

Tenth Edition

Multicultural Education *in a* Pluralistic Society



Donna M. Gollnick



Philip C. Chinn



T E N T H E D I T I O N

Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society

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This book is dedicated to

*Dr. Haywood Wyche and Michele Clarke,
my best friends and my inspiration*

DMG

*Dr. Frances Kuwabara Chinn and Dylan Philip Chinn-Gonzalez,
my best friend and my newest grandchild*

PCC

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Preface

A decade from now, we may look back at the period around 2015 as a turning point in addressing racism in the United States. As this book went to print, in the summer of 2015, marchers from diverse racial, ethnic, and economic groups across the country were chanting “Black Lives Matter” after nine African Americans had been murdered in the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, and a number of unarmed African American youth and men had been killed by police over the previous year. Calls for the removal of the Confederate flag as a symbol of hate from public places came from leaders across political parties and racial groups. Times will tell whether these events have led to a public outcry by people of all races that will change policies and practices that are racist and discriminate against people of color.

The tenth edition of *Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society* examines issues of race, diversity and equity in society, how they are reflected in schools, and their impact on students and teachers. In order to explore these issues, the book introduces future teachers to the different cultural groups to which we and our students belong and the importance of building on the cultures and experiences of students to help them learn at high levels.

What Is New in the Tenth Edition?

NEW! The tenth edition is available as an enhanced Pearson e-text* with the following features:

- **Video Margin Notes:** Our new digital format allows us to illustrate issues and introduce readers to cultural groups in ways that were unimaginable in the past. Each chapter includes two to five videos to allow readers to listen to experts, watch footage of diverse classrooms, and listen to and watch effective teachers talk about and practice strategies that promote multicultural education.
- **Chapter Quizzes:** Quiz questions align with learning outcomes and appear as a link at the end of each chapter in the e-text*. Using multiple-choice questions, the quizzes allow readers to test their knowledge of the concepts, research, strategies, and practices discussed in each section.

NEW! New opening scenarios in Chapters 1 and 5 introduce issues surrounding language diversity and sexual identity in classrooms.

NEW! Chapters 1, 2, and 11 include new Focus Your Cultural Lens features on the politics of teaching ethnic studies, the use of suspensions in schools, and teaching “Black Lives Matter.”

NEW! New Critical Incidents are introduced on handling a student behavior issue (Chapter 7), verbal attacks on Muslims in a classroom (Chapter 8), and moving from the city to a rural community (Chapter 9).

*These features are only available in the Pearson eText, available exclusively from www.pearsonhighered.com/etextbooks or by ordering the Pearson eText plus Loose-Leaf Version (ISBN 0134054679) or the Pearson eText Access Code Card (ISBN 013405492X).

NEW! With disproportionately large numbers of African American and Latino men incarcerated in the nation's prisons, Chapter 2 on ethnicity and race explores the school to prison pipeline that contributes to many youth entering the juvenile justice system as a result of actions taken in schools.

NEW! Data from the Clinton Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's *No Ceilings, the Full Participation Report* informs a Chapter 4 discussion of the dramatic changes that have improved conditions for girls and women in the world since the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

NEW! The growing interest in dual language immersion programs and the softening in some states of their previous opposition to bilingual education programs are introduced in Chapter 7 on language.

NEW! New sections on global restrictions on religion, the changes introduced by Pope Francis, and Islamic extremists have been added to Chapter 8 on religion along with a discussion of the rise in the number of Americans and Canadians indicating no religious affiliation. The discussion of the interaction between religion and presidential and congressional elections has been expanded in this edition.

NEW! Changing racial and ethnic demographics and significant regional differences related to health and well-being, politics, religion, and education are explored in Chapter 9 on geography.

NEW! The impact of the most technologically advanced group of students to appear in our classrooms is examined in Chapter 10 on age. The chapter now includes a section on the Sandy Hook tragedies and chronicles the problems faced by the gunman who instigated the incident.

UPDATED! Chapters reflect recent events and research that have impacted the topics addressed throughout the book.

UPDATED! All tables, figures, and references reflect the latest data and thinking about the issues explored throughout the book.

Why Study Multicultural Education?

The United States is one of the most multicultural nations in the world. The population includes indigenous peoples—American Indians, Aleuts, Inuit, and Hawaiians—and others who themselves or whose ancestors arrived as immigrants from other countries. Our students bring their unique ethnicities, races, socioeconomic statuses, religions, and native languages to the classroom. They differ in gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and physical and mental abilities. They have come from different parts of the world and have different experiences based on the communities in which they have grown up. As we move further into this century, the population will become increasingly more diverse. Children of color comprised just over half of the school-aged population in 2014, and this percentage will continue to grow over time.

The culture and the society of the United States are dynamic and in a continuous state of change. Understanding the impact of race, class, gender, and other group memberships on our students' lives will make us more effective teachers. Education that is multicultural provides an environment that values diversity and portrays it positively. Students are valued regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, native language, religion, socioeconomic status, or disability. We should have high expectations for all of our students and both encourage and support them in meeting their educational and vocational potential. To deliver multicultural education, we must develop instructional strategies that build on the cultures of our students and their communities. We must make the curriculum authentic and meaningful to students to engage them in learning. Making the curriculum multicultural helps students and teachers think critically about institutional racism, classism, sexism, ablism, ageism, and heterosexism.

About the Tenth Edition

Students in undergraduate, graduate, and in-service courses will find this text helpful in examining social and cultural conditions that impact education. It provides the foundation for understanding diversity and using this knowledge effectively in classrooms and schools to help students learn. Other social services professionals will find it helpful in understanding the complexity of cultural backgrounds and experiences as they work with families and children.

As in previous editions, we approach multicultural education with a broad perspective of the concept. Using culture as the basis for understanding multicultural education, we discuss the cultural groups to which we belong and the impact those group memberships have on us and how we are treated in society and in schools.

We also emphasize the importance of an equitable education for all students. Educators should both be aware of and confront racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, and discrimination based on abilities, age, religion, and geography. Schools can eradicate discrimination in their own policies and practices if educators are willing to confront and eliminate their own racism, sexism, and other biases. To rid our schools of such practices takes a committed and strong faculty. The tenth edition helps readers develop the habit of self-reflection that will help them become more effective teachers in classrooms that provide equity for all students.

Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society provides an overview of the different cultural groups to which students belong. The first chapter examines the pervasive influence of culture, the importance of understanding our own and our students' cultural backgrounds and experiences, and the evolution of multicultural education. The next nine chapters examine ethnicity and race, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, exceptionality, language, religion, geography (that is, the places we live), and age. The final chapter contains recommendations for using culturally responsive and social justice pedagogies in the implementation of education that is multicultural. The chapters in this edition have been revised and reorganized to reflect current thinking and research in the area. In particular, the first chapter provides the foundational framework that supports our thinking about multicultural education. The final chapter integrates critical pedagogy with research on teaching effectively. Each chapter opens with a scenario to place the topic in an educational setting.

We have tried to present different perspectives on a number of issues in the most unbiased manner possible. We are not without strong opinions or passion on some of the issues. However, in our effort to be equitable, we attempt to present different perspectives on the issues and allow the reader to make his or her own decisions. There are some issues related to racism, sexism, ableism, and so on, that are so important to the well-being of society that we do provide our positions, which we recognize to be our biases.

Readers should be aware of several caveats related to the language used in this text. Although we realize that the term *American* is commonly used to refer to the U.S. population, we view *American* as including other North and South Americans as well. Therefore, we have tried to limit the use of this term when referring to the United States. Although we have tried to use the terms *black* and *white* sparingly, data about groups often have been categorized by the racial identification, rather than by national origin such as African or European American. In many cases, we were not able to distinguish ethnic identity and have continued to use *black*, *white*, or *persons of color*. We have limited our use of the term *minority* and have focused more on the power relationships that exist between groups. We use *Hispanic* and *Latino* interchangeably to refer to persons with Spanish-speaking heritages who have emigrated from countries as diverse as Mexico, Cuba, Argentina, Puerto Rico, Belize, and Colombia.

Features in the Tenth Edition

Each chapter includes the following features that illustrate how concepts and events play out in a classroom or school.



2 Race and Ethnicity

LEARNING OUTCOMES

As you read this chapter, you should be able to:

- 2.1 Identify patterns of immigration and immigration policy and their impact on the education of children of foreign-born families.
- 2.2 Explain how educational practices support or eliminate ethnic differences among students.
- 2.3 Analyze the impact that the nation's growing racial diversity will have on schools and students.
- 2.4 Describe the impact of the civil rights movement on education.
- 2.5 Evaluate the results of continuing racial and ethnic discrimination on communities and students.
- 2.6 Develop strategies for affirming race and ethnicity in the classroom.

Derise Williams was aware of the racial tension in the high school in which she teaches. At the last faculty meeting, the focus of the discussion was on developing more positive interethnic and interracial relations among students. A committee had been created to identify consultants and other resources to guide teachers in this effort.

Ms. Williams, however, thought that neither she nor her students could wait months to receive a report and recommendations from the committee. She was ready to introduce the civil rights movement in her social studies class. It seemed a perfect time to promote better cross-cultural communications. She decided to introduce this unit with a current event. She asked students to read selected articles and videos of events in Ferguson, Missouri, in the summer and fall of 2014, after Michael Brown had been shot by a police officer.

She soon learned that this topic was not an easy one to handle. African American students expressed their anger at the discriminatory practices in the school and the community. Most of the white students did not believe that there was any discrimination. They did not understand the anger of the African American and Latino students. Ms. Williams thought the class was getting nowhere. In fact, at times the anger on both sides was so intense that she worried a physical fight would erupt. She was frustrated because the class discussions and activities were not helping students understand the reasons for their different perspectives about the same event. She felt she was making no progress at addressing stereotypes and prejudices that students held about each other. She was concerned that students were becoming more polarized in their

beliefs. She wondered whether she could do anything in her class to improve understanding, empathy, and communications across groups.

REFLECTIONS

1. What racial groups are most likely to see themselves represented in the school curriculum?
2. How can a classroom reflect the diversity of its students so that they all feel valued and respected?
3. What were the positive and negative outcomes of the steps taken by Ms. Williams to introduce the civil rights movement?

XXXX Immigration

As people from all over the world joined American Indians in populating this nation, they brought with them cultural experiences from their native countries. Just because individuals have the same national origins, however, does not mean that they have the same history and experiences as other people who have emigrated from the same country. The time of immigration, the places in which groups settled, the reasons for emigrating, their socioeconomic status, and the degree to which their families have been affected by racism and discrimination affect their immigration experiences and acceptance in the United States. You will see these differences in schools as students whose families have been in the United States for several generations do not always warmly welcome new immigrant students.

Most groups have immigrated to the United States voluntarily to seek freedoms not available in their native countries at the time, to escape dismal economic or political conditions, or to join family members already settled in the United States. However, not all people and groups voluntarily immigrate. The ancestors of most African Americans arrived involuntarily on slave ships. Mexicans living in the southwestern part of the country became residents when the United States annexed their lands. The reasons for immigration and the way immigrants were treated after they arrived have had a lasting impact on each group's assimilation patterns and access to society's resources.

A Brief History of Immigration in the United States

The United States was populated by hundreds of American Indian tribes when explorers from other nations arrived on its shores. Early European leaders were convinced that the needed to convert First Americans to Christianity, teach them English, and have them adopt European culture. With the continuing arrival of the European settlers, federal policies led to government takers of the land of the indigenous population, who fought against the privatization and selling of their lands. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 led to the forcible removal of First Americans in the Cherokee, Muscogee, Seminole, Chickasaw, and Choctaw nations from their homes in southeastern states in the Trail of Tears that moved them to reservations in the Oklahoma Territory. As many as 1 in 3 of the First Americans who were removed from their homes died on the way to the western territories. In addition, this separation led to a pattern of isolation and inequity that remains for many First Americans today.

By 1879, children on reservations were being removed from their homes and placed in boarding schools to unlearn their traditional ways and languages of their families. The hair of these children was cut, and they were not allowed to use their native languages. They sometimes attended school part of the day and worked the other part of the day to support the school. A number of reports in the 1920s chronicled the abuse of these children, who were schooled many miles and sometimes many states away from their families. Although the goal

Chapter-Opening Classroom Scenarios

Each chapter opens with a classroom scenario to place the chapter content in an educational setting. Questions at the end of each scenario encourage readers to think about the scenario and reflect on the decisions they would make.

Critical Incidents in Teaching

This feature presents both real-life and hypothetical situations that occur in schools or classrooms, providing readers with the opportunity to examine their feelings, attitudes, and possible actions or reactions to each scenario.

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Impact of Socioeconomic Status on School Events

The middle school in a rural community of 9,000 residents has four school-sponsored dances each year. At the Valentine's Day dance, a coat-and-tie affair, six eighth-grade boys showed up in rented tuxedos. They had planned this together, and their parents, who were among the more affluent in the community, thought it would be "cute" and paid for the rentals. The final dance of the year is scheduled for May, and it is a coat-and-tie dance. This time, rumors are circulating around school that "everyone" is renting a tux and that the girls are getting new formal dresses. The parents of the six boys are, according to the grapevine, renting a limousine for their sons and their dates. These behaviors and dress standards are far in excess of anything previously observed at the middle school.

Several students, particularly those from lower-income backgrounds, have said they will boycott the dance. They cannot afford the expensive attire, and they claim that the ones behind the dress-up movement have said that only the nerds or geeks would show up in anything less than a tux or a formal gown.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. How can schools ensure that the cost of attending school affairs is not prohibitive for some of their students?
2. Should school administrators intervene in the plans being made by the more advantaged students? What could they do to control the situation?
3. Why could the actions of these advantaged students be disruptive to the school climate?

better in 1973 than in 1940. Beginning in 1973, however, the cost of living (i.e., the cost of housing, utilities, food, and other essentials) began to increase faster than incomes. Except for the wealthy, all families felt the financial pressure. No longer did they have extra income to purchase nonessentials. No longer was one full-time worker in a family enough to maintain a reasonable standard of living. The 1990s saw another upswing in the economy that resulted in an annual median family income of \$68,931 in 2007. Following the 2008 recession, the median income of a family dropped to \$63,152; it had rebounded only to \$63,815 by 2013. When both husband and wife worked, the median income of the family increased to \$94,299 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014a).

Income sets limits on the general lifestyle of a family, as well as on their general welfare. It controls the consumption patterns of a family—the amount and quality of material possessions, consumer goods, and luxuries—and it influences savings, housing, and diet. It determines whether families are able to afford college educations or new cars. Most low-income and middle-income families are barely able to cover their expenses from one paycheck to the next. If they lose their source of income, they could be homeless within a few months. Higher incomes provide security for families so that they will not need to worry about paying for the essentials and will have access to health care and retirement benefits.

Wealth

Although the difference in income among families is great, an examination of income alone does not reveal the vast differences in the way families live. Income figures show the amount of money earned by a family for their labors during one year, but the figures do not include money earned from investments, land, and other holdings. They do not present the net worth of a family after they have paid all of their debts. The wealth of a family includes savings accounts, insurance, corporate stock ownership, and property. Wealth provides a partial guarantee of future income and has the potential of producing additional income and wealth. However, for most families, the majority of their wealth comes from the equity value of their

¹All of the family income numbers in this paragraph are reported as equivalent to 2013 dollars.

are congruent with the home cultures of students. Parents can learn to support their children's learning at home but may need concrete suggestions, which they will seek from teachers who they believe care about their children.

Educators must know the community to understand the cultures of families. In a school in which a prayer is said every morning, regardless of the Supreme Court's decision forbidding prayer in public schools, a new teacher in that setting should realize that teaching evolution would need to be done with great care and even then might have some negative consequences. In that school setting, one may not be able to teach sex education in the same way it is taught in many urban and suburban schools. In another school, Islamic parents may be upset with the attire that their daughters are expected to wear in physical education classes and may not approve of coed physical education courses. Jewish and Muslim students often wonder why the school celebrates or at least acknowledges Christian holidays but never their religious holidays. Because members of the community may object to the content and activities in the curriculum does not mean that educators cannot teach multiculturally. It does suggest that they

Focus Your Cultural Lens: Debate

This feature presents a controversial school issue with *for* and *against* statements for readers to consider. Questions guide readers to critically analyze both sides of the issue and encourage them to take a side.

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate/Incorporating Global Perspectives in the Curriculum

When a number of teachers at John F. Kennedy High School began to realize the impact that globalization was having on their community, they began to talk to their colleagues about more systematically incorporating global perspectives across the curriculum. Some of the other teachers agreed. They clearly saw that a number of parents had lost their jobs when several factories relocated to Southeast Asian cities. And all around them, they could see that they and their students were wearing clothing and buying goods that were made outside the United States.

The least threats to food safety were due to imports from other countries.

Other teachers thought it was nonsense to change their curriculum to integrate global issues and perspectives. One teacher was overheard saying, "Who do these young radicals think they are? All they want to do is convince these kids that the United States is an imperialist country that only cares about filling corporate pockets. The country will be ruined with such talk." The principal, however, likes the idea of students developing a greater global awareness. She thinks that it might gain community support and provide a unique branding for the school.

FOR

- The study of globalization will help students understand how different nations are connected.
- It will help students understand which people are benefited by globalization and which ones lose as a result.
- Students will learn to think more critically about the changes that are occurring in the country as a result of globalization.
- Projects in some classes could help students become more involved in their communities by having them organize to fight against inequalities.

AGAINST

- Social studies courses already cover global issues.
- The approach must present a balanced view of the importance of globalization for our economy.
- Including global perspectives in the curriculum will politicize the curriculum.
- The curriculum should concentrate on preparing students for college or jobs.

QUESTIONS

1. Why do faculty members disagree about how globalization should be addressed in the curriculum?
2. Why do proponents feel that it is important to help students not only understand globalization but understand the negative impact it is having on many of them who are students, as well as children around the world?
3. Where do you stand on including global perspectives throughout the curriculum? How could they be integrated into the subject that you will be teaching?

Supplements for the Tenth Edition

The following resources are available for instructors to download on www.pearsonhighered.com/educators. Instructors enter the author or title of this book, select the 10th edition of the book, and then click on the "Resources" tab to log in and download textbook supplements.

Instructor's Resource Manual and Test Bank (0134227972)

The Instructor's Resource Manual and Test Bank includes an overview of chapter content and related instructional activities for the college classroom and for practice in the field as well as a robust collection of chapter-by-chapter test items. Discussion Questions and Portfolio Activities found in earlier editions have been moved to the Instructor's Resource Manual.

PowerPoint™ Slides (0134227980)

The PowerPoint™ slides include key concept summarizations. They are designed to help students understand, organize, and reinforce core concepts and theories.

TestGen (0134227999)

TestGen is a powerful test generator available exclusively from Pearson Education publishers. You install TestGen on your personal computer (Windows or Macintosh) and create your own tests for classroom testing and for other specialized delivery options, such as over a local area network or on the Web. A test bank, which is also called a Test Item File (TIF), typically contains a large set of test items, organized by chapter and ready for your use in creating a test, based on the associated textbook material. Assessments may be created for both print and testing online.

Tests can be downloaded in the following formats:

- TestGen Testbank file – PC
- TestGen Testbank file – MAC
- TestGen Testbank – Blackboard 9 TIF
- TestGen Testbank – Blackboard CE/Vista (WebCT) TIF
- Angel Test Bank (zip)
- D2L Test Bank (zip)
- Moodle Test Bank
- Sakai Test Bank (zip)

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1

Foundations of Multicultural Education

LEARNING OUTCOMES

As you read this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1.1** Describe the diversity of students in today's schools and discuss how that diversity can enrich a classroom.
- 1.2** Examine the role that culture plays in the lives of students and their families and discuss the influence of the experiences of a cultural group in the community and society on our cultural identity.
- 1.3** Consider whether cultural pluralism is a reasonable and achievable goal in the classroom.
- 1.4** Identify the obstacles to creating a just and equal classroom and explore strategies for overcoming them.
- 1.5** Describe characteristics of a multicultural classroom.

Katie Cunningham's students are anxious about their first day of school. A number of them are learning a new language—along with a new country, a new teacher, and new classmates. More than one-third of the school's student population speak a language other than English at home. More than 50 languages are spoken among students in the school district who have come from numerous countries in Africa, Asia, Central America, South America, and Europe.

Ms. Cunningham is excited about having such a diverse classroom. The majority of her class is African American and European American students whose native language is English. She is bilingual in Spanish and English and is familiar with the families of some of the students who have emigrated from Central America over the past two decades. She had not realized that her class would include a student who recently moved from Russia and speaks no English and that the native language of two students is Farsi, but she is looking forward to learning about the languages and cultures of Russia and Iran.

REFLECTIONS

- 1.** What are some of the reasons that Ms. Cunningham is excited about having a diverse student population in her classroom?

2. What challenges is Ms. Cunningham likely to confront in her goal for all of her students to be at grade level by the end of the year?
3. What do you wish you had learned in your teacher preparation program to help you be a more effective teacher of English language learners from diverse countries of origin?



Diversity in the Classroom

Educators today are faced with an overwhelming challenge to prepare students from diverse populations and backgrounds to live in a rapidly changing society in which we don't know many of the jobs that will be available to them in the future. In addition, the United States is becoming increasingly diverse but continues to struggle to provide **equality** across racial, ethnic, gender, economic, language, and religious groups. The gap in income and wealth continues to grow, leading to a smaller middle class and a larger proportion of the population being unable to provide basic needs for their families even when working full time.

Schools are becoming increasingly diverse across the United States as the proportion of white students diminishes. In today's public schools, **students of color** account for more than half of the student population, with the largest increases in Asian American and Latino students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014a). By 2023, students of color are projected to account for 55% of the elementary and secondary public school populations (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014b). However, the race and sex of their teachers match neither the student population nor the general population, as shown in Figure 1.1. More than 80% of the teachers are European American, and 76% are female (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014b).

The racial and ethnic diversity in public schools differs greatly from region to region, as shown in Figure 1.2, and from state to state within the region. Students of color already account for over half of the student population in western and southern states. More than 40% of the public school students in western states are Hispanic, and 10% are Asian American/Pacific Islander. Nearly 25% of the public school students in southern states are African American. Schools in midwestern states are the least diverse, with only one in three students being students of color. Students of color are in the majority in most of the nation's largest school districts, with only one in four students being white across the 100 largest districts (Sable, Plotts, & Mitchell, 2010). This ethnic diversity includes the children of recent immigrants, who often speak a language other than English at home, requiring schools to have programs that help students learn both the subjects being taught and English.

The United States is not only multiethnic, it is also a nation of diverse religious beliefs. During the past 40 years, new waves of immigrants from around the globe have brought with them religions that are unfamiliar to many U.S. citizens. While small groups of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and Sikhs have been in the country for many decades, they became more highly visible as conflicts in the Middle East were expanded in the first few years of this century. Even Christians from Russia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines, and Egypt bring their own brands of worship to denominations that have strong roots in this country.

Diverse religious beliefs can raise challenges for educators in some communities. The holidays to be celebrated must be considered, along with religious codes related to the **curriculum**, school lunches, interactions of boys and girls, and student clothing. Immigrant parents generally value education for their children, but they do not always agree with the school's approaches to teaching and learning or accept the public school's secular **values** as being appropriate for their families. Values are the qualities that parents find desirable and important in the education of their children; they include areas such as morality, hard work, and caring, often with religious overtones. Working collaboratively with parents and communities is an important step in providing an equitable education to all students.

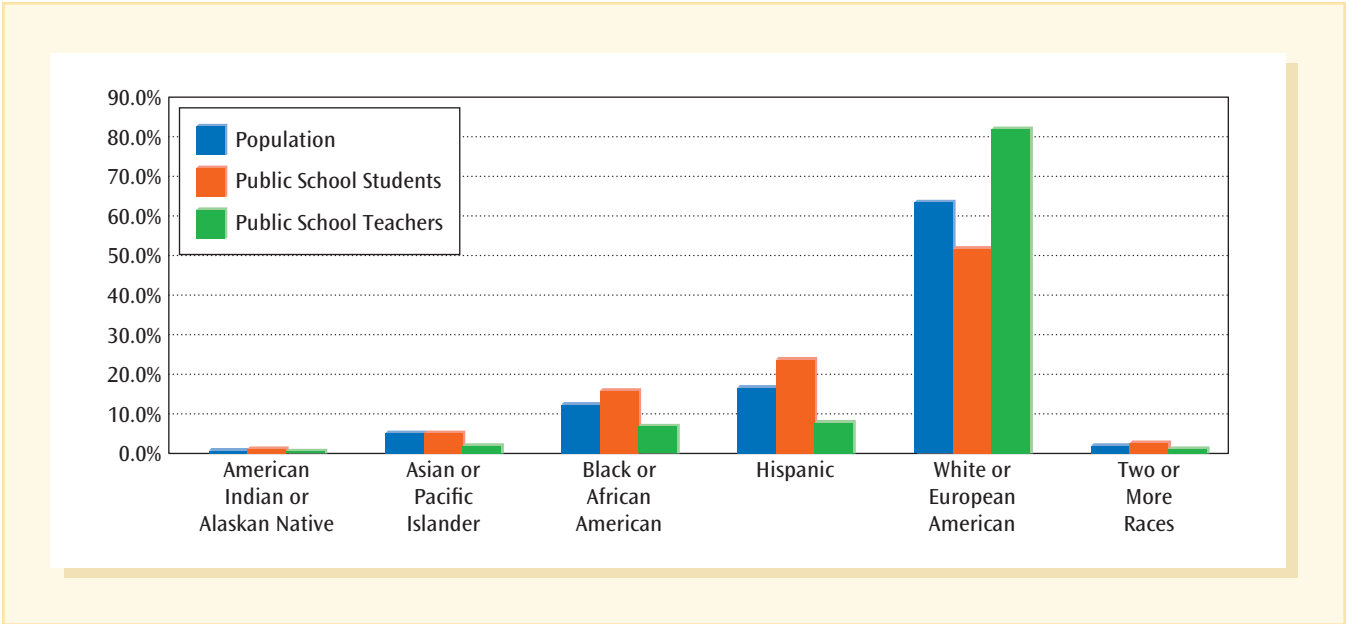


FIGURE 1.1 Pan-Ethnic and Racial Diversity of K-12 Teachers and Students in 2011

Sources: (1) U.S. Census Bureau. (2014). Annual estimates of the resident population by sex, age, race, and Hispanic origin for the United States and states: April 1, 2010, to July 1, 2013. Retrieved October 12, 2014, from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=PEP_2013_PEPASR6H&prodType=table. (2) National Center for Education Statistics. (2014). Digest of education statistics: Enrollment and percentage distribution of enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity and region: Selected years, fall 1995 through fall 2023 (Table 203.50). Retrieved October 12, 2014, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_203.50.asp. (3) National Center for Education Statistics. (2014). Digest of education statistics: Number and percentage distribution of teachers in public and private elementary and secondary schools, by selected teacher characteristics: Selected years, 1987-88 through 2011-12 (Table 209.10). Retrieved October 12, 2014, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_209.10.asp.

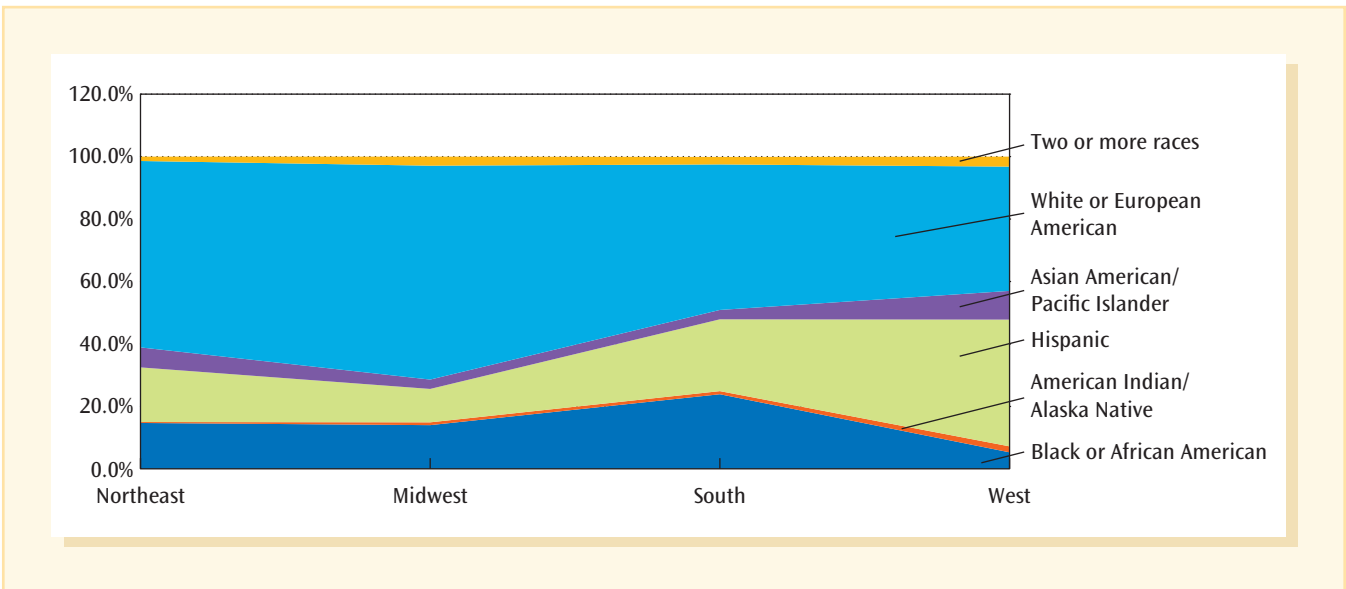


FIGURE 1.2 Percentage of Public Elementary and Secondary School Students Enrolled, by Region and Ethnicity/Race in 2011

Source: National Center for Education Statistics. (2014). Enrollment and percentage distribution of enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity and region: Selected years, fall 1995 through fall 2023 (Table 203.50), Digest of education statistics. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on October 12, 2014, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_203.50.asp.

Another important aspect of diversity that has an impact on schools is the economic level of students' families. Although the U.S. Census Bureau (2014) reports that 14.5% of the U.S. population had income below the poverty level in 2013, nearly one in five, or 20%, of U.S. children live below the official poverty level (DeNavas-Walt & Proctor, 2014). The percentage of public school students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch programs because their families are below or near the poverty level increased from 38% in the 2000–01 school year to 48% in 2010–11 (Snyder & Dillow, 2015). In addition, nearly one in five students attend a **high-poverty school** in which more than 75% of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (Kena et al., 2014). African American, American Indian, and Latino students are more likely than other students to be attending these high-poverty schools (Aud et al., 2012).

Each classroom is likely to have one or more students with disabilities. Depending on the disability, modifications in the curriculum or environment will be needed to provide students with disabilities the opportunity to learn at the same level as other students. The goal is to provide all students the least restrictive environment so that they can learn with peers who do not have a recognized disability. The number of students with disabilities who are being served by special programs increased from 3.7 million in the 1976–77 school year to 6.4 million, or 13% of the school population, in the 2010–11 school year (Snyder & Dillow, 2013).

Being aware and knowledgeable of the diversity of your students is one way to show respect for them and their families. Understanding the community in which the school is located will be very helpful in developing effective instructional strategies that draw on the cultural background and experiences of students. You should help students affirm their own **cultures** while learning that people across cultures have many similarities. In addition, students should become aware of cultural differences and inequalities in the nation and in the world.

Teachers will find that students have individual differences, even though they may appear to be from the same cultural groups. These differences extend far beyond intellectual and physical abilities. Students bring to the classroom different historical and cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, and day-to-day experiences that guide the way they behave in school. The cultures of some students will be mirrored in the school culture. The differences between home and school cultures for others will cause dissonance unless the teacher can accept and respect students' cultures, integrate their cultures into the curriculum, and develop a supportive environment for learning. If the teacher fails to understand the cultural factors that affect student learning and behavior, it will be difficult to help all students learn.

Multicultural education is an educational construct in which students' cultures are integrated into the curriculum, instruction, and classroom and school environment. It supports and extends the concepts of culture, diversity, equality, **social justice**, and **democracy** into the school setting. An examination of these concepts and their practical applications in schools is a first step in creating a classroom that is multicultural.

 Watch the video “Cultural Diversity in the United States” to hear the importance of teachers developing cultural competence to interact effectively with students and families from diverse groups.



Culture defines who we are. It influences our knowledge, beliefs, and values. It provides the blueprint that determines the way we think, feel, and behave. Generally accepted and patterned ways of behavior are necessary for a group of people to live together, and culture imposes order and meaning on our experiences. What appears as the natural and perhaps only way to learn and to interact with others is determined by our culture. It allows us to predict how others of the same culture will behave in certain situations. Culturally determined norms provide the dos and don'ts of appropriate behavior in our culture. We are generally comfortable with others who share our culture because we know the meanings of their words and actions. In addition, we share the same traditions, holidays, and celebrations.

Culture has such an impact on us that we fail to realize that not everyone shares our way of thinking and behaving. This may be, in part, because we have never been in cultural settings

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Celebrating Ethnic Holidays

Esther Greenberg is a teacher in an alternative education class. Ms. Greenberg's college roommate was Chinese American, and she remembers fondly her visit to her roommate's home during the Lunar New Year. During that holiday, the parents and other Chinese adults gave all the children, including her, money wrapped in red paper, which was to bring all the recipients good luck in the new year. Ms. Greenberg thought it would be a nice gesture to give the students in her class the red paper envelopes as an observance of the upcoming Lunar New Year. Since she was unable to give the students money, she wrapped gold-foil-covered chocolate coins (given to Jewish children) in red paper to give to her students.

Unfortunately, on the day of Lunar New Year, a number of students were pulled out of class for a special event-planning session. Most of the remaining students were Asian American students. When she passed out the red envelopes, the students were surprised and touched by her sensitivity to a cherished custom.

When her principal heard what Ms. Greenberg had done, he accused her of favoritism to the Asian American students and of deliberately leaving out the African American and white students. When she tried to convince him otherwise, he responded that she had no right to impose Asian customs on her students. She responded that this was an important Asian custom of which students should be aware. However, he continued his attack, saying that this was Asian superstition bordering on a religious observance, and students should not be participating in such activities.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. Were Esther Greenberg's actions inappropriate for a public school classroom? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. When Ms. Greenberg learned that a large number of students were going to be absent from class, what should she have done with the red envelopes? Did her actions create an appearance of favoritism of one ethnic group over others? How could she have handled the situation to make it a pleasing experience to all concerned?
3. Why may the principal have been so upset about Ms. Greenberg's actions?

different from our own. This lack of knowledge often leads to our responding to differences as personal affronts rather than simply cultural differences. These misunderstandings may appear insignificant to an observer, but they can be important to participants. For example, our culture determines how loud is too loud, how late we may arrive at an event, and how close we can stand to another without being rude or disrespectful. Teachers may misinterpret the actions and voices of their students if they do not share the same culture.

Characteristics of Culture

Culture is learned, adapted, and dynamic. We learn our culture from the people who are closest to us—our parents or caretakers. The ways that we were held, fed, bathed, dressed, and talked to as babies are culturally determined and begin the process of learning the family's culture. Culture impacts how we dress, what we eat, how we speak, and what we think (Ryan, 2010). The process continues throughout our lives as we interact with members of our own and other cultures.

Our values are initially determined by our culture. They influence the importance of prestige, status, pride, family loyalty, love of country, religious belief, and honor. Status symbols differ across cultures. For many families in the United States, accumulation of material possessions is a respected status symbol. For others, the welfare of the extended family is of utmost importance. These factors, as well as the meaning of morality and immorality, the use of punishment and reward, and the need for higher education are determined by the value system of our culture.

Our cultures are adapted to the environments in which we live and work. While the environment in rural areas is characterized by space and clean air, urban dwellers adapt to smog, crowds, and public transportation.

(© MIXA Co., Ltd)



Watch the video “Components of Non-Verbal Communication” to learn cultural cues that can be misunderstood by members of a culture different than your own.

Our nonverbal communication patterns also reflect our culture and can lead to misunderstandings among groups. The appropriateness of shaking hands, bowing, or kissing people on greeting them varies across cultures. Culture also determines our manner of walking, sitting, standing, reclining, gesturing, and dancing. Raising an eyebrow and gesturing with our hands have different meanings across groups; they may be acceptable and expected in one group and very offensive or rude in another group. We must remind ourselves not to interpret acts and expressions of people from a different cultural group as wrong or inappropriate just because they are not the same as our own. These behaviors are culturally determined.

Language is a reflection of culture and provides a special way of looking at the world and organizing experiences that is often lost in translating words from one language to another. Many different sounds and combinations of sounds are used in the languages of different cultures. Those of us who have tried to learn a second language may have experienced difficulty verbalizing sounds that were not part of our first language. Also, diverse language patterns found within the same language group can lead to misunderstandings. For example, one person’s joking may be heard by others as serious criticism or abuse of power.

Because culture is so internalized, we tend to confuse biological and cultural heritage. Our cultural heritage is not innately based on the culture into which we are born. For example, Vietnamese infants adopted by Italian American, Catholic, middle-class parents will share a cultural heritage with their adopted family rather than with Vietnamese. Observers, however, may continue to identify these individuals as Vietnamese Americans because of their physical characteristics. Parents from different ethnic, racial, and religious groups than their children may consciously encourage their children to be bicultural, learning the cultures of the two groups to which they belong.

The Dominant Culture

U.S. political and social institutions have evolved from an Anglo-Saxon and Western European tradition. The English language is a polyglot of the languages spoken by the various conquerors and rulers of Great Britain throughout history. The legal system is derived from English



Although Congress is more diverse than in the past, its members do not yet represent the racial, gender, and religious diversity of the nation's population. (© Jim Lo Scalzo/EPA/Newscom)

common law. The political system of democratic elections comes from France and England. White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs) have had a major historical influence on the judicial system, schools, social welfare, and businesses that affect many aspects of our lives. Over generations, the U.S. population has adapted traditionally WASP characteristics and values that provide the framework for the common culture that people in other countries would recognize as American.

Although most of our institutions still function under the strong influence of their WASP roots, the common culture has been influenced by the numerous cultural groups that have come to comprise the nation's population. Think about the different foods we eat, or at least try: Chinese, Indian, Mexican, soul food, Italian, Caribbean, and Japanese. Young people choose clothing that is influenced by hip-hop and African American culture. But more important are the contributions made to society by individuals from different groups in the fields of science, the arts, literature, athletics, engineering, architecture, and politics.

The overpowering value of the dominant culture is **individualism**, which is characterized by the belief that every individual is his or her own master, is in control of his or her own destiny, and will advance or regress in society based only on his or her own efforts (Bellah et al., 2008). This individualism is grounded in a Western worldview that individuals can control both nature and their destiny. Traits that emphasize this core value include industriousness, ambition, competitiveness, self-reliance, independence, appreciation of the good life, and the perception of humans as separate from, and superior to, nature. The acquisition of the most recently released cell phone and technology gadgets, cars, boats, and homes measures success and achievement.

Another core value is **freedom**, which is defined by the dominant culture as not having others determine our values, ideas, or behaviors (Bellah et al., 2008). Relations with other people inside and outside the group are often impersonal. Communications may be very direct or confrontational. The nuclear family is the basic kinship unit, but many members of the dominant culture rely more on associations of common interest than on family ties. Values tend to be absolute (e.g., right or wrong, moral or immoral) rather than ranging along a continuum of degrees of right and wrong. Youthfulness is emphasized in advertisements and commercials. Many U.S. citizens, especially if they are middle class, share these traits and values to some degree. They are patterns that are privileged in institutions such as schools.

Cultural Identity

Groups in the United States are called **subsocieties** or **subcultures** by sociologists because they exist within the context of a larger society or culture in which political and social institutions are shared (Ryan, 2010). Numerous groups exist in most nations, but the United States is exceptionally rich in the many distinct groups that make up the population. Each of us belongs to multiple subcultures, such as ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, native language, geographic region, and abilities or exceptional conditions, as shown in Figure 1.3. Our cultural identity is based on traits and values learned as part of our membership in these groups. Each of the groups to which we belong has distinguishable cultural patterns shared among all who identify themselves as members of that particular group. Although we generally share many characteristics of the dominant culture, we also have learned traditions, discourse patterns, ways of learning, values, and behaviors that are characteristic of the different groups to which we belong.

We may share membership in one of the groups in Figure 1.3 with many people, but they may not be in the other groups of which we are members. For example, all men are members of the male culture, but not all males belong to the same ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic group. On the other hand, an ethnic group includes both males and females and individuals with disabilities who have different religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.

The intersection of the various group memberships within society determines our cultural identity. Membership in one group can greatly influence the characteristics and values of membership in other groups. For instance, some fundamentalist religions have strictly defined expectations for women versus men. Thus, membership in the religious group influences, to a great extent, the way a female behaves as a young girl, teenager, bride, and wife, regardless of her ethnic group. One's economic level greatly affects the quality of life for families, especially the children and elderly in the group. Having a disability can have a great impact on one's life, sometimes leading to involvement in civil rights action to promote the interests of the group. Some students and adults with disabilities, such as those who are deaf, are members of distinct cultural groups with their own language and primary interactions with other members of the group.

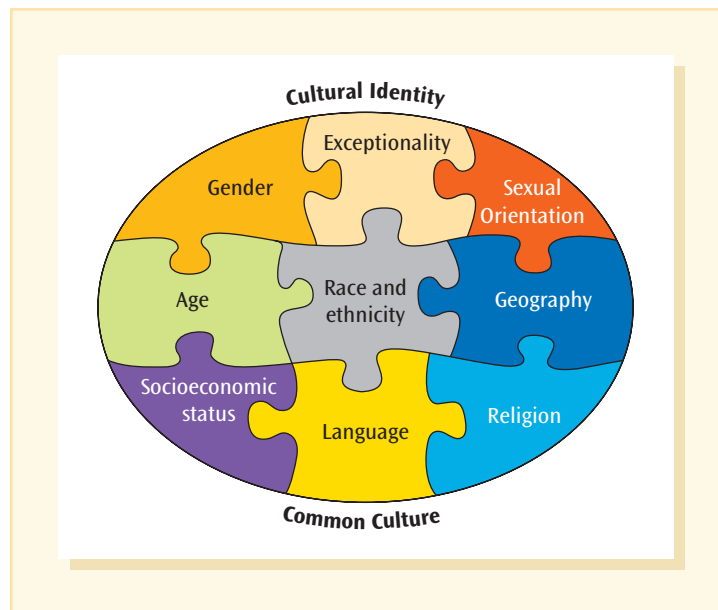


FIGURE 1.3 Cultural Identity

Our cultural identity is based on our membership in multiple groups that are influenced by the dominant culture, discrimination, and power relations among groups in society.

Source: Adapted from Johnson, J. A., Musial, D. L., et al. (2005). *Introduction to the Foundations of American Education* (13th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. Copyright 2005 Pearson Education. Reprinted and electronically reproduced by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

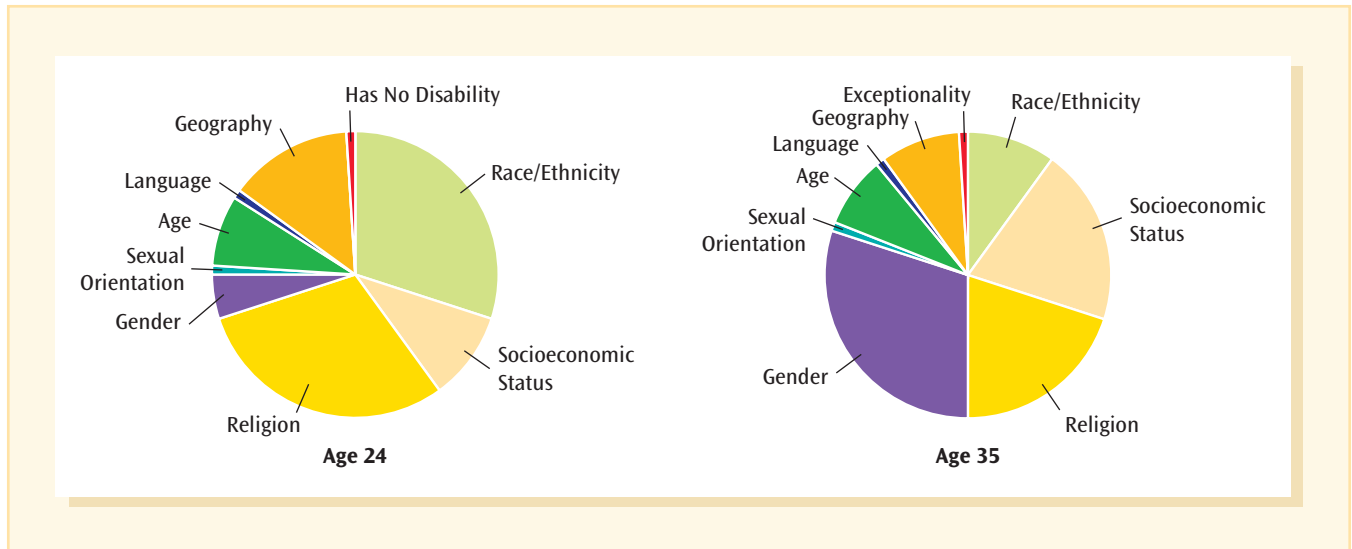


FIGURE 1.4 Changing Cultural Identities

Some cultural group memberships may take on more importance than others at different periods of life, as shown here for a woman when she was 24 years old and married without children and again when she was 35, divorced, and a single mother.

One cultural group may have a greater influence on our identity than others. This influence may change over time and may be greatly influenced by our life experiences. We can shed aspects of our culture that no longer have meaning, and we can adopt or adapt aspects of other cultures that were not inherent in our upbringing. Identity is not fixed. For example, a 24-year-old, upper-middle-class, Catholic, Polish American woman in Chicago may identify strongly with being Catholic and Polish American when she is married and living in a Polish American community. However, other group memberships may have a greater impact on her identity after she has divorced, moved to an ethnically diverse neighborhood, and become totally responsible for her financial well-being, as portrayed in Figure 1.4. Because she was straight, not disabled, and a native English speaker, her membership in those groups had little to do with how she saw herself. If she later has a disability, membership in that group is likely to take on more importance to her. Think about the group memberships that are most important in your own cultural identity.

Understanding the importance of group memberships to your identity helps answer the question “Who am I?” An understanding of other groups will help answer the question “Who are my students?” Historical and current background on each of these groups and approaches for making a classroom multicultural are explored throughout this book.



Although many similarities exist across cultural groups, differences exist in the ways people learn, the values they cherish, their worldviews, their behavior, and their interactions with others. There are many reasonable ways to organize our lives, approach a task, and use our languages and dialects. It is when we begin to see our cultural norms and behaviors not just as one approach but as superior to others that differences become politicized. By developing an understanding of cultural differences, we can begin to change our simplistic binary approaches of us/them, good/bad, and right/wrong. We begin to realize that a plurality of truths is appropriate and reasonable. We seek out others for dialogue and understanding rather than speak about and for them. We begin to move from exercising power over others to sharing power with them.

The theory of **cultural pluralism** describes a society that allows multiple distinctive groups to function separately and equally without requiring **assimilation** into the dominant