

Fifth
Edition

Teaching Young Children in Multicultural Classrooms

ISSUES, CONCEPTS, AND STRATEGIES




Wilma Robles de Meléndez

Vesna Beck

TEACHING STANDARDS ALIGNMENT CHART


NAEYC Standards

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) *Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation* describe the expectations for what teachers should know and do for appropriate and developmentally based teaching of young children. They provide a framework for early childhood professionals in a variety of roles and settings. The 2010 standards include seven key areas as indicated below. The following table shows the alignment between content in this text and NAEYC standards.

NAEYC Standards 	Chapter
Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning	1, 2, 4, 7, 8
Standard 2: Building Family and Community Relationships	3, 8, 10
Standard 3: Observing, Assessing, and Documenting	6, 7, 8
Standard 4: Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families	2, 4, 6, 8, 9
Standard 5: Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum	7, 9
Standard 6: Becoming a Professional	1, 5, 6, 9
Standard 7: Early Childhood Field Experiences	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

InTASC Standards

The Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) is part of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). In April 2011, the CCSSO published the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards that define effective teaching. They cut across age levels (K–12) and content areas. They were developed in collaboration with most major teaching-related national organizations and are aligned with other national standards such as the Common Core State Standards, the NBPTS, and the Council for Accreditation for Educator Preparation (CAEP). They are the most widely used national standards of teaching, and many state teaching standards are based on these national standards. There are 10 standards, with several aspects of essential knowledge (EK) within each standard. The following table shows the alignment between content in this text and InTASC standards.

InTASC Standards 	Chapter
Standard 1: Learner Development	1, 4
Standard 2: Learner Differences	2, 4, 8
Standard 3: Learning Environments	9
Standard 4: Content Knowledge	2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10
Standard 5: Application of Content	6, 7, 8, 9, 10
Standard 6: Assessment	7
Standard 7: Planning for Instruction	6, 7, 8
Standard 8: Instructional Strategies	4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice	1, 3, 5, 6, 9
Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration	3, 10

ACEI Global Guidelines for Early Care and Education

The Global Guidelines for Education and Care is a global framework defining expectations for establishing responsive and developmentally-based care and education programs for young children around the world. Developed in 1999, the framework was the outcome of a forum sponsored by ACEI and OMEP that convened a group of more than 80 international early childhood care and education experts from 27 countries.

ACEI Global Guidelines 	Chapter
Area 1: Environment and Physical Space	8, 9
Area 2: Curriculum Content and Pedagogy	2, 6, 7, 8, 9
Area 3: Early Childhood Educators and Caregivers	1, 5, 7, 10
Area 4: Partnerships with Families and Communities	4, 3, 10
Area 5: Young Children with Special Needs	3, 4, 5, 6, 7

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Nova Southeastern University

Vesna Beck

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Wilma Robles de Meléndez, Vesna Beck

Product Director: Marta Lee-Perriard

Product Manager: Steven Scoble

Project Manager: Ronald D'Souza

Content Developer: Katie Seibel

Product Assistant: Megan Nauer

Marketing Manager: Andrew Miller

Manufacturing Planner: Doug Bertke

Photo and Text Researcher: Lumina Datamatics Limited

Production Management, and Composition: MPS Limited

Art Director: Helen Bruno

Text Designer: Liz Harasymczuk

Cover Designer: Irene Morris Design

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To my family, from whom I learned that we are all equal. To my husband, Sal, who supports and shares my dreams of a peaceful world. With special dedication to my mother, Carmen Martinez, who inspired me to follow her example to become a teacher and who continues today to be my inspiration.

—W. R. M.

To my parents, Borisava and John D. Savich, with eternal love and gratitude for making it possible for me to become an American.

—V. B.

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Preface

As we complete the fifth edition, we reaffirm our commitment to multicultural education and to our belief in diversity as a strength of the United States society. We are also proud that many here and around the world still consider our country the bastion of freedom and hope. However, whenever we witness prejudice, discrimination, and unfairness against some members of our society, that pride, along with our societal values, is diminished. Instead of engaging in philosophical and theoretical discussions about such injustices, we, as educators, need to look for practical solutions that can effectively address the challenges of living in a pluralistic society. That solution is found in education. Our belief that people can learn to see the similarities in all has led us to write this book. Envisioning empowering classrooms where young children will find themselves valued and their cultures validated is the dream that sustains our work. Because we believe that early childhood educators are the cornerstones of educational success, we dedicate this work as a source of knowledge and ideas that will allow both teacher candidates and practitioners to create responsive and successful classrooms for all children.

For us, writing this book is a personal and professional journey—personal because both of us came to the United States as immigrants and had the opportunity to witness firsthand the inadequacies of our educational system to provide for the needs of students from diverse characteristics and backgrounds. Our personal and professional experiences in the classroom and as early childhood teacher educators at Nova Southeastern University inspired and guided us in selecting the content and creating the conceptual framework of this book.

Purpose of the Book

The primary purpose of the book is to serve as a text for teacher candidates who already have some theoretical background in child development and curriculum development. This includes undergraduate students of early childhood education as well as practicing teachers who want to gain new ideas about diversity. The book can be used as a primary text for courses in early childhood undergraduate and graduate programs addressing diversity and multicultural education.

The secondary purpose of the book is as a resource for practicing early childhood professionals and anyone interested in learning about diversity and multiculturalism. Many components of the book, such as chapter activities and recommended children's books, are intended to assist practitioners in creating more developmentally and culturally appropriate curricula and classroom environments conducive to young children's learning.

As we know, this book is not the only one of its kind. Many fine publications exist that address this topic very eloquently. Some works in the current market are very specialized and more narrowly focused than our book. Although we recognize the value of the specialized approach, we wanted to create a book that is comprehensive in scope and presents diversity issues in a more complete context of our society. Diversity exists in sociological, historical, political, developmental, and instructional contexts. This book presents the multifaceted approach to diversity as it relates to the education of young children.

The selection of content and the conceptual scheme for the book came from our personal experiences as well as from teaching our very diverse undergraduate and graduate student populations. Many of our early childhood teacher candidates are bilingual and come from the United States as well as a multitude of countries ranging from Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. As future teachers, they have a special desire to facilitate tolerance and acceptance of cultural and ethnic differences among young children. The comprehensive approach of our book is also the result of our realization that, many times, early childhood professionals and teacher candidates who work in multicultural and diverse communities need ways to assist them in learning more how to meet the needs of children with culturally diverse backgrounds.

Organization of the Book

The book is organized in three parts. Part I deals with social foundations and theory of multicultural instruction. It contains the historical perspectives of multiculturalism, future trends, and the social and psychological developmental influences that affect young children. Part II explores the past and current issues and directions of multicultural education, covering the historical background and different approaches to teaching diversity. Part III includes new content about English language learners and provides resources in the form of guidelines and ideas for classroom implementation. Several actual multicultural instruments, curriculum plans, and classroom techniques are presented.

Conceptual Development and Learning Features of This Text

The book balances theory and practice, which makes it suitable for the several purposes mentioned earlier. The theoretical component is necessary for several reasons. First, we believe it is good practice to base the recommendations and conclusions on a sound scholarly knowledge base and proven practices. Second, teachers need to understand the principles and theories that underlie practices related to multicultural education in order to implement them properly. Third, the theoretical background provides a framework for multiculturalism that makes it fit into the larger context of teaching and learning. The practical aspect of the book is a consequence of our strong commitment to practitioners in the field of early childhood education and to the commitment of bonding theory and practice.

This text also offers several unique chapter features that are designed to organize and summarize content, provide exercises, promote discussions, and present practical ideas. The activities in these special chapter features are intended for use with both preservice and practicing teachers, and we believe that most activities can be adapted to both individual assignments and group work. These unique chapter features are described here.

- **Learning Objectives** are listed at the beginning of each chapter and are aligned directly to the main heading within the chapter.
- **Professional Teaching Standards** from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) that correlate to the chapter content are listed at the beginning of each chapter. The Global Guidelines for Early Childhood and Care in the 21st Century from the Association of Childhood Education International (ACEI) are also included.
- **Key Terms** are listed at the beginning of each chapter and defined in the text and in the Glossary at the back of the book.

- **Teachers Share** are chapter-opening vignettes that are based on real-life stories and experiences from students and from observations in the classroom. These classroom snapshots provide additional venues for reflection and discussion.
- **In Action** boxes offer hands-on class activities and assignments. Each activity is accompanied by questions and other information related to the material discussed in the body of the chapter.
- **Think and Reflect** boxes provide opportunities for self-reflection and ask students to relate the ideas and concepts presented in the chapter to personal experiences, ideas, and values, and to examine their own biases.
- **Focus on Classroom Practices** boxes feature examples of activities and suggestions for classroom application of the theoretical concepts discussed in each chapter.
- **Literacy Connection** boxes are interspersed throughout each chapter and provide lists of valuable children's literature resources that can be used by students to start a library of children's books to use in the future. Some books are mentioned in more than one place in the book because they are appropriate for diverse topics and discussions. These lists are also available as Professional Resource Downloads.
- **Around the World** boxes show different global perspectives on the various issues and concepts dealing with diversity, and can be used to prompt discussion or as additional resources for activities and also ways to prompt discussions.
- **What We Have Learned—Chapter Summary** at the end of each chapter provides an overview of the key concepts discussed in the chapter.
- **Making Connections** at the end of the chapter provide additional practice for individuals and groups.
- **Your Standards Portfolio**, a feature that is highly praised by both students and teachers, is introduced in Chapter 1 and then revisited at the end of each chapter with activities that are correlated to specific NAEYC and InTASC standards as well as the Association of Childhood Education International (ACEI) and World Organization for Early Childhood Education (OMEP) Global Guidelines for Early Childhood and Care in the 21st Century. These chapter-ending activities allow students to demonstrate their knowledge by creating various artifacts for their portfolio. The portfolio provides a special opportunity for teacher candidates and early childhood practitioners to gain valuable knowledge and professional experiences through the standards portfolio process.

Official Terminology

Throughout this book, we use the official terminology of the United States Bureau of Census when referring to various ethnic and cultural groups. The terms *white* and *black* are used despite their social and political connotations. In some instances, race needs to be the predominant descriptor for both. This is particularly true of the term *black*, which cannot be interchangeable with *African American* in every instance.

Hispanic is the most widely used term to describe the various populations of Central and South America. We have decided to continue using it in this edition, but we also added the term *Latino*. Using both allows for more flexibility and respects the preferences of the members of this vastly diverse group.

The US Bureau of Census does not have a classification for *non-European Americans*. The term *other* is still used for groups that classify themselves as neither white nor black. We do not agree with that terminology and continue to use the term *non-European Americans* to refer to all those born or descending from non-Europeans. This group consists of Asian Americans, Hispanics, African Americans, Pacific

Islanders, Native Hawaiians, Caribbean Islanders, Arabs, and Middle Easterners, as well as people of all native Indian nations and Alaskan natives.

New to this Edition

Some changes to the fifth edition were implemented as a result of the reviewers' suggestions, and other material was added and updated to make this edition more current to the national and global societal realities. Key changes include the following:

- New full-color design featuring many new color photographs and improved color illustrations makes reading easier and helps to highlight what's important for the student. Many figures from the fourth edition have been turned into tables in order to improve the readers' understanding.
- New numbered Learning Objectives, listed at the beginning of each chapter and correlated with main headings throughout the chapter, provide a framework for students as they read, helping them to locate key content and understand expected outcomes.
- The Global Guidelines for Early Childhood and Care in the 21st Century from the Association of Childhood Education International (ACEI) were added to the beginning of each chapter and to the Your Standards Portfolio at the end of each chapter. Created by educators from 27 countries, including the United States, the five guidelines and 76 individual categories of assessment have been used globally with great success in defining developmentally based best practices with a global focus. They are another important strategy for improving the education of children from diverse cultures at the international level.
- Many figures, tables, and text elements are also available as Professional Resource Downloads. These summaries of strategies and practices, checklists, sample questionnaires, activities, assessments, and other useful documents are downloadable and often customizable. The Professional Resource Download label identifies these items throughout the text.
- Revised Think and Reflect boxes provide more opportunities for student self-reflection and can be expanded into class assignments.
- Revised In Action boxes are more focused on "doing" and offer hands-on class activities and assignments.
- Data on demographics and other information related to the multicultural issues have been updated.
- New or expanded coverage on brain research, social justice issues, reality of children in poverty, homelessness, dual language learners, and family engagement was added (see the Chapter by Chapter Changes section for specifics).
- Lists of children's books (most found in the Literacy Connections boxes) have been updated in every chapter and in Appendix A with more recent publications. Some of the classic and important older publications remain because of their timeless value.
- MindTap for Education is a fully customizable online learning platform with interactive content designed to help students learn effectively and prepare them for success in the classroom. Through activities based on real-life teaching situations, MindTap elevates students' thinking by giving them experiences in applying concepts, practicing skills, and evaluating decisions, guiding them to become reflective educators.

Chapter-by-Chapter Changes

All chapters have been revised to reflect the suggestions of the reviewers and as we thought appropriate.

- **Chapter 1:** Added new text about current immigration debate.
- **Chapter 2:** Updated information about ethnicities.
- **Chapter 3:** Added new text about extended families and families in poverty.
- **Chapter 4:** Added new text about brain research.
- **Chapter 5:** Added text about UNICEF, UNESCO, and United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and “A World Fit for Children.” Added new text about children in the global community, global equality for children, and global migration.
- **Chapter 6:** Added new text about social justice curriculum approach. Added new Literacy Connections box on using children’s literature to integrate social justice experiences.
- **Chapter 7:** Added new text about effective teaching.
- **Chapter 8:** Updated data about language diversity. Added new text about language learning, and dual language learners (DLLs).
- **Chapter 9:** Revised all activities.
- **Chapter 10:** Added new strategies and updated discussions about family involvement and family engagement practices.
- **Appendices:** Updated Appendix A with new children’s books. Appendix B has been expanded to include more organizations supporting diversity efforts. All listings were updated with phone numbers and Internet addresses. Appendix C has been updated and designated as a Professional Resource Download (PRD).
- **References:** All in-text and end-of-chapter references have been updated, and URLs were included for all Internet resources. At the time of publication, we made sure that all Internet resources were available and accessible for the reader. However, as we all know, availability of Internet resources may be subject to change over time, which is something that escapes our control.

Accompanying Teaching and Learning Resources

The fifth edition of *Teaching Young Children in Multicultural Classrooms* is accompanied by an extensive package of instructor and student resources.

MindTap™: The Personal Learning Experience

MindTap for *Teaching Young Children in Multicultural Classrooms* represents a new approach to teaching and learning. A highly personalized, fully customizable learning platform with an integrated e-portfolio, MindTap helps students to elevate thinking by guiding them to:

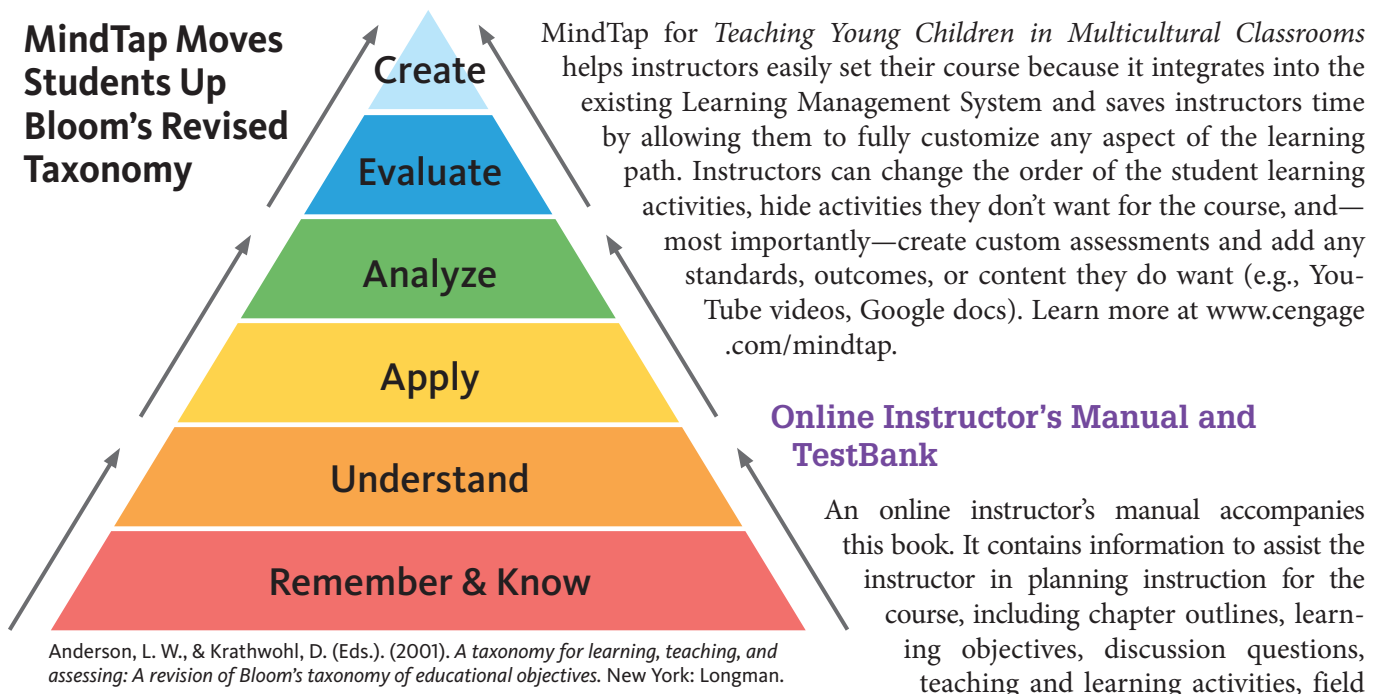
- know, remember, and understand concepts critical to becoming a great teacher;
- apply concepts, create curriculum and tools, and demonstrate performance and competency in key areas in the course, including national and state education standards;
- prepare artifacts for the portfolio and eventual state licensure, to launch a successful teaching career; and
- develop the habits to become a reflective practitioner.

As students move through each chapter's Learning Path, they engage in a scaffolded learning experience, designed to move them up Bloom's Taxonomy, from lower- to higher-order thinking skills. The Learning Path enables preservice students to develop these skills and gain confidence by:

- engaging them with chapter topics and activating their prior knowledge by watching and answering questions about authentic videos of teachers teaching and children learning in real classrooms;
- checking their comprehension and understanding through Did You Get It? assessments, with varied question types that are autograded for instant feedback;
- applying concepts through mini-case scenarios—students analyze typical teaching and learning situations, and then create a reasoned response to the issue(s) presented in the scenario; and
- reflecting about and justifying the choices they made within the teaching scenario problem.

MindTap helps instructors facilitate better outcomes by evaluating how future teachers plan and teach lessons in ways that make content clear and help diverse students learn, assessing the effectiveness of their teaching practice, and adjusting teaching as needed. MindTap enables instructors to facilitate better outcomes by:

- making grades visible in real time through the Student Progress App so students and instructors always have access to current standings in the class;
- using the Outcome Library to embed national education standards and align them to student learning activities, and also allowing instructors to add their state's standards or any other desired outcome;
- allowing instructors to generate reports on students' performance with the click of a mouse against any standards or outcomes that are in their MindTap course; and
- giving instructors the ability to assess students on state standards or other local outcomes by editing existing or creating their own MindTap activities, and then by aligning those activities to any state or other outcomes that the instructor has added to the MindTap Outcome Library.



experiences, and additional online resources. For assessment support, the updated and expanded test bank includes multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions for each chapter.

PowerPoint Lecture Slides

A set of PowerPoint slides are available for each chapter and assist you with your lecture by providing coverage of the key concepts, using images, figures, and tables directly from the textbook.

Cognero

Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero is a flexible online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test-bank content from multiple Cengage Learning solutions; create multiple test versions in an instant, and deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want

Acknowledgments

No work is ever accomplished without the support of family members, colleagues, and friends. We thank our families for their loving understanding, patience, and support of this work. Thank you for staying at our side through many long hours, lost holidays, and working weekends. Sincere thanks to our students, who generously continue to share their experiences and inspire us to continue our work in the field of multiculturalism and diversity. Their ideas and concerns have helped shape this work.

We wish to acknowledge the guidance of Katie Seibel (¡Gracias, Katie!), Content Developer at Cengage, and Steve Scoble, Product Manager, for their support and patience.

We extend our most sincere appreciation to the reviewers enlisted through Cengage Learning for their constructive suggestions and encouragement: Johnny Castro, Brookhaven College; Miranda Lin, Illinois State University; Grace A McDaniel, Otterbein University; Eugenie Pratt, West Hills College; Barbara Thomas, Delgado Community College, City Park Campus; and Loraine Woods, Mississippi Valley State University.

A Final Word from the Authors

The fifth edition of this book serves as a reaffirmation of our commitment to making this a better and fairer place for every young child. We chose to write about education for diversity not only because we believe in its importance to education and to the future of our country, but also for very personal reasons. Like many others, we were both “newcomers” to the United States. We both have experienced, together and with our families, the tribulations and sometimes-painful adjustments of starting a new life in a strange new land. Many of the experiences we wrote about in the book have personal significance. We know firsthand what it is to be different. We have also experienced diversity as US residents of other countries and places such as the US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Spain, Germany, India, and the former country of Yugoslavia. Our travels continue to take us to many other interesting places as well. These experiences have enriched us and given us multicultural and global perspectives that we want to share through this book with our fellow educators and other readers. Now, join us in our journey!

Wilma Robles de Meléndez and Vesna Beck

About the Authors

WILMA ROBLES DE MELENDEZ, PhD, is an associate professor of early childhood education at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. She has over two decades of experience in the field of early childhood and is a specialist in multicultural education issues and practices for dual language learners. An active member of state, national, and international early childhood associations, she has written and published several articles in education journals as well as another text with Vesna Beck for Cengage Learning: *Teaching Social Studies in Early Education*.

VESNA BECK, EdD, is a retired university administrator, professor of graduate studies, and community college administrator. During her 24-year tenure at Nova Southeastern University, she was the administrator of the doctoral program in organizational leadership and professor in the Master of Science in early childhood education, where she taught research and assessment courses. Vesna's partnership with Wilma began more than two decades ago and has resulted in two books, many workshops, conference presentations, teacher training and journal publications. Vesna is the co-author (with Wilma Robles de Meléndez) of *Teaching Social Studies in Early Education*.

CHAPTER 1

Living in Diversity: The Intricate Nature of Our Society



*He met many people along the way. He shook hands
with black men, with yellow men and red men.*

—Allen Say (1994)

Standards Addressed in this Chapter

naeyc Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning

naeyc Standard 6: Becoming a Professional

InTASC Standard 1: Learner Development

InTASC Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

ACEI Global Guidelines, Area 3: Early Childhood Educators
and Caregivers

Teachers Share: The World in My Classroom

For Sally, a prekindergarten teacher, today was a special day. She had just started at the local preschool, where she met her new group of 4-year-olds. Getting ready to leave, she told one of her colleagues:

“Well, today I finally met my class. They are so bubbly! When I read their names, I never imagined I would find a mini-United Nations.”

“Oh, I’m sure,” responded Angela, a veteran toddler teacher. “This year, my new toddler class is also a mix of so many cultures. You see, this neighborhood has been changing. Since last year, we have seen more families from other countries moving here.”

“That explains it,” Sally said. “I have several children who are from Central America and the Caribbean, three who are Jamaican, one who is Haitian, two who just arrived from Puerto Rico, and one who is Bahamian. There are two from India. The rest are African American,

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- 1-1 Comprehend that diversity is a major cultural trait of the United States.
- 1-2 Recognize that schools reflect the societal makeup of our country.
- 1-3 Describe the main highlights in the history of immigration in the United States.
- 1-4 Explain the historical roots of diversity in our country.
- 1-5 Analyze the characteristics of major cultural groups.
- 1-6 Identify the main differences and similarities among various cultural groups and those of the mainstream culture.
- 1-7 Describe the current issues related to immigration.
- 1-8 Discuss the commitments of professional organizations to early childhood education.
- 1-9 Analyze guidelines for creating a professional standards-based portfolio.

Key Terms

multicultural
society
cultural diversity
immigration

ethnic groups
non-European
Americans

like me. You see, I want to be their best teacher, but I don't think it will be easy. I still grapple with many issues related to diversity."

"I'm sure that this will be an interesting year for all of us. So much to learn!" The toddler teacher smiled as she left the office.

1-1 The United States—A Nation of Contrasts

Learning Objective 1-1

Comprehend that diversity is a major cultural trait of the United States.

Like the teachers in the vignette, every day in classrooms across the country early childhood educators are greeted by the faces of children with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They are a reflection of the increased demographic diversity that reflects our multicultural nation. Today, preparing ourselves to meet the needs of young children with diverse roots and their families is a priority. The journey begins by getting a sense of history of the culturally diverse nature of the United States from its early beginnings to the present. In the sections that follow, we explore the elements and factors contributing to our increasing social diversity today, found in our communities and classrooms.

The landscape of the United States, a quilt woven of dramatically different terrains, is populated by people equally unique and diverse. Glancing over the entire country from the Pacific to the Atlantic, we see many different environments coexisting: warm deserts, snowcapped mountains, golden plains, green valleys, lush marshlands, sandy beaches, and bustling cities. All are different yet of one country: The United States. Just like its eclectic landscape, its people mirror the global community. In small country towns and large cities alike, you will find numerous examples of world cultures. Whether they wear a sari, attend a mosque, speak Tagalog, or French Creole, they have changed the composition of our social landscape.

Throughout history, the presence of culturally diverse groups has brought people of the United States in contact with ways different from those established by the white European groups that founded this country (Baruth & Manning, 2008). Nowhere else is this more apparent than at the community level. This is where most people recognize to what extent pluralism permeates their world. Diversity makes itself known through the fascinating contrasts that bring a new vitality to our surroundings. For example, American comfort food restaurants are found alongside ethnic establishments that serve flavorful sushi and spicy curry dishes; the Latin beat is heard on radio stations just

as often as American rock and roll; sari-clad women shop next to women in jeans; and a Vietnamese-language newspaper can be found next to the English language paper at the neighborhood newsstand. School grounds echo with the different languages spoken by children and adults. Community centers all over the country are filled with newly arrived immigrants trying to learn the language of their adopted homeland.



PHOTO 1.1 Like this Eastern European family in Chicago (1925), many migrated to the United States during the early part of the twentieth century in search of a better life.

1-2 School—The Place of Diversity and Action

Learning Objective 1-2

Recognize that schools reflect the societal makeup of our country.

Equality! Where is it, if not in education? Equal rights! They cannot exist without equality of instruction.

Frances Wright (1795–1852)

Today, educators at all levels are aware of diversity in schools. We recognize its effects on our way of thinking, and we know its impact through the new laws and regulations that mandate changes in the schools and society at large. On a more

IN ACTION



What Is Diversity?

You may not be fully aware of the diversity around you. To find out whether diversity is a part of your community and your life, make a list of details about other cultural groups that you have observed in your community. Find out how much you know about individuals from other cultures, their backgrounds, their ways of life, traditions, and other distinctive characteristics. Then, consider the following questions:

- What roles do these individuals play in your life?
- How has their presence changed your community?
- What are some important things you learned from them?
- What do you think they know about you?

personal level, early childhood professionals know diversity through the joyous shouting of exotic words heard on the school playground and by witnessing the frustrations that accompany conquests of new knowledge.

It is well known that the ethnographic composition of schools has changed dramatically in the last two decades. Increasingly, schools are filled with students of non-European cultural backgrounds. The presence of non-European cultural groups varies from one geographical area to another. Although Hispanics are found in greater numbers in Texas, Florida, and California, cities such as Chicago and Seattle include large populations of Asian Indians and Vietnamese, and Alaska, Arizona, and New Mexico are home to large communities of Native Americans. Even states such as North Dakota, Montana, Vermont, and Maine, traditionally known for being populated predominantly by European Americans, are inhabited by immigrants from other continents (US Census Bureau, 2015b).



PHOTO 1.2 Throughout the history of our country, children of immigrants have learned about their new home culture and language through school.

1-3 How Did We Become a Diverse Society?

Culture and diversity are terms that are part of today's educational jargon. Although this is further explained in Chapter 2, here we will briefly explore what the terms signify. *Culture* is a very hard term to define because social scientists have not yet agreed on a single definition. Some define culture as a collection of beliefs, attitudes, habits, values, and practices that a human group uses to form a view of reality. This means that every cultural group, such as Filipinos, Koreans, and Jamaicans, for example, interprets life events (marriage, death, child rearing, and others) according to the established cultural frameworks it has formed over time. They represent the recognized and accepted frames of reference of a cultural group. Such frameworks are owned by every cultural group and are transmitted through generations. At the classroom level, this means that young children from different cultures view our world in very heterogeneous ways. This is especially true of children of newly arrived immigrants. This also implies that teachers may have different ways of interpreting life than the children they teach. This divergence of ideas is how you encounter diversity in the classroom. This is also what makes teaching today's young children exciting and challenging.

Learning Objective 1-3
Describe the main highlights in the history of immigration in the United States.



PHOTO 1.3 More than half of the students in this 1950s classroom were recent newcomers or children of first-generation immigrants.

Wadsworth/Cengage Learning

Young children in today's classrooms are a natural extension of the United States, where groups of many different ethnicities and extractions have come together to form a culturally diverse, pluralistic, or **multicultural society** (Baruth & Manning, 2008).

Cultural diversity denotes contrasts, variations, or differences from the ways of the mainstream or majority culture. When diversity is used in reference to human beings, a multitude of elements are involved in the concept. These meanings are explored in Chapter 2 when we focus on the connotation of the term cultural origin or descent.

Cultural diversity has not only transformed the composition of the US population, but it has also enriched the character of life in the United States. The various groups have brought much

knowledge about other parts of the world in forms of languages, traditions, customs, and folklore. This diversity is displayed in the classroom in countless ways: the various snacks children bring to school, the words and phrases they use, the ideas about families and social relationships they express, the special holidays they celebrate, and even the fashions they prefer (Dresser, 2005). The classroom is a very polychromatic place that can be considered a microcosm of society (Nieto & Bode, 2012). This polychromatic quality makes the United States exciting and special. This is also why US society is described as culturally diverse. A culturally diverse society is one where different cultures exist, socially interact, and yet remain visible in their own context (Anderson & Hill Collins, 2016).

1-4 A Nation of Immigrants

Learning Objective 1-4

Explain the historical roots of diversity in our country.

Immigration is the engine that makes and remakes America. It is also a riveting personal and societal drama, one that unfolds in a complex interplay of social, economic, religious, political and cultural transformations—among the immigrants and their descendants, and within the nation as a whole.

Pew Research Center (2013)

The United States has traditionally been defined as a nation of immigrants. Looking at some of the historical events of the United States helps in answering how, why, and when the country acquired this multicultural personality. Nieto and Bode (2012) point out that **immigration** is an ongoing process of change and not a phenomenon of the past.

THINK AND REFLECT

Thinking about Diversity

Although we live among people of other cultures and ethnic origins, we seldom think in-depth about our relationship with them. As an early childhood professional, it is important to reflect and ask yourself questions in order to become cognizant of your own views regarding diversity. Working with young children includes learning and developing relationships with children and families from many

different parts of the world. Reflecting on your own views and experiences will help you build relationships with families with diverse roots. Ask yourself:

- How do you feel about people from other cultures as members of our society?
- What do you understand about *ethnocentrism*?



FOCUS ON CLASSROOM PRACTICES



Learning That We Are Alike and Different

Our present US society has sometimes been described as a wonderful tossed salad. This same metaphor probably describes the children in most classrooms. As children begin to notice human diversity, it is just as important to guide them to discover how alike they are. You can begin with an activity such as paper plate self-portraits. You need a paper plate for each child, a set of cutouts of the different parts of the face, glue, and yarn for the hair and for hanging the portraits. To reflect differences among facial traits, cutouts should include a variety of facial features, such as different eye colors and different shapes of noses, mouths, and ears that resemble the traits of your students. Including face parts different from those of the children in the group can be a starter for later discussions. Distribute the materials, making sure that you have provided enough cutouts. Have children work on their portraits in pairs or in groups of four. This could be an introductory activity for a thematic unit “Who We Are.” After finishing their portraits, the children can follow up with a rhyme like the following:

Hello!

We are so alike!

(Have children face each other to point at face parts as they are named.)

Eyes I have and so do you.

Both of us have noses too.

Ears we both also have.

And mouths that say,

“Come be my friend!”

Wow! WOW! Wow!

We’re alike and how! *(Showing surprise)*

You can also have them play Simon Says. Here they would stand up as Simon asks: “Stand up if you have green eyes,” “. . . if you have a long nose,” and so on. You may want to include other body parts to further stress similarities. Teachers may want to share stories such as *All the Colors We Are* by Katie Kissinger (Redleaf Press, 1994), *Who We Are, All about Being the Same and Being Different* (Harris, 2016), and *Black Is Brown Is Tan* by Arnold Adoff (Amistad, 2004).

It is an everyday experience as immigrants from all parts of the world make their way to our country in search of a better life for themselves and for future generations.

The United States has also been described as a land where dreams for a better and more equitable life become a reality. Since the days of the first settlements, this part of North America has represented the pathways to liberty, justice, equality, and opportunity. The journey that began with the seventeenth-century Mayflower Pilgrims helped establish the distinctive trait of this country: cultural plurality.

1-4a The Early Days: Immigrants of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

European immigrants settled in this country in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Native Americans as well as Africans and people of the Caribbean brought over as slave laborers were the other significant population groups during that time. Historically, the beginning of today’s US multiculturalism is found in the social interaction patterns that emerged among these groups. Because these interactions were largely based on discriminatory distinctions among people based on their race and the color of their skin, the seeds of unfairness and inequality were planted in the early days of this nation. Long years of persecution of the African Americans, the systematic eradication of the Native Americans, and later the disenfranchisement of large numbers of Mexican Americans hampered the efforts of unification among peoples destined to share this land.

The first settlers shaped the culture of this land in the early seventeenth century in unprecedented ways. In addition to many positive cultural trends, their values and social ethics defined a system of discrimination and persecution that still remains today. It first began with the early settlers’ discrimination and systematic eradication of the East Coast Native American groups. This was the beginning of one of the longest, most tragic, and shameful chapters in US history.

IN ACTION



Diversity in Your Life

Perhaps you have not yet discerned how diversity touches your life. To find out, you can do a personal inventory. You need a pad of self-stick notes, a pencil, and a piece of paper. Make five columns on the paper. Label the first four columns as *Things I Use*, *Things I Wear*, *Things I Eat*, and *Things I Read*. Label the fifth column *Cultures*. Now, using the sticky notes, write names of things you consider a part of your world that come from cultures other than

your own. After you have finished your cultural search, place the sticky notes in the appropriate columns. Fill in the names of the cultures from which the items originate. Ask yourself:

- *What have I learned about diversity in my life?*
- *What are the implications of my findings?*
- *Can I draw some conclusions about diversity?*

The beginning of slavery in the seventeenth century marked the start of violent persecution and segregation of African Americans that formally ended with the Emancipation Proclamation in 1864. The Civil War that ravaged the country ended slavery and preserved the union.

1-4b The Immigration Wave of the Nineteenth Century

Economic, social, and political reforms following the post-Civil War years initiated a new era in America. This age also marked the beginning of a new kind of diversity that intensified the kaleidoscopic nature of this country and presented new challenges.

The great waves of immigration in the nineteenth century began with the Irish as early as the 1850s. Most settled in the large cities, where they later made great strides in business and politics. On the West Coast, the Chinese were arriving at the same time. Some came as economic immigrants looking for a better life, whereas many more came to join the 49ers in their quest for California's gold. By 1870, over 60,000 Chinese were living mostly in California, the West, and the Southwest (Campbell, 2009). The construction of the Central Pacific Railroad, completed in 1869, was largely a Chinese achievement.

Presence of people of Hispanic descent traces back to the early sixteenth-century explorers who first settled in Florida and then explored throughout the Southwest. During the nineteenth century, Mexicans came to build the Texas Mexican Railway. Earlier, many Mexicans worked in the gold mines in California and in the copper mines in Arizona. They were employed as general laborers and were always paid less than their white counterparts. Many of these laborers were migrants who never settled permanently in the states where they worked. Others found themselves strangers in their own land after the United States annexed Texas and California.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the United States had entered into an unprecedented age of industrialization and progress. This attracted new immigrants from European countries and the Balkans. Unfortunately, the newcomers inspired a new backlash that led to many discriminatory practices, some of which still exist today.

1-4c Search for Prosperity and Freedom: Immigrants of the Twentieth Century

The first great wave of immigrants during the twentieth century occurred between 1905 and 1915, when various economic and political events in Europe caused 10 million people to seek refuge in the United States (Campbell, 2009). These were mostly economic immigrants, people who came to the United States primarily in search of a better life. These large **ethnic groups** were segments of larger societies whose members had a common origin, were of a specific race, and shared a common culture and often

FOCUS ON CLASSROOM PRACTICES



Discovering Diversity

At the core of diversity is the issue of human differences. Learning to live with diversity means helping children recognize its presence in their lives. To help children discover that we all hold distinctive traits, teachers can help them create a *Me Bag*. This could be a part of the activities conducted at the beginning of the school year. This activity is based on the belief that each person has unique characteristics. The *Me Bag* is intended to help children see differences as a typically descriptive element defining each individual. This activity starts by the teacher's preparation of his or her own *Me Bag* to be shared with the children. This activity helps in identifying your own diverse characteristics.

You will need one large brown bag for each child. Write the children's names on the bags, and ask them to draw or paste their picture on the outside. Then, ask children to put inside the bag items, drawings, or words that are special to them. Invite children to share their bags, and

have them talk about the things they selected. Lead children to identify the items that are common to everyone and those that are different. Use the following questions to engage children in a discussion of their findings.

- *What did we learn about our class? Tell me something you discovered about two of your friends.*
- *What things did we discover we have in common with our classmates? What things do we not have in common?*
- *In what ways are we all alike? Why?*
- *Tell me something that makes you special.*

Bags can be displayed and kept as an ongoing activity. Other details can be added throughout the year. Follow up by adding books to the literacy center to reinforce the characteristics of diversity found among the children in the group.

a common religion. Approximately 2 million Italians and 1.5 million Russians, many of them Jews avoiding persecution, came to the large cities on the East Coast. The new immigrants comprised 3 percent of the labor force. The majority of European immigrants came to the United States as common people. Settling in cities where there were jobs and where they could live with their own kind in places like little Italies, Bohemias, and Germantowns, they worked hard and struggled to make a living. Many women worked in sweatshops and earned even less than men. Most immigrants lived in slums in rundown tenements without heat and running water. Working conditions were just as deplorable. Hazardous working conditions caused numerous accidents in which many workers were maimed for life or even killed. Part of the new US labor force consisted of children. They were largely children of the poor and of immigrant families who were not able to partake in the national prosperity experienced at the turn of the twentieth century.

1-4d Laws Limiting Immigration in the Twentieth Century

The first national limits on immigration, in the form of a quota system imposed in 1924, were known as the National Origins Act. The quotas limited the total number of immigrants per year to 150,000. Quotas for each nationality group were 2 percent of the total members of that nationality residing in the United States according to the 1890 Census. Western Europeans were exempt from the quota system because they were perceived as more desirable in terms of their education and



PHOTO 1.4 Ellis Island was the first glimpse of the “land of the free” for many immigrants in the beginning of the twentieth century.

IN ACTION



An Increasingly Multiracial Country

The Census Bureau (2014) provides a unique cultural and demographic portrait of the United States. Not only did the Census results confirm the growing multicultural character of the nation, they also exposed, for the first time, the existence of a new multiracial and multiethnic group classified as “multicultural.” The responses revealed the following:

- Eight million people identified their heritage as multiracial.
- The “two or more races” population is projected to reach 19 percent by 2060.
- Racial or ethnic minority babies comprised 50.2 percent of all babies born in 2015.
- In 2015, enrollment of ethnic minority students in public schools surpassed that of white students.

Projections also tell us that between 2010 and 2020, the foreign-born population is projected to increase

nearly 20 percent compared to 6.4 percent for native born. Given this trend, the number of young children with multiracial heritage is expected to rise dramatically. For early childhood educators, learning about the needs of children and families with multiracial heritage is essential.

- What strategies would you recommend to better prepare educators to deal with the changing demographics in our society and in its schools?
- Do you know of anyone identifying themselves as multiracial? What are his or her main reasons for this designation?
- Do further research on the Internet about the emerging societal trends, and share your findings with your classmates.

Source: US Census Bureau (2015).

the skills they possessed (Parillo, 2015). The main purpose of the quota system was to preserve the original racial and ethnic composition of the United States by preventing the poor and illiterate from Eastern, middle, and southern European countries; Russia; and Asia from coming in and becoming a social and economic burden to US society. The system gave an enormous advantage to the British, the Germans, and other Western Europeans whose ancestors were among the pioneers who settled this country.

Immigration law was changed in 1952 with the passing of the McCarran–Walter Act that repealed the quota system and instead gave preference to skilled workers in fields experiencing shortages in the United States, reunification of families, and protection of the domestic labor force. This system was also biased in favor of the Western Europeans, whose immigration numbers continued to be unrestricted.

In 1965, as a result of many political changes in the world, the increasing intensity of the Cold War, Castro’s rise to power, and the Vietnam War, Congress passed an immigration law that was based on a humanitarian notion of “reunification of families.” The law abolished the national origins system and the major restrictions against the Asiatic countries. The Western Hemisphere was also subject for the first time to an overall annual quota of 120,000. A seven-category system was created, with preference given to reunification of families and to individuals with needed talents or skills.

Many immigrants who arrived in the 1960s and the early 1970s were political dissidents, artists, intellectuals, and entrepreneurs from the Eastern European communist countries, Asia, and Cuba. (It should be noted that this law was applied very selectively in the 1980s, granting immigrants from the communist countries legal entry, whereas opponents to the right-wing dictatorships of countries such as Guatemala and El Salvador were forced to enter illegally.) Under the kinship system, newly arrived refugees did not need to have any job skills, education, or means of support. The “reunification” law brought 10 million newcomers to this country who were closely and distantly related to earlier immigrants. The second and third generations of those originally allowed into the United States are the ones changing the makeup of US society.

LITERACY CONNECTIONS

Recommended Books about Immigrants



Multicultural children's literature offers a rich and lively way to explore diversity concepts. Stories addressing topics related to cultural diversity are powerful learning sources for young children. The following titles will help you explore the very important topic of immigration.

- Curtis, J. L., & Cornell, L. (2016). *This is me: A story of who I am and where I came from*. New York: Workman.

The story is about packing a suitcase and things you would put in it if you were never coming back. It's about leaving the old behind and embracing the "new." The suitcase provides an excellent venue for discussion of what the children and families value and consider important.
- Danticat, E. (author), & Staub, L. (illustrator). (2015). *Mama's nightingale: A story of immigration and separation*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

The author's true story of her Haitian mother detained and separated from her family. The theme of separation, action, and change may resonate with many children in the classroom.
- Anzaldua, G. (1993). *Friends from the other side*. San Francisco: Children's Press.

Based on facts, the story tells about the experiences of Prietita, a girl who helps Joaquin and his mother when they come to live in the United States.
- Hoffman, M. (2002). *The color of home*. New York: Fogelman Press.

The story tells the experiences of first-grader Hassan, an immigrant boy from Somalia, as he goes to school in the United States for the first time. This is a powerful tale that conveys the feelings and emotions of a child who misses life in his country.
- Maestro, B. (1996). *Coming to America. The story of immigration*. New York: Scholastic.

In a child-appropriate way, the story presents immigration as a shared reality that describes people in the United States.
- O'Brian, S. A. (2015). *I'm new here*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.

True story of diversity in the classroom and the struggles immigrant children and children with special needs experience. Excellent source of discussion with children and educators.
- Pak, S. (2002). *A place to grow*. New York: Levine Books.

In this story, an inquisitive child asks her father about the reasons he left his birthplace to come to a new country. This is a good starting point for families in sharing their own stories and the reasons why they came to the United States.
- Recorvits, H. (2003). *My name is Yoon*, 1st ed. New York: Ferrar, Straus and Giroux.

This is a story of a Korean girl who must learn to write in English. She is not sure that she likes the idea of writing her name in strange letters that look "unhappy." This book provides a good discussion about the need to learn a new language in a new country.
- Sanna, F. (2016). *The journey*. London, United Kingdom: Flying Eye Books.

Beautifully illustrated, the story is about making decisions to leave home because of the turmoil and danger of war. This book is about war refugees and the challenges they must overcome for a better future.
- Yaccarino, D. (2016). *All the way to America*. Decorah, IA: Dragonfly Books.

The author presents five generations of Italians who proudly work to preserve their culture, while embracing the American life. It is multigenerational book well suited for family discussions.
- Young R. (author), & Ottley, M. (illustrator). (2016) *Teacup*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

A young boy carries a book, a bottle, and a blanket as he leaves his home by boat. In his teacup, he carries some earth from where he played. This book is about parting with what you know and finding new ground to begin a future.
- Sandin, J. (1986). *The long way to a new land*. New York: Scholastic.

The story shares the struggles of nineteenth-century Swedish immigrants as they come to the United States in search of a new life.
- Surat, M. (1989). *Angel child, dragon child*. New York: Scholastic.

This story is about the experiences of an immigrant child from Vietnam as he begins to learn how to live in the United States.