

CULTURAL LITERACY

Definition:

Culturally literacy is the ability to understand and appreciate the similarities and differences in the customs, values, and beliefs of one's own culture the cultures of others.

Quote:

"No culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive."

-Mahatma Gandhi as cited on <http://www.chesco.com/~artman/gandhi.html> Accessed 11-26-01.

[Image]

Importance in the Digital Age:

As citizens of one of the most diverse nations in the world, it has been particularly important that Americans be sensitive to the role that culture plays in the behaviors, beliefs, and values of themselves and others. The advent of new communications technology only makes this sensitivity more imperative. Within the virtual worlds of e-mail, chat rooms, virtual classrooms, and even multi-player gaming environments, individuals from cultures and societies around the globe are interacting with a frequency that was unimaginable even a decade ago.

In order to work cooperatively with individuals from vastly different backgrounds, students must appreciate and understand the beliefs and values that drive them. These qualities must reflect a notion of cultural literacy that is broader than it has been in the past: first, it must be sensitive to the many sub-cultures that exist within the larger American society; second, it must include newly developing technological cultures such as virtual workspaces, and chat-room environments; and third, it must recognize the evolutionary nature of culture and the impact that technology had had – and will continue to have – on cultures worldwide.

Understanding other cultures has two notable benefits: 1) it multiplies our access to practices, ideas, and people that can make positive contributions to our own society; and 2) it helps us understand ourselves more deeply. By understanding a range of alternatives, we become aware of our own implicit beliefs – beliefs so deeply imbedded that we routinely take them for granted (Stigler, Gallimore and Hiebert, 2000).

Profile of a Culturally Literate Student:

Culturally literate students are knowledgeable and appreciative of the way that culture and history – their own as well as those of others – impact behaviors, beliefs, and relationships in a multicultural world. Such students:

- understand that culture impacts their behavior and beliefs, and the behavior and beliefs of others.
- are aware of specific cultural beliefs, values, and sensibilities that might affect the way that they and others think or behave.

- appreciate and accept diverse beliefs, appearances, and lifestyles.
- are aware that historical knowledge is constructed, and is therefore shaped by personal, political, and social forces.
- know the history of both mainstream and non-mainstream American cultures, and understand that these histories have an impact today.
- are able to take the perspective of non-mainstream groups when learning about historical events.
- know about major historical events of other nations and understands that these events impact behaviors, beliefs, as well as relationships with others.
- are aware of the similarities between groups of different cultural backgrounds and is acceptant of differences between them.
- understand the dangers of stereotyping and other biases; are aware of and sensitive to issues of racism and prejudice.
- are bilingual or multilingual, or working towards these proficiencies.
- can communicate, interact, and work positively with individuals from other cultural groups.
- understand how the use of technology and the Internet impacts worldviews.
- use technology in order to communicate with individuals and access resources from other cultures.
- are familiar with existing cultural norms of new technology environments (instant messaging, virtual workspaces, e-mail), and are able to interact successfully in such environments.

Continuum of Progress:

Indicator	Novice	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
<i>Awareness of culture</i>	Student is largely ignorant of specific value systems that contribute to the way that he / she and others behave, OR he/she possesses negative, stereotyped beliefs about different cultural groups.	Student is aware that culture impacts his / her own behavior and the behavior of others; however, understanding of specific beliefs and value systems is largely superficial or incomplete.	Student possesses some knowledge of specific beliefs, values, and sensibilities that contribute to the way that he / she and others behave.	Student is highly knowledgeable about specific cultural beliefs, values, and sensibilities that might affect the way that he / she and others think or behave.
<i>Awareness of history and its impact</i>	Student is largely unknowledgeable about the history of his own and others' cultures, and he/she shows no interest in learning more.	Student possesses basic knowledge about history, mostly focused on mainstream American cultures. He / she is largely unaware of how history has shaped relationships among diverse groups.	Student knows some history of mainstream and non-mainstream American cultures, and of other nations; he / she understands that these histories impact relationships today, but this understanding is unsophisticated.	Student has substantial knowledge of history of both mainstream and non-mainstream American cultures, and the history of other nations. He / she has a sophisticated understanding of how these histories have impacted relationships among groups.
<i>Perspective</i>	Student does not	Student requires	Student realizes that	Student realizes

<i>taking - history</i>	realize that knowledge of history is socially and politically constructed; when learning about history, does not independently assume the perspective of non-mainstream groups.	substantial assistance to recognize that knowledge of history is socially constructed, and to assume the perspective of non-mainstream groups when learning history.	history is socially constructed. With minimal guidance, he / she is able to take the perspective of non-mainstream groups when learning about historical events.	that history is socially and politically constructed, and has sufficient knowledge to spontaneously take the perspective of non-mainstream groups when learning history.
<i>Stereotyping and bias</i>	Student does not understand that stereotyping and other biases are not acceptable, and tends to engage in these behaviors. Student internalizes implicit, biased messages about other cultural groups (e.g., in media).	At a general level, student understands that stereotyping and other biases are not acceptable; however, he/she is not sensitive to the impact of prejudice or to biased messages about other cultural groups (e.g., in media).	Student understands the dangers of stereotyping and other biases; he/she is aware of and sensitive to issues of racism and prejudice, and sometimes recognizes biased messages about other cultural groups (e.g., in media).	Student understands the dangers of stereotyping and other biases, is sensitive to issues of racism and prejudice, and highly cognizant of biased messages about other cultural groups (e.g., within media).
<i>Tolerance</i>	Student fails to recognize similarities between his/her own culture and other cultures; he/she judges differences in behavior or lifestyle negatively, and does not associate with individuals from different cultural groups.	With a few exceptions, student fails to recognize similarities between his/her own culture and other cultures. Although not negative about differences in behavior or lifestyle, student only occasionally associates with individuals from different cultures.	With guidance, student is cognizant of similarities between his/her own culture and other cultures. He/she appreciates and accepts individuals with diverse beliefs, appearances, and lifestyles.	Student understands that individuals from diverse cultures share some fundamental beliefs; he/she appreciates and accepts diversity, and seeks opportunities to learn about and interact with different cultures.
<i>Language proficiency</i>	Student is not interested in learning other languages. Efforts made towards these skills are superficial and motivated almost entirely by course	Student is willing to learn another language, but does not appreciate the value of this skill. Although student makes a genuine attempt to learn a	Student understands the value of being multilingual, is at or working towards this proficiency, and is intrinsically motivated to acquire	Student understands the value of being multilingual, is at or working towards this proficiency, and is intrinsically motivated to learn

	requirements.	new language, these efforts are motivated by course requirements.	new languages.	not only a new language, but also about the culture from which the language is derived.
<i>Interactions with individuals from different cultures</i>	Student communicates, interacts, or works poorly with individuals from other cultural groups.	Under supervision, student can generally communicate, interact, and work positively with individuals from other cultural groups.	Student usually communicates, interacts, and works positively with individuals from other cultural groups.	Student almost always communicates, interacts, and works positively with individuals from other cultural groups; he/she seeks opportunities to learn from diverse perspectives.
<i>Use of resources from different cultures</i>	Student avoids using technology to gain access to individuals or resources from other cultures.	With substantial guidance, student is willing to use technology to gain access to individuals or resources from other cultures; however, these efforts are generally motivated by course requirements.	Student sometimes uses technology to gain access to individuals or resources from other cultures; these efforts are sometimes self-initiated and intrinsically motivated.	Student regularly uses technology to gain access to individuals or resources from other cultures; these efforts are generally motivated by interest and exceed course requirements.
<i>Awareness of the way that technology influences worldviews</i>	Student does not understand that technology impacts his/her own and others' worldviews.	Student understands that technology allows access to other cultures, but does not understand the impact of this access on worldviews or societies.	Student has some understanding of the way technology impacts his/her own and others' worldviews.	Student has an insightful understanding of the way technology impacts his/her own and others' worldviews (e.g., by allowing individuals to access pop culture, news, ideas, from other societies).
<i>Culture of technological environments</i>	Student has no knowledge about the culture of technological environments (e.g., online chats, instant	Student has some basic knowledge about the culture of technological environments (e.g., online chats,	Student is reasonably fluent in the culture of technological environments (e.g., online chats, instant	Student has substantial and sophisticated knowledge about the culture of technological

	messaging, MOOs, MUDs), and does not participate in these forums.	instant messaging, MOOs, MUDs), and participates minimally in these forums.	messaging, MOOs, MUDs), and can participate frequently in these forums.	environments (e.g., online chats, instant messaging, MOOs, MUDs), and can participate fully in these forums.
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GLOBAL AWARENESS

Definition:

Global awareness is the recognition and understanding of interrelationships among international organizations, nation states, public and private economic entities, socio-cultural groups, and individuals across the globe.

Quote:

“... the world's corporate and political leadership is undertaking a restructuring of global politics and economics that may prove as historically significant as any event since the Industrial Revolution. This restructuring is happening at tremendous speed...”

-International Forum on Globalization (<http://www.ifg.org/>) Accessed 11-27-01

[Image]

Importance in the Digital Age:

According to Thomas Friedman, author of the *Lexus and the Olive Tree*, globalization has replaced the Cold War in defining international relationships. Access to telecommunications and technology has caused shifts in power from nation states to multinational corporations, public and private economic entities, socio-cultural groups, and even individuals.

Today, international commerce accounts for nearly a quarter of the American economy. A third of recent U.S. economic growth and a quarter of new job creation are due to exports. The world marketplace is even more important to particular sectors of the economy. One out of every two acres of wheat grown by American farmers is exported. More than two-fifths of the production of the domestic computer industry – including computer systems, hardware, and peripherals – is exported, and nearly three-fifths of the computer equipment Americans rely on is imported (Citizen's Guide to U.S. Foreign Policy, 2000, pgs. 7-16).

But as U.N. Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, reminds us: “Unless the basic principles of equity and liberty are defended in the political arena and advanced as critical conditions for economic growth,” the rewards reaped from a global economy will be limited (speech at Harvard University, September 17th, 1998). Indeed, informed citizens worldwide are beginning to articulate wider principles, policies, and politics of “global

awareness.” Central to these efforts is the belief that trade, investment, and technology are not ends in themselves; they are tools for promoting the ideals of equality, democracy, good jobs, a clean environment, and healthy communities.

The fair treatment of workers, the possible depletion of environmental resources, higher international health and safety standards, consumer protections, and issues of overpopulation, illiteracy, poverty, racism, hunger, aging, justice, immigration transcend national boundaries; they have become a growing part of our 21st century consciousness. Multinational flows of ideas, information, capital, labor, and even identity are concerns of the present that are not likely to diminish in an increasingly interconnected global future.

Communications technology, of course, is a tremendously important component of global awareness; the use of such technologies invariably informs our response to issues of globalization. According to John Naisbitt, “With the activities of the world being replayed for us in our living rooms each night, none of us can feign ignorance about affronts to society’s ethical standards. We have all become our brother’s keepers – at least in this sense. Communications technology has empowered individuals and communities through instant access to information of all kinds. With that access comes responsibility. Are we up to the task?” (Global Paradox, 1994, p.193).

Profile of a Globally Aware Student:

Globally aware students consider themselves global citizens. As such they use digital-age technologies to learn, think, participate in, and communicate about global issues. Globally aware students:

- are aware of how technology links nations and individuals, as well as how it enables the global economy.
- understand the interconnectedness of the global economy.
- are aware of how the global economy impacts political decision-making – including the formal and informal pacts nations enter into.
- are aware of the social, environmental, and micro-economic impacts of global decisions made by both national and international (e.g. the U.N., the I.M.F.) organizations.
- understand how cultural differences (e.g. beliefs, traditions, religions) impact personal and national participation at the global level.
- understand the impact of ideology and culture on national decisions about access to and use of technology.
- participate in the global society through interactions with persons in another country or culture.

Continuum of Progress:

Indicator	Novice	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
<i>Awareness of technology's impact on interconnections between nations/ individuals, global economy</i>	Student is unaware of the role that technology plays in enabling a global economy. He/she knows at a very superficial level that technology links individuals from different nations.	Student is aware that technology plays an important role in linking nations/individuals and in enabling the global economy. However, this knowledge is general, limited (e.g., student may define technology too narrowly), or includes significant misconceptions.	Student has some understanding of the ways in which technology has been an essential part of the global economy. He/she understands some of the effects technology has had in linking nations /individuals and enabling exchange of goods, services, and information.	Student understands - beyond grade-level expectations -how technology links nations/individuals , how it enables the global economy, and how it changes the nature of the resources (e.g. information vs. goods) that can be traded.
<i>Understanding of the interconnectedness of the global economy</i>	Student does not understand that economies of nations impact one another.	Student is aware that national economies impact one another, but this knowledge is general and sparse.	Student is aware that economic conditions of one nation can impact those of other nations, but he/she is not aware of political/social/ environmental issues raised by economic interdependence.	Student understands – beyond grade-level expectations – how economies impact each other; he/she can think critically about political/ social/ environmental issues raised by economic interdependence.
<i>Understanding of the impact of global economy on political decision-making</i>	Student is unaware of the impact of economic considerations on political decision-making. He/she may be largely unaware of political events and international economic conditions.	Student is generally aware that political decisions are shaped by economic considerations; however, he/she has little knowledge of specific considerations and national/ international policies.	Student is aware of some of the economic considerations that drive political decisions. However, this knowledge is somewhat limited or tends to cast issues in black and white terms.	Student possesses knowledge – beyond grade level expectations – of economic considerations that drive specific national policies and decisions. He/she can critically evaluate the gains and losses that result from these policies.
<i>Understanding the impact of decisions made</i>	Student has no knowledge of the impacts of	Student understands very generally that	Student understands how some specific	Student has an excellent understanding of

<i>by national, international organizations on societies, environment, economies</i>	decisions made by national/international organizations. He/she has little knowledge of these organizations or their functions.	national and international organizations impact societal, environmental, and micro-economic conditions, but is unaware of specific policies/decisions that impact his/her world.	decisions made by national/international organization impact many facets of his/her day-to-day world; however, knowledge is limited or tends to cast issues in black and white.	the way specific decisions made by national/international organizations impact his/her day-to-day world. He/she is able to evaluate these issues critically and thoroughly.
<i>Understanding of the impact of culture on political relationships</i>	Student is unaware of the ways in which culture impacts national/personal political decision-making.	Student understands that culture impacts national/personal political decision-making, but his/her view tends to cast these issues in black and white. Knowledge is either sparse or includes significant misconceptions.	Student understands some specific ways in which culture impacts national/personal political decision-making.	Student has an excellent understanding of the ways in which culture impacts decision-making of specific nations/groups. This understanding is fair and takes into account multiple cultural perspectives.
<i>Understanding of the impact of ideology, culture on decisions related to technology and access</i>	Student is unaware of differences in societies' access to technology and information; he/she is unaware that political ideologies and culture impact individuals' access to these resources.	Student understands at a general level that nations differ in the degree to which they allow citizens access to technology/information. However, this knowledge is sparse.	Student understands some of the ideological and cultural issues that drive national decisions about access to technology and information.	Student has specific and well-developed knowledge of ways in which access to technology/information is impacted by culture and political ideology. He/she is able to transfer this knowledge when learning about similar issues with which he/she is unfamiliar.
<i>Participation in the global society</i>	In many cases it has not occurred to the student that persons in other nations directly influence his/her life socially,	The student has a growing awareness of the global nature of the world. He/she is interested in the study of international policy	The student recognizes his/her own role as an individual in a global society. As such he/she - when guided -participates	The student is aware of how his/her actions and the actions of his/her country exert influence globally. He/she

	politically, and economically.	and affairs—but action is limited to learning and reflection.	locally through economic, political, or social means (e.g., donations to relief efforts, contributions to international social, health, or environmental concerns).	seeks to understand the global impact of personal actions (e.g., consumerism based on company policies, consumption of energy, or recycling), and acts accordingly.
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