Restructuring a curriculum for multicultural education in language arts

Terri Jean Tatum

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Restructuring a Curriculum for Multicultural Education in Language Arts

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Secondary Education

By
Terri Jean Tatum
March 1993
RESTRUCTURING A CURRICULUM FOR MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN LANGUAGE ARTS

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Faculty of
California State University,
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The following is a case study of curricular change at a Middle School in Riverside County. The specific topic of discussion is the cause and impact of the five-year restructuring plan on the Language Arts 7 curriculum at the Middle School. Whether induced by increased birth rates among minorities or an enormous influx of immigrants, more minorities are not having their needs met in schools or inevitably the job market. The growing gap between the universal needs of today's work force and the knowledge and skills job-seeking students have presents just one reason to focus on multicultural concerns. Still, several situational factors have contributed to the need for multicultural organization, curriculum, and instruction of schools.

Due to changes in the district's demographics, more minority students attend the Middle School. They come from "at risk" circumstances that are not compatible with former traditional
teaching environments. The adolescents do not relate to most values educators usually communicate to students as tools for success. Items from this "hidden curriculum" range from the importance of diligence and punctuality to developing interpersonal skills to work well with others. However, many minority youngsters lack exposure to these and fail to see how they can empower them to thrive and compete with peers. Instead in such settings, instructors can not expect students to arrive in class properly fed, adequately rested, anxious to learn, respectful of authority, self-disciplined in studies, fully-supported by parents, speaking and writing English fluently, or valuing the information and education offered. As a result, nontraditional teaching styles and resources must be incorporated into classroom climate to reach minorities.

Multicultural education allows using more than a common core of materials to teach concepts and to engage the interests of a diverse group of students. Transfer of information occurs on several levels simultaneously. On one, the teacher utilizes numerous methods to present information. While teaching
concepts, teachers can elaborate on and further develop them by making comparisons and contrasts among different cultural perspectives. Having more global discussions that include ethnic, class, religious, and family issues allow some students to see part of the world they already value as it relates to that of classmates and school itself. In other words, such approaches may be their only link to learning.

Without multicultural education, all students will remain academically undeveloped and culturally illiterate. Just attending class is not enough. Students need to sharpen scholastic and social skills to become fully-functional, intelligent, decision-making adults. They must be exposed to and educated about cultural diversity. Only by openly sharing ideas and experiences in a safe, structured setting can students eradicate stereotypes, prejudices, and other communication obstacles. Local and minority cultures have to be preserved and respected (regarded highly) in public as well as private spheres. Failing to do so will have tragic results. Ignorance or lack of knowledge will merely continue to perpetuate the historical
cycles of racism, oppression, violence, and inequality (Schofield, 1982).
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CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

An area of utmost concern at the Middle School is the need to restructure curriculum and integrate multicultural education into the Language Arts program. Attention and effort must be devoted to involving multiple perspectives and interpretations. Only those who relate to and reflect upon the materials can achieve permanent concept attainment. Since reflective thinking is essential to learning and language development, a widely-based, well-balanced multicultural curriculum must be devised and implemented to maximize the number of students who benefit.

According to Section 1 of the Education Reform Act, curriculum serves two main functions: "1. promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and 2. preparing such pupils for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life" (Cough, 1989, p. 17).

To a large extent, students control their own learning processes. They decide whether or not to relate their
experiences with academic activities. The pupils' interests and energies affect their willingness to participate and meet course challenges. Instructors can only rely on their repertoire of teaching strategies to teach effectively. By presenting diverse perspectives and allowing structured student interaction, concepts can be truly defined and understood. On the other hand, one would be blindly mistaken to believe learning is the automatic result of "good teaching."

A middle school can address many problems, such as gangs, stereotypes, and drugs, by undertaking a multicultural approach. "It is through the knowledge of languages and cultures that we best begin to know and comprehend the scope and significance of human experience in history, from ancient times to modern; it is through the knowledge of languages and cultures that we best learn to tolerate and appreciate cultural and linguistic diversity at home, to understand our contemporaries abroad and so achieve our full potential as citizens of the world" (Gaston, 1984, p. 1).

One of the main reasons American society has become so
dysfunctional is the fact that people fail to acknowledge or to respect the various cultures around them. As a whole, U.S. citizens have an overwhelming ignorance about how cultural identities and influences may stem from one's religion, sex, profession, social standing, family, or geographical location, and not just from one's ethnic/racial background (Metz, 1978).

When it comes to eliminating racism, education can be a dynamic tool. Multiculturalism can be a primary source of power or main catalyst for societal change. Students can be empowered by learning from a well-balanced and fully-integrated curriculum that focuses on social and cultural issues. Furthermore, educators can fulfill their obligation to help students get a better grasp of goals for themselves and their surroundings.

In American education, two of the primary functions are to transmit culture and to respond to culture by acknowledging changes in people's lives and social conditions. Reshaping society through its educational institutions can improve living conditions of the present and future citizens. Teachers can
integrate subject matter and make it relevant to children's lives. Instead of demoralizing and invalidating those cultures independent of the mainstream, instructors should demonstrate and perpetuate cultural diversity and pluralistic societal values through literature. Minority parents and students can learn to maintain their own culture and linguistic dialectics and simultaneously seek power and respect in the dominant culture.

Before students can truly understand and respect others, their language, literature, or life style, they have to understand themselves and how they relate to the world. The purpose of school is to give youngsters experiences to master, articulate, and use dominant symbol systems of the culture. Studying dialect varieties can be an effective tool to such initial perspective-taking.

The pivotal point of a child's personal, emotional, and intellectual development hinges on what topics and techniques are used in education. Several factors must be considered prior to deciding how to attempt to balance the curriculum:

1. Adolescents adopt certain activities based on one's
patterns of behavior.
2. Adolescents are unique individuals, every single experience affects each differently.
3. No two adolescents progress in exactly the same way or at the same rate.
4. Adolescents are only going to repeat or respond to things that please them or have some value to them.
5. Adolescents must realize curriculum content refers to the attitudes and values, processes and skills, and subject matter exchanged between teachers and students, and between students in the classroom.

In multicultural curricular programs, students receive respect as individuals with various perspectives, abilities, talents, and interpretations. An abundance of opportunities abound to relate the classroom concepts to their own lives. Therefore, development of meaning and appreciation can occur at deeper affective, cognitive, and social levels.

Language Arts teachers at middle schools have to design a multicultural curriculum that addresses needs of the everchanging "at-risk community." More students are coming from home environments that make learning a challenge. For some from the urban sectors, parents commute hours to and from work and spend little time discussing school with students. For others in the more rural areas of the district, parents may
work long ten-hour shifts on their own land or in local factories to make a living, rather than helping children learn lessons. In other words, no attention is given to a child's social or personal development at home or at school. What is missing from the curricular organization is how various disciplines may serve larger, more integrative ends and relate to the world. Meanwhile, everyone seems unclear about how the formal educational experience can affect attitudes and values.

Many minority students think of teachers as hostile authority figures who impose unrealistic demands and values that do not relate to their world as a whole or to their individual needs. Before they can be taught essential skills and be prepared to socialize with diverse groups, these students need multicultural liaisons to make them appreciate the value of education. They need to be shown how to learn in the style most comfortable for them, as well styles society will demand. Using an array of teaching methods to help them discover more learning styles is a prerequisite for their success. For a smoother transition into the labor market, networking needs to occur to permit
community service projects and hands-on activities (Komulainen, 1991).

In a typical Language Arts class, current cultural approaches select pieces of works from nondominant nationalities or highlight historical moments briefly to cover multicultural curricular objectives. When isolated, these random teaching selections defeat the purpose of introducing new cultural topics. Such tokenistic gestures humiliate members from the minority groups to the point that they resent the lessons more than nonmembers. For example, most African-American students detest their annual Martin Luther King Jr. and Black History holidays because teachers say the same speeches every year, instead of changing the perspectives and projecting some pride and dignity. Similarly, most Mexican American students feel uncomfortable when their peers question the yearly repetition of Cinco de Mayo lessons. In other words, the students feel patronized and belittled.

Instead, a more feasible alternative would be multicultural education, which applies a sincere sense of purpose to the
exploration of different cultures. Its scope is not limited; rather, it looks at diverse groups and discusses them as they relate on a societal scale. Their politics, economies, communities, literature and arts, religions, and customs are critically studied, compared, contrasted, and evaluated.

Although state frameworks define large portion of teaching Language Arts as developing students' literacy skills, educators only expose adolescents to the best traditional literary works and aesthetic writing. "However, there is an urgent need to establish relational contexts so children from diverse social situations can learn reading and writing as meaningful complements to their cultural heritage" (Taylor, 1983, p. 94). Students need to master language to communicate effectively because literacy plays a key role in determining their identity and status in daily interactions.

Since the making and marketing of educational materials has become so commercialized, the literature tends to be lifeless and generic. It lacks distinctive qualities as it limits its portrayals of class, geography, and ethnicity in order to see
more broadly. In other words, it masks nondominant cultures and renders them silent and invisible because this is more marketable (Bhadwal & Panda, 1991).

Some Language Arts texts clash with multicultural goals because they require a thorough understanding of traditional values and schemata. In other words, they appear inaccessible or incomprehensible to many nontraditional students. Study after study has shown high correlations between students' background at home and achievement in school. Several minority students stop trying and detour from academics because of a clash of values. Many times, educational systems fail to compensate for cultural deprivations and differences.

Most traditional texts blur the distinctions among cultures so badly, that several specific national cultures seem nonexistent. Often characters are simply identified as ruled people or rulers. The generic societies portrayed lack cultural significance. The majority of educational series reinforce reading skills and simultaneously project mainstream, dominant values. In the process of creating and exchanging educational materials, many
educators and publishers become so disillusioned with the products available that they have lost sight of their educational goals.

"Educators certainly have an obligation to develop abilities a student will need for financial survival and social success, but humane educators also must educate the whole person for a whole life" (De Castell, Luke, & Egan 1986, p. 287). Today, more than ever before, employers search for well-educated workers who have mastered more than basic skills such as grammar and spelling. Those employees who fail to understand Standard English encounter difficulty in communicating effectively and often get stuck in oppressive, unsatisfying jobs. "The hidden curriculum of family life, health care, so-called professionalism, or of the media, plays an important part in the institutional manipulation of man's world-vision, language and demands. But school enslaves more profoundly and more systematically . . . by making learning about oneself, about others, and about nature depend on a pre-packaged process" (Shor, 1986, p. 169).

Schools can control meanings, values, and people. They
systematically determine and distribute what is legitimate, powerful, or respected. These institutions reinforce societal limits on access to resources and power. "In other words, schools contribute to 'cultural reproduction of class relations'" (Apple, 1990, p. 64). Schools transmit carefully selected definitions, rules, and rituals to characterize the dominant culture. Overemphasis, deletion, and reinterpretation are just a few of the techniques used to "fine-tune" the projected image of significant people and events.

Feverishly following a pragmatist point of view one decade, then reverting to traditional teaching in the next era of reform, education has created countless flaws in curriculum. Abrupt changes in curricular thought have caused extreme vertical and horizontal fragmentation within disciplines and across subjects. A logical compromise is a literature-based curriculum with both traditional and pluralistic resources. It must be taught via various teaching strategies and incorporate many multicultural learning activities. Therefore, in addition to receiving a common core of information, students will be working with materials
that are more appropriate for their diverse cultural temperaments and aims.

To ensure success of such change, instructional practices and teaching materials must be altered. Literature anthologies may need to replace some traditional folklore and legend with factual and diverse recollections of history. Excerpts from real ethnic role models and cultural community leaders would be more intriguing. Creativity must evolve from the individual teachers, students, and learning tasks, not from textbook writers who advocate dominant tradition values. Rather than reading and remembering falsified facts and fairy tales, students can review true encounters. During discussions, debates, and decision-making activities, they can benefit better by relating them to their own experiences. Implementing these methods to pool positive aspects from different cultures may help prevent some minority students from alienating themselves from school and society.

According to some multicultural curriculum theorists, such as Donna Gollnick and Phillip Chinn (1990), the importance of
teaching minorities or others with nondominant cultures about their heritage and history serves a dual purpose. First, it motivates ethnic students to achieve academically. Second, it empowers them to take advantage of educational, vocational, and societal opportunities. In America, schools serve capitalistic needs of employers, who want skilled workers and manipulative demands of politicians who want to maintain power. While that augments class conflict and cultural inequality, students learn how unevenly educational and employment opportunities are distributed among the respected dominant cultures and their powerless counterparts.

Solely teacher-led, dominant-culture fed learning is degrading and dehumanizing. With such a one-way communication about a one-perspective ideology, their students need to open their mouths and minds to maximize learning. Adolescents are painfully aware of how their peers react to their differences in cultural background, class, racial heritage, and religion. Despite some (often visible) differences, they have similar desires. For example, they want the latest trendy
clothes, newest Nintendo games, and sincere acceptance from classmates and teachers.

Unfortunately, teachers often avoid discussing or dealing with ethnic, or cultural issues whether they arise naturally in class contact or content. Although they feel adequately trained in their specific field, many instructors feel threatened by interracial realities. Yet, what students need is intelligent discourse about how to accept other-race and other-culture peers. Children have to confront feelings and fears to develop both intergroup and interpersonal relations with diverse individuals. Since this may be a new challenge for youngsters, effective adult guidance and role-modeling is essential to diminish behavior problems.

"Besides overcoming their own prejudices, minority pupils must learn to avoid the self-defeating responses that often lower their group's status. They need help learning to be proud of their group membership, yet not to identify to such an extent that they become ethnocentric. The teacher has to provide acceptable channels into which a child's aggressions may be
sublimated . . . Whenever children of any ethnic, religious, or racial group have feelings of rejection arising from experiences in school, their personal development and our society suffer" (Graham, 1969, p. 278).

Like almost every other educational reform bandwagon, multicultural education involves social change. Many educators believe modification means loss of control or comfort. As a result, some may resist curricular adjustments out of fear or resentment for removing familiarity from a formerly "safe" system/domain.

Before atypical behavior can change among different cultural and racial groups, teachers may have to organize class activities to stimulate discussion and critical thinking. Assigning cooperative projects that provide a sense of teamwork may also "break the ice" and "bridge academic gaps," too. Not only do such settings cause students to be closer physically when working, but they allow them to develop meaningful roles and identity within their group interactions.

Furthermore, to motivate students to interpret facts,
concepts, and ideologies from varying perspectives, occasional inserts of ethnic content into existing traditional teaching formats is not enough. Multicultural approaches reflect a much broader spectrum of views and interests to understand and appreciate. If teachers do not fully support the new organization, curriculum, and instruction proposed by restructuring . . . no significant changes will occur in the classroom. Regardless of the effort dedicated to curricular planning and restructuring, teachers will continue to use strategies and materials with which they feel most comfortable (Galton, 1980, p.67).
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

According to educational experts, multicultural education empowers minorities in the classroom by providing materials that equate nondominant cultures with traditional western European cultures, and give members equal status. These multicultural educational programs have been very successful with middle school children. They can easily be integrated into previously identified scope and sequence designs of Language Arts. Countless manuals and guides have been made available to help teachers and students with proposed curriculums. For specific information on which models would be excellent to emulate, refer to the bibliography for any of these:

Race, Class, Gender, and Disability. Columbus, OH: Merrill.


In "Empowering Minority Students: A Framework for Intervention," Cummins (1990) argues that educational reforms, such as compensatory and bilingual education, have failed because they have not significantly altered relationships between educators and minority students or between schools and minority communities. Some societal groups continue to be disabled by their unhealthy interactions with educators, especially with those who belong to dominant groups controlling institutions and reward systems. Far too often, dominated groups are denied access to high-status positions because many failed to receive adequate preparation and training. Multicultural education can develop ability,
confidence, and motivation to empower minorities to succeed in school.

In "Implementing the CA English Language Arts Framework," Kucer (1988) claims revolutionary restructuring needs to be done as far as how Language Arts is conceived and taught. Some traditional literacy curricula present concepts in piecemeal fashion and break up the writing and thinking processes into unrelated subskills stripped of meaning. Some teachers spend excessive time drilling spelling and not enough time encouraging creativity and composition. Another flaw in some traditional formats is reliance too heavily upon standardized tests to measure teacher effectiveness.

As a whole, Americans have fallen victim to believing the myth that higher standardized test scores equate to higher achievement in education. This misconception has led to major pressure from parents, politicians, and potential employers to increase and emphasize test scores. These individuals not only publicize their dissatisfaction; they demand improvement. Thus, school personnel and pupils may often resort to cheating.
to "make the grade."

For instance, to compensate for poor reports, thousands of teachers stop teaching their state-mandated frameworks two or three weeks prior to any standardized exam. As a result of teaching exactly what is tested, they may raise overall averages. While selective scores look good and please parents, the students are not necessarily improving in the academic areas measured. In other words, the actual testing process has become too polluted and political to give accurate insight.

Ironically, those in positions to enhance the learning environments usually have adverse effects, instead. Examples include professional quality review teams and administrators throughout the country. They critique school climates and curricula to allocate funds. In theory, the Program Quality Review staffs' job is to help successful schools invest in new ways to continue stimulating scholastic growth. But in reality, this does not happen because administrators stress the importance of passing inspection.

Rather than being supportive, district leaders create
unnatural working conditions that reflect recent teacher rehearsing and role playing. They also insist teachers and students outperform their predecessors every year. Even though higher test scores have little educational or predictive value in classrooms, they may translate into more money for future budgets. For instance, schools often receive special grants and funding to support pilot programs that have proven successful. Generating higher test scores has become a major part of the criteria to measure a school's success.

To conclude Cummin's ideas, the general consensus is that the system is failing to educate students adequately. Parents and employers are complaining about the crisis in American schools. Despite the statistics, Americans remain under the illusion that better standardized test results indicate educational improvement.

While the public cries out for higher test scores, educators giving the tests argue these instruments lack consistency and reliability for selected populations. At the same time, most popular journals and local newspapers ridicule the annual
"Report Card" the U.S. Department of Education issues. Meanwhile, if nobody can pinpoint the problems, what are all of the assessments worth?

Sleeter and Grant (1987) give from a different perspective of multicultural education in "An Analysis of Multicultural Education in the United States." They examine what multicultural education means and evaluate the contributions to both theory and practice. Much of existing literature addresses only limited aspects of multicultural education. Teaching the culturally different to assimilate students of color into the cultural mainstream and social structure within existing school programs does not work. But multicultural environments can build human relations that help students of different backgrounds get along better and appreciate each other.

Multicultural programs foster cultural pluralism by teaching courses about experiences, contributions, and concerns of distinct ethnic, gender, and social class groups. Multicultural Education promotes cultural pluralism and social equality by
reforming school programs for all students to make it reflect diversity. Education that is multicultural prepares students to challenge social structural inequality and to promote cultural diversity.

Multicultural education means different things to different people. Commonly, it means changes in education that merely benefit people of color. Most writings consider race and ethnicity as the main types of human diversity, without even referring to language, gender, social class, or various handicaps. Most fail to concentrate on institutional or curricular needs as agents of school change. Lastly, if those authors (e.g. Hirsch, 1987; Rodriguez, 1987) spent more time examining fully-functional multicultural classrooms, they would have a much clearer, understanding of how beneficial they can be.

One text that has tremendous teaching tools is Teaching Strategies for Ethnic Studies. In it, Banks (1984) explains why and how students should be taught more accurate information about numerous nonwhite cultures. Each chapter focuses on
the corrections to myths commonly taught as fact in American schools throughout the country. For instance, he shows how contorted class discussions of the Native American's perspective usually are.

The majority of commentary on educations reflects the general consensus that people most often falsely assume that teaching models and learning styles lack flexibility and cannot be adapted to be more compatible. To grow, learners have to deal with discomfort and set tasks to break the barriers of fear. Innovative teachers must help students actively seek new challenges both inside and outside of the classroom. Before that can happen, students have to maintain a sense of belonging and acceptance. However, those students who experience great discomfort in the school environment have difficulty relating to and profiting from educational settings.

In Teacher-student Relationships: Causes and Consequences, Brophy (1974) says students are more willing to learn when they appreciate the value of classroom activities and believe they will succeed if they apply reasonable effort.
To motivate students to learn, teachers must both help them to appreciate value of academic activities and make them successful when they apply effort. Some built-in functions of multicultural programs are having a supportive environment and meaningful learning objectives (Brophy & Good, 1984).

In Middle School teaching students and adapting tasks to students' interests include novelty/variety elements that allow choices or autonomous decisions, provide students opportunities to respond actively, provide immediate feedback to student responses, allow students to create finished products include fantasy or simulation elements, incorporate game-like features into exercises, include higher-level objectives and divergent questions, and provide opportunities to interact with peers.

In an article, J. Lewandowski (1989) reports how peer forums can be used throughout this country to motivate students. The data presented comes from a case study conducted at Allen High School, by the Special Education department. A panel of students was developed to address
several factors: how to get these students to be academically successful, have extracurricular interests, be known and respected on campus, be recognized for overcoming major school problems and to be outspoken and confident.

The author describes the preparation, forum procedures, follow-up, possible modifications, and conclusions. He explains how similar student committees can be formed as support groups to help everyone from the GATE to the "at risk" student.

The article relates directly to classroom activities because it discusses how teacher can help students organize to support each other. This can be done in a single class or as a schoolwide project. The idea is to get the students to share ideas, concerns, encouragement, and support. They can define their own qualities necessary for success and use each other as role models. Basically, the teacher would function as a mediator and monitor of activities.

To maximize the reader's understanding, Lewandowski (1989) thoroughly introduces his research setting, methodology and analysis, and the upcoming data. Immediately letting his
audience know the scope of his survey prevents misinterpretation of its findings. If the scope had been broader, his report would have outlined a much more plausible picture of what could potentially occur in these educational forums.

To be more plausible, comparisons could have been made of different regions, schools, and districts throughout the United States. For example, his research may have indicated that the school districts in southern California provided better support systems to their students and teachers than similar facilities in other areas, which would explain why they would have a greater tendency to prevent high dropout rates in their schools. In other words, the more data the author collected, the more convincing and enlightening the report could have been.

On the other side of the world, the educational studies show situations are similar to those Americans face. Educators elsewhere are also striving to incorporate multicultural agendas into the school system to alleviate racial tensions. For
instance, from 1981 to 1987, the University of Warwick's Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations (Foster, 1990) created a program called Education and Ethnicity. The goal was to establish and examine policies, practices, and purposes of multicultural and antiracist education.

One of the case studies was conducted at comprehensive, multiethnic, inner city high school in Milltown, England. To show an intense commitment to its antiracist agenda, administrators published the following message to the community in its 1985-6 school year pamphlet:

"Milltown High is a multiracial school. We are developing policies to promote equal opportunities and equal esteem for all our students, girls and boys, black and white. It is very important to help everyone in our school community understand the causes of racism and sexism in our society, and the part we can play in fighting against them" (Foster, 1990, P. viii).

From a professional perspective within the English department of the study, the two male and four female teachers felt dedicated to using a curriculum that enhanced personal development of their students. All of them stressed
the value of incorporating the youngsters’ backgrounds and beliefs into learning environment. Throughout all the lessons, antiracism and cultural appreciation were recurring themes. To sharpen social and political awareness, repairing racially-strained relationships and preparing students to transcend existing cultural/ethnical boundaries was a major focus.

The literary works used in the curriculum had varied moral and cultural perspectives. Discussions and debates stimulated student interest and involvement in endless ethical and economical issues. By taking different viewpoints, they learned how to put some real life experiences into several different political and social contexts. In other words, such learning activities penetrated pupils persona to give them an upclose, uncensored glance at own their daily individual roles and functions. Alas, some success had been made.

CURRICULUM

Since schools no longer consist of all white, English-speaking students, it is important to sensitize its staff to the needs of
the new diverse pupil population. For example, to relate to
African American students, a broad spectrum of literary works
by African Americans could explain various political, social, and
cultural phenomena and their impact on society. The universal
themes in these works would allow all students and teacher an
opportunity to share ideas and enhance critical thinking,
organizational, and decision-making skills.

Including these and other nonwhite, ethnic resources would
have several benefits. First and foremost, information would
replace ignorance and neutralize the negative portrayal most
texts depict of minorities. As all cultures learn about each
other's heritage, students could find new ways to deal with
their daily dilemmas and present pressures. Once motivated to
persevere and to overcome obstacles, students could improve
their human relations.

Yet, with the exception of a few excerpts from well-known
authors, such as Langston Hughes, African American and other
nontraditional writings have been excluded from some
literature curriculum. Throughout the teaching of English
classes, getting students to read regularly has always been a challenge. Using record sheets to track student reading can be quite effective. The student logs the book title, length of reading session, and a parent signature. These sheets should be turned in consistently and stipulate a 20-minute minimum for uninterrupted reading.

In a literature-based Language Arts program, it is important to know the powerful roles stories often involve. Generally, they help children to pinpoint and relate to a particular setting and follow a sequence of events. As they process the details, they comprehend norms and distinguish deviations. At some point, they relate familiarities from their world to regularities and nuances in literature. Finally, true transfer of knowledge occurs. In additions to books, films can do wonders to augment children's exposure to numerous cultures. Far too often, movies are just simply used as rewards. Instead, they can be instructional aids to accomplish goals. They can explain complex literary concepts, simplify confusing sections of a text, and analyze story elements, like: setting, plot,
characterization, theme, mood, tone, point of view, style, climax etc. Technology can stimulate analytical comparisons between an author's viewpoint and a filmmaker's depiction of literary work. Such analysis can initiate class discussions or help open minds of those who have limited contact with or views of other cultures.

Once students learn to use logic and deductive thinking or reasoning to look beyond superficial explanations, they can be encouraged to respond strongly or sincerely. Discussing real issues prepares pupils to function in a complex society. In such an environment, they can learn to tolerate differences of opinions and viewpoints.

When movies are combined with television shows and written sources, social and political events may be elaborated on and further embellished by daily news commentary and articles. Furthermore, interactive class discourse can act as a catalyst for students to fully grasp their world and their role in it. "What is important is how teachers teach the content in the curriculum, not just how the curriculum is designed." A good
curriculum director facilitates discussions that develop a genuine list of criteria defining an excellent curriculum. Such discussions may hinge on two questions: "What should your students know and be able to do? What experiences are all students entitled to?" (Shields, 1992, p. 10).

A very informative book called Taking Sides (Noll, 1991) had a dedicated a chapter to debating a controversial question: does a common curriculum promote equality? That is one of the many questions educators wrestle with when making political decisions, like whether or not to pursue multicultural education.

In Taking Sides, Alder, director of the Institute of Philosophical Research, claims establishing uniform curricular objectives for all will lead to qualitative equality of educational opportunity. A critic of Alder, McKenzie, former superintendent of public schools criticizes The Paideia Proposal and points out Alder's faulty assumptions about the learning process and his lack of attention to the realities of today's society.
To put their argument in the proper perspective, the question for the 1990's is: Can quality and equity be gained simultaneously and, if so, how? The search for academic excellence weighs heavily on the minds of all those who report on the current situation in schools.

The Paideia Proposal outlines a plan for providing the same essential education for all students, regardless of background. This common schooling has three premises: development of thinking skills, acquisition of necessary organized information, and sustenance of intellectual inquiry.

Adler contends society desperately needs grasp the Greek concept of paideia to have a nation of productive, culturally-united, and intelligent individuals. However, some serious questions should be addressed when evaluating the practicality and feasibility of this plan. For example, could teachers be qualified or available to carry out the various aspects of the proposal? Would the plan's rigorous intellectual training hinder "nonacademic" students? Would students and parents willingly forfeit their view of school as an agency to
prepare people for careers?

With such critical issues in mind, Floretta McKenzie (1983) examines and refutes the theoretical and practical aspects of Adler's plan. McKenzie uses The Wizard of Oz analogy to describe Adler's disillusioned perspective of education. She says educators have an image of perfect, peaceful place like Oz, where teachers and school administrators can enjoy carefree lives.

While Adler illudes to such a moment/place in education, he offers no realistic approach to reach it. Plus, many educators no longer share these high hopes of finding ideal instruction or exemplary education of Oz. Instead, they refuse to believe in miracles or rush to join the next trip down the yellow brick road of educational reform.

The Paideia Proposal makes a serious mistake by minimizing the tremendous progress America has made to offer wider access to education. The plans misjudges the educational system when it merely says U.S. education is only winning the quantitative half of its battle to provide equal educational
opportunity to all. For example, not only are twenty-five percent more people graduating from high school, but GNP has also risen 25-50 percent in the last twenty years. Yet Alder's proposal neglects to acknowledge the fact that schools must have been teaching youngsters some meaningful, life-enhancing skills.

Another gross error the proposal makes is presuming that because all children can be educated, they should receive uniform instruction. However, any teacher can testify that a variety of methods and strategies must be used to reach as many children as possible. Teachers have to use flexibility to account for different learning styles.

Another questionable assumption the proposal makes attempts to define an ideal curriculum. Its ideas conflict with the realities of today's society. While, one of the author's major points is "to live well in the fullest human sense involves learning as well as earning," his proposed program urges eliminating almost all vocational training in basic schooling. That clearly negates the motto's notion that earning is as
important as learning.

Cutting such programs would also upset the business industry, which constantly complains that far too many graduates lack general and specific skills for employment. Obviously, Adler overlooked how societal demand instigated the teaching of vocational education ... so potential employees would have adequate training to keep up with the vastly changing technological world. The Proposal prefers that vocational training occur after high school on two or four-year college campuses. But that ignores the harsh reality that many cannot afford to attend. Plus, many unprepared pupils would be denied or at least delayed in the chance to enter the work force.

All these oversights lead one to believe Adler does not realize schools are political institutions that are very sensitive to the economic and social needs of the public. He simply suggests giving local principals more control to debureaucratize schools. On the one hand, that may please some districts, but it would in no way remove schools from the
political arena.

The plan lacks economic sense too. Adler admits successful implementation of his proposal would require a long list of changes ranging from higher teacher salaries and smaller class sizes to remedial education. But he offers no suggestions to finance the cost for its remedies.

Without a doubt, much speculation, discussion and research needs to be done to improve education. Adler's plan does detail what should be done, but it fails to outline the transition steps to get there from where we are now.

Overall the proposal's message is excellent quality education is the key to quality living. Voters must be educated to maintain democracy, and education is the gateway to equality. Despite the strength of its words, the plan just lacks the leadership and power to make the changes needed to succeed.

In a later chapter, Adler debated a second pertinent issue, which comes up when educators consider implementing multicultural programs. The focus hinged on the question:
should literacy be based on traditional culture?

Professor of English E. D. Hirsch, Jr., (1987-1988) argues that educators need to examine slogans that determine the teaching of traditional knowledge to young children. Stephen Tchudi, (1987-1988) director of the Center for Literacy and Learning at Michigan State University, contends that cultural literacy cannot be prescribed, since it evolves from the complexities of children's experiences.

One of the most controversial issues today is how much of a role should a student's social experiences play in shaping schools. While nobody seems to agree . . . everyone, claiming to be someone in education, is trying to find an acceptable definition of cultural literacy.

Hirsch (1987-1988) argues the teaching of traditional knowledge through good literature has been severely undermined. He feels everyone must be able to participate in the national culture and that requires uniform exposure to a common body of materials. However, some serious questions should be addressed when defining literacy. For example,
when a society is multicultural, should so-called literacy be drawn exclusively from the dominant cultural sources?

Answers to this question are changing in America . . . Many people disagree with the primary use of the U.S.'s European heritage. As a result, countless researchers have called for major shifts in educational focus and efforts. "Nation At Risk" and "How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students" were two of the most publicized studies.

Stephen warns that the background for Hirsch's kind of cultural literacy is acquired in several complex ways. Enculturation does not happen automatically. It cannot be reduced to "the presentation of selected bits of 'traditional literate culture' in some prescribed order."

Stephen uses the analogy of building a straw man to describe Hirsch's manipulative strategy to put his argument together. Stephen says Hirsch attributes three slogans to education just to call them "half-truths" and knock them down. After that, he describes and proposes that his own concept of
cultural literacy be used in future educational reform. Hirsch's overall mistake is that he seems to be supporting cultural indoctrination instead of genuine education. But flaws can be illustrated point by point.

First, concerning home versus school learning, he alludes to a recent consensus among reading researchers that adequate literacy depends on the specific information called cultural literacy. That is simply not true. No consensus exists among reading researchers that advocates imposing traditional literate culture on children at the earliest possible age. Instead, researchers emphasize the background of the reader. That is not just factual information; it includes the reader's experiences, attitudes, and values brought to the text. Hirsch neglects the fact that home values and home learning have powerful effects on literacy, just like those at school. He should realize background for literacy is acquired in complex ways. Hirsch uses a highly selective example of history to support his argument that school matters. He creates an image of golden age in education when students studied common
content and supposedly mastered a common literate culture. Another mistake was Hirsch's assumption that having learning resources meant the students actually learned the material in them. He also ignored historical studies that show at least as much criticism about what students really knew then and know today.

A more reasonable approach than accusing children of being obstinate, boneheaded, or illiterate would be to ask cultural indoctrination has consistently failed year after year.

Any educator knows children only retain information when they see some purpose to it and place it in a context of previous learning and experience. Hirsch has a point when he says "children thrive only as members of a community and they learn language and culture quickly because of an appetite for acculturation." But his error is trying "force-feed traditional literate "culture" to these hungry children.

Hirsch is right to question pseudoscience of using basals, but he offers no real solution to book selection in curriculum design. Using the curriculums that have been prescribed and
taught over the years, children have failed to learn to anyone's satisfaction.

The result is language and acculturation do not happen automatically. They occur naturally through extensive reading, writing, speaking, listening, thinking, and experiencing.

Hirsch wants changes in education, but he only offers slight variations of plans that have failed throughout history. To succeed, Americans need to move beyond slogans and straw men. Cultural literacy is a process of participating fully and actively in a society. It is a product of home and school activities. It is not something that results from piling up of facts passed on in some common material.
CHAPTER THREE: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This analysis involving a Middle School illustrates how adopting a multicultural outlook can transform students into more productive, effective citizens. The next logical step means converting the district's written commitments into achieving diversity within the school, its staff, and students in daily permanent practices. More specifically, educators must implement a curriculum that guarantees tolerance and perpetuation of cultural diversity. They must stop spending so much time and money conducting opinion polls about educational and cultural problems and start restructuring for long-term improvements and solutions.

Devising this multiculturally-integrated, literature-based curriculum will help the District restructure its Language Arts program. Including minority-impacted cultures in classroom discourse will improve the service to the everchanging nearby neighborhoods. All students can be introduced to a cultural cornucopia of societal systems, functions, generalizations, and
concepts; but simultaneously, the curriculum must be used to teach students the skills necessary to participate actively in these activities.
CHAPTER FOUR: DESIGN OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The data collected stems from various sources, such as field research, direct observation, published and unpublished documents, and formal and informal interviews. The details reported include unsettled, controversial, and career-threatening circumstances.

To restructure curricula, theories, techniques, texts, and other pertinent materials were obtained and combined from the following sources: several Riverside County Language Arts 7/8 Course Guides, California Framework for Language Arts/English, Caught In The Middle, numerous works on multicultural education, and other current Language Arts literature.

Both thematic and conceptual approaches were used to teach basic and multicultural skills; these should uniformly rely on majority and minority cultural groups' perspectives to enhance learning experiences for all adolescents. The resulting curriculum guide included: outline of units, textbooks, core
content, supplemental materials, and a thorough course guide of objectives aligned with California State Framework.

This curricular project was not field tested nor did it have specific results to report to the Master's Project Committee. Due to budget constraints and administrative changes throughout the District, the curriculum team at the Middle School was not able even to consider reviewing the plan until the fall of 1993.

BACKGROUND INDUCING CHANGE

The historical/political conditions that contributed to the proposed change were complicated. Two districts were disagreeing about boundaries and competing for resulting ADA funds for increasing enrollment. One district had been K - 12 for years and planned on building new sites to house more students. This district refused to lose staff and transfer its students to its former feeder Elementary district that was planning to expand to K - 12 and retain its own elementary students.

On the other hand, the latter District, initiated a lawsuit to
ensure that its intentions of becoming a district were realized. This district had been elementary since its conception and had little or no idea about devising a secondary curriculum. As a result, one of the stipulations in the transition was to buy and implement all of the first district's secondary curricular materials.

By the end of the political battle, first district had legally lost. However, it retaliated or rebelled by not forwarding adequate teaching/learning resources. Thus, the District inherited thousands of students, quickly constructed new school sites and converted old ones, and used a piece-meal approach to create a temporary curriculum to get through its first year.

By using convenient combinations of available materials, the District teachers taught from literature books aligned with elementary level end-of-the-year CTBS tests. Yet they set instructional objectives derived from an adopted course of study aligned with secondary level end-of-the-year (CAS)². The result was problems determining accountability and evaluation.
From a political standpoint, board members wanted to look good to the community. Therefore, idealistic visions and forecasts were publicized about the new district's goals and objectives.

**LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

The intended outcomes of the proposed change in the curriculum were to introduce students to the *Caught In The Middle* concept (as it relates to Language Arts). Students were supposed to have an opportunity to learn various terms and skills that would produce a smooth transition from middle to high school.

The academic activities favored were those that would prepare students adequately for high school. Specifically, the 7th graders were going to follow a curriculum aligned with social studies. The *Star Walk* book was to be the literary base. Under the proposed curriculum, 7th graders were to have learned the following:

1. 8 styles of writing (CAS)
2. research techniques
   a. Reader's Guide
b. microfiche
c. computer assistance
3. literary terms
4. mechanics to the writing process
5. relation of literature to life
6. critical thinking and problem-solving skills

Despite the District's intentions, many curriculum goals were not obtained during the first year of restructuring. For example, the students did not have an opportunity to develop adequate research and library skills because current facilities did not have a fully-supplied, accessible, or functional library. Besides having no library references, there were no word processing resources, and no novels that correlated with history. Lastly, even the students' exposure to literature was limited.

OUTCOME-PROMOTING PROCESSES

The new District tried to bring about new outcomes required to teach Language Arts 7 according to the Caught In The Middle ideology. To do so, it used several formal and informal processes. In the initial stages, board members shared their expectations with district administrators in meetings and
memoranda. They also discussed the district's internal needs, structure, and mission.

From the district level, duties were delegated to school site administrators to plan strategically successful restructuring programs. High-scaled recruitment began for the best-qualified teachers. They sought educators with credentials and training to meet their employment needs. Shortly after hiring them, summer curriculum committees were chosen to outline instructional objectives for the fall.

One of the first issues was testing. In new District, all 7th grade Language Arts teachers had to administer both pre- and posttests. To document previous knowledge, as well as current gains in performance, they selected the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test. The testing material was by far the best evaluative resource to be available in years. The primary purpose of the test was to screen students in reading. Once performance ability had been classified, students' schedules were modified as needed. Then the teacher had to decide which materials and methods would be best to help students
reach their full potential.

These staff members worked diligently pooling resources and tapping each other's creativity. They used numerous references in their decision making. These included: The California Framework for Language Arts/English, the district guidelines such as the newly-adopted Language Arts 7 Course of Study Guide, and their previous elementary-aligned literature and grammar texts.

Nevertheless, other instruments needed to be included in the teachers' repertoire of resources to maintain the reader's interest and to enhance previously accepted literary standards of excellence (Pearson et al., 1989). Most of the material was presented in global terms and relative concepts and the tests required understanding of main ideas and supporting details.

Initially, due to the urgency of having curriculum drafts approved, input and feedback from parents, students and other community members were postponed until after school opened. Then the District held meetings that were open to the public and published quarterly reports inviting the community to offer
ideas to aid restructuring.

For instance, in the District's Winter 1991-92 publication issue, community members, schools, and various agencies were asked for input into the five-year restructuring proposal. Specific areas of concern included the following: "description of the school district, description of the community, instructional programs and services, financial and physical resources, community involvement, organizational management, demographic planning/facility usage, innovations, and other critical issues" (SEE FIGURE 1).
**FIGURE 1: A MODEL OF CHANGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES</th>
<th>TARGET FOR CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who’s in control?</td>
<td>Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>Organizational policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence (Power)</td>
<td>Beyond numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Power</td>
<td>Organization culture explicit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values/beliefs CULTURAL</td>
<td>Identify own culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Appreciate others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>See value-added in others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Am I?</td>
<td>Interpersonal learnings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes INDIVIDUAL</td>
<td>Individual awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions</td>
<td>Behavioral change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ORGANIZATION: SCHOOL MISSION, COMMUNITY, AND PARENTS

To make the multicultural innovations succeed between 1991-1996, some of the existing norms at the Middle School must change. Although not all of these are known yet, some desired behaviors are quite evident. For instance, recruitment and enrollment techniques must achieve and maintain diversity throughout the school. The cultural composition of the staff should closely reflect or represent that of the student body to ensure a variety of role models and educational experiences.

Communication among administrators, teachers, parents, local agencies and businesses, and students needs to improve drastically. Whether feedback from any internal and external source is through questions, criticism, suggestions, or approval, it should be respected and receive immediate response. Whenever possible, the school site should also be sensitive to other community needs. For example, administrators and program planners must consider cost, scheduling, and transportation for children and parents who may want to
attend academic and extracurricular functions. Informal potlucks and after school/work festivities could be excellent icebreakers. But inevitably, networking and cooperation must occur to emphasize learning. Then the students would have to acquire a new attitude about the purpose of middle school and take their studies seriously to prepare for high school. In that way, they could see the importance of education and how it relates to their everyday lives.

In regard to educators, the teachers would have to be trained how to facilitate changes in curriculum and class instruction. Several must adjust to being culturally open-minded "team players." Teachers would have to recognize their own biases and resist being judgmental or being polarizing extremes because of differences. Professionally, more time has to be allotted for departmental discussions to coordinate 7th and 8th grade curriculum goals. Without proper inservice, the transformation involved from being creative individuals to team members consulting about lesson/unit changes would be too difficult. Unless teachers
were directly involved in decision-making, some would resent the loss of their individual autonomy and become frustrated.

One of the best ways to approach attaining cultural awareness in the classroom is progressively over time. For optimal development of multicultural education, teaching themes and strategies should be divided into four flexible stages. First, recognition of the impact students' heritage has on their lives needs to occur. For this to take place, all observations and class discussions must be nonjudgmental to allow comfortable, unlimited exchanges and experiences. Second, acceptance or rejection may result, depending on how students cope with the new information and their individual reactions to unfamiliar ideas. Third, some healthy form of integration or ethnocentrism can transpire, once youngsters learn to empathize with diverse groups. Lastly, in a safe sharing environment, students can transcend the initial awkwardness and come to respect their different backgrounds and perspectives (Gaston, 1984, pp. 1-13).

Undoubtedly that would be an excellent start, but there
must also be adequate texts, supplementary materials, and library resources to ensure successful implementation. More importantly, a formal curriculum and direction needs to be formatted and followed. It should show a continuum of Language Arts skills and activities. A committee of teachers, parents, and students could outline a detailed scope and sequence schedule. After being actively involved in the curricula change, they would have the focus required to attain scholastic goals together.

**BARRIERS TO CHANGE**

Many instructors and parents have expressed misconceptions about multicultural education and perceive it as a threat to their existing attitudes and assumptions about life inside and outside of the classroom. By including and informing all those who may be affected, parents, educators, and children may reach tolerance and comfort levels necessary to explore multicultural activities. Community involvement and parent participation are essential prerequisites for success in school. Otherwise, their confusion and resistance may stifle any initial
acceptance of these new culturally-conscious programs (Ramsey, 1987, pp. 169–70).

Barriers and resistance to the change have come from several sources, ranging from students and parents to certificated employees. For example, during interviews a 7th grader said, "This school doesn't have the right books or equipment for our regular classes or P. E. But everyone expects us to learn what we can and like it. Well, we don't." Similarly, at Open House, one parent of a 7th grade student said, "I know you teachers are really trying to make the best of a bad situation. But I gotta tell you, it's hard to keep a straight face when my son comes home complaining about trying to read or study from poorly xeroxed handouts cause you can't afford to send books home."

Two veteran Language Arts teachers shared their opinions also. The first remarked, "I've been teaching longer than some of these people around here have been born. How can they dream up stuff over the summer and tell me I have to change what I've been doing for over twenty years!" The second
candidly stated, "I agree with the ideas being proposed in the curriculum. But we don't have the supplies we need; so how can we be held accountable for meeting the proposed objectives? Being idealistic is one thing, but losing your job over a technicality is another." In addition, one teacher just joining the new District commented, "I think the old district lost sight of its educational obligation during the lawsuit. If children were really a primary concern, those people would have sent over all of the stuff we needed to teach the students. Even though the curriculum would have been temporary, the transition would have been hard enough without their resistance. Everyone was so caught up in the politics and ego-tripping, nobody really won anything. In the long run, the kids are losing out."

Despite the differences in perspectives, there seemed to be some consensus about the curricular changes in the Language Arts department. While most agreed with the agenda for changes and new ideas, they believed initial restructuring was done hastily. School sites and staffs were not prepared to
undertake such an influx of elementary school students. They just simply lacked the secondary materials and training to transform them into middle school students. Consequently, resistant attitudes arose from the confusion.

For more clarity, multicultural education should be overtly evaluated by formative and summative measures. The first simply means teachers continuously use a culturally-conscious scope to determine resources and concepts covered in their daily lessons, thematic units, and interactive activities. Second, summative evaluation would involve the teacher's ongoing periodic assessment of the children's reaction to and benefit from such strategies (Ramsey, 1987, pp. 192-5).

Before engaging in formative planning, the teacher could use the following eight-item checklist to select appropriate materials and to meet specific objectives:

1. "develop positive gender, racial, class, cultural, and individual identities
2. develop ability to identify, empathize, and relate with individuals from other groups
3. develop respect and appreciation for ways in which other people live
4. develop a concern and interest in others, a willingness
to include others, and a desire to cooperate
5. develop a realistic awareness of contemporary society, a sense of social responsibility, and an active concern for people outside of their immediate environment
6. develop autonomy to become critical analysts and activists in their social environment
7. develop educational skills and social knowledge that will enable them to become full participants in all aspects of society
8. develop effective and reciprocal relationships between homes and schools" (Ramsey, 1987, pp. 192-5).

Before engaging in summative planning, the teacher could use the following four-item checklist to determine the areas in which children need to be progressing:

1. "the ability to take another person's point of view
2. the level of social responsibility
3. the inclusionary versus exclusionary behavior
4. the grouping by patterns of children" (Ramsey, 1987, pp. 54-5).

To be fair, one must keep in mind that the restructuring is designed to take about five years. During this time, input and feedback can be obtained from all sources involved who are willing to participate. So, the "on-going innovation" may produce various outcomes; but exactly what those may be is
hard to predict. "To move monocultural organizations toward multiculturalism, change agents must seek overall system change" (See Figure 1). Ultimately, the success of the proposed changes will depend on the overall staff, student, and community evaluation and acceptance of the plan.

If all goes well, members of this Riverside area will reap the benefits of five key philosophical functions of education. First, multicultural education will provide a safe, cooperative learning environment that promotes student pride. Once students have a positive self-image, they tend to use more higher order thinking skills. They are less reluctant to share their ideas or to express themselves. Then the school can measure their achievement and effort. In addition to pupil participation in classroom activities, the school will offer parents opportunities to observe and give feedback.

Second, each student may at least receive a culturally-enriched education which is essential to function in a diverse society. In other words, these children will know how to demonstrate their individual perspectives and competencies
in the areas of reading and writing. Simultaneously, students master the series of skills needed to pass state-mandated proficiency tests and job entrance exams.

Third, the proposed comprehensive curriculum will meet students' needs. While expected to comprehend large amounts of knowledge, students will do more than merely memorize definitions and facts. To get the students actively engaged and on task, instructors must encourage them to incorporate their own personal experiences into every lesson. By using their multicultural backgrounds as a foundation for learning, students will be motivated to grasp a meaningful understanding of the concepts. Students learn better by relating new material to their own experiences.

Fourth, students will develop interpersonal skills because a quality education has to enrich students' lives intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. Often students are their own best teachers. Letting pupils work in groups with peers to translate and to reinterpret each others' ideas improves their communication skills. Reinforcing such cooperative learning
projects with periodic guidance allows students to become productive, well-rounded members of society.

Fifth, lesson plans will be changed whenever situational factors necessitate revision. The course guide outlines objectives that are flexible enough to educate the students and to address the needs of the community at the same time. This format capitalizes on the children's creativity instead of insisting they conform to rigid standards. Students strive to attain similar educational goals, without sacrificing their individuality. Overall, the multicultural philosophy enables students to have some responsibility for what and how they learn and combines a student and society-based strategy.

The district should seek support systems to invest time and money into school programs to lighten the burden of creating and accepting changes. Once united, parents, educators, and community members may encourage students to accept themselves and others as people with similarities that make us all human and differences that make us unique. Thus, students will learn to respect a wide range of diversity, including
physical differences, emotional differences, cultural differences, and differences in life-styles among individuals and groups" (Office of Intergroup Relations, 1979, pp. 1-2).

Any dollar amount is well spent to avoid stifling some students or hindering their participation in education. Overwhelming them with dominant traditional values and viewpoints devastates and destroys too many minority youngsters' ambitions. Multicultural techniques offer adolescents knowledge about unfamiliar lifestyles and traditions and the opportunity to combine aspects of them to enhance their own unique way of life. They also inform students about how different nondominant nationalities contributed to the dynamics of what makes America the great nation it is.

Advocates of diverse teaching methodologies use unbiased literature to expose students to historical experiences of numerous nondominant groups to understand better how some of their cultural values and behaviors have been shaped. Then students can continue to explore ideas with each other in
nonthreatening, supportive ways, rather than violating their peers unknowingly.

No manipulative kit or worksheet can enable students to have hands-on experience using concepts such as freedom of speech, respect for fellow humankind, tolerance, fairness, and passive persuasion. However, literature can.

English instructors can help students do more than read and write well. Given adequate resources and training, they may enable children to regard Language Arts as an dynamic tool for written and oral communication in their daily lives. The lessons improve reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities to communicate rationally with fellow citizens and future co-workers. Nevertheless, the focus remains on the importance of maintaining an open mind and perspective-taking when communicating, whether issues are common or controversial.

Time has been dedicated to developing this curriculum that will "undermine inequality; prepare youth for participation in economic democracy; create understanding of how to fight
oppression; balance self-development with directed teaching; develop awareness of worker-control experiments and of class-consciousness; inspire a sense of power and mutual respect; discuss and show humane alternatives" (Shor, 1986 p. 174).

Unless pedagogy develops student abilities/skills on several levels, students from nondominant backgrounds will not be empowered. Furthermore, to these pupils concepts like: inquiry, social perception, self-knowledge, peer relations, constructive engagement of the teacher, reflection on the making and remaking of knowledge and culture will merely be 'meaningless buzz words' used in education" (Shor, 1986, p. 188).

Upcoming generations need to engage in deep student-stimulated and student-centered inquiries and discussions about key themes or questions; then relate their interests to the content-area. Overall, the goal would be respectfully to use student ideas and merge their concrete experiences into the academic lessons.
The following curriculum has diverse, open-ended multicultural activities that have enough elasticity to encourage students to see their educational value; Once pupils see the importance and relate it to their own experiences, they will become more committed and motivated to learning.

Overall, the education system must take a significant and long overdue step in its attempt to create equality-rich class climates. The day of racially-tense environments should be as far in the past as the historical 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka case's verdict to desegregate schools (Baker, 1977, pp. 16-7).

In conclusion, the district should wisely invest in this priceless curricular packet. Its teachers could then have the means necessary to enhance one of the strongest literature-based curricula in the country.
CHAPTER FIVE:

NEW DISTRICT's
MULTICULTURAL EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM
LANGUAGE ARTS 7
CONTENT: THE FOLLOWING OUTLINES APPROXIMATE AMOUNT OF TIME TO BE SPENT TEACHING THE UNITS FOR LANGUAGES ARTS 7:

UNIT I: Stages of Adolescence 9
UNIT II: Animals' Language and Interdependence 9
UNIT III: Historical Development of Desire to Fly 9
UNIT IV: Interpretations of Past Civilizations 9
UNIT V: Extended Skills ***throughout course***

- Planning, developing, evaluating, and presenting individual and groups projects

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES: THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBES HOW THE CLASS WILL BE TAUGHT.

The teacher will: 1. alternatively instruct directly to small and entire class clusters.

2. enhance teaching strategies by using various forms of modern technology.

3. create opportunity for discussion among groups of different sizes.
4. provide cultural and research projects.
5. issue immediate critique and feedback on assignments to include opportunities to resubmit edited work
6. follow literature/writing based curriculum.
7. identify optimal environment to match student's cognitive and morality levels.
8. make provisions for peer tutoring and learning centers

TEXTBOOKS, CORE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL WORKS:

1. TEXTBOOKS

   A. English Writing and Skills Holt, Rhinehard, and Winston, Inc.,
      Copyright 1988

   B. Star Walk Silver Burdett & Ginn
      Copyright 1989

   C. Elements of Literature Holt, Rinehart, and Winston
      Copyright 1989

2. CORE

   A. Mara, Daughter of the Nile
B. Treasure Island
C. A Day No Pigs Would Die

3. SUPPLEMENTAL BOOKS/MATERIALS

A. Novels

1. Alice in Wonderland
2. Through the Looking Glass
3. Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
4. Medieval Myths
5. Robin Hood

B. Magazines

1. National Geographic
2. Essence
3. Ebony
4. Jet

C. Newspapers

1. Black Voice
2. La Opinion
3. Los Angeles Times
4. Press Enterprise
D. Recommended Cultural Reading


2. Sedlacek, William E., and Brooks, Glenwood C.
   *Racism in American Education: A Model for Change.*

   New York: Knopf, 1972


4. Audio-Visuals

A. Films

1. *Connecting What You Know With What's On The Page*

2. *Decoding Words in Context*

3. *Drawing Conclusions*

4. *Integrating Comprehension Strategies*

5. *Story Mapping*

6. *Identifying Main Idea and Details*

B. Videos

1. *To Build A Fire*
2. *Witchcraft in America: Behind the Crucible*

3. *The Making of TV News*

4. **Second Step: Check It Out**

5. **Second Step: Violence Prevention Curriculum**

C. **Computer Software**

1. *Parts of Speech*

2. *Essential Grammar*

3. *Essential Punctuation*

4. *Super Story Tree*

5. *Land of the Unicorn:*
   
   An Adventure in Synonyms, Antonyms, and Logic


7. *The Portrait Series: Women Writers*

8. *Knowledge Quest Essentials*

9. *Word Attack Plus*

5. **EXTENDED WORKS – HONORS/GATE**

A. *Call of the Wild*

B. *Pride and Prejudice*

C. *Ten Little Indians (And Then There Were None)*
COURSE OBJECTIVES

I. INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP LISTENING SKILLS

A. Follows Oral Directions
   1. Writes Dictated Paragraph
   2. Follows Oral Directions
   3. Identifies Objectives

B. Recognizes Listening Behaviors
   1. Selects Appropriate Listening Behavior
   2. Clarifies And Negotiates Goals And Plans
   3. Analyzes Alternatives And Roles
   4. Takes Another's Viewpoint
   5. Uses Interpersonal Skills
   6. Cooperates With Diverse Others
   7. Works To Resolve Conflicts

C. Identifies Main Idea

D. Interprets Point Of View From Oral Reading
   1. Identifies Point Of View
   2. Analyzes Influence Of Heritage
3. Interprets Personal Heritage

4. Distinguishes Between Powerful And Powerless Perspectives

5. Becomes Aware Of Attitudes And Behaviors That Instigate Conflict

6. Interprets Information

7. Relates Ideas To Personal Experiences

8. Pinpoints Their Own Values

9. Examines Their Own And Others' Values In Terms Of Their Consequences

10. Develops Tolerance For Value Existing Conflicts

II. ORAL LANGUAGE SKILLS

A. Reads Orally

1. Reads Orally For Purpose

2. Practices Oral Communication Skills

3. Receives And Responds To Feedback

B. Presents Oral Summary Or Report

1. Gives An Oral Summary

2. Presents Oral Report
a. Exchange ideas in words and in writing
b. Adjust to people/having an audience

3. Critiques The Performance
   a. Provides self with feedback
   b. Monitors progress

III. HOLISTIC LITERATURE APPROACH

A. Understands Elements Of Literature
   1. Identifies Elements Of Literature
      a. plot
      b. setting
      c. characterization
      d. mood/tone
      e. climax/turning point

2. Understands Literary Terms

3. Recognizes Types Of Literature

4. Identifies Plot Sequence

B. Recognizes Topic Sentence, Main Idea, And
   Supporting Details
   1. Identifies Topic Sentence

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2. Identifies Main Idea

3. Identifies Supporting Details

IV. INTEGRATED SUBSKILLS FOR ANALYSIS

A. Comprehends Meanings Of Words

1. Uses Context Clues

2. Identifies Pronoun Reference

3. Identifies Prefix, Root, or Suffix

4. Identifies Meaning Of Prefix, Root, or Suffix

5. Selects Synonym

6. Selects Antonym

7. Selects Homonym

B. Differentiates Fact From Opinion

1. Identifies Fact And Opinion

2. Understands Cultural Influences and Differences

3. Clarifies Personal Values

4. Distinguishes Between Myths/Stereotypes and Facts

5. Recognizes Prejudice Attitudes/Behaviors

C. Make Conclusions, Inferences, And Predictions
1. Draws Conclusions
   a. Develops independent thoughts
   b. Hypothesize for oneself about problems/tasks

2. Identifies Inferences

3. Predicts Events
   a. Follows logical patterns
   b. Foretells outcomes based on experience and/or creativity

D. Identifies Author's Intent and Audience
   1. Identifies Author's Intent
   2. Identifies Author's Intended Audience
   3. Evaluates Motives
   4. Analyzes Audience's (Intended) Response
   5. Evaluates Consequences

E. Recognizes Cause and Effect
   1. Identifies Cause and Effect

F. Understands Critical Questions
   1. Identifies Critical Questions
   2. Uses Inquiry To Relate Main Ideas To
Overall Concepts

G. Makes Comparisons And Contrasts

1. Determines Comparisons And Contrasts
2. Categorizes Similarities and Differences

H. Completes Analogies

1. Identifies Analogies
2. Completes Analogies

I. Interprets Propaganda Techniques

1. Recognizes bias, slanted interpretation, and exaggeration
2. Identifies, investigates, and evaluates the range of evidence and perspectives involved
3. Determines choices available to them and makes informed decisions
4. Analyzes reasoning behind arguments people pose and the effects of their actions
5. Applies various techniques to enhance one's own communication and persuasion skills
6. Identifies biases in the media
IV. WRITING PROCESS

A. Writes To Prompt-CAP Skill Areas/Rubrics
   1. Writes Descriptive/Expository Work
   2. Writes Report Of Information
   3. Writes Evaluation: Judgment On Worth
   4. Writes Problem Solution
   5. Writes Autobiographical Incident
   6. Writes Firsthand Biography
   7. Writes Observational Essay
   8. Writes Story
   9. Writes Friendly Letter
  10. Writes Summary Or Synopsis
  11. Writes Speculation About Causes

B. Uses Prewriting Skills

   1. Understands relationship between writing process and writing product
      a. Identifies topic
      b. Identifies purpose

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c. Identifies organization pattern (examples)

1. description
2. comparison/contrast
3. definition
4. narration
5. cause/effect

d. Identifies genre (examples)

1. letter of various types
2. proposal
3. report
4. essay
5. formal speech

e. Identifies audience

2. Organizes Ideas

a. determines reasons

b. enumerates/gives examples

c. discusses implications

C. Writes Draft

1. Generates Draft
a. Distinguishes relevant from irrelevant material  
b. develops structure  
c. focuses on additional material as needed  

D. Revises Written Work  
   1. Recognizes And Uses Complete Sentences  
   2. Recognizes And Uses Sentence Variety  
   3. Uses Appropriate Word Choice And Diction  
   4. Uses Topic Sentences, Details, Transitions, And Closure  

E. Edits For Grammar, Usage, And Mechanics  
   1. Corrects Spelling  
   2. Corrects Subject/Verb Agreement  
   3. Corrects Verb Tenses  

V. USES ORGANIZATION AND STUDY SKILLS  

A. Uses Organizing Skills  
   1. Classifies And Organizes  
   2. Places Events In Chronological Order  
   3. Completes An Outline  

B. Recognizes Parts Of A Book  
   1. Identifies Parts Of A Book
2. Knows How To Identify Bibliographical Information

C. Understands Objective Test Taking
   1. Identifies Test Taking Procedures
   2. Develops And Use Appropriate Study Skills

VI. LIBRARY/RESEARCH SKILLS
   A. Uses Card Catalog And Dewey Decimal System
      1. Identifies Information From Card Catalog
      2. Determines Correct Heading
   B. Understands Plagiarism
      1. Determines Appropriate Presentation
      2. Uses Community Members As Resources
      3. Uses School Personnel As Resources
   C. Uses Dictionary Skills
      1. Selects Alphabetical Order
      2. Understands Guide Words
      3. Uses Pronunciation Key

VII. EXTENDED SKILLS
   A. Plans, Develops, Implements, Evaluates Project
      1. Finds Or Is Presented With A Topic
2. Narrows And Focuses

3. Formulates A Thesis Statement (if written) Or
   Central Idea (if audio or visual)

4. Collects Information And Arguments Or Materials

5. Revises For Clarity And Correctness

B. Presents Finished Project

C. Reads Works From Extended Lists

   1. Reads Orally From Minority-authored Texts

   2. Supplements Recommended Reading List With Works
      Of Own Interest

D. Participates In Multi-group Class Activities

   1. Discusses Intergroup Conflict(s)
      a. cultural differences
      b. stereotypes
      c. tension/hostility
      d. peer pressure

   2. Role plays Scenario

   3. Constructively Defines Problem(s)

   4. Uses Problem-solving Skills To Find Better
Alternatives And Solutions
a. identifies fact and opinion
b. identifies cause and effect
c. identifies propaganda (persuasive) techniques
d. identifies protagonist, antagonist
e. makes inferences, draw conclusions

5. Develops Intergroup Skills
a. develops writing skills
b. develops speaking skills
c. develops listening skills
d. develops sensitivity for others by doing perspective-taking

6. Writes A Draft About The Class Activity Using At Least One Of The Following Guidelines:
a. historical research
b. summary/synopsis
c. judgment of worth essay
d. comparison/contrast essay
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