

Shift to Culturally Responsive Learning Explorations

The shift to culturally responsive curriculum design and assessment is an active process, and not simply a matter of re-writing a question. It's an approach and lens through which the teacher would set up the learning experience as an authentic exploration, scaffolded to guide students so that they feel confident with the task.

The samples below show a question or task that a teacher has re-written with a culturally responsive lens. For some of the samples, the first question may still be a valuable step in the development of the concept, but not the end point. Please see the samples below and engage in table talk with your department members.

Consider a project, assignment, task, or question that you engage your students in every year. How can you rewrite it with a culturally responsive lens? How can you design the task to support your students in understanding the concepts and then applying them?

ELA 10

Non-Culturally Responsive ELA 10 Assessment Task/Question: Before:

"Write a persuasive essay arguing for or against the banning of a classic novel. Use evidence from the text to support your claims."

Culturally Responsive ELA 10 Assessment Task/Question: After:

"Choose a contemporary novel that explores themes of cultural diversity and social justice. Discuss the significance of the novel in today's diverse society in a mode of your choice (please discuss your presentation idea with me in advance). Draw connections between the characters' experiences and real-world issues and consider how the novel amplifies underrepresented voices."

Diverse Literature: The revised question shifts the focus from a classic novel, which may not reflect the diverse experiences of all students, to a contemporary novel that explores themes of cultural diversity and social justice. This inclusion allows students to engage with literature that is more relevant and reflective of their own experiences and those of others in a diverse society.

Social Relevance: The question prompts students to reflect on the significance of the chosen novel in today's diverse society. It encourages critical thinking and invites students to explore the connections between the characters' experiences and real-world issues, fostering an understanding of social justice and cultural awareness.

Amplifying Underrepresented Voices: By emphasizing the importance of underrepresented voices in literature, the question promotes inclusivity and equity. It encourages students to consider how the chosen novel provides a platform for marginalized voices, allowing for a broader exploration of diverse cultural identities and perspectives.

The culturally responsive lens in the revised question acknowledges the diversity of students' cultural backgrounds and experiences. It invites them to engage with literature that is inclusive, relevant, and

reflective of the complexities of a diverse society. By amplifying underrepresented voices, the question promotes cultural responsiveness, critical thinking, and empathy in the ELA 10 curriculum.

Environmental Science 12

Non-Culturally Responsive Science 12 Assessment Task/Question: Before:

"Design an experiment to test the effects of a certain fertilizer on plant growth. Record your observations and analyze the data to draw conclusions."

Culturally Responsive Science 10 Assessment Task/Question: After:

"Investigate the traditional agricultural practices of a specific cultural community in your local region. Design an experiment that explores the effectiveness of integrating traditional farming techniques with modern sustainable practices. Record your observations, analyze the data, and reflect on the cultural and environmental significance of your findings."

Explanation of Cultural Responsiveness:

Cultural Context: The revised question acknowledges and values the diverse cultural communities in the local region. It prompts students to explore and understand the traditional agricultural practices of a specific cultural community, fostering an appreciation for cultural diversity.

Integration of Traditional Knowledge: By incorporating traditional farming techniques into the experiment, the question promotes the recognition and inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge systems. It provides an opportunity for students to learn from and respect traditional practices, fostering cultural responsiveness.

Sustainability and Environmental Awareness: The question encourages students to consider the environmental impact of different farming practices. It promotes critical thinking and reflection on the cultural and environmental significance of integrating traditional and sustainable farming methods.

The culturally responsive lens in the revised question ensures that students engage with scientific concepts in a way that is respectful of diverse cultural practices and perspectives. It fosters cultural responsiveness, environmental awareness, and a deeper understanding of the interplay between science and culture in the Science 10 curriculum.

Social Studies

Before: "Students research the fur trade in British North America (Canada). Students determine the top three positive outcomes of the fur trade and post their thoughts on a discussion forum."

The before question focuses on the fur trade in British North America, specifically Canada, without explicitly addressing the cultural context or perspectives of Indigenous peoples involved in the fur trade. It lacks cultural responsiveness and fails to acknowledge the historical experiences and impacts on Indigenous communities.

After: "Students explore what role culture and ethnicity played in colonialism, specifically when the fur traders interacted with Indigenous peoples of British North America (Canada)? Can you connect this to how colonialism has impacted other areas of the world?"

The after question, on the other hand, takes a more culturally responsive approach by addressing the role of culture and ethnicity in colonialism, specifically within the context of the fur traders' interactions with Indigenous peoples in British North America. It invites students to explore the cultural dynamics and power imbalances inherent in colonial relationships.

Explanation of Cultural Reference

The cultural reference in the after question highlights the significance of culture and ethnicity in colonial interactions. It acknowledges the historical experiences and perspectives of Indigenous peoples, who were impacted by the fur trade and colonization. By recognizing the role of culture and ethnicity, the question prompts students to critically analyze the complexities of colonialism and its effects on different cultures and regions.

Additionally, the question connects the impacts of colonialism in British North America to other areas of the world. It encourages students to draw connections between historical events and the global legacy of colonialism, fostering an understanding of how colonialism has shaped societies and cultures beyond a single geographical context.

Overall, the after question demonstrates cultural responsiveness by incorporating cultural references and encouraging critical thinking about the interplay between culture, colonialism, and their broader impacts on the world.

PHE 11

Non-Culturally Responsive PHE 11 Assessment Task/Question: Before:

"Design a fitness program tailored to individual goals, focusing on cardio, strength, and flexibility exercises while applying safety practices in different types of fitness activities."

Culturally Responsive PHE 11 Assessment Task/Question: After:

"Explore diverse cultural practices and physical activities from different communities within British Columbia. Choose a cultural physical activity that interests you and create a fitness program that incorporates elements of that activity, considering cardio, strength, and flexibility exercises. Demonstrate your activity considering the concepts of safety, fair play, and leadership. For extension, reflect on the cultural significance of the activity and its contributions to holistic well-being."

Explanation of Cultural Responsiveness:

Cultural Exploration: The revised question expands beyond a generic fitness program to include diverse cultural practices and physical activities from different communities within British Columbia. It acknowledges and values the diverse movement traditions and physical activities within the local cultural context.

Cultural Significance: By incorporating cultural physical activities, the question promotes cultural responsiveness and encourages students to reflect on the cultural significance of the chosen activity. It acknowledges that physical activities can hold deeper cultural meanings, contribute to community identity, and provide holistic well-being benefits.

Inclusive Representation: The question recognizes the importance of representing diverse cultures and communities within British Columbia. It encourages students to explore physical activities from different cultural backgrounds, fostering inclusivity and appreciation for diverse movement traditions.

Holistic Well-being: By considering cardio, strength, and flexibility exercises within the fitness program, the question promotes a holistic approach to well-being. It acknowledges that different cultural physical activities may encompass various aspects of fitness and contribute to overall health and wellness.

The culturally responsive lens in the revised question ensures that students engage with Physical and Health Education content in a way that is inclusive, culturally relevant, and promotes an appreciation for diverse movement traditions and cultural practices. It fosters cultural responsiveness, physical literacy, and a broader understanding of the relationship between culture, physical activity, and well-being in the PHE 11 curriculum.

ADST 8

Non-Culturally Responsive ADST 8 Assessment Task/Question: Before:

"Design a poster promoting a new technological gadget that would be popular among your peers."

Culturally Responsive ADST 8 Assessment Task/Question: After:

"Investigate and design a sustainable solution that addresses a community challenge or issue in your local area. Consider the diverse cultural perspectives and needs of the community members in your design process. Create a multimedia presentation to showcase your solution and its potential positive impact on the community."

Explanation of Cultural Responsiveness:

Community Context: The revised question shifts the focus from a generic technological gadget to a sustainable solution that addresses a community challenge or issue in the local area. It acknowledges the importance of considering the specific needs, cultural perspectives, and diverse experiences of the community members.

Cultural Perspectives: By incorporating cultural perspectives and needs, the question promotes cultural responsiveness and encourages students to think critically about how their designs can be inclusive and respectful of diverse cultures within their community.

Sustainable Design: The question encourages students to consider sustainability in their design process, emphasizing the importance of creating solutions that are environmentally responsible and have long-term positive impacts on the community.

Community Impact: The question prompts students to reflect on the potential positive impact of their solution on the community. It encourages them to think beyond individual preferences and consider how their designs can contribute to the well-being and cultural vibrancy of the community as a whole.

The culturally responsive lens in the revised question ensures that students engage with ADST content in a way that is inclusive, community-oriented, and socially responsible. It fosters cultural awareness, critical

thinking, and a broader understanding of the relationship between technology, culture, and community needs in the ADST 8 curriculum.

Math 8

Non-Culturally Responsive ADST 8 Assessment Task/Question: Before:

Is the mean or the median a better description of a data set? When is it appropriate to use a measure of central tendency?

Culturally Responsive ADST 8 Assessment Task/Question: After:

Part 1: Use the information in the [2021 Census Profile for Vancouver, BC](#) to explore the income levels of individuals and families living in the city of Vancouver in 2020. Why is there a difference between the average and the median incomes? Suggest some factors that could cause these differences.

Highlights of 2021 Census Households, Families, and Income:

· *Family households, including couples with and without children and multigenerational households, continue to make up the majority of households in Vancouver (53%), while one-person households were 39%. Roommate households and couples without children were the fastest-growing household type between 2016 and 2021.*

· *Income in Vancouver increased much faster than inflation, both before and during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Income support programs reduced inequity and decreased low-income rates in 2020, but many of these programs have ended.*

· *Compared to other cities, Vancouver has a high incidence of low-income and an inequitable income distribution. Population and household growth are skewed toward higher incomes, while many people in Vancouver continue to experience very low incomes, poverty, and homelessness*

Source: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2022-08-05-city-of-vancouver-2021-census-household-families-and-income.pdf>

Part 2: Write a letter to Statistics Canada explaining why it is important that this information be disaggregated by race/ethnicity. Include other categories for disaggregation if you wish. Include data and mathematical justifications in your letter.

*Note for students: You may need to do some research on the relationship between ethnicity/race and income before writing your letter.

*Note for teachers: This question could be added to a set of standard questions where students find mean, median and mode OR expanded into a unit project or cross-curricular project with Social Studies. It could also be used as a numeracy task for Social Studies in grades above grade 8.

Explanation of Cultural Responsiveness:

1. **Contextualization:** The question incorporates specific information from the 2021 Census Profile for Vancouver, BC. By referencing the local context, it makes the topic more relatable and relevant to the students. It also acknowledges the diversity of the population in Vancouver, which is important for fostering inclusivity and cultural responsiveness.
2. **Cultural Considerations:** The question acknowledges the disparities in income levels and income distribution in Vancouver, highlighting the existence of low-income populations, poverty, and homelessness. This brings attention to social and economic inequalities that can be influenced by various cultural and systemic factors.
3. **Intersectionality:** The question suggests the importance of disaggregating data by race/ethnicity. By recognizing that different racial and ethnic groups may have unique experiences and challenges related to income, it encourages students to consider the intersection of race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. This promotes a deeper understanding of social dynamics and the impact of multiple identities on individuals' experiences.
4. **Critical Thinking and Analysis:** Part 2 of the question asks students to write a letter to Statistics Canada explaining the significance of disaggregating data by race/ethnicity. This requires students to conduct research, analyze the relationship between ethnicity/race and income, and provide mathematical justifications for their arguments. This higher-order thinking task engages students in critical analysis, problem-solving, and the application of mathematical concepts to real-world scenarios.