.

15 Chrysanthemum thinks her name is absolutely perfect, until the kids at school
16 make fun of her.

17 18 **Organizations**

19
20 Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (AKA)

21 <http://www.aka1908.com/>

22 World's oldest college-based sorority founded by black women. Sorority
23 members conduct workshops on subjects of general interest such as problems of
24 black women in the job market.

25
26 American Association of University Women (AAUW)

27 <http://www.aauw.org/>

28 The oldest and largest national organization for the betterment of woman. It
29 produces numerous publications on sex equity and Title IX.

30
31 Association for Women in Science (AWIS)

32 <http://www.awis.org/>

33 The AWIS promotes equal opportunities for women entering the sciences and
34 attempts to help them reach their goals. It provides funding for pre-doctoral
35 awards through its educational foundation and testifies on sex discrimination
36 matters before congressional committees. The Association for Women in Science

1 is dedicated to achieving equality and full participation for women in science,
2 technology, engineering and mathematics.

3
4 Business and Professional Women's Foundation (BPW)

5 <http://www.bpwfoundation.org/>

6 The BPWF carries out an integrated program of research, information,
7 dissemination and education to improve the quality of working life for women. It
8 assists high school age women in assessing future occupational possibilities.

9
10 Center for Women Policy Studies

11 <http://www.centerwomenpolicy.org/about/default.asp>

12 Was founded in 1972 as the first feminist policy analysis and research institution
13 in the USA. For more than three decades, the Center has brought the voices and
14 needs of women and girls to major public policy debates on such issues as: equal
15 credit opportunity, educational equity, violence against women and girls,
16 welfare reform, work/family balancing and workplace diversity policies,
17 reproductive rights and health, the women's HIV/AIDS epidemic, access to
18 health care for low income women.

19
20 National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)

21 <http://www.nameorg.org/>

22 A national organization that brings together professionals from all academic
23 disciplines and from multiple levels and types of educational institutions and
24 occupations with an interest in multicultural education.

25
26 National Center for Fair and Open Testing (FAIRTEST)

27 <http://www.fairtest.org/>

28 The National Center for Fair & Open Testing advocacy group advances quality
29 education and equal opportunity by promoting fair, open, valid and
30 educationally beneficial evaluations of students, teachers and schools. Fair Test
31 also works to end the misuses and flaws of testing practices that impede those
32 goals. We place special emphasis on eliminating the racial, class, gender, and
33 cultural barriers to equal opportunity posed by standardized tests, and
34 preventing their damage to the quality of education.

35
36 **Websites (Links to information on how to analyze children's books for bias.)**

37
38 <http://hastings.lexingtonma.org/Library/Yes/evaluate.htm>

39 Early childhood research and practice.

40

- 1 <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v3n2/mendoza.html>
- 2 Examining multicultural picture books for the early childhood classroom.

Chapter Six: I Am a Person First

Case Study: Joseph

Joseph Sweeny is a five and a half year old boy who uses a wheelchair. He recently moved from Florida to Pennsylvania. Joseph's father Frank was recently laid off from his job in Florida. The family has decided to move to Pennsylvania where both families of Joseph's parents currently reside. Frank has been offered a job working for his father at a local shoe store. There are many transitions that the Sweeny family are encountering and Joseph is about to experience the biggest transition of all, his transition into his new school.

Joseph's new kindergarten teacher, Mrs. O'Malley was uninformed of Joseph's arrival until the morning he showed up. She was unable to prepare the other children or become knowledgeable about his physical disability. The short notice also left Joseph without his usual aide so a substitute aide assisted him throughout the day. So began a new experience for Joseph, his parents, and principal, teacher and fellow classmates.

It was a cold morning in the middle of January as Joseph entered his new kindergarten classroom with a smile. The principal, Mr. Murphy, pushed his wheelchair into the classroom and introduced Joseph to his teacher and fellow classmates. There was a surprised look on the children's faces as they noticed something very different about Joseph.

Mr. Murphy said, "Good morning, boys and girls, this is your new friend and classmate, Joseph. Joseph just moved here from Florida, and is really excited to be a part of your kindergarten class. Boys and girls, please say good morning to Joseph."

The children jumped to their feet, stopping what they were doing, and as a group they said, "Good morning Joseph."

One girl then shouted, "Why are you in that wheelchair? I thought those were for old people! The only person I know who has one is my grandmother, and she *needs* it because she can't walk."

Mrs. O'Malley walked over to the student and said, "Shhhhh."

She then walked back to Joseph, thanked Mr. Murphy and pushed Joseph over to the meeting rug. At this point Joseph's substitute aide had arrived.

Joseph was looking around his new classroom, noticing how small it felt. He thought to himself, "How am I going to move my wheelchair around this classroom? I am going to hit everything. There are so many toys to play with but they are all on the

1 ground. I can't even fit at those tables, they are too short, and so I can't play with the
2 toys on the table. I won't be able to eat my lunch, draw pictures; I just won't fit at those
3 tables. I wish I wasn't in this classroom. I don't belong in this classroom. I want my
4 old classroom with my old teachers and my old friends."

5 Mrs. O'Malley continued her typical day. She introduced Joseph again and
6 asked everyone to share their names and something special about them. Mrs. O'Malley
7 had the children stand up, sit down and take part in the different songs and dances.
8 Many of the morning activities involved movement, which meant that Joseph was
9 unable to participate. Joseph's smile and enthusiastic personality began to dwindle to a
10 frown with constant looks to the ground. Mrs. O'Malley acted as if nothing was
11 happening and that Joseph was just fine.

12 Joseph's aide asked Mrs. O'Malley, "Why are you doing so much movement in
13 your morning meeting when you have a child with a physical disability? He cannot
14 participate at all."

15 "I cannot just change everything I am doing. The other children will be
16 confused. We have been in school since September. They are in a routine, and now it is
17 mid-January. If I change everything now, they will all regress," Mrs. O'Malley said.

18 The aide remained quiet, just sitting next to Joseph, trying to get him to
19 participate by moving his arms.

20 After morning meeting it was time for centers. The children were permitted by
21 Mrs. O'Malley to choose their own center. The centers consisted of a science table,
22 dramatic play area, block area, art table, library center, a water table and table toy area.
23 Each child ran to their favorite center, as Joseph remained in his chair on the carpet.

24 Mrs. O'Malley approached Joseph asking, "What would you like to play with
25 Joseph?"

26 Joseph looked at Mrs. O'Malley with a blank stare, knowing he was not going to
27 be able to do anything because his wheel chair could not fit in between the different
28 centers.

29 Joseph said to Mrs. O'Malley, "I just want to watch, I don't want to play right
30 now. Can I just look at a book?"

31 Mrs. O'Malley said, "Sure, just let me know if you change your mind."

32 Joseph remained on the carpet, quiet, pretending to look at his book, over and
33 over again. Not one child approached Joseph to play, nor did Mrs. O'Malley encourage
34 any students to include Joseph during centers. The children acted as if Joseph did not

1 exist. Joseph was relieved because he knew he was unable to fit in between the
2 furniture. Because he had to stay in his wheel chair he could not play on the ground
3 with the boys.

4 After center time the children enjoyed a snack. As Joseph's aide pushed him
5 toward the tables, she realized that the tables were too low to fit his chair. As a result,
6 Joseph had to sit next to the table as the aide handed him his snack. Joseph felt
7 extremely displaced. He wanted to curl up into a ball and cry.

8 Joseph kept looking at the clock thinking, "I get to go home when the big hand
9 gets to the 12. That's what Mommy promised."

10 After snack the children were to complete a work job. Joseph was excited.

11 "Mrs. O'Malley, I love work jobs, what kind of work job is it?" he asked.

12 Mrs. O'Malley said, "Joseph, please be quiet until the directions are given and
13 please go sit quietly on the carpet."

14 Joseph again, looked down to the ground thinking, if I *could* only walk over to
15 the carpet and sit like the normal kids. After the directions were given the children
16 headed to their assigned seats to complete their job. Joseph was pushed by his aide to
17 his seat. Again, Joseph was unable to fit at the table. His aide gave him a large book to
18 press on while remaining next to the table. Joseph completed his work job. It was
19 difficult because he did not have an ample amount of space to work but he was able to
20 finish. Joseph looked up at the clock and realized that the big hand was almost on the
21 12, which meant he would soon get to go home. Joseph had never been so excited to go
22 home. Usually he was sad at dismissal, but not at his new school.

23 As the students' parents arrived to pick up their children, Joseph waited
24 anxiously in the back of the room. His teacher asked his aide to place him there so he
25 would "not be in the way of the other children, as their parents picked them up."
26 Joseph did not mind, at this point all he cared about was going home and never coming
27 back.

28 Joseph saw his mother and screamed, "Mommy, mommy, take me home with
29 you, I can't wait to go home!"

30 Mrs. Sweeny knew this was a problem and was anxious to get into the car to hear
31 about Joseph's first day at his new school.

32 As the children were leaving they said things to their parents such as, "Mommy,
33 look at Joseph, he's the new boy but he can't do anything because he has a big chair."
34 Or "Daddy, see that little boy, he is in our class, he just sits in that chair all day long."

1 Mrs. Sweeny overheard these comments and was both disgusted and saddened.
2 She was hoping Mrs. O'Malley would address these comments but she seemed to be
3 busy with the other students and parents.

4 When Joseph got into the car, the tears began to roll down his face. He was so
5 upset it was difficult for him to speak.

6 He rattled off things such as, "I can't move around the classroom. I don't fit.
7 They do so many songs and dances and I can't do them. I don't like centers because I
8 can't play on the ground. I don't fit at the tables because they are too short. The kids
9 ignore me and pretend I am not even there. I hate my new school, I am never going
10 back. They all look at me funny and ask me why I am stuck in my chair all day.
11 Mommy, I hated it so much, please don't ever make me go there again. I won't go,
12 never, ever, ever."

13 Mrs. Sweeny knew she had a huge dilemma on her hands and she was going to
14 talk to her husband that evening. After speaking with her husband, Mr. and Mrs.
15 Sweeny came to the conclusion that they would request a meeting the following
16 morning with the principal, teacher and aide. They felt Joseph's needs were not being
17 met, and they were extremely disappointed in the school for creating an environment
18 that shunned their son.

19

20 **Discussion Questions:**

- 21 1. What is to happen next?
- 22 2. What changes/alterations will be made?
- 23 3. Where is Joseph's IEP and why has the teacher not seen it, or if she has seen it,
24 why is she choosing to ignore it?
- 25 4. Why was the teacher not informed sooner about the arrival of her student with a
26 physical disability?
- 27 5. Why did the teacher allow the other students to ask questions and say comments
28 but not address them appropriately?
- 29 6. Why did everyone ignore Joseph's existence and act as if he was not a part of the
30 class?
- 31 7. Overall, what can be done to remedy this extremely difficult situation?

32

33 **What?**

1 What is **disability**? Teachers in training should be aware and fully understand the
2 meaning of the term disability. There are many definitions of disability and it is
3 important to use a definition that is accurate and culturally sensitive. According to the
4 **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**, (1990), "The term 'disability' means, with
5 respect to an individual – (a) "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits
6 one or more of the major life activities of such individual; (b) a record of such
7 impairment; or (c) being regarded as having such an impairment." (P.L. 101-336, Sec.,
8 www.ucp.org).

9
10 There are definitions for specific disabilities under the **Individuals with Disabilities**
11 **Education Act (IDEA)**. The different suggested categories consist of, "Autism, Deaf-
12 Blindness, Deafness, Developmental Delay, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing
13 Impairment, Mental Retardation, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other
14 Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Speech or Language Impairment,
15 Traumatic Brain Injury and Visual Impairment Including Blindness"(NICHCY, 2009,
16 p.2). States use the above guidelines to help them decide whether a child will receive
17 free, appropriate public education (NICHCY, 2009). In order to be sensitive and
18 understanding of children with disabilities, one must be aware of the definition and
19 criteria of disability.

20 21 **So What?**

22 A teacher may wonder "why do I need this definition and how does this affect me"? It
23 is important to be culturally sensitive in reference to disability. There are an increasing
24 number of students with disabilities in the general classroom. Therefore the general
25 education teacher must be knowledgeable on how to be sensitive to the student's needs.
26 "Over the years, there has been a notable increase of students with disabilities receiving
27 instruction in general education classrooms" (White &Whitby, 2008, p.2). "...the most
28 recent data indicate that about 55% of students with disabilities participate in general
29 education classrooms 80% or more of the day, and another 24% spend 40% to 79% of the
30 day in general education classrooms" (White & Whitby, 2008, p.2). Because these
31 students are in the general education classroom, teachers must have an understanding
32 of what disability entails, in order to create a **least restrictive environment (LRE)** that
33 provides a **free appropriate education (FAPE)**. It is the teacher's responsibility to create
34 this environment for the students. According to West and Whitby, "the standard of

1 least restrictive environment is intended to ensure that children with disabilities are
2 educated, to the maximum extent 'appropriate,' with their nondisabled peers" (West &
3 Whitby, 2008, p.2). Although special education teachers are often in the classroom
4 tending to the needs of children with disabilities, general education teachers must be
5 aware that it is also their responsibility to teach all students in their classroom.
6

7 A classroom environment should be sensitive and accepting of all students' needs.
8 West and Whitby mention that "Section 504, which was enacted in 1974, prohibits
9 discrimination in education (and many other areas) on the basis of disability when
10 federal funds are involved and provides the right to reasonable **accommodations** in
11 education" (White & Whitby, 2008, p.3). This may include having certain types of desks
12 for students with physical disabilities (wheelchairs) and setting up the classroom so that
13 students can maneuver around. Students have diverse learning needs. It is the
14 responsibility of the general education teacher to plan for these learning needs.
15 Children with disabilities should feel as though they are a part of their classroom
16 community.
17

18 Cultures view disability differently. Dennis and Giangreco state, "Researchers in both
19 general education and special education have recently stressed the importance of
20 providing services for individual students in culturally sensitive ways that respect,
21 acknowledge, and promote their diversity and strengths" (Dennis & Giangreco, 1996,
22 p.103). Being conscious, aware and educated on different cultures is important when
23 dealing with families of children with disabilities. For example, according to Fenichel et
24 al., Hispanic American families are very close to their extended family. Often they
25 include their family in meetings and making important decisions. This is something to
26 keep in mind when dealing with students with disabilities (Fenichel, et al., 1989). Be
27 aware and understanding that many family members may be a part of the child's
28 educational experience. Ceil Belasco, an advocate for students with disabilities,
29 believes a relationship should be created where the parent or guardian feels
30 comfortable and confident speaking with the teacher (Ceil Belasco, personal
31 communication, July 15, 2009). According to Bellinger, et al., "Parent involvement in
32 special education is federally mandated and has gained increasing emphasis in recent
33 reauthorizations of federal special education law: The Individuals with Disabilities
34 Education Act (IDEA) (Bellinger et al., 2003, p.41). Parental involvement is mandatory;

1 teachers must involve guardians in the continual review of progress of their child. This
2 most often takes place during an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting. The general
3 education teacher is often present during these meetings. Teachers should develop a
4 relationship with parents where parents feel comfortable approaching the teacher with
5 comments or concerns.

6 7 **Now What?**

8 Now that you have been provided with this information and research, it is your
9 responsibility to be aware of the importance of being culturally sensitive to disability.
10 When welcoming students into your classroom, please be aware of the **diverse learners**
11 that you may have in your class. Use this information to create an environment that
12 encompasses all students. Be sure to develop relationships with parents/guardians. The
13 information they have on their child will be extremely helpful as you develop your
14 classroom environment. This can be accomplished by having open communication with
15 parents. According to Ceil Belasco, sending home personal notes to parents, sharing
16 that you have noticed improvement is comforting. Asking parents about their child's
17 recent doctor appointments and how their family is doing allows the parents to feel
18 supported. When talking with parents it is helpful to talk about things *other than their*
19 *child's disability* (Ceil Belasco, personal communication, July 15, 2009).

20
21 Treat parents of children with disabilities with the same high regard as you would treat
22 a parent with a child who is typically developing. Moreover, Dr. Charlene Trovato
23 believes it is important to see each situation through the parent's lens (Dr. Charlene
24 Trovato, personal communication, July 15, 2009). Try to imagine the situation facing the
25 parent and have patience. For example, if a child is unable to turn homework in on
26 time, understand that the parent *does* care, but that something may have happened that
27 evening that prevented the child from completing their homework (Ceil Belasco,
28 personal communication, July 15, 2009). Having an open mind and listening to parents
29 is beneficial. Parents can provide a teacher with much information on their child with a
30 disability.

31
32 If you are a teacher, you likely will have at least one student in your classroom with a
33 disability. It is your responsibility to help children with and without disabilities to feel
34 comfortable in their classroom. Belasco feels as though the teacher should not pity the

1 child because of their disability. She also suggests not making assumptions about the
2 child simply because he/she has a disability. Get to know the child, their strengths and
3 weaknesses. Belasco mentions the importance of teachers using sensitive and
4 appropriate language. "A child is a child before they are a disability" (Ceil Belasco,
5 personal communication, July 15, 2009). For example say, "John is a child in my class
6 with a diagnosis of autism", not, "The autistic kid in my class, John". The language
7 teachers use can have a positive effect on children.

8
9 Teachers should have strong communication with students with disabilities. According
10 to Elizabeth Healy, an advocate for students with disabilities, a conversation with a
11 child with special needs may take more time than it would with a child without special
12 needs. This may be due to different **communication devices**, etc. (Elizabeth Healy,
13 personal communication, July 15, 2009). Although this communication may take
14 longer, it remains the teacher's responsibility to develop a relationship with the child.
15 Have patience with the child and realize the importance of the relationship. Healy
16 states that students with disabilities are often **bullied** or **depressed** while at school
17 (Elizabeth Healy, personal communication, July 15, 2009). It is the teacher's
18 responsibility to develop a relationship with a child so that he/she feels comfortable
19 sharing any concerns he/she may be experiencing while at school.

20
21 Following the next case study are resources to help you gain a better perspective of
22 children with disabilities, siblings of children with disabilities, parents of children with
23 disabilities, teachers of students with disabilities and any laws that pertain to a child
24 with a disability. These sources also provide information that will help you understand
25 the importance of being culturally sensitive to disability.

26 27 **Case Study: Mrs. Connor**

28 Mrs. Riley teaches third grade at Peabody Elementary School in McLean,
29 Virginia. She has taught at Peabody for fourteen years. She has high expectations for
30 her students: she expects each student to be on grade level for each curricular area.
31 When a child does not seem to be on target, she is quick to discuss the issue with the
32 child's family. Her theory is that open communication between parents and the teacher
33 is the best way to help a child succeed. Mrs. Riley feels she has a strong relationship
34 with most of her student's families, and she prides herself on these open relationships.

1 Samantha Connor is a new student at Peabody Elementary School. Over the
2 summer, she and her family moved from Alabama to Virginia. For work, her father
3 travels five days out of the week. Samantha, her mother, and her father live in an
4 apartment about ten minutes from the elementary school. Each day Samantha takes the
5 bus to and from school. Her mother does not like to drive in the city and finds driving
6 around Washington intimidating. This makes it difficult for Samantha to have play
7 dates with her friends and to participate in any activities outside of school. This also
8 makes it difficult for Mrs. Riley to develop a relationship with Samantha's mother.

9 Samantha's overall school experience is enjoyable. She loves playing with her
10 friends and thoroughly enjoys math and science. In mid-October, Samantha started to
11 show signs of struggling in reading and writing. Mrs. Riley immediately sent a letter
12 home with Samantha for her mother. The letter suggested a conference to discuss
13 Samantha's difficulties in reading and writing. Mrs. Riley usually schedules
14 appointments in the morning or afternoon, which is convenient for parents who are
15 dropping off or picking up their children. However, since Mrs. Connor does not drive
16 Samantha to school, Mrs. Riley must rely on Samantha to take the letter home. Mrs.
17 Riley had requested that Mrs. Connor sign the form with the appropriate time that she
18 and her husband (if possible) would like to meet. For three days, Mrs. Riley asked
19 Samantha if she gave her mother the note and if she had anything to return to Mrs.
20 Riley.

21 Each time Samantha said, "Yes, I gave my mother the note, and no, I do not have
22 any notes for you from my mother."

23 This made Mrs. Riley furious. She thought to herself, "This mother knows that
24 her daughter is having difficulties with reading and writing because I sent her a note
25 informing her, but she refuses to meet with me. She clearly does not care about her
26 daughter's academic progress."

27 Mrs. Riley then sent a second note home for Samantha's mother. The second
28 note said, "Dear Mrs. Connor, I am sure you received my first note regarding your
29 daughter's progress in reading and writing. We need to have a conference regarding
30 Samantha's struggles. In order to help Samantha succeed we have to work as a team, so
31 I would greatly appreciate it if you would return this note with a time and date that
32 works well for you (and your husband)."

33 Mrs. Riley gave the note to Samantha and asked her to give it to her mother.

1 When Samantha got home from school that day she handed her mother the note
2 and said, "This is from Mrs. Riley and you HAVE to read it, sign it and I have to take it
3 back to her. I'm sick of her bugging me all the time about it."

4 Samantha went outside to play and when she returned, she found her mother
5 sitting at the kitchen table, looking at the note in tears. Samantha said, "Mommy, what
6 is wrong? What did I do? What is the problem? Why are you crying?"

7 Her mother quickly wiped her tears and told Samantha to wash up for dinner.

8 When Samantha went to school the next day, Mrs. Riley asked her if she had
9 anything to give her.

10 Samantha said, "No I don't, but that note made my mommy cry. I saw her
11 crying at the kitchen table."

12 Mrs. Riley was even more frustrated. She was annoyed that Mrs. Connor had
13 become so upset over the information on her daughter's progress before she had even
14 spoken with Mrs. Riley. Mrs. Riley knew she had a challenge on her hands and she was
15 not looking forward to it.

16 She thought to herself, "These kinds of parents are so overprotective that they
17 cannot handle hearing that their child is struggling. All I want to do is discuss
18 Samantha's progress in reading and writing."

19 After waiting for five days with no reply from Mrs. Connor, Mrs. Riley decided
20 to call Samantha's house. She left a voicemail for both parents.

21 She said, "Hello, this is Mrs. Riley, Samantha's teacher. I have sent home two
22 notes requesting a conference with you to discuss Samantha's progress in school. I
23 would greatly appreciate it if you would return my phone call at (543)578-5615. Please
24 let me know what time and date works best for you both. I hope to hear from you by
25 Monday."

26 When Mr. Connor returned home from business, he found his wife sitting by the
27 answering machine. He asked her what was wrong and she said, "I tried to write down
28 the phone number for Samantha's teacher but I kept messing up the numbers. I tried to
29 call her back but I guess I wrote the number down wrong. "

30 Mr. Connor comforted her and said, "Honey please don't worry, I will find the
31 phone number. I will return Mrs. Riley's phone call as soon as possible."

32 Mrs. Connor was grateful to her husband for being so helpful and
33 understanding. He returned Mrs. Riley's call and scheduled a conference for the
34 following Friday at 3:30pm.

1 When the Connors arrived for their conference with Mrs. Riley, they could sense
2 the frustration in her voice. She seemed annoyed and agitated. The three of them sat
3 down to discuss Samantha's progress in reading and writing.

4 Mrs. Riley said, "Samantha is having a difficult time in reading and writing. I
5 have tried to work with her but she does not seem to be progressing. I am concerned
6 that she is falling behind the rest of her class."

7 While Mrs. Riley was speaking, Samantha's mother did not seem to focus. She
8 looked all around the class, bouncing her knees up and down, tapping her fingers on
9 the table and constantly clearing her throat, as if she were preparing to say something.
10 Mrs. Riley grew more frustrated.

11 She continued, "We need to help Samantha as soon as possible. We need to
12 create goals for her so she can improve. I think some tutoring sessions after school
13 would be beneficial, and if she could come to school early a few days out of the week, I
14 can help her myself."

15 As Mrs. Riley spoke, Samantha's mother stood up, went to the window and
16 drew the blinds. She then straightened up the tissue box and chalk.

17 Mr. Connor was about to speak, and offer to work as a team to help Samantha.
18 He was considering how to explain that it was too difficult for Mrs. Connor to bring
19 Samantha to school early and to pick her up late because the driving gives her anxiety.
20 But he was interrupted by Mrs. Riley, who abruptly stood up.

21 "Okay, clearly this is not important to you, Mrs. Connor. I have tried to share
22 with you that your daughter is struggling but you are not interested. You are wasting
23 my time, and clearly, I am wasting yours. I will speak with the principal and we can all
24 schedule a conference together. Maybe he will have a little more influence on you," she
25 said.

26 Mrs. Connor ran out of the room crying. Her husband ran after her. After a few
27 minutes, he returned to the classroom and asked Mrs. Riley to sit down.

28 He said, "Mrs. Riley, I am not sure if you know this or not. My wife suffers from
29 two disabilities. She has dyslexia, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Her dyslexia
30 makes it difficult for her to read your notes, write numbers, read numbers and write
31 letters. The OCD makes her feel as though she has routines and rituals that she needs to
32 partake in throughout the day. She is amazing and has many of them under control,
33 but when she feels uncomfortable, they tend to escalate. I really do not appreciate the
34 way you spoke to my wife. We are leaving now because she is upset. I do agree, a

1 meeting with the principal would be appropriate. One day, I hope you learn to be more
2 open and understanding of people and their disabilities.”

3

4 **Discussion Questions:**

- 5 1. What would you suggest that Mrs. Riley do now?
- 6 2. How do you think she feels?
- 7 3. How could she work with the parents to improve the relationship?
- 8 4. How can Mrs. Riley communicate with Mrs. Connor, especially now that she
9 knows that reading and writing is a challenge?
- 10 5. What could have been done in this situation so that it did not escalate?
- 11 6. If this situation were to occur again, how could Mrs. Riley respond to Mrs.
12 Connor differently?

13

14 **Suggested Resources:**

15

16 **Articles for Teachers**

17 West, J. & Whitby, P. (2008). Federal policy and the education of students with
18 disabilities: Progress and the path forward. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, (41)3,
19 1-16.

20

21 Nichey (2009). Categories of disability under IDEA: *National Dissemination Center for*
22 *Children with Disabilities*, 1-6.

23

24 **Web Articles/PDF Files**

25

26 <http://www.ndscenter.org/resources/package1.php>

27 This is a link to a writing piece by Emily Perl Kingsley. In this piece Kingsley
28 compares the dream of becoming a parent of a typically developing child to a
29 trip that you planned to Italy but unexpectedly you ended up in Holland. Just as
30 you planned on visiting Italy, you planned on raising a typically developing
31 child but things changed when you were informed that your child has special
32 needs.

33

34 http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0STR/is_2_113/ai_109947645/?tag=content;col1

1 An article about a little girl named Helen. She does very well in reading but
2 shows signs of difficulty in other areas. Read this case study and try to recognize
3 the signs of a learning disability.

4
5 <http://www.unitedspinal.org/pdf/DisabilityEtiquette.pdf>

6 United Spinal Association put together a pdf on “disability etiquette”. The
7 website states, “You don’t have to feel awkward when dealing with a person
8 who has a disability. This booklet provides some basic tips for you to follow.
9 And if you are ever unsure how to interact with a person who has a disability,
10 just ask!”

11 **Websites**

12
13
14 http://www.ucp.org/ucp_channel.doc.cfm/1/13/12632/12632-12632/6184

15 The website on United Cerebral Palsy provides an in-depth definition of
16 disability from the American with Disabilities Act (1990).

17
18 <http://www.nichcy.org/Disabilities/Categories/Pages/Default.aspx>

19 National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) is a
20 website for families, schools and agencies. The website provides information on
21 developmental milestones, laws, different resources, research, and it provides a
22 blog with the most recent information on disabilities.

23
24 <http://www.dol.gov/odep/faqs/federal.htm>

25 The Office of Disability Employment Policy is a website under The United States
26 Department of Labor. This website provides the reader with a federal
27 government definition of disability.

28
29 <http://adawatch.org/>

30 ADAWatch is a website that provides the reader with the latest information,
31 programs, media, photos, videos, and headlines regarding disabilities.

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<http://www.tapartnership.org/cc/default.asp>

“The Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health (TA Partnership) provides technical assistance to system of care communities that are currently funded through the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and their Families Program”.

www.pealcenter.org

The Parent Education Advocacy Leadership Center (PEAL Center) “reflects a resounding call to parents, professionals and persons living with disabilities to join in celebrating our common bonds and to be the collective voice that reverberates in our communities.”

<http://www.gvparent.com/Articles/2609disability.html>

A website that helps parents and educators address difficult questions posed by children about disabilities.

Videos

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7ZTauD8VY4>

Stewart Middle School has a day for children without disabilities to experience a glimpse of what life is like for children with disabilities.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bO9Tf8Vk72k>

This is a youtube power point that teaches the importance of using person first language through examples of how to use person first language.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhKMouRaWcY>

This youtube is a powerful commercial that involves a man with a disability singing to his music and the insensitive looks from surrounding people.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMe9urPGJXU>

1 This youtube includes perspectives of people with disabilities. The students want
2 people to understand that they have the same desires and goals as typically
3 developing people.
4

5 **Books for Professionals and Parents**

6

7 Fitzpatrick, L. (2008). *A practical handbook on disability sensitivity*. United States: The
8 Disability Etiquette Training Company.

9 *A practical handbook on disability sensitivity*, “synthesizes a pioneering body of
10 work on disability sensitivity for the 21st Century, where technological, medical
11 and legislative breakthroughs have changed the game for people with
12 disabilities” (<http://www.lulu.com/content/4608864>).
13

14 Johnson, M. (2006). *Disability awareness do it right: Ragged edge online community*. United
15 States: The Advocado Press.

16 A book that helps professionals plan a disability awareness day.
17

18 Martin, L. C. (2009). *Strategies for teaching students with disabilities*. Thousand Oaks:
19 Corwin Press.

20 A book that is helpful for teachers who will be working with students with
21 disabilities. This book provides different helpful teaching strategies.
22

23 Fink, Dale. B. (2000). *Making a place for kids with disabilities*. West Port: Praeger.

24 This book fosters conversation and decision making on how to create an
25 appropriate environment for children with disabilities.
26

27 Dyches, T. T., & Prater, M. A. (2008). *Teaching about disabilities through children’s*
28 *literature*. Westport: Libraries Unlimited/Teacher Ideas Press.

29 In order to teach disability through children’s literature, this book provides the
30 teacher with an “annotated bibliography, lesson plans, unit plans, activities and
31 worksheets and additional resources”.
32

33 Grandin, T. (2008). *The way I see it: A personal look at autism & aspergers*. Arlington: Future
34 Horizons.

1 This book includes many different chapters that are helpful for teachers of
2 children with autism. There is a chapter dedicated to “teaching and education”.

3
4 **Children’s Books**

5
6 Rickert, J.E. (2000). *Russ and the almost perfect day*. Bethesda: Woodbine House.

7 This is a book about a boy named Russ. The book goes through a school day in
8 Russ’ life.

9
10 Rickert, J.E. (2001). *Russ and the fire station*. Bethesda: Woodbine House.

11 A book about a boy named Russ who spends the day on duty at a fire station.

12
13 Girnis, M. (2000). *ABC for you and me*. Illinois: Albert Whiteman & Company

14 This book teaches each letter of the alphabet through the demonstration of a
15 child with Down syndrome.

16
17 Girnis, M. (2001). *1,2,3 for you and me*. Illinois: Albert Whiteman & Company.

18 This book teaches the concept of numbers through the demonstration of a child
19 with Down syndrome.

20
21 Cowen-Fletcher, J. (1993). *Mama zooms*. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

22 This is a book about a mother with a physical disability and her experiences with
23 her child.

24
25 DeBear, K. (2001). *Be quiet, Marina!* New York: Star Bright Books.

26 This is a book about two little girls with disabilities. The two girls became
27 extremely good friends.

28
29 Thomas, P. (2005). *Don’t call me special: A first look at disability*. United States: Barron's
30 Education Series.

31 This book emphasizes the importance of teaching children that all children are
32 different, with or without disabilities. Every child has different strengths and
33 weaknesses.

1 Harrington, D., & Shally, C. (2007). *Since we're friends: An autism picture book*. Arkansas:
2 Awaken Specialty Press.

3 This book teaches children the differences of children and the importance of
4 friendship, regardless of a child's disability.

5
6 Bunnett, R. (2006). *Friends at school*. United States: Star Bright Books.

7 This is a book about children accepting each other's differences and working
8 together as friends.

9 10 **Books for Children Whose Siblings Have Disabilities**

11
12 Lears, L. (2003). *Ian's walk: A story about autism*. United States: Albert Whitman &
13 Company.

14 This is a book for a child with a sibling who has a disability. The siblings go on a
15 walk with their brother Ian. Throughout the walk Ian (a child with autism) has
16 different experiences related to his disability.

17
18 Lord, C. (2006). *Rules*. New York: Scholastic Press.

19 This book is told through the eyes of a child who has a sibling with a disability.
20 The child tries to teach her brother the different rules in life. The little girl
21 searches to seek acceptance and understanding of her brother and his disability.

22 23 **Films**

24
25 Brooks, J. L. (Director). (1998). *As Good As It Gets* [Motion Picture].

26 This is a movie about a man who has obsessive compulsive disorder. The movie
27 goes through his adult life, showing and sharing the challenges he faces.

28
29 Nelson, J. (Director). (2002). *I am Sam* [Motion Picture].

30 This is a movie about a father who has a disability. He spends much of his time
31 fighting for the custody of his daughter.

32
33 Schachter, S. (Director). (2002). *Door to Door* [Motion Picture].

1 This movie is about a man who has cerebral palsy. He goes through his adult life
2 showing and teaching others that a disability does not stop someone from being
3 successful.

4

5 Stanton, A. (Director). (2003). *Finding Nemo* [Motion Picture].

6 This is a movie about a young fish that has a physically disabled fin. Watch this
7 movie and experience the big adventure of Nemo.

8

9 http://www.tc.umn.edu/~rbeach/teachingmedia/student_units/module5/disabilities_timonis.pdf

10 mons.pdf

11 This is a PDF file that shares numerous movies that involve people with
12 disabilities.

Chapter Seven: The Voices of the Silent

Case Study: Tommy Miller

Tommy Miller, a seven-year-old living in a suburb of a large city, is the only child of two middle class parents. His family moved to a new town at the end of June from the nearby city. His parents wanted him to grow up in a safer environment, so they are now commuting to work in the city. Although they are not far from the city, the Miller family's new town is less diverse than the city. For the most part, the town is racially, ethnically, and economically homogeneous.

Instead of hiring a babysitter, Tommy's parents signed him up for a local day camp to make friends. Several of his new friends are in his new second grade class with Mrs. Shafer. Mrs. Shafer, a teacher for ten years, sent her students a welcome letter several weeks before school began. She instructed the students to bring in something for show-and-tell on the first day of school. Mrs. Shafer suggested the item be something from the child's summer activities. After searching through his toy chest, he turned to his most prized possessions the night before his first day of school.

"How about your T-Rex tooth from the museum?" Angela, Tommy's mother, called to him from the hallway.

"No, I want something *no one* else will have! Chris has one of those!" Tommy exclaimed, naming his new best friend who lives only two houses away.

Tommy continued looking, but by the time his parents called him to take a bath and get ready for bed, he had almost given up. He went to bed worried, unsure if he would be able to find something great enough to win over the class. Something no one in the class would have would surely do the trick! Just when he was about to fall asleep, he knew what he could bring in. He smiled to himself and fell asleep, knowing the beginning of his summer had surely been different from all the other kids.

The next morning, his parents searched for the car keys to take him to school before they went to work. Tommy snuck into the living room and slid his family photo album into his backpack. He knew that his parents would be upset with him if he took it, because it was so important to them.

"Tommy! Are you ready to go?" Angela called to him from the front door.

"Yeah!" he yelled, grinning wildly as he ran to the front door.

By the time school started and he was sitting in his seat in a noisy classroom, Tommy could barely sit still. He could not wait for show-and-tell! His teacher was very

1 nice and she smiled at him a lot. She helped the children take turns reading a book. If
2 kids were stuck on words, she did not get upset or mad or yell. This was a refreshing
3 change from his old school, where the classes were overcrowded and the teachers were
4 too busy yelling at kids to help Tommy with course material. He was very excited to go
5 to this new school where there were fewer students in the class. Also, Mrs. Shafer never
6 yelled, even when another child knocked over a can of paint during arts and crafts.

7 As the day continued, Tommy almost forgot about show-and-tell. During lunch
8 he sat with his new best friend Chris, and Chris' friends Dylan and Matt. At recess, the
9 boys played kickball and the girls played on the playground. All of the boys cheered for
10 Tommy when he kicked the ball so hard, his team scored three points! Chris, Dylan,
11 and Matt picked Tommy up and cheered.

12 "You are the best kicker in our grade! Are you good at baseball? You know we
13 play afterschool sometimes," Chris said to Tommy, as the whistled blew to signal the
14 end of recess.

15 "Thanks! I never got to play baseball at my old school. But I watch it on TV!"
16 Tommy said excitedly.

17 "You should play with us. We'll teach you how," Matt said. "Come to my house
18 after school, I live next to Chris."

19 "Okay!" Tommy said, grinning. He could not believe his luck. The best show-
20 and-tell ever *and* new friends all in one day!

21 As the class went inside, Mrs. Shafer continued with the activities she had
22 planned for the day. They did some math, learned a few facts about the state they lived
23 in, and they even watched a movie about the kinds of animals their local zoo had.

24 When the movie was over, Mrs. Shafer moved the class to the carpeted area in
25 the back of the classroom. Tommy fidgeted in excitement as his classmates each stood
26 up and showed their item to the class. Each child told stories about his or her trip to the
27 beach or a ride on the fastest roller coaster at the nearby amusement park.

28 Finally, Mrs. Shafer called Tommy's name from her list of students and he
29 eagerly stood up. Holding the family photo album tight to his chest, Tommy stood in
30 front of the class. He felt butterflies in his stomach as he looked at the sea of faces.

31 "Hello, Tommy," Mrs. Shafer said with a smile. "What did you bring to show us
32 today?"

33 "My family photo album!" Tommy said.

1 “That’s a great way for us to get to know your family, Tommy! What a great
2 idea!” Mrs. Shafer replied.

3 Tommy beamed, knowing how exciting his summer was, and how excited he
4 was to show everyone how much fun he had with his parents. Mrs. Shafer urged the
5 children to move closer so they could see the pictures.

6 “Why don’t you pick four pictures and tell us what they are from?” Mrs. Shafer
7 said.

8 “This first one is when my mom and Angela got ready for the wedding,”
9 Tommy said, showing a picture of his two parents standing in white wedding dresses.

10 Before moving to the suburbs, Tommy’s parents had been married for the first
11 time following the state’s new legislation allowing for same-sex marriages. Although he
12 has always had two mothers, Tommy’s parents could not legally be married in their
13 state until recently. With the new laws passing in several states, many same-sex couples
14 are able to get married. Also, it is now becoming a greater possibility that same-sex
15 couples can have children and adopt together.

16 “And whose wedding is this, Tommy?” Mrs. Shafer asked.

17 “My mom and Angela’s,” Tommy said.

18 Tommy looked out at the kids in front of him and saw some look confused, some
19 whisper to each other, and others giggle. When his eyes fell on Chris, Matt, and Dylan,
20 all three were giggling with their hands covering their mouths. Tommy just shrugged
21 and continued on to the next picture.

22 “This next one is my mom walking down with her daddy,” Tommy said, turning
23 to another page in the album.

24 “That is very nice,” Mrs. Shafer said.

25 Tommy’s smile faded as the kids continued to snicker and point.

26 Tommy’s heart started beating fast and he began to sweat, realizing the kids
27 were laughing *at* him. Wanting to show the kids how much fun he was, he continued
28 with the pictures. He turned the album to a picture of him with his parents, all three
29 faces covered in cake.

30 “And at the end of the party, we got to have cake and we had a food fight!”
31 Tommy said, laughing.

32 When he looked at the kids, some of them looked unsure. Others looked bored.
33 But his three new friends, his best friends in the new town, were laughing and pointing
34 at the pictures.

1 “Ew, that’s gross!” Matt yelled.
2 “That’s enough, boys,” Mrs. Shafer said, but the boys continued to laugh.
3 “You aren’t supposed to have *two moms*, Tommy,” Dylan said.
4 “Alright, everyone back to your seats,” Mrs. Shafer said, louder this time. She
5 stood up and thanked Tommy for his presentation, giving him a smile.

6 The rest of the class hurried to their seats while Tommy went to his cubby and
7 put his photo album back into his backpack. As he went to take his seat while Mrs.
8 Shafer looked in her desk for papers to hand out, Chris got up from his seat and walked
9 over to Tommy.

10 “My daddy says, if you have two moms, then you won’t be normal,” Chris said,
11 loud enough for the whole class to hear. Some kids laughed and some looked away
12 from Tommy. Mrs. Shafer had found her papers and walked closer to the class just in
13 time to hear Chris’ comment to Tommy. She knows that Chris’ teasing could easily
14 escalate into persistent bullying—bullying that would continue after school on the bus
15 with Tommy and Chris being neighbors. Since it was the first day of school, she did not
16 want to get off on the wrong foot with her students. It could lead to yearlong problems
17 for a new student like Tommy, who had not adjusted to his new surroundings. Yet, she
18 was unsure what to do since she has never encountered this type of situation. Tommy’s
19 parents are the first same-sex couple to live in this town with a child attending school.
20 Mrs. Shafer finished her teaching degree ten years ago. At that time, her school did not
21 offer classes on diversity. Although teaching requires her to take additional classes
22 throughout her career, she has not thought to take a class on cultural diversity.

23

24 **Discussion Questions:**

- 25 1. Whom can Mrs. Shafer talk to for help with bullying and teasing? Should she
26 involve Tommy’s parents, or the parents of the children doing the bullying and
27 teasing?
28 2. Would it help to educate the children on what being ‘gay’ means?
29 3. How might outside resources be helpful to Mrs. Shafer? Where could she find
30 these resources? Should classes on culture in education include issues such as
31 sexual orientation and same-sex marriage?
32 4. Would a “zero tolerance on bullying” policy reduce the teasing and help Tommy
33 adjust?

1 5. Should teachers be required to take classes on diversity, even if their school
2 district is not statistically diverse?
3

4 **What?**

5 The American Heritage Dictionaries (2006) defines **sexual orientation** as “the direction
6 of one's sexual interest toward members of the same, opposite, or both sexes”. Several
7 terms are associated with sexual orientation, including the terms **heterosexual**,
8 **homosexual**, **gay**, **lesbian**, **transgender**, and **bisexual**. The glossary at the end of the
9 guide defines these terms, as well as many others. Although these terms are common in
10 today's society, there are terms used within the sexual minority community, such as the
11 term ‘**coming out**’, as well as **homophobia** and **heterosexism**. **LGBT** is an acronym
12 used within the literature and the sexual minority community to refer to Lesbian, Gay,
13 Bisexual, and Transgender individuals. There are variations on this acronym to include
14 **LGBTQ (Queer or Questioning)** or **LGBTIQA (Intersex and Asexual)**.
15

16 Homosexuality is in fact a part of our lives. Whether you hear stories on the news or
17 know someone who identifies as a sexual minority individual, they are a part of our
18 communities and schools. Ginsberg estimates that six percent of adolescents identify as
19 gay or lesbian, and Marinoble suggests this number is closer to ten percent of
20 adolescents (as cited in Campos, 2005). The United States Census, as far back as the 2000
21 survey, indicates that in terms of couples living together who are unmarried, one out of
22 nine is a same-sex couple (American Psychological Association, 2008). In addition, a
23 third of female same-sex couples and almost a quarter of male same-sex couples had
24 children under the age of 18 living in their house in 2000 (American Psychological
25 Association, 2008).
26

27 **So What?**

28 The topic of sexual orientation is important to schools and teachers for several reasons.
29 The most important reason is the safety of students. In a large study, the Gay, Lesbian,
30 and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) conducted a study to survey sexual minority
31 youth. In terms of harassment, 86.2% of students who identify as a sexual minority
32 youth experienced verbal harassment, almost a quarter of a sample of students
33 experienced physical assault, and over half were victims of what is known as ‘cyber
34 bullying’ in the past year (Kosciw, Diaz, & Greytak, 2008). The National Crime

1 Prevention Council defines cyber bullying as a recent phenomenon that “happens when
2 teens use the Internet, cell phones, or other devices to send or post text or images
3 intended to hurt or embarrass another person” (National Crime Prevention Council,
4 2009).

5
6 Students who experience harassment do so because he or she identifies as gay, or he or
7 she has parents who are gay, in the case of the student in this case study. Perceiving or
8 judging someone as gay based solely on looks, dress, or gender expression also leads to
9 harassment (Lee Marcuzzi, personal communication, June 24, 2009). Overall, two thirds
10 of the sample in GLSEN’s study felt unsafe in school due to a personal characteristic,
11 such as sexual orientation or race (Kosciw, Diaz, & Greytak, 2008). Students also either
12 did not report harassment because they felt staff would not be effective in helping the
13 situation, or when they did, most often the teacher or school did not do anything.

14 15 **Now What?**

16 First of all, it is important to note that the sense of feeling different that emerges from
17 individuals who are lesbian, gay, or questioning their sexuality is not exclusive to the
18 onset of puberty. As reported by Treadway and Yoakum, it can emerge at the young
19 age of five, or in the teenage years as Morrow notes (as cited in McCaughtry, Dillon,
20 Jones, & Smigell, 2005). Teachers and staff of all grade levels should be aware of the
21 victimization that can occur with any age group.

22
23 Lamme and Lamme (2001/2002) have offered a variety of suggestions on how to make
24 gay families and their children feel safe and comfortable in schools. First, they suggest
25 school personnel do not tolerate harassment, including derogatory terms. Also, provide
26 diversity training not just for school personnel, but also for students. Another
27 suggestion is to celebrate gay pride week, and to include noteworthy or famous
28 individuals in class. In addition, it is important to make sure library and media
29 resources include books and other materials on diverse families, sexual orientation,
30 gender identity, and even fiction that includes characters that may identify as gay,
31 lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.

32
33 In addition, Lamme and Lamme suggest many ideas for teachers. Sending home two
34 copies of papers, handouts, or other items in case a family is divorced is beneficial not

1 only to gay families who were previously part of heterosexual families, but also for any
2 divorced family. It can also be hurtful to ask who the 'real' parent is, suggesting the
3 biological parent is more important, if one exists in the family situation.

4
5 There are also many ways to bring up the topic of homosexuality in a classroom so that
6 teachers may educate students. In a class of fourth and fifth grade students, the teacher
7 brought up the topic of homosexuality following a theme of survival in middle school
8 the next year (Schall & Kauffman, 2003). The students and teacher discussed that a
9 classroom built on choices, trust, and the chance to voice one's own opinion would help
10 create class environments where children can learn safely. She then read aloud a book
11 about two princes falling in love and allowed the students to voice their opinions and
12 initial reactions. Then they had the choice to read additional books with the subject of
13 same-sex parenthood or partnership, and again discussed those books. The most
14 important point the authors make is that the children knew that treating others with
15 respect is important, however when they encounter situations that they do not
16 understand, they respond negatively. The students expressed "that if they were told
17 what was going on and were helped to understand others, they would be more tolerant
18 of each other" (Schall & Kauffman, 2003, p. 41).

19
20 Schall and Kauffman also found that the students wondered why they had no
21 knowledge of the reality of a person being homosexual. Their knowledge of
22 homosexuality came mostly from some friends and close in age family members, but
23 did not come from adults. The students also questioned why adults feel children cannot
24 handle information about homosexuality. After several months had passed, the
25 students still discuss the books they read, and they have stopped using derogatory
26 terms on the playground to insult others. They even mentioned standing up for others
27 and for themselves. This type of discussion with the students as well as reading of
28 children's books with same-sex partners and parents is a great way to start to educate
29 students about homosexuality and to decrease harassment and bullying by students.
30 Children's books, literature, and films are all a way to begin a dialogue in classrooms
31 about homosexuality.

32
33 **Case Study: Mr. Smith**

1 Mr. Smith has just started his first year teaching fourth grade in a suburban
2 school district. He is both nervous and excited, but as the first few days of school pass,
3 his nervousness begins to decrease. He enjoys his class and is looking forward to
4 Parents Night on Thursday night, where he can meet the parents of his wonderful
5 students. When setting up his classroom for the school year, he solicited help from
6 friends who are teachers, and his colleagues in the school. In an effort to include
7 diversity, he includes pictures and posters with people of different races, ethnicities,
8 and cultures. Found throughout the classroom are maps of countries and continents, as
9 well as books and activities on different countries and cultures.

10 On the night of Parents Night, Mr. Smith waits patiently and nervously in his
11 classroom for parents to begin arriving. He is unsure about how to approach parents.
12 Should he be friendly and open or business like and professional? What if a parent has a
13 question that is unsure about or cannot answer? He nervously arranges and rearranges
14 the snack table as he waits. He realizes that the parents may be as nervous as he is, since
15 this is a new school building for these students with new teachers and principals.

16 Finally, he sees his first set of parents walk into the classroom. They smile
17 brightly at him and as they come over to shake his hand, he relaxes. For the next fifteen
18 minutes, he greets parents until it is time for the curriculum discussion he has planned.

19 "Good evening, Moms and Dads and welcome to 4S! I am Mr. Smith and I will
20 be teaching your children this year," Mr. Smith says to the parents seated in front of
21 him.

22 The adults politely applaud, and Mr. Smith tells the class a little bit about
23 himself.

24 "Since this is my first year teaching, I welcome any questions, comments, or
25 suggestions that you may have," Mr. Smith concludes, as a few more parents arrive late.

26 "I see here that you will be working on long division and multiplication this
27 year. My daughter has a lot of trouble with math. Are there any resources in the school
28 to help her if she needs it?" a parent asks from the back of the room.

29 Relieved, Mr. Smith knows the answer to this question. He tells the parents
30 about peer-to-peer tutoring programs and that he is available after school or at special
31 times during the day if a student needs extra help.

32 "Will you be discussing history of the state?" another parent asks.

33 "Yes, we will. I will also teach about the three branches of the government, and
34 about voting," Mr. Smith answered.

1 “What about families and different relationships?” a mother asked from near the
2 door.

3 Mr. Smith saw several other parents nod their heads in agreement.

4 “Definitely,” Mr. Smith answered. “I have several books in mind to have the
5 class read and talk about, such as stories about single parents or grandparents who raise
6 their grandchildren. It should be a very enlightening topic.”

7 Several parents nodded their heads in agreement. As the questions continued,
8 Mr. Smith felt more and more at ease. He felt the parents had great questions and were
9 all very interested and proactive in their child’s lives in school. Furthermore, he had an
10 answer for every question. As the question and discussion portion of the night
11 concluded, Mr. Smith suggested parents get to know each other for the remaining time
12 and that he would be mingling and meeting parents individually.

13 An elderly couple was the first couple to come up to Mr. Smith as the group
14 moved towards the snack table or formed smaller groups.

15 “Mr. Smith, it is so nice to meet you. I’m Anna and this is my husband, Reggie,”
16 the woman said, shaking his hand. “Our granddaughter, Amy, is in your class. She just
17 loves you!”

18 “Oh yes, Amy! She is wonderful, very bright. A natural leader! She likes to settle
19 disputes. I can see her being a judge someday,” Mr. Smith replied with a smile.

20 “We see that too. We are really glad you will be discussing government,” Reggie
21 added. “She is very eager to learn about how the laws work.”

22 Mr. Smith spoke with Amy’s grandparents for a few more minutes, then moved
23 on to another couple.

24 “Hi, we’re Ben’s parents,” the father said, pumping Mr. Smith’s fist exuberantly.

25 “Ah, yes. We’ve spoke on the phone,” Mr. Smith said.

26 Mr. Smith thought to himself, these are the parents who called four times this
27 summer and sent lists of suggestions about their child. He knew that parents could
28 sometimes be very involved in their child’s life, and he was glad to have them. They
29 spoke for a few minutes about Ben’s learning style and where he might need additional
30 help.

31 Somewhat relieved, his parents moved off to another group of parents near the
32 snack table. Mr. Smith had a minute to jot down a note or two about Ben before another
33 parent came up to him.

1 “Mr. Smith? I’m Tina Watson,” the woman said, shaking his hand with a bright
2 smile, her bracelets jingling.

3 “Oh! Louise’s mother, she is so wonderful!” Mr. Smith said. He truly did like
4 Louise was a quiet child who spoke rarely in class, but when her comments were
5 uncommonly profound. However, Louise was a bit of a loner. She did not have many
6 friends and did not seem to participate in her classmates’ discussions on sleepovers for
7 the weekend, or neighborhood pick-up baseball games after school. Some kids ignored
8 Louise, but others liked her. He had not been able to figure out why, but hoped Louise’s
9 mother might have an answer.

10 “Louise talks about you all the time in class,” Tina said.

11 This surprised Mr. Smith. If she was talking a lot at home, why did she keep to
12 herself the majority of the time at school?

13 “Really? She seems to be pretty quiet in school. Is she usually shy for the first
14 couple of weeks of school?” Mr. Smith asked.

15 “Actually, yes. That is why I wanted to talk to you about your section on family
16 and relationships,” Tina said, tapping the curriculum guide in her hand that he had
17 provided for the parents.

18 “I am looking forward to that section,” Mr. Smith said. “I just met Amy’s
19 grandparents, they are great. Are Louise’s grandparents at home as well?”

20 “No, she does not have a relationship with his grandparents right now. I was
21 wondering what you had planned to include in the curriculum about same-sex
22 relationships. Or same-sex parents?” Tina asked.

23 Mr. Smith thought for a minute, and looked around at a room filled with
24 heterosexual couples.

25 “Well, I am not sure that topic would be relevant to this classroom,” Mr. Smith
26 finally said, as he saw another parent enter the classroom.

27 “Oh, Mary, over here,” Tina said to the woman who had come into the
28 classroom, looking rushed. “Mr. Smith, I’d like you to meet my partner, Mary.”

29

30 **Discussion Questions:**

- 31 1. Does Mr. Smith owe Tina and Mary an apology?
- 32 2. Why would Mr. Smith believe that gay and lesbian issues are not relevant to his
- 33 classroom?

- 1 3. How should Mr. Smith incorporate gay and lesbian issues into his curriculum
- 2 and classroom?
- 3 4. How might he handle parents who do not want these topics discussed in the
- 4 classroom?
- 5 5. Can a teacher with different views on homosexuality issues set aside his or her
- 6 feelings to teach about the topic? If so, how?
- 7 6. How can Mr. Smith help Harry to form relationships with the other children,
- 8 especially keeping in mind that bullying and teasing most likely occurs for Harry
- 9 because of his family?
- 10

11 **What?**

12 Same-sex parenting, as evidenced by the statistics following the first case study, is much
13 more prevalent now than it was even a generation or two ago. However, many teachers
14 and school personnel still assume that everyone in their classroom and parents of
15 students are heterosexual (Straut & Sapon-Shevin, 2002).

16
17 In such a diverse country, there are several obstacles to including LGBT issues in
18 preparing teachers to provide safe schools and classrooms for students with every type
19 of sexual identity (Straut & Sapon-Shevin, 2002). The first of these obstacles is
20 assumptions, which teachers and students alike make about their pupils and classmates
21 sexuality. Most often, they assume that their peers and students are not gay or lesbian.
22 The second barrier is the **hegemonic norm**, which is the belief that everyone is
23 heterosexual and everyone came from heterosexual families. Third, some individuals
24 may perceive the discussion of LGBT issues as promoting homosexuality and are
25 against doing so. Finally, LGBT issues are not included in curriculum, which leads to a
26 curriculum gap.

27 28 **So What?**

29 Why is it important to avoid assuming everyone is heterosexual? There are several
30 answers to this question. The hegemonic norm leads to educators not choosing readings
31 by authors who are gay or lesbian, or even not choosing guest speakers who are gay or
32 lesbian. Most importantly, most students and educators of teachers are not even aware
33 of the lack of LGBT issues in curriculum (Straut & Sapon-Shevin, 2002).

1 Students and educators most often do not even think to consider LGBT issues, unless of
2 course that student or teacher identifies as LGBT. However, it is important to include
3 these issues because it helps to educate students on a topic they may not know a lot
4 about. Knowledge helps to break down stereotypes of groups of individuals. Silence
5 about the issue of homosexuality is similar to silence about racist, sexist, or classist
6 stereotypes, comments, or remarks (Hermann-Wilmarth, 2007). The silence allows
7 individuals to consider those stereotypes as correct and true of that individual or group.
8

9 Most school staff, teachers, parents, and students would agree that classrooms that feel
10 warm and welcoming, do not discriminate, and allow for differences and education
11 about those differences, contribute more to learning. As mentioned earlier, a classroom
12 built on choices, trust, and the chance to voice one's own opinion helps to create
13 classroom environments where children can learn safely (Schall & Kauffman, 2003).
14 Consciously or unconsciously leaving out the history, role models, and issues of a
15 minority group sends the message to students that this group is not important enough
16 to discuss in school.
17

18 **Now What?**

19 In response to the barriers mentioned earlier, Straut and Sapon-Shevin (2002) give
20 several suggestions to educators, especially pre-service teachers. First, teachers need to
21 have knowledge of terminology, such as 'gay' and 'transgender'. Demographic
22 information about LGBT students and parents is important, as well as is information to
23 combat stereotypes. Second, teachers need courage to take action about discriminatory
24 acts that they witness that are homophobic. A tip for teachers when reporting
25 harassment (of any kind, not just harassment based on sexual orientation) is to write
26 down clearly what happened, the teachers and other individuals present, explain what
27 each person did, and make sure this information is given to school personnel and
28 possibly the parents (Lee Marcuzzi, personal communication, June 24, 2009. Finally, a
29 teacher needs skills to help his or her students rectify assumptions and to begin a
30 dialogue about issues that students may not personally experience.
31

32 Straut and Sapon-Shevin (2002) give several suggestions for each content area in school.
33 In math and science classes, the authors suggest challenging gender stereotypes such as
34 a story problem dealing with two male students baking for a bake sale instead of two

1 female students. Or using statistics such as hate crime rates, the rate of calling on males
2 versus females, or which gender makes more money. English classes provide more
3 opportunities to discuss sexual orientation. Many books can spark discussions about the
4 differences within families, relationships, and interactions. In the visual and performing
5 arts, the sexual preference of the artist can be relevant for discussion. The use of music
6 to teach about and against homophobia is also useful. Finally, social studies provides
7 many opportunities to bring up the topic of homosexuality. For instance, the Stonewall
8 Inn riots that occurred in New York City in 1969 are a part of the gay rights movement.
9 Gay individuals were also included in the Holocaust as a hated group. Straut and
10 Sapon-Shevin suggest a goal of social studies education is to create decent citizens who
11 live in a democracy where there are multiple and diverse perspectives.

12
13 There are also non-curriculum suggestions that teachers should be aware of. Lamme
14 and Lamme (2001/2002), in addition to the suggestions following the first case study,
15 advise that teachers realize that the family may be 'closeted', so the parents have not
16 disclosed their sexual orientation to others. The risks of disclosure can be hurtful to the
17 family and to the child. Along these lines, teachers should not ask a student to discuss
18 his or her family in the classroom to avoid the disclosure issue. However, if they are
19 older children or the parents agree to discussions, then it may be beneficial to discuss
20 the student's home life. Finally, the school should be sure to include parents in
21 volunteer activities or ask them to speak to classes if they are willing.

22

23 **Case Study: Katelyn Jones**

24 Park View Middle School is a moderately sized middle school in a suburban
25 area. As an eighth grader, Katelyn Jones has lived in this town her entire life, and
26 knows all of her classmates. The town is slightly more diverse because it is close to a
27 large city. It also does a foreign exchange student program with students from countries
28 all over the world. Katelyn feels blessed to know so many different types of people.

29 A week ago, Katelyn's best friend, Linda, revealed that she thinks she may be
30 attracted to other women and not men. Linda is afraid that if anyone else finds out,
31 other students will treat her differently or tease her. Although Katelyn and Linda and
32 their friends are a generally open minded group, they know that some teachers,
33 parents, administrators, and other students do not know a lot about what it means to be
34 gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered.

1 After school one Friday, Katelyn and Linda are meeting their friend Harry at the
2 local pizza parlor. Harry, also an eighth grader at Park View Middle School, is a child of
3 same-sex parents. His father Thomas raised him from birth when his birth mother,
4 Thomas' sister, died. Thomas adopted Harry as his son and several years later, met his
5 partner Bill. Together they have lived as a family and raised Harry.

6 The three friends find a quiet booth in the back of the pizza parlor where they
7 talk about homework, tests, teachers, and the class gossip as they wait for their pizza.
8 As soon as their food arrives and the server leaves, Linda decides to tell Harry about
9 her confused feelings of attraction. Harry and Katelyn are both sympathetic as they
10 listen to Linda's dilemma about whether or not to tell her parents. She has heard horror
11 stories about parents kicking their children them out of their homes for being gay or
12 lesbian.

13 “What can we do? I feel like we are hiding out back here,” Katelyn finally said,
14 glancing around the pizza parlor where they had secluded themselves from other
15 patrons.

16 “You know, my cousin's school in the city formed a club. It's called a Gay-
17 Straight Alliance. He said that anyone could join, and there are a lot of people that are
18 in the club. They talk about being gay and how to teach people about what it means to
19 be gay,” Harry said, almost thinking aloud.

20 “Really?” Linda said, a glimmer of hope in her eyes.

21 “Oh, yeah. He said he joined the GSA 'cause of my dad's,” Harry said, nodding
22 fervently.

23 “Wow. So straight people can join?” Katelyn asked.

24 “Yup,” Harry answered. “Anyone can. And you can do it through the school.
25 And it doesn't mean you're gay just because you're in the club. I mean, that's just not
26 true. People are always asking me if I'm gay just because my dad's are. Well, I'm sick of
27 telling them no. Maybe if we had a club like this, we can show people, 'hey it's okay to
28 be gay and it's okay to have friends who are gay'.”

29 “Yeah, that is a good idea,” Katelyn said.

30 As several of their other friends came in to join them, the conversation quickly
31 turned to the football game that night and who would win the rivalry. However,
32 Katelyn could not keep her mind off of the idea of a Gay-Straight Alliance.

33 At the football game that night, Katelyn sat with Linda and Harry and their other
34 friends, drinking hot cocoa in the early November chilled air. They cheered on their

1 team, groaning when the other team scored a touchdown, and going hoarse over the
2 impressive two-point conversion their team scored.

3 During halftime, Katelyn made her way to the bathrooms. As she left to head
4 back to the stands, she noticed her math teacher, Mrs. Morris, standing alone along the
5 fence. She had loved having Mrs. Morris last year as her math teacher. She always loved
6 hearing her exhilarating tales of backpacking through Europe in college, or living on a
7 boat one summer in the Pacific Ocean. Mrs. Morris always made herself available if any
8 student wanted to talk. About math or otherwise.

9 "Mrs. Morris, hi!" Katelyn said, coming over to stand next to her along the fence.

10 "Katelyn! It's so good to see you! You know, I miss having you in class," Mrs.
11 Morris said with a smile.

12 "I do too. Mr. Pierce wears the same tie every day," she replied and they both
13 chuckled. "Actually, I have a question for you."

14 "Okay. What is it?"

15 "Well," Katelyn said, hesitated for a minute, and then pressed on. "Some friends
16 and I...well, we were talking about forming a club. It's not an academic club though,
17 more of a social, informative type club."

18 "Hmm. Well, those types of clubs are possible. There are some guidelines but I'm
19 sure we can set it up. I would be happy to be an advisor. What's the nature of the club?"
20 Mrs. Morris asked, her expression turning thoughtful.

21 "Well, it would be a Gay-Straight Alliance," Katelyn said, then added hurriedly,
22 "I mean, it only makes sense. So many schools have them, and there are people who are
23 gay, even people our age. If the math club can have a club to talk about math issues,
24 there should be a club for people who want to talk about gay issues, even if they are or
25 aren't gay."

26 "That's very well said. Let's do some research and we can present our idea to the
27 board of education. They are meeting next Thursday."

28 "That sounds great. Thank you so much!" Katelyn said, already formulating a
29 plan in her mind.

30 The next Thursday, Katelyn and her friends and classmates who had heard about
31 her idea, came to the board of education meeting. They had met together after school
32 every day with Mrs. Morris and researched online about GSA's and how to form them.
33 Katelyn stood nervously waiting for her turn to speak. After going through several
34 other issues and an hour of bureaucratic boilerplate, the board president finally called

1 her name. She approached the front of the room and began speaking. She told the board
2 of education members about the need for the GSA. She gave them statistics on the
3 number of schools who have a GSA. She also gave statistics on how students feel safer
4 in a school with a GSA. Then she discussed how they could form the club, including
5 nominating and voting for officers, holding fundraisers, and bringing awareness to
6 other students and adults in the community. As she finished her speech and looked
7 back at her classmates with a sigh of relief, they smiled at her, clapped, and cheered.
8 Mrs. Morris nodded at her and smiled her approval.

9 “Miss Jones, your speech was very informative. However, this board feels there
10 is no need for a Gay-Straight Alliance,” the board president said after conferring with
11 the other board members for several minutes. “If you wish to have this kind of club,
12 you must do so outside of school. Thank you for your time. This meeting is adjourned.”

13 Katelyn, in disbelief, stared at the board members as they gathered to leave along
14 with the rest of the community members in the auditorium. Some of her classmates
15 looked bewildered, some defeated, and still others looked angry. She saw a strange look
16 on Linda’s face, which can only be described as fear, and thought to herself, *now what?*

17

18 **Discussion Questions:**

- 19 1. What do you think the benefits of a GSA are to a school? What, if any, are the
20 disadvantages of such a club?
- 21 2. What else can Katelyn do to seek approval from the board of education?
- 22 3. Are there laws that can prohibit GSA clubs, or protect schools if they decline
23 student’s wishes to start one?
- 24 4. How important is Mrs. Morris’ role in forming a GSA, besides the fact that they
25 need an advisor? What about schools that do not have a teacher willing to be an
26 advisor to this type of club?
- 27 5. Are GSA’s a benefit to the school community and the outside community? Why
28 or why not?

29

30 **What?**

31 A **Gay-Straight Alliance** or **GSA**, is a club run by students within schools. It “provides
32 a safe place for students to meet, support each other, talk about issues related to sexual
33 orientation, and work to end homophobia” (GSA Network, 2008). GSAs are important
34 support groups for students, both gay and straight. They are a source of education for

1 the school community on LGBT issues. GSAs involve themselves in pride weeks or
2 awareness events, as well as 'teach the teachers' days where they teach school staff
3 about becoming allies for LGBT students (GSA Network, 2008). They also participate in
4 the Day of Silence, a day where students stay silent in order to recognize how
5 homophobia has led to silencing LGBT community members. Some GSAs take on an
6 activist role, pushing for inclusion of LGBT issues in curriculum, LGBT books in
7 libraries, and better written and implemented anti-discrimination policies.

8

9 **So What?**

10 Lawrence King. Carl Walker-Hoover. Jaheem Herrera. These are the names of three
11 youth who died because of bullying and discrimination based on perceived
12 homosexuality. Lawrence King, fifteen years old, experienced bullying by his
13 classmates and another student, on February 12, 2008, they shot him twice, killing him
14 because he openly identified himself as gay (Conoley, 2008). Carl Walker-Hoover and
15 Jaheem Herrera both completed suicide in 2009 after repeated bullying and teasing that
16 the two young adolescents were gay (Harpo Productions, 2009).

17

18 Other statistics suggest that students who identify as LGBT attempt suicide about two
19 to three times more often than non-LGBT peers (Maryland School Mental Health
20 Alliance, 2009). These students are also more prone to substance abuse, depression,
21 loneliness, dropping out of school, and the aforementioned harassment and assault by
22 peers (Maryland School Mental Health Alliance, 2009). In addition, homelessness due to
23 bad reactions from parents to their child coming out as gay or lesbian, is a real reality
24 for adolescents. Some estimate that anywhere from twenty to forty percent of homeless
25 adolescents identify as LGBT (Ray, 2006).

26

27 In addition to the effects that harassment has on students mentioned in the first case
28 study, victimization of students also leads to harmful effects on education. Students
29 who reported being frequently physically harassed due to their sexual orientation, also
30 admitted to having lower grades than a national sample of students did (Kosciw, Diaz,
31 & Greytak). Issues of sexual orientation also affect plans for pursuing college or other
32 advanced degrees. LGBT students, compared to a national student sample, were two
33 times as likely not to pursue college. LGBT students experiencing verbal harassment
34 also miss school and classes more frequently than their counterparts in the majority.

1
2 Students need a support system within schools, and they need teachers and staff who
3 will stand up for them and become their allies. Szalacha (2003) studied schools in
4 Massachusetts to determine the effect that GSAs have on the school climate. In schools
5 with GSAs, students could better identify staff members who were supportive of LGBT
6 students, there was a decrease in gay and lesbian slurs, an increase in positive,
7 supportive comments about sexual minority youth from teachers, and the students
8 reported differences in attitudes and also differences in their own and others behaviors.

9
10 **Now What?**

11 The GSA Network (2008) gives many guidelines on how to start a GSA. Although these
12 guidelines are meant for students wanting to form a club, they are beneficial to teachers
13 as well. The student handbook in your school includes the rules about how to establish
14 a group or club. The rules may include: securing an administrator’s permission;
15 deciding to take on a staff or faculty advisor; or, writing a constitution. The next step is
16 to *find* an advisor, whether it is a teacher, librarian, counselor, or other school staff
17 member, as long as they are a supportive ally of sexual orientation issues. Third, having
18 an administrator on your side is important. Another important note is that if students or
19 teachers would like to start a GSA, the Federal Equal Access Act protects forming such
20 a club. Fourth, let guidance counselors know about the group as they may know other
21 students who have an interest in such a club.

22
23 Fifth, pick a place to meet in school that will allow for privacy and confidentiality. Also,
24 advertise about the club and think about your choice of words. Even posters in the
25 hallway can educate students, whether those students attend a meeting or not. Once the
26 club is formed, establish ground rules so that the discussions have a safe, respectful,
27 and confidential aspect to them (GSA Network, 2008). Such rules can include
28 prohibiting the use of assumptions or labels about another individual’s sexual
29 orientation. Finally, prepare for the future of the club by setting goals and discussing
30 fund raising. Lamme and Lamme (2001/2002) believe Gay-Straight Alliances should
31 receive support from the school and its staff. They also suggest involving both gay and
32 straight students in important activities such as school dances or prom.

33
34 **Suggested Resources:**

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Children's Books

Aldrich, A. R. (2003). *How my family came to be: Daddy, papa, and me*. Oakland, CA: New Family Press. Retrieved July 14, 2009, from <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0974200808/understandi0d-20>
Meant for children ages 4-8, this book tells the story of how two fathers created their family.

Combs, B. (2000). *1, 2, 3: A family counting book*. Ridley Park, PA: Two Lives Publishing. This counting book is ideal for younger children, suggesting ages two to five. It counts items from one to twenty, while showing alternative as well as traditional types of families, including a male couple welcoming two children into their home. The pictures also depict different races and ethnicities.

Combs, B. (2000). *ABC: A family counting book*. Ridley Park, PA: Two Lives Publishing. Retrieved July 14, 2009, from <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0967446813/understandi0d-20>
This counting book, similar to the one previously described by Combs, goes through the alphabet and describes situations with a child and his or her two same-sex parents. It is most appropriate for preschool ages.

de Haan, L., & Nijland, S. (2000). *King & king*. Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press. A modern, diverse twist on classic prince-meets-princess fairytales, this children's book tells the story of a prince whose mother, the queen, wants him to marry. He reluctantly agrees and begins meeting princesses from around the world. However, he does not like any of the princesses he meets. The last princess he meets arrives with her brother, and it is then that the prince finally falls in love at first sight. However, it is not with the princess, but with her brother. The two marry and become King and King of the kingdom. This book is an interesting addition to other, more popular fairytales such as Cinderella.

de Haan, L., & Nijland, S. (2004). *King & king & family*. Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press.

1 In this follow up to *King & king*, the married kings go on a honeymoon to the
2 jungle. They travel through the jungle for many days, meeting many animal
3 families. Throughout their travels, they have a feeling that someone is following
4 them. Eventually, they must return home. However, when they do, they find
5 something in their suitcase: a little girl! They adopt her into their family and they
6 live happily together.

7
8 Edmonds, B. L. (1997). *When grown-ups fall in love*. Eugene, OR: Barby's House Books.

9 Retrieved July 14, 2009, from

10 <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0965670015/understandi0d-20>

11 "This book is a sweet poem which shows families with mom and dad, two
12 moms, and two dads. The large, colorful illustrations are great for group story
13 time or for one child sitting on your lap. Suitable for reading to children from
14 newborn to 7 years old. The book also includes coloring pages as well as space
15 for children to write their own family stories. Gay-friendly preschool literature is
16 a long overdue resource for parents and teachers, both gay and straight. The
17 author wants children with gay parents to feel included in the world of children's
18 literature, and also wants to help straight parents provide their children with
19 books which promote an appreciation of diversity."

20
21 Edmonds, B. L. (2000). *Mama eat ant, yuck!* Eugene, OR: Hundredth Munchy

22 Publications. Retrieved July 14, 2009, from [http://www.amazon.com/Mama-](http://www.amazon.com/Mama-Yuck-Barbara-Lynn-Edmonds/dp/0965670023/ref=pd_sim_b_4)

23 [Yuck-Barbara-Lynn-Edmonds/dp/0965670023/ref=pd_sim_b_4](http://www.amazon.com/Mama-Yuck-Barbara-Lynn-Edmonds/dp/0965670023/ref=pd_sim_b_4)

24 This newborn to seven year old age appropriate book tells about one year old
25 Emma's life with her two mothers and her siblings. It rhymes and repeats the
26 title of the book, 'Mama eat ant, yuck!' throughout the book, which tends to thrill
27 young children.

28
29 Garden, N. (2000). *Holly's secret*. New York, NY: Farrar Straus Giroux.

30 Holly, the twelve year old daughter of lesbian mothers, moves to a new town
31 with her family. She does not want her new friends and classmates to know
32 about her family, so she lies, even about her name. Eventually, the lies catch up
33 with her and she realizes it is much easier to tell the truth than to hide who her

1 family really is. This 132 page novel is a good read for older children, perhaps
2 grade four or higher.

3
4 Garden, N. (2004). *Molly's family*. New York, NY: Farrar Straus Giroux.

5 Molly, the daughter of a lesbian couple, draws a picture of her family for her
6 class' Open School Night. When one of her classmates says she cannot have two
7 mothers, she tells her mother about it later that night. Her parents tell her that
8 families can come in all shapes and sizes, and she remembers her classmate's
9 comments that day. Some said they had only a mommy or a daddy, and some
10 had grandparents and dogs. Molly then believes it is true because her mothers'
11 love each other and that is what makes a family. Nancy Garden has written
12 many children's books on the topic of families and same-sex parents.

13
14 Hoffman, E. (1999). *Best best colors*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

15 This children's book tells the story of Nate, who feels he must choose one best
16 color, one best friend, one best mom, etc. Through his interactions with his
17 various friends and his two mothers, he learns that he does not have to choose
18 one person, item, or color, as his favorite. He can like all things equally. An asset
19 to this book is that it includes the text in Spanish along with English. It also
20 provides vivid illustrations of people of different races, socio-economic status,
21 and family structures. At the end of the book, there is a short list of suggestions
22 for parents, caregivers, and teachers about preschool aged children and the need
23 to teach them that no one thing is the 'best' and that differences are a part of life.

24
25 Kennedy, J. (1998). *Lucy goes to the country*. Los Angeles, CA: Alyson Wonderland.

26 Retrieved July 14, 2009, from

27 <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1555834280/understandi0d-20>

28 This story is about a cat that lives in the city with a male couple. They take their
29 cat, Lucy, with them on weekend trips to the country. Lucy gets into some
30 trouble chasing after a dog she does not like. There are numerous references to
31 other same-sex families throughout the book.

32

- 1 Newman, L. (2000). *Heather has two mommies* (2nd Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Alyson
2 Wonderland. Retrieved July 14, 2009, from
3 <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1555835430/understandi0d-20>
4 This is the ten year anniversary edition of this book, originally published in 1989
5 and causing huge controversy. The first of its kind to describe different types of
6 families, it was stolen from libraries and criticized by members of the United
7 States Senate, among other events. It tells the story of Heather's life with her two
8 mothers. Heather learns that her friend's in her classroom all have different types
9 of families as well. It is appropriate for ages four to eight.
10
- 11 Newman, L. (2002). *Felicia's favorite story*. Ridley Park, PA: Two Lives Publishing.
12 In this children's book, Felicia asks her two mothers for a bedtime story. She
13 wants to hear her favorite story about how she was adopted by her parents. Her
14 mothers' tell the story of wanting to have a baby to share their love with. In the
15 bedtime story, they take an airplane ride to Guatemala to adopt Felicia when she
16 was a baby. This children's book is important not only because it discusses same-
17 sex parenting, but also discusses adoption.
18
- 19 Newman, L. (2009). *Mommy, mama, and me*. Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press.
20 Meant for younger children, this short rhyming book describes a family with two
21 mothers going through daily routines with their child. The family is portrayed as
22 loving and just the same as other families with opposite sex parents. This is a
23 great book for preschoolers or even kindergartners. The pictures of two mothers
24 going through daily normal interactions with their child are an important lesson
25 for children.
26
- 27 Newman, L. (2009). *Daddy, papa, and me*. Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press.
28 Following the same idea as *Mommy, Mama, and Me*, the interactions in this book
29 are between two fathers. Their child is depicted interacting with them in daily
30 activities. It includes non-stereotypical male gender activities, such as baking a
31 pie, playing dress up, and learning to sew. It is ideal for toddlers, preschoolers,
32 and kindergartners.
33

- 1 Parr, T. (2003). *The family book*. New York, NY: Little, Brown Young Readers. Retrieved
2 July 14, 2009, from [http://www.amazon.com/Family-Book-Todd-](http://www.amazon.com/Family-Book-Todd-Parr/dp/0316738964/ref=pd_sim_b_4)
3 [Parr/dp/0316738964/ref=pd_sim_b_4](http://www.amazon.com/Family-Book-Todd-Parr/dp/0316738964/ref=pd_sim_b_4)
4 Todd Parr's children's book celebrates different types of families, including
5 single parent families, same-sex parent families, families with adopted members,
6 stepfamilies, and the nuclear family.
7
- 8 Richardson, J., & Parnell, P. (2005). *And Tango makes three*. New York, NY: Simon &
9 Shuster Books for Young Readers.
10 In this true story written for children, two male penguins at the Central Park Zoo
11 in New York City become a couple. Like the male-female penguin couples, they
12 do everything together, even build a nest home. The only thing they cannot do is
13 have a penguin family. When another penguin couple produced two eggs, the
14 penguin keeper gives one to Roy and Silo because the other couple could not
15 care for both of the eggs. After taking wonderful care of the egg, their chick was
16 born and they named him Tango and they all lived happily with the other
17 penguins. The penguin family still resides in the Central Park Zoo. This book is
18 an asset to showing children that families can be different, even animal families.
19
- 20 Skutch, R. (1995). *Who's in a family?* Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press. Retrieved July 14,
21 2009, from
22 <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/188367266X/understandi0d-20>
23 This story also discusses families and the different types of families there can be.
24 It includes same-sex parent families, divorced families, grandparent-headed
25 families, and even families without children who refer to their pets as their
26 children. It intermingles and compares pictures of variations in animal families
27 with differences in family structure in human families.
28
- 29 Valentine, J. (2004). *One dad, two dads, brown dad, blue dads*. Los Angeles, CA:
30 Alyson Wonderland.
31 This four through eight year old children's book involves the theme that
32 everyone is the same, despite skin color and sexual orientation. Two boys talk
33 about one boy's dads, who are blue. They try to decide why they are blue, and

1 decide it is okay because they just are. Another child appears and says her two
2 parents are green.

3 4 **Older Children/Adolescent Books**

5
6 Bauer, M. D. (Ed.). (1994). *Am I blue? Coming out from the silence*. New York, NY: Harper
7 Collins. Retrieved July 18, 2009, from

8 <http://www.gsanetwork.org/resources/pdf/books4.pdf>

9 This book is a short story collection. The authors are young adults going through
10 LGBT issues.

11
12 Bechdel, A. (2006). *Fun home*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin. Retrieved July 18, 2009,
13 from <http://www.gsanetwork.org/resources/pdf/books4.pdf>

14 This non-fiction novel is a memoir of a young woman dealing with her own
15 sexual orientation as well as learning about that of her late father. The story is
16 told in graphic novel form using comic strips.

17
18 Boock, P. (1997). *Dare truth or promise*. Dunedin, New Zealand: Longacre Press.

19 This young adult novel is a story about two girls who meet while working at a
20 fast food place. They begin to form a deeper relationship and fall in love.

21 Unfortunately, they experience stress and resistance from friends, society, and
22 family members. Since it is a young adult novel, it may be more suitable for older
23 teens in terms of reading level.

24
25 Garden, N. (2000). *Holly's secret*. New York, NY: Farrar Straus Giroux.

26 A description of this book can be found in the earlier resource section with the
27 first case study. Although it is suitable for younger children, around grade four,
28 it may be a good read for teens.

29
30 Gleitzman, M. (1996). *Two weeks with the queen*. Sydney, Australia: Pan Macmillan.

31 This story, cited in Letts IV and Sears (1999), is about Colin, a young boy who has
32 a brother who is dying. He is sent to live with relatives in London. While there,
33 he writes a letter to the Queen and asks for the best doctor she knows to help his
34 brother. When trying to meet the doctor, he is thrown out of the hospital and

1 meets a man outside the hospital. The man is visibly upset because his partner is
2 dying of AIDS. The two strike up a friendship. The contributor of this chapter
3 discusses using the book with a class.
4

5 **Professional Books**

6

7 Campos, D. (2005). *Understanding gay and lesbian youth: Lessons for straight school teachers,*
8 *counselors, and administrators.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

9 This book gives a lot of information for teachers and other school staff. It
10 includes stereotypes of gay and lesbian people, as well as answers common
11 questions that students may ask their teachers. The chapter on Myths is an
12 excellent way for teachers to educate students on stereotypes that can be
13 harmful. Another chapter on famous gay and lesbian individuals includes a long
14 list of historical and contemporary people. The list can be surprising and also
15 informative to children and young adults. Gay and lesbian individuals, or
16 children of gay and lesbian parents need role models and historical and
17 contemporary figures can serve as such. A list of resources and websites can be
18 found in the same chapter as the gay and lesbian individuals in society.
19

20 Letts IV, W. J., & Sears, J. T. (1999). *Queering elementary education: Advancing the dialogue*
21 *about sexualities and schooling.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

22 In this chapter book full of essays and anecdotes, contributors provide
23 information on how to include gay and lesbian issues in elementary curriculum.
24 They provide tips about how to answer children's questions (p. 44), name several
25 texts that can be used in the classroom, and provide stories and dilemmas
26 revolving around LGBT issues in the classroom.
27

28 Sapon-Shevin, M. (1999). *Because we can change the world.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn
29 & Bacon.

30 This book includes a chapter on music, titled "Using music to teach against
31 homophobia". It gives four categories of songs: addressing gender roles and
32 behavior expectations, songs for adults about issues of sexual preference and
33 relationships, songs to spark discussions about LGBT issues in older children,

1 and children's songs that children can sing about sexual orientation (as cited in
2 Straut & Sapon-Shevin, 2002).

3 4 **Films**

5
6 Chasnoff, D. (Director). (1995). *It's elementary: Talking about gay issues in school*
7 [videotape]. New York: Women's Educational Media.

8 In this controversial and award winning documentary, teachers are filmed in his
9 or her classroom discussing gay issues with students. Students from first to
10 eighth grade asked questions, discussed stereotypes, read books about same-sex
11 parents, and met young adults like them who are gay or lesbian. The children in
12 the video were more informed than many may believe. In fourth grade, children
13 knew about cross-dressing and what it is. In third grade, students knew what the
14 term 'homophobia' meant. Other students expressed the understanding that gay
15 people are the same as anyone else and how biases and stereotypes can affect a
16 person's life. In a combined first and second grade class, children created a
17 picture book detailing issues they had faced such as being teased or called 'gay'.
18 The students were also able to talk about issues such as gay marriage. Students
19 as young as first grade demonstrated understanding of what it means to "put
20 yourself in another person's shoes." A parent in the film suggested that bringing
21 up gay issues "opens the dialogue so even if you are against the lifestyle, it still
22 needs to be there, it still needs to be addressed". The teachers used different
23 techniques such as mapping and clustering with the words stereotype and gay
24 and having class discussions by asking questions. Using role models and pictures
25 of famous people and having students decide if they are gay or not, is an
26 important way to teach that you cannot tell who is gay by how they dress or act.
27 One teacher mentioned when hearing derogatory terms, that "you can't just say
28 stop, you have to educate about it, and if you don't educate about it, it won't
29 stop". It is suggested that if teachers do not step in when there is harassment or
30 name calling, it sends the message that those behaviors are acceptable. During a
31 class assembly, a movement teacher shows the children how hard it would be to
32 play soccer and have to hide your leg. He equates this with the difficulty of
33 hiding a part of yourself, particularly being gay, and the understanding by the
34 students is incredible. This film is, and should be, a vital part of the curriculum

1 of future teachers. It gives future teachers a real life example of how to start a
2 dialogue or bring up gay issues in the classroom. Discussing different families
3 and lifestyles changed the beliefs of many of the students in the film and they
4 realized that people who identify as gay are just like anyone else.
5

6 Chasnoff, D. (2000). *That's a family!* [DVD]. Retrieved July 21, 2009, from
7 <http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/thatfamily>

8 This is a documentary on living in a different type of family than a nuclear
9 family. It includes same-sex parent headed families as well as divorced families,
10 single parents, families with parents of two different races, and families from two
11 different religious backgrounds. If ordered online from the Groundspark
12 website, it comes with a discussion and teaching guide and schools or other
13 community groups can receive training on how to use the video with young
14 children to teach about diversity.
15

16 Chasnoff, D. (Director). (2004). *One wedding and a revolution* [DVD]. Retrieved July 21,
17 2009, from <http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/onewedding>

18 This video documents the first legal marriage in San Francisco between two
19 women. It is nineteen minutes in length and can be used to spark discussion in
20 schools, or viewed in meetings of GSAs.
21

22 Chasnoff, D. (Director). (2008). *It's elementary: Talking about gay issues in school* [DVD
23 version]. Retrieved July 5, 2009, from <http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/stillelementary>

24 This newly released DVD version of *It's Elementary: Talking About Gay Issues In*
25 *Schools* includes the original 1995 documentary and can be found in the
26 Groundspark store (http://groundspark.org/store/home_users). It also includes a
27 37-minute educational training video as well as a guide for curriculum planning
28 and professional development in K-8th grade settings. In addition, it introduces
29 the new 51-minute documentary *It's STILL Elementary*, in which the director
30 Debra Chasnoff revisits some of the footage from the original video, as well as
31 interviews with some of the students from the original video who are now young
32 adults. In a clip from the Groundspark website, Chloe Moushey, one of the
33 original children interviewed now as a young adult, commented that
34

1 “learning about gay and lesbian issues gave us vocabulary to talk about it,
2 it gave us a forum to ask the questions that we wanted to ask. Our
3 teachers were sensitive about the issue, but they were also very neutral.
4 They would just give us the facts, they would answer our questions
5 honestly and truthfully...I think that learning about these things that
6 people don't usually talk about has given me tools to ask questions about
7 other issues. Education is never wrong. If you present the facts and you
8 allow someone to think about it for themselves, I don't think that there are
9 very many downsides of that” (clip retrieved July 5, 2009, from
10 [http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-](http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/stillelementary/ie2_clips)
11 [campaigns/stillelementary/ie2_clips](http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/stillelementary/ie2_clips)).
12

13 Chasnoff, D. (Director). (2009). *Straightlaced: How gender's got us all tied up* [DVD].
14 Retrieved July 2, 2009, from [http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-](http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/straightlaced)
15 [campaigns/straightlaced](http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/straightlaced)

16 This video discusses gender roles and stereotypes from the point of view of teens
17 that identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or questioning. They discuss anti-
18 gay teasing, taking on non-stereotypical gender roles, behaviors, and activities,
19 and even suicide. The documentary “unearths how popular pressures around
20 gender and sexuality are confining American teens. Their stories reflect a
21 diversity of experiences, demonstrating how gender role expectations and
22 homophobia are interwoven, and illustrating the different ways that these
23 expectations connect with culture, race and class”.
24

25 Horton, P. (Director), Burg, M., & Eisner, E. (Producers). (1995). *The cure* [Motion
26 picture]. United States: Universal Pictures and Island Pictures.

27 This PG-13 movie tells the story of two social outcasts becoming friends. Erik
28 suffers teasing in the first five minutes of the movie, taunted as 'Erika', after an
29 **HIV** positive child moves in next door to him. The bullies promptly label Erik as
30 the new neighbor's 'boyfriend'. He has no friends and since it is the end of the
31 school year, is perfectly content to sit and play video games all summer.
32 However, his mother has other ideas and takes away his video games.
33 Eventually, he meets his neighbor Dexter while playing outside. He finds that
34 Dexter is as 'normal' as he is, playing outside with action figures the exact same

1 way Erik is. When Erik brings up Dexter's HIV status and tells him to go away so
2 he does not have to worry about "catching something and dying", Dexter
3 quickly dispels the myths and the two become friends. They search for a cure for
4 Dexter's illness, traveling hundreds of miles. The film is an important way of
5 putting a face to people with HIV and **AIDS**. Although it may not be appropriate
6 for most classrooms because it is PG-13, classrooms at the right age level could
7 benefit from watching some of the scenes of this movie. It shows scenes of
8 bullying, name-calling, and the effect it can have on people when others assume
9 stereotypes are true for everyone in a specific group.

10
11 Walton, P. (1999). *Gay youth* [videotape]. New York, NY: Filmmaker's Library.
12 Retrieved July 19, 2009, from [http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/187641/Gay-](http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/187641/Gay-Youth/overview)
13 [Youth/overview](http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/187641/Gay-Youth/overview)

14 This forty minute documentary is about gay youth in high schools. It discusses
15 homophobic attitudes and behaviors in classroom settings. The NY Times
16 describes it as "a great tool for teaching tolerance and coping skills".

17
18 Demme, J., (1993). *Philadelphia* [Motion Picture]. United States: Sony Pictures.

19 Retrieved August 11, 2009, from [http://www.amazon.com/Philadelphia-Tom-](http://www.amazon.com/Philadelphia-Tom-Hanks/dp/0800141806/ref=sr_1?ie=UTF8@s+dvd&qid=1250038017&sr=1-1)
20 [Hanks/dp/0800141806/ref=sr_1 ?ie=UTF8@s+dvd&qid=1250038017&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Philadelphia-Tom-Hanks/dp/0800141806/ref=sr_1?ie=UTF8@s+dvd&qid=1250038017&sr=1-1)

21 This PG-13 movie tells the story of an employee working for a conservative law
22 firm. After he is fired by the law firm because he has AIDS, he hires a lawyer,
23 the only lawyer who is willing to take his wrongful dismissal case. The lawyer
24 turns out to be homophobic, however he learns throughout the film that LGBT
25 men and women lead similar lives to him, that they are not really so different,
26 and that there are many misconceptions about AIDS and how people acquire the
27 disease. This would be suitable for students age 13 and older.

28 29 **Websites**

30
31 COLAGE: <http://colage.org/>

32 This website provides a community for children of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and
33 transgender parents. The organization works towards decreasing discrimination
34 and working for social justice for the LGBT community and parents. It provides a

1 scholarship opportunity for students, a pen pal program, and many resources for
2 parents and children. A PDF file of books for children, teens, and young adults
3 with LGBT parents is also on the website and includes some of the books
4 described in this chapter.

5
6 COLAGE: http://www.colage.org/resources/safe_classrooms.pdf

7 This PDF file, from COLAGE's website (www.colage.org), provides tips for
8 teachers to make classrooms safe and inclusive: 1) Always intervene; 2) Do not
9 make assumptions; 3) Visually show your support; 4) Challenge heterosexism in
10 your assignments; 5) Include topics about diversity in your curriculum; 6) Never
11 out a student with LGBTQ parents; 7) Do not make assumptions about youth
12 with LGBTQ parents; 8) Make your classroom accessible; 9) Work with your
13 administration; and finally, 10) Educate yourself. This file goes into greater detail
14 about each of these ten tips.

15
16 Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN): [http://www.glsen.org/cgi-](http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/home/index.html)
17 [bin/iowa/all/home/index.html](http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/home/index.html)

18 The GLSEN website provides a multitude of information to help educators.
19 Similar to other websites, it gives up-to-date news articles on current happenings
20 in Washington D.C., such as initiatives Congress or the President is voting on, or
21 decisions the Supreme Court must make, such as legislation to prevent and stop
22 bullying. It also provides many resources for educators, students, and supporters
23 under the heading "Tools & Tips". Under the "Booklinks" section, educators can
24 find books suitable for certain grade levels. Many of the books mentioned in this
25 guide are included, however the list contains many more books as well as videos.
26 By clicking on the title, the user comes to a short description of each item. "When
27 Did it Happen: An LGBT History Lesson" provides a lesson plan for teachers to
28 teach their students about the LGBT civil rights movement and historical figures,
29 including matching games, discussion questions, and classroom decoration
30 activities. There is also information on training workshops, and other movements
31 such as the Day of Silence and No Name-Calling Week (found as additional
32 resources in this chapter). The GLSEN Lunchbox is also available for purchase
33 through the Tools & Tips section. It is a toolkit used to help educators and

1 community members create safe and inclusive learning environments for LGBT
2 students. More information on the toolkit is on the website.

3
4 Day of Silence: <http://www.dayofsilence.org/index.cfm>

5 The Day of Silence is a day to recognize and affirm the silence that is caused by
6 name-calling, bullying, teasing, and homophobia that is associated with
7 individuals identifying or judged as LGBT. The website offers an organizational
8 guide with information on how to help organize the Day of Silence at your
9 school, as well as the dates for the next Day of Silence. You may also purchase
10 buttons and shirts to signify the Day of Silence. At the time of the writing of this
11 guide, the next Day of Silence is scheduled to be held on April 14, 2010.

12
13 GSA Network: <http://www.gsanetwork.org/resources/pdf/booksv4.pdf>

14 This PDF file through the GSA Network website provides a bibliography of
15 fiction and non-fiction books concerning LGBT characters and themes. Some of
16 the books have short descriptions. Most of the books, based on descriptions,
17 seem to be for older children such as teens or young adults.

18
19 GSA Network: <http://www.gsanetwork.org/resources/pdf/Movies.pdf>

20 This PDF file through the GSA Network website provides a bibliography of films
21 containing LGBT characters and/or themes. The list includes popular movies
22 such as 1998's *The Object Of My Affection* about a woman who falls in love with a
23 gay man. The list also contains more serious films and documentaries, including
24 documentaries on transgender individuals and their transition from one gender
25 to another.

26
27 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month, 2009:

28 [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Presidential-Proclamation-LGBT-
Pride-Month/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Presidential-Proclamation-LGBT-
29 Pride-Month/)

30 This press release from the White House Office of the Press Secretary denotes
31 June 2009 as LGBT Pride Month. It is unclear whether President Obama plans to
32 continue this tradition. He states "LGBT youth should feel safe to learn without
33 the fear of harassment, and LGBT families and seniors should be allowed to live
34 their lives with dignity and respect".

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No Name-Calling Week: <http://www.nonamecallingweek.org/>

Similar to the Day of Silence, this site promotes a No Name-Calling Week. There are organizational kits and products that can be downloaded for free and purchased to help with this event. The next No Name-Calling Week, at the time of the writing of this guide, is listed on the website as January 25-29, 2010.

Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays: <http://www.pflag.org/>

This website from the PFLAG organization includes a lot of information about current laws and reforms put into place by the federal government, as well as other news surrounding the LGBT community. It also includes a section under Education and Schools titled "Top 10 Ways to Make Schools Safer". By clicking on the hyperlink of each of the ten tips, the reader is taken to another page with information on statistics, defined terms, do's and don'ts on how to handle student harassment, policy making, books and films (some described within this chapter), cyber bullying, education and LGBT youth, and other resources.

Point Foundation: <http://www.thepointfoundation.org>

The Point Foundation: The National LGBT Scholarship Fund, provides scholarship opportunities to LGBT youth. "Point Foundation provides financial support, mentoring, leadership training and hope to meritorious students who are marginalized due to sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression".

Project 10: <http://www.project10.org/>

"Project 10 is dedicated to providing educational support services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth who attend public school campuses." It originated in the Los Angeles Unified School District where it continues as a support system for the LGBT community of adolescents in schools. It serves as a model for other schools, and seeks to prevent drop out, suicide, substance use and abuse, and seeks to reduce verbal and physical harassment and provide accurate information about HIV and AIDS.

Safe Schools Coalition: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/>

1 The Safe Schools Coalition is involved in creating safe schools for students and
2 educators of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Included within the
3 vast array of resources, is the link “Curricula & Classroom Tools”. The resources
4 found here include free lesson plans grouped by elementary school, middle
5 school, high school, and college. It also includes month-by-month lesson
6 planning, books, curriculum, videos, music, web sites for pre-K and elementary,
7 middle school, high school and a total K-12 student group. In addition, there are
8 resources specific to subject: coaches and physical education teachers, drama,
9 health, history and civics, language arts, music, and a resource for rural students,
10 staff, and teachers. There are lesson plans that cost money, however, they are
11 relatively inexpensive and the Teaching Tolerance website offers grants for
12 teachers that can include these lesson plans (see below). There are also videos
13 found on the website; in one video, students discuss experiencing and taking
14 part in bullying (Alone, Together). The Use Another Word campaign used in a
15 United States high school was started by students. Tired of hearing racist, sexist,
16 homophobic, and able-ist comments made by their peers, a group of students
17 along with the school administration came up with a pledge and campaign. They
18 simply asked students to respond to other’s derogatory comments with the
19 phrase ‘please use another word’. Since the start of it, the school reports that
20 suspensions involving fighting and defiance have decreased
21 (<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/UseAnotherWord.pdf>).

22
23 Teaching Tolerance: <http://www.tolerance.org/index.jsp>

24 This website provides lesson plans, articles, classroom activities, titles of books,
25 and other resources for teachers, parents, teens, and kids. In the classroom
26 activity titled “Crocodile and Ghost Bat Have a Hullabaloo”, the website
27 provides a story that teachers may read aloud to their students. It then provides
28 questions for discussion about name-calling, how it can be hurtful, and ways
29 children can respond to name-calling. It is included in a free teaching kit that
30 classroom teachers and other school personnel can order through the website.
31 The teaching kit includes a Teaching Tolerance two-year magazine subscription,
32 DVD and VHS documentaries and shows about the Holocaust and desegregation
33 efforts, as well as an anthology of stories for pre-kindergarten through sixth
34 grade, including “Crocodile and Ghost Bat Have a Hullabaloo”. The website also

1 offers grants for teachers to develop projects to reduce prejudice, improve
2 relationships within school, and promote staff development.

3

4 The Trevor Project: <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/home2.aspx>

5 The Trevor Project is responsible for the only national, 24/7 hotline for suicide
6 and crisis prevention for LGBTQ youth. In 1998, filmmakers of a short movie
7 about a gay teen attempting suicide because of rejection by classmates were set to
8 air their movie on HBO. They found that there was no national hotline for youth
9 who may be experiencing the same feelings as the movie's character, Trevor.
10 They wished to give viewers a resource during the film's airing on HBO, so they
11 created the Trevor Helpline. The website provides a place to write to someone
12 with questions (Dear Trevor), warning signs of suicide, as well as the phone
13 number to the hotline: 1-866-4-U-TREVOR (1-866-288-7386).

Cultural Sensitivity Tips

- Provide an opportunity for parents to tell you about themselves, their family, and their culture. This can be done at the first meet and greet or parent conference, or through a form.
- Encourage parents to explain any special needs or circumstances of the family/child to prevent any misunderstandings.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions. Most people prefer that you ask questions rather than make assumptions.
- See your children as human beings. Build relationships with students and show interest in them not pertaining to academics. For example, notice Jenny's new outfit and compliment her, or ask Billy about his new puppy.
- Actions speak louder than words. Your students will pick up on your actions much quicker than you may expect. Always present yourself professionally and treat others accordingly.
- Educate yourself about any diversity in your classroom. Learn about communication differences and taboos that may exist.
- Do not act as if the child is not there.
- Remember to use person first language; a person is not defined by their disability.
- Take suggestions from parents about what works at home.
- Explore your own attitudes and beliefs about different cultures to increase your own sensitivity to differences.
- Do not talk about the disability as a problem.
- Pay attention to non-verbal signals.
- Do not pity the child.

- 1
- 2 • Do not point fingers.
- 3
- 4 • Refrain from judging parents/guardians based on your own expectations.
- 5
- 6 • Try to see through the parents' lens.
- 7
- 8 • Ask questions with an open mind. Do not imply answers to questions about
- 9 one's culture. For example, "Isn't it true that Muslim women are oppressed?", is
- 10 a leading question that already assumes the answer.
- 11
- 12 • Set up opportunities to explore culture.
- 13
- 14 • Do not say "I don't see color," or "you people." See each student as an
- 15 individual.
- 16
- 17 • Utilize open communication among teachers and colleagues as a resource for
- 18 support and not for gossip.
- 19
- 20 • Accept what you cannot explain.
- 21
- 22 • Do not be afraid of change.
- 23
- 24 • You don't have to leave your first amendment rights at the door, but you need to
- 25 leave your prejudices.
- 26
- 27 • Create a safe place for your students to learn and to express themselves.
- 28
- 29 • Do not assume that one individual of a culture is representative of everyone in
- 30 the culture.
- 31
- 32 • Use a non-sexist curriculum without gender-specific stereotypes.
- 33
- 34 • Be an advocate for diversity.
- 35
- 36 • Re-direct putdowns and take action against bullying.
- 37
- 38 • Be problem solvers not problem dwellers.
- 39
- 40 • Provide a curriculum that ensures each student can meaningfully participate.

Glossary

- 1
- 2
- 3 **Accommodation-** Changes in curriculum that will help a student succeed in a
- 4 classroom.
- 5 **Aide-** “An assistant or helper” (www.dictionary.com).
- 6 **AIDS-** Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome; this disease is an immunological
- 7 disorder caused by the virus HIV; it leads to a decrease in the immune system,
- 8 which leaves the individual susceptible to rare diseases and cancers such as
- 9 Kaposi’s Sarcoma (American Heritage Dictionaries, 2006).
- 10 **American Disability Act (ADA, 1990)-** “The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of
- 11 1990 was conceived with the goal of integrating people with disabilities into all
- 12 aspects of American life, particularly the workplace and the marketplace”
- 13 (<http://www.unitedspinal.org/pdf/DisabilityEtiquette.pdf>).
- 14 **Asexual-** “lacking interest in or desire for sex” (American Heritage Dictionaries, 2006).
- 15 **Bisexual-** “the human sexual orientation that refers to the aesthetic, romantic, or sexual
- 16 desire for people of either gender or of either sex” (Maryland School Mental
- 17 Health Alliance, 2009).
- 18 **Bullied-** “To intimidate or mistreat a weaker person” (Encarta Dictionary).
- 19 **Coming Out-** coming out for homosexual individuals includes these processes: “self-
- 20 awareness of same-sex attractions; the telling of one or a few people about these
- 21 attractions; widespread disclosure of same-sex attractions; and identification
- 22 with the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community” (American Psychological
- 23 Association, 2008).
- 24 **Communication Device-** An electronic way of speaking.
- 25 **Conference-** “A meeting for consultation or discussion” (www.dictionary.com).
- 26 **Cross Dresser-** someone who dresses as the opposite sex; these individuals are most
- 27 often heterosexual men who dress as the opposite sex (Lee Marcuzzi, personal
- 28 communication, June 24, 2009).
- 29 **Cultural Sensitivity-** being aware of and accepting other people’s culture.
- 30 **Curriculum-** sets the course for education. It refers to the set of courses being taught
- 31 and what is being taught in those courses.
- 32 **Cyber bullying-** “when teens use the Internet, cell phones, or other devices to send or
- 33 post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person” (National
- 34 Crime Prevention Council, 2009).

1 **Depression-** “Depression is a mental health disorder that can affect the way you eat and
2 sleep, the way you feel about yourself, and the way you think about things. A
3 depressive disorder is more than a passing mood. It is not a sign of personal
4 weakness, and it cannot be willed or wished away” (about.com).

5 **Dilemma-** “Any difficult or perplexing situation or problem” (www.dictionary.com).

6 **Disability-** (a)“ a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more
7 of the major life activities of such individual; (b) A record of such impairment; or
8 (c) Being regarded as having such an impairment.” (P.L. 101-336, Sec.,
9 www.ucp.org).

10 **Disposition-** refers to the tendency or propensity to respond in specific ways to
11 particular circumstances (Eberly et al., 2007, p. 31)

12 **Diverse Learners-** Students who have numerous styles of learning; visual, spatial,
13 auditory etc.

14 **Dominant Race-** most influential, prominent, and powerful culture in a geographical
15 location; in the United States it would seem that European American culture is
16 considered the dominant race.

17 **Drag Queen or King-** these individuals identify as either gay or lesbian, and they dress
18 as the opposite sex (Lee Marcuzzi, personal communication, June 24, 2009).

19 **Dyslexia:-** “Any of various reading disorders associated with impairment of the ability
20 to interpret spatial relationships or to integrate auditory and visual information”
21 www.dictionary.com.

22 **Ethnicity/Ethnic group-** relating to a person or to a large group of people who share a
23 national, racial, linguistic, or religious heritage, whether or not they reside in
24 their countries of origin (Encarta Dictionary).

25 **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)-** “Requires that public schools provide
26 special education and related services at public expense; meet state standards;
27 include an appropriate preschool, elementary, or secondary education in the
28 state; and maintain conformity with the student’s individual education plan
29 (IEP)” (West &Whitby, 2008, p.2).

30 **Gay-** same-sex sexual orientation, between two males or two females (Maryland School
31 Mental Health Alliance, 2009).

32 **Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA)-** “a student-run club, typically in a high school, which
33 provides a safe place for students to meet, support each other, talk about issues

1 related to sexual orientation, and work to end homophobia” (GSA Network,
2 2008).

3 **Gender Stereotyping-** A set of perceived behavioral norms associated particularly with
4 males and females in a given social group or system (thefreedictionary, 2009).

5 **Geographic Diversity-** variation in culture, attitudes, and values between individuals
6 from different geographic locations

7 **Hegemonic Norm-** the belief that everyone is heterosexual and everyone came from
8 heterosexual families (Straut & Sapon-Shevin, 2002).

9 **Heterosexism-** “the presumption that all people are heterosexual; the belief, stated or
10 implied, that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality; the belief that all
11 people should be heterosexual” (Roffman, 2000).

12 **Heterosexual-** “sexually oriented to persons of the opposite sex” (American Heritage
13 Dictionaries, 2006).

14 **HIV-** Human Immunodeficiency Virus; a virus that leads to AIDS; the two types are
15 HIV-1 and HIV-2, where HIV-1 is found worldwide and HIV-2 is mainly found
16 in West Africa (American Heritage Dictionaries, 2006).

17 **Homophobia-** “the fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or
18 homosexuals”; “hatred or disapproval of homosexual people, their lifestyles,
19 sexual behaviors or cultures, and is generally used to assert bigotry” (Maryland
20 School Mental Health Alliance, 2009).

21 **Homosexual-** “of, relating to, or having a sexual orientation to persons of the same sex”
22 (American Heritage Dictionaries, 2006).

23 **Individual Education Plan (IEP)-** “A plan for instruction and services developed by a
24 team, including the parents and the professionals who work with the student:
25 the special education teacher, general education teachers, representatives of the
26 school district, and professionals who may provide related services to the
27 students” (West & Whitby, 2008, p.2).

28 **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)-** “Is a United States Federal Law
29 that governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special
30 education, and related services to children with disabilities. It addresses the
31 educational needs of children with disabilities from ages birth to 26¹¹ in cases
32 that involve 13 specified categories of disability” (www.wikipedia.org).

33 **Interracial-** between races; diversity between individuals of two different races

1 **Intersex-** “describes persons born with the combined anatomy of a male and a female;
2 hermaphrodite defined these persons in the past, but the term is now considered
3 offensive” (Campos, 2005).

4 **Intraracial-** within one race; diversity between individuals of the same race

5 **Kinesthesia-** the sense that detects bodily position, weight, or movement of the
6 muscles, tendons, and joints (thefreedictionary, 2009).

7 **Learning Style Inventory-** an assessment tool which is based on an individual’s
8 response to five categories of preferences. It emphasizes that individuals also
9 have physical and environmental preferences for learning.

10 **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)-** “To ensure that children with disabilities are
11 educated, to the maximum extent ‘appropriate,’ with their nondisabled peers”
12 (West &Whitby, 2008, p.2).

13 **Lesbian-** “a female who is exclusively emotionally, sexually, romantically and/or
14 aesthetically attracted to other females” (Maryland School Mental Health
15 Alliance, 2009).

16 **LGBT-** an acronym that stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
17 individuals; it may also include a Q, I, or A to stand for Queer, Questioning,
18 Intersex, or Asexual.

19 **Multicultural Education-** an effort by teachers to develop strategies and materials to
20 promote success for all the diverse students in our schools.

21 **Name Day-** in Greece, everyone celebrates the "Name Day" of the saint that bears the
22 same name. This usually has no relation to a person's actual birthday except by
23 coincidence.

24 **National Assessment of Educational Progress-** The National Assessment of
25 Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as "the Nation's Report Card," is the
26 only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's
27 students know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, assessments have
28 been conducted periodically in mathematics, reading, science, writing, U.S.
29 history, geography, civics, the arts, and other subjects (National Assessment of
30 Educational Progress, 2009).

31 **National Math Test-** The mathematics framework focuses on two dimensions:
32 mathematical content and cognitive demand. By considering these two
33 dimensions for each item in the assessment, the framework ensures that NAEP
34 assesses an appropriate balance of content along with a variety of ways of

1 knowing and doing mathematics (National Assessment of Educational Progress,
2 2009).

3 **National Science Test-** The NAEP science assessment presents a broad view of what
4 American students know and can do in science. The National science test is
5 administered to fourth grade, eighth grade and twelfth grade students (National
6 Assessment of Educational Progress, 2009).

7 **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)-** Obsessive Compulsive Disorder:
8 "...thoughts, impulses, or images" which are continuous and constant that tend
9 to "cause marked anxiety and distress" amongst the person. "Repetitive
10 behaviors (hand washing, ordering, checking) or mental acts (praying, counting,
11 repeating words silently) that the person feels driven to perform in response to
12 an obsession, or according to rules that must be applied rigidly" (DSM, 2000,
13 p.217).

14 **Physical Disability-** A physical impairment that limits a person.

15 **Professional Development** -Skills and knowledge attained for both personal and career
16 development. These skills may be required in order to acquire employment or
17 retain employment (thefreedictionary, 2009).

18 **Queer-** this word is also a derogatory slur used against LGBT individuals, however
19 recently LGBT youth have reclaimed it to describe themselves; non-LGBT
20 individuals should not use it to refer to anyone since not all LGBT individuals
21 are accepting of the term (Lee Marcuzzi, personal communication, June 24, 2009).

22 **Questioning-** a phase where an individual experiences exploration and may transition
23 into a different sexual orientation than they previously identified as (Maryland
24 School Mental Health Alliance, 2009).

25 **Race-** a distinct group of individuals distinguished by local geographic or global
26 human population with similar genetic physical characteristics; a group of
27 individuals united or classified together on the basis of common history,
28 nationality, or geographic distribution.

29 **Race identity-** sense of belonging and association with a particular group in which an
30 individual shares similar cultural values and beliefs.

31 **Racial discrimination-** idea that race is the primary determinant of human
32 characteristics and capabilities that allow a particular race to impose judgments
33 of superiority or inferiority upon other races.

1 **Racism-** discrimination or prejudice based on race; the idea that one race is superior or
2 inferior to another.

3 **Regress-** to move backward; go back (www.dictionary.com).

4 **Scientifically based behavior principles or “principles of scientific research”-** the use
5 of rigorous, systematic, and objective methodologies to obtain reliable and valid
6 knowledge. (Extended definition available at AERA.net)

7 **Sexual Orientation-** “the direction of one's sexual interest toward members of the same,
8 opposite, or both sexes” (American Heritage Dictionaries, 2006).

9 **Stereotype-** an oversimplified standardized image of a person or group (Encarta
10 Dictionary)

11 **Stereotype threat-** the idea that a negative stereotype attributed to one’s social or racial
12 group is self-relevant and defines one’s identity.

13 **Stereotypes-** an oversimplified generalization or opinion of a member or members of
14 another social group that do not necessary hold true.

15 **Student learning style-** It is commonly believed that most people prefer some
16 particular method of interacting with, taking in, and processing stimuli or
17 information. A learning style is the method of learning particular to an
18 individual that is presumed to allow that individual to learn best
19 (thefreedictionary, 2009).

20 **Substitute-** “A person or thing acting or serving in place of another”
21 (www.dictionary.com).

22 **Traditional learning style-** Learning style based on research conducted by traditional
23 cognitive psychologists is the delivery of knowledge typically from the teacher at
24 the podium to the student seated at their desk (thefreedictionary, 2009).

25 **Transgender-** “a variety of individuals, behaviors, and groups involving tendencies
26 that diverge from the normative gender role (women or men) commonly, but not
27 always, assigned at birth, as well as the role traditionally held by society” (Lee
28 Marcuzzi, personal communication, June 24, 2009).

29 **Transition-** “Movement, passage, or change from one position, state, stage, subject,
30 concept, etc.” (www.dictionary.com).

31 **Transsexual-** an individual who changes his or her biological sex to match his or her
32 gender identity (COLAGE, 2009); these individuals feel that they are the opposite
33 sex than they were biologically born with (Lee Marcuzzi, personal
34 communication, June 24, 2009).

- 1 **Transvestite-** this is a derogatory term to describe people with different sexual
2 orientation, cross-dressers, or drag queens or kings; it should not be used to refer
3 to any person as it is an insult (Lee Marcuzzi, personal communication, June 24,
4 2009).
- 5 **Tutoring-** "Teach or instruct, especially privately" (www.dictionary.com).
- 6 **Voluntary segregation-** When groups automatically separate themselves based on
7 differences such as race, ethnicity, gender, or ability, etc.

Appendix A: Ethnicity

1
2
3 Deering, T.E. (1997). Preparing to teach diverse student populations: A British and
4 American perspective. *Educational Research*, 39, (3), 342-350.

5 Deering explored the differences in cultural sensitivity between British students
6 and American students in teacher education programs. The research showed
7 that teachers who are insensitive to a student's culture are hindering the
8 learning process. Teachers are unprepared to teach students from diverse
9 backgrounds, and teacher education programs should include multicultural
10 courses and plenty of fieldwork. This study expanded on a previous study that
11 "assessed the impact of a multicultural education course on cultural sensitivity
12 of female elementary pre-service teachers" (p. 343). The previous study found
13 that multicultural education courses without field experience produced little
14 change in students' sensitivity. Deering researched "1. How culturally sensitive
15 are British and American pre-service teachers; 2. What are the similarities and
16 differences between their cultural sensitivity; 3. What effect does a pre-student
17 teaching field experience in a multicultural setting have on their cultural
18 sensitivity" (p. 344)? The study administered the *Cultural Diversity Awareness*
19 *Inventory* (CDAI) to all participants (22 male and 29 female British students; 27
20 male and 50 female American students). The results showed that the British
21 students were more culturally sensitive than the American students. Some
22 reasons for this could have been the differences in the countries' demographic.
23 Both were diverse countries; however British population is denser with a
24 smaller population. British students are exposed to more diversity throughout
25 their lives. With America's large population and geographic areas, many white
26 Americans do not interact with members of minority groups on a regular basis.
27 In addition, it will be difficult for teacher education programs to change the
28 beliefs and attitudes that students have formed during their previous 18-20
29 years of life. "Teacher educators must remember that changing attitudes and
30 behavior is a slow and difficult process" (p. 348).

31 Dovidio, J.F., Gaertner, S.L., & Saguy, T., (2009). Commonality and the complexity of
32 "We": Social attitudes and social change. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*,
33 13, (3), 3-20.

1 This article looked at the role of “collective identity” in intergroup biases and
2 disparities. It focused on the common in-group identity model, which is “a
3 theoretical framework for reducing intergroup biases and improving
4 intergroup relations.” Social categorization occurs naturally as people group
5 themselves by similarities. The in-group (the group containing the self) is
6 typically referred to as “we,” or “us,” while the out-group is referred to as
7 “they,” or “them.” When this categorization occurs, people often overlook the
8 differences between members of the same group, and exaggerate the differences
9 between groups. The pronouns used to describe the in-group (we, us) are more
10 positive and lead to more favorable evaluations than those used for the out-
11 group (they, them). The common in-group identity model works to re-
12 categorize groups to create one “super ordinate” group rather than two
13 separate groups. “The goal is to reduce bias by systematically altering the
14 perception of intergroup boundaries, redefining who is conceived of as an in-
15 group member (p. 5).” Studies showed that this model was effective with many
16 different groups and settings, including high schools, banking mergers, and
17 blended families. Research showed that a common one-group identity creates
18 more positive inter-group attitudes.

19 Eberly, J.L., Rand, M.K., & O’Connor, T. (2007). Analyzing teachers’ dispositions
20 towards diversity: Using adult developmental theory. *Multicultural Education*, 14,
21 (4), 31.

22 This study researched the dispositions of teachers using Robert Kegan’s adult
23 developmental theory. According to the theory, the desire for teachers to
24 provide a multicultural education to a diverse group of students leads
25 educators to provide skills and tools to teacher candidates, when many of them
26 may not even have the mental capability to use them. Kegan describes five
27 orders of meaning-making consciousness that we all use to approach problems
28 and challenges. The first and second orders are egocentric (me), the third order
29 is ethnocentric (us), and the fourth and fifth orders are worldcentric (all of us).
30 One-half to two-thirds of adults have not reached the fourth order of
31 consciousness, and those few who move into the fifth order are well into their
32 forties before they do. Using this theory, the researchers assessed the
33 dispositions of sixty different college students studying education. The students
34 were separated into two groups and each given a case study to read and

1 respond to. The results showed that the participants were functioning at the
2 third order of Kegan's theory. More research is needed to explain how to help
3 students make the transformation to the fourth order and have a better
4 disposition.

5 Gross J.S. (1996). Reducing stereotyping among 4th through 6th grade students by
6 strengthening self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, and multicultural
7 appreciation. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Nova Southeastern University.

8 This dissertation discussed the need to implement a program in the chosen
9 school, to help reduce the amount of stereotyping and prejudice among the
10 students. Beginning in 4th-6th grades, the number of minority students in the
11 school, increased drastically. As a result, the number of behavior problems
12 dealing with stereotyping and prejudice had also increased. The researcher
13 collected data about the problem through: the use of racial or ethnic slurs in the
14 classroom; observations of students' voluntary segregation in unstructured
15 social situations (cafeteria and playground); sociograms that chart the patterns
16 of voluntary socialization in the classroom; and administrative records of
17 referrals involving race and ethnicity. They researched possible causes for
18 stereotyping and prejudice in children to come up with a practicum to reduce
19 the behavior. They determined that the goal of the practicum was to reduce
20 stereotyping among 4th through 6th grade students by strengthening self-esteem,
21 interpersonal relationships, and multicultural appreciation.

22 The researchers implemented a 6-pronged solution strategy to reach their goals.
23 The first strategy was to establish a safe and secure atmosphere that is governed
24 by consistent authoritative discipline. The students helped create the rules and
25 the consequences for breaking them. This increased self-esteem and
26 interpersonal relationships while also decreasing the number of racial and
27 ethnic slurs in the classroom. The second strategy was to build realistic self-
28 esteem through activities that increase security, build selfhood, encourage
29 affiliation, develop a sense of mission, and promote feelings of personal
30 efficacy. This led to a reduction in voluntary student segregation in
31 unstructured social situations, as well as improved interpersonal relationships.
32 The third strategy was to increase cultural, ethnic, and racial awareness and
33 appreciation by making American history more inclusive. Interdisciplinary
34 activities and projects were used to reinforce what the students learned. They

1 found that this created empathy and decreased the number of identified friends
2 from shared race and ethnicities. The fourth strategy was to provide
3 opportunities for the students to have a positive impact on their environment.
4 The students were able to identify and explore personal skills, talents, abilities,
5 and gifts, and apply them to helping other people. This strengthened self-
6 esteem, reduced conflict in the classroom, and decreased voluntary segregation.
7 It also decreased the number of infractions to administrators involving race and
8 ethnicity. The fifth strategy was to introduce and utilize peer mediation. They
9 found that empowering the students to assume more responsibility for personal
10 behavior reduced the number of referrals to administrators for serious
11 problems. The final strategy was to form a student group to combat
12 stereotyping and prejudice. This reinforced the goals of the practicum and gave
13 the students a chance to put newly gained knowledge and skills to work. They
14 found that it heightened multicultural awareness and appreciation, increased
15 empathy among students, and reduced incidents of stereotyping.

16 Kauffman, J. M., Conroy, M, Gardner, R., & Oswald, D., (2008). Cultural sensitivity in
17 the application of behavior principles to education. *Education and Treatment of*
18 *Children, 31, (2), 239-262.*

19 This article discussed the issues of multicultural education and the best way to
20 teach a diverse student population. They examined the terms *culturally sensitive*,
21 *culturally responsive*, and *culturally competent*, and attempted to define the word
22 *culture*. They conducted research on behavior principles, focused on three
23 different areas of culture, ethnicity, gender, and religion. They examined “ways
24 in which behavior principles apply in particular ways to specific cultural
25 groups and what culturally sensitive practice entails for specific cultural
26 groups.” The authors concluded that scientifically-based behavior principles are
27 the best way to teach all students. The focus should not be on creating
28 instruction that is sensitive to the student’s culture, but to the student as an
29 individual. They feel that one cannot be sensitive to the needs of a student
30 while being insensitive to the student’s culture, and vice versa. The following
31 seven behavior principles were listed as ways to meet the needs of a diverse
32 student population:

33 1. The student is always right (i.e., the student's behavior guides instruction).

- 1 2. Assessment includes an evaluation of reinforcement history (including
- 2 behaviors and reinforcers influenced by culture, including ethnicity).
- 3 3. Teaching is seen as a science that involves the task analysis of skills,
- 4 assessment of students' behavior, the careful development of an intervention,
- 5 ongoing monitoring of the effects of instruction on the terminal skill, and
- 6 systematic planning for generalization and maintenance of skills. Indeed only
- 7 through science will we be able to address the complex problems facing
- 8 educators.
- 9 4. Instructional techniques are completely identified and described (and,
- 10 therefore, are easier for other educators to replicate).
- 11 5. The methodology requires robust, socially relevant results (thereby
- 12 systematically eliminating strategies with negative, nonexistent, or weak
- 13 results).
- 14 6. Single-subject research methodology involves the analysis of each
- 15 participant's behavior so that the independent variable can be analyzed across
- 16 individuals.
- 17 7. Single-subject designs have high internal validity.
- 18 “In all cases, cultural sensitivity requires using the most effective acceptable
- 19 means to help students achieve socially validated objectives.”

Appendix B: Race

1
2
3 Scott, K. A., & Mumford, V. E. (2007). Critical thoughts: Reexamining teacher training,
4 cultural awareness, and school reform. *Multicultural Perspectives* , 9 (4), 54-58.

5 Scott and Mumford (2007) cite research from Gay and Kirkland who argue that
6 becoming culturally aware involves a process of “self-reflection” and “critical
7 consciousness” about social problems related to race and ethnicity (p. 54).

8 Prospective teachers are not properly trained and equipped to work in diverse
9 settings with students that look different from themselves. Researchers have
10 made the argument that students are more likely to succeed when their teachers
11 display cultural sensitivity in the classroom. This has led to a discussion on
12 preparing prospective teachers on how to be culturally sensitive by providing
13 cultural diversity courses (Scott & Mumford, 2007).

14 A program that has been identified as a tool for preparation of young teachers
15 to work with diverse populations is social foundations of education courses
16 (SFE). The foundation of SFE courses is to prepare students to think critically
17 through reflective practices. These processes include reflection of one’s own
18 thoughts, feelings, and ideas in order to challenge personal ideals and beliefs
19 and encourage change of thoughts, ideas, and actions (Scott & Mumford, 2007).
20 Scott and Mumford (2007) mentions that this can be challenged through
21 dialogue. Through dialogue, one can begin to reflect on their own contributions
22 to social problems and reflect on ways to change behavior.

23 SFE courses are primarily used for awareness of cultural diversity, but it may
24 also prove to be effective in increasing cultural competency. In order for one to
25 work toward cultural competency, prospective teachers must gain firsthand
26 knowledge and experience. This includes community or field experience, films,
27 journals, and/or personal stories (Scott & Mumford, 2007).

28 SFE courses that integrate cultural diversity can create knowledgeable,
29 empowered, informed teachers ready to interact with a diverse student
30 population. SFE courses teach prospective teachers not only to identify a
31 problem, but how to think critically about new and innovative ways to
32 approach and solve problems. Scott acknowledges that one class will not
33 completely change one’s belief, but it can improve attitudes and awareness of
34 diversity (Scott & Mumford, 2007).

1
2 Markus, H. R. (2008, November). Pride, prejudice, and ambivalence: toward a
3 unified theory of race and ethnicity. *American Psychologist*, 651-670. For years,
4 researchers have had a hard time defining and distinguishing race and ethnicity
5 because they are highly interrelated. The literature here suggests that scholars
6 have had such a hard time with these two terms because in science at one time
7 race and ethnicity were referred to as biological in nature, whereas Markus
8 suggests in his literature that they are social entities (Markus, 2008). Markus
9 says, "Both race and ethnicity are dynamic sets of ideas, and practices that
10 people create to distinguish groups and organize their own communities"
11 (Markus, 2008, p. 654).

12 Markus along with his colleague Paul Moya, define race as a "dynamic set of
13 historically derived and institutionalized ideas and practices that sorts people
14 into ethnic groups according to perceived physical and behavioral human
15 characteristics; associates differential value, power, and privilege with these
16 characteristics, and establishes a social status ranking among the different
17 groups..." (Markus, 2008, p. 654). Race has been described as an index of
18 power, authority, and privilege of one group over another. It is a way of
19 categorizing or distinguishing significantly different groups from one another
20 (Markus, 2008).

21 Race was thought to be biological in nature because society attributed certain
22 traits and characteristics to groups and generalized it to all who belonged to
23 that race. Williams and Eberhardt found that those who held on to the notion
24 that race was biological were more likely to endorse stereotypes, had very few
25 friends of different races, and attributed negative qualities of people of other
26 races to biological traits (Markus, 2008).

27 Markus (2008) argues that race and ethnicity are not biological in nature;
28 instead, they are the result of society's way of making sense of systematic
29 behaviors that guide one's own behaviors and explain the behaviors of others.
30 He makes the case that race is defined by others not associated with the group.
31 Categorizing groups has little to do with values, traditions, beliefs, and/or
32 behaviors of those associated with that group. Racial differences are imposed
33 by another group and are not necessarily endorsed by the group itself (Markus,
34 2008).

1 Cicetti-Turro, D. (2007). Straight talk: Talking across race in schools. *Multicultural*
2 *Perspectives* , 9 (1), 45-49.

3 The author and teacher, Danielle Cicetti-Turro, delivers a story about her
4 experience working with students who were different from herself. She
5 discusses how she walked in with preconceived notions about what the class
6 was going to be like and tried to elicit the help of one of her colleagues, Mrs.
7 Watkins. Mrs. Watkins turned her down and Turro was forced to take on the
8 task alone. For some time she and Mrs. Watkins did not speak to one another
9 until one day Mrs. Watkins asked Turro for one of the journals she had begun
10 using with her students in class. Mrs. Watkins began an open-dialogue with
11 Turro about race and a variety of other topics through this journal. As Turro
12 reflects back on her experience, she realized that there was some reasoning
13 behind Mrs. Watkins actions. She expected Mrs. Watkins to trust her without
14 earning her trust and respect first. Turro realized that she was the minority for
15 once and was placed in a position where she had to prove herself and earn
16 others' respect (Cicetti-Turro, 2007).

17 Turro (2007) discloses her experience to convey the message that she, along
18 with many other educators, promote what Lisa Delpit refers to as "silenced
19 dialogue" (p.45). This occurs when conversations about race fall on deaf ears
20 because of denial or inability to be sensitive to what one has to say (Cicetti-
21 Turro, 2007). Research by Tatum has shown that people of color usually
22 develop their racial identity earlier than European-Americans or whites.
23 Groups that have developed their racial identity are generally more
24 comfortable in diverse situations. Conversations about race usually occur with
25 people of color instead of with people who need to participate in them the
26 most. Racial identity has shown some relation to academic achievement. Aside
27 from families, teachers have the most influence on socializing children.
28 Pedagogical models must address diversity from a perspective of cultural
29 awareness and be careful to avoid blaming or defensive attitudes that may
30 result in miscommunication and ill feelings. Teachers need to be trained to
31 move beyond traditional practices of education into respect, care, concern, and
32 open-dialogue of students that look different from themselves (Cicetti-Turro,
33 2007).

1 Turro (2007), in her discussion on diversity, says that there is a “bare
2 minimum” when it comes to diversity. She explains it as exploration and
3 acceptance of one’s own racial identity. Teachers must help close the distance
4 across race lines, especially with whites. Turro (2007) ends her story by posing
5 the question, “Had I not been forced into an unfamiliar and uncomfortable
6 situation, would I have been open to what Mrs. Watkins had to say? I still
7 wonder” (p. 48).

8 Atwater, S. A. (2008). Waking up to difference: Teachers, color-blindness, and the
9 effects on students of color. *Journal of Instructional Psychology* , 35 (3), 246-253.

10 Atwater (2008) discusses the ongoing debate of color-blindness that suggests
11 that “race should not matter” and “race does not matter” as it applies to
12 American education (p.246). The “race should not matter” phenomenon is the
13 idea that everyone should be treated equal regardless of race, whereas the “race
14 does not matter” phenomenon suggests ignoring racial differences even though
15 they do exist (Atwater, 2008).

16 Atwater (2008) provides data from various researchers that confirms these
17 notions. Teachers generally bring cultural biases and assumptions to their
18 classroom that they are sometimes unaware of. Regardless of whether the
19 assumptions are conscious or unconscious, they have an impact on teacher
20 attitudes and behaviors, and student academic achievement. Some teachers see
21 race and culture as a “deficit” to their individual development and academic
22 achievement (Atwater, 2008).

23 Atwater discusses the work of Steele and Aronson who developed a term called
24 “stereotype threat” (Atwater, 2008, p. 248). One experiences stereotype threat
25 when they begin to believe the negative traits attributed to one’s group to be
26 true of themselves. For example, African Americans and Hispanics believing
27 that they are poor and will never succeed.

28 Pappas discussed the “invisible” culture among Americans, which is the belief
29 that they have no true culture. Whites see themselves as the privileged majority
30 yet they may fail to recognize that they too have culture and are a part of a race.
31 Atwater (2008) offers the idea of diversity training as a way to address cultural
32 sensitivity. The training suggested by Zeichner and others is two-fold (Atwater,
33 2008). The first part encompasses cultural knowledge that seeks to teach about
34 different cultures and learning styles. The second part is color consciousness

1 that encourages self-awareness and reflection of one's own attitudes and beliefs
2 (Atwater, 2008).

3 Liggett, T. (2008). Frames of reference: The impact of race on teaching strategy and
4 classroom discussion. *Urban Review: Issues and Ideas in Public Education* , 386-402.

5 Liggett (2008) provides data from the US Department of Education that
6 indicates that over 80% of the teaching profession is comprised of White
7 American teachers, while there remain a relatively low number of teachers of
8 color in this profession. On the opposite end, there is an increase in students of
9 color enrolled in schools, especially in low-income neighborhoods (Liggett,
10 2008).

11 Liggett (2008) discusses the social construction of racial discourse and suggests
12 that much of the miscommunication and assumptions of race come from what
13 Foucault refers to as the "pre-conceptual level" (p.388). On this level, positions
14 and categories of power between groups have been determined throughout
15 history and have formulated the terms and concepts of racism that we are
16 familiar with today. This produces a hierarchy of classification that suggests
17 that there are races that are superior to others (Liggett, 2008).

18 Liggett (2008) found that White Americans do not identify themselves as
19 members of a racial group and often times fail to explore their racial identity
20 until later than other racial groups. Research shows that identification with a
21 racial group plays a significant role in identity development (Liggett, 2008).

22 Liggett (2008) suggests helping teachers learn to explore their racial identities in
23 order to understand diversity and learn how to respond to members of other
24 racial groups. She mentions the idea of re-contextualizing interaction with one
25 another (Liggett, 2008). Liggett (2008) says that this happens through self-
26 exploration and shifting education programs to embrace multiculturalism.

27 Grieco, E. M., & Cassidy, R. C. (2001). *Overview of race and hispanic origin: Census 2000*
28 *Brief*. US Census Bureau, US Department of Commerce.

29 This article provides statistics from the 2000 US Census on race and ethnicity in
30 the United States. It breaks down the statistics of how Americans classified
31 themselves based upon their race. Also discusses how Hispanic/Latino is not
32 listed as a main category of race because there are so many sub-cultures under
33 the category, making it a concept of ethnicity rather than race.

Appendix C: Geographic Diversity

1
2
3 Diala, C. C., & Muntaner, C. (2003). Mood and anxiety disorders among rural, urban,
4 and metropolitan residents in the United States. *Community Mental Health Journal*,
5 39(3), 239-252.

6 Researchers investigated the variables related to mood and anxiety disorders in
7 urban and rural United States residents. They used data from the National Co-
8 morbidity Survey (NCS) to analyze differences in the prevalence of mood and
9 anxiety disorders based on gender, race, and geographic location. Regardless of
10 geographic location, African Americans reported having mood disorders less
11 than Whites. There were no gender differences in the prevalence of mood or
12 anxiety disorders among rural residents. This is a reflection of the greater
13 frequency of mood and anxiety disorders reported by rural males. One valid
14 explanation discussed in this article for the greater prevalence of disorders in
15 rural males was growing financial strain from a lack of secure, high paying jobs.
16 These authors provided insights based on their collective backgrounds in health
17 policy and management, mental hygiene, behavior and community health, and
18 epidemiology and preventative medicine.

19 Glenn, N. D., & Hill, L. (1977). Rural-urban differences in attitudes and behavior in the
20 United States. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*,
21 429, 36-50.

22 Using data from American Gallup Polls, researchers investigated the
23 differences in attitude and behavior between urban and rural residents. They
24 determined that a clear distinction between urban and rural individuals does
25 not exist; rather, attitude and behavior differ based on a continuum. According
26 to the data used in this study, rural individuals tend to have more conservative
27 and religious views, while urban individuals tend to be at the other end of the
28 continuum with more liberal and less religious views. Individuals from
29 intermediate-sized communities tend to fall somewhere in between. The
30 authors responsible for this research have experience in sociology.

31 Waldorf, B. S., Florax, R. J. G. M., & Beckhusen, J. (2008). Spatial sorting of immigrants
32 across urban and rural areas in the United States: Changing patterns of human
33 capital accumulation since the 1990s. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*,
34 90(5), 1312-1318.

1 Using data from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Censuses, as well as the 2005 American
2 Community Survey (ACS), the authors explored immigrant preference of
3 residency location. They discovered that a growing number of immigrants
4 choose to live in rural areas. They attributed the rise in rural immigrant
5 populations to the ever increasing numbers of immigrants into the United
6 States in general. They also pointed out that immigrants who choose to live in
7 rural locations tend to be less educated than those who choose to live in
8 metropolitan locations. The influx of an immigrant population into rural
9 communities highlights a need for those communities to adapt to this change.
10 The authors provided insights based on their backgrounds in agricultural and
11 spatial economics.

12 Wilcox, S., Castro, C., King, A. C., Housemann, R., & Brownson, R. C. (2000).

13 Determinant of leisure time physical activity in rural compared with urban older
14 and ethnically diverse women in the United States. *Journal of Epidemiology and
15 Community Health, 54*, 667-672.

16 Researchers examined the differences in leisure time physical activity (LTPA)
17 between urban and rural middle-aged and older women. Survey results
18 revealed that rural women were more sedentary than urban women. The
19 correlates of sedentary lifestyle unique to rural women were American
20 Indian/Alaskan Native and African American race, lack of enjoyable scenery,
21 and not frequently seeing others exercise. The correlates of sedentary lifestyle
22 that both urban and rural women had in common were older age, less
23 education, and lack of social support. The tendency toward a sedentary lifestyle
24 among rural women is a societal trend that requires attention. The authors
25 responsible for this research have experience with medicine, public health,
26 exercise science, and disease prevention.

27 Zahner, G. E. P., Jacobs, J. H., Freeman, D. H., & Trainor, K. F. (1993). Rural-urban child
28 psychopathology in a northeastern U.S. : 1986-1989. *Journal of the American
29 Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 32*(2), 378-387.

30 Using parent and teacher report data from epidemiological surveys of children
31 from Connecticut, researchers studied urban and rural differences in child
32 psychopathology. They observed greater disturbances in urban girls and boys.
33 Parents and teachers of urban girls reported greater behavioral disturbance and
34 social withdrawal, as well as greater total disturbance. Parents and teachers of

1 urban boys reported greater emotional disturbance. The researchers attributed
2 higher rates of child psychopathology in urban children to economic and
3 cultural differences that exist between urban and rural individuals. The authors
4 of this study present information based on their backgrounds in epidemiology,
5 public health, mental health, and biostatistics.

Appendix D: Religion

1
2
3 Passe, J. & Willox, L. (2009). Teaching religion in America's public schools: A necessary
4 disruption. *The Social Studies*, 100(3), 102-106.

5 As the needs of society change, the schools must also be willing to change to
6 meet these needs. Religion is a topic that can no longer be ignored in schools,
7 and the present authors feel teachers should re-introduce religious diversity in
8 a way that promotes an understanding and positive reception of those
9 differences. This article examines the function of religion in schools and makes
10 suggestions on how to incorporate religion into the school curriculum. Our
11 authors stress the importance religion has on understanding events in history,
12 world events and the content in social studies. They feel that this alone
13 challenges our perception that the church and state must be separated. The
14 article states that efforts to include multicultural education in schools have been
15 successful but they do not take an in-depth look into religion. The authors
16 suggest that we should support a less narrow school curriculum that promotes
17 religious education in elementary and middle schools. Promoting this change in
18 school curriculum will result in more positive interactions and relationships in
19 society as a whole. The article also notes that challenges such as: the teacher's
20 lack of knowledge of world religions and the lack of skills required to teach the
21 content is why this topic is avoided. The authors suggest a training program for
22 teachers to help develop the curriculum and materials. Lastly, the article
23 recognizes that success depends on the involvement of multiple stakeholders
24 including: parents, community groups, policy makers, foundations and
25 administration.

26 Garmon, M, A. (2004). Changing pre-service teachers' attitudes/beliefs about diversity:
27 What are the critical factors? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 55, 201-213.

28 This study focuses on improving cultural sensitivity by becoming aware of the
29 individual factors that affect one's attitude and beliefs about diversity. It is
30 important to recognize that what you possess as a person (your views and
31 beliefs) affects your interactions with others. A review of previous research
32 suggested that diversity courses are important in teacher preparation but that
33 these courses have different effects on every student in terms of changing their
34 attitude or beliefs. Many courses are broadly defined and others are more

1 narrowly focused. In this study, a 22-year-old Caucasian woman was used to
2 evaluate changes in cultural awareness. The method consisted of more than 10
3 hours of interviews in which the participant was asked to talk about her
4 experiences, both past and present, with diversity and reflect upon what she
5 has learned up to the present time. Through the interviews, six categories were
6 drawn out that appeared to contribute to her change in perceptions. The
7 dispositional factors included: openness, self-awareness/self-reflectiveness,
8 and commitment to social justice. The experiential factors included:
9 intercultural experiences, support group experiences, and educational
10 experiences. Findings indicated that all these factors should be considered.
11 Results show that these factors could be indicators of a teacher's readiness to
12 learn from cultural experiences. Researchers do suggest that follow up is
13 needed to determine if these factors are consistent with teachers who show
14 growth in cultural sensitivity. This study implies that cultural awareness starts
15 with identifying and challenging your own beliefs and attitudes.

16 Kirmani, M. H., & Laster, B. P. (1999). Responding to religious diversity in classrooms.
17 *Educational Leadership*, 56(7), 61-63.

18 This article makes the strong point that teachers, parents and administrators
19 must work together to increase understanding of the diverse backgrounds of
20 students. The authors do an excellent job of providing the reader with case
21 scenarios and an opportunity to discuss some of the issues that children of
22 different cultures may face in schools. Because classrooms are becoming
23 increasingly diverse, it is important that the school environment becomes
24 sensitive to individual needs. The authors feel that by exploring religious
25 diversity through meetings, workshops and class instruction, we can raise
26 awareness of their needs/problems and offer support to the students and their
27 families.

28 Bae, S. J., & Clark, G. M. (2005). Incorporate diversity awareness in the classroom: What
29 teachers can do. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 41(1), 49-51.

30 This article discusses how teachers can include diversity in the classroom. It
31 provides an easy to read lesson that utilizes twenty strategies to help educators
32 increase their effectiveness in teaching children with disabilities who are from
33 diverse cultures. It is noted that each child brings something unique from his or
34 her culture and teachers must be able to respond to this uniqueness. It is up to

1 teachers to foster these differences to promote school success. Not only are
2 these strategies meant to help educators communicate with their students, but
3 also with their families, who are at the core of their beliefs, traditions and
4 values..

5 Cruz, B. C. & Patterson, J. M. (2005). Cross-cultural simulations in teacher education:
6 Developing empathy and understanding. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 7(2), 40-47.
7 Many teachers today are not prepared for a growing diverse population, which
8 is why teacher training programs are so important. This article discusses one
9 way of preparing teachers to handle issues of diversity and the challenges they
10 face as educators of this diverse population. The method discussed is known as
11 cross-cultural simulation. The authors suggest that when teacher training
12 programs include discussion, modeling, field experiences and observations,
13 they will be more meaningful and provide more opportunity for appreciation
14 and understanding of different cultures.

Appendix E: Gender

1
2
3 Catsambis, S. (1994). The path to math: Gender and racial-ethnic differences in
4 mathematics participation from middle school to high school. *Sociology of*
5 *Education*, 67 (3), 199-215.

6 This study traced the gender differences in learning opportunities in
7 mathematics among African American, Latino, and White students from eighth
8 grade to tenth grade. In the study the researchers found female students do not
9 lag behind males at this age. The study suggests that females tend to have less
10 interest and confidence with their math abilities.

11 Geist, E.A. & King, M. (2008). Different, not better: Gender differences in mathematics
12 learning and achievement. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 35 (1) 43-52.

13 This article reviews the literature and research on differences in boys and girls
14 learning math skills and in their math achievement scores. The conclusion the
15 authors reach is that girls and boys learn and process mathematics differently,
16 yet our traditional educational system does not take this into consideration.

17 Hedges, L., & Nowell, A. (1995). Sex differences in mental test scores, variability and
18 numbers of high scoring individuals. *Science*, 269, 41-45.

19 In this study the authors demonstrate the average sex differences on most
20 measured tests of abilities are small with the exception of science, writing and
21 male vocational aptitude. The data suggests there is not a major difference in
22 gender education.

23 Hyde, J.S. (2005). The gender similarities hypothesis. *American Psychologist*, 60 (6) 581-
24 592.

25 The author states that claims of gender differences are not clear that males and
26 females are alike in most psychological variables. A review provided of 46
27 meta-analyses support her claims of gender similarities.

28 Murphy, P.E., & Gipps, C.V. (Eds). (1996). *Equity in the classroom: Towards effective*
29 *pedagogy for girls and boys*. London. UNESCO Publishing, The Falmer Press.

30 All around the world educational opportunities for girls are more limited than
31 those for boys. The articles in this book are the outcome of papers presented by
32 a small group at a colloquium that focused on what happens to girls inside the
33 classroom. Some of the issues discussed were pedagogy, girls, learning theory,
34 and intervention projects.

1 Park, C.C. (2000). Learning style preferences of Southeast Asian students. *Urban*
2 *Education, 35*, 245-286.

3 This article discusses deep cultural roots that have a significant influence on the
4 learning style of Southeast Asian students (Cambodians, Hmong, Lao, and
5 Vietnamese). The Southeast Asians have cultural roots that include deep
6 respect for authority, commitment to family values, and male dominance.

7 Prashnig, B. (2009). *The power of diversity: New ways of learning and teaching through*
8 *learning styles*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

9

10 Barbara Prashnig wrote this practical guide on the Learning Style Inventory
11 assessment tool. She explains in a simple and understandable way how to use
12 the assessment tool to modify teaching styles to meet student learning
13 preferences in the school environment. The author describes in each chapter a
14 component of the inventory and how to apply it in various situations.

15 Severiens, S., & Ten Dam, G. (1998). Gender and learning: Comparing two theories.
16 *Higher Education, 35*, 329-350.

17 In this article the authors view gender learning differences from various
18 models. The epistemological model describes females as using different
19 patterns of reasoning compared to men. Women are more open to accepting
20 alternative perspectives of learning into their own views. On the other hand,
21 males' learning focused more on their own individual perspectives of knowing.
22 The authors then compared the Epistemological Model to Vermut's Theory
23 which focuses on student learning styles which include how to study, what the
24 student does to continue studying, and the reason for studying.

25 Yang, P. Q. (2004). Generational differences in educational attainment among Asian
26 Americans. *Journal of Asian American Studies, 27* (1), 51-71.

27 Existing research in this study has revealed a significant gender variation in
28 educational attainment. Female youth have obtained higher levels of education
29 than their male counterparts. This is significant among first generational
30 immigrants.

Appendix F: Disability

Anderson, P., & Fenichel, E. (1989). Serving culturally diverse families of infants and toddlers with disabilities. *National Center for Clinical Infant Programs*, 1-27.

“Serving culturally diverse families of infants and toddlers with disabilities” is a piece that originated from a meeting held by “Project Zero to Three.” This piece begins with a contents section in which it mentions the different sections that are included throughout the document. The “Culture-The All-Encompassing Variable” section is extremely helpful in defining and understanding the importance of culture. The authors mention the importance of understanding that decisions and choices vary depending on culture, and it must be respected. The piece goes on to share “Examples of Health, Illness and Disability Belief and Practice Tendencies in Different Cultural Groups” (Anderson & Fenichel, 1998, p.5). Also included in this piece are effective means of communication and “examples of communication and interactional tendencies in different cultural groups” (Anderson & Fenichel, 1998, p.5). At the end of the piece there are helpful recommendations for future readings. The authors have provided us with an extremely beneficial reading in understanding disability and the importance of remaining culturally sensitive.

Bellinger, O., Harrison, S., Zions, L., & Zions, P. (2003). Urban African American families' perceptions of cultural sensitivity within the special education system. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 8(1), 41-50.

In this article the authors focus on how urban African American families feel about cultural sensitivity in the special education system. The article is centered on two topics: whether or not African Americans feel their children receive appropriate services, and if they feel the planning is culturally sensitive. It also focuses on whether or not these parents feel it is important to be culturally sensitive when dealing with services. It discusses whether they feel they are included in the planning and to what extent they are a “partner.” The study asks parents what they feel are “important cultural beliefs and values” that should be included by the schools. Finally, the discussion of different “cross-cultural training” that schools should take part in before “working directly with families who share their cultural beliefs and values” (Bellinger et. al., 2003, p.42). Interviews including different open-ended questions were given to

1 different families. There were six commonalities that the interviewees
2 experienced. The first is, "respect for parents and children by school
3 personnel." Second, "perceived negatively toward children and/or parents by
4 schools." Third, "need for information and assistance using community support
5 services." Fourth, "desire for greater cultural understanding and demonstrated
6 acceptance of differences by school personnel." Fifth, "issues of quality and
7 training among teachers and other school personnel." Sixth, "improved teacher-
8 parent and parent-parent partnerships" (Bellinger et. al., 2003, p.41). Through
9 these conclusions, the authors have created suggestions for schools so that they
10 can be more culturally sensitive to families of children with disabilities.

11 Bishop, K., Rounds, K., & Weil, A. (1994). Practice with culturally diverse families of
12 young children with disabilities. *ProQuest*, 75(1), 1-11.

13 The main focus of this article is presenting the importance of understanding
14 that our society does not have the necessary respect for cultural diversity. Part
15 H of IDEA and its emphasis on ". . . the importance of 'carrying out early
16 intervention activities in a 'culturally competent' way'" is central. It is
17 imperative for social workers to have "culturally competent" skills in order to
18 work with families of children with disabilities. Part H of IDEA is specifically
19 geared toward early intervention. Part H was introduced to IDEA in order to
20 help with creating an environment that is family centered. It specifically states:
21 "Families [must] have access to culturally competent services within their local
22 areas" (Bishop et. al, 1994, p.2). The article continues to explain the principles of
23 culturally competent practice, one being, "a set of congruent behaviors,
24 attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among
25 professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work
26 effectively in cross-cultural situation" (Bishop et. al, 1994, p.3). The authors feel
27 it is important to understand cultural competence and to include it in practice.

28 Dennis, R., & Giangrecom, M. (1996). Creating conversation: Reflections on cultural
29 sensitivity in family interviewing. *Exceptional Children*, 63(1), 103-106.

30 The authors in this study focus on the importance of being culturally sensitive
31 during interviews and throughout the development of Individualized
32 Education Plans (IEPS). It is imperative to understand what "cultural
33 sensitivity" is and what it entails. The authors suggest that "Cultural sensitivity
34 implies an awareness of the influences of other isolated or multiple factors that

1 can impact and shape the priorities and perspectives of individuals and families
2 in our society" (p.104). They suggest many important factors that influence
3 cultural sensitivity. This study specifically reviews a previous planning tool
4 called *COACH*. The alteration of *COACH* was to include "the need to explore
5 the design of the tool for use in more culturally diverse settings" (Dennis &
6 Giangrecom, 1996, p.105). After one hour interviews with fourteen participants
7 the results and recommendations were drawn. "Recommendations for
8 professionals include increasing their own knowledge base about other
9 cultures; examining their own cultural biases; providing a family focus;
10 allowing sufficient time for comfortable interviews; and considering time, place,
11 and language needs" (Dennis & Giangrecom, 1996, p.103). With these
12 recommendations, hopefully, there will be more cultural sensitivity when
13 communicating with families and schools.

14 Lo, L. (2008). Expectations of Chinese families of children with disabilities towards
15 American schools. *The School Community Journal* , 18(2), 73-90.

16 In this study, the author was interested in exploring the different expectations
17 of Chinese families of children with disabilities in schools. The author mentions
18 how under IDEA regulations, parents are to be included in the planning and
19 preparation of their child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). It is also
20 mentioned that there is a large increase of ethnically diverse children who
21 receive special education. Therefore, teachers and administrators need to be
22 aware of the cultural differences within the special education population. The
23 author states, "These families felt that many teachers, especially the Caucasian
24 teachers, did not have a solid cultural understanding of them and their
25 children. Some families also reported that cultural sensitivity did not exist in
26 their children's schools" (Lo, 2008, p.75). With the information gathered in this
27 study, schools can better improve their relationships with diverse families. The
28 results which were founded through interviews, of what some families believe
29 should be included in American schools are, "(1) accessibility of equality
30 interpreters, (2) cultural sensitivity among professionals, (3) advocacy, (4)
31 home-school communication, and (5) parent education" (Lo, 2008, p.73). The
32 authors conclude their study with different strategies that can be implemented
33 in schools in order to develop stronger relationships between schools and
34 families.

Appendix G: Sexual Orientation

The American Heritage Dictionaries. (2006). *The American heritage dictionaries of the English language* (4th ed.). Retrieved July 17, 2009, from <http://dictionary.reference.com/>

Various terminology used in this section are derived from www.dictionary.com's website using definitions solely from the American Heritage Dictionaries of the English Language.

American Psychological Association. (2008). Answers to your questions: For a better understanding of sexual orientation and homosexuality. Retrieved July 17, 2009, from www.apa.org/topics/sorientation.pdf

This brochure from the American Psychological Association's website offers information on sexual orientation, specifically gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues. It is set up in a question and answer format. It may be a good discussion piece for older children to read and ask questions about. It is very informative and discusses coming out for individuals, including adolescents.

Campos, D. (2005). *Understanding gay and lesbian youth: Lessons for straight school teachers, counselors, and administrators*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

This essential resource gives educators and other school personnel information about the homosexual community. It includes statistics and facts, different developmental milestones that homosexual youth face, myths of homosexual people, the history of the gay and lesbian community, curriculum that promotes including GLBT youth, and even resources for schools, to name a few. In the book is a historical timeline of important events in the gay and lesbian civil rights movement, which includes the Stonewall Riots that occurred in New York City. The Stonewall Inn, a gay bar that was frequently harassed in the 1960s by police, was raided, and is considered by some to be the start of the gay-rights movement. It is largely unheard of however, and was not formally recognized by the White House until the forty-year anniversary of its occurrence, (as evidenced by Frank Rich's June 28, 2009 article in the New York Times, *40 Years Later, Still Second-Class Americans*.) The book also lists and describes famous people who identify as homosexual for schools to provide role models for students.

1 Chasnoff, D. (Director). (1995). *It's elementary: Talking about gay issues in school*
2 [videotape]. New York: Women's Educational Media.

3 In this controversial and award winning documentary, teachers are filmed in
4 his or her classroom discussing gay issues with students. From first to eighth
5 grade, the students asked questions, discussed stereotypes, read books about
6 same-sex parents, and met young adults like them who are gay or lesbian. The
7 children in the video were more informed than many may believe. In a class of
8 fourth grades, children knew about cross-dressing and what it is. In third
9 grade, students knew what the term 'homophobia' meant. Other students
10 expressed the understanding that gay people are the same as anyone else and
11 how biases and stereotypes can affect a person's life. In a combined first and
12 second grade class, children created a picture book detailing issues they had
13 faced such as being teased or called 'gay'. The students were also able to talk
14 about issues such as gay marriage, and as young as first grade, they understood
15 to put yourself in another person's shoes. A parent in the film suggested that
16 bringing up gay issues "opens the dialogue so even if you are against the
17 lifestyle, it still needs to be there, it still needs to be addressed." The teachers
18 used different techniques such as mapping and clustering with the words
19 stereotype and gay and having class discussions by asking questions. Using
20 role models and pictures of famous people and having students decide if they
21 are gay or not are important ways to teach that you cannot tell who is gay by
22 how they dress or act. One teacher mentioned when hearing derogatory terms,
23 that "you can't just say stop, you have to educate about it, and if you don't
24 educate about it, it won't stop." It is suggested that if teachers do not step in
25 when there is harassment or name calling, it sends the message that those
26 behaviors are acceptable. During a class assembly, a movement teacher shows
27 the children how hard it would be to play soccer and have to hide your leg. He
28 equates this with the difficulty of hiding a part of yourself, particularly being
29 gay, and the understanding by the students is incredible.

30 This film is, and should be, a vital part of the curriculum of future teachers. It
31 gives future teachers a real life example of how to start a dialogue or bring up
32 gay issues in the classroom. Discussing different families and lifestyles changed
33 the beliefs of many of the students in the film and they realized that people who
34 identify as gay are just like anyone else.

1 Chasnoff, D. (Director). (2008). *It's elementary: Talking about gay issues in school* [DVD
2 version]. Retrieved July 5, 2009, from [http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-](http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/stillelementary)
3 [campaigns/stillelementary](http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/stillelementary)

4 This newly released DVD version of *It's elementary: Talking about gay issues in*
5 *schools* includes the original 1995 documentary and can be found in the
6 Groundspark store (http://groundspark.org/store/home_users). It also includes
7 a 37-minute educational training video as well as a guide for curriculum
8 planning and professional development in K-8th grade settings. In addition, it
9 introduces the new 51-minute documentary *It's STILL elementary*, in which the
10 director Debra Chasnoff revisits some of the footage from the original video, as
11 well as interviews with some of the students from the original video who are
12 now young adults. In a clip from the Groundspark website, Chloe Moushey,
13 one of the children interviewed now as a young adult, commented that
14 "learning about gay and lesbian issues gave us vocabulary to talk about it, it
15 gave us a forum to ask the questions that we wanted to ask. Our teachers were
16 sensitive about the issue, but they were also very neutral. They would just give
17 us the facts, they would answer our questions honestly and truthfully...I think
18 that learning about these things that people don't usually talk about has given
19 me tools to ask questions about other issues. Education is never wrong. If you
20 present the facts and you allow someone to think about it for themselves, I
21 don't think that there are very many downsides of that" (clip retrieved July 5,
22 2009, from [http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-](http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/stillelementary/ie2_clips)
23 [campaigns/stillelementary/ie2_clips](http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/stillelementary/ie2_clips)).

24 Conoley, J. C. (2008). Sticks and stones can break my bones and words can really hurt
25 me. *School Psychology Review*, 37(2), 217-220.

26 This article tells the story of Lawrence King, a fifteen year old from California
27 who identified as gay. He experienced bullying by his classmates and another
28 student, on February 12, 2008; they shot him twice, killing him. Physical
29 appearance such as appearing weak or obese, clothing, high grades, non-
30 normative behavior or looks such as acting 'weird' or 'geeky', and especially
31 gender behavior that society does not consider 'normal' are all reasons for
32 bullies choosing their victims.

33 GSA Network. (2008). How to start a gay-straight alliance. Retrieved July 9, 2009, from
34 <http://www.gsanetwork.org/resources/start.html>

1 This website provides information on GSA's and how to start one. It also
2 includes many links to information about laws, resources, books, and national
3 LGBT-centered days, such as the day of silence.

4 Harpo Productions. (2009). Bullied to death: Two devastated moms speak out
5 [Television series episode]. In *The Oprah Winfrey show*. Illinois: Harpo
6 Productions.

7 This episode of *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, tells the story of Carl Walker-Hoover
8 and Jaheem Herrera, two students who completed suicide because they were
9 bullied. The students who bullied them teased them for acting or looking gay,
10 although neither student identified as such. The episode centers on bullying,
11 however suicide and suicidal thoughts are increasingly becoming associated
12 with bullying and can unfortunately become the result of months or years of
13 tormenting and teasing.

14 Hermann-Wilmarth, J. M. (2007). Full inclusion: Understanding the role of gay and
15 lesbian texts and films in teacher education classrooms. *Language Arts*, 84(4), 347-
16 356.

17 This article reviews texts and films about gay and lesbian individuals that are
18 useful for students learning to be teachers, as well as in their classrooms in the
19 future. Teachers and pre-service teachers who wish to use these materials to
20 educate their students may face barriers such as various governments at state
21 and city levels banning books from libraries or threatening to cut funding to
22 libraries with elementary school level books about gay individuals. Parents also
23 make complaints about books their children may bring home from school.

24 There is also a lack of books on this topic in general.

25 The author suggests teaching about the topics of homophobia and heterosexism
26 in the classrooms of pre-service teachers. Silence about this issue is similar to
27 silence about racist, sexist, or classist stereotypes, comments, or remarks. The
28 silence allows individuals to consider those stereotypes as correct and true of
29 that individual or group. The author cites studies that have found that the
30 majority of students are willing to read books that center around gay and
31 lesbian individuals. If nothing else, they are informative of different families
32 and different lifestyles. The author gives several resources, but first mentions
33 that most of the books or literature she has read on multicultural or diversity
34 issues barely mention gay and lesbian topics. An important resource she notes

1 is an introductory book on children's literature, a rare resource that equates
2 discrimination of gay and lesbian individuals to that of discrimination against
3 minority races or prejudice based on gender. The various children's books that
4 the author refers to most often do not show issues and struggles of gay and
5 lesbian families, however they do show pictures of same sex parents with their
6 children. The author also mentions books that deal with issues such as
7 comments from peers about another student's family picture drawings of same-
8 sex families. A fairytale, akin to Cinderella, about two princes falling in love has
9 been a controversial book. A story of two male penguins partnered together
10 details the couple finally having the chance to raise an orphaned baby penguin
11 after years of watching opposite sex parents have babies.

12 This article is an important source of information on children's literature that
13 includes gay and lesbian families and issues. However, it does not provide
14 insight into how to answer children's questions about the books or about the
15 different lifestyles of families. Despite this fact, the books and videos mentioned
16 are a good starting point for teachers to begin the discussion of sexual
17 orientation, which may be the biggest obstacle for teachers.

18 Kosciw, J. G., Diaz, E. M., & Greytak, E. A. (2008). *2007 National School Climate Survey:
19 The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in our nation's schools.*
20 New York: GLSEN. Retrieved June 2, 2009, from [http://www.glsen.org/cgi-](http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/library/record/2340.html?state=research&type=research)
21 [bin/iowa/all/library/record/2340.html?state=research&type=research](http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/library/record/2340.html?state=research&type=research)

22 This report, researched and published by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight
23 Education Network (GLSEN), surveyed over 6,000 students from every state in
24 the United States, including the District of Columbia. The students identify
25 themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT). The authors
26 recruited from randomly selected community groups that support and serve
27 LGBT youth throughout this country, including GLSEN chapters and other
28 organizations that advocate for youth. They also enlisted the use of websites
29 and the internet, including social networking sites to administer their survey to
30 LGBT students.

31 The report includes many statistical findings ranging from harassment, to
32 teacher involvement, to educational outcomes. For instance, over two thirds of
33 the students surveyed felt unsafe in school due to a personal characteristic, such
34 as sexual orientation or race. Similarly, 32.8% missed at least one day of school

1 in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable. In terms of
2 harassment, 86.2% experienced verbal harassment, almost a quarter of the
3 sample experienced physical assault, and over half were victims of what is
4 known as 'cyber bullying' in the past year. Participants also noted that they did
5 not report harassment because of the belief that staff would not be effective in
6 helping the situation, or it would make it worse. Those who did report
7 incidences said that most often the teacher or school did not do anything. The
8 authors also found that students in the South, from small or rural towns, and
9 from areas with high poverty levels reported more victimization due to sexual
10 orientation. Victimization also leads to harmful effects on education. The
11 participants, who reported being frequently physically harassed due to their
12 sexual orientation, also admitted having lower grades than other students did.
13 More positively, students felt a greater belonging to the school if he or she told
14 students and staff about his or her sexual orientation. Eight out of ten
15 participants also knew of a school staff member he or she felt was supportive of
16 students with a different sexual orientation.

17 The first of several limitations to this report is that it is not a peer-reviewed
18 journal article. In addition, because of the anonymity of the survey, participants
19 could provide false information, but this risk could be small and the large
20 sample size is beneficial. The risk of false information in the surveys is also a
21 problem for the surveys conducted through websites such as social networking
22 sites. However, the authors included this method because they wanted to reach
23 LGBT youth who do not have connections to community-based organizations.
24 The sample is also limited because some students may not openly identify as
25 LGBT even though they engage in same-sex sexual behavior, and so they are
26 lacking in appropriate representation. Finally, the authors note that the
27 representation of Latino, Latina, and African American LGBT students is
28 lacking.

29 Lamme, L. L., & Lamme, L. A. (2001/2002). Welcoming children from gay families into
30 our schools. *Educational Leadership*, 59(4), 65-69.

31 This article, written by a professor of education and her daughter, offers
32 suggestions on how to make gay families and their children feel safe and
33 comfortable in schools. First, they suggest school personnel do not tolerate
34 harassment, including derogatory terms. Also, provide diversity training not

1 just for school personnel, but also for students. Another suggestion is to
2 celebrate gay pride week, and to include noteworthy or famous individuals in
3 class. Similar to other research, the authors believe gay-straight alliances, or
4 GSAs, should receive support from the school and its staff. In addition, it is
5 important to make sure library and media resources include books and other
6 materials on diverse families, sexual orientation, gender identity, and even
7 fiction that includes characters that may identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or
8 transgender.

9 Ideas for teachers include sending home two copies of papers, handouts, or
10 other items in case a family is divorced. This is beneficial not only to gay
11 families who were previously part of heterosexual families, but also for any
12 divorced family. It also can be hurtful to ask who the 'real' parent is, suggesting
13 the biological parent is more important, if one exists in the family situation. In
14 addition, they advise that teachers realize that the family may be 'closeted', so
15 the parents have not disclosed their sexual orientation to others. The risks of
16 disclosure can be hurtful to the family and to the child. Along these lines,
17 teachers should not ask a student to discuss his or her family in the classroom
18 to avoid the disclosure issue. Finally, the school should be sure to include
19 parents in volunteer activities or ask them to speak to classes if they are willing,
20 in addition to including both gay and straight students in important activities
21 such as prom.

22 A major limitation of this article is that the peer-review status of the journal is
23 unknown. Therefore, experts in the field of research and journal writing have
24 not read and reviewed this article for credibility. However, it is important to
25 note that these are suggestions based on two individual's research of some
26 literature and possibly their opinions. These suggestions and ideas may not be
27 empirically tested, but can be opinions, ideas, or suggestions from gay families
28 who are on the receiving end of harassment and bullying.

29 Maryland School Mental Health Alliance. (2009). Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and
30 transgender youth: Information for teachers. Retrieved July 2, 2009, from
31 <http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/Resources/Educ/CulSenEdu>

32 This PDF file through the School Mental Health website provides definitions of
33 terms associated with the LGBT community. It also includes a 'why do we

1 care?' section with important statistics and facts about LGBT adolescents. It
2 gives tips and resources to teachers to make schools and classrooms safe.

3 McCaughtry, N., Dillon, S. R., Jones, E., & Smigell, S. (2005). Sexuality-sensitive
4 schooling. *Quest*, 57, 426-443.

5 In this paper, the authors have compiled research on sexual orientation and
6 schools and have come up with three ways to promote safe, open, and equal
7 school for gay, lesbian, and straight students. First, schools must consider the
8 experiences of these youth in school, home, and the community. Second,
9 consider the consequences of victimizing students based on sexuality. Finally,
10 teachers in physical education and sports coaches can help create a school
11 atmosphere that is sensitive to differences in sexuality. The authors stress that
12 the sense of feeling different that emerges from individuals who are lesbian,
13 gay, or questioning their sexuality is not exclusive to the onset of puberty. As
14 reported by Treadway and Yoakum (1992), it can emerge at the young age of
15 five, or in the teenage years as Morrow (1997) noted in this article. Teachers and
16 staff of all grade levels should be aware of the victimization that can occur with
17 this youth group. The authors give many suggestions for teachers and schools,
18 and physical education and coaches in particular, for making school safe for all
19 students, especially lesbian and gay students. They suggest a consistent, school-
20 wide tolerance and respect policy that adds terms such as 'sexuality tolerance',
21 'freedom', and 'diversity' into the policy or mission of the school. A zero
22 tolerance policy on disciplining students for victimization based on hate is also
23 necessary and this should include ways for students or staff to make
24 anonymous reports of victimization, and to have school activities monitored for
25 sexuality victimization. Education and awareness training for faculty and
26 students is important, as well as support for gay and lesbian role models,
27 including teachers. Finally, making literature on sexuality available within the
28 school and supporting groups or clubs that promote safe gay and straight
29 student communication and interactions are recommendations.

30 National Crime Prevention Council. (2009). Cyber bullying. Retrieved July 17, 2009,
31 from <http://www.ncpc.org/cyberbullying/?searchterm=cyberbullying>

32 This website provides information on cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is the use
33 of cell phones, internet websites, or social networking sites among other ways

1 to intentionally harass or harm another student. The website also gives tips on
2 how to prevent cyber bullying from happening.

3 Ray, N. (2006). *Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth: An epidemic of homelessness*.
4 New York: National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute and the
5 National Coalition for the Homeless. Retrieved July 15, 2009, from
6 <http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/HomelessYouth.pdf>

7 This is a publication on the homeless adolescent LGBT community. It discusses
8 effects on schooling, mental health, sexual activity, and many other topics. It
9 includes discrimination in terms of resources, the juvenile justice system, and
10 victimization of homeless LGBT adolescents.

11 Roffman, D. M. (2000). A model for helping schools address policy options regarding
12 gay and lesbian youth. *Journal of Sex Education and Therapy*, 25(2 & 3), 130-136.

13 This article was used for its definition of heterosexism. However, for those
14 interested in school policy issues for gay and lesbian youth, this article
15 discusses four policy options for schools in regards to homosexuality.

16 Schall, J., & Kauffman, G. (2003). Exploring literature with gay and lesbian characters in
17 the elementary school. *Journal of Children's Literature*, 29(1), 36-45.

18 A fourth grade and fifth grade multi-age class teacher and a graduate student
19 who teaches undergraduates about literature sought to find a way to bring up
20 the topic of homosexuality in the classroom. The author teaching the class
21 focused on themes throughout the school year, and one included how the
22 students could survive his or her next year of school. The students and teacher
23 discussed that a classroom built on choices, trust, and the chance to voice one's
24 own opinion would help create class environments where children can learn
25 safely. Then, the teacher read a story aloud to the class about two princes falling
26 in love. She allowed the students to voice their opinions and initial reactions,
27 and then gave them the choice to read more books with the subject of same-sex
28 parenthood or partnership. After the children had read his or her choice of
29 books for 45 minutes, they held discussions about the readings. The students
30 expressed concern over why a person who liked someone of the same sex is
31 subject to name-calling. One student suggested that calling someone a name is
32 wrong because no one should make fun of another person just because he or
33 she loves someone of the same sex. The students also discussed a need to

1 understand different kinds of relationships, especially the ones from the books
2 they read. The authors also write that
3 “even though the children verbalized that it was important to treat others with
4 respect, they recognized that many times when confronted with situations they
5 didn’t understand, they responded in negative ways. They thought that if they
6 were told what was going on and were helped to understand others, they
7 would be more tolerant of each other.” (p. 41)

8 The discussions continued with the children bringing up the need for truth. The
9 students wondered why they had no knowledge of the reality of a person being
10 homosexual. Their knowledge of homosexuality came mostly from some
11 friends and close-in-age family members, but did not come from adults. The
12 ‘secret’ of being gay was also discussed, and most students agreed that a person
13 cannot control whom they like or love and they should be themselves. Another
14 student even suggested that if homosexual couples are the majority, a child
15 from a heterosexual couple could feel discrimination. The students also
16 questioned why adults feel children cannot handle information about
17 homosexuality.

18 The authors found that after several months had passed, the students still
19 discuss the books they read, and they have stopped using derogatory terms on
20 the playground to insult others. They even mentioned standing up for others
21 and for themselves. Although this article is not evidence-based, it discusses a
22 way to bring up the topic of homosexuality issues in classrooms. It also shows
23 that children are able to discuss these issues, especially if the classroom
24 community uses critical thinking and dialogue to help them understand the
25 issues. Introducing gay and lesbian themed children’s books is a way to
26 introduce this topic and start a dialogue with students.

27 Straut, D., & Sapon-Shevin, M. (2002). “But no one in the class is gay”: Countering
28 invisibility and creating allies in teacher education programs. In R. M. Kissen
29 (Ed.), *Getting ready for Benjamin: Preparing teachers for sexual diversity in the*
30 *classroom* (pp. 29-41). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

31 The authors begin by providing four obstacles to the inclusion of lesbian, gay,
32 bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) issues in preparing teachers to provide safe
33 schools and classrooms for students with every type of sexual identity. The first
34 is assumptions, in which teachers and students alike make assumptions about

1 their pupils and classmates sexuality. Most often, they assume that their peers
2 and students are not gay or lesbian. In an anecdote, one professor points out to
3 his or her students when one student assumes everyone in the class is straight
4 and would not be hurt by his effeminate gestures, ““You know the sexual
5 histories of all thirty-five people in this room well enough to say that? And
6 would it be okay to do that even if there were no one in the room who were gay
7 or lesbian?”” (p. 31). Second, the hegemonic norm is the belief that everyone is
8 heterosexual and everyone came from heterosexual families. This leads to
9 educators of teachers not choosing readings by authors who are gay or lesbian,
10 or even not choosing guest speakers who are gay or lesbian. Most importantly,
11 most students and educators of teachers are not even aware of the lack of LGBT
12 issues in curriculum. A third barrier is that some individuals may perceive the
13 discussion of LGBT issues as promoting homosexuality and are against doing
14 so. Finally, there is a gap in the curriculum that includes LGBT education.
15 In educating new teachers, three goals can promote social justice. First, teachers
16 need to have knowledge, specifically about terminology such as gay and
17 transgender. Demographic information about LGBT students and parents is
18 important, as well as information to combat stereotypes. Second, the authors
19 suggest teachers need courage to take action about discriminatory acts that they
20 witness that are homophobic. Third, a teacher needs skills to help his or her
21 students rectify assumptions and to begin dialogue about issues that students
22 may not personally experience. The authors continue with specific ideas for the
23 major areas of content: math and science, English, language arts, visual and
24 performing arts, and social studies. In math and science classes, the authors
25 suggest challenging gender stereotypes such as a story problem dealing with
26 two male students baking for a bake sale instead of two female students. Or
27 using statistics such as hate crime rates, the rate of calling on males versus
28 females, or which sex makes more money. English classes provide more
29 opportunities to discuss sexual orientation. Many books can spark discussions
30 about the differences within families, relationships, and interactions. In the
31 visual and performing arts, it is suggested, ““if the sexuality of the art or artist is
32 directly related to the work then it is relevant when discussing the context in
33 which the work was created”” (p. 38). The use of music to teach about and
34 against homophobia is suggested. More information on this can be found in

1 Sapon-Shevin's (1999) book *Because We Can Change The World* in the chapter
2 titled "Using music to teach against homophobia." Finally, social studies
3 provides many opportunities to bring up the topic of homosexuality. For
4 instance, the Stonewall Inn riots that occurred in New York City in 1969 are a
5 part of the gay rights movement. Gay individuals were also included in the
6 Holocaust as a hated group. The authors suggest a goal of social studies
7 education is to create decent citizens who live in a democracy where there are
8 multiple and diverse perspectives.

9 This book chapter gives new teachers, and educators of teachers, important
10 information and ways to incorporate LGBT education and issues into the
11 curriculum. These ideas are important suggestions and ways for teachers to
12 lead by example despite the fact that they are not empirically tested. Most
13 importantly, despite a teacher's personal beliefs on gay and lesbian lifestyles,
14 the ultimate goal is safe schools where all children can learn and be respectful
15 of differences.

16 Swartz, P. C. (2003). It's elementary in Appalachia: Helping prospective teachers and
17 their students understand sexuality and gender. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in*
18 *Education, 1(1), 51-71.*

19 This author seeks to educate her students, who are future teachers, to
20 understand that sexuality is not an either/or concept, where gender and
21 sexuality fall into male-female, and heterosexual-homosexual. Gender and
22 sexuality fall along a continuum of behaviors and expressions and these
23 behaviors are only a small percentage of what makes each individual who they
24 are. She also stresses that these educators will most certainly have students with
25 parents or relatives who are sexual minorities, or the student themselves will
26 be. Related to this, these students and family members will face damage from
27 "name calling and hiding in the closet" (p. 54). Swartz also suggests that it is
28 unrealistic to believe that bringing a role model or books into a classroom that
29 deal with homosexuality is introducing a 'new' topic. There are already
30 students, staff, and teachers who identify as LGBT in schools. Although the
31 future teachers in the article have admitted to witnessing harassment, they most
32 often do not allow themselves "to *imagine* the depth of the pain such
33 harassment causes" (p. 56). In order to reach and teach all students, a teacher's
34 personal beliefs and prejudices should be set aside. Educating students

1 prevents them from drawing and adhering to inconsistent conclusions about
2 homosexuality. Her students as future teachers, suffering their own prejudices
3 living in Appalachia, “may not agree personally with queerness in all of its
4 forms, (but) they do not deny the importance of just treatment for *all* students in
5 the classroom” (p. 62). Swartz also notes that, as evidenced by the film *It’s*
6 *elementary: Talking about gay issues in schools*, the idea that children are innocent
7 about sexuality is a misconception. The children in the video knew a lot more
8 than parents and teachers believed they did about homosexuality, stereotypes,
9 and prejudices about sexual minorities and gender issues.

10 This article is not a statistical, controlled study, however through dialogue and
11 teaching her students about gay and lesbian issues, the author was able to
12 challenge and change their perceptions. Using a film to show real teachers in
13 the classroom talking to students about LGBT issues and lifestyles is an
14 important way to show future teachers that they can have discussions with
15 their students and inform them in order to dispel their stereotypes and
16 prejudices.

17 Szalacha, L. A. (2003). Safer sexual diversity climates: Lessons learned from an
18 evaluation of Massachusetts safe schools program for gay and lesbian students.
19 *American Journal of Education*, 110(1), 58-88.

20 The Massachusetts Board of Education created the Safe Schools Program for
21 Gay and Lesbian Students, also called SSP, to create policies in schools that help
22 protect gay or lesbian students from being harassed, threatened, or
23 discriminated against. It also offers crisis and suicide prevention training for
24 school personnel. The SSP also calls for establishing gay-straight alliances
25 (GSAs) as support groups in schools for gay, lesbian, and even heterosexual
26 students. Finally, the program also provides for school-based family counseling
27 for gay and lesbian students, or referrals for these services. The authors used
28 cluster sampling to select schools from the four regions of Massachusetts to
29 determine if implementing any of the SSP recommendations is evoking positive
30 change. The sample included 1,646 students, 6.9% of which identified as gay,
31 lesbian, bisexual, or questioning. In schools with GSAs, half of the students
32 knew staff members who were supportive of gay, lesbian, or bisexual students,
33 compared to only 36.9% of schools without GSAs. GSA formed schools cut
34 down on gay and lesbian slurs, according to the students, and they have seen

1 an increase in positive, supportive comments about sexual minority youth from
2 teachers. Schools with all three SSP recommendations adopted (a GSA, training
3 for staff, and a definitive policy) had a higher sexual diversity climate. The
4 authors define this as “the quality of the internal environment of the school
5 experienced by students regarding the level of safety, tolerance, and
6 atmosphere of respect for sexual minority individuals” (p. 62). Even students in
7 schools where only one recommendation is in use still felt safer in school and
8 felt the environment was less sexually prejudiced. Overall, students reported
9 differences in attitudes and also differences in their own and others behaviors.
10 Although important, the study is limited in several ways. There is an
11 association of positive change between the recommendations and sexual
12 diversity climate, but there is no way to account for all the other variables that
13 can affect school climate. Therefore, the cause of the positive climate is not
14 certain. It is also not a longitudinal study, so information on each school’s
15 sexual diversity climate before the SSP recommendations are unavailable for
16 comparison. In addition, the study included and targeted members of GSAs
17 who may be more aware of the sexual diversity climate than the general
18 student population.