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Diverse Learners

Before I can meet the needs of the various students I will have in my classroom, and any high standards that are presented, I must work with the families and parents to get a good understanding of each type of student that is in my classroom. One way I will work with the families of these students is being available to them for any assistance. Whether that is through email, phone, or one-on-one meetings, being able to have the communication with the parents or families will help understand the students best since their parents are the ones who know the students best. I can get information from the parents about the student's home life, home behavior, interests, and/or hobbies. Students can often be shy or intimidated, especially when they are in a cultural setting they are not used to so they may not give me sufficient answers if I asked them those type of questions. Going to the parents will give me reinforcement to the students answers and any additional information. Also, by being in communication with the parents or families, I can let them know if the student is struggling with anything and keep them up to date with the student's progress. Additionally, to be able to best understand each student, I will do some basic research about their culture, religion, or socioeconomic status via a web search. This will give me some background knowledge to a student so I know how to approach each student individually to meet their needs.

In order to understand and meet the student's needs, who come from a diverse background, I will apply any information about a student's culture in a few different ways. The ways I will meet these standards is through my lessons, through accommodations, and through classroom activities. With information about a student's culture I will construct my lessons so they are widely understandable. For example, a math word problem containing items that are

only common in a German cultured background, may not be very receivable from a student who comes from a Hispanic background and does not know what a particular item is, therefor not understanding the problem. I will then instead use more widely known objects or items such as rocks or sticks, something that is common in every culture. Or, I will create two or three examples using objects or items from different cultures to give the students a good understanding what is being taught. Additionally, for a student who comes from a lower socioeconomic background I will use information or scenarios they are familiar with. For example, during the creating and solving equations topic in an algebra class, when doing word problem examples, I would not use high end or luxurious items in the problems. I would just use everyday normal items they would be familiar with, like basic food or household items.

Furthermore, I will apply my information through accommodations. Since a student may not be as quick to understand the language and lingo of the dominate culture in the classroom, implementing accommodations will allow the student to be able to learn the material or content at a slower pace which allows them not to fall behind, and it allows them to learn the same thing as the other students without that student feeling singled out or left out. Also, by having knowledge of a student's family culture, I can explain in terms they best understand, to that student, what certain phrases or lingo words mean. A strength I have that will allow me to do this effectively is patience. I know that for a lot of students, they will be in a classroom where it is not their primary culture, or the language is not their first language. It will take patience working with students, and patience and accommodating the lesson or homework that best suites them and best sets them up for success.

Additionally, through classroom activities I can apply my information of the different cultural backgrounds to the classroom. With classroom activities, I will be able to get all the

students to be aware of the different traditions and beliefs of many different cultures. To implement this strategy, I feel my strength of a strong work ethic and perseverance will play a strong role. This strategy will get the students to better understand why the students of different cultural backgrounds in the class may act “differently” from the rest or do things a different way. When the other students understand why the culturally different students do things certain ways and that in those culturally different student’s native home, and that they would be looked at as different and strange, it will allow the students to better connect with each other. And, in order for this to happen, I will have to continually work at finding common ground where they can relate and to not stop trying even when the students are struggling. When the students can connect with each other all the same, regardless of cultural background, it will make the classroom run smoother and allow for more collaboration between students. To get the students to connect with their peers and understand their peers, having them work together will best help this. So, having a white student work with an ELL student or a student from a different culture will allow the students to get know each other so they can each understand the other’s culture. Additionally, sometimes a student having a topic explained or taught to them by another student is easier because it is easier for peers to connect or find common ground among each other.

On another note, students from a lower socioeconomic class may not look at school as fun because their parents or whoever is the head of household may not have gone very far in their education and does not value education very much. This could then in result would influence the student to think school is not important and they would come to school with a negative attitude towards school. My goal would be to get the students from low socioeconomic classes to view the lessons as fun and not think of it as just school. With fun classroom activities that I can relate to the relevant topics in the student’s life or pop culture, it will grab that

student's attention more and help them think that they are not in the classroom "just learning math". When I can relate my lessons to things that these students are familiar with or interested in, they will start off with a more positive attitude, which in return will lead to them giving more of their attention effort. With all of that, it should result in the student's scores increasing, and their understanding of material increasing.