

Culturally responsive curriculum helps students develop understanding of people from a variety of cultures and gives students the skills to be able to interact and take action within varied cultural contexts. The table below outlines four stages of development of culturally responsive curriculum. This information was drawn directly from the Mississippi Cultural Responsibility Matrix, and is based on the work of Banks and McGee-Banks.

<p>Contributions</p>	<p>The curriculum structure, goals and characteristics reflect mainstream constructions of knowledge. Ethnic holidays and themes are incorporated into the curriculum to acknowledge ethnic holidays and celebrations. Books, bulletin boards, videos and other teaching materials are chosen because they portray people from multiple cultural, racial, ethnic, religious and language groups in a variety of roles interacting across stereotypical lines.</p>
<p>Diversity Additive</p>	<p>Teachers consistently reference the multicultural nature of their teaching tools, noting the contributions and accomplishments of distinguished individuals from a variety of cultural, racial, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.</p> <p>In addition to acknowledging heroes and holidays, concepts, themes, authors, and perspectives from a variety of ethnic and cultural groups are added to the curriculum without changing its basic structure and assumption. For example, in this approach, the Westward Expansion curricula is taught from the perspective of the westward movement of hunters, trappers, pioneers and the advent of the industrial age and its impact on harnessing the resources of the western U.S. Concepts and themes that explore the impact of expansion on American Indians is a substantial portion of the curriculum but the focus is on the movement west.</p>
<p>Transformational</p>	<p>Teachers consistently provide opportunities for their students to work together across cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, language and ability lines. Academic and social opportunities are created throughout the course of each academic year so that students form friendships and mutually supportive connections across cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, and ability groups. The curriculum, including concepts issues, themes and problems is taught from several ethnic and cultural perspectives and points of view. Texts and other teaching materials offer multiple perspectives and are told from multiple perspectives.</p> <p>Rather than study the Western Expansion, students explore the history of the West during the 19th century and its impact and outcomes on multiple groups. The emphasis is on the complexities of diverse cultures and the role of government and other institutions in achieving specific outcomes. Classroom practices are congruent with the</p>

	<p>curriculum so that, regardless of the content area, the curricula create opportunities to examine the influence of multiple perspectives and knowledge generation on the content area.</p>
<p>Social Action</p>	<p>Teachers enact curricula that explore multiple perspectives, ideas, and outcomes. Students can develop critical lenses that require analysis, synthesis and perspective taking within each content area. Teachers assess student outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills, and critical perspectives as well as social advocacy.</p> <p>Teachers infuse their curriculum with opportunities for students to explore questions of fairness and equity as they relate to classroom practices such as grouping, rule setting, consequences for conduct, and grading. The teacher mediates these discussions by encouraging students to take the perspective of others. The curricula include learning experiences and assignments that encourage students to investigate the status quo and to generate actions that combat or improve equity within the school or local community.</p>

(see page 3 for a printable/editable note catcher)

A Tool for Self-Assessment & Design

Based on the descriptors above, take some time to consider elements of your own curriculum. The note catcher below can hold your thinking. Once complete, it can help you consider strategic ways that you can continue to grow the cultural responsiveness of your curriculum.

	Contributions	Diversity Additive	Transformational	Social Action
Topics/Issues				
Activities				
Language				
People Studied				
Other				