Tenth Edition

Multicultural Education *in a* Pluralistic Society



Donna M. Gollnick • Philip C. Chinn



TENTH EDITION

Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society

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PEARSON

This book is dedicated to

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

DMG

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

PCC

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Preface

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

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

What Is New in the Tenth Edition?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Why Study Multicultural Education?

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

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

About the Tenth Edition

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

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

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

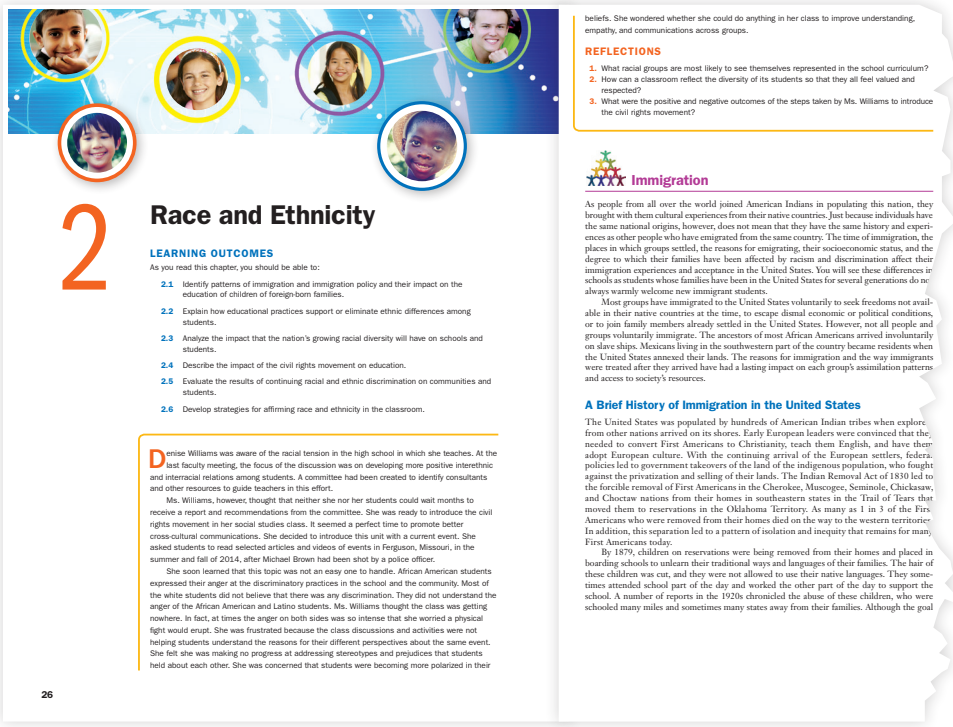
Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society provides an overview of the different cultural groups to which students belong. The first chapter examines the pervasive influence of culture, the importance of understanding our own and our students' cultural backgrounds and experiences, and the evolution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

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

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

Features in the Tenth Edition

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



2

Race and Ethnicity

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

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

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

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

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

REFLECTIONS

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

Immigration

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

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

A Brief History of Immigration in the United States

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

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

Chapter-Opening Classroom Scenarios

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

Critical Incidents in Teaching

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

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Impact of Socioeconomic Status on School Events

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

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

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

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

better in 1973 than in 1940. Beginning in 1973, however, the cost of living (i.e., the cost of housing, utilities, food, and other essentials) began to increase faster than incomes. Except for the wealthy, all families felt the financial pressure. No longer did they have extra income to purchase nonessentials. No longer was one full-time worker in a family enough to maintain a reasonable standard of living. The 1990s saw another upswing in the economy that resulted in an annual median family income of $68,931[1] in 2007. Following the 2008 recession, the median income of a family dropped to $63,152; it had rebounded only to $63,815 by 2013. When both husband and wife worked, the median income of the family increased to $94,299 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014m).

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

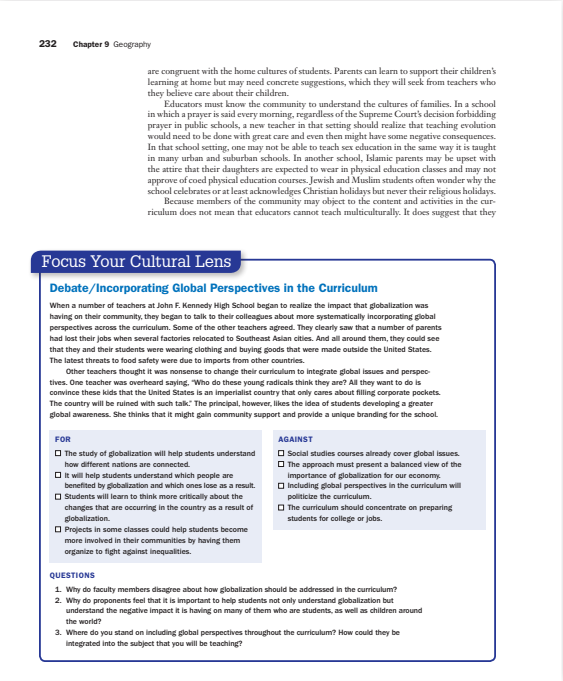
Wealth

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

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

Focus Your Cultural Lens: Debate

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



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

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

Because members of the community may object to the content and activities in the curriculum does not mean that educators cannot teach multiculturally. It does suggest that they

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate/Incorporating Global Perspectives in the Curriculum

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

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

FOR

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

AGAINST

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

QUESTIONS

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

Supplements for the Tenth Edition

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

Instructor's Resource Manual and Test Bank (0134227972)
The Instructor's Resource Manual and Test Bank includes an overview of chapter content and related instructional activities for the college classroom and for practice in the field as well as a robust collection of chapter-by-chapter test items. Discussion Questions and Portfolio Activities found in earlier editions have been moved to the Instructor's Resource Manual.

PowerPoint™ Slides (0134227980**)**
The PowerPoint™ slides include key concept summarizations. They are designed to help students understand, organize, and reinforce core concepts and theories.

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Tests can be downloaded in the following formats:

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

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1 Foundations of Multicultural Education

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

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

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

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

REFLECTIONS

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

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

Diversity in the Classroom

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

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

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

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

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

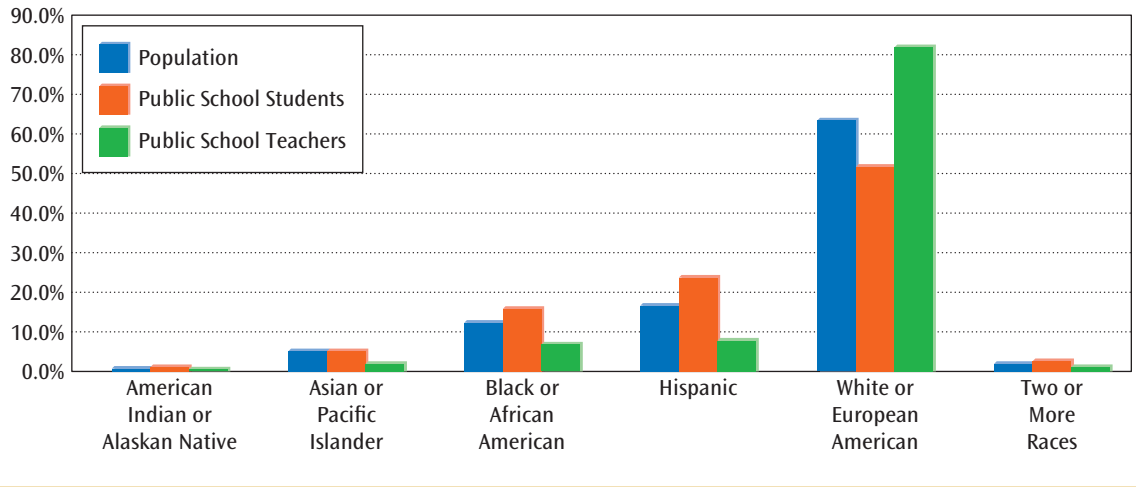


FIGURE 1.1 Pan-Ethnic and Racial Diversity of K–12 Teachers and Students in 2011

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

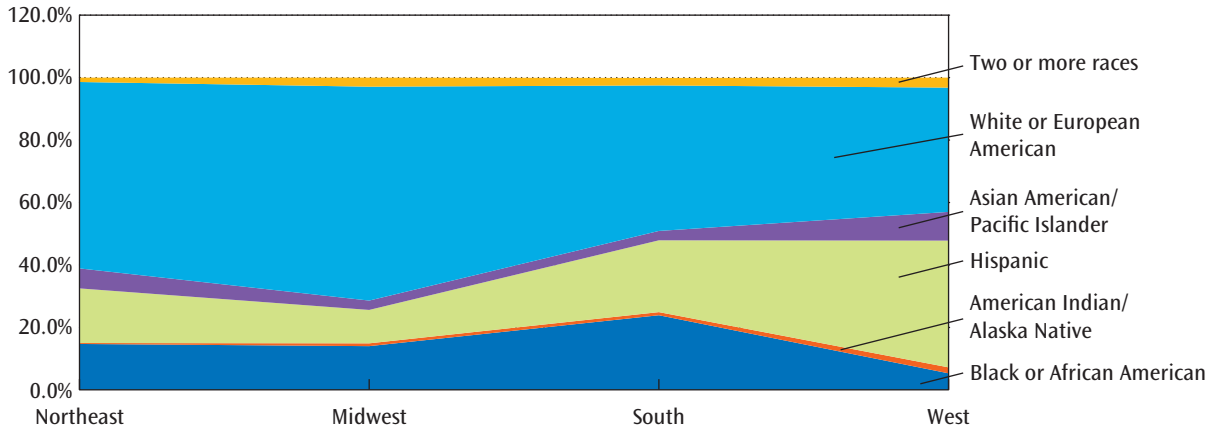


FIGURE 1.2 Percentage of Public Elementary and Secondary School Students Enrolled, by Region and Ethnicity/Race in 2011

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Culture

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

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

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Celebrating Ethnic Holidays

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

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

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

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

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

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

Characteristics of Culture

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

The Dominant Culture

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



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

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

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

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

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

Cultural Identity

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

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

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

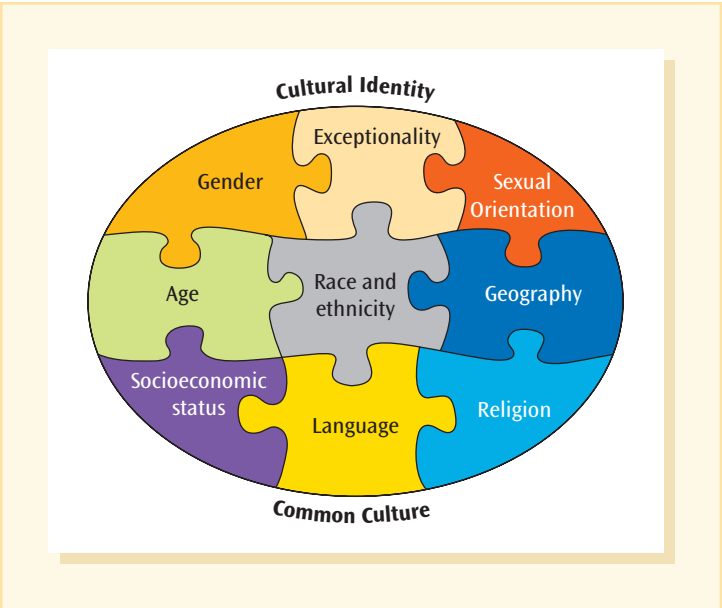


FIGURE 1.3 Cultural Identity

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

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

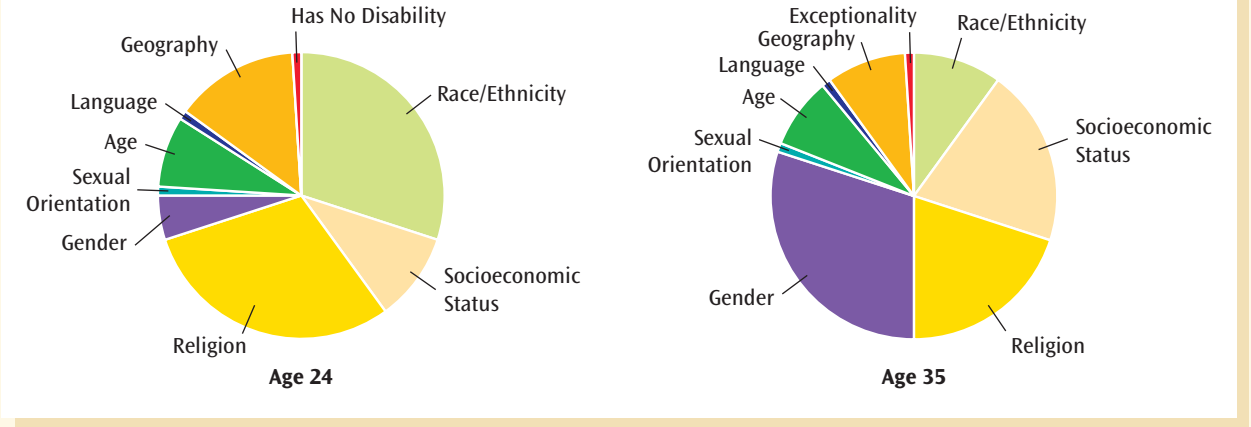


FIGURE 1.4 **Changing Cultural Identities**
Some cultural group memberships may take on more importance than others at different periods of life, as shown here for a woman when she was 24 years old and married without children and again when she was 35, divorced, and a single mother.

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

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

Pluralism in Society

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

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

culture. Some immigrant groups have assimilation as their goal; others try to preserve their native cultures. Refusing or not being permitted to assimilate, some immigrants and ethnic groups maintain their own ethnic communities and enclaves in areas of the nation's cities, such as Little Italy, Chinatown, Harlem, Koreatown, East Los Angeles, and Little Saigon. The suburbs also include pockets of families from the same ethnic group. Throughout the country are small towns and surrounding farmlands where the population comes from the same ethnic background, with all the residents being African American, German American, Danish American, Anglo American, or Mexican American. Some American Indian nations in the United States have their own political, economic, and educational systems.

Members of segregated communities may be culturally encapsulated in that most of their primary relationships and many of their secondary relationships are with members of their own ethnic group. Cross-cultural contacts occur primarily at the secondary level in work settings and political and civic institutions. In segregated communities, families may not have the opportunity to interact with members of other ethnic groups, who speak a different language or dialect, eat different foods, or have different values. They may learn to fear or denigrate members of other ethnic groups. Many European Americans live in segregated communities in which they interact only with others who share the same culture. Most people of color are forced out of their ethnic encapsulation to try to achieve social and economic mobility. In these cases, they are likely to develop secondary relationships with members of other ethnic groups at work, school, or shopping centers.

Assimilation

Assimilation occurs when a group's distinctive cultural patterns either become part of the dominant culture or disappear as the group adopts the dominant culture. Two similar processes interact as we learn how to act in society: **enculturation** and **socialization**. Enculturation is the process of acquiring the characteristics of a given culture and becoming competent in its language and ways of behaving and knowing. Socialization is the general process of learning the social norms of the culture. Through these processes, we internalize social and cultural rules. We learn what is expected in social roles, such as mother, husband, student, and child, and in occupational roles, such as teacher, banker, plumber, custodian, and politician. Enculturation and socialization are processes initiated at birth by parents, siblings, nurses, physicians, teachers, and neighbors. These people demonstrate and reward children and adults for acceptable behaviors. We learn the patterns of our culture and how to behave by observing and participating in the culture in which we are raised.

Structural assimilation occurs when the predominant cultural group (e.g., WASP) shares primary relationships with a second group, including membership in social clubs, intermarriage, and equal benefits in society. Although it may require several generations after immigration, assimilation has historically worked for most **voluntary immigrants**, particularly if they are white, but has not applied to **involuntary immigrants**, who were forced to emigrate as slaves. Many families have been in the country for centuries and yet have not been allowed to assimilate at the structural level because of long-term **discrimination**.

White European immigrants usually become structurally assimilated within a few generations after arriving in this country. Marriage across groups is fairly common across white ethnic groups and Judeo-Christian groups. Interracial marriage is now growing across ethnic groups and races. More than two in three Asian Americans and half of Latinos marry outside their ethnic groups. However, only 7% of whites and 17% of African Americans were marrying outside their groups in 2008 (Lee & Bean, 2010). Young people who are biracial are more likely to acknowledge their mixed heritage today than in the past. According to self-reported census data, 2% of the population identifies as biracial, with 3% of K–12 students so identified (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014a; U.S. Census Bureau, 2014b).

Many groups that immigrated have become acculturated or have adopted the dominant culture as their own. Although some groups have tried to maintain the cultures of their native countries, it is often in vain, as children go to school and participate in the larger society. Continuous and firsthand contacts with the dominant culture result in subsequent changes in the cultural patterns of either or both groups. The rapidity and success of the acculturation

process depend on a number of factors, including location and discrimination. If a group is spatially isolated and segregated (whether voluntarily or not) in a rural area, as is the case with many American Indians on reservations, the acculturation process is very slow. Discrimination against members of oppressed groups can also make it difficult for them to acculturate even when they choose to do so.

The degree of acculturation is determined, in part, by individuals or families as they decide how much they want to dress, speak, and behave like members of the dominant culture. In the past, members of many groups had little choice if they wanted to share the American dream of success. Many people have had to give up their native languages and behaviors or hide them at home. However, acculturation does not guarantee acceptance by the **dominant group**. Most members of oppressed groups, especially those of color, have not been permitted to assimilate fully into society even though they have adopted the values and behaviors of the dominant culture.

Schools historically have promoted assimilation by teaching English and U.S. culture to new immigrants. Before the civil rights movement, students of color would have rarely seen themselves in textbooks or learned the history and culture of their group in the classroom. Even today, the curriculum is contested in some communities when families do not see their cultures and values represented. When the first set of national history standards were being developed in the early 1990s, the historians involved proposed a multicultural curriculum that celebrated the similarities and differences of the ethnic groups that comprise the United States. Some very influential and powerful individuals and groups accused the project of promoting differences that would undermine national unity and patriotism. When the standards were presented to Congress, they were condemned by a vote of 99 to 1 (Symcox, 2002).

Identifying the degree of students' assimilation into the dominant culture may be helpful in determining appropriate instructional strategies and providing authentic learning activities that relate to the lived experiences of students. The only way to know the importance of cultural groups in the lives of students is to listen to them. Familiarity and participation with the community from which students come also help educators know students and their families.

Ethnocentrism

Because culture helps determine the way we think, feel, and act, it becomes the lens through which we judge the world. As such, it can become an unconscious blinder to other ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. Our own culture is automatically treated as innate and the natural and right way to function in the world. Even common sense in our own culture is translated to common sense for the world. We compare other cultures with ours and evaluate them by our cultural standards. It can become difficult to view another culture as separate from our own.

This inability to view other cultures as equally viable alternatives for organizing reality is known as **ethnocentrism**. Although it is appropriate to cherish one's culture, members sometimes become closed to the possibilities of difference. These feelings of superiority over other cultures can become problematic in interacting and working effectively and equitably with students and families of different groups. Our inability to view another culture through its own cultural lens prevents an understanding of the second culture. This inability can make it difficult to function effectively in a second culture. By overcoming one's ethnocentric view of the world, one can begin to respect other cultures and even learn to function comfortably in more than one cultural group.

Cultural Relativism

"Never judge another man until you have walked a mile in his moccasins." This North American Indian proverb suggests the importance of understanding the cultural backgrounds and experiences of others rather than judging them by our own cultural standards. The principle of **cultural relativism** is to see a culture as if we are a member of the culture. It is an acknowledgment that another person's way of behaving and thinking is valid. This ability becomes essential in the world today as countries and cultures become more interdependent. In an effort to maintain positive relationships with people in our community as well as around the world, we cannot afford to relegate cultures other than our own to an inferior status.

Intercultural misunderstandings between groups occur even when no language barrier exists and when large components of the dominant culture are shared by the people involved. The members of one group are largely ignorant about the culture of another group, giving it little credibility or respect. Our lack of knowledge about **others** leads to misunderstandings that are accentuated by differential status based on race, gender, class, language, religion, and ability.

Cultural relativism suggests that we need to be knowledgeable about our own culture. That must be followed by study about and interaction with other cultural groups. This intercultural process helps one know what it is like to be a member of the second culture and to view the world from another perspective. To function effectively and comfortably within a second culture, that culture must be learned.

Multiculturalism

Individuals who have competencies in and can operate successfully in two or more different cultures are bicultural or multicultural and often bilingual or multilingual as well. Having **proficiencies** in multiple cultures allows us to draw on a broad range of abilities and make choices as determined by the particular situation.

Because we participate in more than one cultural group, we have already become proficient in multiple systems for perceiving, evaluating, believing, and acting according to the patterns of the various groups to which we belong. We often act and speak differently when we are in the community in which we were raised than when we are in a professional setting. We behave differently on a night out with members of our own gender than we do at home with the family. People with competencies in several cultures develop a fuller appreciation of the range of cultural competencies available to all people.

Many members of **oppressed groups** are forced to become bicultural, operating (1) in the dominant culture at work or school and (2) in their family's culture at home and in the community. Different behaviors are expected in the two settings. Because most schools reflect the dominant culture, students are forced to adjust to or act like middle-class white students if they are to be academically successful. In contrast, most middle-class white students find almost total congruence between the cultures of their family, school, and work. Most remain monocultural throughout their lives. They do not envision the value and possibilities inherent in becoming competent in a different culture.

Multiculturalism values the cultural identities of diverse groups as members participate in and interact with the dominant culture. A society that supports multiculturalism promotes diverse ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, language, religious, and other group identities. Diversity in the workplace, school, university, or community is valued and affirmatively sought. It allows individuals to choose membership in the cultural and social groups that best fit their identities, without fear of ostracism or isolation from either their original group or their new group.

Educators establish **cultural borders** in the classroom when all activity is grounded in the teacher's culture. In our expanding, diverse nation, it is critical that educators be able to participate effectively in more than one culture. As we learn to function comfortably in different cultures, we should be able to move away from a single perspective linked to cultural domination. We should be able to cross cultural borders and integrate our students' cultures into the classroom. Understanding the cultural cues of different groups improves our ability to work with all students and makes us more sensitive to the importance of cultural differences in teaching effectively.



Equality and Social Justice in a Democracy

The United States is a democracy, in which people participate in their government by exercising their power directly or indirectly through elected representatives. **Egalitarianism**—the belief in social, political, and economic rights and privileges for all people—is espoused as a key principle on which democracy is based. Thus, the Constitution was fashioned with a coherent

set of "checks and balances" to limit the systematic abuse of power. Power should be shared among groups, and no one group should continuously dominate the economic, political, social, and cultural life of the country. Society and government, though not perfect, are promoted as allowing mass participation and steady advancement toward a more prosperous and egalitarian society.

One strength of a democracy is that citizens bring many perspectives, based on their own histories and experiences, to bear on policy questions and practices. Thus, to disagree is acceptable as long as we are able to communicate with each other openly and without fear of reprisal. Further, we expect that no single right way will be forced on us. For the most part, we would rather struggle with multiple perspectives and determine what is best for us as individuals within this democratic society than have one perspective forced on us.

At the same time, a democracy expects its citizens to be concerned about more than just their own individual freedoms. In the classic *Democracy and Education*, philosopher and educator John Dewey (1966) suggested that the emphasis should be on what binds us together in cooperative pursuits and results, regardless of the nation or our group alliance and membership. He raised concern about our possible stratification into separate classes and called for "intellectual opportunities [to be] accessible to all on equitable and easy terms" (p. 88). The Internet may help us achieve this goal.

Both individualism and equality have long been central themes of political discourse in a democratic society. The meaning of equality in our society varies according to one's assumptions about humankind and human existence. At least two sets of beliefs govern the ideologies of equality and **inequality**. The first accepts inequality as inevitable and believes that an individual's achievements are due totally to his or her own personal merits. The second set of beliefs supports a much greater degree of equality across groups in society that could be accomplished by not limiting accessibility to quality education, quality teachers, higher-paying jobs, health care, and other benefits of society to affluent groups with power.



Because of family income and wealth, some students have access to resources and experiences in their homes, communities, and schools that are not available to most low-income students. (© Echo/Cultura/Getty Images)

Meritocracy

Proponents of **meritocracy** accept the theories of sociobiology or functionalism or both, in which inequalities are viewed as natural outcomes of individual differences. They believe that all people have the opportunity to be successful if they just work hard enough (Grinberg, Price, & Naiditch, 2009). They give little credit to conditions such as being born into a wealthy family as a head start to success. Members of oppressed groups such as low-income families, persons of color, and persons with disabilities are seen as inferior, and their hardships blamed on their personal characteristics rather than societal constraints or discrimination.

The belief system that undergirds meritocracy has at least three dimensions that are consistent with dominant cultural values. First, the individual is valued over the group. The individual has the qualities, ambitions, and talent to achieve at the highest levels in society. Popular stories promote this ideology in their descriptions of the poor immigrant who arrived on U.S. shores with nothing, set up a vegetable stand to eke out a living, and became the millionaire owner of a chain of grocery stores. In reality, moving from the bottom of the economic ladder to the top is a rare occurrence. Some individuals and families move up and down the economic ladder one quintile from where they started (Page & Jacobs, 2009). The second dimension stresses differences through competition. IQ and achievement tests are used throughout schooling to help measure differences. Students and adults are rewarded for outstanding grades, athletic ability, and artistic accomplishment. The third dimension emphasizes

internal characteristics— such as motivation, intuition, and character—that have been internalized by the individual. External conditions, such as **racism** and poverty, are to be overcome by the individual; they are not accepted as contributors to an individual's lack of success.

Watch the video "American Dream Myth—Stiglitz on Income Inequality" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swpgji1h17s) to hear a Nobel Laureate economics professor discuss income inequality that is central to meritocracy.

Equal educational opportunity, or equal access to education, applies meritocracy to education. All students are to be provided with equal educational opportunities that allegedly will give them similar chances for success or failure. Proponents of this approach believe it is the individual's responsibility to use those opportunities to his or her advantage in obtaining life's resources and benefits. Critics of meritocracy point out that children of low-income families do not start with the same chances for success in life as children from affluent families. Even the most capable of these students do not enjoy equal educational opportunities if the schools they attend lack the challenging curriculum and advanced placement courses typically found in middle-class and affluent communities. Thus, competition is unequal from birth. The chances of a child from an affluent family being educationally and financially successful are much greater than for a child from a low-income family (Page & Jacobs, 2009). Those with advantages at birth are almost always able to hold on to and extend those advantages throughout their lifetimes.

Equality

With the persistence of racism, poverty, unemployment, and inequality in major social systems such as education and health, it is difficult to reconcile these daily realities with the celebrated egalitarianism that characterizes the public rhetoric. This perspective sees U.S. society as comprising institutions and an economic system that represents the interests of the privileged few rather than the pluralistic majority. Even institutions, laws, and processes that have the appearance of equal access, benefit, and protection are often enforced in highly discriminatory ways. These patterns of inequality are not the product of corrupt individuals as such but rather are a reflection of how resources of economics, political power, and cultural and social dominance are built into the political-economic system.

Even in the optimistic view that some degree of equality can be achieved, inequality is expected. Not all resources can be redistributed so that every individual has an equal amount, nor should all individuals expect equal compensation for the work they do. The underlying belief, however, is that there need not be the huge disparities of income, wealth, and power that have increased greatly over the past 30 years. Equality does suggest fairness in the distribution of the conditions and goods that affect the well-being of all children and families. It is fostered by policies for full employment, wages that prevent families from living in poverty, and child care for all children.

Equality is more than providing oppressed group members with an equal chance or equal opportunity. One proposal is that more equal results should be the goal. These results might be more equal achievement by students across groups and similar rates of dropping out of school, college attendance, and college completion by different ethnic, racial, gender, and socioeconomic groups.

Traditionally, the belief has been that education can overcome the inequities that exist in society. However, the role of education in reducing the amount of occupation and income inequality may be limited. School reform has not yet led to significant social changes outside schools. Equalizing educational opportunity has had very little impact on making adults more equal. Providing equal educational opportunities for all students does not guarantee equal results at the end of high school or college. It does not yet provide equal access to jobs and income across groups. Equality in schools would mean that students in impoverished communities would be guaranteed to have teachers who are as highly qualified as the teachers in wealthy school districts. Equality requires financial support for providing quality instruction in environments that are conducive to learning by all students.

Social Justice

Social justice is another element of democracy that is based on the expectation that citizens will provide for those in society who are not as advantaged as they are. John Dewey (1966) called for social justice at the beginning of the twentieth century when he said, "What the best and

wisest parent wants for his [or her] own child, that must the community want for all of its children" (p. 3). In schools, social justice requires critiquing practices that interfere with equity across groups. Social and economic inequities that prevent students from learning and participating effectively in schools must be confronted.

Enormous disparities exist between the very wealthy and the poor. The very wealthy have accumulated vast resources, while the poor are unable to obtain the barest essentials for shelter, food, or medical care. Some lack housing, which leads to a growing number of homeless students. Others lack nutritious meals as well as heat in the winter and air conditioning in the summer. Every day children from low-income families come to school having had insufficient sleep because of the physical discomfort of their homes, with inadequate clothing and with empty stomachs. Tens of thousands suffer from malnutrition and lack of dental care. When they are sick, many go untreated. Under these conditions, it is difficult to function well in an academic setting.

Civil unrest has almost always been precipitated by the disenfranchised who have no realistic hope of extricating themselves from lives of despair. Those who have the power to bring about meaningful change in society are generally the more affluent. They have the resources and connections to make things happen. Bringing about truly meaningful change requires paradigm shifts. Even the middle class may be reluctant to make changes if a change in the status quo diminishes their position. Meaningful change in society requires a universal social consciousness. It requires, to some extent, a willingness of the citizenry to explore the means of redistributing some of the benefits of a democratic society. Effective redistribution requires that some who have considerable wealth provide a greater share in an effort to eliminate poverty and its effects. The end result could be a society in which everyone has a decent place to sleep, no child goes to school hungry, and appropriate health care and a quality education are available to all.

Obstacles to Equality and Social Justice

Differing and unequal power relationships have a great impact on individuals' and groups' abilities to define and achieve their own goals. These differences among and within groups can lead not only to misunderstandings and misperceptions but also to conflict. Cultural differences sometimes result in political alliances that respond to the real or perceived presence of domination or subordination faced by a group. The result may be strong feelings of patriotism or group solidarity that expand into armed conflicts across and within nations, tribes, religious communities, or ethnic groups. Feelings of superiority of one's group over another are sometimes reflected in anti-Semitic symbols and actions, cross burnings, gay bashing, and sexual harassment.

Conflicts between groups are usually based on the groups' differential status and value in society. The **alienation** and **marginalization** that many powerless groups experience can accentuate their differences and may lead to their separating themselves from the dominant culture. Groups sometimes construct their own identities in terms of others. For example, European Americans often do not think of themselves racially, except as it makes them different from Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, or American Indians. Males may define themselves in opposition to females. Native English speakers may see their language as superior to the language of immigrants, and they may refuse to learn a second language or value the advantages of bilingualism or multilingualism.

As long as differences across groups have no status implications in which one group is treated differently from another, conflict among groups is minimal. Unfortunately, cultural borders are often erected between groups, and crossing them can be easy or difficult. What is valued on one side of the border may be denigrated on the other side. For example, speaking Spanish or a dialect may be valued in the community but not appreciated in school.

Prejudice, discrimination, and **privilege** stem from a combination of several factors related to power relationships. People who are prejudiced have a negative attitude about members of a group other than their own. Discrimination leads to the denial of privileges and rewards to members of some groups. Privilege provides advantages and power to groups that have resources and status exceeding those of others.

Prejudice. Prejudice can result when people lack understanding of the history, experiences, values, and perceptions of groups other than their own. Members of a specific group are **stereotyped** when generalizations are applied to the group without consideration of individual differences within the group. Prejudice manifests itself in feelings of anger, fear, hatred, and distrust toward members of a specific group. These attitudes are often translated into fear of walking in a neighborhood, fear of being robbed or hurt by members of a group, distrust of a merchant from the group, anger at any advantages that others may be perceived as receiving, and fear that housing prices will be deflated if someone from that group moves next door.

Some members of all groups possess negative stereotypes of others. For example, some African Americans and Latinos believe that all whites are bigoted, bossy, and unwilling to share power. Some women believe that all men are abusers because that is their experience with men. Feminists become labeled as lesbians because some activists are lesbians. Blue-collar workers are seen as intolerant and bigoted because that is how they have been portrayed in movies. Fundamentalist Christians are labeled as sexist or homophobic because some ministers have preached that message. These negative stereotypes may describe some members of a group but have been unfairly extended as characteristic of all members of the group.

Although prejudice may not always directly hurt members of a group, it can be easily translated into behavior that harms members. An ideology based on aversion to a group and perceived superiority undergirds the activities of the neo-Nazis, Ku Klux Klan, skinheads, and other racist groups. A prejudiced teacher may hold high academic expectations for students of one group and low expectations for students of another group. Such prejudice could lead to inappropriate placement of students in gifted or special education programs.

Children who hold biased attitudes toward other groups may simply be reflecting their parents' attitudes, but other implicit messages from peers and the media also affect them (Berk, 2012). Children are influenced by what those around them think, do, and say. Even when parents model tolerance, children may still be exposed to the racist behaviors of others. They may hear older children or adults putting down a group in jokes or ethnic slurs. They may observe how some individuals do not associate with members of certain groups (Anti-Defamation League, n.d.). They may observe how some white teachers associate only with other white teachers in the cafeteria. Unwittingly, these teachers are modeling behaviors for students.

Children are greatly influenced by the media. They watch television and movies. They see pictures on the Internet, in newspapers, and in magazines their families have in the home. Hardly a day goes by without children being exposed to stereotyping, misinformation, or exclusion of important and accurate information (Anti-Defamation League, n.d.).

For the past few years, children have been exposed to the horrors of war in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, as well as bombings in other parts of the world. They have heard or seen reports of soldiers killed daily by people of color, whom they assume are Muslims. They continually hear expressions of justifiable anger directed toward terrorists and suicide bombers, who are almost always described by race or religion. The popular media has always had its villains. From the American Indians to the Japanese and Germans in World War II, villains of choice have evolved from Communists to Latin American drug lords, and now to Arabs and Muslims. These messages can contribute to children developing prejudicial attitudes about people they don't know. This situation is exacerbated by the minimal effort made to show that the majority of the people in these groups are good, law-abiding, loyal citizens of their countries.

The Anti-Defamation League (n.d.) suggests that children with poor self-images are prone to develop prejudices. By targeting individuals they can put down, they bolster their own self-worth, making them feel more important and powerful than those they attack. At other times, children may exclude or ridicule other children because they perceive that this behavior will enhance their standing among their peers (Anti-Defamation League, n.d.). Because children are cognitively capable of becoming less prejudiced, developing activities that have been shown to reduce prejudice during the early years of elementary school is an appropriate education goal for teachers.

Discrimination. Whereas prejudice is based on attitudes, discrimination focuses on behavior. Discrimination occurs at two levels: individual and institutional. Individual discrimination is attributable to, or influenced by, prejudice. Individuals discriminate against members of a

group because they have strong prejudicial, or bigoted, feelings about the group, or they believe that society demands they discriminate. For example, real-estate agents, human resources managers, receptionists, and membership chairpersons all work directly with a variety of individuals. Their own personal attitudes about members of a group can influence decisions such as whether a house is sold, a job is offered, a loan is granted, an appointment is made, a meal is served, or a membership is granted to an individual. The actions of these individuals can prevent others from gaining the experiences and economic advantages that these activities offer.

An individual has less control over the other form of discrimination. Institutional discrimination cannot be attributed to prejudicial attitudes. It refers to inequalities that have been integrated into the systemwide operation of society through legislation and practices that ensure benefits to some groups versus others. Laws that disproportionately limit **immigration** to people from specific countries are one example. Other examples include practices that lead to a disproportionately large percentage of African Americans being incarcerated; single, low-income mothers being denied adequate prenatal care; and children in low-income neighborhoods suffering disproportionately from asthma as a result of poor environmental conditions.

We have grown up in a society that has a long history of discrimination against people of color, low-wage earners, women, and people with disabilities. We often do not realize the extent to which members of some groups receive the benefits and privileges of institutions such as schools, Social Security, transportation systems, and banking systems. Because we may think that we have never been discriminated against, we should not assume that others do not suffer from discrimination.

Some people argue that institutional discrimination no longer exists because today's laws require equal access to the benefits of society. As a result, they believe that individuals from all groups have equal opportunities to be successful. They fight against group rights that lead to what they perceive to be preferential treatment of the members of one group over others. The government is usually accused of going too far toward eliminating discrimination against historically oppressed groups by supporting affirmative action, contracts set aside for specific groups, special education, and legislation for women's equity. Opponents of these programs charge that they lead to reverse discrimination.

However, the criteria for access to the "good life" are often applied arbitrarily and unfairly. A disproportionately high number of people of color and students with disabilities have had limited opportunities to gain the qualifications for skilled jobs or college entrance or to obtain the economic resources to purchase homes. As businesses and industries move from the city to the suburbs, access to employment by those who live in the inner city becomes more limited. A crucial issue is not the equal treatment of those with equal qualifications but equal accessibility to the qualifications and jobs themselves.

The consequences are the same with individual and institutional discrimination. Members of some groups do not receive the same benefits from society as most members of the dominant group. Individuals are harmed by circumstances beyond their control because of their membership in a specific group. The roles of teachers and other professional educators require that they not discriminate against any student because of his or her group memberships. This consideration must be paramount in assigning students to special education and gifted classes and in giving and interpreting standardized tests. Classroom interactions, classroom resources, extracurricular activities, and counseling practices must be evaluated to ensure that discrimination against students from specific groups does not occur.

Privilege. European Americans generally do not think of themselves as white, financially secure, Christian, English-speaking, or heterosexual. In fact, not all whites are financially secure or Christian or English-speaking or heterosexual. However, they are privileged in society. They do have advantages of which they are not always aware. Many teachers do not recognize the inequality, racism, and powerlessness that work against the success of students of color, girls, English language learners, non-Christians, students from low-income families, and students with disabilities. Many European Americans have not had the opportunity to explore their own ethnicity and privileged position in society. They often have not studied or



Watch the videos "Mirrors of Privilege: Understanding White Privilege" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuXWJDyGct4) and "Mirrors of Privilege: Beyond Guilt to Responsibility" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdHJtyf7TB0) to become aware of the meaning of white privilege.

interacted with groups to which they do not belong. Therefore, they have not explored where they fall along the continuum of power and inequality in society.

In contrast to whites, members of other groups are constantly confronted with the difference of their race, language, class, religion, gender, disability, and/or sexual orientation. The degree of identification with the characteristics of the dominant culture depends, in part, on how much an individual must interact with society's formal institutions for economic support and subsistence. The more dependence on these institutions, the greater the degree of sharing or of being forced to adopt the traits and values of the dominant culture.

Think about the following situations and how often you have been confronted with them (McIntosh, 2010):

- Turning on the television or opening the newspaper and seeing people of your cultural group widely represented
- Speaking in public to a male group without putting your cultural group on trial
- Performing well on a project without being called a credit to your cultural group
- Being asked to speak for all people of your cultural group
- Asking to talk to "the person in charge" and finding a person of your cultural group
- Worrying that you have been racially profiled when you are stopped for a traffic violation
- Being followed around by a clerk or security person when you shop

How differently would whites and people of color respond to these situations? Some groups have more privilege than others as they interact in broader society.

These differing perspectives have led to public debates about the need for affirmative action to ensure diversity as well as the integration of diversity into the common core of the curriculum. Members of oppressed groups argue that their cultures are not reflected in a curriculum that includes the great books of Western European thought. The traditionalists, who are predominantly European Americans, often invoke nationalism and patriotism in their calls to retain the purity of the Western **canon** and promote homogeneity in society. However, proponents of a common core curriculum that includes the voices of women, people of color, and religions other than Christianity also include many European Americans who value differences and multiple perspectives and are allies in the quest for equality.

The question appears to be whose culture will be reflected in the elementary and secondary, as well as the college, curriculum. Those who call for a curriculum and textbooks that reflect only their history and experiences view their culture as superior to all others. Thus, they and their culture become privileged over others in schools. They do not see themselves as different; to them, diversity refers only to members of other groups in society. To be successful, European Americans are not required to learn to function effectively in a second culture, as are members of other groups. The privileged curriculum reinforces this pattern. It is the members of the oppressed groups who must learn the culture and history of European Americans, often without the opportunity to study in depth their own cultural group or to validate the importance of their own history and lived experiences. It is as if they do not belong. This feeling may lead to marginalization and alienation from school when students do not see themselves in the curriculum, do not feel a part of the school culture, and are not leaders in the school.



Multicultural Education

Not all students can be taught in the same way because they are not the same. Their cultures and experiences influence the way they learn and interact with their teachers and peers. They have different needs, skills, and experiences that must be recognized in developing educational programs. Each student is different because of physical and mental abilities, gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, language, religion, class, sexual orientation, geography, and age. Students behave differently in school and toward authority because of cultural factors and their

relationship to the dominant culture. As educators, we behave in certain ways toward students because of our own cultural experiences within the power structure of the country.

Multicultural education is a construct that acknowledges the diversity of students and their families and builds on that diversity to promote equality and social justice in education. Developing the knowledge and skills to work effectively with students from diverse groups is key in creating differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students. The following beliefs are fundamental to multicultural education:

- Cultural differences have strength and value.
- Schools should be models for the expression of human rights and respect for cultural and group differences.
- Social justice and equality for all people should be of paramount importance in the design and delivery of curriculum.
- Attitudes and values necessary for participation in a democratic society should be promoted in schools.
- Teachers are key to students' learning the knowledge, skills, and **dispositions** (i.e., values, attitudes, and commitments) they need to be productive citizens.
- Educators working with families and communities can create an environment that is supportive of multiculturalism, equality, and social justice.

Many concepts support multicultural education. The relationships and interactions among individuals and groups are essential to understanding and working effectively with students from groups different from those of the teachers. Educators should understand racism, **sexism**, prejudice, discrimination, oppression, powerlessness, power, inequality, equality, and stereotyping. Multicultural education includes various components that often appear in courses, units of courses, and degree programs. They include ethnic studies, global studies, bilingual education, women's studies, human relations, special education, and urban education. Let's examine how multicultural education has evolved over the past century.

Evolution of Multicultural Education

Multicultural education is not a new concept. Its roots are in the establishment of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915. Through their research and books on the history and culture of African Americans, Carter G. Woodson, W. E. B. DuBois, Charles C. Wesley, and other scholars were the pioneers of ethnic studies. Woodson founded the *Journal of Negro History* and the *Negro History Bulletin* to disseminate research and curriculum materials. These materials were integrated into the curricula of segregated schools and historically black colleges and universities, allowing African American students to be empowered by the knowledge of their own history (J. A. Banks, 2004).

By the 1920s some educators were writing about and training teachers in intercultural education. The intercultural movement during its first two decades had an international emphasis, with antecedents in the pacifist movement. Some textbooks were rewritten with an international point of view. Proponents encouraged teachers to make their disciplines more relevant to the modern world by being more issue oriented. One of the goals was to make the dominant population more tolerant and accepting of first- and second-generation immigrants in order to maintain national unity and social control (C. A. M. Banks, 2004). However, issues of power and inequality in society were ignored. The interculturalists supported the understanding and appreciation of diverse groups but did not promote collective ethnic identities, the focus of ethnic studies.

Following the Holocaust and World War II, tensions among groups remained high. Jewish organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Committee provided leadership for improving intergroup relations and reducing the anti-Semitic sentiment that existed at the time. National education organizations and progressive educational leaders such as Hilda Taba and Lloyd A. Cook promoted intergroup relations in schools to develop tolerance of new immigrants, African Americans, and other groups of color. Like the earlier intercultural movement, many intergroup educators had the goal of assimilating immigrants and



Although the Supreme Court ruled in 1954 that schools should be desegregated, students in many classrooms today are from the same racial, ethnic, or language group. (© Blend Images-Hill Street Studios/Brand X Pictures/Getty Images)

people of color into the dominant society (J. A. Banks, 2004). Some programs focused on understanding the "folk" cultures of these groups. Others were designed to help rid native European Americans of their prejudice and discrimination against other groups. There was disagreement among the supporters of intergroup relations about the degree to which they should promote an understanding of the culture and history of ethnic groups (C. A. M. Banks, 2004).

By the 1960s desegregation was being enforced in the nation's schools. At the same time, cultural differences were being described as deficits. Students of color and whites from low-income families were described as culturally deprived. Their families were blamed for not providing them with the **cultural capital**, or advantages such as wealth and education, that would help them succeed in schools. Programs like Head Start, **compensatory education**, and special education were developed to make up for these shortcomings. Not surprisingly, those classes were filled with students of color, students from low-income families, and students with disabilities—the children who had not been privileged in society and whose cultures seldom found their way into textbooks and school curricula.

In the 1970s the term *cultural deficits* was replaced with the label *culturally different* to acknowledge that students of color and immigrant students have cultures, just as do European Americans. One of the goals of this approach was to teach those who were culturally different to develop the cultural patterns of the dominant society so that they could fit into the mainstream (Sleeter & Grant, 2009). Students with disabilities were still primarily segregated from their nondisabled peers during this period.

The civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s brought a renewed interest in ethnic studies, discrimination, and intergroup relations. Racial and ethnic pride emerged from oppressed groups, creating a demand for ethnic studies programs in colleges and universities across the country. Similar programs were sometimes established in secondary schools. However, students and participants in ethnic studies programs were primarily members of the group being studied. Programs focused on students' own ethnic histories and cultures, with the objective of providing them with insights into and instilling pride in their own ethnic backgrounds. Most of these programs were ethnic specific, with only one ethnic group studied. Sometimes the objectives included gaining an understanding of the relationship and conflict between the ethnic groups, but seldom was a program's scope multiethnic.

Concurrent with the civil rights movement and the growth of ethnic studies, an emphasis on intergroup or human relations again emerged. Often, these programs accompanied ethnic

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate / Should Ethnic Studies Be Taught?

During the civil rights movement of the 1960s, students at San Francisco State University and the University of California, Berkeley led the movement to demand courses in ethnic studies that would be taught from the lens of the ethnic group rather than a Eurocentric perspective. These protests resulted in the addition of courses and programs at colleges and universities across the country in African American, Asian American, Hispanic, and American Indian studies. Some school districts followed suit, offering courses related to specific ethnic and cultural groups.

By 2013, students in California's state universities were protesting budget cuts that were eliminating ethnic studies courses and faculty. A similar pattern was occurring in high schools. In 2010 the governor of Arizona signed a bill banning the teaching of ethnic studies programs that are designed for a particular group or advocate ethnic solidarity. The Tucson Unified School District was forced to close its Mexican American studies courses soon after the law went into effect. Taking an opposite approach, the El Rancho school district in California in 2014 adopted a requirement that all of its students take an ethnic studies course before graduation. California's state senate also was considering a bill to study the best way to implement a standardized curriculum for ethnic studies across the state. What are the rationales for supporting or not supporting ethnic studies in a school or university?

FOR

- ☐ Help make curriculum more relevant to students from specific ethnic groups.
- ☐ Ethnic studies courses teach about long-neglected ethnic groups in the United States.
- ☐ Ethnic studies courses allow students from the group being studied and students from other ethnic groups to explore different perspectives on the histories and literature of a group.
- ☐ Ethnic studies courses help students develop empathy toward other groups.
- ☐ All students can benefit from learning the culture, history, literature, and experiences of ethnic groups different from their own.

AGAINST

- ☐ It is wrong to teach students separately based on their ethnic group membership.
- ☐ Ethnic studies courses are divisive and foster resentment among students.
- ☐ Teachers of ethnic studies courses indoctrinate students with anti-American ideas and anti-patriotism.
- ☐ Ethnic studies courses foster hostility toward U.S. society.
- ☐ Ethnic studies courses encourage students whose ethnic group is being studied to see themselves as victims.

QUESTIONS

1. How do European American groups fit into ethnic studies?
2. Whose ethnic groups and cultures are best represented in the curriculum used by most schools? What ethnic and other cultural groups are seldom found in the curriculum? What are the reasons for these disparities?
3. How do the personal perspectives and biases of authors impact the content of textbooks and curriculum? What is important about hearing the perspectives of different ethnic groups?

studies content for teachers. The objective was to promote intergroup, and especially interracial, understanding in order to reduce or eliminate stereotypes. This approach emphasized the affective level—teachers' attitudes and feelings about themselves and others (Sleeter & Grant, 2009).

With the growth and development of ethnic studies came a realization that those programs alone would not guarantee support for the positive affirmation of diversity and differences in this country. All students needed to learn the history, culture, and contributions of groups other than their own. As a result, ethnic studies expanded into multiethnic studies. Teachers were encouraged to develop curricula that included the contributions of oppressed groups along with those of the dominant group. Textbooks were rewritten to represent more accurately the multiethnic nature of the United States and the world. Students were to be exposed to the perspectives of

diverse groups through literature, history, music, and other disciplines integrated throughout the general school program. Curriculum and instructional materials were to reflect multiple perspectives, not just the single master narrative of the dominant group.

During this period, other groups that had suffered from institutional discrimination called their needs to the attention of the public. These groups included women, those with low incomes, people with disabilities, English language learners, and the elderly. Educators responded by expanding multiethnic education to the more encompassing concept of multicultural education. This broader concept focused on the different groups to which individuals belong, with an emphasis on the interaction of race, ethnicity, class, and gender in one's cultural identity. It also called for the elimination of discrimination based on group membership. No longer was it fashionable to fight sexism without simultaneously attacking racism, classism, homophobia, and discrimination against children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Multicultural Education Today

The 1990s were characterized by the development of standards, which led to debates between fundamentalists and multiculturalists, especially around the history standards. The fundamentalists argued that the standards should stress what they believed to be the foundations of democracy: patriotism and historical heroes. The multiculturalists promoted the inclusion of diverse groups and multiple perspectives in the standards. In English language arts, groups disagreed about the literature to which students should be exposed, some arguing for multiple perspectives and others arguing that such literature might promote values they could not support.

Multicultural education is sometimes criticized as focusing on differences rather than similarities among groups. Critical theorists criticize it for not adequately addressing the issues of power and oppression that keep a number of groups from participating equitably in society. At least three schools of thought push multiculturalists to think critically about these issues: critical pedagogy, antiracist education, and **critical race theory** (Sleeter & Bernal, 2004). Critical pedagogy focuses on the culture of everyday life and the interaction of class, race, and gender in contemporary power struggles. Antiracist education is the construct used in Canada and a number of European countries to eliminate racist practices such as tracking, inequitable funding, and segregation in schools. Critical race theory focuses on racism to challenge racial oppression, racial inequities, and white privilege (Howard, 2010). Multicultural education promotes **critical thinking** about these and other issues to ensure that education serves the needs of all groups equitably. Multicultural education as presented in this text attempts to integrate critical pedagogy, antiracist education, and critical race theory as different groups are discussed.

Still, after eight decades of concern for civil and human rights in education, racism persists. Educators struggle with the integration of diversity into the curriculum and provision of equality in schools. Some classrooms may be desegregated and mainstreamed, and both boys and girls may now participate in athletic activities. However, students are still labeled as at risk, developmentally delayed, underprivileged, lazy, or slow. They are tracked in special classes or groups within the classroom based on their real or perceived abilities. A disproportionate number of students from African American, Mexican American, Puerto Rican, American Indian, and Southeast Asian American groups score below European American students on national standardized tests. The number of students of color and low-income students participating in advanced science and mathematics classes is not proportionate to their representation in schools. They too often are offered little or no encouragement to enroll in the advanced courses that are necessary to be successful in college. To draw attention to these inequities, the National Alliance of Black School Educators declared that "education is a civil right" and has called on the country to establish a "zero tolerance policy on illiteracy, dropout and failure" (National Alliance of Black School Educators, 2008, p. 1).

In a country that champions equal rights and the opportunity for the individual to improve his or her conditions, educators are challenged to help all students achieve academically. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the standards movement focused on identifying what every student should know and be able to do. The federal legislation for elementary and secondary schools, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), requires standardized testing of students

to determine a school's effectiveness in helping students learn. It mandates that test scores be reported to the public by race, gender, English language proficiency, disability, and socioeconomic status (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). The goal of NCLB is to improve the academic achievement of all students. Students in low-performing schools may transfer to a higher-performing school to improve their chances of passing tests if their neighborhood school continues to be low performing for three years. Congress has begun the process of reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which is currently called NCLB, and may have passed it by the time you read this book. Although a number of initiatives may change, the emphasis on improving student learning is not likely to decrease.

Multicultural Proficiencies for Teachers

By the time you finish a teacher education program, states and school districts expect you to have proficiencies for helping all students meet state standards such as the common core. NCLB requires school districts to hire qualified teachers who can help low-income students, students of color, English language learners, and students with disabilities meet state standards. The expected proficiencies include specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to working with diverse student populations and multicultural education.

State standards for teacher licensure reflect the national standards in Table 1.1 that were developed by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC, 2011). Each of the 10 standards include knowledge, dispositional, and performance proficiencies that teachers should be able to demonstrate to earn a state license to teach. Selected InTASC proficiencies related to diversity and multicultural education are listed in Table 1.1.

TABLE 1.1 SELECTED INTASC PROFICIENCIES RELATED TO DIVERSITY

1. Learner Development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
1(g) The teacher understands the role of language and culture in learning and knows how to modify instruction to make language comprehensible and instruction relevant, accessible, and challenging. (Knowledge)
2. Learning Differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
2(d) The teacher brings multiple perspectives to the discussion of content, including attention to learners' personal, family, and community experiences and cultural norms. (Performance)
2(k) The teacher knows how to access information about the values of diverse cultures and communities and how to incorporate learners' experiences, cultures, and community resources into instruction. (Knowledge)
2(l) The teacher believes that all learners can achieve at high levels and persists in helping each learner reach his/her full potential. (Disposition)
2(o) The teacher values diverse languages and dialects and seeks to integrate them into his/her instructional practice to engage students in learning. (Disposition)
3. Learning Environments. The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
3(f) The teacher communicates verbally and nonverbally in ways that demonstrate respect for and responsiveness to the cultural backgrounds and differing perspectives learners bring to the learning environment. (Performance)
4. Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
4(m) The teacher knows how to integrate culturally relevant content to build on learners' background knowledge. (Knowledge)
4(o) The teacher realizes that content knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex, culturally situated, and ever evolving. S/he keeps abreast of new ideas and understandings in the field. (Disposition)

(*continued*)

TABLE 1.1 SELECTED INTASC PROFICIENCIES RELATED TO DIVERSITY (continued)

5. Application of Content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.
5(g) The teacher facilitates learners' ability to develop diverse social and cultural perspectives that expand their understanding of local and global issues and create novel approaches to solving problems. (Performance)
6. Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.
6(h) The teacher prepares all learners for the demands of particular assessment formats and makes appropriate accommodations in assessments or testing conditions, especially for learners with disabilities and language learning needs. (Performance)
7. Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
7(i) The teacher understands learning theory, human development, cultural diversity, and individual differences and how these impact ongoing planning. (Knowledge)
7(n) The teacher respects learners' diverse strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to plan effective instruction. (Disposition)
8. Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.
8(k) The teacher knows how to apply a range of developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate instructional strategies to achieve learning goals. (Knowledge)
9. Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.
9(e) The teacher reflects on his/her personal biases and accesses resources to deepen his/her own understanding of cultural, ethnic, gender, and learning differences to build stronger relationships and create more relevant learning experiences. (Disposition)
10. Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning; to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, and other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth; and to advance the profession.
10(q) The teacher respects families' beliefs, norms, and expectations and seeks to work collaboratively with learners and families in setting and meeting challenging goals. (Disposition)

Source: Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium. (2011, April). *InTASC model core teaching standards: A resource for state dialogue.* Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers, pp. 10–19.

In working with students who come from different ethnic, racial, language, and religious groups from those of the teacher, the development of dispositions that are supportive of diversity and differences is important. Students quickly become aware of the educators who respect their cultures, believe they can learn, and value differences in the classroom. Examples of dispositions that the InTASC standards expect teachers to develop are listed in Table 1.1.

Reflecting on Multicultural Teaching

Teachers who reflect on and analyze their own practices report that their teaching improves over time. If you decide to seek national board certification after you have taught for three years, you will be required to provide written reflections on videos of your teaching. You are encouraged to begin to develop the habit of reflecting on your practice now and to include in that reflection the multicultural proficiencies listed above. Are you actually helping students learn the subject and skills you are teaching? An important part of teaching is to determine what is working and what is not. Effective teachers are able to change their teaching strategies when students are not learning. They do not leave any students behind.

They draw on the experiences and cultures of their students to make the subject matter relevant to them. Self-reflection will be a critical skill for improving your teaching.

You can begin to develop skills for reflection while you are preparing to teach. Many teacher education programs require candidates to keep journals and develop portfolios that include reflection papers. Video the lessons that you teach so that you can critique your knowledge of the subject matter, interactions with students, and methods of managing a class. The critique could be expanded to address multicultural proficiencies. You may find it valuable to ask a colleague to periodically observe you while you are teaching and provide feedback on your multicultural proficiencies. Honest feedback can lead to positive adjustments in our behavior and attitudes.

SUMMARY

Diversity in the Classroom

Students of color currently account for over half of the elementary and secondary school populations, and this proportion is expected to grow to 55% by 2023. They come from diverse ethnic, racial, religious, socioeconomic, language, gender, sexual orientation, and ability groups. Understanding diversity and the cultures of students and knowing how to use that knowledge effectively can enable teachers to deliver instruction to help students learn.

Culture

Culture provides the blueprint that determines the way we think, feel, and behave in society. We are not born with culture but rather learn it from our families and communities. Historically, U.S. political and social institutions have developed from a Western European tradition, and they still function under the strong influence of that heritage. At the same time, many aspects of American life have been greatly influenced by the numerous cultural groups that comprise the U.S. population. The dominant culture of the United States is based on its white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant roots and the core values of individualism and freedom. Cultural identity is based on the interaction and influence of membership in groups based on ethnicity, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, native language, geographic region, and exceptionalities. Membership in one group can greatly affect our participation in another group. Cultural identity is adapted and changed throughout life in response to political, economic, educational, and social experiences that either alter or reinforce our status or position in society.

Pluralism in Society

Assimilation is the process by which groups adopt and change the dominant culture. Schools have traditionally served as transmitters of the dominant culture to all students, regardless of their cultural backgrounds. The theory of cultural pluralism promotes the maintenance of the distinct differences among cultural groups with equal power. Ethnocentrism occurs when individuals believe that their culture is superior to others. Multiculturalism allows groups to maintain their unique cultural identities within the common culture without having to assimilate.

Equality and Social Justice in a Democracy

Egalitarianism and equality have long been espoused as goals for society, but they are implemented from two perspectives. The emphasis on individualism is supported in a meritocratic system in which everyone is alleged to start out equally, but the most deserving will end up with the most rewards. Equality, in contrast, seeks to ensure that society's benefits and rewards are distributed more equitably among individuals and groups. Prejudice, discrimination, and privilege continue to be obstacles to equality.

Multicultural Education

Multicultural education is an educational construct that incorporates cultural differences and provides equality and social justice in schools. For it to become a reality in the formal school situation, the total environment must reflect a commitment to multicultural education. The diverse cultural backgrounds and group memberships of students and families are as important in developing effective instructional strategies as are their physical and mental capabilities. Further, educators must understand the influence of racism, sexism, and classism on the lives of their students and ensure that these are not perpetuated in the classroom.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts.



2 Race and Ethnicity

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

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

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

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

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

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

REFLECTIONS

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



Immigration

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

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

A Brief History of Immigration in the United States

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

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

became less assimilation based, some boarding schools for American Indians continued to operate into the twenty-first century.

The atrocities and near genocide that characterized the treatment of First Americans have been ignored in most accounts of U.S. history. Not until 2000 did an official of the U.S. government apologize for the Bureau of Indian Affairs's "legacy of racism and inhumanity that included massacres, forced relocations of tribes and attempts to wipe out Indian languages and cultures" (Kelley, 2000, p. 1). Congress did not give American Indians the right to vote until 1924, and it was not until the 1960s that they had federal authority to establish and manage their own tribal schools.

The 1.1 million Native Hawaiians have experiences similar to those of other **indigenous** populations around the world. In 1894 Queen Liliuokalani of Hawaii was overthrown by a group of white sugar planters in an effort to gain control of the island and further their interests. The American minister sent to Hawaii by President Grover Cleveland declared the overthrow to be illegal, and the president agreed that the monarchy should be restored. However, the annexationists' interests prevailed, and a white president of the Republic of Hawaii was recognized immediately by the U.S. government. Vital to the interests of the United States, Hawaii eventually became a territory and, in 1959, the fiftieth state. Today, Native Hawaiians remain near the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder, as do other indigenous populations globally.

Although most of the first European settlers were English, the French, Dutch, and Spanish also established early settlements in the "new world." After the consolidation and development of the United States as an independent nation, successive waves of Western Europeans joined the earlier settlers. Irish, Swedish, and German immigrants left their home countries to escape economic impoverishment or political repression. These early European settlers brought with them the political institutions that would become the framework for our government. The melding of Northern and Western European cultures over time formed the dominant culture in which other immigrant groups strived or were forced to assimilate.

Africans were also among the early explorers of the Americas and were settlers in the early days of colonization, but by the eighteenth century, they were being kidnapped in their native country and sold into bondage by slave traders. As involuntary immigrants, Africans underwent a process quite different from that confronting the Europeans who voluntarily immigrated. Separated from their families and homelands, robbed of their freedom, cultures, and languages, Africans developed a new culture out of their African, European, and Native American heritages and their unique experiences in this country. Early on, the majority of African Americans lived in the South, where today they remain the majority population in many counties. When industrial jobs in northern, eastern, and western cities began to expand between 1910 and 1920, many African Americans migrated to northern and then western cities—a pattern that was repeated in the 1940s and 1950s. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the trend had reversed, with a growing number of African Americans from northern states moving south.

Another factor that contributed to African American migration north was the racism and political terror that existed across the South at that time. Even today, a racial ideology is implicit in the policies and practices of many of our institutions. It continues to block the full assimilation of African Americans into the dominant society. Although the **civil rights** movement of the 1960s reduced a number of the barriers that prevented many African Americans from enjoying the advantages of the middle class, the number of African Americans, especially children, who live in poverty remains disproportionately high. Schools generally are not yet meeting the needs of African American children. They do not perform as well as most other **ethnic groups** on standardized tests, and less than 60% of African American male students are graduating from high school in four years (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

Mexican Americans also played a unique role in the formation of the United States. Spain was the first European country to colonize the western and southwestern United States as well as Mexico. In 1848 the U.S. government annexed the northern sections of the Mexican Territory, including the areas currently occupied by Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and southern California. The Mexicans and Native Americans living within that territory became

an oppressed group in the region where they had previously been the dominant population. Although the labor of Mexicans has persistently been sought by farmers and businesses for over a century, laborers have been treated with hostility and have been limited to low-paying jobs and subordinate status. Supremacy theories related to race and language have been used against them in a way that, even today, prevents many Mexican Americans and Central Americans from assimilating fully into the dominant culture if they choose to do so.

While Mexican Americans were involuntary immigrants when they were annexed by the U.S. government, they have been the largest group to voluntarily and legally immigrate to the United States since the 1960s. They have been joined by other immigrants from Cuba, Central America, and South America—a combined group identified as Latino or Hispanic, terms used interchangeably in this book. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Latino population became the largest group of color in the United States, and it is projected to constitute 30% of the population by 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014j).

The industrial opening of the West in the mid-1800s signaled a need for labor that could be met through immigration from Asia. Chinese worked the plantations in Hawaii and were recruited to provide the labor needed on the West Coast for mining gold and building railroads along with workers from Japan and the Phillipines. By 1882 racism and a changing need for labor led to Congress passing the Chinese Exclusion Act, halting all immigration from China. Japanese American families were arrested and placed in internment camps during World War II, many losing their property and belongings in the process. Because of such bias against the Chinese and Japanese, immigration from Asia was severely limited by Congress until a change in the immigration laws in 1965. With the changed immigration quotas, Asian Americans have become the fastest-growing group in the United States, with the majority of Asian American students being foreign-born or having a foreign-born parent.

At the end of the nineteenth century, industries in the nation's cities again required more labor than was available. Immigrants from impoverished Eastern and Southern European countries were enticed to accept jobs, primarily in midwestern and eastern cities. Into the early twentieth century, immigrants continued to arrive from nations such as Poland, Hungary, Italy, Russia, and Greece. The reasons for their immigration were similar to those that had driven many earlier immigrants: devastating economic and political hardship in the homeland and the demand for labor in the United States. Many immigrants came to the United States with the hope of enjoying the higher wages and improved living conditions they had heard about, but they found conditions in the United States worse than they had expected. Most were forced to live in substandard housing near the business and manufacturing districts where they worked. These urban ghettos grew into ethnic enclaves in which the immigrants continued to use their native languages and maintain the cultures of their native lands. To support their social and welfare needs, ethnic institutions were established. Many of the racist policies that were used against African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Native Americans were applied to these immigrants. A major difference was that their offspring were allowed to assimilate into the dominant culture during the second and third generations.

Immigration continues to impact the nation's population today. Around 1 million people have been immigrating to the United States annually for more than a decade. Over half of the persons born outside the United States live in California, New York, Florida, and Texas (U. S. Department of Homeland Security, 2013). More than 1 in 4 California residents and 1 in 5 New York residents are foreign-born (Grieco et al., 2012). Although many new immigrants settle in **metropolitan areas** of at least 50,000 people, more than half of today's immigrants live in the suburbs; fewer than 5% of new immigrants live in rural areas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014e).

The Control of Immigration

Throughout history, the U.S. Congress has restricted the immigration of different national or ethnic groups on the basis of the racial superiority of the older, established immigrant groups that had colonized the nation. As early as 1729, immigration was being discouraged. In that year, Pennsylvania passed a statute that increased the head tax on foreigners in the colony. Some leaders, including Benjamin Franklin, worried that Pennsylvania was in danger of becoming a

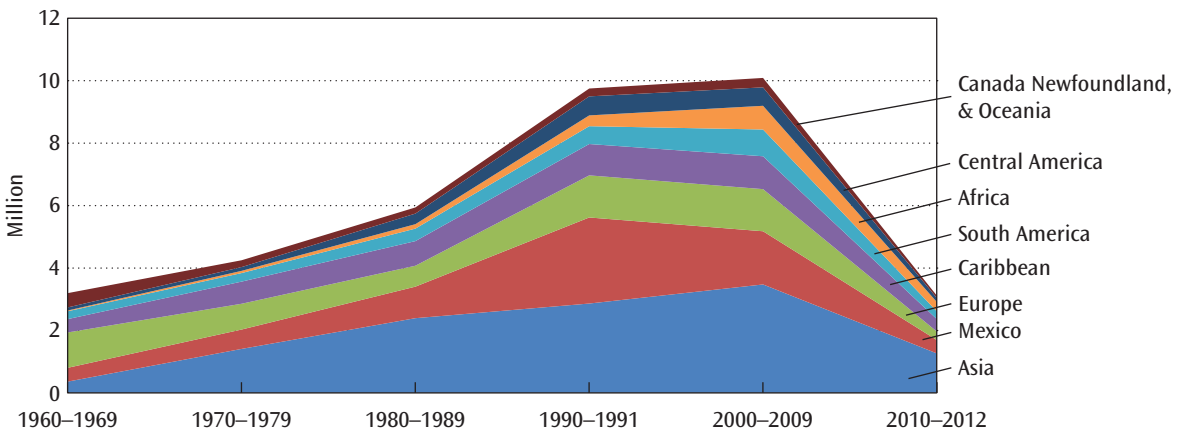


FIGURE 2.1 **Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Selected Countries and Continents: 1960–2012**

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2013). *Yearbook of immigration statistics: 2012*. Retrieved May 24, 2015, from https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ois_yb_2012.pdf.

German state. The 1790 Naturalization Act, which allowed only whites to become U.S. citizens, declared that an immigrant could become a citizen after several years of residency.

In the nineteenth century, native-born citizens again worried about their majority and superiority status being threatened by new immigrant groups. The resulting movement, known as **nativism**, restricted immigration and protected the interests of native-born citizens. This nativism continued into the twentieth century, when the Dillingham Commission recommended, in 1917, that all immigrants be required to pass a literacy test. The nativists received further support for their views when Congress passed the Johnson-Reed Act in 1924, establishing annual immigration quotas that disproportionately favored immigrants from Western European countries. This act also stopped all immigration from Japan. The Johnson-Reed Act was not abolished until 1965, when a new quota system was established, dramatically increasing the number of immigrants allowed annually from the Eastern Hemisphere and reducing the number from the Western Hemisphere, which resulted in the changes shown in Figure 2.1.

Congressional leaders and presidential candidates during the 1980s promoted a "get tough" approach to immigration, calling for greater control of the U.S. borders. However, the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act actually expanded immigration by allowing visas to people born in countries adversely affected by the 1965 law—Europeans. Today, immigration policies are again under attack by citizens who believe that immigration, especially unauthorized immigration, is not being controlled effectively by the federal government.

Some of today's immigrants enter the United States legally and others are unauthorized. Legal immigrants come in through four major routes. Family sponsorship is the primary path to immigration, representing approximately 66% of the legal immigrants. Family members who are U.S. citizens can petition the federal government to admit their relatives; there are no caps on the number of visas available for immediate family members. The second-largest group of legal immigrants (14%) have come to the United States at the request of employers. They include workers with "extraordinary ability" in the arts or sciences, professionals with advanced degrees, skilled and unskilled workers, investors, and such special categories as athletes, ministers, and investors. **Refugees** and **asylees** (15%) make up the third group. The fourth group is diversity immigrants (4%), participants in a system that allows persons from



Latinos are joined by their allies to protest attacks on immigration rights and anti-discrimination legislation.
(© Peter Casolino/Alamy)

countries with relatively few immigrants to enter a lottery for 50,000 available openings (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2013).

As in the past, emotions about immigration policies today are dividing restrictionists from immigration supporters. Many citizens value multiculturalism and bilingualism, recalling that their ancestors were immigrants who entered the country with a culture and often a language different from that of the dominant group. Other citizens view the growing cultural and language diversity as dangerous to the continuation of the "American" culture for which they and their ancestors have fought. In some states and school districts, these groups of citizens have led the movement to declare English the nation's official language and oppose the use of bilingual signs and documents, which they see as promoting bilingualism. In some communities they picket places where unauthorized day workers gather to meet potential employers.

The debate about immigration policy centers on the action to be taken regarding unauthorized immigrants. Although George W. Bush proposed immigration reform during his presidency at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Congress took no action. Many Latinos were hopeful that President Barack Obama would push for immigration reform soon after he was inaugurated but were disappointed by the inaction of the Obama administration. The Dream Act, intended to allow the children of unauthorized immigrants to attend U.S. colleges, was defeated by Congress in 2010, but President Obama created a policy in 2012 that temporarily deferred removal deportation of these "dreamers" who arrived in the United States as children. However, U.S. citizens continue to be divided on the immigration policies that should be enacted. The Pew Research Center (2014c) reports that 71% of the population would like the government to find a way for unauthorized immigrants to be able to stay in the country legally, although they disagree on the appropriate path for citizenship.

Unauthorized Immigrants

Not all immigrants are authorized to be in the country. People from other countries enter the United States as travelers or on student or other special visas. Some of them extend their stay; others never go home. Many of these immigrants are later reclassified as legal because they meet the requirements for employment-based visas, they qualify as refugees, or they are sponsored by a family as allowed by law. They may also become legal immigrants through

amnesty or similar programs periodically enacted by Congress. The total number of unauthorized immigrants has decreased since 2007, when it was at its peak, 12.8 million. In 2012 an estimated 11.2 million unauthorized immigrants—3.5% of the population—were living in the United States. Approximately 52% of the unauthorized immigrants were from Mexico, 15% from Central America, 6% from South America, 5% from the Caribbean, 12% from Asia, 5% from Europe and Canada, and 4% from Africa, the Middle East, and other countries. Over 6% of the population of California, Texas, and Nevada are unauthorized immigrants (Passel & Cohn, 2014).

Restrictionists charge that unauthorized immigrants drain the social welfare system as they seek education for their children and medical assistance for their family members. Some states try to restrict public services, including education, to unauthorized immigrants. Other states are more supportive of immigrant families, passing their own Dream Acts and promoting bilingual education. For example, some states have passed legislation to provide in-state tuition to children of unauthorized immigrants and increase opportunities for them to attend public colleges and universities in their states.

Refugees and Asylees

Refugees are people who are recognized by the federal government as being persecuted in their home countries because of race, religion, nationality, or membership in a specific social or political group. During 2012, 58,179 individuals were admitted as refugees and 17,506 as asylees, with the majority from the countries shown in Figure 2.2. Figure 2.2 shows that the number of refugees from different countries changes over time, based on political conditions in their home countries.

Nearly half of the refugees are students who may be coping with the stress of the political unrest in their native countries and time spent in refugee camps. They often do not speak English and do not have strong academic backgrounds. They may feel disconnected from their U.S. schools, which contributes to poor academic performance and high dropout rates.

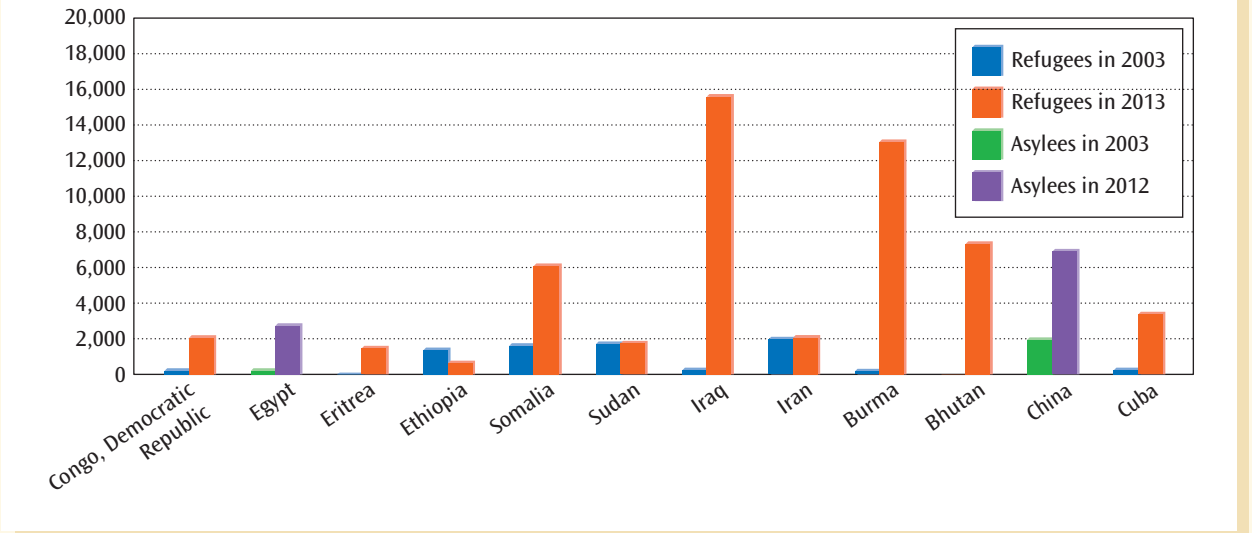


FIGURE 2.2 **Home Countries from Which Most Refugees and Asylees Entered the United States in 2003 and 2012**

Source: Martin, D. C., & Yankay, J. E. (2014). *Refugees and asylees: 2013.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics.

Educators need to work with the parents of these students to determine their educational goals for their children and provide the necessary support (Roxas, 2010).

Education of Immigrants

A key factor in the education success of immigrant children is the level of their parents' education, which impacts the economic well-being of the family (Mather, 2009). However, the education level of immigrants varies greatly. The percentage of the foreign-born population with bachelor's degrees is nearly equal to that in the native-born population, 18% and 20%, respectively. Nearly 11% of the foreign-born population have advanced degrees, as do native-born citizens. At the other end of the scale, 28% of foreign-born adults do not have a high school degree—three times as many as in the native-born population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014e). Studies of immigrants indicate that those with the social and cultural capital of higher education and higher economic status are more likely to be accepted by the dominant society and more likely to assimilate into the middle class (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

More than 1 in 4 students in the United States has one or more foreign-born parents (Hanson & Simms, 2014). Children of immigrants comprise nearly 50% of all children in California and over 30% of the children in Florida, New Jersey, New York, Nevada, and Texas. The majority of these children are born into Latino (59%) or Asian (23%) families. Almost 8 in 10 children with at least one unauthorized parent are U.S. citizens (Pew Research Center, 2014c).

Speaking English well improves students' chances of academic success in U.S. schools. Overall, 1 in 5 of the U.S. population speaks a language other than English at home, but 3 in 5 speak English "very well" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014h). Children are more likely to speak English than their immigrant parents. More than 4 in 5 of the children of immigrants are English proficient, even though nearly half of their parents do not speak English proficiently. Although English language learners (ELLs) speak English fluently within a reasonably short time after arriving in the United States, it generally takes five to seven years to develop conceptual and academic fluency in a second language.

English language learners are not performing as well as their white peers on the standardized tests in math and reading that are required in U.S. schools. Latino immigrant students are more likely to drop out of school than other students, especially if they had limited education in their native countries. Many teachers do not have information or experience that will help them work effectively with immigrant students and foreign-born parents. If the students are lucky, they will attend schools in which the faculty and staff work together to provide them every opportunity possible to achieve academically at high levels.

The Fourteenth Amendment grants citizenship to children born in the United States. Unauthorized children have a right to seek a public education under the U.S. Supreme Court decision *Plyler v. Doe* (1982). Educators cannot require students or parents to declare their immigration status, and they cannot make inquiries that might expose such status. For example, parents cannot be forced to provide Social Security numbers to school districts.



Ethnicity

The United States is an ethnically and racially diverse nation comprised of nearly 300 ethnic groups whose members can identify the national origins of their ancestors. First Americans comprise approximately 1.7% of the total U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014b), with 566 federally recognized tribal entities that are indigenous or native to the United States (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2014). Foreign-born individuals comprise 13% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014b). Ancestors of the remaining 85% of the population immigrated to the United States from around the world sometime during the past 600 years.

Many definitions have been proposed for the term *ethnic group*. Some writers describe ethnic identity as one's national origin, religion, and race. The most basic definition focuses on

the native country of one's ancestors. Thus, we identify ourselves as German American, Chinese American, or Mexican American. A growing number of citizens are able to identify multiple national origins of their ancestors, seeing themselves as African, European, and Japanese American, for example. Other citizens identify themselves as American, not acknowledging the national origins of their ancestors as part of their identity.

A common bond with an ethnic group is developed through family members, friends, and neighbors with whom intimate characteristics of living are shared. These are the people invited to baptisms, marriages, funerals, and family reunions. They are the people with whom we feel the most comfortable. They know the meaning of our behavior; they share the same language and nonverbal patterns, traditions, and customs. **Endogamy** (that is, marriage within the group), segregated residential areas, and restriction of activities with the dominant group help preserve ethnic cohesiveness across generations. The ethnic group also allows for the maintenance of group cohesiveness. It helps sustain and enhance the ethnic identity of its members. It establishes the social networks and communicative patterns that are important for the group's optimization of its position in society.

The character of an ethnic group changes over time, becoming different in a number of ways from the culture of the country of origin. Members within ethnic groups may develop different attitudes and behaviors based on their experiences in the United States and the conditions in the country of origin at the time of immigration. Recent immigrants may have little in common with members of their ethnic group whose ancestors immigrated a century, or even 20 years, before. Ethnic communities undergo constant change in population characteristics, locations, occupations, educational levels, and political and economic struggles, which affects the nature of the group and its members as they become Americans with ethnic roots in another country.

Ethnic Identity

Developing a healthy and secure ethnic identity helps in developing one's overall identity, providing a sense of belonging, optimism, and self-esteem (Berk, 2012b). Among young children, ethnic awareness increases with age. By age four they are aware of differences in appearance, language, and names. Soon after, they become aware of religious and cultural distinctions as well (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2011).

Ethnic identity is influenced early in life by whether one's family members recognize or promote ethnicity as an important part of their identity. Sometimes, the choice about how ethnic one should be is imposed, particularly for members of oppressed ethnic groups. When the ethnic group believes that a strong and loyal ethnic identity is necessary to maintain group solidarity, the pressure of other members of the group makes it difficult to withdraw from the group. For many members of the group, their ethnic identity provides them with the security of belonging and knowing who they are. Their ethnic identity becomes the primary source of identification, and they feel no need to identify themselves differently. In fact, they may find it emotionally very difficult to sever their primary identification with the group.

One does not have to live in the same community with other members of his or her ethnic group to continue to identify with the group. Many second- and third-generation children have moved from their original ethnic communities, integrating into the suburbs or other urban communities—a move that is easier to accomplish if they look white and speak standard English. Although many Americans are generations removed from immigrant status, some continue to consciously emphasize their ethnicity as a meaningful basis of their identity. They may organize or join ethnic social clubs and organizations to revitalize their identification with their national origin. Such participation is characterized by a nostalgic allegiance to the culture of one's ancestral homeland. As ethnic groups learn English and adopt the cultural behaviors of the dominant group, their ethnicity becomes less distinct, and they are less apt to be labeled as ethnic by society, especially if they are white. Their ethnicity becomes voluntary; they can choose to identify with their ethnic group or not.

The European heritages with which nearly half of U.S. residents identify are German (14.6%), Irish (10.5%), English (7.7%), Italian (5.4%), Polish (3%), French (2.6%), Scottish

(1.7%), Dutch (1.4%), and Norwegian (1.4%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014b). Unlike the European groups that emigrated in a wave early in the twentieth century and eventually lost contact with relatives in their country of origin, the ethnic identity of Latinos is regularly replenished as newcomers from their home countries arrive in their communities with the cultural traditions and language of their native countries (Jiménez, 2010). Some residents have multiple ancestries, identifying with two or more national origins. However, teachers and others with whom students interact may continue to respond to them primarily on the basis of their identifiable ethnicity.



Many individuals and families in the United States maintain ties with their ethnic group by participating in family and cultural traditions. (© Jeff Greenberg/ PhotoEdit, Inc.)

Some families fight the assimilative aspects of schooling that draw children into adopting the dress, language, music, and values of their peers from the dominant culture. Immigrant families, families with origins other than Europe, families who are not Christian, and conservative Christian families may fight **acculturation** and assimilation in an effort to maintain the values, beliefs, and codes of behavior that are important in their cultures.

Acculturation

Many immigrant groups have become acculturated over time, adopting the dominant group's cultural patterns. The rapidity and extent of the acculturation process depend on a number of factors, including location and discrimination. If a group is spatially isolated and segregated (whether voluntarily or not) in a rural area, as is the case with some American Indians on reservations, the acculturation process is very slow. Discrimination against members of oppressed groups can make it difficult for them to acculturate even when they choose to do so.

The degree of acculturation is determined, in part, by individuals or families as they decide how closely they want to match the dress, speech, and behavior of members of the dominant group. In the past, members of many groups had little choice if they wanted to share the American dream of success. However, acculturation does not guarantee acceptance by the dominant group. Most members of oppressed groups, especially those of color, have not been permitted to assimilate fully into society even though they have adopted the values and behaviors of the dominant group.



Race

Are racial groups also ethnic groups? In the United States, many people use the two terms interchangeably. Racial groups include many ethnic groups, and ethnic groups may include members of more than one racial group. Race is a concept that was developed by physical anthropologists to describe the physical characteristics of people in the world more than a century ago—a practice that now has been discredited. It is not a stable category for organizing and differentiating people. Instead, it is a sociohistorical concept dependent on society's perception that differences exist and that these differences are important (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Omi & Winant, 2015). Throughout U.S. history, race has been used by policymakers and much of the population to classify groups of people as inferior or superior to other racial groups, resulting in inequality and discrimination against people of color. These racial structures impact the life chances of members of racial groups, benefiting members of the dominant culture (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). They have led to the oppression of people of color and their resistance against that oppression (Omi & Winant, 2015), as reflected in the 2014 street protests against the killing of unarmed African American men and the fairness of a justice system that places a disproportionately high number of men of color in U.S. prisons.

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Student Conflict between Family and Peer Values

Wing Tek Lau is a sixth-grade student in a predominantly white and African American southern community. He and his parents emigrated from Hong Kong four years ago. His uncle was an engineer at a local high-tech company and had encouraged Wing Tek's father to immigrate to this country and open a Chinese restaurant. The restaurant is the only Chinese restaurant in the community, and it was an instant success. Mr. Lau and his family have enjoyed considerable acceptance in both their business and their neighborhood. Wing Tek and his younger sister have also enjoyed academic success at school and appear to be well liked by the other students.

One day when Mrs. Baca, Wing Tek's teacher, called him by name, he announced before the class, "My American name is Kevin. Please, everybody call me Kevin from now on." Mrs. Baca and Wing Tek's classmates honored this request, and Wing Tek was "Kevin" from then on.

Three weeks later, Mr. and Mrs. Lau made an appointment to see Mrs. Baca. When the teacher made reference to "Kevin," Mrs. Lau said, "Who are you talking about? Who is Kevin? We came here to talk about our son, Wing Tek."

"But I thought his American name was Kevin. That's what he asked us to call him," Mrs. Baca replied.

"That child," Mrs. Lau said in disgust, "is a disgrace to our family."

"We have heard his sister call him by that name, but she said it was just a joke," Mr. Lau added. "We came to see you because we are having problems with him in our home. Wing Tek refuses to speak Chinese to us. He argues with us about going to his Chinese lessons on Saturday with the other Chinese students in the community. He says he does not want to eat Chinese food anymore. He says that he is an American now and wants pizza, hamburgers, and tacos. What are you people teaching these children in school? Is there no respect for family, no respect for our cultures?"

Mrs. Baca, an acculturated Mexican American who was raised in East Los Angeles, began to put things together. Wing Tek, in his attempt to ensure his acceptance by his classmates, had chosen to acculturate to an extreme, to the point of rejecting his family heritage. He wanted to be as "American" as anyone else in the class, perhaps more so. Like Wing Tek, Mrs. Baca had acculturated linguistically and in other ways, but she had never given up her Hispanic values. She knew the internal turmoil Wing Tek was experiencing.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. Why is Wing Tek rejecting his Chinese name?
2. Why do Mr. and Mrs. Lau say that their son is a disgrace to the family and their traditional family values?
3. What can Mrs. Baca do to meet both the needs of Wing Tek's parents and Wing Tek?
4. What can Mrs. Baca do to help Wing Tek feel more comfortable with his Chinese heritage in the classroom?

People of Northern and Western European ancestry have traditionally been advantaged in the United States. Until 1952 immigrants had to be white to be eligible for naturalized citizenship. At one time, slaves and American Indians were perceived as so inferior to the dominant group that each individual was counted by the government as only a fraction of a person. Chinese immigrants in the late nineteenth century were charged an additional tax. When Southern and Eastern Europeans immigrated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they were viewed by nativists as members of an inferior race. However, these Europeans were eligible for citizenship because they were white; those from most other continents were not eligible. Arab American immigrants, for example, needed a court ruling that they were white before they could become citizens.

In 1916 Madison Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race* detailed the U.S. racist ideology. Northern and Western Europeans of the **Nordic race** were identified as the political and military geniuses of the world. Protecting the purity of the Nordic race became such a popular and emotional issue that laws were passed to severely limit immigration from any region except Northern European countries. **Miscegenation** laws in many states prevented the marriage of whites to members of other races until the U.S. Supreme Court declared those laws unconstitutional in 1967.

Nativism reappeared in the 1990s in resolutions, referenda, and legislation in a number of states to deny education to unauthorized immigrants, restrict communication to the English language, and limit prenatal care and preschool services available to low-income families, who are disproportionately of color. As the nation continues to become more racially and ethnically diverse, nativists again call for more restrictive control of immigration. They worry that the heritage and power of European Americans are being diminished as the population becomes less white.

Identification of Race

When racial identification became codified in the United States, it was acceptable, and even necessary at times, to identify oneself by race. This practice allows tracking of the participation of groups in schools, colleges, and professional fields to determine the extent of discriminatory outcomes. Federal forms and reports classify the population on the basis of a mixture of racial and pan-ethnic categorizations, as shown in Figure 2.3.

A problem with identifying the U.S. population by such broad categories is that the categories reveal little about the people in these groups. Whether a person was born in the United States or is an immigrant may have significance in terms of how he or she identifies himself or herself. Pan-ethnic classifications impose boundaries that do not always reflect how group members see themselves. Some students rebel against identifying themselves in this way and refuse to select a pan-ethnic identity. Puerto Ricans and other Latinos do not generally identify themselves by race, even though the U.S. Census asks them to identify their race. Their group identity within the United States is primarily connected to the country from which their family emigrated (Taylor, Lopez, Martinez, & Velasco, 2012).

Although non-Hispanic whites are numerically dominant in the United States, they belong to many different ethnic groups. Neither the ethnic identification nor the actual racial heritage

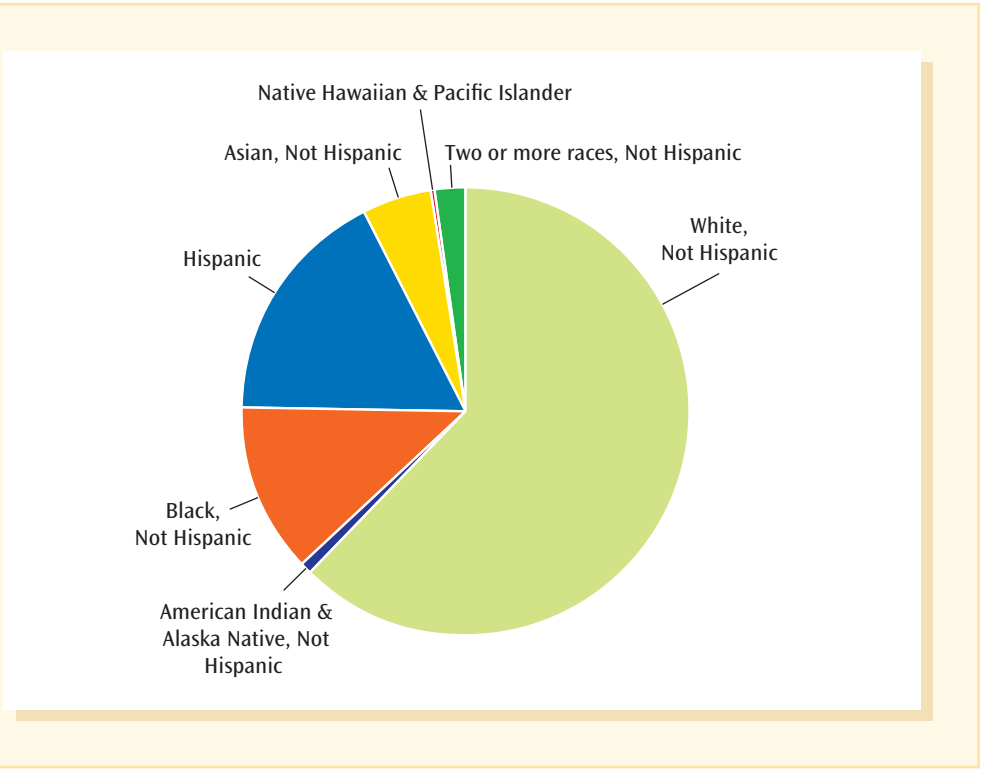


FIGURE 2.3 Pan-Ethnic and Racial Composition of the United States in 2013

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (2014b). American community survey: Demographic and housing estimates. Retrieved December 28, 2014, from http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_1YR_DP05&prodType=table.

of African Americans—which may be a mixture of African, European, American Indian, and other groups—is recognized. Latinos represent different racial groups and mixtures of racial groups, as well as distinct ethnic groups whose members identify themselves as Mexican Americans (64% of the Latino population), Puerto Ricans (9%), Central Americans (8%), South Americans (6%), and Cuban Americans (4%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013).

The pan-ethnic classification of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans includes individuals whose families have been here for generations and those who are first-generation immigrants. Many have little in common other than that their countries of origin are from the same continent. Asian Americans are immigrants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Borneo, Burma, Cambodia, Chamorro, China, East India, Philippines, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Okinawa, Samoa, Sikkim, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, and other Asian countries.

Watch the video "Redefining Race and Ethnicity in the US" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VA7La5JgOUk), in which categories of race and ethnic identity are discussed.

African Americans have become a single pan-ethnic group because of a common history, language, economic life, and culture developed over centuries of living in the United States. They are a cohesive group, in part, because of the continuing discrimination they experience in the way of racial profiling by police and others, segregated schools and housing, and discriminatory treatment as shoppers, diners, and employees. Just because an individual appears to be African American is not an indication that the person always identifies himself or herself as African American. Some identify themselves as black, others with a specific ethnic group—for example, Puerto Rican or Somali or West Indian. Africans who are recent immigrants may identify themselves ethnically by their nation or tribe of origin and do not see themselves as members of the long-established African American ethnic group.

The belief in the racial superiority of whites is reflected in cases of mixed racial heritage. Children of black and white parents are often classified by others as black, not white; those of Japanese and white heritage usually are classified as Japanese American. Biracial young people today may recognize both of their races but may identify with one race more than another.

Watch the video "Being Multiracial in America" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21H9lA6MLHM), in which biracial students discuss their experiences growing up in two cultures.

Many whites see themselves as raceless. They believe they are the norm, against which everyone else is "other." They can allow their ethnicity to disappear because they do not see it as determinant of their life chances, especially after their family has been in the United States for a few generations. They often deny that racial inequality has any impact on their ability to achieve, believing that their social and economic conditions are based solely on their own individual achievement. They seldom acknowledge that white oppression of people of color around the world has contributed to the subordinate status of those groups. Most whites are unable to acknowledge that they are privileged in our social, political, and economic systems. The study of whiteness exposes the privilege and power it bestows on its members in the maintenance of an inequitable system (Leonardo, 2009; McIntosh, 2013).

Racial Diversity

The proportion of whites in the U.S. population will continue to decline. Currently more than one-third of the nation's population is African American, Latino, Asian American, American Indian, Alaska Native, Hawaiian Native, and Pacific Islander. These groups of color will comprise 40% of the population by 2020 and 50% of the population by 2045 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014j).

Two factors contribute to the population growth of people of color: new immigrants and births. As shown in Figure 2.1, the majority of new immigrants are coming from Mexico, the Caribbean, and Asian countries. The countries from which the most people were granted legal permanent residency in 2012 were Mexico (14.2%), China (7.9%), India (6.4%), the Philippines (5.6%), the Dominican Republic (4%), Cuba (3.2%), Vietnam (2.7%), and Haiti (2.2%) (Monger & Yankay, 2013). The growth of the Asian American population is due primarily to immigration. Nearly 3 in 4 Asian adults in the United States are foreign born (Brown, 2014).

The second factor that affects population growth is birth rate. At its peak in the 1950s, the U.S. fertility rate was 3.7 births per woman (Mather, 2014), leading to an overall increase in the population. Today that rate is 1.9, as compared to 1.1 in Taiwan, 1.2 in Singapore and South Korea, 1.4 in Japan and Germany, 2.4 in India, 4.1 in Iraq, 5.1 in Afghanistan, 6.1 in Mali, and 7.6 in Niger (Population Reference Bureau, 2014). The replacement rate required to maintain the population is 2.1 children per woman. Therefore, some countries with lower

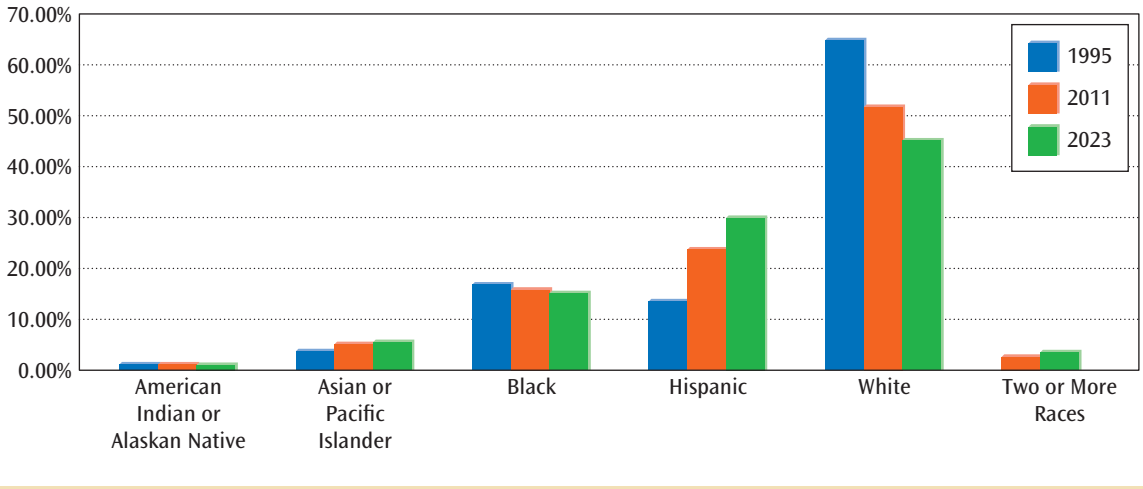


FIGURE 2.4 **The Changing Diversity of the K–12 Student Population**

Source: U.S. Department of Education. (2013b). Digest of education statistics 2013. Retrieved December 28, 2014, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_203.50.asp.

fertility rates are experiencing a decrease in their populations, while those with higher rates are increasing the size of their populations. The differential rate among racial and ethnic groups contributes to distinct growth patterns in the U.S. population. White women in the United States are having an average of 1.8 children, as are Asian Americans, while African Americans are having an average of 2.1, and Latinos 2.4 (Passel, Livingston, & Cohn, 2012).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Latinos replaced African Americans as the largest group of color in the United States. Figure 2.4 shows how the diversity of school-age children and youth has changed since 1995 and is projected to change by 2023. The majority of the population in many urban schools is already comprised of students of color, and diversity is growing in many rural areas of the Midwest and South. White students represented less than half of the student population beginning in 2014 (U.S. Department of Education, 2013b). These demographics obviously will have a profound impact on schools throughout the United States.

Some states and areas of the country are much more diverse than others; for example, the West has the largest concentration (60%) of students of color, the Midwest the lowest (32%). Students of color now comprise over half of the student population in 14 states and the District of Columbia, as shown in Figure 2.5. The highest concentration of African American students is in the South (24%); Latinos and Asian American students are more concentrated in the West, comprising 40% and 9% of the student population, respectively (U.S. Department of Education, 2013b).

Racial Identity

Racial identity is influenced by our family and by others who share our identity. Racial stereotypes influence the interactions among members of different racial groups. If a group is seen as aggressive and violent, the reaction of the second group may be fear and protective action. The construct of whiteness by many students of color is based on a distrust of whites that has grown out of their own or their communities' lived experiences. Unlike most whites, people of color see the privilege of whiteness and, in many cases, have suffered the consequences of their lack of privilege and power in society. Their oppression by the dominant group is often a unifying theme around which people of color coalesce.

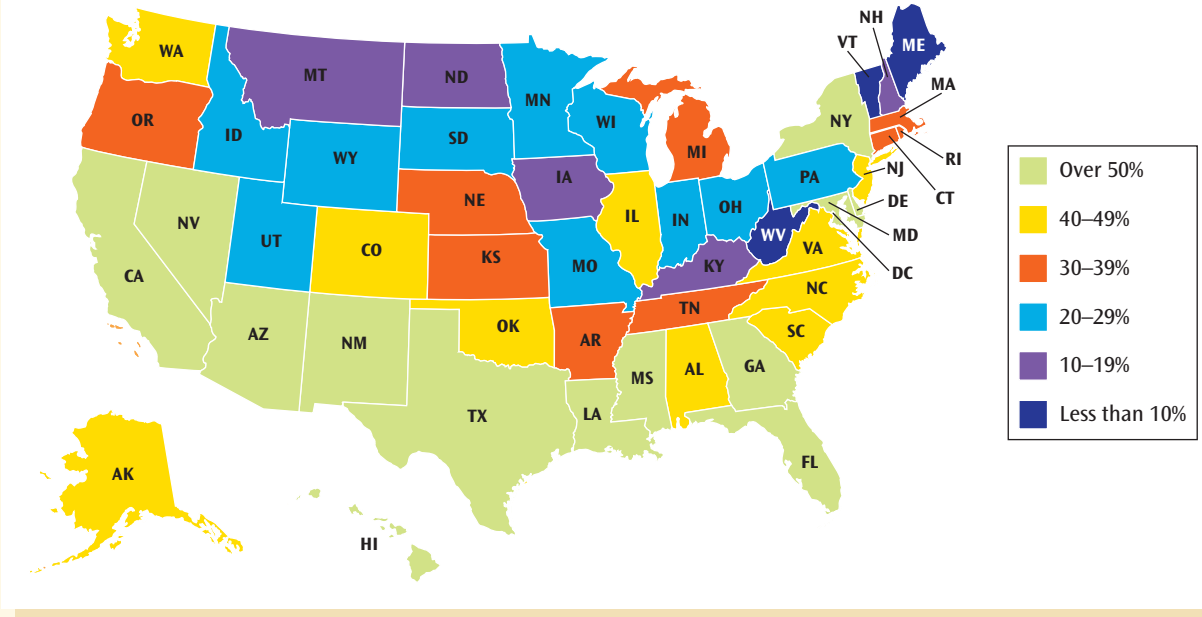


FIGURE 2.5 Percent of Students of Color by State

Source: U.S. Department of Education. (2013b). Digest of education statistics 2013. Retrieved December 28, 2014, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_203.50.asp.

The racial identity of groups evolves with education and life experiences but may be suppressed at any stage before full development. The Black Identity Development (BID) model, which has been recently updated by Bailey W. Jackson III (2012), describes five stages in the racial development of African Americans. In the first stage, black children become aware of physical and cultural differences between themselves and others but generally do not feel afraid of or hostile toward members of other groups. In the second stage, acceptance, children attempt to accept and conform to the standards and values of the dominant society. In the third stage, resistance, young people begin to become acutely aware of racism and its impact on their lives as well as its institutionalization in policies and practices that affect them. They learn the overt and covert messages in society that indicate that blacks are not equal to whites, as portrayed in their low achievement rates on standardized tests, high incarceration rates, and low economic status. It becomes clear that the black culture is not positively portrayed in society. They do not see their culture or the contributions of their ancestors in textbooks, books, and movies used in school. During this period, they may be angry or hurt about the stereotyping and racism they are experiencing or seeing others experience.

In the fourth stage, redefinition, blacks develop a strong desire to identify with their racial group and actively learn about African American history and culture. The fifth stage of development is internalization, in which individuals become secure in their own race and are able to develop meaningful relationships with whites who respect their racial identity. In the last stage, individuals have a very positive sense of their racial identity and develop a commitment to the issues of African Americans as a group. Some blacks will develop a multicultural perspective that incorporates the worldviews from a number of cultural groups.

Whites and other racial and cultural groups also go through developmental stages as they develop their racial identity and abandon racism. At the beginning, whites usually do not recognize the significance of race. They accept the common **stereotypes** of people of color and do not believe that racism pervades society. As they become aware of white racism and privilege, they

become uncomfortable and feel guilt, shame, and anger about racism. They begin to recognize that they are prejudiced. In the next stage, they become silent about racism and are frustrated at being labeled a member of a group rather than an individual. As they become more aware of institutional racism, they begin to unlearn their own racism. In this stage they are often self-conscious and feel guilty about their whiteness. The development of a positive white identity allows them to move beyond the role of the victimizer, causing their feelings of guilt and shame to subside. In the last stage, they become an ally to people of color and are able to confront institutional racism and work toward its elimination (Helms, 1990; Tatum, 2009).

Elementary and secondary students will be at various stages in their development of racial identity. They may be angry, feel guilty, be ethnocentric, or be defensive—behaviors and feelings that may erupt in class, as Denise Williams found in the vignette that opened this chapter. Educators must remember that students of color face societal constraints and restrictions that seldom affect white students. Such recognition is essential in the development of instructional programs and schools to effectively serve diverse populations who do not yet share equally in the benefits that education offers.



The Struggle for Civil Rights

Members of oppressed groups sometimes coalesce to fight against the harsh economic and political realities and injustices imposed on them. These movements for democratic rights and economic justice invariably bolster community solidarity based on race or national origins. The fight for civil rights has led to the reduction of the overt discrimination and exclusion that has kept many citizens from having access to the basic necessities and benefits of society. The events that initiated these changes in schools and broader society are outlined in this section.

The Civil Rights Movement

The fight for civil rights by ethnic and racial groups has a long history in the United States. Native Americans fought to maintain their rights, culture, languages, and lands as foreigners appropriated their homelands. African slaves revolted against their owners. Free blacks decried the discrimination and violence they faced in the North. Martin Delaney led a Black Nationalist movement in the mid-1800s for black liberation. In the early twentieth century, Mexican American miners in Arizona led a strike for better working conditions and pay equal to that of European American miners. Across the Southwest, Mexican Americans established ethnic organizations to fight exploitation and support those who were in dire straits. Chinese and other immigrants used the courts to overturn the 1790 Naturalization Act, which excluded them from citizenship (Takaki, 1993).

Although individuals and groups continued to push the government for civil rights throughout the twentieth century, the movement exploded in the 1950s and 1960s when large numbers of African Americans in the South challenged their oppressed status. Rosa Parks defied authorities in 1955 when she sat in the whites-only section at the front of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama, sparking a boycott of the public transportation system for over a year and leading to the desegregation of the transportation system. Beginning in 1960, students from North Carolina A&T University and other historically black colleges sat at lunch counters designated for whites only, challenging **Jim Crow laws** that forced whites and people of color to use different public accommodations such as water fountains, restrooms, hotels, and restaurants. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the Black Panthers Party organized young people to fight the injustices African Americans faced daily.

Under the leadership of Fannie Lou Hamer, African American Democrats from Mississippi challenged the seating of the all-white delegation at the 1964 Democratic National Convention. Although the African American delegates were not seated, their courage led to the

seating of a growing number of ethnically and racially diverse delegates in the years that followed. Facing arrest and beatings, the racially mixed Freedom Riders boarded buses to break the segregation pattern in interstate travel. African Americans, sometimes joined by European Americans, marched for freedom and established Freedom Schools across the South to teach leadership and social activism. The March on Washington in 1963, in which Martin Luther King, Jr., made his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, inspired African Americans to continue the fight for their civil rights. But the violence against them continued. Less than a month after the March on Washington, four girls were killed when a bomb exploded in the basement of their black church in Montgomery, Alabama. Congress finally responded by passing the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which banned discrimination in schools, employment, and public accommodations and secured the voting rights of African Americans.

The call for "Black Power" brought attention to the history and contributions of African Americans to society. Black studies and other ethnic studies programs were established in colleges and universities. Educators and textbook publishers were pushed to rewrite books to more accurately reflect the multiethnic history of the United States. Yet societal changes did not necessarily follow. Although legislation guaranteed equality for all racial groups, many European Americans continued to fight against the desegregation of schools and other public facilities. Frustration with the dominant group's efforts to impede progress led African Americans and members of other oppressed groups to identify even more strongly with other members of their ethnic group to fight discrimination and inequality with a unified voice. These struggles continue today, not only in this country but elsewhere throughout the world.

Brown v. Board of Education

Schools have long been at the center of the civil rights movement. At one time children of color were not allowed to attend school. Later they were not allowed to attend schools with white children, leading to a system of segregated schools in which students of color were delegated to schools without the books and resources to which most white children had access. Segregation continued in many states until more than a decade after the Supreme Court unanimously declared that separate but equal schooling was not equal in its *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) decision.

The 1954 decision was the result of four cases before the Supreme Court: *Briggs v. Elliott* (1952) in South Carolina, *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County* (1952) in Virginia, *Gebhart v. Belton* (1952) in Delaware, and *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1951) in Kansas. These cases were addressed together in the 1954 decision of *Brown v. Board of Education*. A fifth case, *Bolling v. Sharpe* (1954), settled a year later, declared that the federal government could not segregate schools in the District of Columbia. The Supreme Court returned to the implementation of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* in 1955 when it sent all school integration cases back to the lower courts and asked states to desegregate "with all deliberate speed." Later courts called for the desegregation of metropolitan areas, requiring students to be bussed across city lines to ensure integration.

Many segregated school districts and universities took years to integrate their schools. The fierce resistance of many whites in many communities required the use of the National Guard to protect African American students who were entering white schools for the first time. Many whites established private schools or moved to the suburbs, where the population was primarily European American, to avoid sending their children to schools with African American children. Some communities, such as Farmville, Virginia, closed their public schools rather than desegregate them. The composition of schools did change in the three decades following the *Brown* decision. In the mid-1960s only 2% of the African American students in the United States attended integrated schools, as compared to 37% in the 1980s (Mickelson & Smith, 2010). Unfortunately, one of the negative outcomes of this movement was the loss of jobs by African American teachers and principals who were not hired to work in integrated schools.

Other ethnic groups also used the courts to demand an equitable education for their children. In *Gong Lum v. Rice* in Mississippi in 1927, a Chinese American girl sought the right to



The National Guard was required to protect African American students as schools were desegregated in many communities during the 1960s. (© Everett Collection Inc/Alamy)

attend a white school by arguing that she was not black. The court ruled she was not white, giving the school the authority to determine the racial makeup of their students. A Mexican American student was allowed to attend an integrated school in California in the 1940s as a result of *Méndez v. Westminster* (1946). Chinese American students in San Francisco won the right to have their first language used in instruction in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974). The *Brown* decision also served as the precursor for federal laws that supported educational equity for girls and women in Title IX, passed in 1972, and people with disabilities in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Post-*Brown* Turnaround

By the mid-1980s courts had begun lifting the federal sanctions that had forced schools to desegregate, stating that the federal requirements were meant to be temporary to overcome **de jure segregation**. Now that schools were no longer segregated by race, the easing of sanctions allowed school districts to return students to neighborhood schools. Because of **de facto segregation** in communities, the students in many neighborhood schools were overwhelmingly of the same race, returning the status of integration to pre-1970 levels. Today 2 in 5 African American and Latino students attend schools in neighborhoods with high poverty, limited resources, social strife, and few, if any, white students (Orfield, Kucsera, & Siegel-Hawley, 2012). The schools of the majority of white students are also segregated; they attend schools where at least 3 in 4 of their peers are white (Spatig-Amerikaner, 2012).

The use of race and ethnicity by a public school or university to promote diversity of its student population was considered by the Supreme Court in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003). The court endorsed the arguments of the University of Michigan Law School that it had used race in its admissions policies to increase integration and the need for a diverse workforce. Race was one of a number of factors considered by the school's admission committee. On the same day, the court ruled against the University of Michigan College of Arts and Sciences, which gave bonus points to applicants from specific groups of color. To ensure that race could not be used as a factor in determining admission to a public college or university, the voters of Michigan passed Proposal 2 in 2006 to ban its use—an action that was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action* (2014).

School districts with plans to diversify their student populations began to be sued. In 2007 the Supreme Court ruled by a vote of 5 to 4 against programs in Seattle and Louisville that used race in assigning students to schools. The court did not find that either school district could relate its preferred level of diversity in a school to related educational benefits. Chief Justice John G. Roberts wrote that "racial balance is not to be achieved for its own sake" (*Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District #1*, 2007). Many educators and commentators claim that the two 2007 Supreme Court rulings against using race to determine where students attend schools have essentially halted the integration of schools. As court orders to desegregate schools have declined, the Office of Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education has intervened to work with schools to reduce racial isolation and improve capital facilities (Maxwell, 2014). The milestones in the desegregation and resegregation of schools are chronicled in Table 2.1.

The goal of desegregation changed over time from the physical integration of students in a school building to the achievement of equal learning opportunities and outcomes for all students. Civil rights groups are now asking why students of color have unequal access to qualified teachers, advanced mathematics and science classes, gifted classes, and adequately funded schools. Why are African American and Latino students disproportionately represented in nonacademic and special education classes, and why do the rates for school suspension and dropping out vary so greatly across racial groups? As schools become segregated again, educators have a greater responsibility for ensuring that all students learn regardless of the ethnic and racial composition of the school. Teachers will also have the responsibility for helping students understand that the world in which they will work is multiethnic and multiracial, unlike the school they may be attending.

TABLE 2.1 MILESTONES IN DESEGREGATING AND RESEGREGATING SCHOOLS

1896	The Supreme Court authorizes segregation in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, finding Louisiana's "separate but equal" law constitutional.
1940	A federal court requires equal salaries for African American and white teachers in *Alston v. School Board of City of Norfolk*.
1947	In a precursor to the *Brown* case, a federal appeals court strikes down segregated schooling for Mexican American and white students in *Westminster School Dist. v. Méndez*. The verdict prompts California Governor Earl Warren to repeal a state law calling for segregation of Native American and Asian American students.
1954	In an unanimous opinion, the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education* overturns *Plessy* and declares that separate schools are "inherently unequal."
1955	The Supreme Court rules that the federal government is under the same duty as the states and must desegregate the Washington, DC, schools in *Bolling v. Sharpe.* In *Brown II*, the Supreme Court orders the lower federal courts to require desegregation "with all deliberate speed."
1956	Tennessee Governor Frank Clement calls in the National Guard after white mobs attempt to block the desegregation of a high school.
	The Virginia legislature calls for "massive resistance" to school desegregation and pledges to close schools under desegregation orders.
1957	More than 1,000 paratroopers from the 101st Airborne Division and a federalized Arkansas National Guard protect nine African American students integrating Central High School in Little Rock, AR.
1959	Officials close public schools in Prince Edward County, VA, rather than integrate them.
1960	In New Orleans, federal marshals shield six-year-old Ruby Bridges from an angry crowd as she attempts to enroll in school.
1964	The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is adopted. Title IV of the Act authorizes the federal government to file school desegregation cases. Title VI of the Act prohibits discrimination in programs and activities, including schools, receiving federal financial assistance.
	The Supreme Court orders Prince Edward Country, VA, to reopen its schools on a desegregated basis.
1965	In *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, the Supreme Court orders states to dismantle segregated school systems "root and branch." The Court identifies five factors—facilities, staff, faculty, extracurricular activities, and transportation—to be used to gauge a school system's compliance with the mandate of *Brown*.

1969	The Supreme Court declares the "all deliberate speed" standard no longer constitutionally permissible and orders the immediate desegregation of Mississippi schools in *Alexander v. Holmes County Board of Education*.
1971	The Court approves busing, magnet schools, compensatory education, and other tools as appropriate remedies to overcome the role of residential segregation in perpetuating racially segregated schools in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenberg Board of Education*.
1972	The Supreme Court refuses to allow public school systems to avoid desegregation by creating new, mostly or all-white "splinter districts" in *Wright v. Council of the City of Emporia* and *United States v. Scotland Neck City Board of Education.*
1973	The Supreme Court rules that states cannot provide textbooks to racially segregated private schools to avoid integration mandates in *Norwood v. Harrison.*
	The Supreme Court finds that the Denver school board intentionally segregated Mexican American and African American students from white students in *Keyes v. Denver School District No. 1.*
	The Supreme Court rules that education is not a "fundamental right" and that the Constitution does not require equal education expenditures within a state in *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez.*
1974	The Supreme Court blocks metropolitan-wide desegregation plans as a means to desegregate urban schools with large minority populations in *Milliken v. Bradley.*
1978	A fractured Supreme Court declares the affirmative action admissions program for the University of California–Davis Medical School unconstitutional because it sets aside a specific number of seats for African American and Latino students. The Court rules that race can be a factor in university admissions, but it cannot be the deciding factor in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke.*
1982	The Supreme Court rejects tax exemptions for private religious schools that discriminate in *Bob Jones University v. U.S.* and *Goldsboro Christian Schools v. U.S.*
1986	For the first time, a federal court finds that once a school district meets the Green factors (i.e., the desegregation of facilities, staff, faculty, extracurricular activities, and transportation), it can be released from its desegregation plan and returned to local control in *Riddick v. School Board of the City of Norfolk, Virginia.*
1991	Emphasizing that court orders are not intended "to operate in perpetuity," the Supreme Court makes it easier for formerly segregated school systems to fulfill their obligations under desegregation decrees in *Board of Education of Oklahoma City v. Dowell.*
1992	In *Freeman v. Pitts* the Supreme Court further speeds the end of desegregation cases, ruling that school systems can fulfill their obligations in an incremental fashion.
1995	The Supreme Court sets a new goal for desegregation plans in *Missouri v. Jenkins*: the return of schools to local control.
1996	A federal appeals court prohibits the use of race in college and university admissions, ending affirmative action in Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi in *Hopwood v. Texas.*
2001	White parents in Charlotte, NC, schools successfully seek an end to the desegregation process, barring the use of race in making student assignments.
2003	The Supreme Court upholds diversity as a rationale for affirmative action programs in higher education admissions, but concludes that point systems are not appropriate in *Gratz v. Bollinger* and *Grutter v. Bollinger*.
	A federal district court case affirms the value of racial diversity and race-conscious student assignment plans in K–12 education in *Lynn v. Comfort.*
2007	The more conservative Supreme Court strikes down the use of race in determining schools for students in *Parents Involved in Community Schools Inc. v. Seattle School District* and *Meredith v. Jefferson County (Ky.) Board of Education.*
2014	The Supreme Court upholds a Michigan constitutional amendment that banned affirmative action in admissions to the state's public universities in *Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action*.
	In *Fisher v. University of* Texas, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit rules in favor of the University of Texas, writing that "universities may use race as part of a holistic admissions program where it cannot otherwise achieve diversity." Fisher may file an appeal or return to the Supreme Court.



Racial and Ethnic Discrimination



Watch the video "A Tale of 2 High Schools" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xdfVAPvv9A), in which two high school students describe the courses they take and provide a brief tour of their schools.

Equality among groups is greater today than at any other time in our nation's history, but we have not yet achieved the egalitarian goals that we so proudly espouse to the rest of the world. African American and Latino families earn an income that is only 57% and 58% that of a white family (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014d). Large numbers of American Indian, African American, and Latino students are not achieving at a proficient academic level in our schools. Because their educational experiences are generally of a lower quality than those of most white students, they have fewer opportunities for higher education and well-paying jobs. Although many whites do not think discrimination contributes to the life chances of African Americans, the majority of blacks perceive that discrimination is the major obstacle to the achievement of equality (Newport, 2013a). In this section, we will explore some of the areas that lead to these differences in perspectives.

Intergroup Relations

Interethnic and interracial conflict is certainly not new in the United States. Conflicts between American Indians and whites were common in the European American attempt to subjugate the native peoples. African slaves rebelled against their owners. This resistance exists today in protests after particularly egregious actions of police and other perpetrators, such as the 2014 shootings of Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida; Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri; Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio; and other unarmed black youth and men.

What are the reasons for continued interethnic conflict? Discriminatory practices have protected the superior status of the dominant group for centuries. When other ethnic groups try to participate more equitably in the rewards and privileges of society, the dominant group must concede some of its advantages. As long as one ethnic or racial group has an institutional advantage over others, intergroup conflict will occur.

Competition for economic resources can also contribute to intergroup conflict. As economic conditions become tighter, fewer jobs become available. Discriminatory practices in the past have forced people of color into positions with the least seniority. When jobs are cut back, disproportionately high numbers of people of color are laid off. The tension between ethnic groups increases as members of specific groups determine that they disproportionately suffer the hardships resulting from economic depression.

Part of the problem is that whites have little or no experience with being the victims of discrimination and are less likely to believe that members of other groups are treated unfairly or are discriminated against. Perceptions are greatly affected by our experiences, as shown in a Gallup poll in which 67% of the white and 71% of the Hispanic respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the way blacks are treated in society as compared to 47% of black respondents (Gallup, 2014b). Most whites and Hispanics think that they and people of color have equal job opportunities, but the majority of African Americans disagree, as shown in Figure 2.6. Even though research shows that young African American men receive harsher sentences than their white peers and are incarcerated at disproportionately high rates, 69% of whites don't find the justice system biased, while only 25% of blacks find the system unbiased (Gallup, 2014a).

Following the nationwide protests against the killing of unarmed African American men, which began in Ferguson, Missouri, in the summer of 2014, the percentage of the population that identified race relations as a major U.S. problem jumped from 1% to 13%. The last time Americans were so concerned about race relations was after the Rodney King beating by police in Los Angeles in 1992 (McCarthy, 2014). With limited progress over the past few decades in reducing inequalities across racial groups, the population is not overly optimistic about the improvement of race relations. Thirty-nine percent of whites, 35% of Latinos, and 49% of African Americans believe that race relations will always be a problem (Gallup, 2014b). Even with the pessimism about racial relations, 2 in 3 blacks described white–black relations as good or somewhat good (Gallup, 2014a).

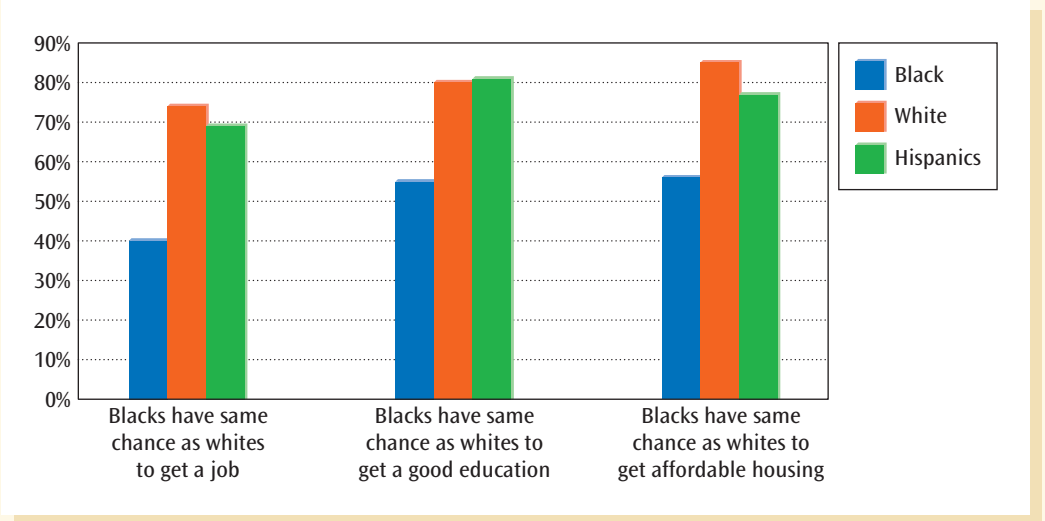


FIGURE 2.6 Gaps in Views of Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics

Source: Gallup. (2014b). Race relations. Retrieved December 29, 2014, from http://www.gallup.com/poll/1687/Race-Relations.aspx.

Hate Groups

White privilege is sometimes taken to the extreme as some whites organize to protect their power by preaching hate against other groups. Since World War II, overt acts of prejudice have decreased dramatically. In the early 1940s, the majority of whites supported segregation of and discrimination against blacks. Today, most whites support policies against racial discrimination and prejudice. A decade after it was first proposed, Congress passed a federal law in 2009 to protect the population against hate crimes.

Nevertheless, intolerance and violence against people based on their membership in specific groups continue. The Hate Crimes Act defines hate crimes as those "that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, gender or gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and ethnicity" (Wilson, 2014). The U.S. Department of Justice reported 293,800 hate crimes in 2012 (Wilson, 2014). Although hate crimes are reported against all of these groups, nearly half of all the crimes are racially based, as shown in Figure 2.7. Two in three of these racially motivated crimes stemmed from anti-black bias; 1 in 5 were a result of anti-white bias.

The Southern Poverty Law Center reported that 939 hate groups were operating in the United States in 2013, with the majority located east of the Mississippi River (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2014). These groups include nativist vigilantes who patrol the border with Mexico, antigovernment "patriot" groups, neo-Nazis, Klansmen, white nationalists, neo-Confederates, racist skinheads, and black separatists.

Recruitment efforts by hate groups often target areas of the country that have experienced economic and racial change, such as factory layoffs or increased diversity in a school. Some recruits may be angry about economic conditions that have led to the loss of jobs in their communities. Rather than blame the corporations, which may be economizing and moving jobs to sources of cheaper labor, they blame African Americans, women, Arabs, Jews, or the government. Hate group organizers convince new recruits that members of other groups are taking their jobs and being pandered to by government programs. A student contact in a school can provide information about any anger in students that might make the school a potential site for recruitment. *Responding to Hate and Bias at School* and the periodical *Teaching Tolerance* are available for free from the website of the Southern Poverty Law Center as resources for teachers to combat bigotry and hate in schools.

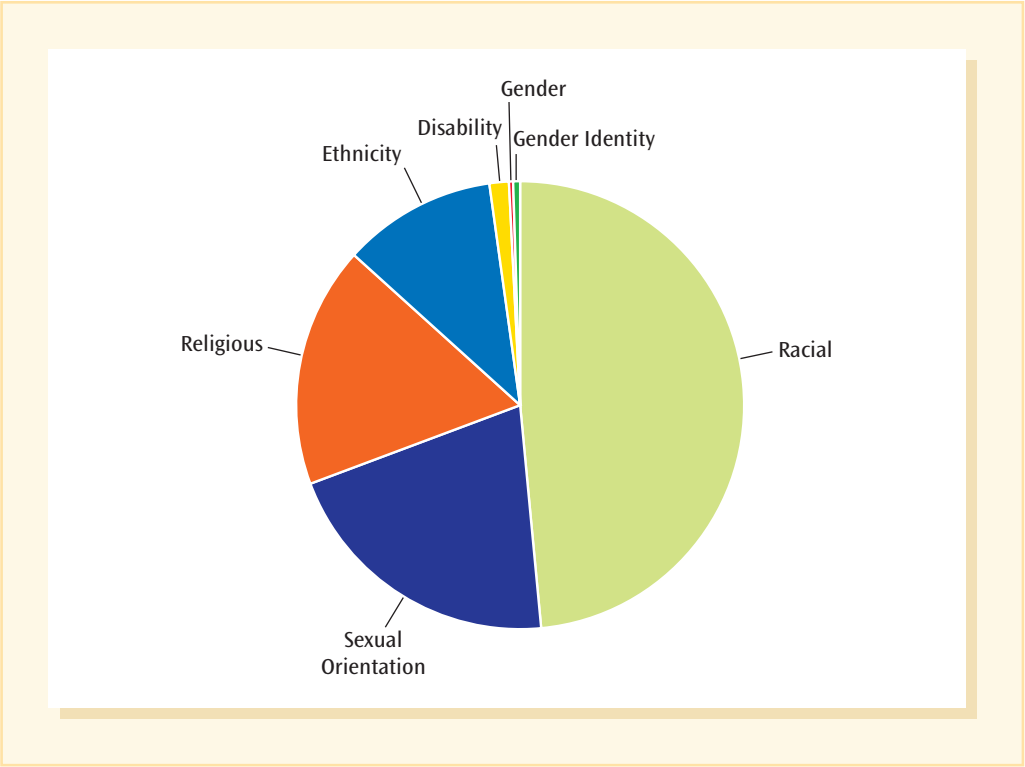


FIGURE 2.7 **Bias Motivation of Hate Crimes in 2013**

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2014). Hate crime statistics, 2013. Retrieved December 30, 2014, from http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/hate-crime/2013.

School-to-Prison Pipeline

In the book *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, Michelle Alexander (2012) makes the case that African American men and other poor people of color are disproportionately arrested and convicted for nonviolent crimes. With a criminal record, they are no longer able to vote or serve on a jury in most states. They are legally discriminated against in finding a job, locating housing, and receiving food stamps and other public benefits in ways similar to the restraints of the Jim Crow laws of the twentieth century. Across the country, 1 in 7 African American men cannot vote because they are felons.

The incarceration rate in the United States is higher than in any other industrialized nation. In the past 30 years, the prison population exploded from 300,000 to more than 2 million (Alexander, 2013). This increase was due primarily to arrests related to drugs that account for more than half of the increase. In 2005, 4 in 5 drug arrests were for possession; only 1 in 5 was for the sale of drugs. Although white youth are more likely to be engaged in drug crimes, young people of color are more likely to be arrested and sentenced (Alexander, 2013). If the current trends continue, as many as 1 in 3 young African American men will be imprisoned. In some cities more than half of all young adult black men are in prison or jail or on probation or parole (Alexander, 2012).

What does the imprisonment of men of color have to do with schools? The path to prison begins for many youth in school, especially with the zero-tolerance policies of a number of schools that can lead to children and youth being handcuffed and arrested. Zero-tolerance policies in schools require punishment of any infraction of a rule. Although the initial intent was to ensure safety of the learning environment by removing students for possession of drugs or weapons, students have been suspended and expelled for the possession of cough drops or Tylenol, paper swords, or a toy gun. Although punishment for some of these offenses may be appropriate, critics of the zero-tolerance policy would argue that the punishment is far too severe for many of the offenses. When students are expelled from school, they are not only

removed from a learning environment but often left on their own and exposed to opportunities for getting in trouble that places them in the juvenile justice system.

Schools often use suspension to temporarily remove students from schools for infractions against school rules, including minor rules that would not have led to out-of-school suspension in the past. Research is finding that suspension is one of the leading indicators of a student dropping out of school. Out-of-school suspension contributes to the risk of a student being incarcerated (Losen & Gillespie, 2012). Who are the students who are most likely to be suspended? Disproportionately, they are African American students and students with disabilities. Nationwide, 1 in 6 African American students is suspended, which is two to over three times higher than students from other groups. African American students with disabilities are the most likely to be suspended, with 1 in 4 of them suspended at least once in 2009–2010. These students are also more likely to be suspended more than once during a school year (Losen & Gillespie, 2012).

Some schools are placing increasing reliance on police to maintain discipline in a building, removing that burden from teachers and school administrators. Most of the arrests in schools are for students being disruptive, but in some schools they are for infractions such as being late to class or dress code violations. In some school systems, students as young as 10 are being arrested. In Meridian, Mississippi, students were being handcuffed and jailed for days without a hearing. Further school infractions were counted as violation of a student's probation (Rethinking Schools,

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate / To Suspend or Not Suspend?

Schools have historically suspended disruptive students temporarily from school as a punishment for breaking school rules. Over the past three decades, suspensions have also been used for many other infractions of school rules, leading to the removal of students from the learning environment of a school for a period of days or weeks. Researchers, policymakers, educators, and parents are now debating the use of suspensions and zero-tolerance policies in schools. Are they accomplishing the purposes for which they were intended? Are they effective in maintaining a safe learning environment? Are they serving students and the school community effectively? Should schools be suspending students?

FOR

- ☐ Not suspending disruptive students will negatively impact the learning environment for the students who want to learn.
- ☐ Suspension will make schools safer by removing disruptive students.
- ☐ Because school violence is at a crisis level, students who do not follow school rules must be removed from the school.
- ☐ The threat of suspension will deter misbehavior by students.
- ☐ Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of suspending students who do not follow the rules.

AGAINST

- ☐ Suspensions are not fair in the way they are being applied by too many school administrators.
- ☐ The use of suspensions is not consistent with what we know about developmentally appropriately strategies for working with students.
- ☐ Out-of-school suspensions are a first step in pushing students who need assistance and support out of school and into the juvenile justice system.
- ☐ Out-of-school suspensions do not deter future misbehavior.
- ☐ Preventing or treating misbehavior that leads to suspensions is much more cost effective than paying welfare and prison costs later.

QUESTIONS

1. In what ways are suspensions applied unfairly across different racial and ethnic groups?
2. Why does disagreement exist among educators about the use of suspensions to maintain a safe learning environment?
3. If you were serving on a committee in your school district to develop a policy related to suspensions and zero-tolerance policies, what would you recommend?



Maintaining a positive climate in the classroom is critical for a safe learning environment that supports all students, regardless of their racial and ethnic background. © Hill Street Studios/Blend Images/Getty Images

2012–2013). Once a student has entered the juvenile justice system, reentering a traditional school is difficult (American Civil Liberties Union, n.d.), making it difficult for many of these students to finish high school. Because 7 in 10 students arrested or referred to law enforcement are African American or Hispanic (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a), those students are entering the juvenile justice system at disproportionately high rates.

Safe schools do contribute to a positive learning environment for students. Does that require the removal of so many students from an environment in which they should be learning? The U.S. Departments of Education and Justice jointly released guidance on school discipline in 2014 that called for rules that are fair to all racial and ethnic groups. They also called for less reliance on zero-tolerance policies. The guidance document recommends that schools:

- Create positive climates and focus on prevention.
- Develop clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive student behaviors.
- Ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement (U.S. Department of Education, 2014b, p. 1).

The work of the Civil Rights Project and other groups has documented the critical importance of keeping students, especially those who suffer the most from inequality, in school (Orfield, 2012). Promising practices for reducing the risk of violence and disruption in schools do not include the use of zero-tolerance policies. Instead, they include bullying prevention, **threat assessment**, and **restorative justice** programs (American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008). In addition, a growing number of schools are dramatically reducing the number of out-of-school suspensions by figuring out how to keep students in learning environments in schools.

Affirming Race and Ethnicity in Classrooms

Race and ethnicity can have a significant impact on how educators perceive students and their behavior and performance in school. Because the cultural background and experiences of teachers may be incongruous with the cultural experiences of students, miscommunication and

misperceptions may interfere with learning. Teachers may stereotype students who have a racial or ethnic background different from their own. The majority of teachers are white females who may be teaching classes in which the majority of students are students of color. Therefore, it is critical that all teachers become aware of the cultures and experiences of the students in the schools to which they are assigned.

This incongruity may contribute to student perceptions that their cultures and experiences are not reflected or respected in school. White students are less likely to drop out of school than their black and Hispanic peers. The percentage of students who graduate from high school on schedule (that is, four years after they enter high school) varies from 68% for African American, American Indian, and Alaska Native students, to 76% for Hispanic students, to 85% and 93%, respectively, for white and Asian American students (Kena et al., 2014).

Ladson-Billings (2012) found that successful teachers of African American students focus on student learning, have developed cultural competence, and promote sociopolitical consciousness. Success does not require a new curriculum or a new behavior performance system or require everyone to wear a uniform. It does require a teacher who believes deeply in students' academic capacity and the teacher's own efficacious abilities. Are you up to this challenge as you prepare to enter schools with an increasingly diverse student population? In this section we will explore some areas that will be important in developing cultural competence and addressing sociopolitical consciousness.

Acknowledging Race and Ethnicity in Schools

Teachers may declare that they are color-blind—that they do not see a student's color and treat all students equally, regardless of race. The problem is that **color-blindness** helps maintain white privilege because it does not recognize the existence of racial inequality (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Teachers do not usually confront issues of race in schools and classrooms in part because race is not supposed to matter. Teachers' discomfort becomes intertwined with their own uncertainties about race and their possible complicity in maintaining racial inequities.

Race and ethnicity do matter to many students and their families, and they do have an impact on communications and interactions with teachers. Students of color are reminded by others of their race almost daily as they face discriminatory practices and attitudes. Rather than pretend that race and ethnicity do not exist, teachers should acknowledge the differences and be aware of ways they can influence learning. Equity does not mean sameness; students can be treated differently, as long as the treatment is fair and appropriate, to accomplish the goal of student learning.

One of the leading researchers on desegregation, Gary Orfield, argues that a major benefit of diverse schools is the realization across groups that cultural and linguistic differences are educational resources rather than deficits (Orfield, 2014). An outgrowth of *Brown v. Board of Education* was the need for intergroup relations to assist students and teachers in respecting each other and working together effectively. This need continues today. Even within desegregated schools, students are often segregated in classes, the cafeteria, and activities. To ensure that they interact with students from other ethnic and racial groups, educators have to consciously plan for this outcome. A number of national groups have developed programs to encourage cross-cultural communications. The Southern Poverty Law Center's project Mix It Up at Lunch, for example, challenges schools to mix students from different groups during the lunch hour. More than 3,000 schools are now participating in the project.

The ethnic communities to which students belong provide the real-life examples that teachers should draw on to teach. Knowing students' ethnic and cultural experiences and how subject matter interacts with students' realities are important in designing effective strategies to engage students in learning. Successful teachers ensure that students learn the academic skills needed to compete effectively in the dominant workplace. In the process, they acknowledge and respect the race and ethnicity of their students and the community in which the school is located to prevent students from becoming alienated from their homes, their community, and their culture. A disproportionally large number of students of color are not learning what is needed to perform at acceptable levels on standardized tests. In fact, the achievement of many students of color decreases the longer they stay in school. Educators should do everything possible to ensure that students are achieving academically at grade level or above.



Watch the video "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FY4wKoPDjIs) to hear a discussion with the author of the book of the same name on why students are more comfortable interacting with other students from the same culture.

Small-group teams and cooperative learning promote both learning and interracial friendships. Students should have equal access to the curriculum, advanced courses, qualified teachers, and activities to develop high-order thinking skills. They should see themselves in the curriculum and in textbooks. Practices such as tracking and pull-out programs are barriers to providing equal access and improving intergroup relations. Engaging parents in school activities and decisions may help decrease the dissonance between school and home. The provision of multicultural education is a critical component in the continued effort to integrate schools and improve intergroup relations.

Confronting Racism in Classrooms

A first step in confronting racism in schools is to realize that racism exists and that, if teachers are white, they have benefited from it. This is not an easy process, as discussed in the section on racial identity. We often resist discussions of race and racism because we must eventually confront our own feelings and beliefs. Once teachers believe that discrimination exists in society and the school, they are more likely to believe students of color when they report incidents of racism or discrimination. They stop making excuses for the perpetrators or explaining that the action of the perpetrator was not really racist. When white teachers are unable to acknowledge the discrimination that groups of color know from experience, building trust with students and their families will be more difficult.

White students may resist discussions about race and racism. They are sometimes reluctant to participate in these discussions because they are afraid of offending someone, they worry about becoming angry, or they do not want to be labeled as racist. Because students are at different levels in their own racial identity, many of them cannot address these issues as rationally as the teacher might desire. Some will personalize the discussion. Some will be emotional or confrontational. Others will be uncomfortable or silent. Just because the topic is difficult to address does not mean it should be ignored. Teachers should break the silence about race and develop the courage to work at eliminating racism in their own classrooms and schools. One step is to help students think critically about race and social justice for all students.

Educators should intervene when students call each other names that are racist. Students should be helped to understand that racist language and behavior are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in schools. When students use derogatory terms for ethnic group members or tell ethnic jokes, teachers should use the opportunity to discuss attitudes about those groups. Students should not be allowed to express their hostility to members of other groups without being confronted. When teachers allow students to treat others with disrespect, they become partners in the perpetuation of racism. These overt acts can be confronted and stopped, but the more difficult task is to identify and eliminate practices in schools that lead to African American and Latino students being disproportionately suspended, placed in special education, and enrolled in low-level courses—all practices that contribute to high dropout rates.

A teacher's challenge is to seriously confront these issues at a personal level before entering the classroom. If teachers believe that people of color are intellectually inferior, it will be difficult for them to have high expectations for the academic achievement of those students. In the classroom, you will be in a position to help students grapple with these topics and their own feelings. As you learn to practice antiracism in the classroom, you should pursue equal opportunity and academic outcomes for your students. In the practice of antiracist education, teachers acknowledge that race impacts their students' lives, learn from the knowledge and experience of the communities in which they are teaching, and challenge racial inequality in the classroom, schools, and communities (Pollock, 2008).

Incorporating Race and Ethnicity in the Curriculum

The school environment should help students learn to participate in the dominant society while maintaining connections to their distinct ethnicities. All students should feel like they belong. Respect for and support of ethnic differences are essential in this effort. As educators, we cannot afford to reject or neglect students because their ethnic backgrounds are different from our own. We are responsible for making sure all students learn to think, read, write, and compute so that

they can function effectively in society. We can help accomplish this goal by accurately reflecting ethnicity and race in the curriculum and using it positively to teach and interact with students.

Traditionally, the curriculum of most schools has been grounded in the dominant culture. The inherent bias of the curriculum does not encourage candid admissions of racism and oppression within society. In fact, it is more likely to support the claim of superiority of Western thought over all others and provide minimal or no familiarity with the non-Western cultures of Asia, Africa, and South and Central America. Information on, and perspectives of, other groups is sometimes added as a unit during a school year. Some schools have replaced this traditional curriculum with one based on the culture of students and communities. Multicultural education, on the other hand, encourages a culturally responsive curriculum in which diversity is integrated throughout the courses, activities, and interactions in the classroom.

An educator has the responsibility for ensuring that ethnic groups become an integral part of the total curriculum. This mandate does not require the teacher to discuss every ethnic group. It does require that the classroom resources and instruction not focus solely on the dominant group. It requires that perspectives of ethnic groups and the dominant group be examined in discussions of historical and current events. For example, one should consider the perspectives of Mexican and American Indians as well as the dominant group in a presentation on and discussion of the westward movement of European Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It requires students to read literature by authors from different ethnic and racial backgrounds. It assumes that mathematics and science will be explored from an American Indian as well as a Western perspective. The contributions of different ethnic groups should be reflected in the books that are used by students, in the movies they view, and in the activities in which they participate.

Bulletin boards, resource books, and films that show ethnic and racial diversity constantly reinforce these realities. However, teachers should not depend entirely on these resources for instructional content about groups. Too often, people of color are studied only during a unit on African American history or American Indians. Too often, they are not included on reading lists or in the study of biographies, labor unions, or the environment. Students can finish school without reading anything written or produced by females or persons of color. If ethnic groups are included only during a unit or a week focusing on a particular group, students do not learn to view them as integral parts of society. They are viewed as separate, distinct, and inferior to the dominant group. A multiethnic curriculum counteracts the distortion of history and contemporary conditions. Without it, the perspective of the dominant group becomes the only valid curriculum to which students are exposed.

Ethnic Studies. Ethnic studies courses introduce students to the history and contemporary conditions of one or more ethnic groups. Many universities and some high schools have ethnic studies programs—such as African American, Asian American, American Indian, and Latino studies. These courses and programs allow for in-depth exposure to the social, economic, and political history of a specific group. They are designed to correct the distortions and omissions that prevail in society about a specific ethnic group. Events that have been neglected in textbooks are addressed, myths are dispelled, and history is viewed from the perspective of the ethnic group as well as the dominant group. Prospective teachers and other school professionals who have not been exposed to an examination of an ethnic group different from their own should take such a course or undertake individual study.

Traditionally, ethnic studies have been offered as separate courses that students elect from many offerings in the curriculum. Seldom have they been required courses for all students. Although the information and experiences offered in these courses are important to members of the ethnic groups, students from other ethnic groups also need to learn about the multiethnic nation and world in which they live.

Ethnocentric Curriculum. Some ethnic groups have their own schools, with classes held in the evenings or on Saturdays, to reinforce their cultural values and traditions or to learn the language of their country of origin. Some ethnic groups have established their own charter or private schools with a curriculum that is centered on the history and values of their

ethnic group. For example, some American Indian tribes have established public tribal schools in which the traditional culture serves as the social and intellectual starting point.

Some African American communities support an **Afrocentric curriculum** to challenge Eurocentrism and tell the truth about black history. These classes are designed to improve students' self-esteem, academic skills, values, and positive identification with their ethnic group. At the core of this approach is an African perspective of the world and of historical events. These schools are generally found in urban areas with large African American student populations.

Watch the video "Best Practices for Teaching African American Boys" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DeUFhei81wg) to learn the importance of centering students' cultures in the classroom.

Closing the Opportunity Gap

African American students, as well as Latino and American Indian students, are not meeting standards as measured by the standardized tests required in most states, as shown in Figure 2.8, which presents achievement levels on a national eighth-grade mathematics test. As a result, a disproportionately large number of students of color are not being promoted to the next grade, are not graduating from high school, or are dropping out of school. It is easy to blame the students' lack of interest or active participation in school on the poverty in which they live or their previous teachers. However, teachers are expected to help all students learn, regardless of environmental factors that may make the task challenging. We may think we are being nice to students who have a difficult home life or who are English language learners by making less rigorous academic demands on them than on other students. Instead, students may decide that we do not believe they are capable of learning at the same level as other students and will respond accordingly (Nieto, 2008).

The Role of Assessment. Schools conduct widespread testing of students to determine whether they are meeting the standards established by states. Tests are trumpeted as measures of competence to move from one grade to another, graduate from high school, enter upper-division college courses, earn a baccalaureate, and become licensed to teach. Thus, student performance on state tests has become the primary measure of quality in the nation's schools, with sanctions imposed if students are not making **adequate yearly progress (AYP)** or the minimum level of performance required by the federal legislation No Child Left Behind. Teachers and principals can lose their jobs if students do not perform at expected levels.

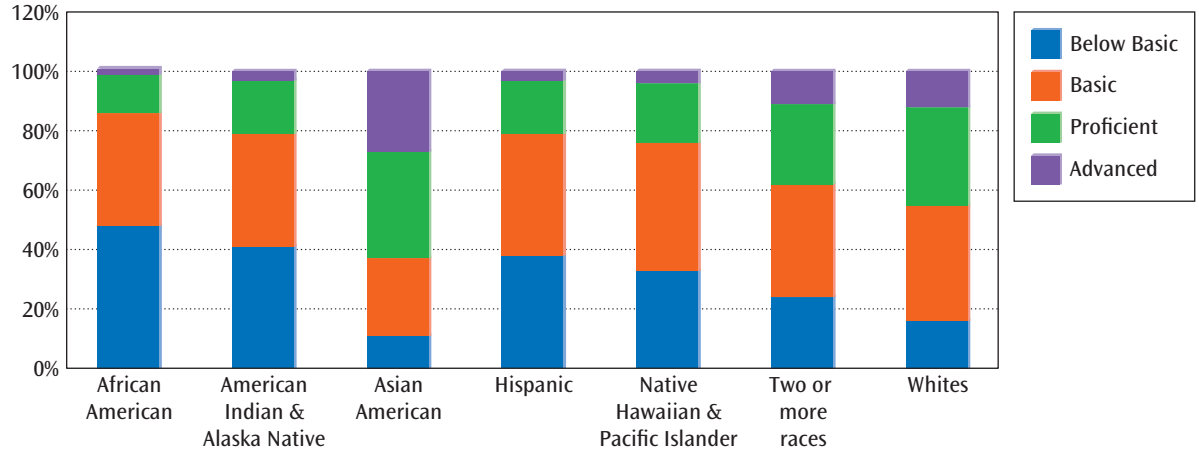


FIGURE 2.8 Eighth-Grade NAEP Mathematics Performance by Race and Ethnicity: 2009

Source: U.S. Department of Education. (2013a). 2013 mathematics assessment. Retrieved January 1, 2015, from nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/report.aspx.

Increasingly, salary increments are based on the degree to which teachers have improved students' performance on tests. This focus on student performance on standardized tests has led many teachers to spend much of their instructional time teaching to the test, which has limited their teaching of critical thinking and other skills needed in the twenty-first century.

Between 1970 and 1990, student performance on national tests improved, with the largest gains being made by students of color (Education Trust, n.d.). The progress came to a halt in the 1990s, and the achievement gap between whites and most students of color remains wide. Why do a disproportionately high number of students of color score lower than whites and Asian Americans on standardized tests? Studies indicate:

- Students from low-income households and students of color are more likely to be taught a low-level curriculum with low standards for performance (Darling-Hammond, 2010).
- Forty-two percent of Asian American high school students completed a calculus course, compared to 18% of white, 9% of Latino, and 6% of African American students (Kena et al., 2014).
- Students in high-poverty and high-minority schools are more likely to be taught by unqualified teachers who are not certified to teach and did not major in the subject they were teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Should it be a surprise that many students of color do not perform as well as white students when they have not participated in advanced mathematics and science courses or have not had teachers who majored in those subjects? In urban schools in which students of color are overrepresented, teachers are less likely to be fully licensed than in schools with middle-class white students. Advanced courses in mathematics and science are not always available in the schools attended by a large proportion of students of color. Students must have access to such courses and qualified teachers so that they can study the content on which they will be tested.

As educators, we must be careful not to label students of color intellectually inferior because their standardized test scores are low. These scores may influence a teacher's expectations for their academic performance. Standardized test scores can help in determining how assimilated into the dominant culture and how affluent one's family may be, but they provide less evidence of how intelligent a person is. Many other factors can be used to provide information about intelligence—for example, the ability to think and respond appropriately in different situations.

What should be the purposes of assessments? Rather than use tests to sort students on the basis of income, ethnicity, and family characteristics, assessments could be used for student learning to help us understand what students know so that curricula and activities can be designed to increase their knowledge and skills. Assessments that use observations, portfolios, projects, and essays provide evidence of what students know in many different ways. They are designed to promote complex and engaged learning.

Educators are capable of making valid decisions about ability on the basis of numerous objective and subjective factors about students. If decisions about the capabilities of students of color correspond exactly to the standardized scores, educators should reevaluate their responses and interactions with students. Test results today are making a difference in the life chances for many students, especially those of color and from low-income families. Therefore, educators cannot afford to use assessments in unfair and inequitable ways.

Who Is Responsible for Closing the Opportunity Gaps? When students do not achieve at the levels expected, some teachers refrain from taking responsibility. They blame the students, their parents, or the economic conditions of the community rather than seriously reflecting on why students in their classrooms are not learning and what might be changed to help them learn. A number of research studies report that teacher effectiveness is more important in student achievement than a student's race, poverty status, or parents' education (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Sanders & Rivers, 1996). In other words, effective teachers matter. Students who have been assigned the most effective teachers for three years in a row perform at much higher levels than students who were in the classrooms of the least effective teachers for three years. With effective teachers, low-achieving students become high achievers (Education Trust, 2008).

Students are not always active participants in their academic achievement. They are not always engaged with the schoolwork, and they do not always do their homework. However, effective teachers do not allow students to fail. There are many examples of good teachers who have helped students with low test scores achieve at advanced levels. African American and Latino students have performed at the same level as other students in mathematics and other subjects after teachers raised their expectations and changed their teaching strategies. Your challenge is to become one of the teachers whose students are not allowed to fail.

SUMMARY

Immigration

The ancestors of the majority of the population voluntarily immigrated to the United States because of economic impoverishment and political repression in their countries of origin and the demands of a vigorous U.S. economy that required a growing labor force. However, the ancestors of many African Americans and the early Mexican residents of the Southwest were involuntary immigrants. Approximately 1 million people per year continue to immigrate to the United States from around the world.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a sense of peoplehood based on national origin. Almost from the beginning of European settlement in the United States, the population has been multiethnic, with individuals representing many American Indian and European nations, later to be joined by Africans, Latinos, and Asians. The conditions encountered by different ethnic groups, the reasons they came, and their expectations about life here have differed greatly and have led ethnic groups to view themselves as distinct from each other.

Race

Although no longer useful in describing groups of people, the term *race* continues to be used in this country to classify groups of people as inferior or superior. The popular use of *race* is based on society's perception that racial differences are important—a belief not upheld by scientific study. Nevertheless, government forms often request users to identify themselves by race in part to track the extent of discriminatory outcomes. As of 2014 the majority of the student population was students of color. By 2050, the majority of the population as a whole will be persons of color.

The Struggle for Civil Rights

People of color have had to fight for their civil rights throughout U.S. history. The efforts of African Americans in the 1950s and 1960s led to the removal of Jim Crow laws, the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and 1965 Voting Rights Act, and the expansion of civil rights for women, Latinos, Asian Americans, American Indians, and people with disabilities. Desegregation is a process for decreasing racial/ethnic isolation in schools. Although early desegregation efforts focused on ensuring that black and white students attended the same schools, increasing numbers of students of color attend predominantly minority schools.

Racial and Ethnic Discrimination

Members of oppressed groups, including children and youth, continue to experience discriminatory treatment and often are relegated to relatively low-status positions in society. Although Americans perceive race relations as better than before the Civil Rights Movement, they were not overly optimistic in 2014 about them getting better. Hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and other white nationalist groups continue to recruit new members, including young people, to fight for their causes. The majority of hate crimes are against persons of color. With the harsh penalties now given by some schools to students who are disruptive or not following school rules, a growing number of students are being pushed out of schools and into the juvenile justice system.

Affirming Race and Ethnicity in Classrooms

The school curriculum has traditionally represented the dominant culture as the focus of study. Since the 1970s, ethnic studies have been added to curricula as an extension or special segment that provides in-depth study of the history and contemporary conditions of one or more ethnic groups. Some ethnic groups have established schools or programs in traditional schools that center the curriculum on their ethnicity. All students should be able to see positive portrayals of their racial and ethnic groups in the curriculum. If disproportionately large numbers of students of color are scoring poorly on standardized tests, educators should develop different instructional practices to improve academic performance.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts.



3 Class and Socioeconomic Status

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- **3.1** Examine class structures and the factors that contribute to distinct class divisions.
- **3.2** Discuss the five factors that contribute to an individual's or family's socioeconomic status.
- **3.3** Analyze the impact of the class of a student's family on the student's school experiences.
- **3.4** Probe the interaction of socioeconomic status with race, ethnicity, gender, and age differences and the impact of inequality on families and children.
- **3.5** Develop curricula and instructional strategies that positively incorporate the experiences and backgrounds of low-income and working-class people into the educational process with the goal of providing equal educational opportunities for students regardless of the economic status of their families.

While he was still in college, Tomas Juarez decided he wanted to work with children from low-income families. He began his teaching career, however, in a culturally diverse suburban school. The school had been built only a few years before and included state-of-the-art science labs. Students were proficient with computers; they even helped Mr. Juarez develop his skills. Most of the students participated in extracurricular activities, and their parents were active in school affairs. More than 90% of the previous graduating class had enrolled in postsecondary programs. It was a pleasure to work with a team of teachers who planned interesting lessons based on a constructivist approach, engaged students in the content, and developed higher-order thinking skills.

After a few years, Mr. Juarez decided he was ready to take on the challenge of an inner-city school where most students were members of oppressed groups. As soon as he stepped into his new school, he realized how spoiled he had been in the suburbs.

First, the smell wasn't right, and the halls were dingy, even though it was the beginning of the school year. The room that was to be his classroom did not have enough chairs for all of the students who had been assigned to the class. Not only did the room look as if it had not been repainted for 20 years but numerous ceiling tiles were missing. Mr. Juarez's first thought was that

both he and the students would be exposed to asbestos and lead poisoning. Outside, the playground was uninviting. There was no grass, the stench from local factories was overpowering, and the football field did not even have goalposts.

During Mr. Juarez's first few weeks, he found that the students were terrific. They were enthusiastic about being back in school. He had only enough textbooks for half the class, however, and no money in the budget to purchase more. Supplies were limited, and most of the school's audiovisual equipment had been stolen the previous year and not replaced.

REFLECTIONS

1. Why were conditions at Mr. Juarez's new school so much different from those in the suburban school?
2. What are the chances of Mr. Juarez's students being academically successful at the same level as his students in the suburban school?
3. Why are students in the urban school more likely to drop out or not attend college?



Class

"**Class** is a system that differentially structures group access to economic, political, cultural, and social resources" (Andersen & Collins, 2013, p. 71). It determines the schools we attend, the stores in which we shop, the restaurants at which we eat, the community in which we live, and the jobs to which we have access. Class is socially constructed by society and its institutions, determining the relationships between families and people who have little or limited financial resources and families with greater resources.

Most people are caught in the socioeconomic strata into which they were born; the political-economic system helps keep them there. However, some individuals have become socially and economically mobile. Stories abound about the athletes, coaches, movie stars, and singers who have moved from poverty to successful careers and great wealth. In reality, few people have abilities and opportunities that translate into the high salaries of elite stars of the corporate entertainment and sports worlds. A college education is the most effective path for moving from low-income to a middle-class or higher status, but family background accounts for a large part of the variation in educational and occupational attainment. The opportunity to participate equally in the generation of wealth is usually thwarted before a child is born. Children born into a wealthy family are likely to be wealthy as adults. Children born into poverty are significantly more likely to be adults in poverty. Barriers that exist in society often lead to the perpetuation of inequalities from one generation to the next.

Class Identity

Most people, if asked, can identify themselves by class, which for most people is probably the **middle class**. They may not strongly vocalize their identification with a specific class, but they participate socially and occupationally within a class structure. Their behavior and value system may be based on a strong ethnic or religious identification, but that specific identification is greatly influenced by their economic circumstances. The first generation of a group that has moved to the middle class may continue to interact at a primary level with friends and relatives who remain in the **working class**. Over time those cross-class ties may disappear as we develop new friends and social groups in a community in which we did not grow up.

Most U.S. citizens exhibit and articulate less concern about class consciousness than do many of their European counterparts. However, many, including teachers, have participated in class actions such as strikes or work stoppages to further the interests of the class to which

they belong. Class consciousness, or solidarity with others at the same socioeconomic level, has become more pronounced since the 2008 recession. During that period, many middle- and working-class people lost the jobs that allowed them to live comfortably. If they could find a job, it was not at the same level and pay as their previous job. As a result, the number of middle-class families dropped dramatically. This change is reflected in the rhetoric of presidential elections as candidates call for policies that will once again grow the middle class.

Social Stratification

Social stratification is a society's system for ranking individuals and families. People with higher incomes and prestigious careers have greater status, wealth, and influence on who is elected and the development of policies that support their needs. It is quite clear in the United States and elsewhere around the world who is at the top and bottom of this hierarchical system. Some groups are more likely to be ranked at the bottom of the scale, primarily because of race or sex discrimination that has prevented them from achieving the education levels necessary for higher-paying jobs.

Inequality results, in part, from differential rankings within the division of labor. Different occupations are evaluated and rewarded unequally. Some jobs are viewed as more worthy, more important, more popular, and more preferable than others. People who hold high-ranking positions have developed a common interest in maintaining their positions and the accompanying power. They have established policies and practices to restrict others' chances of obtaining the same status—a key to establishing and maintaining a system of stratification.

Many people in the United States receive high or low rankings in the social stratification system on the basis of characteristics over which they have no control. Some of the groups to which we belong are assigned at birth because they are the ones to which our parents belong; we have no choice about our membership. If we have been born into higher-ranking socioeconomic positions, we will have advantages and privileges over children who were born in lower-ranking groups. Although white, able-bodied, Christian men are more advantaged in society because of their race, sex, and religion, they do not all enjoy high-ranking status. They appear at all levels along the continuum, from a homeless person to a billionaire, but European Americans remain overrepresented at the highest levels. Conversely, members of most oppressed groups fall along all levels of the continuum, but with proportionately fewer at the top of the socioeconomic scale.



Socioeconomic Status

How is economic success or achievement measured? The economic condition of a person or group is measured using a criterion called **socioeconomic status (SES)**. It serves as a composite of the economic status of a family or an individual on the basis of occupation, educational attainment, and income. Related to these three factors are wealth and power, which also help determine an individual's SES but are more difficult to measure.

These five determinants of SES are interrelated. Although inequality takes many forms, these factors are probably the most salient for an individual because they affect how one lives. Families' SES is usually readily observable in the size of their home and the part of town in which they live, the schools the children attend, and the clubs to which the parents belong. Many educators place their students at specific SES levels on the basis of observations about their families, the way students dress, the language or dialect they use, and their eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch.

Income

Income is the amount of money earned in wages or salaries throughout a year. One way to look at income distribution is by dividing the population into fifths; the lowest one-fifth has the lowest income, and the highest one-fifth has the highest income. Figure 3.1 shows the

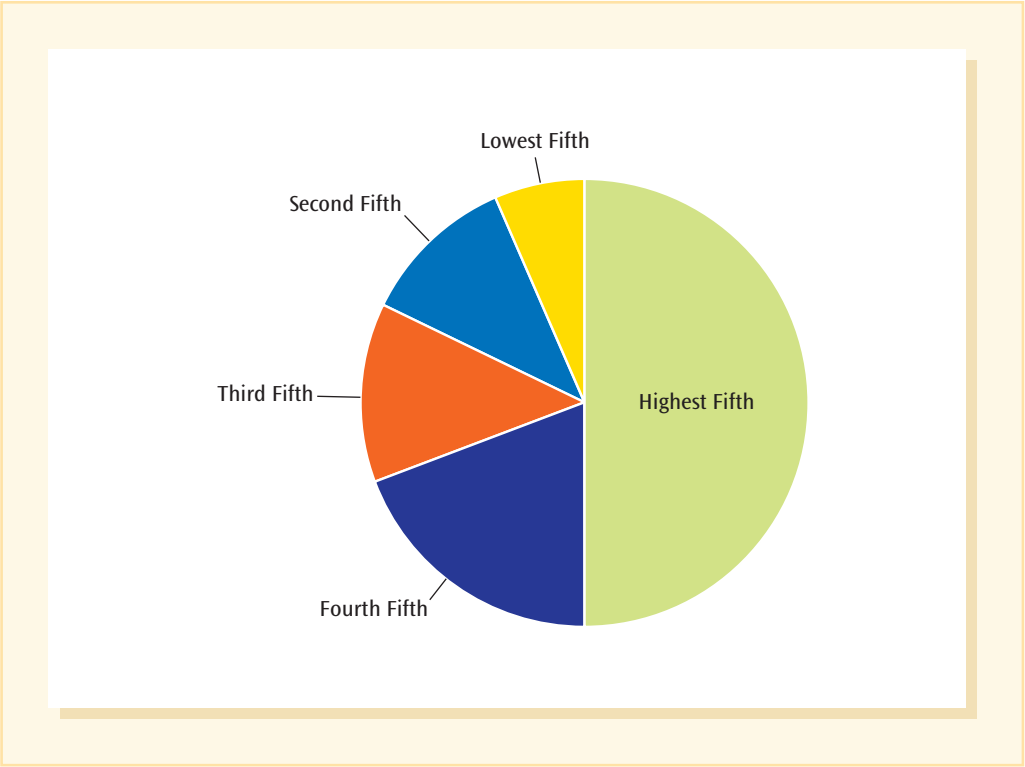


FIGURE 3.1 **Share of Aggregate Family Income Received by Fifths of the Population**
Source: Based on U.S. Census Bureau. (2014b). Table H-2. Share of aggregate income received by each fifth and top 5 percent of households, all races: 1967 to 2013. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on February 16, 2015, from http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/.

percentage of total income earned by each fifth of the population. The top fifth of the population earned 51% of the total income, whereas the bottom fifth earned 3% of the total income. High incomes are reserved for the privileged few. The top 5% of U.S. families with the highest incomes earned 22% of the total income of all families (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014l), and the wealthiest families are becoming even wealthier. The top 1% of wealth holders own 33% of the nation's wealth (Rose, 2014).

Many people view this income inequity as a natural outcome of the American way. Those people who have contributed at high levels to their professions or jobs are believed to deserve more pay for their effort. People at the lower end of the continuum are either unemployed or work in unskilled jobs and thus are not expected to receive the same economic rewards. The distance between the two ends of this continuum can be quite large. Chief executive officers (CEOs) of the largest 100 U.S. companies earned a median income of $13.9 million in 2013 (Eavis, 2014), which was 257 times the average earnings of their employees (Sweet, 2014). At the other end of the scale, people earning the minimum wage of $7.25 per hour receive $15,080 annually. International studies report that the gap between high and low wage earners is greater in the United States than in most other industrialized countries. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of tax structures to adjust the disparities; in fact, the rich are paying less in taxes today than in 1961 (Goldberg, Collins, Pizzigati, & Klinger, 2011). When these disparities are noted at the political level, some conservatives accuse liberals of encouraging class warfare.

Between World War II and 1973, the growth of the U.S. economy allowed the incomes of workers at all levels to increase at a faster rate than expenditures. Many middle-income families were able to purchase homes, cars, boats, and luxuries for the home; money was sometimes also available for savings. During this period, the annual **median income** of all people 14 years of age and older nearly tripled. The standard of living for most of the population was markedly

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Impact of Socioeconomic Status on School Events

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

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

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

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

better in 1973 than in 1940. Beginning in 1973, however, the cost of living (i.e., the cost of housing, utilities, food, and other essentials) began to increase faster than incomes. Except for the wealthy, all families felt the financial pressure. No longer did they have extra income to purchase nonessentials. No longer was one full-time worker in a family enough to maintain a reasonable standard of living. The 1990s saw another upswing in the economy that resulted in an annual median family income of $68,931[1] in 2007. Following the 2008 recession, the median income of a family dropped to $63,152; it had rebounded only to $63,815 by 2013. When both husband and wife worked, the median income of the family increased to $94,299 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014m).

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

Wealth

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

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

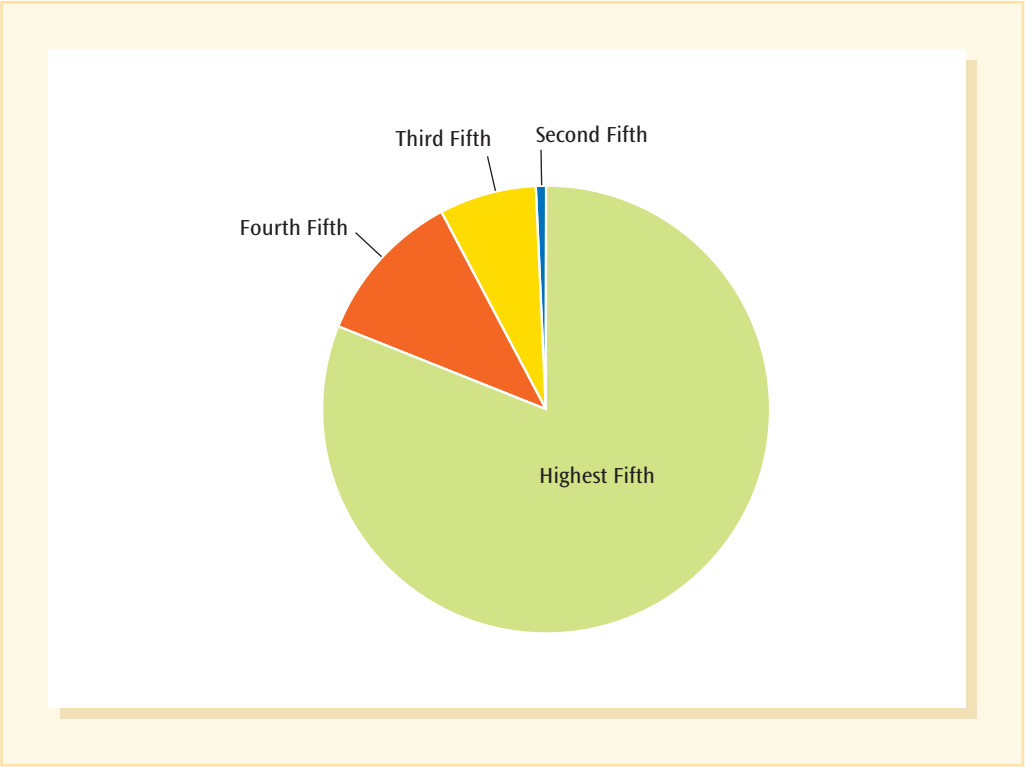


FIGURE 3.2 **Distribution of Wealth in the United States by Fifths of the Population**
Source: Based on Rose, S. J. (2014). *Social stratification in the United States: The American profile poster* (revised and updated). New York: New Press.

homes and the residual value of household goods. Approximately 40% of U.S. households have virtually zero or negative wealth (Rose, 2014).

Whereas income is reported on federal income tax forms, wealth is difficult to determine from these or any other standard forms. However, the distribution of wealth is clearly concentrated in a small percentage of the population. The wealthiest top two-tenths of the population holds 16% of the nation's wealth, with an average of $19 million per person (Rose, 2014). Figure 3.2 shows how wealth is distributed across fifths of the population.

The world's wealth is also held by a few people. The richest 0.000016% of the people in the world owns 16% of the global economic output, while 2.6 billion of the world's population exist on $2 a day. The profits of major corporations such as Walmart, Nestlé, Microsoft, and Apple exceed the gross national income of many countries of the world (Smith, 2012). The difference between the economic lives of populations in the wealthiest and poorest countries in the world is shocking in its magnitude. These differences affect quality of life, health, and life expectancy.

Wealth ensures economic security for its holders even though the degree of security depends on the amount of wealth accumulated. It also enhances the power and prestige of those who possess it. Great wealth attracts power, provides an income that allows luxury, and creates values and lifestyles that are very different from those of the rest of the population. Wealth also gives great economic advantages to the children in such families, who can attend the best private schools, travel widely, and access needed medical and health resources.

Occupation

Income, for most people, is determined by their occupation. Generally speaking, income is a fair measure of occupational success—both of the importance of the occupation to society and of one's skill at the job. In addition to providing an income, a person's job is an activity that is

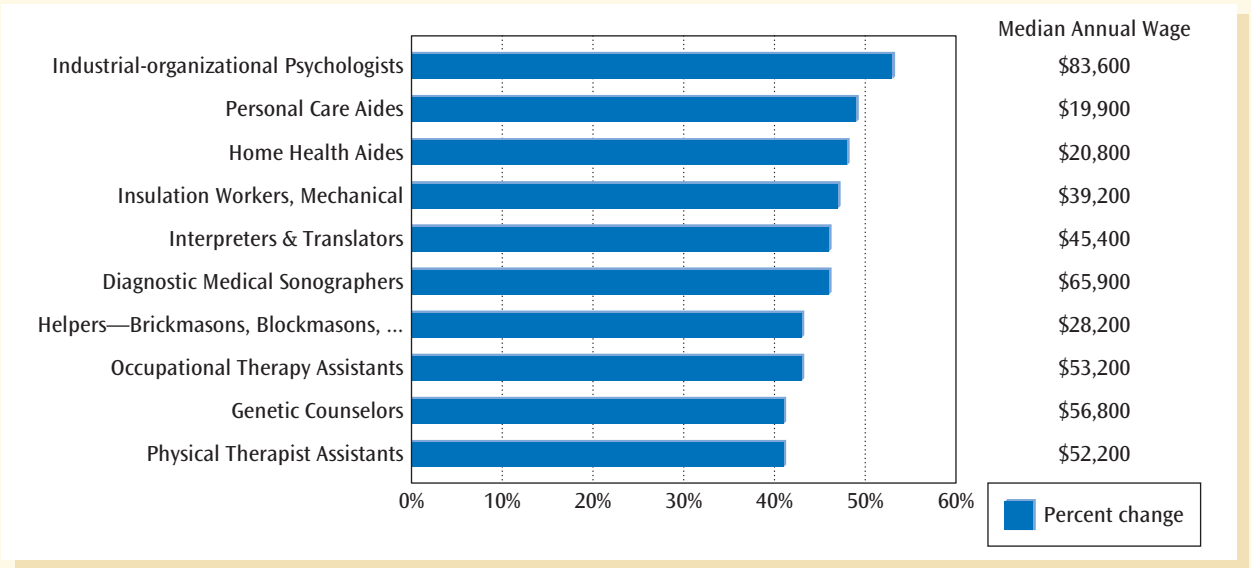


FIGURE 3.3 **Projected Fastest-Growing Occupations from 2012 to 2022**

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2014a). Fastest growing occupations. *Occupational outlook handbook*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved February 20, 2015, from http://www.bls.gov/ooh/fastest-growing.htm.

considered important. Individuals who are unemployed often are stigmatized as noncontributing members of society who cannot take care of themselves. Even individuals with great wealth often hold jobs even though the additional income is unnecessary. Just over half of today's workforce is comprised of **white-collar** workers—people who do office work. The percentage of service workers is growing, although the percentage who are private household workers continues to decline. Between now and 2022, 5 of the 10 fastest-growing occupations are expected to fall in the health fields, as shown in Figure 3.3.

A number of the jobs on this list require on-the-job training but no postsecondary preparation (e.g., personal care aides, home health aides, and helpers such as brick masons). Others require an associate's or bachelor's degree at a minimum. The difference in income among these jobs varies greatly, as shown in Figure 3.3.

The type of job one holds is the primary determinant of income received, providing a relatively objective indicator of a person's SES. The job usually indicates one's education, suggests the types of associates with whom one interacts, and determines the degree of authority and responsibility one has over others. It accounts for differing amounts of compensation in income and differing degrees of prestige in society.

Education

The best predictor of occupational prestige is the amount of education required for the job. Financial compensation is usually greater for occupations that require more years of education. For example, medical doctors and lawyers remain in school for several years beyond a bachelor's degree program. Many professionals and other white-collar workers have completed at least an undergraduate program. Craft workers often earn more money than many white-collar workers, but their positions require specialized training that often takes as long to complete as a program leading to a college degree.

A great discrepancy exists among the incomes of people who have less than a high school education and those who have completed professional training after college. In 2013 the median annual income of a male who was 25 years old or older who worked full-time, year



The type of job one holds impacts one's socioeconomic status. Low-wage jobs make it difficult if not impossible to move into the middle class. (© George Dolgikh/Shutterstock)

round, but had not completed high school was $30,565; for a male who had attained a bachelor's degree, it was $76,105. Women do not earn as much as men, no matter what education level they have achieved. The differential for females was $22,248 if they have not finished high school versus $55,724 if they have a bachelor's degree—or 73 cents for each dollar earned by males with the same education (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014f).

Education is rightfully viewed as a way to enhance one's economic status. However, impressive educational credentials are much more likely to be achieved as a result of family background than because of other factors. High school graduates whose parents have bachelor's degrees or higher are more likely to enroll in postsecondary education. The higher the socioeconomic level of a student's family, the greater the student's chances of finishing high school and college, as shown in Figure 3.4. The rate of students who enrolled in college soon after high school graduation ranged in 2012 from 51% of those from low-income families to 81% of those from families with high incomes (Snyder & Dillow, 2015).

The conditions under which low-income students live can make it difficult for them to go to school as an alternative to working. The colleges that students attend are influenced more by the SES of the family than by the academic ability of the student. Many students simply cannot afford to attend private colleges and instead choose community colleges or state colleges and universities. To add to the problems faced by low-income students contemplating college, the cost of tuition has risen continuously over the past decade (Stiglitz, 2013). Thus, a student's socioeconomic origins have a substantial influence on the amount and type of schooling.

Power

Individuals and families at the upper SES levels exert more power than those at any other level. These individuals are more likely to sit on state or local policy boards, boards of colleges and universities, and boards of corporations. They determine who receives benefits and rewards in governmental, occupational, and community affairs. Groups and individuals with power control resources that influence their lives and the lives of others. Groups or individuals with little power do not have the means to get what they need or the access to the people who could influence their interests. They continually obtain a lower share of society's benefits, in part because they lack access to sources of power.

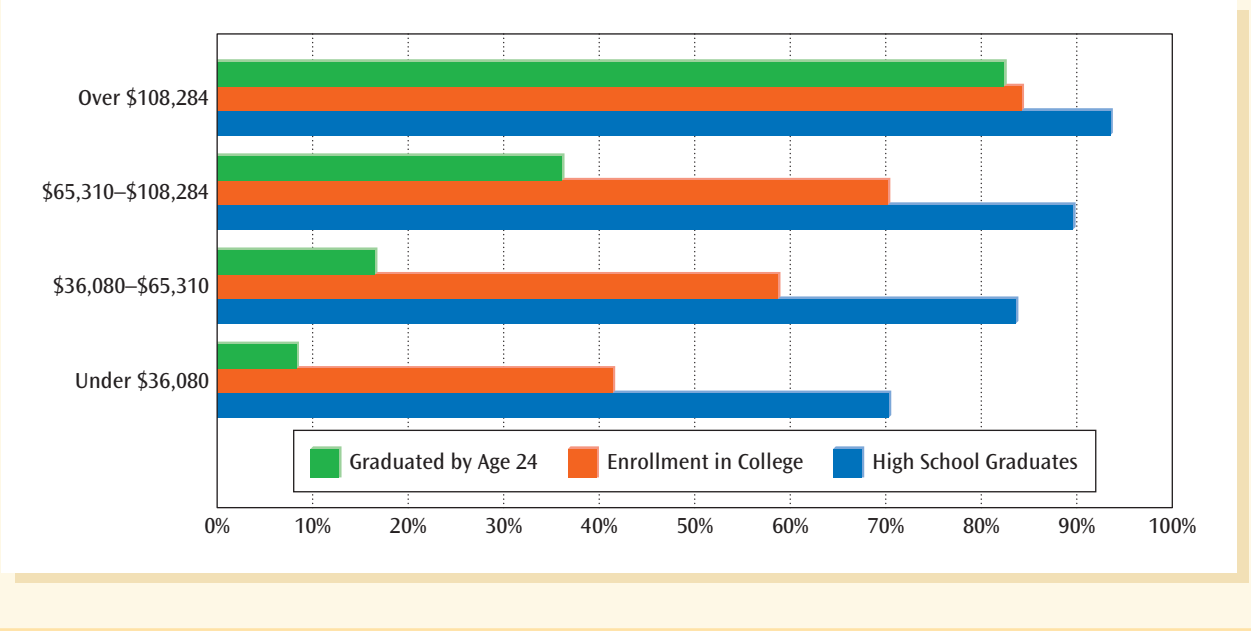


FIGURE 3.4 **High School Graduation, College Enrollment, and College Completion by Family Income**
Source: Based on Family Income and Educational Attainment: 1970 to 2009. (2010, November). *Postsecondary Education Opportunity*, No. 221.

People with higher incomes are more likely to participate in national and local politics as well as vote in presidential elections. Contributing financially to political candidates pays off for this portion of the population. The American Political Science Association (2004) found that voters with low or moderate incomes have little or no influence on policies, whereas advantaged voters have great influence. This power translates to legislative action that benefits people, families, and corporations that are wealthy. Other segments of the population become disillusioned with a political system in which they reap few if any of the benefits (Stiglitz, 2013).

Education is not exempt from the exercise of power. Wealth and affluence can create an uneven playing field for many students, as parents with larger incomes use their power to ensure that their children have access to the best teachers, advanced placement courses, gifted and talented student programs, and private schools. Parents are able to financially contribute to the hiring of teachers for programs such as music and art, which many school districts can no longer afford. They do not tolerate the hiring of unqualified or poor teachers. On the other end of the income spectrum are families with little input into decisions concerning the education of their children and with insufficient resources to donate funds to maintain a full and desirable curriculum.

Class Differences

Many Americans identify themselves as middle class. It is an amorphous category that can include everyone who works steadily and is not a member of the upper class. It ranges from well-paid professionals to service workers. Most white-collar workers, no matter what their salary, see themselves as middle class. Manual workers, in contrast, may view themselves as working class rather than as middle class, even though their incomes and cultural values may be similar to those of many white-collar workers.

Despite the popular myth, most people in the United States are not affluent by U.S. standards. A medium budget that allows a family of four to meet basic needs is above $47,248, compared with the federal government's poverty line of $23,624 for a family of four (Jiang, Ekono, & Skinner, 2015). In 2013 more than 1 in 3 U.S. families earned less than $45,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014a), which corresponds to the category of low income. Many of these individuals identify themselves as middle class, but they may be unable to obtain the material goods and necessities to live comfortably. In this section we will explore the different classes and socioeconomic levels of the population.

The Unemployed and Homeless

The portion of the population who suffers the most from lack of a stable income or other economic resources is the unemployed and homeless. The long-term poor fall into this group, but most others are temporarily at this level, moving in and out of poverty as they work off and on at low wages. More than half of the population will have lived below the poverty line at least once by the time they turn 75 years old (Pimpare, 2008). Children suffer the most from persistent poverty.

Families and people in poverty have been socially isolated from the dominant society. They usually are not integrated into, or welcome in, the communities of the other classes. Recommendations to establish low-income housing, homeless shelters, or halfway houses in middle-class communities are often met with vocal outrage from the residents. Some analysts think this lack of integration has exacerbated the differences in behavior between members of the underclass and those of other classes.

Nearly 9 million people, or 5.7% of the civilian workforce, in January 2015 were classified as unemployed; another 2.2 million unemployed people had given up looking for work and were not included in the government's report of the unemployed (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015a). Children and families live on the streets of our cities, comprising a large portion of today's homeless population, as shown in Figure 3.5, but homelessness is not limited to cities. About 7% of the homeless live in rural areas in cars, campers, or substandard housing with relatives (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2009). In its biannual count of the homeless on one night in January, the Department of Housing and Urban Development found more than 578,000 homeless people in the United States (Henry, Cortes, Shivji, & Buck, 2014).

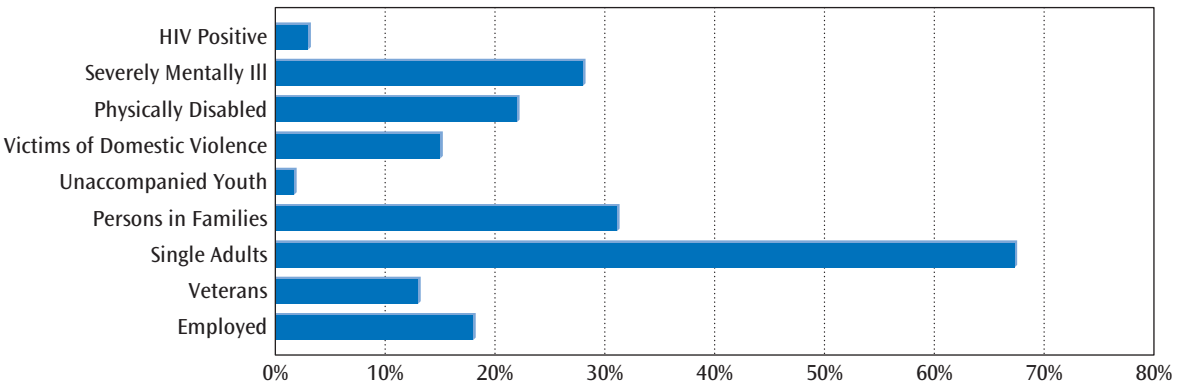


FIGURE 3.5 **Who Are the Homeless in Our Cities?**

Source: Based on The United States Conference of Mayors. (2014, December) *Hunger and homelessness survey: A status report on hunger and homelessness in American cities*. Washington, DC: Author.

Because almost all cities report having more homeless people than shelter space, the number housed nightly in shelters undercounts the actual number of homeless people. The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (2015) reports that 2.5 to 3.5 million people have been homeless at some time during the previous year, and 1.35 million of them are children. Many of the homeless work, but at such low wages that they are unable to afford housing.

Why are people homeless? The lack of affordable housing is the primary reason for homelessness, followed by unemployment, poverty, and low-paying jobs (U.S. Conference of Mayors, 2014). The federal definition of *affordable housing* is rent equal to 30% of one's income. To afford a two-bedroom apartment in most parts of the country, a person who makes the minimum wage will require one or more additional wage earners in the household. Four in five minimum wage earners are paying more than 30% of their income for rent, leaving little to cover expenses such as health care, child care, and other basic necessities. They are also more likely to live in inadequate housing that could be hazardous to their health and safety. Over half of the households with incomes in the bottom quartile are spending more than half of their income on rent; households of color suffer the most from the lack of affordable housing. Because of job losses and reductions in working hours, a growing number of people are unable to pay their rent or mortgage, ending up homeless (Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2014).

Domestic violence is another cause of homelessness; women who are escaping violent relationships do not always have someplace else to go. Other homeless people are without a place to stay because the number of facilities to care for people with mental disabilities is limited. Some people who are dependent on drugs or alcohol have lost their jobs, can't keep a job that earns enough to pay for their housing, or have become estranged from their families. Some teenagers leave home because of family problems, economic problems, or residential instability, often ending up homeless on city streets.

Nearly 2.5 million children were homeless at some point during 2013 (National Center on Family Homelessness, 2014). Some homeless students do not attend school for extended periods of time and are not as healthy as other children. Many have not received immunizations that are expected in childhood. They experience higher rates of asthma, respiratory infections, ear infections, stomach problems, and obesity than other children. They have more emotional and behavioral problems, show delayed development, and have learning disabilities.



An increasing number of homeless adults, families, and children are found in communities around the country. (© Ljupco Smokovski/Shutterstock)

They are often hungry or lack adequate nutrition. Further, they are more likely to have been abused or neglected by parents and other adults (National Center on Family Homelessness, 2014).

Watch the video "Tri-State Homeless Children Problem" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yC16hV06unI), in which childhood homelessness in the Cincinnati area is discussed.

The **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**, passed by Congress in 1987, requires public schools to recognize the educational rights of and provide protection for homeless children and youth, including students who are living with relatives or friends because they have lost their housing. The law requires school districts to provide transportation for homeless students to keep them in their schools of origin if requested by their parents or guardians. A school cannot deny enrollment to homeless students because they do not have school records, immunization records, proof of residency, or other documents. The McKinney-Vento Act ensures that homeless students have access to schooling and are not denied services because of circumstances beyond their control. The school district's liaison for homeless students should serve as an advocate for them, assisting them in accessing available services in the school system and community. This legislation has made a difference. Before it was passed, 25% of homeless students were in school, compared to 85% today (Murphy & Tobin, 2011).

The unemployed and homeless suffer from economic insecurity and from social, political, and economic deprivation. When they do hold full-time jobs, they are of the lowest prestige and at the lowest income levels. The jobs are often eliminated when economic conditions tighten or the jobs move to the suburbs, again resulting in unemployment. The work for which they are hired is often the dirty work—not only physically dirty but also dangerous, menial, undignified, and degrading. Most people who are living in poverty want a job, not charity (Pimpare, 2008). They want work that will help move them out of poverty.

Many stereotypical notions about the poor need to be overcome for teachers to effectively serve students from low-income families. Some Americans believe that people are poor because of their moral failings or because they simply do not want to work. Poor people are often treated with condescension, not as equals. Students from these families should not be blamed if they show acceptance of, resignation to, or even accommodation to their poverty as they learn to live with their economic conditions.

Some anthropologists and sociologists who have studied the relationship between cultural values and poverty status have proposed the theory of a culture of poverty. They assert that the poor have a unique way of life that has developed as a reaction to their impoverished environment. This thesis suggests that people in poverty have a different value system and lifestyle that is perpetuated and transmitted to future generations. Critics of the culture of poverty thesis believe that the cultural values of this group are much like those of the rest of the population but have been modified in practice because of situational stresses (Gorski, 2013). This explanation suggests that the differences in values and lifestyles are not passed from one generation to the next but rather are their adaptations to the experience of living in poverty.

The Working Class

The occupations pursued by the working class are those that require manual work, for which income varies widely, depending on the skill required in the specific job. A factor that is important in defining the working class is the subordination of members to the capitalist control of production. These workers do not have control of their work. They do not give orders; they take orders from others. They have been hurt the most because of job losses resulting from the movement of jobs to other countries, periodical recessions, and technological advances where machines and robots have replaced them.

Blue-collar workers are engaged primarily in manual work that is routine and mechanical. The level of education required for most of these jobs is not as high as for white-collar jobs, which are not mechanical and are less routine. Without additional training, it becomes difficult to move into a higher-level position. Blue-collar workers are generally hard workers who are performing important work for society. They want to have financially stable lives, as everyone else does, and they hope that their children will have a better life than their own. Of the employed population, 42.1% have the blue-collar jobs shown in Figure 3.6 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014d).

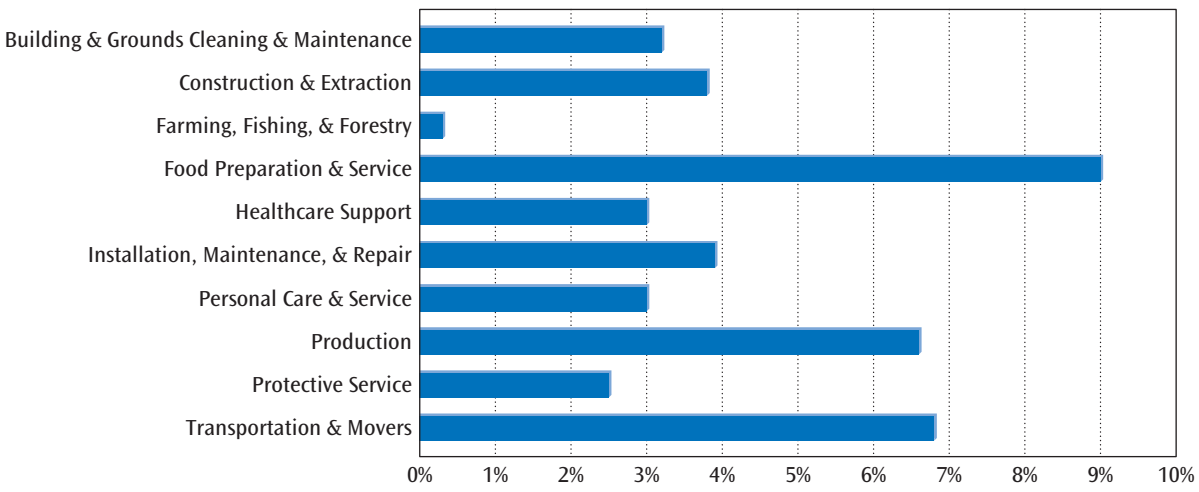


FIGURE 3.6 **Percentage of U.S. Population in Working-Class Jobs.**
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2014d). Occupational employment and wages—May 2013 (News release). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved February 22, 2015, from http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ocwage.pdf.

The income of these workers varied in 2013 from a median weekly wage of $366 in food services to $797 for installation, maintenance, and repair occupations (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014d), which provide different standards of living. Although the income of the working class is equal to and sometimes higher than that of white-collar workers, these workers generally have less job security. Work is more sporadic, and unemployment is unpredictably affected by the economy. Jobs are uncertain because of displacement as a result of technology or being moved to other countries. Fringe benefits available to these workers are often not as good as those offered to other workers. Vacation time is usually less, health insurance more typically unavailable from the employer, and working conditions more dangerous.

People at the low end of the wage scale are the working poor. They do the jobs that most people with more education refuse to do or can't afford to do. Although many work one or more jobs at the federal minimum wage of $7.25 per hour, they can't pull themselves out of poverty. The working poor are more likely than other workers to hold part-time jobs, be women, be African American or Hispanic, and lack a high school diploma. Service workers account for 1 in 3 of the working poor (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014e). Although union workers generally receive higher incomes and enjoy negotiated health care and retirement benefits, many low-income workers either do not join unions or work in states or companies that aggressively discourage union membership.

The Middle Class

The incomes of Americans who consider themselves middle class vary greatly. The middle class includes members of the working class, managers, and professionals who do not see themselves as either poor or rich. It includes families from all ethnic and racial groups, and both immigrant and native families. Moving into the middle class and maintaining that status often requires two wage earners. For the purpose of this discussion, families are classified as middle class if they fall in the third or fourth quintile of income earners in the country, which includes 40% of the population. The income range is $40,188 to $105,910 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014g), which leads to different lifestyles at the two ends of the continuum. Although some members

of the middle class have comfortable incomes, many have virtually no wealth. Many live from paycheck to paycheck, with little cushion against the loss of earning power through catastrophe, recession, layoff, wage cuts, or old age. Some fall into poverty for brief periods over their life cycle.

The jobs held by the middle class vary greatly, especially in income compensation. Overall, middle-class workers earn a median income above that of most blue-collar workers, but there is a great deal of crossover. For example, the median income of sales workers was $25,168 in 2013; workers who provide office and administrative support in offices earned more, at $32,011 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014d). As a group, white-collar workers have greater job security and better fringe benefits than many blue-collar workers, but these benefits are being eroded under current economic constraints in the United States and globally.

Some white-collar jobs are as routine and boring as many blue-collar jobs; others are highly interesting and challenging. Still others are extremely alienating in that employees cannot control their environments. Some employees perceive their work as meaningless, are socially isolated from coworkers, and develop low levels of self-esteem. The type of job and the environment in which it is performed vary greatly among workers with white-collar jobs. Members of the middle class appear to believe strongly in the Protestant work ethic. They generally adhere to a set of beliefs and values that are inherent in the good life. Although they are only slightly better off economically than their blue-collar counterparts, they have or try to maintain a more affluent lifestyle.

Over 30 years ago, sociologists were warning that the middle class was beginning to disappear. At that time blue-collar workers were losing their manufacturing jobs; many of the replacement jobs paid lower wages, making it difficult to maintain their lifestyles. Today's middle-class families face stagnant salaries. They are being forced to pay more of their health insurance and retirement funding than in the past (Hacker & Pierson, 2010).

The Upper Middle Class

Professionals, managers, and administrators are the elite of the middle class. They represent the status that many upwardly mobile families are trying to reach. Their income level allows them to lead lives that are, in many cases, quite different from those of white-collar and blue-collar workers. They are the group that seems to have benefited most from the nation's economic growth. Although they are at a level far below the upper class, the **upper middle class** are the affluent members of the middle class.

The professionals who best fit this category are those who must earn professional or advanced degrees and credentials to practice their professions. Almost 2 in 5 workers have a professional or related job. Judges, lawyers, architects, physicians, college professors, teachers, computer programmers, and scientists are the professionals. Excluding teachers and social services occupations, many professionals earn far more than the $53,046 median income of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b). Generally, members of the upper middle class are among the top 5% of income earners, with annual salaries over $180,000. They usually own a home and a couple of cars and are able to take vacations (Mooney, 2008).

This group also includes managers and administrators, who make up 5% of the employed population. They are the successful executives and businesspeople, a very diverse group that includes the chief executive officers of companies, presidents of colleges, and owners of local businesses. Those who are the most affluent make up the middle and upper management positions in financing, marketing, and production. As reported earlier in this chapter, the administrators of large corporations earn salaries far above this level; their salaries and fringe benefits place them in the upper class.

The incomes and opportunities to accumulate wealth are higher for this group compared with other members of the middle class because they have enough money to invest and earn additional income. Members of this class play an active role in civic and voluntary organizations. Their occupations and incomes give them access to policymaking roles in local, state, and national organizations. They actively participate in the political process when possible.

The occupations of the people in this group play a central role in their lives, often determining their friends as well as their business and professional associates. Their jobs allow autonomy and a great amount of self-direction. Members of this group tend to view their affluence, advantages, and comforts as universal rather than as unique. In the past, they believed in the American dream of success because they had achieved it. However, this dream now appears to be working primarily for college graduates who choose careers in the financial and corporate world. College graduates who choose fields such as reporting, teaching, social work, and other human services professions do not appear to be eligible for the opportunities for upper economic and social mobility available to earlier generations (Hacker & Pierson, 2010; Mooney, 2008).

The Upper Class

High income and wealth are necessary characteristics for entering the **upper class** as well as being accepted by those who are already members. Within the upper class, however, are great variations in the wealth of individual families. This income level is composed of two groups. One group includes the individuals and families who control great inherited wealth; the other group includes top-level administrators and professionals. Prestige positions, rather than great wealth, allow some families to enter or maintain their status at this level. The upper class includes individuals with top-level, highly paid positions in large banks, entertainment companies, and industrial corporations. It also includes those who serve as primary advisors to CEOs and government leaders—for example, corporate lawyers.

The disparity in income and wealth between members of this class and members of other classes is astounding. In 1980, for example, chief executive officers earned about 42 times as much as the average worker in their companies. In 1990 the pay ratio reached 107:1 (Anderson, Collins, Pizzigati, & Shih, 2010). By 2013 it had increased to 257:1 (Sweet, 2014). The number of people reporting incomes of more than $1 million has grown dramatically since the 1980s. This increase in the size of the upper class has occurred, in part, because of the growing incomes of CEOs. The richest hundredth of a percent (i.e., 0.01%) of the population includes around 15,000 families with average annual incomes of $35 million, responsible for 6% of the national income (Hacker & Pierson, 2010). For the first time, in 2005, all of the richest 400 Americans on the *Forbes* magazine list were billionaires; there were 1,400 billionaires by 2013 (Piketty, 2014). The wealthiest families have been able to increase their share of income and wealth consistently over the past 35 years, whereas low-income families have seen almost no gain and middle-class families only a modest gain (Hacker & Pierson, 2010).

Wealth and income ensure power. The extremely small proportion of the population who hold a vastly disproportionate share of the wealth also benefit disproportionately in resource distribution. The power possessed by these people allows them to protect their wealth. The only progressive tax in this country is the federal income tax, in which a greater percentage of the income is taxed as the income increases. Loopholes in the tax laws provide benefits to those whose unearned income is based on assets. What does this mean in terms of advantage to the rich? Tax laws in the 1980s were regressive, resulting in a decline in the taxes of higher-income families. The 1990s saw a more progressive structure in which the taxes of higher-income families rose in comparison to the taxes of low-income families. The tax cuts of 2001 reduced taxes for everyone but more so for high-income families than for others. The debate about taxes continues today, with one side arguing that the rich should be taxed more and the other side arguing that taxes should be cut for the wealthy because they believe such cuts will stimulate the economy.

Although families with inherited wealth do not represent a completely closed status group, they do have an overrepresentation of Anglo, Protestant members who were born in the United States. They tend to intermarry with other members of the upper class. They are well educated, although a college degree is not essential. The educational mark of prestige is attendance at elite private prep schools and prestigious private colleges and universities. Greater assimilation of lifestyles and values has occurred within this class than in any other. Although diversity exists among them, members of the upper class may be the most homogeneous group, and they are likely to remain so as long as their cross-cultural and cross-class interactions are limited.

Economic Inequality

Income inequality is higher in the United States than in all other developed countries except Chile, Mexico, and Turkey (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2014b). International studies report that the United States has the highest poverty rate and an institution of social policies that limit opportunities for moving out of poverty. Low-income workers in the United States earn less than low-income workers in other developed countries. Other countries have stronger unions, higher minimum wages, and more generous benefits, including more vacation days. The policies of other countries provide a social safety net for families through maternity leave, family leave, and child care (Caldera Sánchez, Lenain, & Flèche, 2014).

Over 45 million people, or 14.5% of the population and 11.2% of all families, were living in poverty by federal standards in 2013 (DeNavas-Walt & Proctor, 2014). Poverty is most likely to be a condition of the young, people of color, women, and full-time workers in low-status jobs, as shown in Figure 3.7.

The poor are a very heterogeneous group. They do not all have the same values or lifestyles. They cannot be expected to react alike to the conditions of poverty. To many, their ethnicity or religion is the most important determinant of the way they live within the economic constraints of poverty. To others, the devastating impact of limited resources is the greatest influence in determining their lifestyles, which are limited severely by the economic constraints that keep them in poverty.

Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Although equality is an important American value, some differences in income among workers is expected. Income differences among groups should be minimal in a society that values equality. However, income differences between whites and persons of color and between men and

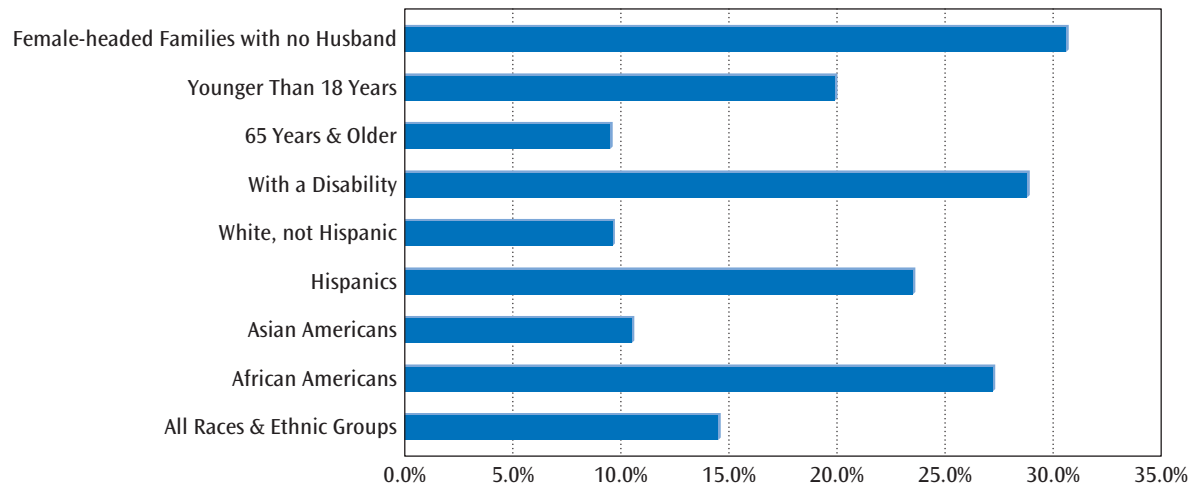


FIGURE 3.7 U.S. Population in Poverty

Source: Based on DeNavas-Walt, C. & Proctor, B. D. (2014, September). *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2013* (Current Population Reports, P60–238). Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

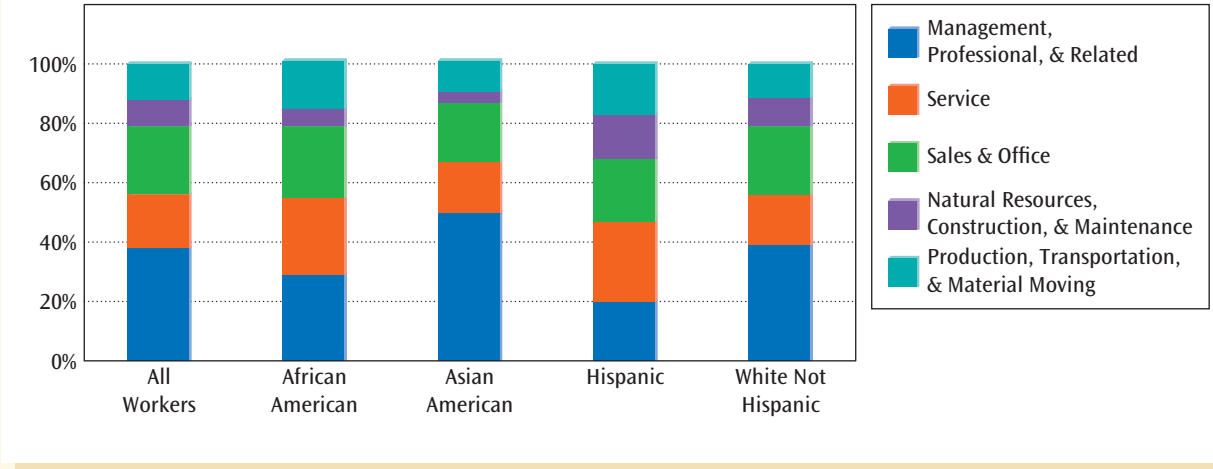


FIGURE 3.8 **Workers by Specific Ethnic Group and Job Category**

Source: Based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2014b). Labor force characteristics by race and ethnicity, 2013. *BLS Reports* No. 1050. Retrieved February 22, 2015, from http://www.bls.gov/opub/reports/cps/race_ethnicity_2013.pdf.

women continue to exist, regardless of their education level. In 2013 African American families earned 57% ($41,505) of the median income of white families ($72,624), Hispanics 58% ($42,269), and Asian American and Pacific Islander families 106% ($76,755) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014k). One of the reasons for these differences is that people of color are more likely to be concentrated in low-paying jobs, as shown in Figure 3.8. The percentage of African Americans in the higher-paying and higher-status jobs is much lower than for whites. African Americans and Hispanics are heavily overrepresented in the semi-skilled and unskilled positions.

Although more whites than any other group are in poverty (19.5 million), the percentage of whites in poverty is smaller compared with other groups except for Asian Americans. Of the white, non-Hispanic population, 10% fall below the poverty level, compared with 27% of African Americans, 24% of Latinos, and 11% of Asian Americans (DeNavas-Walt & Proctor, 2014).

This inequitable condition is perpetuated by several factors. Students from low-income families are more likely not to graduate from high school. Students of color drop out of school in greater proportions than white students, limiting their income potential. High school completion and college attendance are more correlated with the income and education of the parents than any other factors. In 2013, 7% of the white and 5% of the Asian American population were unemployed, compared with 13% of African Americans, 13% of American Indians and Alaska Natives, 10% of Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders, and 9% of Hispanics (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014b). Continuing discrimination against groups of color contributes to fewer opportunities to learn at high levels, which results in lower academic achievement, lower educational attainment, and lower-status jobs.

The historical experiences of ethnic groups have had a great impact on their gains in SES. For example, the absolute class position (income, occupation, rate of employment) of African Americans improved as a result of their migration to America's large cities, where they could find jobs paying higher wages during the first half of the twentieth century. Their educational attainments have narrowed the formerly enormous gap between blacks and whites with regard to completion of high school; median number of school years completed; and, to a lesser degree, standardized test scores and prevalence of college attendance. Even though the gaps in educational attainment have narrowed among racial and ethnic groups, only 68% of African

American and American Indian/Alaska Native students graduate from high school within four years after entering as freshmen (Kena et al., 2014).

Other oppressed groups with disproportionately low SES have had different historical experiences from African Americans but suffer similarly from discrimination. Mexican Americans are highly overrepresented as farm laborers, one of the lowest-status occupations. Many American Indians have been isolated on reservations, away from most occupations except those lowest in prestige, and the numbers of such positions are limited. Asian Americans, who as a group have a high educational level and relatively high SES, often reach middle-management positions but then face a glass ceiling that prevents them from moving into upper management.

Gender Inequality

As a group, women earn less and are more likely to suffer from poverty than any other group, with women of color suffering the greatest oppression. The origins of such inequality, however, are very different from inequality based on race and ethnicity. Institutional discrimination based on gender began in a patriarchal society in which women were assigned to the traditional roles of mother and wife and, if they had to work outside the home, to jobs in which subordination was expected. This status has limited their job opportunities and has kept their wages lower than those of men. Overt discrimination against women has resulted in the use of gender to determine wages, hiring, and promotion of individuals using mechanisms similar to those that promote inequality for members of other oppressed groups.

Women, especially those who are the heads of households, are more likely than men to fall below the poverty level. Almost 1 in 3 families maintained by women without a husband earn an income below the official poverty level (DeNavas-Walt & Proctor, 2014). The large number of families in this group is a result of a combination of low-paying jobs and an increase in divorces, separations, and out-of-wedlock births. Households headed by women without a husband earn an average of $35,154, which is only 69% of the median income of men without spouses who head households (DeNavas-Walt & Proctor, 2014).

Age Inequality

Both women and men earn their maximum income between ages 45 and 54. The median income of people 14 to 19 years old is lower than for any other group, primarily because most of them are just beginning to enter the workforce at the end of this period, and some may not enter for several more years, especially if they attend college. Income then increases steadily for most people until they reach 55 years of age. The income of women remains fairly constant throughout much of their working lives, whereas the income for a large percentage of men increases dramatically during their lifetimes.

The highest incidence of poverty occurs for young people, as shown in Figure 3.9. Children's class status depends on their families, leaving children little or no control over their destiny during their early years. In the United States, 1 in 5 children live in families that are officially considered poor. However, researchers find that an income twice that of the poverty level is needed to pay for housing, food, and other basic needs. When the near poor are added to the students living below the poverty level, 44% of the nation's children live in low-income families (Jiang et al., 2015), limiting their opportunities for enriched educational activities such as summer camps on technology and science that students in more affluent families can access.

The United States has one of the highest child poverty rates among developed countries in the world (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2014a). The degree of child poverty varies across states, with Arizona, the District of Columbia, Kentucky, Mississippi, and New Mexico having rates that exceed 20%. Poverty rates are much higher for most children of color. Nearly three times as many African American, Hispanic, and American Indian children under 18 years old as compared to white and Asian American children live in families who fall below the official poverty level. Children in immigrant families are 1.3 times more likely than children with native-born parents to live in low-income families (Jiang et al., 2015).

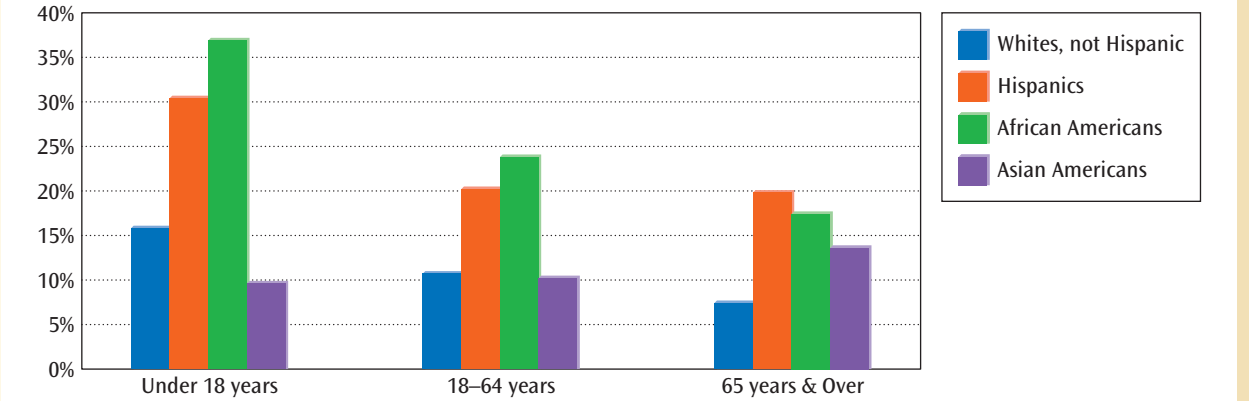


FIGURE 3.9 **Persons in Poverty by Age, Race, and Ethnicity**

Source: Based on U.S. Census Bureau. (2014b). Table 3. Poverty status of people, by age, race, and Hispanic origin: 1959 to 2013 (Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved February 22, 2015, from http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/people.html.

In schools poverty is tracked by the number of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches (FRPL). Children who are eligible for free meals are in families with incomes that are 130% of the poverty level. If they are in families with incomes between 130% and 185% of the poverty level, they are eligible for a reduced-price meal. Over half of U.S. students are eligible for FRPL. Although the percentage of low-income families with children is higher in urban areas, low-income families are also found in suburbs, towns, and rural areas (Kena et al., 2014).

Low-poverty schools are defined as those in which fewer than 25% of the students are eligible for FRPL; in high-poverty schools more than 75% of the students are eligible. Nineteen percent of the nation's public school students attended a high-poverty school and 28% attended a low-poverty school in the 2011–2012 school year. African American students were 6 times more likely than white students to attend a high-poverty elementary school and 10 times more likely to attend a high-poverty secondary school. Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native students are 5 times more likely to attend high-poverty schools than white students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013a).

What is the impact of poverty on students in schools? Low-poverty schools are twice as likely to have no reported violent incidents. There is greater ethnic and racial diversity among staff in high-poverty schools, with more African American and Latino principals and teachers. The real inequality is in the academic area. On average, students in high-poverty schools do not perform as well as their peers in other schools on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading, mathematics, music, and art assessments (Aud et al., 2010), limiting their opportunities for participating in the high-quality postsecondary education that could give them greater access to jobs with incomes that could pull them out of poverty.

Researchers have found that the combination of poverty and low reading skills places children at three times the risk of not graduating from high school as students from families with higher incomes. Students from low-income families who are reading at a proficient level in third grade have a much better chance of completing high school (Hernandez, 2011). Unfortunately, 17% of low-income students were reading at the proficient or advanced level in fourth grade in 2013 compared to 37% of higher-income students, as shown in Figure 3.10 (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2013). A number of factors contribute to this low performance. For example, students from low-income families are more likely to be absent from school, which is associated with lower academic performance. Research also finds that



Watch the video "More Students Living in Poverty Strains Education System" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKGyoCLSqeE) to learn about the degree of child poverty in the United States and some of the policy implications.

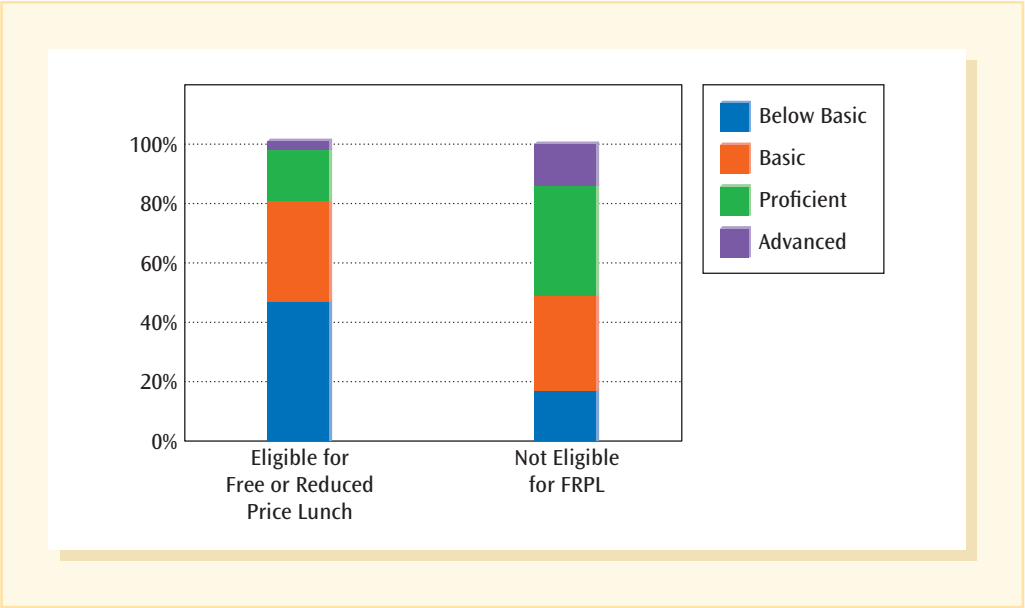


FIGURE 3.10 **Performance on Fourth-Grade Reading Tests by Income Level in 2013**
Source: Based on National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2013). *2013 reading assessment.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved on February 22, 2015, from http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/report.aspx..

students' reading proficiency level drops over the summer unless they are engaged in reading (Hernandez, 2011).

Students from low-income families often begin kindergarten with lower cognitive skills than their peers in families with middle and high incomes (Berk, 2012b). To compound the problem, many kindergartners in low-income families begin their schooling in high-poverty public schools with low-quality teaching and discriminatory practices such as ability grouping (Darling-Hammond, 2010). These children will be disadvantaged in developing their adult earning power by inferior schooling, an oppressive financial environment, and poor health.

Teaching for Equality

Many social reformers, educators, and parents view education as a powerful device for achieving social change and reducing poverty. From the beginning of the public school movement in the early nineteenth century, low incomes and immorality were believed to result from inadequate education. Thus, children from low-income families were encouraged to attend charity schools and public common schools to learn the Christian values that would help them develop the discipline for working.

By the 1960s, many students from low-income families still were not achieving academically at the same levels as their more economically advantaged peers and were still dropping out of school at higher rates. As part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, the federal government attempted to decrease poverty through the establishment of Head Start, Title I (compensatory education), Upward Bound, Job Corps, Neighborhood Youth Corps, and other educational programs. However, academic achievement as measured by test scores has not improved as much as expected, and the economic equality of families has not been realized.

Students from low-income families typically take fewer courses in mathematics and science than their more affluent peers, which contributes to later disparities in college enrollment and vocational choices. In many schools with large numbers of low-income students,

advanced courses in these subjects may be offered, but they lack the academic rigor of the more advantaged schools. Thus, low-income students who are achieving at a level equal to students from higher-income families are stifled in their attempts to move to higher levels in the advanced courses available at their schools. It is no wonder that they don't score as high on standardized assessments: They lack the opportunity to take the same high-level courses as their middle-class peers.

This lack of progress in overcoming the effects of poverty on students should not be taken as evidence that educational reforms are not worthwhile. Some changes make schooling more attractive to students and even increase the achievement of many students. In a number of states, educational resources have become more equitably distributed as a result of court cases. Nevertheless, the initial goal of programs aimed at increasing income equity and eliminating poverty has not been realized. More than school reform will be needed to raise the academic achievement of low-SES students. The social and economic conditions of their families' lives must be improved through higher wages and social policies that support low-income families (Stiglitz, 2013).

Different sociohistorical interpretations of education are presented to explain the role of schools in society and the degree to which this goal and others are being met. In one view, schools are an agent of social reform that can improve the chances of economic success for their graduates. The second view posits that schools exist as agents of the larger social, economic, and political context, with the goal of inculcating the values necessary to maintain the current socioeconomic and political systems.

Supporters of the first view are much more benign in their description of the role of schools in helping students become socially mobile. They are optimistic that social reform can be achieved by providing low-income students with more effective schools. The other view sees schools as preparing students to work efficiently at their jobs in corporate organizations. The needs of business and industry are met by preparing students from low-income families for low-wage jobs that will be managed by college graduates from middle- and high-income families.

Rather than provide equal educational opportunity, many schools perpetuate existing social and economic inequities in society. In this section, we examine four areas that influence inequities in schools: teacher expectations, tracking, curriculum, and funding.

Watch the video "An Education Masterpiece in Baton Rouge" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EONzNX-rNZVU), in which a school has focused on the creative arts to build a blue ribbon school in an economically depressed community.



Suburban schools are more likely than inner-city schools to have the technology, resources, extracurricular activities, and attractive playground space that make a school welcoming to students. **(© Steve Debenport/E+/Getty Images)**

Teacher Expectations

Ethnographic studies of schools document how students are classified, segregated, and taught differently, starting with their first days in school. Most teachers can identify the personal characteristics of students that will lead to academic success. They then develop instruction and interactions with their students to ensure that the students will, in fact, behave as the teachers expect—a phenomenon called the **self-fulfilling prophecy**, or **Pygmalion effect**. The kindergarten teacher who divides her class into three reading and mathematics groups by the third week of school has limited knowledge about the academic abilities of the students. Too often, the groups are organized according to nonacademic factors. Students in the highest group may be dressed in clean clothes that are relatively new and tidy. They interact well with the teacher and other students, are quite verbal, and use standard English. Students in the lower two groupings may be poorly dressed and use a dialect or be English language learners. Their families may appear to be less stable than those of students in the highest group.

If the teacher's goal is to spend time with students in the lower group to ensure that they develop the language and reading skills they will need to be successful in first grade and to ensure that they develop the skills to make them less distinguishable from students in the higher groups, this grouping strategy may be successful. The problem is that many teachers do not expect the students who are in the lower academic group at the beginning of the year to perform at high levels by the end of the year. The result is that students in the highest group continue to perform better academically and to behave in a more acceptable manner than students in the other two groups. As the teacher had projected, these students are more successful throughout their schooling than students from lower socioeconomic levels.

When teachers make such judgments about students, they are taking the first step in preventing students from having an equal opportunity for academic achievement. Rather than ensure that students have access to an egalitarian system, such classification and subsequent treatment of students ensure the maintenance of an inequitable system. This action is not congruent with the democratic belief that all students should be provided equal educational opportunities. All students can learn, including those in the lower-ability group; they can learn at the same level as many other students with the assistance of effective teachers.

How can the development of negative and harmful expectations for students be prevented? Teachers, counselors, and administrators can unconsciously fall into such behavior because they have been taught that poverty is the fault of the individual. As a result, students are blamed for circumstances beyond their control. Instead, educators should see as a challenge the opportunity to provide these students with knowledge and skills to overcome poverty. Educators should select approaches they would use for the most gifted students. The goal should be to improve the educational experience for students who previously would have been tracked into the low-ability classes. Too many teachers blame the students, their families, and their communities for students' failure to learn rather than examine and change their own teaching practices to improve student learning. Effective teachers do make a difference (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

In helping to overcome the stigma of poverty, educators must consciously review their expectations for students. Students' feelings of low esteem should not be reinforced by teachers. Seeing students as individuals rather than as members of a specific socioeconomic group may assist educators in overcoming the **classism** that exists in the school and the community. Information about a student's family background can be used in understanding the power of environment on a student's expression of self; it should not be used to rationalize stereotypes and label students. Educators should become aware of any prejudices they themselves hold against members of lower socioeconomic groups and work to overcome their biases. Otherwise, discriminatory practices will surface in the classroom in the form of self-fulfilling prophecies that harm students and perpetuate societal inequities.

Tracking

Tracking students into different groups or classes based on their intellectual abilities is a common educational practice. Teachers divide a class into smaller groups for instructional purposes. These groups could have a heterogeneous makeup, with each group containing girls and boys

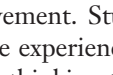
from different ethnic groups and students who are currently high and low achievers. In these groups students could help each other. In other cases, teachers may assign students to a group based on their perception of the students' academic abilities, which may be based on students' latest standardized test scores. Teachers may use different instructional strategies in these groups and may have different expectations for learning outcomes.

Tracking occurs when students are assigned to courses based on their perceived intellectual abilities or other characteristics, such as speaking a language other than English or having a disability. Middle and high school students either choose or are assigned to college preparatory, vocational, general, and advanced courses based, in great part, on how their teachers or counselors judge their future potential. Some students are placed in gifted courses or programs, and others are placed in courses that are clearly meant for low-ability students.

Supporters of tracking argue that separating students based on their perceived academic abilities allows teachers to better meet the needs of all students. Critics argue that tracking and homogeneous grouping based on ability is discriminatory and prevents many students from developing their intellectual and social potential.

Tracking is an area in which class matters. High ability appears to be more closely related to race and class than to intellectual potential. Students whose families are already privileged benefit the most from tracking. Students in the gifted and advanced programs are academically challenged in their courses, with enrichment activities that encourage them to develop their intellectual and critical thinking skills. At the other end of the learning spectrum, the learning environment is often uninviting, boring, and not challenging. Rather than prepare students to move to higher-level courses, these courses keep them at the lowest levels of academic achievement.

Being in the low-ability group diminishes student achievement. Students in this group have limited access to rigorous courses and to rich and creative experiences that will enhance opportunities for learning (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Critical thinking tasks are reserved for the high-ability groups. Oral recitation and structured written work are common in low-ability groups. Students are exposed to knowledge at a slower pace than their peers in higher-ability groups, and the knowledge is low in status, helping them fall further behind in subjects like mathematics, foreign languages, and sciences.



Watch the video "Ability Grouping, Tracking and Grouping Alternatives" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tItvMjRxL_c) for a discussion of tracking in schools and recommendations for a balanced approach to grouping students.

Teachers in low-ability classrooms spend more time on administration and discipline and less time actually teaching. As one might expect, student behavior in low tracks is more disruptive than in higher-level groups. However, this probably happens, in part, because students and teachers have developed behavioral standards that are more tolerant of inattention and not because of students' individual abilities. To compound the problem, the more experienced and more successful teachers are disproportionately assigned to the higher-ability groups. Unfortunately, many teachers generally view high-track students positively and low-track students negatively.

Disproportionately large numbers of students from lower socioeconomic levels are assigned to low-ability groups beginning very early in their school careers. Even more tragic is the fact that the number of students from low-income families who are classified as being mentally challenged is disproportionately high. This inequitable classification places students of color in double jeopardy because they also disproportionately come from low-income families.

In many schools with diverse student populations, students are segregated based on race, class, and language into separate tracks within the school. White middle-class students have disproportionately high representation in gifted and talented programs, while African Americans, Hispanics, students from low-income families, and English language learners comprise the majority of the students in low-ability classrooms. For the most part, the courts have agreed with plaintiffs that tracking students into low-ability courses and programs is a discriminatory practice that limits their educational opportunities and their potential for later occupational and economic success. Even when students and parents are encouraged to choose courses, a school district may be liable for discriminatory action if parents have not been appropriately informed of the prerequisites for advanced courses. Other discriminatory practices that are being reviewed by courts today are the inadequate preparation of low-income students and students of color to pass standardized tests and the assignment of unqualified teachers to the schools in which these students are concentrated.

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate / Detracking

Data in many schools show that the children of upper-middle-class families are overrepresented in high-ability programs for the gifted and talented and underrepresented in low-ability special education and general education courses. School officials are being pushed by the courts to change their practices that segregate students by SES or race. One of the remedies for eliminating these discriminatory practices is detracking, or dismantling tracks for students based on ability, as determined by standardized tests or teachers' perceptions. Some teachers and middle-class parents resist the move to a single track in which students from different ability groups are mixed.

Opinions about these strategies differ. Some people believe that detracking will provide greater equality of opportunity across economic and racial groups. Opponents believe that it will lead to a lower quality of education overall. These arguments are outlined below.

FOR

- ☐ **Eliminates discrimination against students from low-income families and students of color.**
- ☐ **Integrates students from different ability levels.**
- ☐ **Encourages classroom instruction that is challenging and interesting for low-income as well as upper-middle-class students.**
- ☐ **Supports a classroom environment in which high-ability students learn while assisting peers who may not be at the same academic level.**
- ☐ **Provides low-SES students greater access to good teachers, improving their chances for learning at higher levels.**

AGAINST

- ☐ **Is not fair to high-ability students, who need to be challenged at advanced levels.**
- ☐ **Makes it more difficult for teachers to provide appropriate instruction for all students, whose abilities differ greatly.**
- ☐ **May lead to pressure from upper-middle-class parents, who may withdraw their children from public schools.**
- ☐ **Waters down the curriculum for high-ability students.**
- ☐ **Prevents high-ability students from participating in gifted and talented programs and advanced-level courses that will give them the advantage needed to be admitted to elite colleges and universities.**

QUESTIONS

1. **How do schools ensure that the voices of low- and middle-income families are included in discussions about detracking and the provision of educational equity in schools?**
2. **How does detracking schools contribute to the provision of equal educational opportunity?**
3. **What other steps could school officials take to provide low-income students greater access to advanced courses?**
4. **What are your reasons for supporting or not supporting detracking strategies in schools?**

Dismantling tracking systems in schools is not an easy undertaking. Some teachers fight detracking, in part because they do not believe that heterogeneous groupings contribute to the learning of all students. They may believe that gifted students will suffer if they are integrated with students who do not perform at the same academic level.

Middle-class parents, especially upper-middle-class parents, sometimes fight efforts to detrack schools and integrate their children with students who they think are not as smart or deserving of the best educational resources (which are often limited to gifted and talented students). Many of these parents believe that their success should be passed on to their children by ensuring that they receive the highest-quality education possible. To prevent detracking, these parents employ strategies to hold on to the privilege that their children can gain from education. They use their power to force administrators to respond to their demands. They have been known to threaten to remove their children from public schools and to hold out for other special privileges for their children. At times, they co-opt parents from the middle class to support their stand. Nevertheless, some schools have been able to detrack their programs with the goal of improving the education of all students, regardless of the socioeconomic level or race of their parents.

Curriculum for Equality

Inner-city schools are populated by many low-income and working-class students whose environment outside the school is very different from that of students in most suburban and rural schools. For many students, schools are safe places compared to the atmosphere of abuse and crime that may be part of the daily lives of students in a neighborhood characterized by poverty. These students have strengths that are not recognized or supported by many educators. Many are very resilient under conditions that present obstacles to their well-being and academic achievement. Although it is essential to ensure that all students learn the subject matter, how these skills are taught should vary depending on the environment in which students live in order to make the curriculum both engaging and meaningful to students by recognizing and building on their lived experiences. Helping students achieve academically in schools that serve students from low-income families requires competent educators who know the subjects they are teaching as well as believe that all students can learn.

Equality in student achievement could be increased by raising the level of instructional content and instructional discourse in all courses at all levels. Achievement is improved when teachers help students interact with the academic content through discussion and **authenticity**—relating the content to students' prior experiences and real-world applications. These strategies work for all students, not just those in advanced placement and honors courses.

The curriculum should reflect accurately the class structure and inequities that exist in the United States. The existence of nearly half the population is not validated in the curricula of most schools. Curricula and textbooks usually focus on the values and experiences of a middle-class society. They highlight the heroes of our capitalist and political system, who were primarily white males from economically privileged families. They usually ignore the history and heroes of the labor struggle in this country, in which laborers resisted and endured under great odds to improve their conditions. They do not discuss the role of the working class in the development of the nation. The inequities based on the income and wealth of one's family are usually neither described nor discussed. In classrooms, students should learn of the existence of these differences. They should understand that the majority of the population does not live the middle-class myth.

Often overlooked are the experiences that students bring to the classroom. School is not the only place where students learn about life. Differences in school behavior and learning among students from dissimilar socioeconomic levels are strongly dependent on the knowledge and skills needed to survive appropriately in their community environments. Most low-income students, especially those in urban areas, have learned how to live in a world that is not imaginable to most middle-class students or teachers. Yet the knowledge and skills they bring to school are not always valued. Educators should recognize the value of the community's informal education in sustaining its own culture and realize that formal education is often viewed as undermining that culture.

Students need to see some of their own cultural experiences reflected in the curriculum. They need to see ordinary working people depicted as valued members of society. These students and their families need to be helped to see themselves as desirable and integral members of the school community rather than as second-class citizens who must learn the ways of the more economically advantaged to succeed in school.

If students never see their communities in the activities, films, and books used in class, their motivation and acceptance may be limited. All students should be encouraged to read novels and short stories about people from different socioeconomic levels. When studying historical or current events, they should examine the events from the perspective of the working class and people in poverty, as well as from the perspective of the country's leaders. Teaching can be enhanced by drawing examples from experiences with which students are familiar, especially when the experiences are different from the teacher's own.

All students, no matter what their SES, should be helped to develop strong and positive self-concepts. Many students do not realize the diversity that exists in this country, let alone understand the reasons for the diversity and the resulting discrimination against some groups. Middle-class children tend to believe that most people live like their families. Educators are

expected to expand their students' knowledge of the world, not to hide from them the realities that exist because of class differences. In a classroom in which democracy and equity are important, low-income students should receive priority time from teachers and have access to the necessary resources to help them become academically competitive with middle-class students.

Finally, all students should be encouraged to be critical of what they read, see, and hear in textbooks, through the mass media, and from their parents and friends. The curriculum should encourage the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Although teachers traditionally talk about the democratic vision, they generally are unwilling to model it. Students and teachers who become involved through the curriculum in asking why the inequities in society exist are beginning to think critically about our democracy.

School Funding

At the beginning of this chapter, Mr. Juarez found great differences in the conditions of schools in the inner city versus the suburbs. The problem is greatly exacerbated by the fact that the current system for funding schools mirrors these inequities. Education is financed by local, state, and federal sources but primarily by local and state sources, at 43.4% and 44.1%, respectively; federal support is at 12.5% (Cornman, 2013). Property taxes are the primary source of local funding for schools, which contributes to the disparities in education from one community to another. Communities with high-income families will generate much more in property taxes than low-income communities to support their schools.

The average per-pupil expenditure for the United States was $10,658 in 2011, but the amount varied greatly across states, ranging from $6,326 in Utah to $16,855 in New York (Cornman, 2013). The United States spends more per pupil than other industrialized countries, but fewer three-year-olds are enrolled in early childhood education, teachers work longer hours, and teacher salaries are below the average of other industrialized countries (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2014c).

Researchers and policymakers disagree as to how much money is needed by schools to improve academic achievement. Some researchers suggest that higher per-pupil expenditures, better teacher salaries, more educated and experienced teachers, and smaller class and school sizes are strongly related to improved student learning. If we agree that more money would help reduce the inequities across groups in schools and that greater resources are needed in low-wealth school districts, what areas would provide the greatest payoff for improving student achievement, especially for students from low-income families? Among the recommendations from researchers and educators are smaller class sizes, prekindergarten programs for four-year-olds, tutoring for students having difficulty, cooperative learning, family support systems, more qualified teachers, and extensive staff and teacher development for delivery of effective programs.

SUMMARY

Class

Social stratification is possible because people occupy different levels of the social structure. People of color, women, the young, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities are disproportionately represented at the low end of the social stratification system.

Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic status (SES) is a composite representing the economic status of a family or of unrelated individuals, based on income, wealth, occupation, educational attainment, and power. Families range from the indigent poor to the very rich. Where a family falls along this continuum affects the way its members live, how they think and act, and the way others react to them. Although a family may actively participate in other cultural groups centered around ethnicity, religion, gender, exceptionality, language, or age, the class to which a family belongs is one of the strongest factors in determining how one lives.

Class Differences

The population is often divided into classes based on income and occupation. Individual choice is most limited for those who are in poverty and who can barely meet essential needs.

People of color and women who head families are more likely than other groups to be unemployed and homeless. The working class and middle class are distinguished by the type of work their members do, but the majority of the population considers themselves middle class. The affluent in society are the upper middle class of professionals and administrators who have many advantages but not as many as the members of the upper class, who protect their power and privilege.

Economic Inequality

The populations that are most likely to suffer from income inequality are persons of color, children, and single mothers with children. Forty percent of the population are low income or near poor, struggling to meet their basic needs from week to week. In the United States, 1 in 5 children under the age of 18 years is in poverty, which is among the highest poverty rates in developed countries.

Teaching for Equality

Disproportionately large numbers of students from lower-SES levels are tracked in low-ability groups in their early school years. Too often, low-income students are placed in remedial programs because of discriminatory testing and placement. Educators should consciously review their expectations for students and their behavior toward students from different SES levels to ensure that they are not discriminating. In addition, the curriculum does not serve students well if it reflects only the perspective of upper-middle-class America. Low-income students need to see some of their own cultural experiences reflected in the curriculum. Financial support for more equitable funding of schools, no matter where they are located or which students attend them, is likely to reduce the achievement gap between groups of students. The current property tax system for supporting schools gives the advantage to families with high incomes.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts.



4 Gender

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- **4.1** Explain the physical and socially constructed differences between males and females.
- **4.2** Differentiate between the expectations of society for masculinity and femininity, including the influences of religion.
- **4.3** Discuss the early and current struggles to gain gender equity and provide some specific examples of today's struggles and some of the progress that has been made.
- **4.4** Explain the costs of sexism and gender discrimination to men as well as to women, as well as how it has affected women in their career choices and ultimately their incomes.
- **4.5** Cite specific examples of how gender equity has been brought into the classroom and provide specific details of the impact of Title IX and the dramatic changes it has brought to the face of American education and athletics.

"What made me think that I wanted to spend my days with middle schoolers?" thought Ms. Carson. "They are driving me crazy today. Jack keeps bothering Jason, who is trying to read his assignment. In fact, all of the boys are fidgety. The girls seem to like the story they are reading and are anxious to discuss it. The boys, on the other hand, seem to want nothing to do with it."

"Why do we have to read this story?" Jason blurted out. "It's only about some sissy girl who thinks she can hit a baseball. Why don't we play baseball? The boys against the girls. That'll show who can play baseball."

Ms. Carson was frustrated. "What am I to do? I selected this story so that the girls could see themselves as athletes who can be competitors. Now the boys don't see themselves in the story. Maybe boys and girls should be taught in separate classrooms."

REFLECTIONS

1. Why is Ms. Carson concerned about how girls are portrayed in the literature that her middle-schoolers read?
2. Characterize the difference between the girls' and boys' behavior in this classroom.
3. What could Ms. Carson do to engage both the girls and boys in the same literature lesson?



Male and Female Differences

We can fairly easily distinguish males and females by their physical appearance alone. Girls tend to have lighter skeletons and different shoulder and pelvic proportions than boys. There are major differences in hormonal levels of estrogen and testosterone, which control the physical development of the two sexes. Soon after birth, boys and girls have similar hormonal levels; they are similar in terms of physical development through the early years of elementary school. The onset of puberty brings major changes in the hormonal levels of the two sexes. At this time, the proportion of fat to total body weight increases in girls and decreases in boys. The differences in physical structure generally contribute to the male's greater strength, greater endurance for heavy labor, greater ease in running and overarm throwing, and lesser ability to float in water. However, the extent of these physical differences can also be influenced by environment and culture. They can be altered with nutrition, physical activity, practice, and behavioral expectations.

Most researchers have found little evidence that our brains are hardwired to make the sexes behave differently from each other (Fine, 2010; Jordan-Young, 2010; Renzetti, Curran, & Maier, 2012). Why, then, do we see differences in behavior between the two sexes? Women and men often segregate themselves at social gatherings. They dress and groom differently. The topics of their conversations often differ. They participate in sex-specific leisure activities. In classrooms, students are sometimes segregated by sex for school activities. Boys tend to be more rambunctious in their play. Girls and boys often choose different games at recess: Girls may jump rope as boys throw balls with each other. These choices extend into adulthood; many men are fascinated with sports, watching every TV broadcast of their favorite sports teams. They may even play touch football or pick-up basketball with friends. Women, on the other hand, are more likely to watch ice skating or gymnastics on a different channel, although more women are being attracted to traditional male-oriented sports such as football.

Are these behaviors and choices due to one's being male or female? Do we learn our male and female behaviors through socialization patterns based on sex? Are we born to behave, think, and act differently (i.e., nature), or do we learn these differences (i.e., nurture)? How can understanding these differences help us support, protect, and provide fair treatment to boys and girls as they grow up and move through school? Let's begin by looking at what we know about the differences between the two sexes.

Differences Based on Nature

Research on biological differences between the sexes has led to contrasting conclusions about the role of biology after birth in defining female and male differences. The X and Y chromosomes that determine our sex represent a very small proportion of our total gene pool; males and females share roughly 99.8% of their genes (Eliot, 2012). The differences in psychological traits (e.g., empathy, ambition, compassion, aggressiveness, and being responsible) and academic abilities between the average female and male are quite small. The differences are much greater within the male and female populations than between males and females in general (Eliot, 2012). In spite of these research findings, many parents and educators believe that there are innate differences between boys and girls, which can lead to stereotypes and the development of different expectations for their behavior, academic achievement, and future occupations.

Eliot (2012) concludes that speaking, reading, mathematics, mechanical ability, and interpersonal characteristics such as aggression, empathy, risk taking, and competitiveness are learned, not innate. Rather than explaining our differences primarily by nature, we are learning that the environment has a great influence on our behaviors. Girls and boys can learn to use both hemispheres of the brain so that they can effectively develop the full range of skills.

At one time it was assumed that men had more intelligence than women due to larger brain size. Today we know that brain size is related to body size, not to intelligence (Renzetti

et al., 2012). When Alfred Binet developed the first intelligence test at the beginning of the twentieth century, no differences were found in the general intelligence level between females and males. However, many studies have found gender differences in mathematical and reading skills, with females performing at higher levels on reading tests and males performing better on assessments of mathematics. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) collected data for a decade, including mathematics and reading performances for nearly 1.5 million 15-year-olds in 75 countries. Across nations, boys scored higher than girls in mathematics and lower than girls in reading. The gender difference in reading was three times as large as that in mathematics (Stoet & Geary, 2013).

Researchers on both sides of the argument recommend that different types of classroom activities are needed to engage boys and girls in the academic areas in which they are not performing proficiently. Boys are in greater need of one-on-one verbal engagement than girls. They need literary immersion, as well as opportunities for physical play and hands-on learning (Eliot, 2012). Girls need to be engaged in similar activities to develop their mathematics, science, and spatial skills at higher levels. Expectations for both girls and boys need to be high, no matter the subject area. Excuses that they are not performing well because of their sex are no longer acceptable in an educational environment in which schools are expected to ensure that all students perform at their grade level.

Socially Constructed Differences



Children learn at an early age what type of activities are considered socially acceptable for their gender. Little girls may dress up as princesses, become little ballerinas, or play with doll houses. (© Elodie Lois Chinn)

Although nature determines our sex at the beginning of life, it does not have to limit our abilities to the stereotyped roles of male or female. How children spend their time and what they are taught can help them either live the stereotypes or break out of the parameters that privilege one group over another. The recreational and interpersonal differences between girls and boys are much greater than their cognitive and academic differences (Eliot, 2012).

Parents, siblings, teachers, and peers teach individuals from birth throughout life their perceptions of the meaning of femaleness and maleness. As soon as we know a baby's sex, everything from clothing to furniture to activities is gender driven. Even when parents are determined not to reinforce the stereotypes, society works against them. Gender-specific toys and the actions of girls and boys on the pages of children's books and magazines, on television, and on the Internet as well as in play with their peers reinforce the gender expectations. Through this socialization process, children develop social skills and learn their socially prescribed roles and expectations.

In a university early childhood demonstration class, the students were given their daily free period time to engage in the activity of their choice. Two girls moved directly to an area where there were dolls and began combing the dolls' hair. One of the boys followed them there and also began combing the hair of a doll. Before the university master teacher could intervene, a university intern, observing this, immediately picked up a model airplane, removed the doll from the stunned boy's hands, and said sternly, "Boys don't play with dolls; they play with airplanes."

The Influence of Media on Perceptions of Gender Roles. By high school graduation, the average child will have spent more hours in front of the television than in a classroom. On television, a woman's beauty can count for more than intelligence. Adult working women are commonly portrayed, but strong, intelligent, working-class women are generally invisible. Neither female heroines nor male heroes are social workers, teachers, or secretaries. They may be superhero crime fighters or CSI lab technicians, but few women on

television today are the full-time, stay-at-home mothers who populated the sitcoms of earlier days. A growing number of women are news anchors, although they are often paired with a male anchor on local news shows. Women's sports can be found on television, but the range of coverage is minuscule compared to men's football, basketball, soccer, and baseball.

Women's magazines often focus on women who are successful professionals while exhibiting the feminine attributes of beauty, caring, and housekeeping. Working mothers are supermoms who not only work but are devoted mothers who meet the needs of their children in much the same way as stay-at-home mothers do. Most magazines for young women focus on celebrities, fashion, and attracting men (Douglas, 2010). Sex, sports, and automobiles are the focus of most men's magazines. Articles on being a good father or husband seldom find their way into these magazines.

Children are not immune to the influence of the media. Cartoon characters, children's movies, and toys help determine their gender identities, which are reinforced by their same-sex peers. For example, many preschool girls are enamored with the princesses of the Disney movies, convincing their parents to purchase the gowns, shoes, jewelry, and makeup of their favorite characters. Not only do they play dress-up at home, they dress as princesses for preschool and when they attend the Disney movies. Toys, games, books, and activities continue to be sorted into the traditional pink for girls and blue for boys. Retailers have learned how to market their products for each sex and reinforce stereotypical roles and expectations. Girls are pretty and sweet; boys are active and aggressive (Orenstein, 2011).

Socialization Patterns in School. When a child enters school, educators usually continue the socialization patterns initiated by parents that reinforce the stereotyped behaviors associated with males and females. The attitudes and values about appropriate gender roles are embedded in the curriculum of schools. Elementary schools with a predominance of female teachers may reinforce maternal roles with an emphasis on obedience. In classrooms, boys and girls receive different feedback and encouragement for their work. Boys often control classroom conversations by answering questions quickly. Teachers are more likely to praise boys for their intellectual responses. At the same time, boys are more likely to be publicly criticized by teachers when they break a rule (Sadker, Sadker, & Zittleman, 2009).

Children are also active participants in the socialization process. Play groups are often determined by the sex of the children, especially in the elementary and middle grades (Orenstein, 2011). Even when girls and boys play the same game, they often play it differently, with the boys being more aggressive. However, not all boys and girls follow the socially acceptable ways of their gender. Not all boys participate in large-group activities and are aggressive. The forgotten boys whose voices have been silenced and marginalized may follow behavior patterns generally associated with girls, but they risk being labeled as effeminate and can become isolated from other boys. Much the same is true for girls. Everyone has probably known a tomboy who chose to play with the boys rather than the girls. However, girls who excel in athletics, even against the boys, usually do not suffer serious consequences (e.g., Little League pitcher Mo'ne Davis).

Combating Gender Stereotypes in the Classroom. Critics of elementary classrooms indicate that instruction is designed around the behaviors, interests, and needs of girls to the detriment of boys. Teachers should consciously ensure that classroom activities do not favor one group over another. Both boys and girls can learn the skills and attitudes that seem to be more natural to the opposite sex through participating in the preferred activities of the other group. Cooperative projects in classrooms in which girls and boys work together can undermine sexual opposition if the students share the work rather than one group always dominating. Teachers need to pay attention to the leadership in these small groups and may sometimes have to assign girls to the leadership role to guarantee that both boys and girls are developing leadership skills. As girls participate in boys' activities that require more movement, their brains begin to adopt the skills needed for better performance in spatial tasks.

Whereas adults read newspapers, magazines, and books, children spend much of their reading time with textbooks. How do the genders fare in terms of the resources used in classrooms

across the nation? Studies show that great improvements have been made over the past 30 years. Textbooks are not as racist and sexist as in the past, and perspectives are better balanced. However, teachers still need to be cognizant of the gender and ethnicity of the authors being read by students. The non-sexist literature read by children and young people tends to show girls with masculine traits appropriate for a protagonist. Male protagonists do not normally reflect feminine characteristics (Fine, 2010). What can teachers do when classroom resources primarily reflect stereotyped portrayals and perspectives of females and males? They have to identify other resources for their students. The Internet may be helpful in identifying different role models for students, games for boys and girls to develop skills at which the other sex is generally more adept, and interesting readings that provide different perspectives from those in the textbook.



Gender Identity

Generally, sex is used to identify an individual as male or female, based on biological differences. If we believe, as most research shows, that we are not hardwired for the differences between the sexes that we see in society, the major biological differences are that women can bear children, and men have penises. The differences we observe are based primarily on **gender**, or the cultural differences between men and women, which define the characteristics behind the meaning of being female or male. These are usually defined as femininity and masculinity, which are culturally determined and learned through socialization.

Most of us take our gender identity for granted and do not question it because it corresponds to our sex. One's recognition of the appropriate gender identity occurs unconsciously early in life. It becomes a basic anchor in the personality and forms a core part of one's self-identity. Children begin selecting toys associated with their gender by the time they start walking. By the age of 3 years, they realize that they are either boys or girls and have begun to learn their expected behaviors (Eliot, 2012). By the time they enter school, children have clear ideas about gender. Most children know that girls and boys are supposed to behave differently. When they don't follow the rules for their gender behavior, they are often reminded by parents or their peers, and sometimes their teachers. Many are prepared to strive for conformity with these gender-stereotyped roles. However, not everyone's gender identity matches that person's sex. Some identify themselves as of the opposite sex, sexless, or somewhere in between. Some are transgender individuals who cross-dress and sometimes physically alter their sex to match the one with which they identify.

Masculinity and Femininity

Most cultures value masculinity over femininity. Masculinity is often measured by a man's independence, assertiveness, leadership, self-reliance, and emotional stability. Men are expected to demonstrate tough, confident, and self-reliant behaviors as well as being aggressive and daring (Kivel, 2013). Femininity is stereotypically characterized as emotional, dependent, compliant, empathetic, and nurturing. As a result, men have been bestowed with greater power than women, leading to their being identified by some as the superior sex. When these differences became translated into the work environment, women were tracked into the nurturing fields of teaching, health care, and social services. They were supervised by men with assertive leadership skills and higher incomes. This pattern may be economically viable for families where both the wife and husband work, but it leaves many single mothers and their children in poverty.

Few people fall solely at one or the other end of the feminine–masculine continuum. Most of us possess some characteristics of each. However, culture and society often expect us to mirror the gender behaviors associated with our sex, which could be detrimental to how we see ourselves and to fulfilling our potential in the work that we select. Generally, females are allowed more flexibility in their gender identification than males. Even young girls receive positive reinforcement for acting like boys by being physically active, participating in sports,



Watch the video "Dr. James Garbarino on the Different Socialization of Boys and Girls in Society" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWVSlga61XI) for an explanation of the different expectations boys face from society compared to girls.

and rejecting feminine stereotypical behavior. However, males are particularly susceptible to societal pressures. As a result, they sometimes go overboard in proving their masculinity.

Many of us do not fit the stereotypical profile associated with our sex. Many men are empathetic and caring, and many women are tough and assertive. People show different feminine and masculine characteristics, depending on the circumstances, as shown by recent male presidents and members of Congress who may cry in times of sadness and yet are tough and assertive when needed. Some conservatives argue that men are losing their masculinity and are being harmed as they become more feminine.

Life is not easy for young men, as supported by statistics indicating they are much more likely than girls to commit suicide, binge-drink, use steroids, suffer from undiagnosed depression, and be killed by gunfire or in a car crash (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014e). However, these problems cannot be attributed to boys becoming more feminine. Boys hold each other to a culturally determined gender identity, with little room for divergence. Smith (2011), in citing the work of William Pollack, suggests that there are certain expectations for males. Boys must learn that they must be as sturdy as an oak, and behaviors such as whimpering, crying, complaining, or any sign of weakness are unacceptable. In addition, risk taking, "give 'em hell," and macho behavior are valued. Boys should dominate others and not reveal any feelings of failure or that life may be out of control. Finally, no "sissy" stuff: Boys must avoid feminine expressions of dependence, warmth, and empathy.

As boys become young men, this "guy's code" is often perpetuated, as young men feel that they are forced to repudiate the feminine side of their personality and confirm their masculinity. They want to be viewed as masculine by their peers, fathers, brothers, and coaches, and among the worst things that can happen is to be considered effeminate and to demonstrate feminine values. It can be an awful burden for males to carry when they personally value caring, nurturing tendencies that some people associate with femininity.

We are, however, living in an era of changing norms in which many people are rejecting old, unequal roles. Some individuals are modifying or even rejecting Pollack's views of expected masculine behavior. Both men and women are often able to move to more **androgynous** behaviors without social repercussions. These changes are resulting in new uncertainties where the norms of the gender role are no longer so distinct. As new norms develop, more flexible roles, personalities, and behaviors are evolving for both females and males. However, we are likely to see adolescents struggling with their gender identity, especially in the middle and high school years.

Transgender Identity

The American Psychological Association (APA) suggests that **transgender** is a term used for persons whose gender identity or behavior does not conform to or is not associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth. One's gender identity refers to the individual's internal sense of being male or female. APA further suggests that gender expression refers to how the individuals express themselves to others by the way they communicate characteristics such as their attire, voice, hairstyle, body characteristics, and general behavior (American Psychological Association, 2015).

An individual's *sex* is assigned at birth, based on biological status of male or female, as determined primarily by physical attributes such as chromosomes and internal and external anatomy. *Gender*, on the other hand, refers to the socially constructed roles, activities, and attributes that each given society assigns as appropriate for males or females. Variations from these expectations, especially if they are significant, may have severe social consequences for an individual.

Some individuals are born with the biological trappings (e.g., vagina or penis) of one sex but think and behave like the other sex. For example, a child may be born in a boy's body but be a girl in every other aspect of life. When someone's identity, appearance, or behavior falls outside the conventional gender norms, that person is described as *transgender*. In some cases, transgender individuals have surgery or use hormones to transform their bodies to match the sex with which they identify—a process called *sex* or *gender reassignment* or **gender affirmation**.

Some of these individuals are transvestites—people who cross-dress. Transgender students may choose names that denote their identity rather than their sex. Family members, educators, and significant others can be supportive of transgender students by educating themselves about transgender issues, consulting experts, and using names and pronouns appropriate to the individuals' gender identity. The protocol is to interact with a transgender student as if the student is of the sex with which he/she identifies. In other words, you would interact with a male student who identifies as female by using female pronouns such as *she* and *her* and interacting with the person as you would with other females in your class.

Transgender students often face sexual harassment similar to that faced by many gay students. Educators should be aware of possible harassment and intervene appropriately to protect the legal rights of these students and ensure safety in their classrooms.

Influence of Ethnicity and Religion

The degree to which a student adheres to a traditional gender identity is influenced by the family's ethnicity, class, and religion. For many women of color, racial discrimination has such an impact on their daily lives and well-being that gender is often secondary in their identity. In some religions, gender identity and relations are strictly controlled by religious doctrine. Thus, gender inequality takes on different forms among different ethnic, class, and religious groups. The degree to which traditional gender roles are accepted depends, in large part, on the degree to which the family maintains the traditional patterns and the experiences of their ethnic group in this country. Families that adhere to traditional religious and cultural patterns are more likely to encourage adherence to rigid gender roles than are families that have adopted bicultural patterns.

Women of color, no matter their socioeconomic status, have current and historical experiences of discrimination based on their race and ethnicity. Identification with one group may be prevalent in one setting but not another. It is often a struggle to develop an identity that incorporates one's gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, class, and religion into a whole with which one feels comfortable and self-assured. Most students of color are likely to identify themselves by their ethnic or racial group rather than by their sex or gender.

Religions generally recognize and include masculine and feminine expectations as part of their doctrines. Regardless of the specific religion, rituals sometimes reflect and often reinforce systems of male dominance. The more conservative religious groups usually support a stricter adherence to gender-differentiated roles. Their influence extends into issues of sexuality, marriage, and reproductive rights. They may have successfully organized politically to control state and federal policies on family and women's affairs. On the other hand, more liberal religious groups may support the marriage rights of gays and lesbians and the right of a woman to choose abortion, and they may encourage both males and females to lead their congregations. These issues are discussed extensively in Chapter 8, which addresses religion and culture. Religious perspectives on the appropriate roles of females and males can conflict with the school culture in designating the ways girls and boys are allowed to interact with each other in the classroom and hallways. For example, the dress of girls and young women in physical education classes may clash with religious dictates. Educators should be alert to religious perspectives as they discuss gender issues in classrooms, plan lessons on sexuality, and interact with females and males in the classroom.



Struggles for Gender Equity

Most major changes in society do not occur quietly. Throughout most of history (and still in many parts of the world today), women were not considered equal to men. In fact, most were subordinate to men. They were dependent on them for financial well-being as their daughters and their wives. For women on their own, jobs were neither plentiful nor well paid. With some education, women could be hired as teachers if they could convince school authorities that they were moral, upstanding young women. Once they married, some were no longer allowed to

teach; they became the responsibility of their husbands. Without laws that provided them autonomy from their spouses or fathers, women could not file for divorce, own property, or apply for men's jobs.

Early Struggles for Gender Equity

The desire for independence and equal rights has fired the struggles of women and their male allies for gender equity since the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. During the mid-nineteenth century, women activists were part of the antislavery movement. They were also trying to raise the public's awareness about women's issues, including the right to divorce, own property, speak in public, prevent abuse by husbands, work, and vote. At the Seneca Falls Convention, women organized to fight against their oppression. This effort involved some male supporters, including Frederick Douglass and white abolitionists who were fighting against slavery and for the human and civil rights of all people. However, even most women did not support the women's movement at that time. They did not view their conditions as oppressive and accepted their roles as wives and mothers as natural.

Later in the century, protective legislation for women and children was enacted to make some manual jobs inaccessible to women because of the danger involved. The legislation also limited the number of hours women could work and the time at which they could work—much like today's child labor laws. Such legislation did little, however, to extend equal rights to women. During this period, the members of women's groups were predominantly European Americans. They segregated their fight for equal rights from the struggles of other oppressed groups and refused to take a stand against Jim Crow laws and other violations of the civil rights of ethnic and racial groups. It was 50 years after the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment, which granted African American men the right to vote, before women would be granted the right to vote following hard-fought battles that included organizing, picketing, arrests, hunger strikes, and forced feedings in jail.

The Second Wave

The most comprehensive advances in the status of women were initiated in the 1960s, when **feminists** were able to gain the support of more women and men than at any other time in



Women have finally been able to work together and gain support from men and other significant groups. (© Ramin Talaie/AP Images)

history. As in the previous century, this movement developed out of the struggle for civil rights being waged by African Americans. The 1963 Equal Pay Act required that men and women receive equal pay for the same job, but it did not prevent discrimination in hiring. In an attempt to defeat the Civil Rights Bill in Congress, a southern congressman added the words "or sex" to Title VII, declaring that discrimination based on "race, color, national origin, or sex" was prohibited. This legislation, which passed in 1964, extended equal rights to women for the first time. Soon afterward, President Lyndon Johnson signed an executive order that required businesses with federal contracts to hire women and people of color, creating the first affirmative-action programs.

Women's groups pushed for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which read, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." After the ERA was passed by Congress in 1972, conservative groups concerned about family values lobbied state legislatures to reject the amendment. Although two-thirds of the U.S. population supported the ERA, it was not ratified by the required number of states. By the 1980s political leaders were no longer disposed to extend full equal rights to women.

The 1990s ushered in a change in the feminist movement toward broader support for the civil rights of all groups rather than just women. As an example, the nation's largest feminist organization, the National Organization for Women (NOW), today includes in its agenda fighting racism and supporting welfare reform, immigrant rights, and affirmative action. A growing number of articles and books on equity by modern feminists, sociologists, and critical theorists address the interaction of race, gender, and class in the struggle for equity for all groups.

Today's Challenges

Equal rights for women, men, gays, and lesbians continue to be contested. Feminists fight for equality in jobs, pay, schooling, responsibilities in the home, and the nation's laws. They believe that women and men should have a choice about working in the home or outside the home, having children, and acknowledging sexual orientation. They believe that women should not have to be subordinate to men at home, in the workplace, or in society. They fight to eliminate the physical and mental violence that has resulted from such subordination by providing support groups and shelters for abused women and children, as well as by pressuring the judicial system to outlaw and severely punish such violence. In addition, they promote shared male and female responsibilities in the home and the availability of child care to all families.

While the movement has been slow in emerging, women have started finding their place in leadership positions in professional fields. Women have run for president of the United States; the first to do so was Shirley Chisholm, in 1972. Geraldine Ferraro and Sarah Palin were candidates for vice president. Two previous secretaries of state—Condoleezza Rice and Hillary Rodhan Clinton—were women, interacting with leaders from around the world.

As of 2015, there were 20 women serving in the U.S. Senate, a historic high. An additional 84 women were serving in the U.S. House of Representatives in 2015. Even more indicative of change, Nancy Pelosi served as the first and only female speaker of the House from 2007 to 2011 and was therefore third in line for the presidency; she still served as the House minority leader in 2015 (Pew Research Center, 2015b).

At one time, it would have been unheard of for a woman to serve as a CEO of a Fortune 500 company. Today, 26 women are serving in these positions, but this is still a very small percentage. One example is Mary Barra, who became the first female leader of an automaker in the world in 2014 when she became the CEO of General Motors, the largest U.S. corporation. Other noteworthy U.S. women in industry leadership positions include Marillyn A. Hewson, the chairperson, president, and chief executive officer (CEO) of Lockheed Martin Corporation, the world's largest defense firm; Phebe Novakovic, the chairperson and CEO for General Dynamics, the world's fifth-largest defense contractor; and Ginni Rometty, the CEO of IBM. It might be noted, however, that on the *Forbes* list of most powerful individuals in the world, there are only three U.S. women—Janet Yellen, chair of the Federal Reserve Board, Ginni Rometty, and Mary Barra—out of a total of eight women, with the vast majority on the list men (Forbes, 2014).

The business world is still male dominated, with only 16.9% of women sitting on the boards of Fortune 500 companies in 2014 (Pew Research Center, 2015b). Men continue to dominate the senior professorial ranks in higher education and as university presidents. In 2011, only 26.4% of university presidents were women (American Council of Education, 2012).

In 2015 five women served as state governors—two Democrats and three Republicans. During the Clinton administration, 41% of the cabinet-level positions were held by women. George W. Bush appointed Condoleezza Rice as secretary of state, the first African American female to hold that position. Two other women served in the Bush second-term cabinet. In 2015, 35% of the Obama administration cabinet members were women (Pew Research Center, 2015b). Three of the nine justices on the U.S. Supreme Court are women.

To date, no U.S. woman has served as president, though there have been presidential and vice presidential candidates representing the two major political parties in the general election. Internationally there have been and continue to be many female heads of state, such as Germany's Angela Merkel, Argentina's Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, and South Korea's Park Geun-hye.

The Boy Crisis

In the past several years, much has been written about the "boy crisis" in our schools. Some of this has been blamed on feminist reforms in schools to the detriment of males. Concerned observers indicate that boys have been short-changed as schools have turned their focus to improving the academic performance of girls. The backlash is over the belief that there is now an advantage for girls in U.S. classrooms. Some say that, under the guise of supporting girls, boys are penalized in classrooms that now favor girls (Lindsey, 2015). Today, more girls than boys are in advance placement (AP) classes, more are completing higher education at all levels, including doctoral degrees, and more boys are being disciplined in school than females. In addition, more boys than girls are in special education classes for students with intellectual disabilities and severe emotional disturbances.

Warner (2013) acknowledges that girls indeed take more AP classes, earn higher grades, and earn more college degrees than males. This is not a new phenomenon. Girls have been outperforming boys in schools for decades. Girls spend more time studying than boys and are more likely to say that good grades are important to them. Black males who excel academically are sometimes faced with accusations of "acting white."

Girls are getting the message that hard work will lead to success in college and also in the workplace. That message is not getting through to boys, particularly if their parents do not value a college education. Warner (2013) suggests that a lot of boys are doing fine. If they are from white or Asian educated families, they are not dropping behind girls. Warner further states that once they enter the labor market, males will still outperform and out-earn females. She believes that the crises are of income and education level, not gender. Covert (2014b) suggests that with respect to well-behaved girls who excel in school, the racial achievement gap and the fact that black children are likely to be disciplined more severely in school works against them. Nearly 40% of black and Hispanic girls will not graduate from high school as scheduled. If there is a degree of truth in the "boy crisis," Covert (2014a) predicts that in 50 years, women will earn more than men and will not only achieve pay equity but actually reverse it.



The Cost of Sexism and Gender Discrimination

Sexism is the belief that males are superior to females. Often, it occurs in personal situations of marriage and family life where the husband or father "rules the roost." It also occurs in the workplace when women hold lower-status jobs, work for men, and receive lower wages than men for the same work.

Only a century ago, most women could not attend college, had no legal right to either property or their children, could not initiate a divorce, and were forbidden to smoke or drink. Because these inequities no longer exist and laws now protect the rights of women, many

people believe that men and women are today treated equally in society. However, society's deep-rooted assumptions about how men and women should think, look, and behave can lead to discriminatory behavior based on gender alone.

Many of us discriminate on the basis of gender without realizing it. Because we were raised in a sexist society, we think our behavior is natural and acceptable, and we often don't recognize discrimination when it occurs. Women may not be aware of the extent to which they do not participate equally in society, and men may not acknowledge the privilege that maleness bestows on them—signs that the distinct roles have been internalized well during the socialization process. Most parents do not directly plan to harm their sons and daughters by teaching them to conform to stereotyped roles. For example, some young women are encouraged to seek fulfilment through marriage rather than by their own achievement and independence, which may prevent them from achieving social and economic success at the same levels as men. Parents may be unaware that their sons may never learn to be compassionate and empathetic if they are taught that they must always meet the masculinity standard.

Educators have the opportunity to help students break out of group stereotypes and provide them with opportunities to explore and pursue a wide variety of options in fulfilling their potential as individuals. They can help girls and young women develop some of the traits traditionally thought of as masculine and help boys and young men become caring and compassionate.

Gender discrimination is not only practiced by individuals but also has been institutionalized in policies, laws, rules, and precedents in society. These institutional arrangements benefit one gender over the other, as described in the following sections.

Jobs

Women continue to be overrepresented in the traditional female occupations, although we are seeing more women entering jobs traditionally held by males, as shown in Table 4.1. However,

TABLE 4.1 THE PARTICIPATION RATES OF WOMEN IN SELECTED JOB ROLES

Occupation	Women's Participation (%)
Speech and language pathologist	98.4
Preschool kindergarten teacher	97.2
Dental hygienist	97.1
Hairdresser or cosmetologist	94.6
Secretary or administrative assistant	94.2
Dietitian or nutritionist	92.4
Occupational therapist	92.4
Bookkeeping, accounting, or auditing clerk	90.2
Registered nurse	90.0
Flight attendant	75.8
Dentist	29.1
Clergy	18.6
Mechanical engineer	8.8
Airline pilot or flight engineer	7.2
Firefighter	5.7
Machinist	4.5
Aircraft mechanic or service technician	3.3
Construction laborer	2.5
Electrician	2.4
Brick, block, or stone mason	0.07

Source: From Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014), Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, U. S. Department of Labor, http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm.

even though more young women are finishing high school and college than their male peers, they are still not making inroads into many traditional male jobs. The jobs in which women predominate are accompanied by neither high prestige nor high income. People in professional positions, such as teachers and nurses, do not compete in income or prestige with architects and engineers. Women continue to be overrepresented as clerical and service workers and underrepresented as managers and skilled workers.

In 2015, however, Sarah Thomas was selected as the first National Football League (NFL) full-time official. Thomas earned her reputation and her way into the coveted position through over 20 years of officiating high school and college football games. Some consider getting that job even more difficult than becoming a player in the NFL. NFL officials must pass rigorous physical and psychological examinations and must master what is considered the most difficult rule book in all of major sports. Thomas became the first woman named to such a position in the 90-plus years of the league.

It has been difficult for women to enter administrative and skilled jobs. These jobs have fewer entry-level positions than the less prestigious ones. The available jobs for many women are those with short or no promotion ladders, few opportunities for training, low wages, little stability, and poor working conditions. Clerical and sales positions are examples of such jobs, but even professions such as teaching and nursing offer little opportunity for career advancement. To earn the comfortable living that is the "American dream" often requires a woman to seek either a traditionally male occupation or a husband with a good income.

When men enter traditionally female fields, they typically do not hold the same positions as women. In 2014 men accounted for fewer than 3% of preschool and kindergarten teachers and 19.1% of public elementary and middle school teachers (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014c). Bitterman, Goldring, Gray, and Broughman (2013) indicate that in 2011–2012, 47.l6% of all principals in the United States were male, and 52.4% were female. In the primary schools, 36.2% were male, and 63.8% were female. In middle schools, 57.7% of the principalships were held by men and 42.3% by women. At the high school level, 69.9% of principals were male, and 30.1% were female.

The participation gap between men and women in a number of high-prestige professions has narrowed over the past few generations but has not been eliminated. Women are still underrepresented in mathematics, science, and technology fields. In 1950 only 6.5% of all physicians and surgeons were women; in 2014, 37.6% were women. The percentage of female lawyers has increased from 4% to 32%, but only 12.3% of electrical engineers, 16.5% of civil engineers, and 12% of astronomers and physicists are women (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014c). The number of women in some professional jobs should continue to rise because women are receiving an increasing number of degrees in these fields. In the 2013 U.S. workforce, 57% of professional occupations were held by women, including 26% of the professional computing occupations. Another encouraging statistic is the fact that 56% of AP test takers were female, including 46% female calculus and 19% female computer science test takers. In 2012, 18% of computer science undergraduate degree recipients were women (National Center for Women in Technology, 2014).

Males have been underrepresented in fields traditionally dominated by women. However, some are beginning to make inroads into those professions. Currently only 6.8% of nurses are males (Anderson, 2014). Male social workers comprise 18.1% of that workforce, 12.7% of paralegals and legal assistants, 15.2% of librarians, and 7.6% of occupational therapists (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014c).

What do these trends suggest to educators? First, schools have prepared a growing number of young women to see themselves as professionals and have helped them obtain the knowledge and skills to pursue those fields. At the same time, a limited number of young men are pursuing jobs that are traditionally female. Why are they not choosing those fields? These figures also clearly indicate that young women are either not preparing themselves for the higher-paying and prestigious jobs in engineering and computer science or are not choosing to pursue those fields after high school. What educational strategies could equalize the numbers of males and females pursuing the fields in which the respective groups currently have limited representation?

Income

Historically, men in U.S. society have usually been expected to work. In past years, many women remained in their homes as the primary care providers for their children and homemakers. In more recent years, the higher educational levels of women, the high cost of living and other factors have seen higher percentages of women in the workforce. Only 16.7% of all married women worked outside the home in 1940; by 2012, 59.4% of women were employed (Berman, 2014b).

Most of the literature, including speeches by President Obama, suggests that in 2013, women who work full time in the United States make 78% of the income men are paid. This implies that women must work 60 additional days a year (or three months) to equal the earnings of men. However, Patten (2014) estimates that based on hourly earnings and including both full- and part-time workers, the pay differential is in reality closer to 84% in favor of men. The wage gap has narrowed over the years—it was 36% in 1980—but it persists. Pew offers some explanations for the gap. Women are more likely to take career interruptions, including time off to take care of family issues such as children. Women indicate that they have taken significant time off from work or reduced their work hours to provide for their children's needs or other family matters Even though more women have entered traditionally higher-paying, male-dominated professional and managerial positions, as a group they still tend to work in lower-paying occupations. It is possible that the pay differential may also be related to discrimination, as more women (18%) report discrimination than do men (10%) (Patten, 2014).

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) (2015) found that one year after college graduation, women were making 82% of their similarly educated and experienced male counterparts. In an earlier report, AAUW had found that 10 years after graduation, the gap widened, and women were making 69% of what the men were paid (Dey & Hill, 2007). Figure 4.1 provides a comparison of male vs. female median weekly salaries in 2005 and 2015. AAUW does suggest that to some extent the gap reflects choices, and women are more likely than men to go into fields such as teaching, resulting in lower salaries. However, AAUW

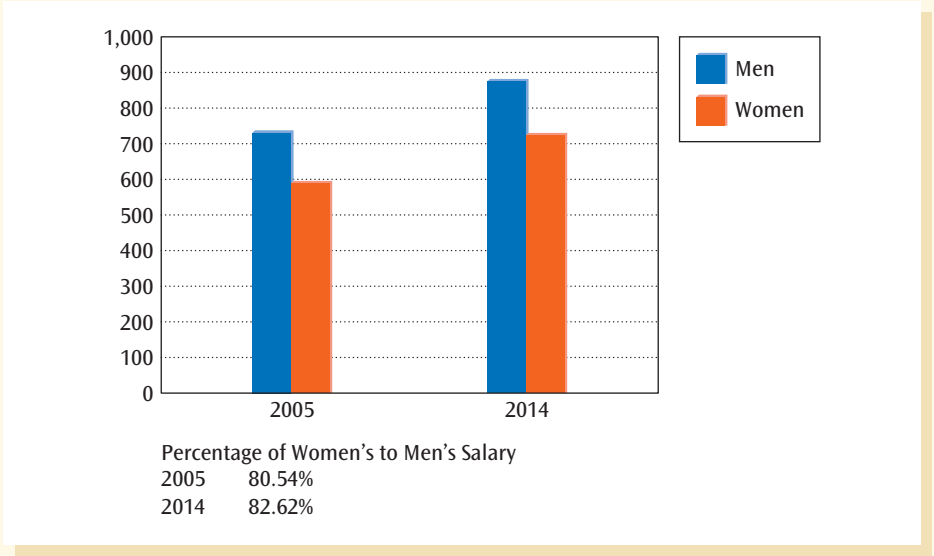


FIGURE 4.1 **Median Usual Weekly Earnings of Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers by Sex, Fourth Quarter Average in 2005 compared to 2014**

Source: From Usual Weekly Earnings of Wage and Salary Workers, U. S. Department of Labor, http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/wkyeng.pdf.

suggests that they may encounter a "motherhood penalty" that extends beyond their time out of the workforce. Research studies have documented that employers are less likely to hire mothers compared than to hire childless women. When offers are made to mothers, they also come with lower salaries than offers made to other women. Fathers, on the other hand, seem to suffer no such penalties (AAUW, 2015).

Patten and Parker (2012) did find that young women (66%) have become more likely than young men (59%) to indicate that having a high-paying career or profession is a very important aspect of their life. According to Patten and Parker, this represents a significant reversal from a 1997 study, in which equal numbers of young men and women indicated that career success was a high priority. Patten and Parker further state that middle-aged and older women were also found to be placing greater emphasis on career success than they had in 1997. They add that women continue to value both marriage and parenting, suggesting that their aspirations for their careers does not necessarily negate their value on family.

Even when accounting for nearly all of the justifications for lower salaries, including the student's major, choice of institution, occupation, grade point average, age, geographical region, and marital status, there was still a 7% differential that could not be explained (AAUW, 2015).



Watch the video "Straight Talk about the Wage Gap" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mH4lb88DMeo) for a discussion about the factors contributing to the wage gap and advice on how to maximize earning potential.

The salary differential is less for younger women than for older women. In 2013 women ages 20 to 24 working full time were making 90% of what men were making. However, by age 35, the median salaries for women were found to start lagging behind those of men. From that age until retirement, women are typically paid 75% to 80% of what men are paid. While education typically increases earnings, it is not a deterrent to the gender pay gap. AAUW (2015) found that at each level of enhanced academic achievement, the median income for men exceeded that of women. The same study found that race was also a factor in women's salaries, with both white and Asian women's salaries exceeding those of Hispanic and African American women at all levels of education.

Only when apples are compared with apples and oranges with oranges can we definitively determine that there is gender pay discrimination. One such study (St. Louis, 2015) reported that in the traditional female-dominated nursing field, male nurses made $5,100 more per year than their female colleagues in similar positions. The data were not from a small isolated study; the research team, which included experts at the Yale School of Public Health and the Vanderbilt University Medical Center, utilizes data from two surveys—on more than 290,000 nurses. Male cardiology nurses were paid more than $6,000 per year more than their female counterparts. Male nurses specializing in chronic care earned roughly $3,800 more than women who did the same work. Even more dramatic was the differential between male and female nurse anesthetists, 40% of whom were men and were paid $17,290 more a year than female nurse anesthetists. Possible reasons offered for the salary gap followed the usual possibilities previously cited. However, a professor of nursing at Hunter College and former editor of the *American Journal of Nursing* concluded that "a man is more of an expert because he is a man" (St. Louis, 2015).

Even as we are beginning to see improvements in income and job equity, Conley (2014) provided a troubling report that one-third of American women are on the verge of poverty. Almost 42 million adult women lived in situations that were 200% below the federal poverty threshold in 2012, essentially living between poverty and the middle class.

If a goal of educators is to enhance the incomes of women, then curricula that lead to the more lucrative professions could be explored by students. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines have tended to provide individuals with these academic backgrounds some of the most financially rewarding careers. However, as most educators are aware, these disciplines are not necessarily areas that all individuals find personally rewarding. Students should be helped in exploring fields that will provide them with career choices leading to satisfying lives.

Since 2005, a larger number and percentage of females have either completed or are projected to complete associate's, master's, and doctoral degrees than men. Women were projected to receive 60% of the 1,046,000 associate degrees, 57.6% of the 1,835,000 bachelor's degrees,

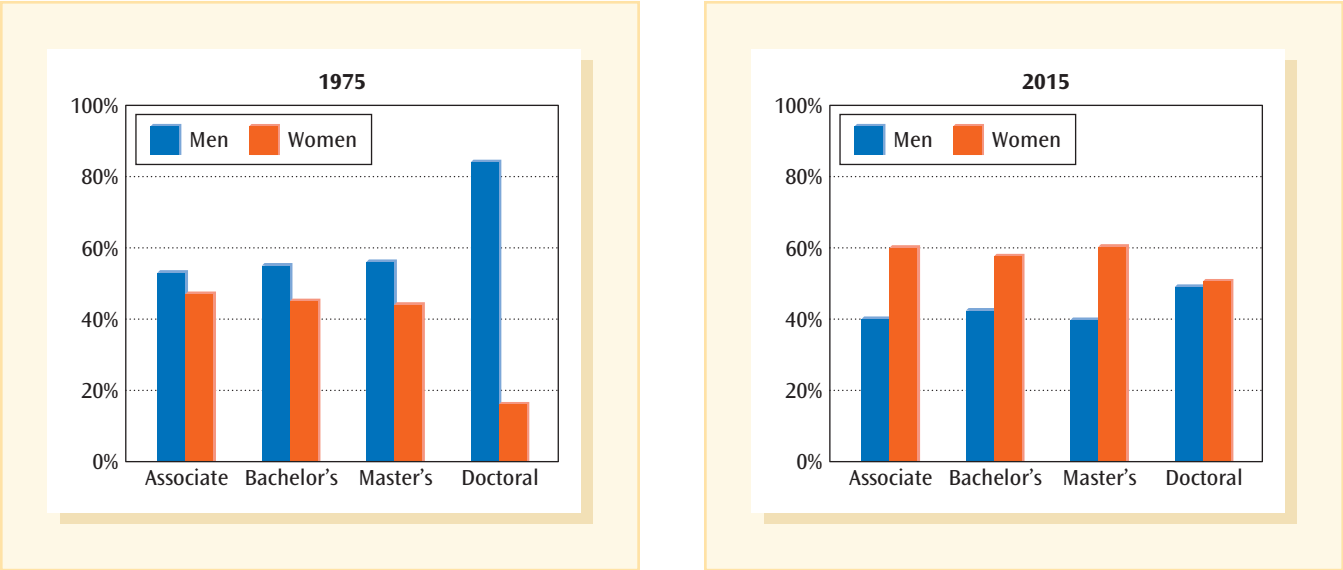


FIGURE 4.2 **Percentage of Men and Women Completing or Projected to Complete Degrees in 1975 and in 2015**

Source: National Center for Education Statistics: Degrees conferred by degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by level of degree and sex of student, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_318.10.asp.

and 50.5% of the doctoral degrees in the 2014–2015 academic year. This data is provided in Figure 4.2. As more women pursue postsecondary degrees, it remains to be seen if this will eventually translate into greater parity in the gender pay gap (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014a).

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that has long existed in the workplace, where women have been the recipients of unwanted and unwelcome sexual behavior. Sometimes the perpetuator is in a position of power over the woman and uses that power to secure favors or to make sexual advances. In other cases, it is a co-worker who makes unwanted advances. As in other areas related to gender socialization, schools mirror society in the perpetuation of sexual harassment. Both boys and girls report receiving unwanted sexual attention in schools. Bidwell (2014) indicates that researchers from the University of Illinois–Champagne Urbana studying 1400 middle school students in four Midwestern middle schools found that more than one in four students (27% of girls and 25% of boys) report unwanted verbal or physical sexual harassment on school grounds or violence.

Sexual harassment occurs in the halls and classrooms of our schools, often while other students watch. Perpetrators of sexual harassment include male and female teachers, school administrators, janitors, and coaches as well as other students. It is not only boys who harass others; girls are also guilty, but less often. The harassment can be verbal (e.g., making insulting remarks or jokes, spreading sexual rumors), visual (e.g., sharing naked pictures, making obscene gestures), or physical (e.g., pinching, fondling, or flashing). At worst, the victim is sexually abused or raped. Teachers who offer higher grades to a student for sexual favors or dates are sexual harassers. If actions by another student or adult are unwelcome by the victim and make him or her uncomfortable, scared, or confused, they constitute harassment.

Sexual harassment can be very damaging to its victims, having an impact on their emotions and subsequent behavior. They may feel self-conscious, embarrassed, afraid, and confused. It can also affect students' school performance. They may participate less in classrooms and find it difficult to pay attention. They may skip school to avoid facing the harasser (National Women's Law Center, 2007).

Elementary school boys and adolescent males are also victims of sexual harassment. They frequently challenge each other to prove their masculinity. They harass new students; haze the rookies on the basketball, football, or other sports teams; and initiate new members of a fraternity through drinking rites and sexual games that can be dangerous to their health and well-being. These young men operate on a code that denigrates females, gays, lesbians, and anybody else who they feel threatens their privileged gender role. They may do everything possible to prove their masculinity, even if that requires harassing females and each other. Those boys who do not meet these gender expectations try to avoid settings in which they may be bullied, beaten, or humiliated; these settings could include school or another place in which students congregate. While some boys do stand up to these pressures, many practice a code of silence where they watch their peers bully others without intervening or reporting incidents to a teacher or parent. As addressed in Chapter 10, young men between 16 and 24 years old suffer from the emotional stress that these actions elicit, resulting in a suicide rate that is higher than that of any other age group.

Educators and parents alike may try to explain away sexual harassment on grounds that this is typical adolescent behavior for boys and place the blame on a few bullies. Young men may be confused by accusations of sexual harassment, in part because the behavior has for too long been viewed as typical for male adolescents. Many principals and teachers either don't know that harassment is occurring in their schools or ignore it. Most students say they are not comfortable reporting incidents to teachers or other school personnel. They are most likely to tell a friend, but many, especially boys, tell no one. However, harassment and sex discrimination are social justice issues and are included under civil rights laws. Students who have

Critical Incidents in Teaching

The Boys' Code

"Assault in the Locker Room" was the headline in the newspaper, surprising most members of the Clarke High School community. Clarke High School was not an inner-city school; it was located in an affluent community. Its basketball team had been a powerhouse for the last decade. What had gone wrong?

The family of a freshman student reported to the school administration that their son had been abused in the locker room by the three star players. On one occasion, they caught him coming out of the shower, duct-taped his genitals to his body, taped him to the wall, and brought in his former girlfriend to have a look. And the abuse did not stop there. He and another rookie on the reserve team were harassed by older teammates on the bus returning from an away game the previous month. They were punched, called "faggots," and used as the objects of simulated sex. While only two of the players were the direct perpetrators of the abuse, others cheered them on.

In the investigation that followed, the basketball players denied the abuse. They said the older players were just horsing around. They didn't mean anything by it. All rookie athletes were initiated into their sports this way and had been for years. Their parents said it was just "boys being boys." They had gone through the same type of hazing when they were in high school, and they turned out all right. Why was this kid suing the school? Why was he ruining the school spirit that was at an all-time high with an outstanding basketball season?

The three star players were suspended with three games left in the season—games that, if won, probably would have guaranteed the school's best season ever. The coach was under investigation. What did he know about these initiation rites? Adults in the community were asking, "What has gone wrong in our school?" Why did other players maintain a code of silence about the abuse? Why did the ex-girlfriend not report the abuse? How can the community recover?

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. **What action should school administrators have taken when the freshman first reported the abuse?**
2. **If you were the basketball coach, what would you have done to prevent this type of abuse in the locker room and on the bus?**
3. **How would you help students have an honest discussion about this incident?**

suffered from such harassment are beginning to fight back through the courts. Educators, school staff and students need to be aware that all states have laws governing sexual assault, and with certain type of assaults (referred to as statutory rape in some jurisdictions), the penalties for offenders can be extremely severe, even if the relationships are consensual. When the younger party is under the legal age for consent and the offender over the prescribed age, penalties may result in years of imprisonment and the requirement of registering as a sex offender, sometimes for life.

School officials are no longer allowed to ignore the sexual harassment and abuse of students and may be forced to pay damage awards if they do. An educator most likely will be fired if found to be harassing a student, and the educator's actions are likely to be reported in the news media. Schools and school districts are legally required to protect students from sexual harassment by Title IX (more on that later in the chapter). Any school receiving federal financial assistance must have an anti-discrimination policy and grievance procedures that address sex discrimination, including sexual harassment.

Policies and practices within schools may need to be revised, but discussions should involve the broader community of students and parents.

Educators can assist in the elimination of harassment, bullying, and other youth violence. They can start by modeling appropriate behavior by avoiding sexual references, innuendoes, and jokes. They should monitor their own behaviors to ensure that they are not using their power as an authority figure to harass students.

Educators can also encourage students to form or join school leadership groups that work to educate others about and prevent sexual harassment. Educators can help young men feel empowered enough to resist being bystanders to sexual harassment and other bullying. The positive attributes of masculinity and femininity, such as honor, respect, integrity, ethics, and doing the right thing, should be reinforced in schools. They can help both female and male students be resilient, especially when they do not meet the stereotyped expectations of their gender.



Bringing Gender Equality to the Classroom and Beyond

Education is a key to upward mobility and financial security in adulthood. The occupational roles that individuals pursue will influence the way they are able to live in the future. Students' chances to pursue postsecondary education are greatly influenced by their education in elementary and secondary schools. By the time students are in high school, they have made their choices, or have been placed in a track that will determine their chances of going to college.

The National Assessment for Education Progress has monitored 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old students since the 1970s. In 2012, female students scored higher on average than the male students at all three levels. However, there were no significant gaps at ages 9 and 13 in math between the male and female students. At 17, however, male students scored higher than the females, although the gap was smaller than it had been in the 1970s (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2013c).

The data indicate some differences in the academic achievement of females and males that might be eliminated if educators improved male performance in literacy and female performance in mathematics and science. There is not common agreement, however, on how to accomplish this goal. Some researchers have proposed that teachers develop classroom environments that take advantage of the learning styles of boys and girls. Professional development programs on gender equity focus on changing the content of curriculum and the behavior of teachers toward students. Teachers, counselors, teacher aides, coaches, and principals all have roles in eradicating the inequities that result from sexism. Let's examine some of the approaches supporting gender equity in schools.

Title IX

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of Public Law 92-318, passed in 1972, is among the most significant legislation enacted regarding gender equity in the United States. The law states:

> No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Title IX addresses the differential, stereotypical, and discriminatory treatment of students on the basis of their gender. It protects students and employees in virtually all public school systems and postsecondary institutions in the United States. The law prevents gender discrimination in (1) the admission of students, particularly to postsecondary and vocational education institutions; (2) the treatment of students; and (3) the employment of all personnel.

Title IX makes it illegal to treat students differently or separately on the basis of gender. It requires that all programs, activities, and opportunities offered by a school district be equally available to males and females. All courses must be open to all students. For example, boys must be allowed to enroll in family and consumer science classes, and girls must be allowed in technology and agriculture courses. Regarding the counseling of students, Title IX prohibits biased course or career guidance; the use of biased achievement, ability, or interest tests; and the use of college and career materials that are biased in content, language, or illustrations. Schools cannot assist any business or individual in employing students if the request is for a student of a particular gender. There can be no discrimination in the type or amount of financial assistance or eligibility for such assistance.

Membership in clubs and other activities based on gender alone is prohibited in schools, with the exceptions of YWCA, YMCA, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Boys' State, Girls' State, Key clubs, and other voluntary and tax-exempt youth service organizations that have traditionally been limited to members of one gender who are 19 years of age or younger. Rules of behavior and punishment for violation of those rules must be the same for all students. Honors and awards may not designate the gender of the student as a criterion for the award. While the law has also been intended to provide access to schooling for pregnant and parenting teenagers, data suggest that only half of women who gave birth as teenagers get a high school diploma by age 22. It has been suggested that these young women are too often deprived of equal opportunities in part because of ignorance about Title IX's application to this group of students. As recently as 2011, a Michigan law prohibited pregnant students from getting the same at-home educational services as students unable to attend school for other medical conditions (Shah, 2012b). While it is important to remember that Title IX is more than athletics, athletics is where the most visible strides in the law have been made.

The most controversial section of Title IX concerns athletic programs. Provisions for girls to participate in intramural, club, or interscholastic sports must be included in a school's athletic program. The sports offered by a school must be coeducational, with two major exceptions: (1) when selection for teams is based on competitive skill and (2) when the activity is a contact sport. In these two situations, separate teams are permitted but are not required. Although the law does not require equal funding for girls' and boys' athletic programs, equal opportunity in athletics must be provided. The courts apply the following three-part test to determine equal opportunity:

1. The percentage of male and female athletes is substantially proportionate to the percentage of females and males in the student population.
2. The school has a history of expanding opportunities for females to participate in sports.
3. A school fully and effectively meets the interest and abilities of female students even if it may not be meeting the proportionate expectation of the first requirement.

Participation in sports tends to provide physiological and psychological benefits to participants. The United States had a limited early history of outstanding female athletes such as all-around athlete Babe Didrikson Zaharias, tennis great Althea Gibson, and figure skater



Watch the video "Title IX" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3Jqj40dybSQ) to understand the impact that this law has had.

Peggy Fleming. There were relatively few world-class female athletes prior to the 1970s in track and field, soccer, basketball, or sports such as speed skating and auto racing. Today, basketball greats such as Diana Taurasi, track stars like Jackie Joyner-Kersee, speed skater Bonnie Blair, soccer greats like Carli Lloyd, swimmer Missy Franklin, and race car driver Danica Patrick have become household names.

Title IX was initially met with resistance from some schools that had invested heavily in men's athletic programs. Some of these schools benefit financially from their athletic programs, especially from football and basketball. Sharing athletic budget resources with women's athletic teams meant considerable adjustments to the budgets and in some instances the elimination of some programs, especially those that did not generate a fan base or revenue for the schools. While women's athletics seldom bring in the same attendance as men's teams, interest in women's athletics has increased. For example, women's basketball attendance at the University of Tennessee averaged over 11,000 a game in 2014, while the Iowa State women's team averaged just under 10,000 that same year (National College Athletic Association, 2014).

When Title IX was passed in 1972, there were 3,666,917 young men and 294,015 young women participating in high school sports, a ratio of 12:1 boys to girls (Toporek, 2012). By the 2013–2014 school year, that number had increased, with 4,527,949 boys and 3,267,664 girls participating in high school sports, for a 1.38:1 boys to girls ratio (National Federation of State High School Associations, 2014).



Since the passage of Title IX in 1972, more than 3 million girls are participating in high school athletic programs, which include sports that were not previously available to girls, such as lacrosse and even wrestling. Thousands more women have participated and continue to participate in college athletics. (© Shelby Lang)

By 2012, there were 13,792 female professionals employed within intercollegiate athletics (e.g., coaches, athletic administrators, etc.). There were 9,274 women's intercollegiate teams, or 8.73 teams per school. There were 3,974 female head coaches, and 20.3% of athletic directors were female. Prior to 1972, there were 16,000 female athletes in the United States. Forty years after the signing of Title IX there were more than 200,000 female intercollegiate athletes in the United States (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012). However, the gap between female and male athletic participation may prove difficult to overcome as long as football remains in the equation. In the 2013–2014 school year, roughly 1.1 million high school boys took part in football, compared to 1,175 girls (National Federation of State High School Associations, 2014).

The law alone has not changed the basic assumptions and attitudes that people hold about appropriate female and male roles, occupations, and behaviors, but it has equalized the rights, opportunities, and treatment of students within the school setting. Experience has shown that once discriminatory practices are eliminated and discriminatory behavior is altered, even unwillingly, changes in attitudes often follow. Equal treatment of students from preschool through college will encourage all students to explore available career and life options.

Improving Academic Achievement

The achievement test scores of 9- and 13-year-olds have increased since the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) began testing in 1970, but the performance of 17-year-olds has not. The problem is that the majority of these students, female and male, are not performing at a proficient level. Students from the United States are performing in the middle of the pack or lower on international tests. In fact, students in most industrialized countries outperform U.S. students. The real gap in achievement in the United States is not between boys and girls but among white, African American, and Hispanic students.

Girls are currently participating in mathematics and science courses at about the same level as boys. In fact, girls are more likely to complete advanced academic courses in science

and mathematics than boys (Warner, 2013) but are less likely to select science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) areas as college majors and thus are less likely to have jobs in these fields, which have higher salaries than the traditional female professions. What can teachers do to increase girls' interest in the STEM fields? One strategy is to help female students develop the right hemisphere of their brains. Beginning in preschool, teachers could encourage girls to build things. At all levels, girls should be encouraged to be more physically active, including participating in organized sports. The more hands-on mathematics and science work can be, the more interested both girls and boys will be in the subjects (Eliot, 2012).

While girls may be less accomplished in math and sciences, boys trail girls in reading and language arts tests. To help balance the playing field, teachers should develop strategies for engaging boys in reading and language arts. Boys may need a greater focus on phonics than girls (Eliot, 2012). Selecting books that will hold the interest of the boys is important, as shown in the scenario that began this chapter. In addition to finding books to hold the interest of boys, teachers may want to divide students into different reading or work groups. There may be other art and music projects that would engage boys and girls with words that contribute to the development of their literacy skills.

Girls and boys use computers and the Internet at home and at school at about the same rate. However, there are differences in the ways they use technology. Boys play more computer games and begin playing them at an earlier age. They are also more interested in programming and designing, and they leave high school with a greater interest in computers. This interest in computers can translate into a job in one of the fastest-growing occupations with some of the highest salaries. Women are not preparing for jobs in this field at the same rate as men; currently only about 25.6% of the computer/mathematical occupations are held by women (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014c). Obviously, neither males nor females should be channeled into occupations simply because they are more lucrative. However, the challenges for educators are increasing the interest of girls in technology and the sciences and enabling them to see that they too have options in those fields.

Different approaches to schooling and teaching may increase the participation rates of females. Both male and female students today use technology in different ways than most of their teachers. They are constantly engaged with social networking. Their cell phones keep them connected 24/7. Most actively use technology to learn. The challenges for teachers are encouraging their students to use these tools to continue learning and opening the world of knowledge to them.

Nonsexist Education

Nonsexist education is designed to ensure that the two sexes are treated fairly and equitably in the curriculum, their interactions with teachers, and instructional and extracurricular activities. To promote nonsexist classrooms, teachers require readings that include women authors as well as male authors. Males and females should appear on bulletin boards and in teacher-prepared materials in nonstereotypical jobs and roles. Male students need to participate in stereotypically female activities and vice versa.

Portrayal in the Curriculum. All students should be exposed to the contributions of women as well as men throughout history. History courses that focus primarily on wars and political power tend to focus more on men; history courses that focus on the family and the arts more equitably include both genders. Science courses that discuss all of the great scientists often neglect to discuss the societal limitations that prevented women from being scientists. Women scientists and writers of the past often used male names or were even required to turn their work over to male supervisors who either published the work under their names or assumed lead authorship. Because teachers control the information and concepts taught to students, it is their responsibility to present a view of the world that includes women and men and their wide ranges of perspectives.

Students are bombarded by subtle influences in schools that reinforce the notion that boys are more important than girls. This unplanned, unofficial learning—the hidden curriculum—has an impact on how students feel about themselves and others. The curriculum is infused with traditional male norms (Dowd, 2010). Sexism is often projected in the messages that children receive in the illustrations, language, and content of texts, films, and instructional materials. Boys are stereotypically portrayed as more active, smarter, more aggressive, and exerting more control over their lives than girls, while girls are assigned more passive characteristics that may not serve them well in the future. Boys who are expected to behave in stereotypically masculine ways also suffer.

Incorporating Student Voices. One of the goals of nonsexist education is to allow girls and young women to be heard and to understand the legitimacy of their experiences. Girls are often silenced as they enter adolescence and take on their more feminine roles, being less assertive and letting boys control discussions in the classroom. Young men are not often encouraged to break out of the expected masculine role, with its own rules of what is required to be a man. They may become depressed and have lower self-esteem as they try to conform to the rules (Cleveland, 2011).

Young men should have opportunities to explore their role in our inequitable society and learn to speak for the equity of girls and women. Teachers will not find it easy to provide such opportunities. Many students resist discussions of power relations and how they stand to benefit or lose within those relations. However, the value to students and society is worth the discomfort that such discussion may cause students—and perhaps teachers. The classroom may be the only place in which students can confront these issues and be helped to make sense of them.

Interacting with Students. An area over which all educators have control is their own interactions with students. Researchers consistently find that educators treat boys and girls differently in the classroom, on the athletic field, in the hall, and in the counseling office (Sadker et al., 2009). While teachers may not think they respond differently to boys and girls, when they critically examine their interactions, most find that they do, in fact, respond differently based on a student's gender. To overcome the common problem of letting boys respond more often to questions, teachers should focus on making sure they give equal voice to female students in the classroom. Also, teachers should pay attention to the type of feedback they provide to female and male students, including how much time they take to provide oral feedback and encouragement to female versus male students.

One of the goals of nonsexist education is to eliminate power relationships based on gender in the classroom. Teachers can monitor the tasks and activities in which students participate in the classroom. Males often receive more attention because of their misbehavior than for their academic performance (Sadker et al., 2009). Female and male students should share the leadership in classroom activities and discussions. Girls and young women may need to be encouraged to participate actively in hands-on activities, and boys may need encouragement in reading and writing activities.

Learning Together. If left alone, many girls and boys choose to sit with and participate in group activities with members of the same sex (Orenstein, 2011). To ensure that boys and girls work together in the classroom, a teacher may have to assign seats and groups. Small, heterogeneous, cooperative work groups reduce the emphasis on power relationships that characterize competitive activities. These activities can be designed to provide all students, even those who are often marginalized in the classroom, opportunities to participate at a more equitable level.

Nonsexist education does not ignore gender in the classroom. It does not require that boys and girls be treated the same in all cases. Gender may need to be emphasized at times to ensure equity. Instructional strategies should be varied to engage both girls and boys with the subject matter, as discussed earlier. Girls may be more comfortable than boys with cooperative group work, reading, listening, and seat work. Engaging more boys in the subject matter may require the use of spatial and graphic aids such as manipulatives in mathematics. A wide repertoire of instructional strategies should include some that are more engaging to girls, some to

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate / Separate Education for Boys and Girls

Editorials in the community in which your school is located are calling for the school district to create an all-boys middle school and high school that will provide parents an alternative to the coeducational schools that exist across the city. The editorial writers argue that too many young men in the city are not graduating from high school in four years and are not attending college at the rates they should. They say local employers report that many of the high school graduates are not prepared for the jobs that are available. They think that an all-boys school can more effectively develop the self-esteem and the academic and vocational skills of the young men who are currently not being served well by the schools.

The leaders of your local neighborhood organization have asked you to discuss the educational advantages and disadvantages of schools that are segregated by sex. They also want you to make a recommendation on where they should stand on the issue as the school district develops a proposal for these schools.

FOR

- ☐ The classroom can address the needs and learning styles of boys, which are very different from those of girls, without doing a disservice to the girls in the classroom.
- ☐ The instruction in a segregated setting can focus on fulfilling boys' academic potential because girls will not be there to distract them from the subject matter.
- ☐ Because the teachers in the all-boys school will be primarily male, these young men will have positive role models who can more effectively prepare them for manhood.
- ☐ The single-sex environment will encourage young men to more openly discuss issues that are critical to their social and academic development.

AGAINST

- ☐ Research shows little or no difference in the achievement of boys or their attitudes toward the subject when they are in boys-only instead of coeducational courses.
- ☐ Single-sex courses reinforce gender stereotypes.
- ☐ This approach lets the teachers in coeducational schools off the hook when the school system should be helping all teachers provide an equitable education for boys and girls.
- ☐ When the boys go to college or enter the workforce, they most likely will be with both men and women. A school with boys only does not mirror the real world.

QUESTIONS

1. What reasons for establishing a boys-only middle school and high school are the most compelling to you?
2. Even though the research on single-sex schools generally does not show significant improvement in the achievement of boys or girls, are there other reasons that the approach may be viable? Why or why not?
3. What will be your recommendation to your neighborhood organization? Why?

boys, and some to both groups. Girls and boys will learn to operate in one another's cultural spheres, and the teacher can avoid the disengagement of one group that typically results with the use only instructional strategies that are geared to the other group.

Single-Sex Education

Single-sex schools focus on developing the confidence, academic achievement, and leadership skills of young women or men by focusing on their unique learning styles and cultural experiences. Although most single-sex schools are for females, some private schools are for boys only. Schools in some urban areas have been established for young African American men. These schools often make African American culture the center of the curriculum, with the goal of developing self-esteem, academic achievement, and leadership in students who often confront a hostile environment.

Early in U.S. history, education for girls and boys was segregated, but by 1850 public schools had quietly become coed (Tyack, 2003). Since then, most single-sex schools and colleges have been private. Over time, the courts have required public men's colleges to open their doors to women. One of the most recent examples was the Virginia Military Institute, which admitted women for the first time in 1997. Public schools have also not been allowed to segregate schools or classes by sex. However, when the No Child Left Behind Act was passed by Congress in 2001, public schools were allowed greater flexibility in experimenting with single-sex education to improve the achievement of both girls and boys. A number of public schools and academies have now been established. A more common and expedient way to offer single-sex environments is to establish segregated courses within a coeducational school. According to Rivers (2012), there were 2 single-sex public schools in the mid-1990s. By 2012, there were more than 500 public schools in 40 states offering single sex classes.

Some research shows that girls are more likely to participate in advanced mathematics and science courses when they are in single-sex classes. Girls in single-sex schools report being more valued and supported (Sadker et al., 2009). Teachers are more likely to use strategies such as cooperative teaching. However, little is known about whether the instruction in single-sex courses and schools differs from that in coeducational settings. Reviews of the research show that students in single-sex settings do have generally higher self-esteem than their peers in coeducational settings. However, little or no difference in achievement and attitudes about the academic subject has been found (Sadker et al., 2009). Park, Behrman, and Choi (2011) report that in Korean STEM career schools, significant causal effect was found in all-boys schools but not in the all-girls schools. Aedin, O'Neill, and Sweetman (2012) found that in Irish schools, boys performed better than the girls, regardless of the school type, although the gap was more pronounced for the boys in single-sex schools. Little difference was found among the girls in either the single-sex or coeducational schools.

Opponents to single-sex classes and schools argue that they are more likely to reinforce traditional, stereotypic gender roles. Sparks (2012) indicates that researchers are finding that more-equitable classrooms can have social and academic benefits for boys and girls alike. Eliot (2012) adds that while children of both sexes play together as toddlers, by the end of kindergarten, they spend only 9% of their playtime with children of the other sex. Eliot further suggests that while separation is a fact of human childhood, this separation creates separate cultures. Sparks also reports on a federal longitudinal study involving 21,000 students in an early childhood kindergarten cohort study. As the percentage of girls in kindergarten and first grade increased, the reading and math achievement of both boys and girls increased by the end of first grade. Boys and girls in classes near sex parity had better self-control than those of either sex in which they were the dominant majority.

Halpern et al. (2011) strongly suggest that there was no well-designed research available to support the contention that single-sex segregation either increases gender stereotyping or legitimizes institutional sexism.

Gender Equity: A Universal Issue

In 1995, the UN Fourth World Conference on women met with leaders from 189 countries, along with civil society organizations, to declare that women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights. (Clinton Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2015). Twenty years later in 2015, these foundations jointly released their "No Ceilings: The Full Participation Report." The report indicates that much progress has been made in the past 20 years. However, much more can and must be done to enhance gender equity, which in turn will enhance the lives of both men and women worldwide. The following are just a few of the highlights of the report.

While much progress has been made for women's rights in much of the world, even when the laws are present, implementation and enforcement are often lacking. Progress is far from

universal. An example in the report states that a girl in Latin America has a far greater chance of finishing secondary school than a girl in sub-Saharan Africa. We in the United States often pride ourselves on our women's rights, but we pale in comparison to many European countries in terms of issues such as paid maternity leave.

Gender equality isn't limited to the betterment of women and girls. When women and girls are educated, entire families prosper. Communities, economies, and society in general all benefit. One extra year of education can increase an individual's wages by 10%, and women obtaining secondary education can enhance economic growth for their communities. Women who are better educated have less likelihood of dying during pregnancy and childbirth. The significant reduction in child mortality rates since the 1970s is attributed to the increased educational attainment of women together with the increased access to quality health services and information, as well as family planning.

The report strongly suggests that when women participate in the economy, poverty decreases, and gross domestic product (GDP) grows. Estimates suggest that closing the gap in the women's labor market can result in significant GDP gains—on the order of 10% in the United States, nearly 20% in Japan and Korea, and 22% in Italy in the next 15 years. In addition, a study of 31 countries indicated that higher female participation in legislatures correlated with higher perceptions of government legitimacy among both men and women and higher corporate profits for organizations with women on boards.

Perhaps one of the most significant findings in the report was that when women participate in peace processes, they are more likely to raise key issues related to long-term peace and security, such as human rights, justice, and health care.

While the report describes significant encouraging improvements that have occurred over the past 20 years, much is yet to be done. Family and civic life, health, and education must continue to improve. Progress, however, has been uneven, and there are wide disparities both among and within countries. The legal rights gained in gender equity are too often unenforced. Some countries still allow customary or religious law to supersede some or all constitutional provisions that guarantee women's rights, and there are still 32 constitutions that do not explicitly guarantee women's equity. Some countries continue to restrict women's freedom of movement. In 61 countries, nearly half the men and even some women believe that women should not be able to initiate divorce.

The health of women and girls has improved in the past 20 years. Women are living longer and in low-income countries have made significant improvements, with a 14% increase. Clean drinking water and sanitation have improved dramatically in the past 20 years. However, 2.5 billion individuals do not have access to toilets and continue to defecate outdoors. Millions of hours are spent daily by men, women, and children collecting drinking water, often reducing both study and school time for children.

Better nutrition and improved immunization have significantly reduced the mortality rates of children; these rates have fallen by about half in both South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. The mortality rates of pregnant women have dropped by at least 40% in 76 countries and by 60% in South Asia in the past 20 years. Increased use of health services and enhancements in these services are credited in part with these advances. In spite of all these advancements, though, the work to enhance the lives of women and girls has just begun. In 2013, 10 countries were responsible for 60% of maternal deaths, including China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

While the gender gap in primary education has come nearer to closing globally in the past 20 years, the gap remains among the girls from the poorest homes. In secondary schools the education gap has also improved, but in some regions, some girls continue to be disenfranchised with respect to a secondary education. Fewer than half the girls in South Asia and fewer than 1 in 3 girls in sub-Saharan Africa are enrolled in secondary schools.

It is encouraging to note how much progress has been made since 1995, but it is clear that there remains much more work to be done to bring equity for women and girls worldwide. Gender equity is everyone's issue. When the lives of women and girls improve worldwide, everyone benefits.

SUMMARY

Male and Female Differences

The most obvious difference between males and females is the physical difference. Sexual difference is noticeable immediately at birth, but the two sexes have skeletal and hormonal differences as well.

Society has different expectations for boys and girls. Expectations for boys are more aggressiveness and for girls supportive and empathetic personality development. The two genders form distinctively different cultural groups.

Gender Identity

Gender differences are determined through socialization, relating to the masculinity or the femininity of the individual. The socialization process begins at birth and is reinforced in both the home and in schools, with girls taught to be more nurturing and empathetic. Women are usually allowed more latitude, while some people advocate a guys' code of always being aggressive, tough, and daring.

One's gender identity relates to one's internal sense of being male or female. One's sex is determined by physical and biological attributes, while gender refers to the socially constructed roles and attributes society assigns as appropriate for each gender. Deviation from the norms can have severe social consequences.

Struggles for Gender Equity

The struggles for gender equity came neither easily nor quietly. Throughout history and even in many parts of the world today, women have been subordinate to men, and those in power usually try to maintain the status quo.

It was not until the 1960s that women's groups began to work in unison and were given support by some men, much of it following the civil rights struggles for racial equality. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the 1964 Civil Rights Bill were major stepping stones. By the 1990s the National Organization for Women (NOW) was able to appeal to a broader group united in the struggle for equity for all groups, including men, women, gays, and lesbians. A handful of women are now heading Fortune 500 companies, and there are increased numbers of women in the U.S. Senate, in the House of Representatives, on the Supreme Court, and in governorships.

As progress was made for women and girls, some raised an alarm about a "boy's crisis," suggesting that feminism has come at a great cost to boys in schools, who are lagging in advance placement classes and in college and graduate school admissions.

The Cost of Sexism and Gender Discrimination

Sexism is the belief in male superiority over women, whether in the home or in society. Despite laws prohibiting certain forms of discrimination, many continue to discriminate on the basis of deeply ingrained discriminatory practices, sometimes without even realizing it. Some young women are still encouraged to seek fulfillment through marriage rather than through their own accomplishments, while some boys are never taught to be compassionate and empathetic.

More females than males are taking advance placement classes; more women are completing associate, undergraduate, and graduate degrees than men. However, while more females are seeking degrees in math and technology than in past years, their enrollments are still not on par with their male counterparts.

Sexual harassment affects both sexes and continues to be a problem in both schools and the workplace. Sexual harassment is a clear violation of the law and must be reported and stopped. The consequences for the victims are often severe. Penalties for sexual violations, even those that are consensual, can be extremely severe for violators.

Bringing Gender Equality to the Classroom and Beyond

Title IX, passed into law in 1972, is among the most significant legislation enacted providing gender equity in the United States. It prohibits differential, stereotypical, and discriminatory treatment of students on the basis of their gender. Perhaps the most visible and controversial section of Title IX involves athletics. There were well over 3.6 million boys participating in high school athletics and fewer than 300,000 girls prior to Title IX. Today, there are 4.5 million boys and 3.2 million girls in high school athletics programs.

Nonsexist education is designed to treat both sexes fairly and equitably in the curriculum, in interactions with teachers, and in instructional and extracurricular activities. To ensure this, required readings and instruction should be devoid of sexual bias, and history lessons should include the contributions of both men and women. Female and male students should share leadership in classroom activities and discussions.

Single-sex education has taken place in the United States and elsewhere for centuries. The results of studies on the efficacy of single-sex classes are inconclusive.

In 1995, the UN Fourth World Conference on women met with leaders from 189 countries along with civil society organizations to declare that "Women's rights are human rights" (Clinton Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2015). While the progress of women's rights has been impressive, the work is far from being completed. Gender equity benefits everyone—every woman, girl, boy, and man, as well as families and nations. It is incumbent on educators to help the world's population realize that gender equity is a universal issue and can benefit all of humankind.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts.



5 Sexual Orientation

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- **5.1** Describe the diversity of sexual orientation and stages through which people move to clarify their sexual identity.
- **5.2** Identify the discrimination historically faced by lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders, and queers (LGBTQ) and the struggles they have made for equality in the United States.
- **5.3** Analyze the toll that heterosexism takes on LGBTQ youth and educators.
- **5.4** Design strategies that value the sexual diversity among students and support LGBTQ students in classrooms and schools.

From the first day she entered middle school, Destin was called names and taunted by her classmates. She wore baggy pants, polo shirts, and a baseball cap. Destin was a lesbian, but her teachers saw her as a transsexual or in between the two sexes. They referred to her as "he" even though she continually told them she was a girl.

Both teachers and her peers called her "it," "queer," and "he-she." Some of her classmates called her a "dyke." She was not allowed to use the girl's restroom.

When Destin's father asked the principal to stop the harassment of his daughter, he was told that "if she's going to dress like a boy, she's going to be treated like a boy." The harassment continued, and she attempted suicide two months later. The torment eventually led Destin to withdraw from the middle school. She is now being home schooled by her grandmother (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2013).

REFLECTIONS

1. How should teachers in the school have handled the fact that Destin did not conform to the gender-specific dress and behavior expected by the principal and community?
2. If students begin calling students names and harassing them, how should you respond?
3. If you were a teacher in this school, how would you ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students are treated respectfully and fully integrated into your classroom?



Sexual Identity

The fact that the population is not solely **heterosexual** is much more obvious today than at any time in the past. The visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (**LGBTQ**) individuals as a group is higher than ever, and issues of the LGBTQ community are now common in the news. When Indiana and Arkansas passed legislation in 2015 on religious freedom that would allow businesses to deny services to same-sex couples, chief executive officers (CEOs) of major corporations threatened boycotts of the states, forcing the states to revise the language of the laws. In the same year the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry no matter where they live in the United States.

The U.S. population has become much more accepting of LGBTQ people than it was in the past. For example, in 2003, a gay Episcopal priest was selected bishop of New Hampshire, and this decision led to a division in the church. In 2011 the military eliminated its "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, allowing personnel to be openly gay, lesbian, or bisexual. However, LGBTQ people continue to be harassed in schools and on the streets. They are imprisoned in Uganda for their homosexuality and are not accepted across most of Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Days of silence, gay–straight alliances (GSAs) in schools, and court cases against school districts for not protecting LGBTQ students from harassment have highlighted the plight of LGBTQ students in the nation's schools. Although the population is more accepting of diverse **sexual identity**, local communities, religious communities, and state and national policymakers continue to debate sexual diversity and the rights of LGBTQ people.

Knowledge about **sexual orientation** other than heterosexuality is generally limited, leading to misconceptions and myths about LGBTQ people. What is sexual orientation? The American Psychological Association (APA) (2008) defines it as an "enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions to men, women, or both sexes" (p. 1). The APA further indicates that different sexual orientations are normal forms of human bonding.

After personal interviews about the sexual behavior of more than 11,000 white adults in the 1940s and 1950s, zoologist Alfred Kinsey reported that 10% of the male population and 2% to 6% of the female population were predominantly **homosexual** (Kinsey Institute, n.d.). The figure of 10% continues to be commonly used to designate the percentage of gays and lesbians in the population. However, recent data indicate that 3.5% of the population identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (Keen, 2011).

Sexual Differences

Most people do not think about their sexuality except in terms of the opposite sex and the stages their families expect them to progress through—dating, getting married, and having children. For most young people, no other options for their sexuality exist. They have not chosen to be heterosexual, and they have always been attracted to the opposite sex. They may not know people with a different sexual orientation than their own and have little or no knowledge about other sexual orientations. Heterosexuality has been the norm, with any other sexual orientation being identified as abnormal or even deviant.

The term *homosexuality* was first used by Karl-Maria Kertbeny, a Hungarian social reformer in 1868 (Bronski, Pellegrini, & Amico, 2013) and had become accepted in the professional literature by 1880. Over the next 100 years, the terms *homosexual* and *heterosexual* became identified with the sex of two persons who were sexually attracted to each other. Many people viewed homosexuality as a sin, a moral failure, a sickness, or a crime. Until 1973 the American Psychiatric Association classified it as a mental illness.

Why are some people gay, lesbian, or bisexual (LGB)? Many people believe that biology has something to do with sexual orientation, and it may well play an important role. In pursuit of scientific proof for a biological explanation, researchers have explored genes, the brain, hormones, and prenatal chemistry to explain why some people are LGB. In the July 1993 issue

of *Science*, molecular biologist Dean Hamer reported finding a DNA marker (Xq28) on the X chromosome of women. Hamer connected that marker to male sexual orientation, but his research has not been replicated, calling into question the existence of a "gay gene." Hormonal differences, especially concerning the role of testosterone, have been investigated, but the great majority of LGBs have hormonal levels that match the heterosexual population. Some researchers believe that the hypothalamus—a small mass of cells at the base of the brain—has something to do with it. Others have found evidence that there is a higher incidence of homosexuality in some families than the general population, suggesting that it is hereditary. Environmental influences such as child rearing have also been proposed as a contributing factor to one's sexual orientation, but research has not confirmed this theory (Bronski et al., 2013; LeVay, 2011).

One perspective within the LGB community is that the reason one is gay or straight should not make a difference. Sexuality and our identity along a sexual orientation continuum from exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual are much more complex than the political debates and scientific studies suggest. A biological explanation could undermine social justice initiatives, such as equity and the right to be gay without being abused, which are important in the community. Identifying a genetic link could have negative impacts on the LGB community if, for example, insurance companies refused to cover people with that gene because they may have a greater chance of having AIDS. Issues of social justice are important in the daily lives of LGBTQ people and their families.

Diversity of Sexual Orientations

Terms to describe sexual identity differ depending on the context and individual. Heterosexual, straight, homosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer are terms commonly used today. However, some youth don't like any of the current labels for describing their own sexuality; instead, they are developing their own terms to describe themselves. Educators should know the terms in current use, but they should not themselves apply labels to students. Students and colleagues must have the freedom to determine their own sexual identities, using the terms that have the most meaning for themselves.

The majority of the population is heterosexual, sometimes referred to as straight, which is defined as being sexually attracted to members of the opposite sex. Persons who are sexually attracted to members of the same sex have been labeled as homosexuals. Today that term has largely been replaced with lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Although **gay** refers to men who are sexually attracted to other men, it is also used as a general term that applies to all LGB persons, and it is sometimes used in this textbook for that purpose. **Lesbian** refers to women who are sexually attracted to other women, and **bisexual** refers to people who are sexually attracted to both men and women.

Sexual orientation includes not only the gender to whom one is sexually attracted but also gender diversity such as transgender or intersex. **Cisgender** refers to a person who identifies with the gender he or she was assigned at birth. **Transgender** persons have a psychological sense of being of the gender (male or female) that does not match their genetic sex (for example, a biological woman identifying herself as a man or vice versa). Transgender youth and adults may choose to live their lives as the male or female with which they psychologically identify rather than the sex with which they were born. Over the past few years the public has been introduced to transgender celebrities. Laverne Cox, the transgender actress who plays Sophia Burset on the popular Netflix series *Orange is the New Black*, appeared on a 2014 cover of *Time* in the cover story "The Transgender Tipping Point." Nearly 17 million viewers watched Diane Sawyer's 2015 interview of former Olympic athlete and reality star Bruce Jenner when he revealed that "for all intents and purposes, I am a woman."

The broad category of transgender also includes **transvestites**, or cross-dressers, and **transsexuals**, who surgically change their genitals and alter other characteristics to match their gender identity. Transgenders are included in LGBTQ because many of the issues and obstacles that they face in society are similar to those encountered by gays, lesbians, and bisexuals (Savage & Harley, 2009). Researchers indicate that about 0.5% of the population is transgender.



Watch the video "Exclusive: A Transgender Child Fights to be Recognized as a Girl" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTRw2QiOfOM), in which the girl and her parents discuss with Katie Couric when they knew their son was a girl.

Intersex individuals were born with an atypical anatomy that does not clearly identify their sex (Newton, 2014). For example, they may have one testis and one ovary, or testes and some female genitalia, or ovaries and male genitals. In the past, medical doctors and parents sometimes determined what the sex of an intersex child would be and resorted to surgery to make the genitals conform to that decision. In some notable cases, the gender identity of these children later in life did not match the sex that had been chosen for them.

The Q in **LGBTIQ** stands for *questioning* or **queer**. The questioning category includes individuals who are wondering about their sexuality, who are not sure of their sexual orientation, or who are not ready to claim a label for their identity (Newton, 2014). *Queer* is a term applied by some members of the LGBTIQ community to anyone who is not heterosexual. Queerness allows fluidity across categories, is political, challenges the status quo, and rejects assimilation into mainstream society (Whitlock, 2007). Younger people view the term as more empowering than other terms that describe them, but some members of the LGBTIQ community remember *queer* as a derogatory term used against them in the past, which leads them to reject the term (Newton, 2014). Nevertheless, educators should be aware of the terms and be able to figure out the communities in which "queer" and other terms are acceptable.

Queer theory critically examines relationships, identity, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, and sexual identity. It challenges the binary categories of man/woman, masculine/feminine, and gay/straight, pushing educators and others to think about the world differently (Meyer, 2007). It includes discussions of "queering the curriculum" or "queering straight teachers" to move away from a conception of heterosexuality as the norm against which we are measured and evaluated.

The idea that sexual orientation plays out along a continuum is not new. In his famous study of sexual behavior nearly 70 years ago, Alfred Kinsey used a 7-point scale between absolute heterosexuality and absolute homosexuality to categorize his interviewees. Kinsey found that some people are bisexuals and are in the middle of the scale. Others have been attracted to or had sexual relationships with people of the same sex at some time but are not exclusively gay or lesbian. Others are exclusively heterosexual. Young people who are communicating online reject labels and are finding new ways to describe their sexual identities across a continuum (Crowley, 2010).

Self-Identity

Our sexual identity is based on sexual attractions, related behaviors, and a connection with others with the same orientation (American Psychological Association, 2008). It is about how people decide to identify themselves. Most researchers agree that sexual orientation is established early in life. As early as six years old, some boys and girls have a sense that they are sexually different from their peers. With the onset of puberty, they are likely to be attracted to a peer of the same or different sex. Young people are identifying themselves as LGBTQ as early as middle school.

Similar to racial and ethnic groups, **LGBT** individuals appear to move through stages of development as they become comfortable with their sexual identity. Because heterosexuals are in the privileged sexual identification category in our society, they may not identify their sexuality unless they become aware of their privilege or become an LGBT ally. The first step for LGBT students is to realize that they are sexually attracted to same-sex individuals, which distinguishes them from most of their peers. Their feelings may confuse them and lead them to question the reality of their developing sexual identity.

The next stage often includes exploration and experimentation as they determine whether they are LGBT, which could include testing relationships with those of the opposite sex. Eventually they begin to identify themselves with a label or decide that none of the current labels describe them. When they feel comfortable with their sexual identity and are willing to face the possible discrimination and alienation that can accompany their disclosure as LGBT, they come out to others. The last stage of the process is to develop pride in their sexual identity (Joyce, O'Neil, & McWhirter, 2010). New research suggests that identity develops along different trajectories rather than in these distinct stages, depending on the individual, his or her contexts, and the support he or she elicits from family members, peers, and members of the broader LGBTQ community (Joyce et al., 2010).

During the stages of struggling with their identity, some LGBTQ people may feel depressed, isolated, and not valued. The messages that they receive from others may indicate that they are abnormal and are making choices that will not serve them well in the future. They are not likely to know that multiple sexual orientations have been characterized by psychologists as "normal forms of human experience" (American Psychological Association, 2008, p. 3). Though many LGBTQ students are happy, well adjusted, and liked by others, some students who are LGBTQ, or are perceived to be, are harassed by other students in schools. These pressures to be different from who they are contribute to LGBTQ students missing school, underperforming academically in school, dropping out of school, and attempting suicide at a higher rate than heterosexual students (Kosciw, Greytak, Palmer, & Boesen, 2014).

The classroom teacher is likely to find students falling at different points along the gender and sexual identity continuum, both in their beliefs about female and male roles and in their actual behavior. Lesbian and gay adolescents are struggling with their sexual identity and its meaning in a heterosexist climate. Heterosexual students also struggle with issues about their sexuality and how to express it appropriately, often receiving mixed messages from their parents, their peers, and the media. Understanding the influence of students' cultural memberships will be important as teachers try to open up the possibilities for all of them, regardless of their gender and sexual identity. Having teachers who are supportive of LGBTQ students and who intervene on their behalf contributes greatly to successful school experiences for these children and youth.

Some religious groups have identified homosexuality as a sin or disease that can be eliminated or cured. They believe that people choose their sexual orientation. Antigay activists and parents may push youth and adults into programs designed to make them "normal" by denouncing their LGBTQ identity and choosing to be heterosexual. Organizations such as the American Psychological Association (1997) and American Psychiatric Association (2000) report that such reparative or conversion therapy reinforces negative stereotypes about gays and lesbians and contributes to an unsafe climate for them. In 2015 President Barak Obama also called for a ban on therapies to return LGBT youth to heterosexuality (Shear, 2015).

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Same-Sex Parents

Maureen Flynn is a third-grade teacher in a suburban public school. Each year, she looks forward to Parents' Night, when she can meet the parents of her students. As she inspects her room one final time, the door opens, and two nicely dressed women appear. "Good evening," they say, almost in unison.

"Good evening. Welcome to the third grade. I'm Maureen Flynn."

"We're Amy Gentry and Kirsten Bowers. We're Allison Gentry-Bowers's mothers."

"Oh," says Ms. Flynn, trying not to show any surprise. "Let me show you some of Allison's artwork and where her desk is."

The rest of the evening is routine. Ms. Flynn introduces herself, welcomes the parents, and asks them to introduce themselves. As the parents exchange names and greetings, there are a few questioning looks as Allison's two mothers introduce themselves. Ms. Flynn explains what the class is currently doing and what the goals and activities are for the remainder of the year. The parents and Ms. Flynn exchange pleasantries and then all go home.

The next morning as class begins, Colleen Burke blurts out, "Miss Flynn, my mommy said that Allison has two mommies. How can that be? How can anyone have two mommies? Everyone is supposed to have a father and a mother." All of the students look to Ms. Flynn for her response.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. **How should Maureen Flynn respond to Colleen's question?**
2. **How could Ms. Flynn use this opportunity to discuss diverse family structures?**
3. **How should she plan to interact with Allison's and Colleen's parents in the future?**



Coming out is much easier for students when they have the support of family members and other students. (© Custom Life Science Images/Alamy)

Most LGBTQ youth and adults are very resilient and have established happy and fulfilling lives. In a survey of 553 gays and lesbians, only 1% of the respondents indicated that there was nothing positive about their sexual orientation. Coming out, which requires disclosing one's sexual identity to others, was identified as a critical step in developing a positive identity. Three in five participants in this survey reported that their families had been supportive as they clarified their sexual identity. Having a supportive gay and lesbian community in which they can participate was seen as a positive aspect of being gay or lesbian.

Coming out often requires a great deal of personal insight and reflection as individuals struggle with who they are and develop the courage to share their identity with others. Some gays and lesbians find that going through this process has strengthened them, made them more empathetic to other oppressed groups, and increased their activism for social justice. Others reported positive outcomes of being gay and lesbian as the freedom they felt from the gender-specific roles often expected of women and men (Riggle et al., 2008). These findings demonstrate the importance of schools' creating safe places for young people to come out and realize their full human potential.

Struggles for Sexual Equity

Until World War II most gays and lesbians hid their sexual identities, often marrying someone of the opposite sex, having children, and living as heterosexuals. States had laws that criminalized homosexuality, allowing gays to be arrested in their homes as well as public places. Gays and lesbians were often not allowed to teach because parents and school leaders believed that they would have a negative impact on children and youth.

When Alfred Kinsey released his books on male sexuality in 1948 and female sexuality in 1953, it was self-affirming for many gays and lesbians as they realized they were not the only ones whose sexual orientation did not match societal expectations. Kinsey's conclusions were widely attacked. Most people had believed that few people were homosexual, and they now worried that the culture would be destroyed by them. Politicians and religious leaders became even more overt in their condemnation of those who deviated from the heterosexual model.

Fighting for Sexual Equity

Between 1927 and 1967, the state of New York banned what it called "sexual perversion" as a dramatic theme in plays. Similar bans were placed on movies. Noted writers ignored the ban, continuing to include gays and lesbians in their books and screenplays. The rock 'n' roll era that began in the 1950s with artists such as Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, and Little Richard celebrated sensuality and rebellion against society's rules, but it was predominantly within a heterosexual context. However, literature and music did become sources of expression for the youth who broke the sexual norms. The Beats were young straight and gay poets and writers who congregated at the bookstores and small galleries in San Francisco during this period. Sexual freedom and the celebration of their gayness were hallmarks of their subculture, contributing to San Francisco becoming a mecca for gays and "beatniks" during the 1950s and 1960s. One of the most famous works during this period was the poem *Howl* by Allen Ginsberg, with its references to drugs and gay sex. The poem became known to the broader public when the owner of the City Lights Bookstore, which published the poem, was charged with obscenity (Hirshman, 2012).

In the 1950s Evelyn Hooker began to question the pathological explanations for homosexuality as a result of her study of gay men. Using standard psychological research tools, she found that gay men were as well adjusted as straight men, and sometimes more so (Hirshman, 2012). Her findings set the stage for gays and their allies to fight popular psychiatric treatments that often involved electroshock therapy. Although Dr. Hooker presented her findings at a 1956 meeting of the American Psychological Association, it took nearly two decades for the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses.

The Lavender Scare. A period known as the Lavender Scare (or Pink Scare) began in the 1950s. When Congress passed the Immigration and Nationality Act (McCarran-Walter Act) in 1952, it banned homosexual immigrants from entering the country. At a time when homosexuals were thought to be more of a threat to national security than Communists, Congress worried that homosexuals could be blackmailed and forced to give up state secrets. The U.S. Senate called for a purge of homosexuals from the government, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed an executive order in 1953 to dismiss homosexuals from the government—a practice that continued into the 1970s. Within a year, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), under Director J. Edgar Hoover, had identified more than 400 federal employees to be fired. Historians have estimated that at least 5,000 employees lost their jobs (Hirshman, 2012). Lesbians and gays were also being dismissed from the military at a rate that rose to 3,000 annually in the early 1960s.

In addition to losing their jobs, gays and lesbians were arrested by the hundreds in bars, parks, and theaters, as well as at parties in their own homes. In some communities, citizens were summoned to call out their homosexual neighbors and work colleagues. Many citizens confused homosexuality with pedophilia and child molestation and feared the recruitment of others into their ranks. Homosexuals' demands for justice were ignored by most of the population. Civil rights groups did not intervene to support gays and lesbians who were losing their jobs or being harassed in other settings. To support each other and their struggles for acceptance and equity in society, gays and lesbians began organizing in San Francisco, Detroit, Philadelphia, New York, and Washington, D.C. (Eaklor, 2008). One of their goals was to eliminate the pathological diagnosis that was prevalent in the dominant culture.

Movement for Gay Rights. The 1950s marked the beginning of the civil rights revolution led by African Americans. Soon after the March on Washington on August 28, 1963, which rallied a quarter of a million people for human, civil, and economic rights, critical legislation for civil rights was passed by Congress, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Other oppressed groups, including the LGBTQ community, followed with calls for the recognition of their civil rights. The counterculture and antiwar movements increased the questioning of the norms, values, and assumptions of the dominant society. This was the era in which gays and lesbians began picketing government agencies, including the White House, the United Nations, the Pentagon, and the State Department.

On June 28, 1969, the gay rights movement gained new momentum when police raided New York City's Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village. Stonewall Inn was a refuge for gays, who were not welcome in other bars. Its patrons were mostly males and drag queens of different ages and economic levels. Police arrived around 1:00 a.m. to close the bar, purportedly because it was operating without a license, but raids on gay bars were not unusual. The bar was closed, employees arrested, and patrons pushed outside. As those arrested were placed in police wagons, the ousted patrons and the crowd that had gathered began throwing coins, bottles, and bricks at police. It soon escalated into a riot, with everything in the bar being destroyed. This initial riot lasted only a few hours, but the crowd had fought back against the police. Crowds reconvened the following night at the Stonewall Inn and on the street outside. They began shouting for "gay power" and cheering for gay liberation. It took police hours to disperse the crowd, which reassembled to battle the police for the next four nights (Eaklor, 2008). Within a few months, the radical Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was formed.

Gays had rioted earlier in Los Angeles and San Francisco against police raids, but those riots had been carefully organized by gay leaders. Stonewall Inn was different. Participants were gays who were rejected not only by society but by more conservative gays who lived as if they were heterosexual. At Stonewall the riot was spontaneous, full of emotion, and bloody. It became the symbol for the fight against the inequities faced by LGBTs. Soon afterward, the number of LGBT groups grew from 50 to more than 800.

As shown in Table 5.1, progress for gay rights and the elimination of discrimination against gays has been made since 1969, although numerous obstacles periodically forestalled significant changes. After the Stonewall riot, it became somewhat easier for gays and lesbians to openly admit their homosexuality, especially if they lived in cities. A number of gay activists turned to the establishment of organizations concerned with law and policy to attack discrimination. In 1973 the National Gay Task Force and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund were created. The National Gay Task Force was renamed the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force within a few years, with the goal of politically fighting the antigay backlash. Lambda Legal began to fight the federal government's antigay policies in the courts. It has continued to be at the center of legal cases related to AIDS, domestic partnerships, and other civil rights issues (Eaklor, 2008).

LGB politicians began to run in and win elections in the 1970s. Allan Spear was elected to the Minnesota state senate and Barney Frank to the Massachusetts House in 1972, but neither of them had come out at that time. In the following two years, Gerry Studds (D-MA) and Robert Bauman (R-MD) were elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Harvey Milk was among the first openly gay citizens to win an election when he was voted onto the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977. The first openly lesbian senator, Tammy Baldwin, was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2012. The number of elected LGBTQ legislators has increased over the past four decades at the local, state, and national levels.

A Backlash and a Disease. The 1980s saw a backlash against the feminist and LGBTQ gains achieved over the previous decade. Conservative Christians began to influence politics, calling for a return to "family values," which they believed should be built on the nuclear family and marriage between a male and a female. Feminists and gays were blamed for the destruction of the family as they fought for the equal rights of women, lesbians, and gays, which many conservatives blamed for the increasing number of divorces and immoral behaviors to which they did not want their children exposed. These differences between conservatives, feminists, and LGBT people fueled the "culture wars" in society. Activists on both sides rallied to their causes and lobbied Congress and state legislatures for change. The Human Rights Campaign Fund was established as the first political action committee (PAC) to lobby on behalf of gays and lesbians (Eaklor, 2008).

A report of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 1981 reported that young men in a number of large U.S. cities had contracted a type of pneumonia that was usually found in cancer patients. The victims in all of the reported cases were gay. As the story spread across the country, rumors and theories also spread about the disease being contagious and propagated by gays with multiple partners. It was another year before researchers determined that the condition was an infection, designated it as AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome), and reported that it was not spread by casual contact.

TABLE 5.1 MILESTONES IN THE MOVEMENT FOR GAY RIGHTS

June 28, 1969	Police raid the Stonewall Inn, which was subsequently followed by a riot in Greenwich Village, New York City.
1970	Thousands march in a New York gay parade to celebrate the anniversary of the Stonewall Inn riot.
1975	The Civil Service Commission lifts its ban on employment of homosexuals.
	Police stop raiding bars but continue to arrest gays in other areas.
1977	The Save Our Children campaign that was initiated by former Miss America Anita Bryant fights to repeal protection for gays.
1978	A California proposal, the Briggs Initiative, calls for a ban on gay teachers working in public schools. It was defeated.
1979	100,000 gay men and lesbians participate in the March on Washington to call for gay rights.
1980	The Moral Majority organizes to oppose homosexuality.
	In *Fricke v. Lynch* the judge rules that a male student at Cumberland High School in Rhode Island can take a male friend as his date to the school prom.
1981	Gay men with a mysterious illness begin appearing in emergency rooms. The disease will later be identified as AIDS, and it provides a unifying cause for the gay community through the 1980s.
1982	Wisconsin passes a gay civil rights law that was introduced by an openly gay legislator.
1984	The U.S. Congress passes the Equal Access Act, which guarantees high school students the right to establish school clubs on religion and also applies to LGBT clubs.
1986	The U.S. Supreme Court rules in *Bowers v. Hardwick* to uphold a Georgia anti-sodomy law that criminalizes gay sex.
1987	During the second Gay and Lesbian March on Washington, the AIDS quilt is spread out on the Mall.
	ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) is founded in New York City.
1989	Massachusetts passes a gay civil rights law sponsored by an open lesbian and closeted gay man.
1993	The third Gay and Lesbian March on Washington protests the military ban against gays and lesbians.
1996	In *Nabozny v. Podlesny, Davis, Blauert*, the court finds that school officials had not protected a student against harassment.
	The U.S. Supreme Court rules that states cannot prevent gays and lesbians from being a protected class in discrimination cases in *Romer v. Evans*.
1998	University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard is found beaten and tied to a fence to die.
2000	Vermont approves civil unions between gay couples and lesbian couples.
	The U.S. Supreme Court rules 5–4 in *Boy Scouts of American v. Dale* that a private organization has a right to discriminate against homosexuals.
2003	The U.S. Supreme Court ends laws against sodomy in *Lawrence v. Texas*.
2004	Massachusetts allows gay couples and lesbian couples to marry.
2008	Connecticut legalizes same-sex marriage.
	Proposition 8, banning same-sex marriage in California, passes.
2009	Congress passes the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act.
	Iowa, New Hampshire, and Vermont legalize same-sex marriage.
2010	A federal district judge in California finds Proposition 8 unconstitutional.
	Congress repeals "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," allowing lesbians and gay men to serve openly in the military.
2013	The U.S. Supreme Court dismisses the appeal on same-sex marriages in California, allowing same-sex marriage to resume in the state.
2015	The U.S. Supreme Court rules in a 5-4 decision that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry.

In 1984 scientists discovered the virus that was responsible for AIDS. Within two years the virus was labeled human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and scientists had developed a blood test to determine whether an individual is HIV positive. They learned that the virus is spread through the exchange of bodily fluids during sexual activity, needle sharing by drug users, and blood transfusions. Between 1981 and 1986, 12,000 deaths from the disease were reported (Eaklor, 2008). Even after non-gays had been diagnosed with the disease, the general public continued to identify it as a gay disease. AIDS has become a global disease that disproportionately affects women (Eaklor, 2008).

During this period, the LGBT community mobilized against AIDS and the growing **homophobia** in society (Eaklor, 2008). They engaged in raising awareness about the disease, lobbying for funds to support research about it, and raising funds to care for the growing number of people suffering from the disease. Members of one of the best-known anti-AIDS organizations, ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), became angry at the inaction of the government and other groups to find a cure for AIDS. They were known for their tactics to disrupt or shut down businesses or government offices, including Wall Street and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In San Francisco a group began a project to memorialize those who had died of AIDS by designing 3′ × 6′ panels, one for each victim, and joining them into the AIDS Memorial Quilt. When the quilt was first displayed on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., in 1987, it had 1,920 panels; by 2006 it had 45,000 panels (Eaklor, 2008).

One Step Forward and One Step Backward. Not all members of the LGBT community agreed on the tactics and direction for their activism. Lesbians often felt neglected in the work. The place of bisexuals in the movement was not clear, and transgender individuals were forming their own groups, usually based on their gender identity (e.g., male-to-female or female-to-male). Although groups and individuals within them may have disagreed on strategies, they generally agreed that they should be fighting to protect LGBT people from discrimination, counter antigay legislation, and repeal sodomy laws in the states (Eaklor, 2008). Progress was being made in the 1980s. Wisconsin passed the first bill to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation. Six states and a number of cities and communities passed similar legislation soon after (Eaklor, 2008). The FBI was required to collect data on antigay violence by the Hate Crimes Statistics Act signed by George H. W. Bush in 1990.

The culture wars continued to influence school policies into the twenty-first century. Books about lesbians and gays were removed from school libraries. In 1992 antigay activists and some parents in New York City contested a school district's adoption of the "Rainbow Curriculum," which supported diversity, including gays and lesbians. When the curriculum was finally adopted, the references to lesbians and gays had been removed (Mayo, 2014). While a number of colleges and universities eliminated ROTC programs and refused to allow recruiters from the military on campus because of their "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, others refused to allow students to establish gay and lesbian groups on campus.

The LGBT community was optimistic that the political landscape would change with the election of Bill Clinton as president. Clinton was the first president who had solicited their support in his election and indicated that he would lift the ban on homosexuality in the armed services. Faced with strong resistance to lifting the ban by military officials, Clinton compromised by establishing a "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy to allow gays and lesbians to serve in the military only if they remained closeted. The hopes of the LGBT community were crushed as their right to be open about their sexual identity was again denied.

On another front, marriage between same-sex individuals was being tested. Three same-sex couples in Hawaii sued for the right to receive marriage licenses in 1991. The couples lost their case, but the Hawaii Supreme Court found that the denial of marriage licenses to these couples was discriminatory. The state legislature responded quickly by defining marriage as taking place only between a man and woman, a decision that led to another suit. Rather than wait for the Hawaii case to be resolved, Congress passed the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in 1996 to forbid same-sex marriages. The voters of Hawaii ratified the legislature's definition of marriage in 1998. At the same time, Alaskan voters approved a constitutional amendment restricting marriage to a man and woman.

Prior to the 2004 national elections, 11 more states passed anti–gay marriage legislation (Miller, 2006). By 2006, 40 states had passed similar amendments (Johnson, 2006). As part of the 2008 national elections, California voters approved by a 52% to 48% margin Proposition 8, overturning the California Supreme Court's ruling that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. An analysis of the characteristics of the people who voted in favor of Proposition 8 found that by large margins they were Republican, were conservative, attended a religious service weekly, and were over 65 years old (Eagan & Sherrill, 2009). Proposition 8 was overturned by a Federal District Court judge in 2010 but was appealed. In 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed the appeal, allowing same-sex marriages to resume in California.

Although 41 states had defined marriage as limited to a man and woman by March 2011, other states were taking different action. In 2000 the Vermont legislature approved civil unions between gay and lesbian couples that would allow them the benefits and responsibilities of marriage without sanctioning marriage. Connecticut followed suit in 2005. The movement for gay marriage received a boost when the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court in November 2003 declared that gay and lesbian couples had a right to marriage. By 2004 gay and lesbian couples were marrying in San Francisco, Portland (Oregon), and a few other cities. However, state legislators intervened, eventually declaring those marriage licenses void. On May 17, 2004, gays and lesbians were married in Massachusetts for the first time. Congress considered an amendment to the U.S. Constitution in July 2004 to ban same-sex marriages, but the Senate failed to adopt it. Other countries, particularly in Europe, were more open to gay marriages. By the time that the Supreme Court ruled that marriage between same-sex couples was a constitutional right in 2015, 36 states and the District of Columbia had already allowed same-sex couples to marry (Pew Research Center, 2015a), and 780,000 gay and lesbian adults had been married (Gates & Newport, 2015).

Debates about civil unions and marriage between gays continue in religious arenas. As of September 2014, 60% of mainline Protestants supported same-sex marriages (Masci, 2015b). The Reform and Conservative Jewish movements, the Unitarian Universalist Association, and the United Church of Christ had allowed same-sex marriages for a number of years. Other mainline churches conduct blessings but not marriage ceremonies. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) became the latest mainline church to sanction gay marriages when its new constitution was adopted in 2015. However, the policy allows clergy to opt out of performing marriages. Other large religious institutions remain firmly against same-sex marriage, including the Roman Catholic Church, Orthodox Jewish Movement, Southern Baptist Convention, and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Masci, 2015b).

The public is becoming more accepting of gay and lesbian relationships. The Pew Research Center (2013d) found that 3 in 5 Americans now believe that homosexuality should be accepted by society. Leading up to the Supreme Court ruling, support for same-sex marriages increased from 37% in 2009 to 52% in 2014 (Masci, 2015a). Women, Hispanics, adults under 30 years of age, college graduates, Democrats, and independents were more likely to favor gay marriages than other groups (Pew Research Center, 2013d).

Continuing Challenges for Equity

Even though a growing number of gays and lesbians are open about their sexual identity, many continue to fear reprisal from employers, neighbors, or friends. In many areas of the country and in many classrooms, gays are harassed and abused if they openly acknowledge their sexual identity. A number of families, religious leaders, and teachers not only reject them but label them as immoral and deviant. Unlike one's racial identity, which can be easily identified by others, gays and lesbians can hide their identities from a hostile society. As a result, many of them suffer loneliness and alienation by not being able to acknowledge their sexuality.

A number of policy and political advances have been made over the past two decades, but these changes have in large part been limited to a few communities or states. Many employers include sexual orientation in their nondiscrimination policies. Lesbians and gays are parents to more than 4% of all adopted children (Human Rights Campaign, n.d.). Nevertheless, gays and lesbians in some states cannot adopt children, or they lose custody of their natural-born children when they enter a relationship with someone of the same sex.



LGBTQ groups and their allies periodically join together to protest discrimination, harassment, and antigay legislation and politics. (© Cal Vornberger/Alamy)

As more people come to recognize and accept gay relations and gay rights over the coming years, antigay legislation should gradually be overturned. Current LGBTQ organizations will be supported in moving their agenda forward by other civil rights and social justice organizations as those groups become more inclusive in their membership and issues.

Heterosexism's Toll on Students and Adults

Heterosexism, which is the fear of or aversion to LGBTQ youth and adults, has historically resulted in laws that prevented them from openly acknowledging their sexual orientation or gender identity. State laws have prevented them from being together, marrying, and adopting children. They have been the victims of hate crimes and the targets of bullying and discrimination from their early school days, sometimes in their own homes. The way they have been treated in society has affected their self-esteem, participation in school, academic achievement, and college attendance. A great deal of progress has been made over the past two decades to overturn heterosexist laws, but much work is left to eliminate the prejudice and discrimination that prevents LGBTQ youth from participating equally in the education process.

A Targeted Minority

In the past, heterosexuality was so highly valued that laws were written to prohibit any other sexual behavior or identity. When the Supreme Court ruled in *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003) that all sodomy laws were unconstitutional, 13 states still had them on their books (Stein, 2010). Many regions of the country do not have legislation or policies to prevent discrimination against LGBTQ persons. LGBTQ people are frequently not admitted to "straight" clubs and are vulnerable to attacks on city streets and country roads.

LGBTQ people are victimized by hate crimes in 20% of the cases reported to the FBI, second only to hate crimes against African Americans (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2014). The hope is that the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Crimes Prevention Act of 2009 will lead to the prosecution of perpetrators of crimes that target LGBTQ people, African Americans, Hispanics, Jews, Muslims, persons with disabilities, and members of other groups.

Currently, statistics on hate crimes are voluntarily reported by state and local jurisdictions, but thousands of agencies are not yet reporting data. Most hate crimes will continue to be prosecuted at the state level. At this point, only 30 states have hate crimes prevention laws that include sexual orientation, and only half of those states address hate crimes against gender identity or expression (Human Rights Campaign, 2014). Transgender women of color have been particularly vulnerable to attacks. In 2014, at least 13 transgender women were killed (Human Rights Campaign, 2015).

LGBTQ youth may experience invisibility and isolation in their homes, communities, and schools (Savage & Harley, 2009). They do not see positive images of LGBTQ people in their schools. The school and local library may not have books or other information on LGBTQ issues. They learn that they are not "normal" and are often hated by others. When LGBTQ identities are included in the school curriculum, the focus is often on negative contexts that indicate all of the problems with being LGBTQ (Savage & Harley, 2009). LGBTQ youth do not learn that LGBTQ people have contributed to the history and culture of the nation and that their predecessors have struggled for decades for equality and the elimination of antigay policies and practices.



LGBTQ students do not always conform to society's heterosexual expectations for behaviors and appearance. They are often very proud of being different and nonconforming. (© Hassan Reine/Fotolia)

Feeling positively about one's sexual identity fosters well-being and mental health (American Psychological Association, 2008). However, many LGBTQ young people and adults worry incessantly about "coming out" or being open with friends, family, and colleagues about their sexual orientation. They may worry about being thrown out of their homes, losing friends, being harassed or physically attacked, or facing discriminatory actions such as losing a job or being expelled from a club. Because urban areas are generally more tolerant of sexual diversity than rural areas, gays and lesbians are more likely to be open about their sexual identity in metropolitan areas where social outlets and support services exist. As acceptance of sexual diversity increases in society, the need to hide one's sexual identity should decrease.

The School Climate

Heterosexism can lead to harassment in schools, which is more common than most educators would like to admit. The 2013 National School Climate Survey by the Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) found that LGBT students face violence, bias, and harassment in schools (Kosciw et al., 2014). In the survey, 3 in 10 LGBT students reported that they had been pushed or shoved at school. Sixteen percent had been punched, kicked, or injured with a weapon by another student. Fifty-six percent of LGBT students felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation and 38% because of their gender expression. In addition, 1 in 3 missed school because they were uncomfortable or felt unsafe, and nearly 2 in 3 said that they avoided school functions and extracurricular activities. Verbal abuse in which students were called names or were threatened was the most common form of harassment. "That's so gay" may be one of the most used phrases in the nation's schools, but other terms, like "dyke," "faggot," "tranny," or "he/she," are also used. Over half of the students in the survey indicated that teachers and other school staff also used this language against LGBT students (Kosciw et al., 2014). One does not necessarily have to be LGBT to be harassed; students who are perceived to be gay, whether or not they are, are also targets of these attacks.

LGBTQ students are over three times as likely to think about suicide and three times as likely to attempt suicide as their heterosexual peers (Robinson & Espelage, 2012). A rash of suicides at the beginning of the 2010–11 school year brought public attention to the problem of bullying and rejection of LGBTQ students. Even with all the attention after these suicides

Watch the video "Out High School Students" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpnA0Ff3soM) to hear students talk about the bullying and harassment they have experienced and their recommendations for improving school climates.

to the damage bullying can cause, they continued in 2015. Seventeen-year-old Leelah Alcorn killed herself by stepping into traffic. She had reported being rejected by her family, who continued to call her Joshua through her funeral. The family's religious background was intolerant of what they perceived as sexual deviance. Zander Mahaffey, a 15-year-old in Georgia, blamed his suicide on his mother for not accepting her transgender identity. The mother of Ash Haffner blamed bullying for her daughter's suicide (LGBTQ Nation, 2015).

Harassment is not always face-to-face. Nearly half of the students in the GLSEN study reported being harassed or threatened by classmates through electronic means such as text messages, e-mails, and postings on the Internet (Kosciw et al., 2014). Cyberbullying has also contributed to the suicides of young people. In 2015 an 18-year-old transgender activist, Blake Brockton, committed suicide after he had become the homecoming king and hateful comments were posted on the Internet. A 22-year-old game developer, Rachel Bryk, jumped off the George Washington Bridge between New York and New Jersey after "constant transphobia" on the Internet (LGBTQ Nation, 2015).

After a number of similar suicides in 2010, syndicated columnist and author Dan Savage initiated the project "It Gets Better," in which people were encouraged to send messages of hope to LGBTQ youth. Hoping for 100 videos, the project received over 10,000 within six months, including videos from a number of celebrities in which they encourage youth to be strong and to understand that life will be better in the future.

Where are school officials when students are harassed at school? LGBT students reported that 61% of the teachers or school staff took no action when a student reported harassment or assault and often told them to ignore the incident. In 10% of the cases, the reporting student was disciplined. Most LGBT students did not report these incidents to school officials because they thought no action would be taken or that the situation would become worse. In one-third of the cases reported to officials, students reported that the action taken was effective, but most cases were ignored or not effectively handled (Kosciw et al., 2014).

Hostile climates for LGBT students affect their academic performance, college aspirations, and psychological well-being. When school officials and teachers are supportive of LGBT students, the students feel safer in school, miss fewer days of school, and are more likely to attend college (Kosciw et al., 2014). The number of supportive staff members is growing. Almost all of the LGBT students in the GLSEN study could identify one supportive staff member in their school, and nearly 2 in 3 students could identify six or more supportive staff. The study also found that LGBT students were safer in schools that had adopted policies against bias, violence, and harassment of LGBT students. One in 10 students reported that the school had a comprehensive policy that included both sexual orientation and gender identity. Victimization of LGBT students was also reduced when the school had student clubs such as gay–straight alliances to provide support for and be allies to LGBT peers. However, only half of the students reported that such a club existed in their schools (Kosciw et al., 2014).

Professional educators have the responsibility to provide a safe and inclusive environment at school by eliminating homophobia in the school climate. High school is a difficult time for many adolescents, but it is particularly stressful for gays and lesbians as they struggle with the knowledge that they are members of one of the most despised groups in society. They have few, if any, support systems in their schools or communities. They are often alone in making decisions about acknowledging their sexual orientation and facing attacks by others. Educators must not limit the potential of any student because of her or his sexual orientation or gender identity. Teachers and administrators should confront colleagues and students who engage in name calling and harassment. The courts agree. In *Nabozny v. Mary Podlesny, William Davis, Thomas Blauert, et al.* (1996), a Wisconsin court awarded a gay student nearly $1 million in damages for the physical abuse and verbal harassment he endured as school administrators looked the other way. School districts will continue to be held accountable for ensuring the safety of all of their students.



Watch the video "Target of LGBT Bullying in Ohio School Tells His Story" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwLs_KvoAvI), in which a mother and her son describe the bullying the son faced at school and the inaction of school administrators to stop it.

LGBTQ Teachers

Teachers have always been expected to be positive role models for students, which requires them to be very careful about their social activities and relationships. Single teachers were often

warned about sharing residences with adults of the same sex, or of the opposite sex if they were not married. Such behavior could be declared immoral and could lead to dismissal from a job, especially teaching. In a 1932 education foundations textbook, *The Sociology of Teaching*, the author told teacher candidates that homosexuality was a contagious disease (Tierney & Dilley, 1998). Teachers whose LGBT identity was discovered could be fired in many school districts. During the civil rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s, teachers who had been fired began to fight back in the courts, which usually sided with school districts that used immoral behavior as the reason for the firing (Eckes & McCarthy, 2008). The tide began to turn with the California case *Morrison v. Board of Education* (1969), when the judges found a teacher's sexual orientation a valid reason for dismissal only if it contributed to poor job performance.

Many gay and lesbian educators separate their personal and professional lives for fear of losing their jobs. They worry that they might be accused of molestation or touching students inappropriately, charged with recruiting their students into being homosexual, or caught in a homosexual liaison. In addition, they worry about threats; harassment; vandalism to their cars and homes; and violence by students, parents, colleagues, and other members of the community. Although courts usually protect their jobs, they cannot provide the security and comfort that is needed by teachers who openly acknowledge their homosexuality (Biegel, 2010).

When lesbian and gay teachers are silent about their sexual identity, they do not serve as role models for gay and lesbian students nor provide the support needed by students whose needs may be ignored by school officials. Heterosexual teachers who are willing to support gay and lesbian students also may face discriminatory retaliation by others.

In the last two decades of the twentieth century, lawyers argued against the dismissal of gay and lesbian teachers by drawing on the constitutional protections of an educator's lifestyle (Eckes & McCarthy, 2008). The Fourteenth Amendment's Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses provided the primary support for these cases when teachers could prove that their dismissal was based solely on their sexual identity. The landmark case *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), in which the U.S. Supreme Court found that homosexuals have a right to privacy in their sexual lives, and the 1969 California case *Morrison v. Board of Education* provided the precedents that would generally favor teachers. As a result, the courts began to rule in favor of LGBTQ teachers unless a school district could successfully make the argument that the teacher's private sexual behavior had a negative impact on his or her effectiveness as a teacher (Eckes & McCarthy, 2008).

More recent court cases are focusing on working conditions related to a teacher's sexual orientation (Eckes & McCarthy, 2008). For example, a New York teacher sued her school district because the principal did not respond to her complaints of harassment by students. In *Lovell v. Comsewogue School District* (2002), the court used the Fourteenth Amendment to hold school officials responsible for protecting teachers from harassment by students, parents, and colleagues, no matter what the teacher's sexual identity. In *Schroeder v. Hamilton School District* (2002) in Wisconsin, the court ruled in favor of the school district because it had taken some minimal action to discipline the students. The findings of courts have also differed when teachers have been dismissed because they surgically changed their gender. A California school district was allowed to provide a substantial financial settlement for a teacher to resign. Educators in Illinois and New York were allowed to retain their positions after such surgery (Eckes & McCarthy, 2008). Until federal laws specifically protect LGBTQ educators, court decisions are likely to vary across the country.

Even today, gay and lesbian teachers do not feel welcome in a number of school districts, which is likely to lead to the loss of some very competent teachers. Even in schools in which sexual diversity is accepted, teachers have to determine when, how, and whether to share their sexual identity with school administrators, colleagues, parents, and students. For LGBTQ students, knowing that a teacher has the same sexual identity as theirs could be very helpful. Some LGBTQ teachers choose and are honored to provide support to LGBTQ students who are struggling with their own identity. The teacher publication *Rethinking Education* includes a number of articles by gay, lesbian, and transgender teachers who have decided to be open to their students about their sexual identity. The book *One Teacher in 10: LGBT Educators Share Their Stories* (2015), edited by the former executive director of GLSEN, Kevin Jennings, also includes teachers' stories about being open about their sexual identity.



Schools That Value Sexual Diversity

Schools have a very important role in promoting a nation's culture and its values. Educators accomplish this task through the formal curriculum that they teach and through the informal curriculum of value-laden rules that guide the daily activities of a classroom and a school. Both the formal and informal curricula usually reinforce the values of the dominant culture, which is white, middle class, heterosexual, English speaking, able-bodied, and Christian. When it comes to the diversity of sexual identity, heterosexuality has historically been the identity that is most valued and supported in schools.

Think of the ways that heterosexuality is supported in the informal curriculum. The system approves of dating between boys and girls, and it sponsors dances in which boys and girls dance together. A queen and king are often elected for the springtime prom. Girls and boys may be allowed to hold hands in the hallways or at school events. Nuclear families with a mother and father are depicted on bulletin boards and discussed in units on the family in primary grades. What if you are an LGBTQ student? Will the school system allow you to hold hands with a person of the same sex or dance with a person of the same sex at a school-sponsored dance? Would the school system allow the student body to elect two kings or two queens for the prom? How often would you see a photo or an illustration of children with same-sex parents? How comfortable would same-sex parents feel when they attended a school event?

As a teacher, you may receive resistance from some parents and school officials once you begin to recognize the sexual diversity of students in a positive and accepting way or you begin to incorporate content about LGBTQ people in the curriculum. You should know that your students are likely to be at very different places in terms of acceptance of sexual diversity. With the existence of these types of obstacles to reflecting sexual diversity in the classroom, why should teachers tackle this project? Long-time educator Elizabeth J. Meyer (2010) identifies four reasons for taking on this challenge:

1. ***Student safety.*** Bullying and harassment are often gendered in nature, directed at students who are gay or perceived to be gay and students who do not conform to the heterosexual behavioral expectations associated with their biological sex, including boys who are effeminate and girls who are tomboys. In a school that values sexual diversity, students would respect and support each other regardless of their sexual identities.
2. ***Physical and emotional health.*** LGBTQ students often feel ostracized and isolated in schools because teachers and other students do not see them as normal. They may be hiding their sexual identity because they fear possible harassment as a result of their being open about their sexual identity. Consequently, they are more likely than their heterosexual peers to engage in high-risk sexual behaviors or drug and alcohol abuse.
3. ***Diversity and equity.*** Although most schools now have incorporated diversity into the curriculum, that diversity does not always include sexual identity. LGBTQ students feel excluded from textbooks, the curriculum, and class discussions. Their issues are usually not addressed even when they are receiving national or local news coverage.
4. ***Student engagement and academic success.*** Students need to be engaged in classroom work to achieve academic success, which will be critical to their future education, jobs, and earnings. Students who have to worry about the hostile environment of a school may disengage by cutting classes and skipping school—acts that have a negative impact on their academic achievement. Dropout rates for LGBT students are also higher than those of their peers.

Queering the Curriculum

Although research indicates that the incorporation of LGBTQ issues in the curriculum promotes feelings of inclusivity and safety (Meyer, 2010), fewer than 20% of LGBTQ students report that they are taught anything about their culture or identity (Kosciw et al., 2014). If sexual identity is discussed at all in schools, it is usually in health and sex education class (Meyer, 2010). It is generally a part of class discussions of HIV, in which gays are sometimes blamed for the

spread of the disease. Sex education programs may become embroiled in controversy between families and school officials, especially when the curriculum includes discussion of LGBTQ identity. In many districts, parents can request that their children be excused from sex education classes when topics such as sexual orientation and birth control are discussed.

In schools that value sexual diversity, educators incorporate factual information on sexual identity in the curriculum. The focus is not on what causes LGBTQ identity but on the factors that contribute to heterosexism and homophobia that make it so difficult for people who are LGBTQ to cope with their sexual identity. LGBTQ students should be able to see themselves not only in textbooks, but in the topics that are discussed. Sexual identity should not be a taboo subject in the classroom. Teachers should be able to help students develop greater awareness and understanding of it when the topic arises. Finding themselves in the curriculum helps to increase the self-esteem and feelings of affirmation of LGBTQ students (Savage & Harley, 2009). Inquiry-based activities encourage students to explore topics individually and in small groups as they prepare to share their findings with the full class. This approach can allow for multiple perspectives on topics being studied, including the perspectives of LGBTQ people (Meyer, 2010). Involving students in developing their own auto-ethnographies will allow them to explore their identities and the privileges they may have as a result of their identity (Meyer, 2010).

Middle School and Secondary Curriculum. Social studies could explore the privilege of heterosexuality in society and include a study of the history of LGBT people and their struggles for equality. Social studies also provides the opportunity to discuss current events at the local, state, and national levels related to LGBTQ issues, such as same-sex marriage, antigay laws, and adoption by gays and lesbians. In these discussions students can learn to do research on a topic, think critically about the issues, and participate in the political process. These discussions and respectful debates should also attend to the intersection of sexual identity with race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and religion (Meyer, 2010).

Language arts and literature courses should include books and short stories by gay and lesbian authors as well as authors of color. As the teacher, you should not be afraid to identify the sexual identity of the author and talk about how it may have influenced the author's writing. Fiction and nonfiction with LGBTQ characters can help students understand the meaning of diversity, the damage of discrimination, and the strengths of LGBTQ people. The contributions of gays and lesbians to society could be highlighted in these courses as well as in courses in art, music, the sciences, and physical education.

Teachers of mathematics and science also can find opportunities to include LGBTQ people in their curriculum. For example, the study of graphs, charts, and statistics could report data related to the experiences of LGBTQ students in schools or society. Word problems could be checked for their **heteronormativity**, which is the assumption that heterosexuality is normal and any other identity is abnormal. Biology could address chromosomal and hormonal influences on embryonic development as well as how biology is related to gender (Meyer, 2010).

Early Childhood and Elementary Curriculum. Queering the curriculum is not limited to middle and secondary schools. Two areas in which related issues could be introduced in early childhood and elementary education are gender role expectations and families (Meyer, 2010). Units on families are common at this level, and gender roles are taught and reinforced through the informal curriculum of preschool and elementary schools. Gender identity becomes important very early in life. Young children learn very quickly the "right" clothes to wear and the appropriate toys and games to play, based on their biological sex. Preschool classrooms often have a boys' corner separate from the girls' corner, and the two groups are not generally encouraged to integrate their play. In fact, children may be redirected if they select a toy, book, or game that is more directly identified with the opposite sex. One of the problems with this approach is that it reinforces gender stereotypes. Another is that it limits students' opportunities to read stories, engage in play activities, and pursue friendships with children of the opposite sex whom they may prefer and enjoy (Meyer, 2010).

In lessons on families and family relationships, teachers do not have to limit pictures and discussions to nuclear families with a heterosexual mother and father. They should include families in which the parents are two males, two females, or grandparents; they should include

families headed by a single parent. The families should be racially or ethnically diverse and from around the world to emphasize the diversity of families who successfully raise children. The value of diversity can also be captured in the variety of children's books now available that show this diversity of families in a positive light. Some of the children in a class may have LGBTQ parents, who should be respected and treated as equal members of the school's support system.

Conflict About LGBTQ-Inclusive Curricula

Not all parents and communities view the diversity of sexual identity as positive. The argument used most often against the positive portrayal of LGBTQ people is that it would promote homosexuality among children. Opponents raise their concerns in local newspapers and at school board meetings, but they seldom win a court case against the inclusion of LGBTQ materials (Biegel, 2010). In *Morrison v. Board of Education of Boyd County, Kentucky* (2007), for example, conservative religious parents sued the school district for requiring students to participate in diversity training and not allowing parents to remove their children from the training sessions. They were concerned that LGBTQ content was positively presented and that they were not allowed to provide their view of homosexuality. The Kentucky court found that the students' constitutional rights had not been violated but indicated that parental permission to attend the training was not needed for middle and high school students (Biegel, 2010).

Although the inclusion of LGBTQ information is generally legal in almost every state under First Amendment principles, a few states limit how it is incorporated into sex education classes (Biegel, 2010). Eight states (Alabama, Arizona, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, and Utah) prohibit the positive portrayal of LGBTQ people in the school curriculum. Some states require that they be presented negatively (GLSEN, n.d. a). On the other end of the spectrum, California's Senate Bill 48—the Fair, Accurate, Inclusive, and Respectful (FAIR) Education Act—requires schools to include instruction on LGBT students in the social sciences curriculum

Supporting LGBTQ Students

Teachers can provide an environment for critically examining the dominant cultural norms that denigrate LGBTQ people. They can encourage an understanding of sexual diversity through the presentation of facts, facilitation of discussions, and staging of democratic debates in which everyone's opinion is respected. When homophobic name calling by students occurs, teachers could follow up with a teachable moment to provide facts and correct myths about LGBTQ people. If educators ignore homophobic remarks made by students or other adults, children and youth are quick to conclude that something is wrong with gays and that they can be treated disrespectfully.

To be respected by LGBTQ and other students, teachers must guarantee respectful treatment of all students. This may be difficult for some teachers. How can educators move to this level of acceptance of and comfort with sexual diversity? First, they should become familiar with the history, culture, and current concerns of LGBT people by reading or attending lectures and films about them. Second, they should create a safe and equitable classroom environment for all students.

In addition to helping all students correct the myths they have learned about gays and lesbians, educators should promote the healthy development of self-identified LGBTQ youth in the school setting. Key to this approach is breaking the silence that surrounds the discussion of homosexuality. The classroom and school should provide a safe and supportive climate for children and adolescents who identify their sexual orientation. They should learn that they are not alone in figuring out their sexual orientation and sexuality.

Supporting LGBTQ students is not always easy for a school district. Some students, who may be supported by their parents, take steps to interfere with the rights of LGBTQ students. In 2001 Minnesota high school student Elliot Chambers wore a sweatshirt with "Straight Pride" on the front and a man and woman holding hands on the back. This triggered a heated debate about homosexuality at a meeting of a student Christian group. The principal asked the student to remove the shirt because a number of students had complained, and he was worried that physical fights among students might occur. Based on the student's First Amendment rights to free speech,

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate / Sexual Orientation in the Curriculum

Educators are struggling with how best to incorporate sexual orientation into the curriculum, eliminate bullying based on sexual orientation, and provide support for their LGBTQ students. Although the population is becoming more accepting of gays and lesbians, not all communities are supportive of the recognition of sexual orientation in their schools. In fact, some parents and religious leaders actively fight against any discussion of it at any grade level.

Concern about the inclusion of sexual orientation in the school curriculum has not been limited to the local school district level. State legislators are becoming involved in deciding what should be taught about gays and lesbians in schools and at what age, and they disagree. A few states have passed legislation to ban any discussion of sexual orientation other than heterosexuality in their schools. Legislation is pending in one state to prevent discussion in grades K–8 of the fact that some people are gay. Another state has passed legislation requiring incorporation of the history of homosexuality into social studies.

Do you think sexual orientation should be incorporated into the curriculum of the nation's schools?

FOR

- ☐ LGBTQ students should see themselves in the curriculum to help them develop positive identities.
- ☐ Children and youth at all ages should be taught to be accepting of others, including individuals whose sexual identity is not heterosexual.
- ☐ Young children should learn that families are very diverse, including some with same-sex parents.
- ☐ Bullying against LGBTQ students could be greatly reduced with curricula that incorporate LGBTQ content.

AGAINST

- ☐ Discussion of sexual orientation in the curriculum will encourage more students to become LGBTQ.
- ☐ Students at all levels should learn the gender roles that are appropriate for their sex.
- ☐ Introducing positive images of same-sex couples and LGBTQ people will lead students to think it is acceptable to be LGBTQ, which is an inappropriate role for schools.
- ☐ Students should learn that bullying against any student is inappropriate without pointing out the disproportionate bullying of LGBTQ students.

QUESTIONS

1. How would you respond to the question? What rationales support your response?
2. How will you know whether the community in which you are teaching is supportive of the inclusion of sexual orientation issues, history, and experiences in the curriculum?
3. If you are teaching in a very conservative community, what strategies would be appropriate in providing support for LGBTQ students in the school?

a judge ruled in favor of the student. He also acknowledged the school's work to create an environment of tolerance and respect for diversity and suggested that schools, parents, and the community "work together so that divergent viewpoints, whether they be political, religious, or social, may be expressed in a civilized and respectful manner" (*Chambers v. Babbitt*, 2001). In a suburban Chicago school, the court ruled in favor of the school district in a case where the text on the student's T-shirt was a negative reference to being gay (*Nuxoll v. Indian Prairie School District*, 2008).

Safe School Policies. Parents and communities believe that schools should be safe for students. The overall goal for a school should be to treat all students with equal respect and dignity (Biegel, 2010). Many school districts developed policies related to bullying after the shootings at Columbine High School in 1999. However, those policies were not always comprehensive in that they did not include sexual orientation or gender identity among the groups to be protected. Comprehensive safe school policies provide faculty and staff guidance for intervening when students are using homophobic language. Students in schools with comprehensive policies report hearing fewer homophobic remarks and are more likely to report harassment and abuse to school officials (Kosciw et al., 2014).

All states have developed generic safe school laws and/or policies to protect students from bullying and harassment (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). Seventeen states and the District of Columbia have enumerated anti-bullying laws to specifically include sexual orientation and gender identity (GLSEN, n.d. b). To see the status of laws in your state, visit the website of GLSEN (www.glsen.org).

No federal law prevents bullying or harassment of students based on their LGBTQ identity. However, bills have been introduced for that purpose. Following the Title IX model, the Student Non-Discrimination Act was reintroduced in 2013 to prevent any federally funded school program or activity from discriminating based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Another bill supported by the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, the Safe Schools Improvement Act, was reintroduced in the Senate and House in 2013 and again in 2015.

Even with safe school policies, schools are not always enforcing them as effectively as they should. Some gay and transgendered students have sued school districts for not protecting them from constant abuse from other students, and courts generally rule in favor of the students. School districts could face litigation if they do not take affirmative steps to prevent harassment and bullying of LGBTQ and other students.

A number of schools have established safe zones or safe spaces for LGBTQ students—usually a specific classroom. The safe space in a school may be marked by a pink triangle or other LGBTQ symbol. In these places students can be themselves and feel free to discuss issues related to their gender identity. In the GLSEN study of the school climate, just over 25% of the students reported seeing at least one of the safe space stickers or posters in their school (Kosciw et al., 2014).

Gay–Straight Alliances. Students in the GLSEN study feel safer when they are in a school with a **gay–straight alliance (GSA)**, which is a student-initiated club of LGBTQ and straight students that provides a safe place for students to discuss issues and meet others with similar interests (Meyer, 2010). When a school has a GSA, LGBTQ students report hearing fewer homophobic remarks, and school personnel are more likely to intervene when homophobic remarks are made. Forty-five percent of the students reported that a GSA existed in their school (Kosciw et al., 2014).

Watch the video "A Gay Straight Alliance Creates Unity and a Culture of Acceptance" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-ZyE1W7VZ80), about why a student led the effort to establish a GSA in her school and how it has changed LGBT's self-concept.

The Federal Equal Access Act of 1984 requires that student clubs be established and managed by students. Teachers and other school personnel may serve as advisors to the group. The goal should be to help students realize their strengths and accomplishments as they develop



LGBTQ students and their allies establish gay–straight alliance clubs in schools to support each other. (© Custom Life Science Images/Alamy)

into young adults. If you are the GSA advisor, remember that sexual identity may not be the primary group identification for all of the club members; it could be religion, race, ethnicity, or exceptionality. The club should provide students opportunities to celebrate who they are regardless of their primary identification.

Students who initiate a GSA may need assistance from their advisor in determining the purpose of the group. Initially, many GSA clubs try to make the student body and teachers aware of antigay discrimination and provide training on safety and tolerance. They may seek approval from school administrators to organize events around National Coming Out Day (October 11), the Day of Silence (April 1), and National History Month (October). Over time, club members may want to explore how the curriculum, school policies, and school practices privilege heterosexuals and ignore other sexual identities.

In some communities parents or religious groups may raise objections about students establishing a GSA club. Some groups have sued school boards to prevent students from initiating a GSA club, but they have not been successful in overturning the school board's decision. Based on the federal Equal Access Act, courts have ruled that if the school district allows students to establish other clubs, it must allow the formation of a GSA club (Biegel, 2010).

SUMMARY

Sexual Identity

Although a number of researchers have looked for a biological cause of homosexuality, no definitive link has yet been found. Sexual orientation includes sexual identity as a lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, transgender, or queer person. LGBTQ youth go through developmental stages similar to other groups as they clarify and become comfortable with their sexual orientation and identity.

Struggles for Sexual Equity

In the 1950s homosexuals were under attack, purged from government and military employment, and arrested in parks, bars, and even their homes for being gay. In the riot at Stonewall Inn in 1969, gays began to publicly resist harassment and fight more aggressively for their civil rights in the courts. By the 1980s gays were facing setbacks as conservative Christians fueled culture wars against feminists, lesbians, and gays as gay men began to be diagnosed with AIDS. The culture war in schools led to the removal of books on gays and lesbians from school libraries and bans on teaching about homosexuality unless it was from a negative perspective. By 2004 the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy that prevented LGBTQ people from coming out in the military had been repealed. Whereas 40 states had legislative mandates or voter amendments against same-sex marriage in 2006, the 2015 Supreme Court decision guaranteed the right to same-sex marriage to couples across the United States.

Heterosexism's Toll on Students and Adults

The majority of LGBTQ students feel unsafe in schools; they are harassed and sometimes physically abused by other students. LGBTQ students are more likely to attempt and commit suicide than their peers. Courts are upholding the rights of teachers to be LGBTQ, and teachers cannot legally be fired because of their sexual orientation. School districts are also required to protect LGBTQ teachers from harassment by students, parents, and colleagues.

Schools That Value Sexual Diversity

Incorporating LGBTQ content into the curriculum will help increase the self-esteem and feelings of affirmation of LGBTQ students. Educators have the right to include LGBTQ content in the curriculum, but some states limit the way that content can be taught. Comprehensive safe school policies that specifically include protection based on sexual orientation and gender identity are providing support to LGBTQ students by helping reduce harassment against them. Student-initiated gay–straight alliances (GSAs) for LGBTQ students and their allies provide a safe place for students to discuss issues affecting their lives and teach others about tolerance and safety.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts.



6 Exceptionality

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- **6.1** Describe exceptional students and explain what groups are considered exceptional.
- **6.2** Explain key court cases relevant to the educational rights of students with disabilities.
- **6.3** Discuss key civil rights legislation for individuals with disabilities.
- **6.4** Analyze the perceptions of individuals with exceptionalities and their integration with wider U.S. society.
- **6.5** Cite the primary issues involved in the overrepresentation and underrepresentation of some ethnic/racial groups in special education classes and possible contributing factors.
- **6.6** Discuss some of the basic needs of exceptional children and explain why it is important for educators to help their students meet these needs.

Guadalupe "Lupe" Gutierrez, a third-grade teacher at Martin Luther King Elementary School, has been asked to see the principal, Erin Wilkerson, after the students leave. Dr. Wilkerson explains that the school is expanding its full inclusion program, in which special education children, including those with severe disabilities, are fully integrated into general education classrooms. Congruent with school district policy, King Elementary is enhancing its efforts to integrate special education students into general education settings. Gutierrez's classroom is one of four general education classrooms in which special education students will be placed in the next few weeks. "What this will involve, Lupe, is two students with severe disabilities. One is a child with Down's syndrome who has developmental disabilities; he has severe delays in the acquisition of cognitive, language, motor, and social skills, and he has some severe learning problems. The other child has normal intelligence but is nonambulatory, with limited speech and severe cerebral palsy.

"You will be assigned a full-time aide with a special education background. In addition, Bill Gregg, the inclusion specialist, will assist you with instructional plans and strategies. It is important that you prepare your students and the parents so that a smooth transition can be made when these students come into your class in January, just two and a half months from now. I'd like you and Bill to map out a plan of action and give it to me in two weeks."

REFLECTIONS

1. What should Lupe and Bill's plan of action include?
2. When students with severe disabilities are integrated into general education classrooms, do they detract from the programming of nondisabled students?
3. Are the students with disabilities potentially a disrupting influence in the classroom?
4. Do general education teachers like Lupe Gutierrez have adequate training and background to accommodate students with disabilities in their classrooms?
5. Should students be integrated, regardless of their degree of disability?



Students with Disabilities and Students Who Are Gifted and Talented

A significant segment of the population in the United States is made up of exceptional individuals. Brault (2012) reported that there are nearly 57 million individuals in the United States with some type of disability. Hallahan, Kauffman, and Pullen (2015) reported that approximately 8.5% of students (more than 6.5 million) receive special education services. The National Center for Education Statistics (2010) reported that approximately 6.7% of students (or 3.2 million) are gifted and talented, although not all of them receive special education services. Educators continuously come in contact with exceptional children and adults. They may be students in our classes, our professional colleagues, our friends and neighbors, or people we meet in our everyday experiences.

Exceptional people include individuals with disabilities and gifted individuals. This fact alone makes the subject of exceptionality very complex. Some, particularly persons with disabilities, have been rejected by society. Because of their unique social and personal needs and special interests, many exceptional people become part of a cultural group composed of individuals with similar exceptionalities. For some, this cultural identity is by ascription; they are labeled and forced into residential institutions where they live. Others may live in certain communities or neighborhoods by their own choosing. This chapter will examine the exceptional individual's relationship to society. It will address the struggle for equal rights and the ways the treatment of individuals with disabilities often parallels that of oppressed ethnic minorities.

Definitions of exceptional children vary from one writer to another, but Heward's (2013, p. 7) is typical:

> Exceptional children differ from the norm (either below or above) to such an extent that they require an individualized program of special education and related services to fully benefit from education. The term exceptional children includes children who experience difficulties in learning as well as those whose performance is so superior that modifications in curriculum and instruction are necessary to help them fulfill their potential. Thus, exceptional children is an inclusive term that refers to children with learning and/or behavior problems, children with physical disabilities or sensory impairments, and children who are intellectually gifted or have a special talent.

This definition is specific to this category of school-age children, who are usually referred, tested to determine eligibility, and then placed in special education programs. Included in the process is the labeling of the child. At one end of the continuum are **gifted and talented** children, students who have extraordinary abilities in one or more areas. At the other end are children with disabilities (some of whom may also be gifted). Students with disabilities are labeled as having **intellectual disabilities** (**ID**, previously referred to as mental retardation),

learning disabilities, speech impairment, visual impairment, hearing impairment, emotional disturbance (or behavioral disorders), or physical and health impairments.

If you completed a public school education within the past 20 to 25 years, there is a strong likelihood that you experienced having a person with a disability in one or more of your classes.

Labeling

The categorization and labeling process has its share of critics. Critics characterize the practice as demeaning and stigmatizing to people with disabilities, with the effects often carried through adulthood, where these people may be denied opportunities as a result. Some individuals, including many with learning disabilities and ID, were never considered to have disabilities prior to entering school. Individuals with ID often have problems in intellectual functioning and in determining socially appropriate behaviors for their age group. The school setting, however, intensifies their academic and cognitive deficits. Many, when they return to their homes and communities, do not seem to function as individuals with disabilities. Instead, they participate in activities with their neighborhood peers until they return to school the following day, where they may attend special classes (sometimes segregated) and resume their role in the academic and social structure of the school as students with disabilities. The labels carry connotations and perhaps stigmas. Some researchers have found that general education classmates often display negative attitudes toward peers with intellectual disabilities and socially reject or neglect them (Siperstein, Parker, Bardon, & Widaman, 2007).

Some disabilities are more socially acceptable than others. Visual impairment stimulates public empathy and sometimes sympathy. The public has long given generously to causes for the blind, as evidenced by the financially well-endowed Seeing Eye Institute, which is responsible for training the well-known guide dogs. The blind are the only group with a disability who are permitted to claim an additional personal income tax deduction because of their disability. The general public perceives blindness to be one of the worst afflictions that could be imposed on an individual. In contrast, ID and to some extent emotional disturbance are often linked to lower socioeconomic status and individuals of color. These are among the least socially acceptable disabilities and are perhaps the most stigmatizing. This is, in part, because of the general public's lack of understanding of these disabilities and the debilitating impact they can have on the family structure.

Learning disability is one of the more socially acceptable disability conditions. Whereas intellectual disabilities are often identified with lower socioeconomic groups, those with learning disabilities may have middle-class backgrounds. Regardless of the level of general acceptance, middle-class parents more readily accept learning disabilities than intellectual disabilities as the cause of a child's learning deficits. This may also be the case with emotional disabilities or behavioral disorders as compared with **attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)**. The former tends to be more stigmatizing, while ADHD may have more social acceptance. Some children have been reclassified from having intellectual disabilities to being learning disabled. It has been said that one person's intellectual disability is another's learning disability and still another's emotional disturbance. The line that distinguishes one of these disabilities from another can be so fine that an individual could be identified as a student with emotional disturbance by one school psychologist and as a student with learning disabilities by another.

Although the labeling controversy persists, even its critics often concede its necessity. Federal funding for special education is predicated on the identification of individuals in specific disabling conditions. These funds, with $12.50 billion appropriated for the 2014 fiscal year (New America Foundation, 2015), are so significant that many special education programs would all but collapse without them, leaving school districts in severe financial distress. Consequently, the labeling process continues, sometimes even into adulthood, where university students may have to be identified with a disability in order to receive necessary accommodations for their learning needs. Vocational rehabilitation counselors often use labels more indicative of their clients' learning problems than of their work skills. If their work peers become aware of these labels, the result could be stigmatizing and lead to social isolation.

Historical Antecedents

The plight of persons with disabilities has, in many respects, closely paralleled that of oppressed ethnic groups. The history of the treatment of those with disabilities does not reveal a society eager to meet its responsibilities. Prior to 1800, with a few exceptions, those with intellectual disabilities, for example, were not considered a major social problem in any society. Those with more severe intellectual disabilities were killed, or they died early of natural causes (Drew & Hardman, 2007).

The treatment and care of people with intellectual and physical disabilities have typically been a function of the socioeconomic conditions of the times. In addition to having attitudes of fear and disgrace brought on by superstition, early nomadic tribes viewed individuals with disabilities as nonproductive and as a burden draining available resources. As civilization progressed from a less nomadic existence, individuals with disabilities were still often viewed as nonproductive and expendable (Drew & Hardman, 2007). They were frequently shunted away to institutions designated as hospitals, asylums, or colonies. Many institutions were deliberately built great distances from the population centers, so the residents could be segregated and more easily contained. For decades, American society did not have to deal with its conscience with respect to its citizens with severe disabilities. Society simply sent them far away and forgot about them. Most Americans did not know of the sometimes cruel and inhumane treatment that existed in many facilities. Today, due to urban sprawl, many of these institutions are now close to or within population centers.

Individuals with mild disabilities were generally able to be absorbed into society, sometimes seeming to disappear, sometimes contributing meaningfully to an agrarian society, often not even being identified as having a disability. As society became more industrialized and educational reforms required school attendance, the academic problems of students with disabilities became increasingly more visible. Special schools and special classes were designated to meet the needs of these children. Thus, society segregated these individuals, often under the guise of acting in their best interests.

Society's treatment of some groups with disabilities, such as those with intellectual disabilities, has frequently been questionable with respect to their civil rights. Although many Americans find the old miscegenation laws prohibiting intermarriage between different ethnic groups abhorrent, few realize that as recently as the latter part of the twentieth century, nearly half of the states had miscegenation laws that prohibited marriage between individuals with intellectual disabilities.

In some instances, individuals with mild intellectual disabilities were released from state institutions into society under the condition that they submit to eugenic sterilization (Edgerton, 1967). The prospect of marriage prohibitions and eugenic sterilization for persons with intellectual disabilities raises serious social and ethical issues. The nondisabled segment of society, charged with the care and education of individuals with disabilities, apparently views as its right and responsibility the control of matters dealing with sexual behavior, marriage, and procreation. In a similar way, educators determine the means of communication for the deaf individual, either an oral/aural approach or a manual/total communication approach. Such decisions have profound implications because they determine not only how these individuals will communicate but also, to a great extent, with whom they will be able to communicate. Too often, society seeks to dehumanize people with disabilities by ignoring their personal wishes, making critical decisions for them, and treating them as children throughout their lives.

Much of this chapter will focus on children with disabilities. This focus is not meant to diminish the importance of gifted and talented (G/T) students. They are equally important in their own right, but space limitations in this chapter preclude a lengthy treatment of G/T students. The vast majority of litigation, legislation, funding, and programming involves children with disabilities. They are the ones whose civil rights have routinely been violated and who have historically suffered rejection and blatant discrimination by both educators and society, which the gifted and talented have generally not had to endure.



Litigation

Educational rights of individuals with disabilities were not easily gained. In many respects, the struggle for these rights paralleled the struggles of ethnic minorities for the right to education. These rights were not handed to children with disabilities out of the concern or compassion of educators. Many educators were reluctant to extend educational rights to children with disabilities, and when they finally did so, it was because the children's rights had been won in the courts and the educational community was ordered to provide for these students.

Some of the court decisions and many of the arguments that advanced the rights of African Americans and other oppressed groups were used by the advocates of children with disabilities. However, in reality, the battles and the rights gained by the disability rights advocates came years after similar rights were won by ethnic minority groups.

Attorneys for children with disabilities and their parents utilized case law to fight their court battles. **Case law** is the published opinions of judges, which interpret statutes, regulations, and constitutional provisions. The U.S. legal system relies on the value of these decisions and the legal precedents they establish. Few cases result in published opinions, and those that are published take on great importance.

Brown v. Board of Education

As with African American students, the initial struggles for children with disabilities involved the right to, or access to, a public education. One of the most famous and important court decisions was the Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954). Historically, the Supreme Court of the United States had sided with the Louisiana District Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896, which upheld the constitutionality of Louisiana's Separate Car Act, providing for separate but equal transportation facilities for African Americans. The *Plessy* verdict became a part of case law and set a precedent, segregating blacks from whites in transportation, public facilities, schools, restaurants, and so on. This decision "legitimized" the **Jim Crow laws** that established racially segregated schools, which were supposed to be separate but equal. As history clearly shows, these schools were inherently unequal. This was the setting for the *Brown* case.

In 1950 Topeka student Linda Brown had to ride the bus to school five miles although a school was located just four blocks from her home. Linda met all of the requirements to attend the nearby school but was prohibited from doing so because she was African American. Linda Brown's parents and 13 other black families filed suit against the Topeka Board of Education because of the district's refusal to admit their children to its all-white schools. Linda Brown's name was the first name listed in the suit, and the case became known as *Brown v. Board of Education*. The case eventually found its way to the U.S. Supreme Court and became a major part of U.S. history.

The U.S. Constitution mandates that all citizens have the rights to life, liberty, and property. They cannot be denied these rights without due process. *Brown* determined that education was a property right. Although there is no constitutional guarantee of a free public education, in *Brown* the U.S. Supreme Court found that if a state undertakes the provision of free education for its citizenry, the property right of an education is established. The property (education) rights of Linda Brown and the other African American children had been taken without due process, a clear violation of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The *Brown* decision overturned *Plessy* with regard to education (although some of the other rights were not clearly gained until the Civil Rights Act of 1964) and began the integration of all children of color into American schools.

Brown did not involve children with disabilities, but the precedent it set in guaranteeing equal educational opportunity for ethnic minority children extended to students with disabilities. It would take another 16 years, however, before the concept of equal opportunity would actually be applied to children with disabilities. The Court had essentially ruled that what the Topeka School District had provided Linda Brown and the other African American children

was not appropriate. Not only have the courts supported rights of students with disabilities to have a free education, but legislation has also sought to ensure them the right to an appropriate education.

The *Brown* decision found "separate but equal" education to be unequal. Separate education denied African American students an equal education. The Court mandated a fully integrated education, free from the stigma of segregation. Chief Justice Warren stated that segregation "generates a feeling of inferiority as to their [children's] status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone."

Throughout the history of special education in the United States, children with disabilities have faced a continuous uphill struggle to gain the right to attend public schools. Eventually some programs were instituted, but until the mid-1970s certain children, particularly those with moderate to severe disabilities, were routinely excluded from public education. One of the arguments to deny admission to children with moderate or severe intellectual disabilities was that they could not learn to read, write, or perform arithmetic in the same manner as nondisabled students. Learning these academic skills is education, it was argued. Since they were not educable, they did not belong in schools.

Parents and supporters of these children countered, arguing that learning self-help skills and other important life skills was indeed learning, and this was education. These children, along with children with severe physical disabilities, could learn, particularly if support services were provided.

PARC v. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

In 1971 the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC, 1972) brought a class action suit against the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the failure to provide a publicly supported education to students with intellectual disabilities. The attorneys for the plaintiffs argued the following:

- Education cannot be defined as only the provision of academic experiences for children.
- All students with intellectual disabilities are capable of benefiting from programs of education and training.
- Having undertaken a free public education for the children of Pennsylvania, the state could not deny children with intellectual disabilities the same opportunities.
- The earlier the students with intellectual disabilities were provided education, the greater the amount of learning that could be expected.

The Federal District Court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, and all children ages 6 to 21 were to be provided a free public education. The court stipulated that it was most desirable to educate children with intellectual disabilities in programs like those provided to their peers without disabilities (Murdick, Gartin, & Crabtree, 2014; Yell, 2016).

Mills v. Board of Education

Following the PARC decision, another class action suit, *Mills v. Board of Education* (1972), was brought before the federal District Court for the District of Columbia on behalf of 18,000 out-of-school children with behavior problems, hyperactivity, epilepsy, intellectual disabilities, and physical problems. The court again ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and mandated that the District of Columbia schools provide a publicly supported education to all children with disabilities. In addition, the court ordered the following (Murdick et al., 2014; Yell, 2016):

- The district is to provide due process procedural safeguards.
- Clearly outlined due process procedures must be established for labeling, placement, and exclusion.
- Procedural safeguards include right to appeal, right to access records, and written notice of all stages of the process.

While these two high-profile cases were being played out in their respective communities, other states were finding similar challenges. PARC was the state chapter of the National Association for Retarded Children (now the National Association for Retarded Citizens [The Arc]). The Arc and other national organizations, such as the Council for Exceptional Children, actively supported disability advocates throughout the country in preparing court briefs and in offering other means of support. Armed with their victories and case law favorable to their cause, parent groups in other states began taking on their legislatures and school districts and winning. More than 46 cases were filed on behalf of children with disabilities in the first two and a half years following the *PARC* and *Mills* decisions (Yell, 2016). Fresh with many court victories, disability advocates in the early 1970s were busy preparing for their next battleground, the U.S. Congress.



Legislation

Following critical court victories for children with disabilities in the early 1970s (e.g., *PARC* and *Mills*), Congress began passing key civil rights legislation for individuals with disabilities. Not surprisingly, much of the legislation was patterned after the civil rights legislation for ethnic minorities. These new laws would forever change the way individuals with disabilities would be treated in the United States and served as a model for much of the world. Today it is inconceivable that schools could be inaccessible to students in wheelchairs, that elevators could have floor buttons not marked with Braille, or that a stadium would be built without ramps. However, as recently as the mid-1970s, restrooms and aisles in restaurants were often too narrow to provide access for individuals in wheelchairs.

Section 504

In 1973 Congress enacted **Section 504 of Public Law 93-112** as part of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 was the counterpart to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The language was brief but its implications far reaching: "No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of his (or her) handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Section 504 prohibits exclusion from programs solely on the basis of an individual's disability. A football coach, marching band director, or university admissions officer cannot deny a student participation solely on the basis of a disability. However, if ID inhibits a student's ability to learn football rules and plays, a learning disability prevents a student from learning marching band formations even with accommodations, or a student's test scores are clearly below the university admissions standards and indicative of likely failure, then exclusion may be justified. If denial of participation is unjustified, the school or agency risks the loss of all federal funds, even in programs in the institution that are not involved in the discriminatory practice (Murdick et al., 2014; Yell, 2016).

Public Law 94-142

In 1975, **Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act**, was signed into law. This comprehensive legislation provided all students with disabilities ages 3 to 21 with the following:

- A free and appropriate education
- Procedural safeguards to protect the rights of students and their parents
- Education in the least restrictive environment
- Individualized Educational Programs
- Parental involvement in educational decisions related to their children
- Fair, accurate, and nonbiased evaluations

These provisions forever changed the face of American education. Every child with a disability is now entitled to a free public education, which is to be appropriate to his or her needs. The education is to be provided in the least restrictive environment, which means that the student is to be educated in a setting as close to a general or regular education class as is feasible. Parents are to have an integral role in their child's education and are to be involved in the development of the education program and to share in other decisions relating to their child. When appropriate, the student is also to be involved. Schools must follow procedural safeguards to ensure that the rights of the students and parents are observed. Each student must have an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** that is designed to meet the student's unique needs. The identification and evaluation process is to be nondiscriminatory and unbiased, with multifactored methods used to determine eligibility and placement (Murdick et al., 2014; Yell, 2016).

Prior to the passage of P.L. 94-142, nearly half of the nation's 4 million children with disabilities were not receiving a publicly supported education. Furthermore, more than 3 million students with disabilities admitted to schools were not receiving an education appropriate to their needs (Yell, 2016). Many of the students who were in special education were often isolated in the least desirable locations within the schools. In the first two special education teaching assignments (both prior to P.L. 94-142) experienced by one of the authors of this text, this was very much the case. In the first, all three special education classes were located in the basement of the junior high school, isolated from the other students. In the second school, there were two lunch periods to accommodate the large student body. The special education students were required to eat in the school cafeteria between the two lunch periods, and they were expected to exit the facility before any other students entered. When a new school building was completed next to the old, outdated facility, the special education class remained in the old facility while the rest of the school moved.



The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of (1975) guarantees a free and appropriate education for all children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment.
© Lisa F. Young/Fotolia

Americans with Disabilities Act

Imagine yourself a paraplegic using a wheelchair for mobility and having a class on the fourth floor of an older college building with only stairs to reach your destination. Add to this problem your Colorado location in the winter. This was the situation for a classmate of one of the text's co-authors. Each day, the individual had to wait at the bottom of the stairs and implore four classmates to carry him and all of their books up and down the four flights of stairs. The individual, books, and wheelchair weighed over 250 pounds. Imagine a paraplegic teacher discovering on his first day at a new school that the toilet stalls that he had to use were too narrow for him to negotiate with his wheelchair. This also happened to a colleague of one of the co-authors. These are only two examples of the hundreds of challenges individuals with physical and sensory impairments faced in their daily lives prior to laws protecting individuals with disabilities.

President George H. W. Bush signed Public Law 101-336, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), into law on January 26, 1990. The ADA was the most significant civil rights legislation in the United States since the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The ADA was designed to end discrimination against individuals with disabilities in private-sector employment, public services, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications.



The American with Disabilities Act requires buses and other transportation services to be accessible to persons with disabilities. (© John A. Rizzo/Photodisc/Getty Images)

Among the many components of this legislation, the following are a sampling of the efforts to break down barriers for individuals with disabilities (Murdick et al., 2014; Yell, 2016):

- Employers cannot discriminate against individuals with disabilities in hiring or promotion if they are otherwise qualified for the job.
- Employers must provide reasonable accommodations for an individual with a disability, such as attaching an amplifier to the individual's telephone.
- New buses, bus and train stations, and rail systems must be accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Physical barriers in restaurants, hotels, retail stores, and stadiums must be removed; if this is not readily achievable, alternative means of offering services must be implemented.
- Companies offering telephone services to the general public must offer telephone relay services to those using telecommunication devices for the deaf.

Watch the video "ADA Parking Violations Sidewalks—Americans with Disabilities Act—Civil Rights –Accessible Sidewalks" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SYVpr7AChv0&list=PLfJQzeyjhoSiPVd6PR-6ZoULz4qCxqq8b5&index=18) to put yourself in the seat of a wheelchair and see the difficulties one may encounter trying to travel down a sidewalk.

Many older European communities have cobblestone streets and sidewalks without curb cuts, so they are inaccessible for individuals in wheelchairs. This may explain why you may see few individuals in wheelchairs in those communities. Today, Americans with physical disabilities should expect to be able to travel in public, access buses, and attend events in theaters, arenas, and stadiums, thanks to the ADA.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Congress passed Public Law 101-476, the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**, in 1990 as amendments to Public Law 94-142. Key components of this amendment included the addition of students with autism or traumatic brain injury as a separate class entitled to services. A **transition plan** was an added requirement to be included in every student's IEP by age 14. The transition plan includes a needs assessment and individual planning to transition the student with a disability successfully into adulthood. In addition to substituting the term *disability* for *handicap*, a far-reaching change in the new legislation included changed language to emphasize the person first, before the disability. The title of the legislation included "Individuals with Disabilities" rather than "Disabled Individuals." Nearly all of the newer literature uses

language such as "children with intellectual disabilities," "students with learning disabilities," "individuals with cerebral palsy," and "people with hearing impairments." Individuals with disabilities are people or individuals first. Their disability is secondary and at times inconsequential to their ability to perform the tasks they undertake (Murdick et al., 2014; Yell, 2016).

IDEA Amendments

The 1997 IDEA Amendments (P.L. 105-17) reauthorized and made improvements to the earlier law. It consolidated the law from eight to four parts and made significant additions, including the following (Murdick et al., 2014; Yell, 2016):

- Strengthened the role of parents, ensured access to the general education curriculum, and emphasized student progress by changing the IEP process
- Encouraged parents and educators to resolve their differences through nonadversarial mediation
- Gave school officials greater latitude in disciplining students by altering some procedural safeguards
- Set funding formulas

In 2004 Congress passed another amendment to IDEA (P.L. 108-446), referred to as IDEA 2004, or the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act**. IDEA 2004 added new language about "academic and functional goals." IEPs must now include "a statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals. . . ." The amendment also required the use of instructional strategies and practices grounded in research and most likely to produce positive student outcomes (Cook, Tankersley, & Landrum, 2009). Another requirement of IDEA 2004 aligned IDEA with the No Child Left Behind requirement of "highly qualified teachers." Under IDEA requirements, emergency or provisional certificates do not qualify an individual (Yell, 2016). All students deserve highly qualified teachers. However, there has been and still is a shortage of fully certified or credentialed special education teachers in most states, and a mandate for highly qualified teachers will not make them suddenly appear for school districts to employ.

Despite the shortages, school districts can no longer employ individuals who have only emergency licensure. School districts must find ways to compensate for the lack of trained personnel by qualifying those previously hired under emergency licensure using creative new categories, such as internships, or in creative instructional staffing for students with disabilities.

Some school districts have created co-teaching arrangements utilizing qualified special education teachers with qualified general education teachers. In some other instances, qualified special education teachers provide consultation to general education teachers. These arrangements may provide benefits of inclusion for students with disabilities.

The mandate requires the district to notify parents if their child's teacher does not meet the appropriate standards. Individuals hired without full licensure must show progress toward completion. This provision, while not immediately solving the problem of shortages, is holding school districts accountable and may, in the future, provide better-qualified teachers for children with special needs. The 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act includes a new initiative in the pre-referral and identification of children with learning disabilities. This process is referred to as **response to intervention (RTI)** and is based on a multitiered approach to meeting the needs of children. Usually associated with learning disabilities, RTI has as its primary aim to provide intervention to students who are not achieving at comparable rates with their peers. The core concepts involve research-based intervention, measurement of student response, and data-based instructional decisions (Kavale & Spaulding, 2008). RTI includes various levels of support in the general education setting prior to a referral to special education services. Only if students are not responding to research-based quality instruction in general education will they be referred to special education (Hallahan et al., 2015). Some research is beginning to demonstrate that effective RTI programs can indeed reduce the need for eventual special education placement (Fuchs, Fuchs & Compton, 2012; Wanzek & Vaughn, 2011).

IDEA Funding

When Congress passed Public Law 94-142 in 1975, it mandated services for children with disabilities. It required states and school districts to provide extensive and often expensive services to these children. Congress set a goal to fund the mandate at 40% of the cost to educate children with disabilities. Often the classes for these children are smaller and many require additional staffing with aides, which increases the cost to the schools. Parents empowered by this mandate have rightfully insisted that their children receive the services to which they are entitled. From 1995 to 2009, Congress's appropriations for IDEA increased from $3,253,000,000 to $12,579,677,000 (Committee on Education Funding, 2010). While this is a very significant increase, special education programs have expanded, and as recently as 2014, Congress's IDEA funding barely reached the 16% level, less than half of the $28.65 billion that had been promised (New American Foundation, 2015). This leaves school administrators in a difficult quandary, trying to provide the mandated appropriate services to all children using the underfunded resources of IDEA.

Many parents of children with disabilities are fully aware of the legal rights of their children. They may fight to secure the best possible education for their children, regardless of the district's financial ability to provide expensive services (e.g., residential schools, long-distance transportation). In these situations, the cost of providing service may greatly exceed funding from state and federal sources and may be far greater than the average budgeted costs for the typical student. These situations may add to a district's financial distress and may require the use of funds from general education to provide special education services.

Post–P.L. 94-142 Litigation

Even with over 40 years of legislation, amendments, and refinements, there are many aspects of special education law that remain unclear to the children, their parents and other advocates, and school district personnel. The laws are extremely precise in some areas and deliberately vague in others. In addition, many other variables exacerbate the problem of interpreting and implementing the various laws and regulations.

In additional to inadequate federal funding, staffing is another serious problem facing most states. Even when school districts are committed to full compliance with the laws, the acute national shortage of qualified special education and related services personnel may preclude their ability to do so. Parents who are aware of the law's requirement of an appropriate education are often angry and may feel that the schools have betrayed the best interests of their children, and they have often successfully addressed their frustrations by taking legal action against the schools. In some cases the schools are at fault for deliberately ignoring the IDEA requirements, but their situation is often exacerbated by lack of funding or lack of qualified teachers.

Because IDEA does not provide a substantive definition of an "appropriate education," the issue has often been left to the courts. Parents, as might be expected, typically view an appropriate education as the best possible education for their child. In 1982 *Board of Education of the Hendrick Hudson School District v. Rowley* became the first case related to "an appropriate education" for a student with a disability to reach the U.S. Supreme Court. Amy Rowley was a student with a hearing impairment who was placed in a regular education kindergarten class. Several of the school personnel learned sign language in order to communicate with Amy. A teletype machine was placed in the school office to facilitate communication with Amy's parents, who were also deaf. Amy was provided with a hearing aid by the school, and a sign language interpreter was assigned to her class. Amy completed kindergarten successfully and was found to be well adjusted and making better-than-average progress.

Following the kindergarten year, as was required by P.L. 94-142, an IEP was developed for the upcoming school year. The plan specified that Amy was to continue her education in a regular classroom. She was to continue the use of the hearing aid, and she would receive speech and language therapy three hours a week. In addition, she was to receive instruction an hour daily from a tutor who specialized in children with hearing impairments.

The parents disagreed with the IEP, believing that Amy should have a qualified sign language interpreter for all academic classes. The school district, however, concluded that a full-time interpreter was unnecessary and denied the request. As was their right under P.L. 94-142, the parents requested and were granted a due process hearing. The parents prevailed, and the case found its way through the lower courts until it finally reached the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Court, noting the absence in the law of any substantive standard for "appropriate," ruled that Congress's objective was to make a public education available to students with disabilities. The intent was to guarantee access on appropriate terms but not to guarantee a particular level of education. The Court ruled that schools were not obligated to provide the best possible education but a "basic floor of opportunity." It found that a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) standard could be determined only from a multifactorial evaluation on a case-by-case basis. This case essentially ensured the continuation of litigation to resolve "appropriate education" disputes (Murdick et al., 2014; Yell, 2016).

This case was significant in that it was the first case related to P.L. 94-142 to reach the Supreme Court. It set a standard for "appropriate education" to require more than simple access to education but less than the best possible educational program. The Court also focused attention on the rights of parents and guardians, giving them full participation at every stage of the process (Conroy, Yell, Katsiyannis, & Collins, 2010). It became part of case law, setting a precedent for similar cases that would follow (Murdick et al., 2014; Yell, 2016). Consequently, when a school can demonstrate that a student is making satisfactory progress, the district's position tends to prevail.

The courts have had to rule on other provisions of the law. For example, the courts have also ruled in favor of the child when parents have sought non-physician support services necessary to sustain the student's ability to function in school (e.g., *Irving Independent School District v. Tatro* [1984]). Through the years, a developing body of case law has provided parents and other advocates as well as school personnel with a better understanding of how the law should be implemented.

Public Law 94-142 provided students with disabilities their legal educational rights. However, school districts too often have been found out of compliance, either deliberately or due to the negligence of personnel. Over the past 30 years, numerous court decisions (e.g., Chandra Smith Consent Decree, Los Angeles Unified School District and Felix Consent Decree, Hawaii Department of Education) have resulted in massive judgments that cost districts far more in legal fees and staff time than they would have expended if they had initially complied with the law.

More than ever before, today children and adults with disabilities are an integral part of the nation's educational system and are finding their rightful place in society. Although the progress in recent years is indeed encouraging, society's attitudes toward individuals with disabilities have not always kept pace with the advancement of legal rights. As long as people are motivated more by fear of litigation than by moral and ethical impulses, we cannot consider our efforts in this arena a complete success.

Laws and Funding for Gifted and Talented Students

Currently there may be as many as 3 to 6 million academically gifted students in the United States. In addition, there are students who are considered talented and who could benefit from special educational programming. While the importance of gifted and talented education cannot be overstated, it unfortunately is often overlooked. Gifted and talented individuals are a country's potential leaders, innovators, and researchers who may someday enhance the quality of our lives. These are potentially individuals who will find preventions or cures for cancers, heart disease, diabetes, and Alzheimer's diseases. While there is permissive legislation for the gifted and talented (laws that allow gifted and talented programming to take place), there are no federal or state mandates for the education of this group. Funding for gifted and talented children is extremely limited. By comparison, over $12 billion is provided annually through IDEA for children with disabilities. The Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act, passed by



Watch the video "Teen Scientists Compete for Intel Science Talent Search Awards" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBOFKQRJutY) to see gifted high school finalists competing for a top science award.

Congress in 1988, is the only federally funded program specific to gifted and talented students. It does not fund local gifted education programs. The act is designed to support scientifically based research and to provide demonstration projects and innovative strategies to enhance the ability of schools to meet the educational needs of these students. Unfortunately, the funding for this act is very limited, with $10 million appropriated for fiscal year 2015 (National Association for Gifted Children, 2015). In the 2012–13 academic year, 14 states did not provide any funding to local districts for gifted education. Eight states provided $40 million or more, while 9 states provided between $1 and $10 million. Most educators understand the importance of special education for the gifted and talented. Legislators, however, are faced with diminishing fiscal resources, partially related to the mandated funding for children with disabilities. Some may believe that children with disabilities must have special programming to survive, whereas gifted and talented students are more able to fend for themselves. While there is some truth to this belief, failure to provide for the gifted and talented group's educational needs amounts to the waste of a valuable resource. While external funding may not be available to support programs for these students, schools need to commit themselves to developing their own programming for these students within their fiscal confines. Hopefully more private funding will eventually support gifted and talented education and allow for the nurturing of our future world leaders.

Exceptional Individuals and Society

Even in modern times, the understanding and treatment for any deviation from the norm has been limited. Society has begun to accept its basic responsibilities for people with disabilities by providing for their education and care, but social equality has yet to become a reality.

Society's view of people with disabilities can perhaps be illustrated by the way the media portrays this population. While the media in recent years has shown increasing sensitivity toward individuals with disabilities, there is much room for improvement. In general, when the media focuses on persons with disabilities, they are portrayed as (a) children, often with severe intellectual disabilities and obvious physical characteristics, or (b) persons with crippling conditions who are either in wheelchairs or on crutches. Thus, society often has a mindset regarding who people with disabilities are. They are often viewed as children or childlike, and they have severe disabilities—intellectually, physically, or both.



American Sign Language (ASL) is the predominant sign language used in the U.S. and English speaking Canada. (© Jules Selmes/ Pearson Education)

Because society often views those with disabilities as childlike, these individuals are denied the right to feel like nondisabled individuals. Teachers and other professional workers can often be observed talking about individuals with disabilities in their presence, as if the individuals are unable to feel embarrassment. Their desire to love and be loved is often ignored, and they are often viewed as asexual, without the same sexual desires as those who are nondisabled.

Contemporary American society places great emphasis on physical beauty and attractiveness. Individuals who deviate significantly from physical norms are subject to possible rejection, even if their physical deviations do not interfere with their day-to-day functioning.

In their seminal publication, Gliedman and Roth (1980) suggested that nondisabled individuals perceive those with disabilities as individuals who seldom hold good jobs, seldom

become heroes in our culture, and are seldom visible members of the community. They further suggested that society systematically discriminates against many capable individuals with disabilities. They indicated that the attitudes of society, which views disability as incompatible with adult roles, parallel racism. They stated that society perceives a "handicapped person as mentally or spiritually inferior because he is physically different or that 'people like that' have no business being out on the streets with 'us regular folks'" (p. 23).

Although society must remain vigilant, circumstances for individuals with disabilities have improved substantially in recent decades. Gliedman and Roth (1980) suggested that, with respect to discrimination, individuals with disabilities are in some ways better off than African Americans in that they face no overt discrimination, no organized brutality, no lynch mob "justice," and no rallies by supremacist groups (although Nazi Germany sterilized and euthanized thousands of individuals with disabilities). In some ways, however, people with disabilities are worse off. African Americans and other groups have developed ethnic pride. It is probable that no one has ever heard a "cerebral palsy is beautiful" cry, however. Society opposes racism with the view that African Americans are not self-evidently inferior, but at the same time it takes for granted the self-evidently inferior status of those who have disabilities.

As we stereotype individuals with disabilities, we deny them their rightful place in society. The disability dominates society's perception of the person's social value and creates an illusion of deviance. Individuals with disabilities are viewed as vocationally limited and socially inept.

Persons with disabilities may be tolerated and even accepted as long as they maintain the roles ascribed to them. They are often denied basic rights and dignity as human beings. They are placed under the perpetual tutelage of those perceived as more knowledgeable and more capable than they. They are expected to subordinate their own interests and desires to the goals of a program decreed by the professionals who provide services to them.

The general public may be required by law to provide educational and other services for individuals with disabilities. The public is prohibited by law from practicing certain aspects of discrimination against citizens with disabilities. No one, however, can require the person on the street to like those with disabilities and to accept them as social equals. Many will not accept a person with a disability. Just as racism leads to discrimination or prejudice against other races because of the belief in one's own racial superiority, **ableism** leads to stereotyping of, and discrimination against, individuals with disabilities because of the attitude of superiority held by some nondisabled individuals.

Society tends to place behavioral expectations on both men and women. Males are often expected to fulfill specific masculine roles including participating in athletics. Physical impairments, however, may preclude athletic involvement. Unable to meet these expectations, a young male with physical disabilities may develop a sense inadequacy. Feminine roles are also assigned, and women with physical disabilities who are unable to assume these roles may also develop similar feelings of devalued self worth. With the increased participation of women in athletics, and the success of the American women in recent Olympic and World Cup competition, some females may also suffer the frustration of being unable to participate in athletic or other physical programs.

Exceptional Cultural Groups

Because of insensitivity, apathy, or prejudice, many of those responsible for implementing and upholding the laws that protect individuals with disabilities fail to do so. The failure to provide adequate educational and vocational opportunities for individuals with disabilities may preclude the possibility of social and economic equality. These social and economic limitations are often translated into rejection by nondisabled peers and ultimately into social isolation.

Not unlike many ethnic minority groups who are rejected by mainstream society, individuals with disabilities often find comfort and security with each other, and in some instances they form their own enclaves and social organizational structures. Throughout the country, one can find cohesive groups of individuals, such as those who have visual or hearing impairments and those who have intellectual disabilities. In some instances, they congregate in similar jobs, in the same neighborhoods, and at various social settings and activities.

Near Frankfort Avenue in Louisville, Kentucky, three major institutions provide services for individuals who have visual impairments. The American Printing House for the Blind, the Kentucky School for the Blind, and New Vision Enterprises (formerly Kentucky Industries for the Blind) are all in close proximity. The American Printing House for the Blind, the leading publisher of materials for individuals with visual impairments, employs a number of individuals who are blind. The Kentucky School for the Blind is a residential school for students with visual impairments, and it also employs a small number of individuals with visual impairments, including teachers. New Vision Enterprises provides employment for individuals who are blind. With the relatively large number of persons who are blind employed by these three institutions, it is understandable that many individuals with visual impairments live in the surrounding residential area.

Settling in this area allows them to live close enough to their work to minimize the potential transportation problems related to their visual limitations. It also provides a sense of emotional security for the many who, in earlier years, attended the Kentucky School for the Blind and lived on its campus and thus became part of the neighborhood. The neighborhood community can also provide social and emotional security and feelings of acceptance. A few years ago, a mailing was sent from the Kentucky School for the Blind to each of its alumni; 90% of the addresses of the mailings at that time had the same zip code as the school.

Individuals with visual impairments or hearing impairments are among the most likely to form their own cultural groups. Both have overriding factors that contribute to the need for individuals to seek out one another and to form cultural groups. Some of the blind have limited mobility. Living in cultural enclaves allows them easier access to one another. They share forms of communication—oral language, Braille, and talking books. Social and cultural interests created partly as a result of their physical limitations can often be shared. The hearing impaired may have communication limitations within the hearing world. Their unique means of communication provides them with an emotional as well as a functional bond. Religious programs and churches for individuals with hearing impairments have been formed to provide services to assist in total communication and social activities.

Individuals with physical disabilities may or may not become a part of a cultural group related to the disability. Some function vocationally and socially as part of mainstream society. Given adequate cognitive functioning and adequate communication patterns, normal social interaction is possible. Socialization, however, may depend on the degree of impairment and the individual's emotional adjustment to the disability. Some individuals with physical disabilities may function in the mainstream world and also maintain social contacts with others with similar disabilities. Social clubs for individuals with physical disabilities have been formed to provide experiences commensurate with members' functional abilities, as well as a social climate that provides acceptance and security. Athletic leagues for competition in sports, such as wheelchair basketball and tennis, have been formed. Many racing events (e.g., the Boston Marathon) now include competition for wheelchair entries. The Wounded Warrior Project provides a wide variety of services to military veterans who have been wounded or injured in combat. Professional services are available to these veterans, and adaptive sports, health, nutrition, and recreational activities provide them with opportunities to spend time with others with similar experiences and disabilities.

Many individuals with mild intellectual disabilities live independently or in community-based and community-supported group homes. The group homes provide a family-like atmosphere, and house parents provide supervision. Most of the individuals with moderate intellectual disabilities who do not live in institutions tend to live at home. Many individuals with severe and profound intellectual disabilities, and some with moderate intellectual disabilities, are institutionalized and thus forced into their own cultural group or enclave, isolated from the rest of society.

The gifted and talented usually do not experience the same type of discrimination and social rejection that many individuals with disabilities experience. Yet, like individuals with disabilities, they may suffer isolation from mainstream society and seek others with comparable abilities to gain a feeling of acceptance as well as intellectual or emotional stimulation. The existence of Mensa, an organization whose membership prerequisite is a high score on an

intelligence test, attests to the apparent need of some gifted individuals to be with others of similar intellect or talents.

Rejection of the gifted and talented may differ from rejection of individuals with disabilities because the roots may stem from a lack of understanding or jealousy rather than from the stigma that may relate to certain disabilities.



Disproportionate Placement in Special Education

For over four decades, the overrepresentation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education classes has been a controversial issue for education. In the 1960s and 1970s, leaders in the field of special education such as Lloyd Dunn (1968) and Jane Mercer (1973) began to highlight the issue of disproportionate placement of minority students.

Disproportionality can be defined as "the representation of a group in a category that exceeds our expectations for that group, or differs substantially from the representation of others in that category" (Skiba et al., 2008, p. 264).

Overrepresentation of ethnic minority students in special education is clearly a major issue in education. While overrepresentation in special education does not necessarily equate with inappropriate placement, it is indicative of problems either within the educational system or in society in general. It is possible that there are actually more children of color in need of special education than their numbers or percentages in the general school population might suggest. If a child legitimately qualifies for special education services and is in need of such, it would be a disservice to him or her to withhold such services.

At least three major problems with overrepresentation have been identified by researchers: the negative effects of labeling, placement in isolated and restrictive settings, and the ineffectiveness of services in some special education settings (Waitoller, Artiles, & Chaney, 2010).

In 1968 the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) began its biannual survey of student placement in special education classes. The data also provided racial backgrounds of the students, using the broad categories of white, black, Asian/Pacific American, American Indian, and Hispanic. While the actual percentages have varied from survey to survey, one finding has remained consistent: African American students, particularly males, have been greatly overrepresented in classes for students with intellectual disabilities and serious emotional disturbances. In some states Latino students are overrepresented in classes for students with mild intellectual disabilities. Another consistent finding is that African American, American Indian, and Latino students are greatly underrepresented in classes for gifted and talented students.

There is, however, evidence that, compared to their prevalence in the general population, children with emotional disturbance may actually be underrepresented for special education services, more so than any other category of special education (Forness et al., 2012). While there is indeed overrepresentation of African Americans in this category, as noted above, there may also be considerable numbers of African Americans, along with other children of color and whites, who are possibly being denied needed services in this category.

Reporting of Students with Disabilites

One of the means by which the placement of students in special education classes is reported is by composition. The composition index compares the percentage of a group in a program with the percentage that the group represents in the general population. It answers questions such as: What is the percentage African American students in classrooms for students with intellectual disabilities? and What is the percentage of African American students in the school-age population? If a particular group's percentage in a program is substantially higher than its percentage of the school-age population, this would indicate overrepresentation (Smith & Tyler, 2014).

While African American students represented only 17% of the school-age population, they accounted for 33% of students identified as intellectually disabled (Skiba et al., 2008). Over the years, African American students, and African American males in particular, were consistently disproportionately represented in classes for students with intellectual disabilities and classes for those with emotional disturbances (Smith and Tyler, 2014). In more recent years, the various disabilities have all been reported by OCR in the single category of those served by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). African Americans continue to be overrepresented in the IDEA reporting of student placements in special education.

Poverty contributes to a significant number of problems. Pregnant women in poverty are provided less-than-optimal care during the prenatal period, as well as the period during and after birth. Physicians who provide medical care through government clinics are often burdened with excessive caseloads and are unable to provide the quality of care that women are afforded from private physicians and managed-care medical facilities. Appropriate nutrition and dietary supplements may be less available both to expectant mothers and to their children. Poverty may necessitate working late into term, even when it is advisable to stop working and rest.

Children born preterm (those under normal gestation and less than 5 lb., 8 oz. [2500 g]) may be at risk of developing cognitive and sensory disabilities (Drew & Hardman, 2007). Though more closely aligned with socioeconomic factors, preterm births have been associated with ethnicity. Younger women having children are more likely to have preterm babies, crack babies, and fetal alcohol syndrome children (Drew & Hardman, 2007), and teen births are disproportionately high among the poor.

Lead Poisoning. Nationally, about a half million children between the ages of 1 and 5 years have elevated lead levels in their blood, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2015). Lead poisoning can affect nearly every system of the body and can contribute to behavior problems, coma, seizures, and even death (CDC, 2015).

The primary sources of lead exposure for children in the United States are (1) house dust contaminated by lead paint and (2) soil contamination. Both the residue of lead paint and decades of industrial and vehicular emissions have contaminated the soil. Lead paint was in wide use in the 1940s, declined in use in the 1950s and 1960s, and was banned from residential use in 1978. However, older homes built before the ban are potentially hazardous to children. African American children are more likely to live in older homes, and 17% were found to have elevated levels of lead as compared to 4% of white children (Smith & Tyler, 2014).

In recent years, millions of toys, including some well-known brands, have been recalled due to excessive amounts of lead in their paint. Parents and educators must be vigilant in the selection of toys and educational materials, particularly those manufactured in other countries.

Overreferrals. As previously stated, the individuals who are placed in classes for students with mild intellectual disabilities and severe emotional disturbances are disproportionately male, African American, and from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. The first step in special education placement is the referral process. Anyone (parents, doctors, educators) can make referrals. Teachers make most referrals in the elementary school years. These teachers are overwhelmingly female, white, and middle class. There is often incongruity between educators and culturally diverse students with respect to cultural values, acceptable behaviors in the school, and educational expectations. This may result in overreferrals to classes for students with disabilities and underreferrals to classes for gifted and talented students. In overreferrals, teachers tend to make excessive referrals of students of color for placement in special education classes for students with disabilities. In underreferrals educators fail to recognize potential giftedness and do not make referrals for placement in classes for gifted students. Ford (2011) reported that in a 2009 survey of U.S. gifted and talent programs, African Americans comprised 16.70% of the total school population in the sample but only 9.86% of the students in gifted and talented classes. Ford also suggested that underrepresentation of African American students in gifted programs is consistently around 50%. Clark (2013) identified four conditions that may create this underrepresentation: biased beliefs regarding diverse populations,

lack of opportunities for early learning, lack of opportunities to develop school skills and testing skills, and fear of rejection. Some students of color are fearful of rejection by peers from their own ethnic/cultural group. As unreasonable as it may seem, some students of color who excel academically may at times be accused of "acting white." Davis, Rimm, and Siegle (2011) strongly advocated a multidimensional approach in identifying gifted and talented minority students, one that looks beyond IQ scores.

Racial Bias. Numerous stories can be told of students of color being automatically placed in low academic tracks or in special education, particularly prior to the advent of IDEA.

Both ethnicity and gender are among the most consistent predictors of school identification of intellectual disabilities and serious emotional disturbance. OCR surveys have revealed persistent overrepresentation of students of color in certain disability categories (and underrepresentation in the gifted and talented category). We have already discussed the overrepresentation of African American children in classes for students with intellectual disabilities. While the disproportionate placement of African American males in classes for students with emotional disturbances is not to the extent found in classes for individuals with intellectual disabilities, it is nevertheless at a troubling level. The placement percentage nationally of students in classes for students with emotional disturbances was 0.85%, while the percentage of African Americans in these classes was nearly 1.5% (50% higher than the general school population). Twenty-nine percent of the students in classes for students with emotional disturbances were African American (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Assessment Issues. Assessment of students of color is also a major concern as a contributing variable to the overrepresentation of these students in special education classes. Litigation in the 1970s (e.g., *Diana v. State Board of Education*, 1970, language minority Latino students; and *Larry P. v. Riles*, 1979, African American students) demonstrated the dangers of **biased assessment** instruments and procedures. Assessments that favor certain cultural groups and discriminate in content are considered biased. It is clear that some students in special education have central nervous system damage and that others have visual, auditory, orthopedic, and speech disabilities. There is no dispute regarding the appropriateness of the special education placement of these individuals. However, inappropriate placement of students of color in the judgmental categories of mild intellectual disabilities and severe emotional disturbance must be addressed if we are to have true equity in our educational system.

Unexplained Issues. The differences in special education placement between Hispanic and African American students and between male and female African American students cannot readily be explained by either social background or measured ability. The poverty rates between Hispanics and African Americans have been similar for a number of years. As previously stated, poverty is often listed as a variable that contributes to disability. However, we lack a clear explanation as to why placement rates for Hispanics in special education classes are relatively low compared to African American student rates. We also lack a clear understanding of why black males and females have such disparate placement percentages when they come from the same socioeconomic backgrounds. One possibility is the fact that males and females are socialized differently, regardless of racial or ethnic background. Perhaps the socialized behaviors of African American males have a higher level of incongruity with educators' values than do those of African American females, and they elicit more negative attention.

In observing the placement differences between African Americans and Hispanics, it might be noticed that some Hispanic students have more educational options open to them, including **bilingual education** and English as a second language (ESL) programs. Bilingual education, which utilizes both the home language and English in the instructional process, is designed to meet the needs of language minority students. ESL programs utilize only English with these students, with the primary intent to teach them English. Some bilingual education teachers may be reluctant to refer their students to special education, knowing

that the language of instruction for special education classes is likely to be English rather than the child's native language.

Prior to special education identification, many children at risk are subjected to classroom suspension or other school disciplinary procedures, and overrepresentation is evident here as well (Sullivan, Van Norman, & Klingbeil, 2014). However, the increasing implementation by special educators of school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) in general education classrooms seems to attenuate these suspensions as well as improve school test scores (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010). As noted, RTI approaches to children at risk for special education have also begun to demonstrate possible reductions in the need for special education placement, and evidence-based models for RTI have begun to proliferate, suggesting at least the potential for reducing disproportionality (Mellard, Stern, & Woods, 2011).

Need for Disaggregated Data

While national data show trends for the various racial/ethnic groups, the data are often confusing because of the failure to disaggregate the various groups. For example, Asians and Pacific Americans are consistently shown to be underrepresented in disability categories and overrepresented in gifted and talented classes. There is considerable diversity within this category, as it includes Asian groups such as the Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Indians, and Vietnamese, while also including Pacific Americans such as Hawaiians, Samoans, and Tongans. There are considerable cultural differences between Asian groups and even greater differences between Asians and Pacific Americans. Japanese Americans and Tongan Americans have little in common culturally, yet they are grouped together for U.S. government reporting purposes. The same is true among Hispanics. There are considerable cultural differences between Cuban Americans living in Miami and Central Americans living in East Los Angeles.

When disaggregating data by states or by ethnic groups, we often find considerable differences compared to national data. For example, data from the Hawaii State Department of Education shows that Hawaiian students are overrepresented in some categories of special education, such as intellectual disabilities. Yet this cannot be determined from analyzing national data, which combines Pacific Islanders with Asians. Hispanics are underrepresented in classes for students with intellectual disabilities and emotional disturbance in the OCR national data. Yet in some states, they are overrepresented.

The disproportional representation and inequities in special education raise concerns about the inequities in other areas of education and raise the prospect that there may be a relationship in these problematic issues. Special education overrepresentation often mirrors the overrepresentation seen in other categories and viewed by some as problematic: dropouts, low-track placements, corporal punishment, suspensions, and involvement in the juvenile justice system.

The problem has persisted for decades and will not be easily ameliorated. It will take a concerted effort to eliminate all bias from the assessment process, a restructuring of teacher education curricula, and a commitment of the wealthiest nation to eliminate the insidious effects of poverty on our children.

California Proposition 227 and Special Education

California's voters passed **Proposition 227** in 1998. This Proposition is discussed extensively in Chapter 7. Proposition 227 and similar laws in Arizona and Massachusetts were intended to dismantle bilingual education in favor of sheltered English immersion programs. The passage of this proposition sent waves of panic through California's (and Arizona's and Massachusetts's) bilingual education community. Those working with special needs students had even greater concerns because many believed that they were prohibited from using the home language with limited- and non-English-speaking students. They were also concerned that the new law would

require them to transition the students into general education classrooms after one year. Proposition 227 is a state law, as are the similar laws in Arizona and Massachusetts. The federal law, IDEA, always takes precedence over a state law. Therefore, if the student's IEP requires bilingual education, it must be provided for as long as indicated.



Teaching Children with Exceptionalities

The educational implications of working with exceptional individuals are numerous, and entire chapters could be devoted to each type of exceptionality. Educators should remember that exceptional children with disabilities and those who are gifted are more like than unlike non-exceptional children. Their basic needs are the same as all other children's. Abraham Maslow's theory on self-actualization is familiar to most students in education. To be self-actualized, or to meet one's full potential, Maslow (1954) theorized, one's basic needs must be fulfilled. That is, to reach self-actualization, one's physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness or love needs, and esteem needs must first be met. Although many individuals with disabilities may never match the accomplishments of their nondisabled peers, they can become proficient at whatever they are capable of doing. Educators can assist them by helping to ensure that their basic needs are met, allowing them to strive toward self-actualization.

Teachers must be constantly cognizant of the unique needs of their exceptional children. The exceptional adult may choose, or may be forced by society, to become part of a cultural group. The interactions between educators and the exceptional child may not change what will eventually take place. Even if exceptional adults are part of a cultural group, they also will interact with the mainstream society on a regular basis. Efforts on the part of the educator to meet the needs of the child may ultimately affect the exceptional adult's interaction with society.

Teachers of children with physical and other health impairments may find it advantageous to check the student records carefully to determine potential problem situations with these students in the classroom. If a child has particular health problems that may surface in the classroom, the child's teachers need to be prepared to determine precisely what to do should the child have, for example, an epileptic seizure. The parents will most likely be able to provide precise instructions, and the school nurse could provide additional recommendations. If the children are old enough to understand, they too can be a valuable source of information. A teacher can ask them what kinds of adaptations, special equipment, or teaching procedures work best for them. Teachers should not be afraid of their own uncertainties. They should feel free to ask students when they prefer to have or not have assistance. Teachers should treat their students with disabilities as normally as is feasible, neither overprotecting them nor doing more for them than is needed or deserved. Allowing them to assume responsibility for themselves will do much to facilitate their personal growth.

Many variables affect the learning, cognition, and adjustment of individuals with disabilities. This is particularly evident for culturally and linguistically diverse learners who must cope with issues of language, culture, and values.

The range and variety of experiences imposed on, or withheld from, persons with disabilities may result in undue limitations. Too often, parents and teachers assume that a child's visual limitation precludes the ability to approximate the typical everyday experiences of sighted children. Children who are blind may not be able to see the animals in a zoo, but they can smell and hear them. They may not be able to enjoy the scenes along a bus route, but they can feel the stop-and-go movements, hear the traffic and people, and smell their fellow travelers. The child who is deaf may not be able to hear the sounds at the symphony or the crowd's roar at a football game. Both events, however, offer the possibility of extraordinary sensory experiences to which the child needs exposure. A child with cerebral palsy needs experiences such as going to restaurants, even if the child has difficulty using eating utensils in a socially acceptable manner.

Well-adjusted individuals with a sensory disability usually attain a balance of control with their environment. Individuals who depend completely on other members of the family and on friends may develop an attitude of helplessness and a loss of self-identity. Individuals with disabilities who completely dominate and control their environment with unreasonable demands sometimes fail to make an acceptable adjustment and could become selfish and self-centered.

It is critical to remember that children who are exceptional are, first and foremost, children. Their exceptionality, though influencing their lives, is secondary to their needs as children. Following are three types of needs for parents and educators to keep in mind for children with disabilities: communication, acceptance, and the freedom to grow. They may also be applicable to some gifted students.

Communication Needs

Exceptional children are far more perceptive than many adults give them credit for being. They are sensitive to nonverbal communication and hidden messages that may be concealed in half-truths. They, more than anyone else, need to deal with their exceptionality, whether it is a disability, giftedness, or both. They need to know what their exceptionality is all about so that they can deal with it. They need to know how it will affect their lives in order to adjust appropriately, to make the best of their lives, and to reach their full potential. They need straight, honest communication tempered with sensitivity.

Acceptance Needs

U.S. society often fails to provide exceptional children with a positive and receptive environment. Even the educational setting can be hostile and lacking in acceptance. A teacher can facilitate the acceptance of a child in a classroom by exhibiting an open and positive attitude. Students tend to reflect the attitude of the teacher. If the teacher is hostile, the students will quickly pick up these cues. If the attitude is positive and nurturing, the students are likely to respond and provide a receptive environment for their classmates with disabilities.

Jeff, a first-grade student who suffered from a hearing loss, was fitted with a hearing aid. When he came to school wearing the hearing aid, the students in the class immediately began whispering about the "thing" Jeff had in his ear. After observing the class behavior, with the permission of Jeff's parents, the teacher privately assisted Jeff in a show-and-tell preparation for the next day. With the teacher's assistance and assurances, Jeff proudly demonstrated his hearing aid to the class, showing them how he could adjust it to allow him to hear even some things they could not. By the end of the demonstration, Jeff was the envy of the class, and all further discussion of the hearing aid was of a positive nature.

Freedom to Grow

Students with disabilities need acceptance and understanding. Acceptance implies freedom for the exceptional child to grow. At times, it may seem easier to do things for a child than to take the time to teach the child. A number of years ago, one of the co-authors lived and worked at a residential state school for the blind. Recounted next are two actual events that took place at the school.

Sarah (whose name has been changed) was a nine-year-old girl who was blind and had an orthopedic disability; she studied at the state residential school for the blind. She wore leg braces but had a reasonable amount of mobility with the use of crutches. To save time and effort, fellow students or staff members transported her between the cottage where she lived and the classroom building in a wagon. One day her teacher decided she needed to be more independent in her travel to and from her cottage. To Sarah's surprise, the teacher informed her after school that she would not ride back in the wagon but that he would walk her back. Angered, she denounced him as cruel and hateful. She complained bitterly the full 20 minutes

Critical Incidents in Teaching

How to Address a Major Student Behavior Issue

Bart Weintraub was a special education teacher with two years of teaching experience. In his third year, he was newly assigned to a high school class of students primarily with mild intellectual disabilities. Four of the students were at the lower end of the continuum with respect to their functioning. Larry was one of the most challenged, minimally articulate, and was diagnosed as autistic.

Bart's biggest challenge was the principal, Mr. Giffords, an older, polite, and professional individual, who clearly did not want a special needs class in his school. While he had no choice in the matter, Mr. Giffords had made his discomfort clear to Ms. Ferguson, an old friend and the district director of special education. Ms. Ferguson had selected Bart for this position and had told him about Mr. Giffords's negative feelings about special education, advising him to be very prudent with interactions with the principal. She told Bart to call her anytime he had concerns.

One day Bart returned from lunch early to find Larry, a student, with Margie, the most intellectually and socially challenged of the girls in the class. Margie was backed up against the back wall of the classroom with a frightened look on her face. Larry was right up against her. His belt and the top button of his trousers were undone. As soon as Larry saw Bart, with a frightened look on his face, he quickly backed away from Margie and fastened his button and his belt. Bart asked Margie if she had been injured, and she quickly replied, "No." Neither of the students said anything. Both looked frightened, for being discovered and for any possible consequences.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. What should Bart do with the situation?
2. Is he obligated to call the police?
3. Is he obligated to inform Mr. Giffords immediately, knowing full well that there would likely be very negative consequences for the special education program?
4. Should he call Ms. Ferguson, the director of special education?
5. Should the parents be notified?

of their walk back to the cottage. After a few days the complaining subsided, and the travel time was reduced. Within a few weeks Sarah was traveling on her own in 10 minutes or less—and with newfound independence and self-respect.

Sometimes, it may be tempting for teachers and parents to make extra concessions for an exceptional child. Often these exceptions hinder the emotional growth of the child and may later cause serious interpersonal problems.

Jimmy (whose name has also been changed) was a seven-year-old boy who was blind, and he attended the same state institution as Sarah. He was a favorite of the staff members because of his pleasant personality and overall adjustment. On a Sunday afternoon he was assisting a staff member in making holiday cards. The conversation turned to Christmas and Jimmy's wish for a transistor radio. (This incident took place in 1960, when transistor radios were very expensive.) Since Jimmy had already made his wishes known to his parents, the staff member was confident that the parents would not deny this child his wish. To the surprise of the staff, Jimmy returned after the holidays without a radio. He explained that the radios were so expensive that had his parents granted his wish, it would have come at the expense of the other children in the family. Weeks later, when Jimmy returned from his birthday weekend at home, he entered his cottage distraught, with his new transistor radio in hand. When questioned, he admitted that he and his younger brother Ralph had been continuously bickering over who would sit next to the window on the way to the school. His parents had first warned them and then severely reprimanded both boys when they did not stop the fighting. When a staff member went out to greet Jimmy's parents, Ralph was visibly upset over being disciplined.

Although Jimmy's disability created adjustment problems for everyone, the parents had resolved to treat him as an equal in the family. As such, he shared all of the family privileges. He also suffered the same consequences for inappropriate behavior. This attitude on the part of the parents was probably a primary factor in Jimmy's excellent adjustment to his disability.

Normalization and Inclusion

Much effort is directed today toward the concept of normalization. **Normalization** means "making available to all persons with disabilities or other handicaps [disabilities], patterns of life and conditions of everyday living which are as close as possible to or indeed the same as the regular circumstances and ways of life of society" (Nirje, 1985, p. 67). Understanding normalization helps us understand what has led us to the current educational movements for children with disabilities.

Normalization was expanded and advocated in the United States by Wolfensberger (1972). He subsequently suggested a rethinking of the term *normalization* and introduced the concept of **social role valorization**—giving value to individuals with intellectual disabilities (Wolfensberger, 1983, 2000). He suggested that the "most explicit and highest goal of normalization must be the creation, support, and defense of valued social roles for people who are at risk of social devaluation" (1983, p. 234).

Drew and Hardman (2007) suggested that normalization has brought about an emphasis on deinstitutionalization, whereby individuals from large residential facilities for people with intellectual disabilities are returned to the community and home environments. They add that the concept is not limited to movement away from institutions to a less restrictive environment; it also pertains to individuals living in the community for whom a more "normal" lifestyle may be an appropriate goal.

The principles of normalization as it was introduced were developed with individuals with intellectual disabilities (mental retardation) as the target group. In more recent years, the concept has broadened so that all categories of individuals with disabilities are now targeted. The term *mainstreaming* has given way to **inclusion**, suggesting that a natural evolutionary process from the concept of normalization has taken place. Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer define inclusion as allowing "students with disabilities to learn in general education classes and have a sense of belonging in these classes" (2010, p. 42). Mastropieri and Scruggs (2013) differentiated between inclusion and **full inclusion**, with the latter serving students with disabilities and other special needs entirely within the general classroom. This is an important difference, as students in full inclusion do not receive any of their education in segregated settings.



Watch the video "Special Education LRE (Least Restrictive Environment)" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rG6C-HEM-wA) to see how educators and fellow students support a student with severe disabilities in a regular education class.

Initially inclusion was intended for students with mild disabilities. The current effort to support full inclusion seeks to provide children with moderate to severe disabilities with similar opportunities. Although resistance to inclusion of students with mild disabilities is far less intense than it once was, it is still felt from some educators. The arguments against integrating children with severe disabilities have often centered on the presumed inability of nondisabled children to accept their peers with disabilities. In reality, some of the reservations may be more a reflection of educators who themselves are unable or unwilling to accept the dignity and worth of individuals with severe disabilities.

Historically, special education in the United States has offered a full continuum of placements for students with disabilities. These services have ranged from the most restrictive placements, such as residential schools and special schools, to the least restrictive settings, such as full inclusion in the general education classroom.

Federal special education law (IDEA) does not require inclusion. The law does require the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities. Herein lies the basis for considerable controversy in special education. The controversy is often fueled within special education itself, as educators are not in complete agreement regarding what is the least restrictive environment. **Least restrictive environment (LRE)** means that children with disabilities are to be educated with nondisabled children whenever possible, in as normal an environment as possible. Few special educators would argue against the concept of inclusion. However, disagreement focuses on whether full inclusion is appropriate for every child regardless of the type or the severity of the disability.

To some, and perhaps to many of the advocates of full inclusion, the issue is not the efficacy of general education placement. Rather, it is a moral and ethical issue. Opponents of inclusion use many of the same arguments that segregationists used more than 50 years ago. Most Americans today would consider it unconscionable to segregate children in schools on the basis of race or ethnicity. This, we can agree, is morally and ethically wrong. Advocates for full inclusion find it equally repugnant to segregate children on the basis of a disability.

In reality, most if not all children with disabilities could be served in a general education classroom if adequate resources and supports were made available. Therein lies a primary problem. There is seldom an adequate supply of certified or credentialed personnel in special education and related services (e.g., school psychologists). General educators have many issues and concerns to address in the area of inclusion:

- The special needs student may detract from the attention normally provided other students.
- What kind of reception will the nondisabled students give to the students with disabilities?
- If educators are not provided with appropriate training to accommodate students with disabilities, they will not be able to provide appropriate instructional services.
- The younger students and those with more severe disabilities will require greater attention.
- The promises of support in terms of classroom personnel and other resources may not be kept.

A pragmatist would argue that there are not enough fiscal resources to provide the support necessary for successful full inclusion of all children. The courts will not accept an excuse such as "We don't do it because there are inadequate resources." The courts may accept the argument that a particular program or service is not in the best interests of the student, but it must be clearly supported and documented. However, if full inclusion is warranted, the courts will order the schools (as they have consistently done) to "get the resources and do it."

Those who question aspects of full inclusion may argue that some children are so disruptive and dangerous to themselves and to other students that they cannot be provided for in general education. Supporters of full inclusion can reply that given adequate resources, students can be taught to stop disruptive and dangerous behaviors. There has been a progressive trend toward greater inclusion in the nation's schools. Prior to the 1984–85 school year, only about a fourth of the students with disabilities spent a significant part of their day in general education classrooms. By the 2011, 61% of the students ages 6 to 21 were involved in general education 80% or more of the school day (Turnbull et al., 2010; Turnbull, et al., 2015). Some general conclusions can be drawn:

- As long as Congress fails to meet its financial obligations to fully fund IDEA, school districts will continue to have difficulty providing adequate resources for special education.
- Segregating students with disabilities from general education classes without justification is morally and ethically wrong.
- The debate over inclusion and full inclusion continues and is not likely to be fully resolved in the immediate future.

It is important for us as educators to see the parallels and differences between the current debate regarding this group of students and the issues that *Brown* addressed more than 50 years ago. The two situations have similarities, but the groups are different. It is important that as educators we maintain open minds so that we ourselves perhaps can be educated.

The legal mandates do not eliminate special schools or classes, but they do offer a new philosophical view. Instead of the physical isolation of individuals with disabilities, efforts must be made to enable students with disabilities to assume a more appropriate place in the educational setting. Still, many children with disabilities may not benefit appreciably from an inclusive setting and may be better educated in a special setting. As attitudes become more attuned to the laws, people with disabilities may have more options to participate in the decision to be a part of the mainstream or to be segregated into their own cultural groups.

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate/Is Full Inclusion Feasible for All Children with Disabilities?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is a federal law that requires the placement of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. This means that these students should be placed in or as close to a general education setting as is feasible for them. What is the least restrictive setting for a child with a disability? Is it feasible to place every child with a disability in a general education setting? Are there adequate resources to do this? Do we have the skill and the will to make it work?

FOR

- ☐ **Full inclusion for all children with disabilities is a moral and ethical issue. It is as immoral to segregate a child because of his or her disability as it is to segregate children because of the color of their skin.**
- ☐ **The least restrictive environment that is feasible for every child is a general education classroom. We have the know-how to deliver quality educational services for every child in an inclusive general education classroom.**
- ☐ **The fact that we do not have adequate fiscal resources is not the fault of the child with a disability. If we don't have the resources, then we need to find ways to get them.**

AGAINST

- ☐ **Full inclusion may work for some students with disabilities, but it makes no sense to insist on it for every student, regardless of the disability or the degree of impairment.**
- ☐ **Some students with disabilities lack the maturity, cognitive ability, social skills, or appropriate behaviors to function in general education.**
- ☐ **Until the federal government makes good on its commitment to fully fund IDEA, there will not be adequate resources to successfully implement full inclusion for all children with disabilities.**
- ☐ **Even if the fiscal resources were there, there simply are not enough professionally prepared personnel to provide the types of services needed for successful inclusion of every child.**

QUESTIONS

1. **Are there some students who should never be considered for general education placement?**
2. **If the federal government mandates special education for all children, commits itself to funding 40% of the cost, and continues to renege on the full funding, should school districts be forced to fully implement IDEA?**
3. **Is excluding children with disabilities from full inclusion in general education morally and ethically comparable to excluding children because of race?**

SUMMARY

Students with Disabilities and Students Who Are Gifted and Talented

There are perhaps 10 million exceptional students in the United States; two-thirds of them are students with disabilities such as intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, and physical and sensory disabilities, and the remaining one-third are gifted and talented. Government programs are mandated for students with disabilities but are permissive for the gifted and talented.

Civil rights for individuals with disabilities have been questionable and have typically lagged behind the civil rights gained by racial and ethnic minorities.

Litigation

It took lawsuits on behalf of students with disabilities brought by parents and advocacy groups for children with disabilities to gain their educational rights in U.S. schools. *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* did not involve children with disabilities, but it served as the cornerstone for special education court cases such as *Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizens v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* and *Mills v. Board of Education* for the courts to determine that children with disabilities are entitled to a public education.

Legislation

As the litigation set the stage, legislation brought on behalf of the parents of children with disabilities and supported by organizations such as the Council for Exceptional Children and the National Association for Retarded Citizens gained the support of congressional leaders and resulted in history-changing legislation such as Section 504 of Public Law 93-112, the special education counterpart to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This law was soon followed in 1975 with Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, which guaranteed a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment for children with disabilities. These laws were the followed up with the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, which provided accommodations for individuals in the workplace and accessibility in public places. The 1997 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and subsequent amendments improved and enhanced the provisions of Public Law 94-142.

Exceptional Individuals and Society

While litigation and legislation gave legal rights to individuals with disabilities, society has not always been kind to individuals with disabilities. They have been looked down upon and often treated like children or as being childlike. While television and other forms of media have begun to treat individuals with disabilities with greater kindness and respect, we continue to hear incidents of these children sometimes being ridiculed and bullied.

With so many military veterans returning from service with permanent disabilities, society is slowly waking up to its responsibilities to these individuals and others with disabling conditions. Some of these individuals have found a secure place for themselves and an outlet for their own personal ambitions in athletic leagues, wounded warrior athletic programs, wheelchair athletic events, Special Olympics, and other forms of athletic expression for individuals with disabilities.

The highly gifted have found a place with others sharing their same interests and commonalities in organizations such as Mensa.

Disproportionate Placement in Special Education

The disproportionate placement of students of color first became evident with the seminal writings of Dunn in 1968 and Mercer in 1973, when they called attention to placement of African American and Hispanic children in classes for the mentally retarded (children with intellectual disabilities). The Office of Civil Rights began releasing the Elementary and Secondary Civil Rights Report in 1968, which through the years show a problem nationally with the overrepresentation of African Americans and in particular African American males placed in classes for students with intellectual disabilities and severe emotional disturbance. Underrepresentation of African Americans in classes for the gifted and talented has also been a continuous problem. The reasons for these disproportionate placements are likely multifaceted, including poverty issues, overreferrals, and biased assessments.

Teaching Children with Exceptionalities

Maslow indicated that for an individual to become self-actualized, he or she must first have basic needs addressed. While children with disabilities may or may not be able to attain the same level of competency as their nondisabled peers, they too are capable of reaching self-actualization and their full potential if their basic needs are met.

Teachers should make themselves particularly aware of the health needs of their special needs students and be prepared for any medical emergencies, such as seizures. Student records, parents, a school nurse, and even the student can assist in awareness.

Providing for special education students' needs for communication, acceptance, and the freedom to grow will not only facilitate the students' academic development but their overall life adjustment.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts



7 Language

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- **7.1** Describe what language is and the role it plays in providing a sense of identity.
- **7.2** Explain the nature of language and why all languages are equal.
- **7.3** Discuss the diversity of languages spoken in U.S. classrooms.
- **7.4** Describe the various forms that nonverbal communication can take and how nonverbal communication can both augment and contradict spoken communication.
- **7.5** Describe the process and challenges of second language acquisition among school-age children.
- **7.6** Discuss issues related to differentiating instruction for all language learners.

Theresa Roberts, a kindergarten teacher at Mokumanu Elementary School in Honolulu, had just finished welcoming her new class and introducing herself. As she wrote her name and the school's on the chalkboard, she felt a slight tug on the back of her skirt and heard a faint voice just above a whisper say, "Teacha, I like go pee." Turning around, she saw the pleading face of Malia Kealoha. "What did you say?" Ms. Roberts responded disgustedly. In a slightly louder voice, Malia repeated herself, "I like go pee." With classmates beginning to giggle, Ms. Roberts exclaimed, "You will go nowhere, young lady, until you ask me in proper English. Now say it properly." "I no can," pleaded Malia. "Then you can just stand there until you do." With the students still giggling and Malia standing as ordered, Ms. Roberts proceeded with her lesson.

A few minutes later, the occasional giggle exploded into a chorus of laughter. As Ms. Roberts turned to Malia, the child was sobbing as she stood in the middle of a large puddle of urine on the classroom floor.

REFLECTIONS

1. Do teachers have a right to expect and demand Standard English from their students?
2. How important is it for students to be able to speak Standard English?
3. If a student is able to communicate well enough in his or her non–Standard English for others to understand, why should educators be concerned about non–Standard English usage?



Language and Culture

The preceding incident took place in a school in Hawaii many years ago. Malia (not her real name) described the incident as one of the most painful and humiliating in her life. When she entered school, she was unable to speak **Standard English** (language considered proper in a community); she could speak only Hawaiian **pidgin English** (a creole of English with words and phrases from Hawaiian, Chinese, Japanese, and other languages). The teacher knew precisely what the child was trying to say. The teacher's insensitivity, however, resulted in lasting emotional scars on Malia as a child that lasted into adulthood. This type of insensitivity, unfortunately, is not an isolated phenomenon. Individuals in the U.S. Southwest have described similar incidents in past years involving non-English-speaking Mexican American students entering school for the first time.



Watch the video "Hawaii Pidgin: The Voice of Hawaii" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7X-9AAeDCr4) to hear an example of the commonly used creole language spoken by many residents of Hawaii.

Language is a system of vocal sounds and/or nonverbal systems by which group members communicate with one another. It is a critical tool in the development of an individual's identity, self-awareness, and intellectual and psychological growth. It makes our behavior human. It can incite anger, elicit love, inspire bravery, and arouse fear. It binds groups of people together. Language and dialect serve as a focal point for cultural identity. People who share the same language or dialect often share the same feelings, beliefs, and behaviors.

Language provides a common bond for individuals with the same linguistic heritage. It can play a key role in providing a group or even a nation a sense of identity. Language may also be the means by which one group of people stereotypes another. Language and accents can usually be altered, whereas racial and physical appearance generally cannot. Through changing the style of one's language or even the language itself, individuals can shape others' impressions of them.

Most students enter school speaking what is considered Standard English. Others speak little or no English. Some are bilingual; some speak a **nonstandard dialect** (the same language but a different pronunciation from what is considered standard, e.g., African American Vernacular English). Some students with hearing impairments may use sign language to communicate. As the scene changes from school to school, the languages and dialects (usually determined by region or social class) spoken also change. The scene, however, is indicative of the multilingual nature of the United States, a result of its multicultural heritage. Because some students speak one or more languages, as well as dialects of these languages, they are part of another cultural group. Of course, not all African American children speak African American Vernacular English (AAVE, also known as African American English [AAE]), a vernacular or dialect of the majority of black Americans, nor do all Hispanics or Latinos speak Spanish. Within most cultures, members vary greatly in language or dialect usage.

Eurocentrism and Eurocentric curricula place Europeans and European Americans as the focus of the world with respect to culture, history, economics, values, lifestyles, worldviews, and so forth. Because U.S. society has such strong Eurocentric roots, European languages and accents may be given higher status than those from non-European countries. French and German languages may be viewed as more academic, more sophisticated, and more prestigious in some segments of society. Children from these linguistic backgrounds may be viewed with greater esteem than immigrant children from undeveloped countries. Society and educators may stigmatize bilingual students, especially those from limited English backgrounds, which are often identified with poverty. They may perceive them to be low in status and educationally at risk. Too often some students from immigrant and language-minority backgrounds have been discouraged by their teachers from seeking higher education.

Individuals who have limited English proficiency frequently suffer institutional discrimination as a result of the limited acceptance of languages other than English. Rather than value and promote the use of two or more languages, some educators expect students to replace their native languages with English. Unfortunately, some students lose the home language in the process. Movements to establish English-only policies and practices may further devalue an immigrant student's home language.

Language as a Socializing Agent

Language is much more than a means of communication. It is used to socialize children into their linguistic and cultural communities, where they develop patterns that distinguish one community from another. Thus, the interaction of language and culture is complex but central to the socialization of children into acceptable cultural patterns. Although there are many theories regarding the development of language, exactly how a language is learned is not completely understood. Almost all children have the ability to learn one or more native languages. In part through imitating older persons, children gradually learn. They learn to select almost instinctively the right word, the right response, and the right gesture to fit the situation. By age 5, children have learned the syntax of their native language, and they know that words in different arrangements mean different things. This suggests that within their own communities, children develop impressive language skills, although these skills may vary greatly from school requirements (Adger, Wolfram, & Christian, 2007; American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2015). At an early age, children acquire the delicate muscle control necessary for pronouncing the words of the native language or for signing naturally if the child is deaf. As the child grows older, it becomes increasingly difficult to make the vocal muscles behave in the new, unfamiliar ways necessary to master a foreign language. This tends to inhibit people from learning new languages and encourages them to maintain the one into which they were born.

Native speakers of a language unconsciously know and obey the rules and customs of their language community. Society and language interact constantly. An incorrect choice in word selection may be perceived as rude, crude, or ignorant. Individuals who are learning a new language or who are unfamiliar with **colloquialisms**, the informal or conversational speech in a community, may make incorrect choices or even be surprised when the use of certain words is incongruous with their perceptions of what is proper. For example, an Australian exchange student attending a Texas university was shocked when a young woman at his church responded to his query of what she had been doing during the summer: "Oh, just piddling around." Her response was meant to convey the message that she had been passing her time in idle or aimless activities. From his frame of reference, however, the shocked Australian student understood her to say that she had been urinating. It is important for classroom teachers to recognize that students who are new to a language may not always be able to make appropriate word selections or comprehend the meaning of particular dialects or colloquialisms. Although the United States is primarily an English-speaking country, many other languages are spoken here. Spanish, Chinese, French, German, Tagalog (Filipino), Vietnamese, and Italian are the most commonly used languages other than English.



The United States has become increasingly diverse linguistically, as evidenced by the various business signs we see in our communities.
© Stephen Finn/Shutterstock

In the 1930s Fiorello La Guardia was the mayor of New York City. La Guardia, of Jewish and Italian ancestry, was fluent in **Yiddish**, Italian, German, and French, as well as the New York dialect of English (Jewish Virtual Library, 2015; NYC.gov, 2015). La Guardia was known to vary not only the language but his speech style with each ethnic group. For example, when speaking to Italian audiences, he used broad, sweeping gestures characteristic of the people of southern Italy. When speaking to Jewish audiences, he used the forearm chop identified with many Eastern European Jews. With some Jewish groups he spoke in Yiddish. The example of La Guardia suggests not only that different ethnic groups have different communication styles but also that individuals adjust their communication style, when possible, to suit the needs of the intended audience.

Language Diversity

Among English-speaking individuals are numerous dialects—from the southern drawl to the Appalachian white dialect to the Brooklyn dialect of New York. Each is distinctive, and each is an effective means of communication for those who share its linguistic style. There are approximately 60 million non-English-speaking individuals living in the United States. This number has almost tripled in the past three decades, and it has substantially outpaced the 33% population growth in the United States during the same period. This figure does not include the millions of English-speaking individuals whose dialects are sometimes labeled nonstandard. The U.S. Census Bureau has identified 381 languages spoken in the United States (Ryan, 2013).

The advantage of being bilingual or multilingual is often overlooked because of our ethnocentrism, or belief in the superiority of our own ethnicity or culture. In many other countries, children are expected to become fluent in two or more languages and numerous dialects so that they can communicate with other groups and appreciate language diversity. Lessow-Hurley (2013) pointed out that while students from an English-speaking background are lauded for mastering another language, children from immigrant families are often encouraged or forced to give up their first language in order to complete their "Americanization." She suggested that we rid ourselves of elitist attitudes and recognize the value of bilingualism, regardless of the source. In a world that is becoming increasingly global, it is evident to more and more U.S. educators and parents that there are distinct advantages to bilingualism, biliteracy, and bicultural skills.



The Nature of Language

From a linguistic point of view, there is neither a good language nor a bad language. All languages have developed to express the needs of their users. In that sense, all languages are equal. It is true that languages do not all have the same conventions of grammar, phonology, or semantic structure. It is also true that society equates different levels of social status with the different language groups. These judgments tend to be based not on linguistic acceptability but on social reasons. Hudley and Mallison (2011) suggested that language is always changing, and variation is inherent. They further suggested that standardized English is influenced or determined by powerful individuals and institutions that have political, social, and cultural status, enabling them to determine what is socially acceptable and prestigious. Standardization is deliberately and artificially imposed; there is no linguistic reason a standardized variety of English should be considered inherently better than any other variety of English. All languages meet the social and psychological needs of their speakers and, as such, are equal.

Cultural Influences

Language usage is culturally determined. In addition to influencing the order of words to form phrases, language influences thinking patterns. "Time" is described differently from culture to culture. Western societies view time as something that can be saved, lost, or wasted; punctuality is valued. In other societies, time assumes different values. In Japan, punctuality is expected. If a Tokyo-bound train is scheduled to leave at 8:12 a.m., one better be on board and in the right seat by that time. Arrive at 8:13 a.m., and you may end up watching the train pull away from the terminal.

Individuals from the southern United States may be accustomed to exchanging pleasantries and what they may consider "small talk" prior to substantive or business conversation. Chatting first about Saturday's football game or the spring flowers in bloom may be considered a polite way to lead into the issues that need to be discussed. To do otherwise might be considered rude by some individuals. Others, unaccustomed to southern ways, may consider this behavior a waste of time.

For effective communication to take place, it is important that there be enough cultural similarities between the sender and the receiver for the latter to decode the message adequately. Even when one is familiar with a word or phrase, comprehension of the intended meaning may not be possible unless there is some similarity or understanding of the cultural background.

In certain cultural groups, words and phrases may assume different meanings. "Bad" among some adolescent groups takes on the opposite meaning from its usual one and may denote the "best." **Argot** is a more-or-less secretive vocabulary of a co-culture group. "Turning a trick" is an example of argot used by a prostitute to indicate that he or she has or had a customer. **Co-cultures** are groups of people who exist and function apart from the dominant culture. Users of argot include prisoners, gays and lesbians, gang members, sporting groups, and prostitutes.

Language is very much cultural. Together with dialect, language is usually related to one's ethnic, geographic, gender, or class origins. Speakers from a particular background often downgrade the linguistic styles of others. For example, easterners may be critical of the speech of southerners, citing the latter's use of slow, extended vowels and the expression "y'all." Southerners, on the other hand, may be critical of the speech and language patterns of some individuals from areas in New York, who they think "speak through their noses" and use such phrases as "youse guys." An eastern dialect of English is appropriate in the eastern United States, the southern dialect is appropriate in the South, and African American Vernacular English, the dialect of the majority of black Americans, is appropriate in many African American communities. As with languages, there are neither good nor bad dialects. While some are more socially acceptable than others, they all meet the group needs and, in that sense, are equal.

Language systems, like most other cultural features, are dynamic. They change constantly as society changes. Language change is inevitable and rarely predictable. For example, an elderly third-generation Japanese American born and raised in Maryland learned Japanese from both his grandparents and parents. On his first trip to Japan, he spoke to the locals in what he considered his fluent Japanese. While he had little difficulty communicating, he was surprised that they seemed amused at his speech, which they found archaic and representative of the early 1900s. The Japanese he had learned from his family was indeed the Japanese language of over 100 years earlier. In some areas, language change is so gradual that it goes unnoticed. In other circumstances, changes are easily noted. Expressions and words tend to be identified with a particular period. Sometimes language is related to a particular culture and a certain period. For example, slang words and terms such as "24/7," "airhead," "that's crazy," and "iffy" may be a part of our language for a time, to be replaced by other expressions.



Language Differences

There are literally thousands of languages in the world. Anderson (n.d.) suggested that 6,909 languages are used worldwide. There are only 210 languages spoken in Europe and another 2,197 in Asia. Some regions are known for their linguistic diversity. For example, Papua New Guinea has more than 800 languages with a population of only 3.9 million. Vyacheslav Ivanov of the University of California, Los Angeles, indicated that there are at least 224 identified languages in Los Angeles County. In addition, many of these languages have different dialects (e.g., Chinese Mandarin, Cantonese, Taiwanese, etc.). Professor Ivanov estimated that publications are locally produced in about 180 languages. There are 92 languages that have been specifically identified among students in the Los Angeles Unified School District (Los Angeles Almanac, 2015). Nearly 12 million children ages 5 to 17 in the United States speak languages other than English in the home. This group represents 22% of all U.S. children. The vast majority, 8,471,000, are Spanish speaking, and 2,593,000 of them have difficulty speaking English (Berman, 2104a).

Social variables also contribute to language differences. Both class and ethnicity reflect differences in language. The greater the social distance between groups, the greater the tendency toward language differences. Upwardly mobile individuals often adopt the language patterns of the socially dominant group because doing so may facilitate social acceptance.

Bilingualism

Language diversity in the United States has been maintained primarily because of continuing immigration from non-English-speaking countries. In its relatively short history, the United States has probably been host to more linguistically diverse individuals than any other country. As new immigrants enter the country, they bring with them their own cultures, values, and languages. As their children and grandchildren are born in the United States, these immigrants often witness with ambivalence the loss of their home language in favor of English.

One aspect of **bilingualism**, the ability to speak two languages, in the United States is its extreme instability, for it is often a transitional stage toward **monolingualism** (the ability to speak only one language) in English. Many children who are bilingual in their homes eventually lose the ability to utilize the home language in favor of the dominant language. In this way, they become monolingual, with the ability to function in just one language. Schools have facilitated this process. Prior to World War I, native languages were used in many schools where a large number of ethnic group members were trying to preserve their languages. In the United States, the maintenance and use of native languages other than English now depends on the efforts of members of the language group through churches and other community activities. Bilingual education programs are now primarily designed to move students quickly into English-only instruction. However, a review of the research suggests that bilingual education in the United States may be far more effective than a strictly monolingual approach. August, Goldenberg, and Rueda (2010) advocated dual-language competency in promoting reading achievement in English. They cited studies suggesting that English learners instructed in two languages demonstrate greater English literacy skills. In addition, researchers in the field of neuroscience increasingly believe that bilingualism may have positive outcomes for the brain. The benefits include multitasking, prioritizing information, and warding off early symptoms of Alzheimer's disease (Khan, 2011).

The acquisition of a second language is important when it serves one's own social and economic needs. Without English language skills, immigrants are often relegated to the most menial, lowest-paying, and sometimes most dangerous jobs in society.

People hold different opinions about the degree of fluency required to be considered bilingual. Whereas some maintain that a bilingual individual must have native-like fluency in both languages, others suggest that measured competency in two languages constitutes bilingualism. There are two types of bilingualism: **subtractive bilingualism** and **additive bilingualism**. Subtractive bilingualism occurs when a second language replaces the first. Additive bilingualism involves the development of a second language with no detriment to the first (Herrera & Murry, 2015). The latter has the more positive effect on academic achievement, as the learner is able to acquire a high level of proficiency in both languages.

Accents

An **accent** generally refers to the way an individual pronounces words. Because some monolingual Japanese speakers have never developed the "*l*" sound in their speech or language, many tend to pronounce English words that begin with the letter *l* as if they began with the letter *r*. Thus, the word "light" may be pronounced as if it were "right" and "long" as if it were "wrong." An accent differs from the standard language only in pronunciation. Teachers should be aware that persons who speak with an accent often speak Standard English but, at this level of their linguistic development, are unable to speak without an accent.

Dialects

In the United States, English is the primary language. Numerous English dialects are used throughout the country, however. A **dialect** is a form of a language that is specific to a particular region or social group. There is no agreement on the number of dialects of English spoken in the United States. There are several regional dialects, such as eastern New England, New York City, western Pennsylvania, Middle Atlantic, Appalachian, southern, central, midland, north central, southwestern, and northwestern. While southern speech, or drawl, is frequently denigrated in other parts of the country, the South is likely the largest dialect area. More Americans speak variations of a "southern" dialect than speak any other regional dialect in the United States. Powerful southern politicians (e.g., Jimmy Carter, Lindsey Graham) and highly visible television personalities (e.g., Matthew McConaughey and Reba McEntire) have increased the exposure and acceptance of southern speech.

Dialects are language rule systems used by identifiable groups that vary in some manner from a language standard that is considered ideal. Each dialect shares a common set of grammatical rules with the standard language and should be considered structurally equivalent (Adger et al., 2007). Theoretically, dialects of a language are mutually intelligible to all speakers of the language; however, some dialects enjoy greater social acceptance and prestige than others. Owens (2012) asserted that dialects should not be devalued or presumed to be inferior to the language standard. To do so devalues individuals and their cultures.

Certain languages are sometimes improperly referred to as dialects. Examples are African languages labeled as African dialects or the languages of the American Indians as Indian dialects. This improper practice is similar to labeling French and German as dialects spoken in the different regions in Europe.

Regional Dialects.

Dialects differ from one another in a variety of ways, and these differences may be attributed to various factors, according to Owens (2012). These include socioeconomic levels, geography, situational variables, and race and ethnicity. Various groups of people who were at one time separated by physical barriers such as mountains or bodies of water developed and maintained their unique linguistic styles. Highways, tunnels, and bridges have all but eliminated these separations.

Watch the video "The Odd Accent of Tangier VA" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlZgw09CG9E) to see and hear how centuries of living on an island in the middle of Chesapeake Bay has helped maintain a unique accent and speech pattern.

Differences in the pronunciations of vowels are a primary means of distinguishing regional differences, whereas consonant differences tend to distinguish social dialects. Regional and social dialects cannot be divorced from one another, however, because an individual's dialect may be a blend of the two. In northern dialects, for example, the *i* in words such as "time," "pie," and "side" is pronounced with a long-*i* sound, which is a rapid production of two vowel sounds, one sounding like *ah* and the other like *ee*. The second sound glides off the first so that "time" becomes *taem*, "pie" becomes *pae*, and "side" becomes *saed*. Southern and related dialects may eliminate the gliding *e*, resulting in *tam* for "time," *pa* for "pie," and *sad* for "side" (Adger et al., 2007).

Social Dialects.

In social dialects, consonants tend to distinguish one dialect from another. Common examples of consonant pronunciation differences are found in the *th* sound and in the consonants *r* and *l*. In words such as "these," "them," and "those," the beginning *th* sound may be replaced with a *d*, resulting in *dese*, *dem*, and *dose*. In words such as "think," "thank," and "throw," the *th* may be replaced with a *t*, resulting in *tink*, *tank*, and *trow*. Adger and colleagues (2007) suggested that middle-class groups may substitute the *d* for *th* to some extent in casual speech, whereas working-class groups make the substitution more often.

In some groups, particularly the African American working class, the *th* in the middle or at the end of a word is not spoken. The *th* in "author" or "tooth" may be replaced with an *f*, as in *aufor* and *toof*. In words such as "smooth," a *v* may be substituted for the *th*, resulting in *smoov*. In regional and socially related dialects, *r* and *l* may be lost, as in *ca* for "car" and *sef* for "self."

Grammatical Differences.

Among dialects, differences in various aspects of grammatical usage can also be found. Adger and colleagues (2007) suggested that nonstandard grammar tends to carry with it a greater social stigma than nonstandard pronunciation.

A common example of grammatical differences in dialect is the absence of suffixes from verbs where they are usually present in standard dialects. For example, the *-ed* suffix to denote past tense is sometimes omitted, as in "Yesterday we play a long time." Other examples of grammatical differences are the omission of the *s* used in the present tense for agreement with certain subjects. "She have a car" may be used instead of "She has a car." The omission of the suffix has been observed in certain Native Indian communities, as well as among members of the African American working class. In the dialect of some African American working-class groups, the omission of the *s* in the plural form of certain words and phrases, as in "two boy" rather than "two boys," has been observed. "Two" is plural, and adding an *s* to show that "boy" is plural is viewed as redundant. Also often omitted in these dialect groups is the possessive *'s*, as in "my friend car" instead of "my friend's car."

Other Differences. Variations in language patterns among groups are significant when compared by age, socioeconomic status, gender, ethnic group, and geographic region (Adger et al., 2007). For example, individuals in the 40- to 60-year age group tend to use language patterns different from those of teenage groups. Teenagers tend to adopt certain language patterns that are characteristic of their age group. Slang words, particular pronunciations of some words, and certain grammatical contractions are often related to teenage and younger groups.

Social factors play a role in the choice of language patterns. In more formal situations, there is a greater likelihood that more formal speech patterns will be used. The selection of appropriate speech patterns appears to come naturally and spontaneously. Individuals are usually able to "read their environment" and select, from their large repertoire, the language or speech pattern that is appropriate for the situation.

Adger and colleagues (2007) indicated that although the evidence is not conclusive, the range between high and low pitch used in African American communities is greater than that found in white communities. Such differences are the result of learned behavior. African American males may tend to speak with raspiness in their voices. American women, it has been suggested, may employ a greater pitch distribution over a sentence than do men.

Bidialectalism

Certain situations, both social and professional, may dictate adjustments in dialect. Some individuals have the ability to speak in two or more dialects, making them **bidialectal**. By possessing the skills to speak in more than one dialect, an individual may have some distinct advantages and may be able to function and gain acceptance in multiple cultural contexts. For example, a large-city executive with a rural farm background may quickly abandon his Armani suit and put on jeans and boots when visiting his parents' home. When speaking with the hometown friends, he may put aside the Standard English necessary in his business dealings and return to the regional dialect, which validates him as the local town person they have always known.

Likewise, a school psychologist in New Orleans who speaks Standard English both at home and at work may continue to speak Standard English in her conference with working-class parents at the school. However, there may be an inflection or a local variation of speech that she uses to develop rapport and credibility with certain parents. At times this may happen spontaneously, with no deliberate planning or thought. This may convey to the parents that although she is highly educated and may be dressed professionally, the school psychologist is still a local person and understands their needs and those of their children.

Children tend to learn adaptive behaviors rapidly, a fact that is often demonstrated in school. Children who fear peer rejection as a result of speaking Standard English may choose to use their dialect even at the expense of criticism by the teacher. Others may choose to speak with the best Standard English they know in dealing with the teacher but use the dialect or language of the group when outside the classroom.

Some school programs are increasingly encouraging students to learn to **code switch** (Sparks, 2014). This is when an individual alternates between two or more languages or language varieties (e.g., dialects) during the course of a single conversation. Some studies have suggested that students who learn to code-switch achieve better academic results. Owens

(2012) suggested that the value may be twofold for learners: retention of the home language while English is learned and, once learners are comfortable with the new language, helping them to use both languages.

Educators must be aware of children's need for peer acceptance and balance this need with realistic educational expectations. Pressuring a child to speak Standard English at all times and punishing him or her for any use of dialect may be detrimental to the overall well-being of the child.

Perspectives on Standard English

There are actually several dialects of Standard English (Adger et al., 2007). Although *Standard English* is often referred to in the literature, no single dialect can be identified as such. In reality, however, the speech of a certain group of people in each community tends to be identified as standard. Norms vary with communities, and there are actually two norms: informal standard and formal standard. The language considered proper in a community is the **informal standard**. Its norms tend to vary from community to community. **Formal standard** is the acceptable written language that is typically found in grammar books. Few individuals speak formal Standard English.

As stated earlier, individuals or institutions that enjoy power and status determine what is considered to be standard. Teachers and employers are among those in such a position. These are the individuals who decide what is and what is not considered standard and what is acceptable in the school and in the workplace. Thus, people seeking success in school and in the job market often try to use that which is deemed standard. Generally speaking, Standard English is a composite of the languages spoken by the educated professional middle class.

Perspectives on African American English

African American Vernacular English (AAVE) or **African American English (AAE)**, sometimes referred to as Vernacular Black English, Black English, or Ebonics, is one of the best-known dialects spoken in the United States. It becomes controversial when schools consider using it for instruction. Its use is widespread, and it is a form of communication for the majority of African Americans. It is a linguistic system used primarily by working-class African Americans within their speech community (Adger et al., 2007).

Although there has been much debate regarding its nature and history, AAVE is considered by most linguists and African Americans to be a legitimate system of communication. It is a systematic language rule system of its own and not a substandard, deviant, or improper form of English. Although differences are found between AAVE and Standard English, they both operate within a set of structural rules, like any other language or dialect. Adger and colleagues (2007) asserted that when comparing the linguistic characteristics of AAVE and Standard English, we find far more common language features than distinctive ones. They disputed the theory of some linguists that AAVE is increasingly evolving in a divergent path from other vernacular English dialects. In fact, there is considerable overlap among AAVE, southern English, and southern white nonstandard English. Much of the distinctiveness of the dialect is in its intonational patterns, speaking rate, and distinctive lexicons.

Teacher bias against AAVE is common among majority-group educators and among some African American educators as well. Although AAVE is an ethnically related dialect, it is also a dialect related to social class. Dialects related to lower social classes, such as Appalachian English and AAVE, are typically stigmatized in our multidialectal society. Unfortunately, many people attach relative values to certain dialects and to the speakers of those dialects. Assumptions are made regarding the intelligence, ability, and moral character of the speakers, and this can have a significant negative impact (Adger et al., 2007). As a result, the use of these dialects without the ability to speak Standard English leaves the speaker at a distinct social, educational, and sometimes occupational disadvantage.

With the 2008 election of Barack Obama as the first African American president of the United States, AAVE in the context of social, racial, and political realities drew nationwide attention.

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Attitudes toward African American Vernacular English

Julio Plata is the principal of Jackie Robinson Middle School. Ms. Ruby Norton, the mother of a sixth-grader, has made an appointment to see Mr. Plata. She has declined to give Mr. Plata's secretary any information about her reasons for wanting to see him. Mr. Plata exchanges the customary greeting and then asks Ms. Norton what he can do for her. At this point, she calmly tells Mr. Plata that his teachers need to stop being racist and to start respecting the culture of African American students.

Mr. Plata is feeling defensive and tries to maintain his composure as he inquires about the nature of the complaint. "This white teacher of Trayson says to my son to stop talking this African American or Black English stuff because it is bad English and he won't allow it in his classroom. He says it's a low-class dialect, and if Trayson keeps talking like that, he ain't never going to amount to nothing, will never get into college, and won't never get a good job. That's just plain racist. That's an attack against all black folk. His granddaddy and grandmother talk that way. All my kinfolk talk that way. I talk that way. You mean to tell me that this school thinks we're all low-class trash? Is that what your teachers think of black folk?"

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. **How should Mr. Plata respond to Ms. Norton?**
2. **Should he arrange a meeting between Ms. Norton and Aaron Goodman, Trayson's teacher?**
3. **What should be the school's position on Ebonics, or Vernacular Black English?**
4. **Is this an issue for the whole school district or for an individual school?**
5. **Is Mr. Goodman wrong to tell Trayson that his speech is a low-class dialect?**
6. **Is Mr. Goodman wrong to tell Trayson that if he speaks only AAVE it will have negative educational and vocational consequences?**

Continuing controversy over Mr. Obama's shifting linguistic style (use of both Standard English and AAVE) and comments applauding his ability to be "articulate" and speak without a "Negro dialect" confirmed not only the challenges of a multi-leveled English-speaking society but the complex relationship between language and race (Childs, 2011).

The refusal to acknowledge AAVE as a legitimate form of communication could be considered another example of Eurocentric behavior. Insofar as teachers endorse this rejection, they are sending a message to many of their African American students that the dialect of their parents, grandparents, and significant others in their lives is substandard and unacceptable. The rejection of AAVE as a legitimate form of communication is viewed by some educators as detrimental to the academic development and achievement of students.

Requiring only a Standard English dialect in schools is both insensitive and controversial. Because of the close relationship between ethnic minority groups and dialects that are often considered nonstandard, this issue may also have civil rights implications.

Some argue that the school has the responsibility to teach each student Standard English to help him or her better cope with the demands of society. There is little doubt that the inability to speak Standard English can be a decided disadvantage to an individual in certain situations, such as when seeking employment.

Many individuals have distinct preconceived notions about non–Standard-English-speaking individuals. If teachers and other school personnel react to students in a manner that is grounded in these preconceptions, the consequences could be serious. Students who are perceived and treated as less intelligent because of their speech may respond as such and become part of a self-fulfilling prophecy, functioning below their ability. In cases where children are tracked in schools, they may be placed in groups below their actual ability level. This problem surfaces in the form of disproportionately low numbers of African American and Latino children being placed in classes for the gifted and talented (U.S. Department of Education, 2014c). School administrators cite the inability to appropriately identify these gifted and talented ethnic

minority children as one of their biggest challenges. Teachers who harbor negative attitudes toward children with nonstandard dialects may be less prone to recognize potential giftedness and may be less inclined to refer these children for possible assessment and placement.

Educators have several alternatives for handling dialect in the educational setting. The first is to accommodate all dialects on the basis that they are all equal. Another choice is to insist that only a standard dialect be allowed in the schools. This alternative would allow for the position that functional ability in such a dialect is necessary for success in personal as well as vocational pursuits. The third alternative is a position between the two extremes, and it is an alternative often followed. Native dialects are accepted for certain uses, but Standard English is encouraged and insisted on in other circumstances. Students in such a school setting may be required to read and write in Standard English because this is the primary written language they will encounter in the United States. They would not be required to eliminate their natural dialect in speaking. Such a compromise allows students to use two or more dialects in the school. It tends to acknowledge the legitimacy of all dialects while recognizing the social and vocational implications of being able to function using Standard English.

Sign Language

Some languages do not have a written system. Individuals who are deaf are not able to hear the sounds that make up oral languages and have developed their own language for communication. **American Sign Language (ASL)** is a natural language that has been developed and used by persons who are deaf. Just in the past 30-some years, linguists have come to recognize ASL as a language with complex grammar and well-regulated syntax. A growing number of colleges and universities accept fluency in ASL as meeting a second-language requirement. The majority of adults who are deaf in Canada and the United States use ASL. Individuals who are deaf use it to communicate with each other. Like oral languages, different sign languages have developed in different countries.

Children who are deaf are able to pick up the syntax and rhythms of signing as spontaneously as hearing children pick up their oral languages. Both children who hear and children who are deaf who are born into deaf families are usually exposed to ASL from birth. Many children who are deaf, however, have hearing parents and do not have the opportunity to learn ASL until they attend a school program for the deaf, where they learn from both their teachers and peers.

ASL is the only sign language recognized as a language in its own right, rather than a variation of spoken English. With its own vocabulary, syntax, and grammatical rules, ASL does not correspond completely to spoken or written English (Heward, 2013; Smith & Tyler, 2014). To communicate with the hearing, those who are deaf often use signed English, a system of signing that parallels the English language. Rather than have its own language patterns like ASL, **signed English** is a system that translates the English oral or written word into a sign. When one sees an interpreter on television or at a meeting, it is usually signed English that is being used.

Sign language is one component of the deaf culture that sets its users apart from the hearing world. Because of the residential school experiences of many individuals who are deaf, a distinct cultural community has developed. As a cultural community, they are highly endogamous, with a very high rate of in-group marriages involving individuals who are deaf. Although ASL is the major language of the deaf community, many individuals are bilingual in English and ASL.



Nonverbal Communication

Although most people think of communication as being verbal in nature, nonverbal communication can be just as important in the total communication process. Because it is so clearly interwoven into the overall fabric of verbal communication, nonverbal communication often appears to be inseparable from it.

Nonverbal communication can serve several functions. It conveys messages through one's attitude, personality, manner, and even dress. It augments verbal communication by reinforcing

what one says; for example, a smile or a pat on the back reinforces a positive statement made to a student. It can contradict a verbal communication; for example, a frown accompanying a positive statement to a student sends a mixed or contradictory message. Nonverbal communication can replace a verbal message: A finger to the lips or a teacher's hand held in the air, palm facing the students, may communicate "Silence" to a class.

The total meaning of communication includes not only the surface message as stated (content) but also the undercurrent (emotions or feelings associated with that content). The listener should watch for congruence between the verbal message and the message being sent nonverbally.

How we appear to others is a form of nonverbal communication, and can, therefore, be considered part of our communication or language. Research has supported the contention that definite prejudices are based on physical characteristics. For example, physical attractiveness plays a part in the way we perceive other people. If one has a bias against a particular group (e.g., overweight people, short people), individuals from that group could be perceived as unattractive and might suffer from social rejection based on the perceptions and bias (Huget, 2011). One's skin color, attire, posture, body movements, gestures, and facial expression all tend to communicate and send messages to others, much like the spoken word (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, & Roy, 2013).

Cultural differences have profound implications about how individuals interact nonverbally. Some cultural groups are more prone to physical contact than others. Latinos and Native Hawaiians, for example, tend to be among the contact cultures. Consequently, one can often observe both Hispanic and Hawaiian men and women greeting each other with a warm embrace. On the other hand, it might be surprising to see some Asian men embracing one another. Of course, the more acculturated Asian American men are likely to observe behaviors typical in the general society.

Conversational distance, usually 18 inches to 4 feet, varies according to circumstances and who is involved. A distance of 18 inches to 2.5 feet is the distance one tends to communicate with friends, family members, and romantic partners. The further distance is usually maintained for casual acquaintances and co-workers (Burgoon, Guerrero, & Floyd, 2010; Samovar et al., 2013). If the distance is much greater than conventional distance for the circumstances, individuals may feel too far apart for normal conversation using a normal voice level. Individuals of other cultural groups, such as Arabs, Latin Americans, and Southern Europeans, are accustomed to standing considerably closer when they talk, even with those they have no relationship to, and in a sense invade the perceived personal space of the individual. In contrast with these contact cultures, Asians and Northern Europeans have been identified as noncontact cultures and may maintain a greater distance in conversation. Students maintain differential distances in cross-cultural relationships. Some white Americans may tend to maintain a greater distance when conversing with African Americans than when conversing among themselves. Women tend to allow a closer conversational space than do men. Straight individuals may distance themselves more from conversational partners they perceive to be gay (Richmond, McCroskey, & Hickson, 2012).



There is often as much or more communicated nonverbally as verbally. (© Angela Lang Photography)

Educators need to be aware that different cultural groups have different expectations when it comes to contact with a teacher. The differences may have implications for educators.

Some groups may view a pat on the head of a child as a supportive gesture. However, some Southeast Asians believe that the individual's spirit resides in the head, and a pat on the head of a child may very well be viewed as offensive by both the parents and the child. Some Asian students may distance themselves in sitting or standing next to a teacher as a sign of deference or esteem (Samovar et al., 2013).

Other nonverbal issues may involve the facial expressions or behaviors of the student. American teachers typically expect a child to look at them while they are having a conversation. However, some groups consider it disrespectful for a child to look directly into the eyes of a teacher. Consequently, as a sign of respect, a child may look at the floor while either speaking to a teacher or being spoken to. The teacher, however, may view this behavior opposite the manner intended and demand that the child look her or him in the eyes (Burgoon et al., 2010).

Some nonverbal gestures can have significantly different meanings across cultures. The thumbs-up gesture, which generally conveys a message of "perfect," "good," or "well done" in most Western countries, has essentially the same meaning in Egypt and China. However, when a teacher attempts to communicate to the parents of immigrant students from Australia, Greece, the Middle East, or West Africa that she approves of a student's performance with a "thumbs up," there can be unpleasant consequences. The gesture may be considered obscene in those countries and regions. Likewise, the "OK" sign, with the circle formed by the thumb and index finger, has a positive connotation in some cultures and is an obscene and even threatening gesture in others (Cotton, 2013; Samovar et al., 2013).

Any discussion of nonverbal behavior has inherent dangers. As examples are given, you must realize that these are generalizations and should not assume that any given behavior will immediately be interpreted in a certain way. Nonverbal communications are often a prominent part of the context in which verbal messages are sent.



Second-Language Acquisition

The arrival of new immigrants annually into the United States results in additional language-minority students in our schools. In 2000, it was estimated that 8%, or 3.7 million students, were **English language learners (ELL)** (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). By 2012 the presence of ELL students had increased to approximately 9.1%, or 4.4 million (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014d). An ELL student is one who does not speak English or whose English limitations preclude the child's ability to fully participate in mainstream English instruction. There were 4,389,321 ELL students in P–12 schools in the United States in 2012 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013b). Table 7.1 shows the numbers of ELL enrolled in U.S. schools between 2002 and 2012. Table 7.2 lists the five states with the largest ELL enrollments.

TABLE 7.1 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY ENROLLMENT OF ELL STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES, 2002–12

School Year	Number of ELL Students Enrolled
2002–03	4,118,918
2005–06	4,421,489
2007–08	4,153,870
2008–09	4,439,514
2009–10	4,364,510
2010–11	4,370,004
2011–12	4,389,321

Source: From National Center for Educational Statistics (2013), http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_204.20.asp

TABLE 7.2 STATES WITH THE LARGEST ELL ENROLLMENTS, 2011–12

State	Number of ELL Students Enrolled	Percentage of U.S. ELL Enrollment
California	1,415,623	23.2%
Texas	722,043	14.9%
Florida	234,347	8.8%
New York	204,898	7.8%
Illinois	170,626	8.2%

Source: From National Center for Education Statistics (2013), http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_204.20.asp

English Language Learner Characteristics

It is surprising to many educators that most ELL students are born in the United States, although 80% of their parents are born outside the country. Coming from 400 different language backgrounds, 70%–80% of ELL students are Spanish speakers, and 12.6% are from Asian and Pacific Island backgrounds. While the most common ELL languages are Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, and French, the most common non-English language varies by state. In Alaska, the most common non-English language is Eskimo-Aleut; in Hawaii, Ilicano (Filipino dialect); in Montana, Native American language; in South Dakota, German; and in Vermont, French (Goldenberg, 2008; Swanson, 2009).

ELL students are often at a socioeconomic disadvantage compared to their non-ELL peers. A disproportionate number of these students live in poverty. Most parents of ELL students have less education than the parents of non-ELL students. Slightly more than 40% of the parents of ELL students have not completed high school, compared to only 9.3% of the parents of non-ELL students. The parents of ELL students, especially those from Mexico and Central America, do not compare favorably with the parents of non-ELL students in other areas of education, employment, and income. Thirty-five percent of ELL students are foreign born, but 48.4% are second-generation Americans, meaning that at least one parent was born in the United States. Seventeen percent are third-generation Americans with both parents born in the United States (Swanson, 2009). Asian-language immigrants, the second-largest ELL group, do not experience the overall poverty issues that the Spanish-speaking groups face. Over 87% of Asian parents have high school diplomas, but there is a high level of diversity within groups, particularly when Southeast Asians are compared to the other Asian groups. Among some of the Cambodian and Laotian immigrants, there is a high level of poverty (Goldenberg, 2008).

Nationwide, one-fourth of ELL students are failing to make progress toward English language proficiency, according to reporting states. Half are making progress or have attained proficiency. Stetser & Stillwell (2014) reported that the graduation rates for ELL students averaged 57%, in comparison to 79% for all other students. In the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the nation's second-largest district, only 5% of scores for ELL students in high school met proficiency in either math or English, while the overall district average was 37% proficiency in English and 17% in math (Shah, 2012a).

The acquisition of English skills serves both social and economic needs. Motivation is usually high. Without linguistic acculturation, assimilation into mainstream society may be impossible. This, in turn, effectively keeps non-English speakers out of many job markets. In the future, educators can anticipate increasing numbers of students whose primary language is other than English.

The Role of First Language in Second Language Acquisition

Most children acquire their first language naturally through constant interaction with their parents or significant others. Knowledge of their first language plays an important role in the

process of acquiring and learning a second language. Some concepts acquired through learning their first language (e.g., Spanish) can be transferred to a second language (e.g., English) when a comparable concept in the second language is encountered. However, English speakers should not think of Spanish, French, Chinese, or any other language as consisting of words that, if translated, basically transform into English. There are words and concepts in all of these languages for which there is no English equivalent. There may be no exact English translation to convey the same meaning. For example, *heung* in the Chinese Cantonese dialect is translated into English as "fragrant." However, *heung* has no exact English translation. The Chinese have a very distinctive meaning that conveys not only fragrance but a multisensory experience. When Cantonese speakers say that food that they have placed in their mouths is *heung*, it may imply that it tastes, smells, and feels very special.

The failure of schools to build on a child's first language during these early years may have serious consequences in the learning process. These observed language behaviors suggest that ELL children should be allowed to develop a firm grasp of basic concepts in their home language prior to instruction of academic concepts in an English-only environment. Research demonstrates that when children are provided a strong educational foundation in their native language, they gain both knowledge and literacy, and this powerfully supports English language development (Crawford & Krashen, 2007).

Language Proficiency. James Cummins (1996), a preeminent researcher in language acquisition, found that many ELL students failed academically after completing English as a second language (ESL) training and being placed in monolingual English class settings. Many of these students were subsequently referred and placed in special education classes. In carefully studying the language characteristics of these students, Cummins found that in two years, these students were able to acquire adequate English communication skills to suggest to their teachers that they were prepared to function in a monolingual English class placement. Cummins also found, however, that the basic language skills, which he labeled **basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS)**, are adequate everyday conversational skills but inadequate to function in high-level academic situations. An example of BICS is "playground English," which relies on nonlinguistic cues and context and is used to facilitate communication (e.g., gestures and other nonverbal cues). BICS, Cummins indicated, is primarily social rather than intellectual. It requires less knowledge of the language and utilizes simpler syntax and a more limited vocabulary than is needed in academic settings.

Although two years of teaching is adequate for everyday conversational usage, an additional five to seven years of school training is essential to develop the higher levels of proficiency required in highly structured academic situations. Cummins (1984) labeled this higher level of proficiency **cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)**. Professors who were themselves ELL students in their earlier years have shared with the authors their experiences in making professional presentations in foreign countries. For example, a Chinese American professor who was born in China and whose first language is Chinese can carry on fluent conversations in both Mandarin and Cantonese dialects. However, this individual insists on having translators for her presentations in China because she does not consider herself proficient in academic Chinese. Other colleagues from non-English-speaking backgrounds have shared similar experiences. This may have some similarities to BICS-level students who have not yet developed academic-level English competence and are thrust into English-only academic situations. Unfortunately, these students are not in a position to insist on translators.

Cummins's framework for conceptualizing language proficiency has been widely adopted by many ESL and bilingual special education programs and has profound implications for language minorities. Cummins (2000) suggested that there are two reasons it takes much longer for ELL students to learn academic language than it does to learn basic conversational language. First, academic language is the language of technical subject matter (e.g., science, math), literature, journals, and other scholarly materials. It is very different from conversational language. As students progress through successive grades, they encounter words that Cummins characterizes as "low-frequency" words. These are words with Greek and Latin derivations. In addition, they are exposed to more complex syntax (e.g., passive voice) and abstract

expressions that are seldom if ever heard in everyday conversation. Second, academic language is what educators develop among native English speakers who are already fluent in conversational English when they enter school. Therefore, the ELL student is learning conversational English while classmates are at a higher level, learning academic English.

Cummins believes that sociocultural determinants of school failure for these students are more significant than linguistic factors. Schools must counteract the power relations that exist in society, removing the racial and linguistic stigmas of being a minority group child. Cummins suggests that power and status relationships between majority and minority groups influence the school performance of these students. Lower-status groups tend to have lower expectations for academic achievement.

Goldenberg (2013), reviewing the available research on teaching strategies for ELL students, suggested that ELL students require additional instructional supports. He suggested that the home language can be used to develop these students academically and that they need early and adequate time to develop their English proficiency. This would tend to support Cummins's contention that ELLs who are functioning at the basic interpersonal communicative skills level may not yet prepared for more advanced academics.

Official English (English-Only) Controversy

In 1981, U.S. Senator S. I. Hayakawa, a harsh critic of bilingual education and bilingual voting rights, introduced a constitutional amendment to make English the official language of the United States. The measure sought to prohibit federal and state laws, ordinances, regulations, orders, programs, and policies from requiring the use of other languages. Hayakawa's efforts were made not only in support of English but also against bilingualism. Had the amendment been adopted, Hayakawa's proposal would have reversed the efforts that began in the 1960s to accommodate linguistic minorities in the United States. The English Language Amendment died without a hearing in the 97th Congress.

In 1983 Hayakawa helped found the organization U.S. English and began lobbying efforts that resulted in a reported 1.8 million–member organization and an annual budget in the millions of dollars (U.S. English, 2014). This movement, also referred to as **Official English** or **English Only**, supports only the limited use of bilingual education and has mounted a major effort to lobby the U.S. Congress to pass legislation to make English the official language of the United States. English has been adopted in the form of statutes and state constitutional amendments in 31 states (U.S. English, 2014). The organization favors **sheltered English immersion**, and it maintains its position that ELL students should be transitioned completely out of bilingual education and into mainstream English usage within a maximum of one or two years.

Official English has become a polarizing issue. For supporters of the English Only movement, English has always been the common language in the United States. Supporters of the English Only movement believe that it is a means to resolve conflict in a nation that is diverse in ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups. They also believe that English is an essential tool for social mobility and economic advancement.

Crawford and Krashen (2007) maintained that attempts to restrict the use of languages other than English are never only about the language. They suggested that such attempts also indicate a negative attitude toward the speakers of other languages.



Differentiating Instruction for All Language Learners

Language is an integral part of life and an integral part of our social system. The diversity and richness of the language systems in this country reflect the richness and diversity of American culture. The ability of U.S. educators to recognize and appreciate the value of different language groups will, to some extent, determine the effectiveness of our educational system.

Kochhar (2014) projects that the U.S. population will reach 401 million by 2050. Of that number, 67 million may be immigrants, plus their 50 million children and grandchildren. In 2013, there were 41.3 million immigrants in the United States, representing over 13% of the population (Zeigler & Camorota, 2014).

All children bring to school the language systems of their cultures. It is the obligation of each educator to ensure the right of each child to learn in the language of the home until the child is able to function well enough in English. This may suggest the use of ESL or bilingual programs for ELL children. Research studies suggest that encouraging the development of students' native languages can provide excellent support in helping them acquire literacy and academic skills in English (August et al., 2010). Equally important, especially for educators, is the responsibility to understand cultural and linguistic differences and to recognize the value of these differences while working toward enhancing the student's linguistic skills in the dominant language. Although it is important to appreciate and respect a child's native language or dialect, it is also important that the teacher communicate the importance and advantages of being able to speak and understand Standard English in certain educational, vocational, and social situations.

Language and Educational Assessment

Few issues in education are as controversial as the assessment of culturally diverse children. The problem of disproportionate numbers of ethnic minority children in special education classes for children with disabilities have historically resulted from such assessment. The characteristics of language are directly related to the assessment of linguistically different children. One of the dangers of assessment tests is that they measure intelligence by things that are valued within the dominant group and tend to exclude things that are culturally specific to minority children. Pence Turnbull and Justice (2012) further cautioned that some students are misidentified as having language disorders because of tests that were developed for Standard English monolingual speakers. Refusal to acknowledge the value of linguistic differences has resulted in inadequate services and the inappropriate placements of children through highly questionable assessment procedures.

Historically, tests were normed primarily "with" or "on" white middle-class children. This means that the values and scores of ethnically and linguistically diverse children were not equitably factored in when standards were determined. Each year millions of standardized tests are administered worldwide. After years of criticism regarding the bias in tests, test developers and publishers have been diligently attempting to create unbiased instruments. However, ethnic and linguistic minority children are just that—a minority—and their numbers in a target audience sample may be comparatively small. As a result, the test norms may still be biased against them. There is an expectation of cultural and linguistic uniformity in the development of assessment tests (Adger et al., 2007). Therefore, such tests are often considered biased against a student who is not proficient in English or who speaks a nonstandard dialect.

Most intelligence tests rely heavily on language. Yet little attempt may be made to determine a child's level of proficiency in the language or dialect in which a test is administered. For example, a Hispanic student may be able to perform a task that is called for in an intelligence test but may not be able to adequately understand the directions given in English. Even if a Spanish translation is available, it might not be in a dialect with which the child is familiar. Using an unfamiliar Spanish dialect may place a student at an extreme disadvantage and may yield test results that do not truly indicate the student's ability. If the psychologist or psychometrist speaks in Castilian Spanish and the student speaks **Spanglish**, there is a linguistic disconnect, and the student may be at a considerable disadvantage.

The same may be true for Asians, African Americans, and Native Americans being tested. Rather than accurately testing specific knowledge or aptitude, all too often intelligence tests measure a student's competence in standard forms of the language (Adger et al., 2007). It is unlikely that there are any completely unbiased assessment instruments being used to test achievement or intelligence.

Several successful class action lawsuits have been brought against school boards or school districts on behalf of children placed in special education classes on the basis of low scores on IQ tests. Typically the suits argue that biased and inappropriate test instruments were used on language-minority students, which resulted in inappropriate special education placement. Among the cases often cited is *Guadalupe Organization, Inc. v. Tempe Elementary School District No. 3* (1978), a suit filed in Arizona that resulted from the disproportionately high placement of Yaqui Indian and Mexican American children in classes for students with intellectual disability (ID). *Diana v. State Board of Education* (1973) was brought on behalf of children of Mexican immigrants placed in classrooms for students with ID on the basis of low IQ scores on tests that were argued to be discriminatory.

Bilingual Education

Bilingual education involves the use of two languages for the purpose of instruction. Typically in English language schools, instruction is in both English and the student's home language. Bilingual education has been supported, in part, by federal funds provided by the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, reauthorized in 1974, 1978, and 1984. The federal legislation views bilingual education more broadly, allowing and even encouraging instructional methodology other than the use of two languages.

Children who speak little or no English cannot understand English-speaking children or lessons that are presented in English. Not only are these children faced with having to learn new subject matter, but they must also learn a new language and often a new culture. It is likely that many of these children will not be able to keep up with the schoolwork and will drop out of school unless there is appropriate intervention. Although new data show a significant decline in the school dropout rate, the dropout rate for Hispanic students is disproportionately high. The high school dropout rate for Hispanic immigrants was 14% in 2012, versus 5% for whites and 8% for African Americans (Pew Research Center, 2014b). The dropout rates for Native American students are also high. Although language differences may not be the sole contributor to the academic problems of these children (poverty has a strong correlation as well), they are considered by many to be a major factor.

Lau v. Nichols. In 1974 the class action suit *Lau v. Nichols* was brought on behalf of 1,800 Chinese children before the U.S. Supreme Court. The plaintiffs claimed that the San Francisco Board of Education failed to provide programs designed to meet the linguistic needs of those non-English-speaking children. The failure, they claimed, was in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. They argued that if the children could not understand the language used for instruction, they were deprived of an education equal to that of other children and were, in essence, doomed to failure.

The school board defended its policy by stating that the children received the same education afforded other children in the district. The position of the board was that a child's ability to comprehend English when entering school was not the responsibility of the school but rather the responsibility of the child and the family. In a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court stated, "Under state imposed standards, there was no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education" (*Lau v. Nichols*, 1974). The Court did not mandate bilingual education for non-English-speaking or limited-English-speaking students. It did stipulate that special language programs were necessary if schools were to provide an equal educational opportunity for such students. Hence, the *Lau* decision gave considerable impetus to the development of bilingual education as well as ESL programs.

In 1975 the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (amended in 1990 as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]) required each state to avoid the use of racially or culturally discriminating testing and evaluation procedures in the placement of children with disabilities. It also required that placement tests be administered in the child's



A million new immigrants enter the United States annually. Many will be students in our schools who will need specialized instruction to help them acquire English skills.
(© Michael Doolittle/Alamy)

native language. In addition, communication with parents regarding such matters as permission to test the child, development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and hearings and appeals must be in the native language. An IEP specifies the programming and services that children with disabilities will receive and requires the participation of the parents in its development.

Throughout the 1970s, the federal government and the state courts sought to shape the direction of bilingual education programs and mandate appropriate testing procedures for students with limited English proficiency. The *Lau* remedies were developed by the U.S. Office of Education to help schools implement bilingual education programs. These guidelines prescribed transitional bilingual education and rejected ESL as an appropriate methodology for elementary students. With a change of the federal administration in 1981, a shift to local policy decisions began to ease federal controls. Emphasis was placed on making the transition from the native language to English as quickly as possible. The methodology for accomplishing the transition became the choice of the local school district. Thus, ESL programs began to operate alongside bilingual programs in many areas. Although the future level of federal involvement in bilingual education is uncertain, there is little doubt among educators that some form of bilingual education is needed.

Transitional Programs. The primary goal of bilingual education is not to teach English or a second language per se but to teach children concepts, knowledge, and skills in the language they know best and to reinforce this information through the use of English. Most bilingual education programs today are **transitional programs**, which emphasize bilingual education as a means of moving from the culture and language most commonly used for communication in the home to the mainstream of U.S. language and culture. It is an assimilationist approach in which the ELL student is expected to learn to function effectively in English as soon as possible. The native language of the home is used only to help the student make the transition to the English language. The native language is gradually phased out as the student becomes more proficient in English.

Bilingual educators strongly support the use of bicultural programs even within the transitional framework. A bicultural emphasis provides students with recognition of the value and worth of their families' culture and enhances the development or maintenance of a positive self-image.

Dual-Language Immersion Programs. **Dual-language immersion programs**, sometimes referred to as two-way bilingual immersion programs, have grown in the past few years from a few hundred to more than 2,000 programs across the United States. Texas is the leading state implementing these programs, with between 700 and 800 of them (Maxwell, 2012). According to Gracile (2014), California had 313 dual-language programs as of 2011—mostly in Spanish. The Glendale Unified School District in Los Angeles County, for example, offers programs in Italian, German, Spanish, Armenian, Japanese, and Korean (Watanabe, 2011). Instruction in the Glendale programs is, for example, 90% in Italian and 10% in English in kindergarten and first grade. Language usage is 50–50 by fifth grade. The goals of the dual-language program are:

- Bilingualism (oral proficiency in two languages)
- Biliteracy (reading and writing in two languages)
- Achievement at or above grade level
- Multicultural competencies (Watanabe, 2011)

Dual-language immersion programs include students with an English background and students with one other language background. Ideally, half the class will consist of students whose home language is Japanese, for example. The other half of the students in the class will come from English-speaking families. Students are expected to stay in the program throughout elementary school.

While bilingual education has a negative connotation for some, dual-language immersion has become an accepted niche to some and may not face the attacks from the bilingual education opponents that the other bilingual programs have had to deal with. It has been embraced by some parents, who want these programs to give their children an edge in an increasingly global world. In California, parents must sign waivers of consent prior to placement in two-way language immersion programs, in compliance with Proposition 227 mandates. Research suggests that by late elementary school or middle school, students in dual-language programs perform at levels comparable to or higher than peers in English-only programs (Watanabe, 2011). The success of these programs has brought renewed attention and interest to bilingual education in California (Gracile, 2014).

Advocates of bilingual education see advantages in being bilingual. Although bilingual education programs have been established primarily to develop English skills for ELL students, some offer opportunities for English-speaking students to develop proficiency in other languages. In addition, bilingualism provides an individual with job market advantages. As the United States becomes less parochial, the opportunity for business and other contacts with individuals from other countries increases, providing decided advantages to bilingual individuals. The United States has always been linguistically diverse. Language diversity is common throughout the world, and students in other countries are often required to learn a language other than their own. Americans are at a distinct disadvantage if they embrace a monolingual philosophy. In a global economy with more than 1 billion Chinese speakers and more than 400 million Spanish speakers, the United States clearly stands to benefit from increased proficiency in other languages.

Bilingual education as it currently exists has many problems and many critics. Critics have provided ample evidence that some children in bilingual education programs have fared poorly, and many have dropped out of school. Research has provided evidence that well-developed and well-delivered bilingual education programming can deliver positive results. It should be recognized that there has been an acute national shortage of qualified bilingual educators. Being bilingual does not necessarily qualify an individual as a bilingual educator. Many who have filled bilingual education positions have not been fully qualified in their preparation and training. When these individuals fail to deliver desired results, bilingual education is often unfairly characterized as being programmatically unsound.

English as a Second Language

English as a second language (ESL) is a program often confused with bilingual education. In the United States, learning English is an integral part of every bilingual program. But teaching English as a second language in and of itself does not constitute a bilingual program. Both bilingual education and ESL programs promote English proficiency for ELL students. The approach to instruction distinguishes the two programs. Bilingual education accepts and develops native language and culture in the instructional process. Bilingual education may use the native language, as well as English, as the medium of instruction. ESL instruction, however, relies exclusively on English for teaching and learning. ESL programs are used extensively in the United States as a primary medium to assimilate ELL children into the linguistic mainstream as quickly as possible. Hence, some educators place less emphasis on the maintenance of home language and culture than on English language acquisition, and they view ESL programs as a viable means for achieving their goals.

In some school districts, there may be ELL students from several different language backgrounds but too few in some groups to warrant a bilingual education class (e.g., Cantonese,

Farsi, Russian). In such a situation, ESL may be the most logical approach to providing appropriate services for these students.

California's Proposition 227. U.S. English members have vigorously supported California's **Proposition 227**, a state ballot initiative that passed in 1998 by a margin of 61% to 39%. This law was intended by its supporters to put an end to bilingual education in the state. This proposition is often referred to as the Unz initiative, after its co-author, Ron Unz. Operating under the organization One Nation, Unz and his supporters cite numerous examples of bilingual education failures. The proposition requires all language-minority students to be educated in sheltered English immersion programs, not normally intended to exceed one year. Sheltered English immersion or structured English immersion involves a classroom where English language acquisition is accomplished with nearly all instruction in English but with the curriculum and presentation designed for children who are learning the language. During this time, ELL students are temporarily sheltered from competing academically with native English-speaking students in mainstream classes. At the completion of the year, the students are transferred to English language mainstream classrooms (Unz & Tuchman, 1998). The law allows parents to seek waivers, and if a waiver is granted, the child's education may continue in a bilingual classroom. If schools or teachers fail to implement a child's education as prescribed by the law, they may be sued.

As might be expected, supporters of bilingual education have vigorously attacked the proposition, concerned that the Unz initiative will spread to other states. Proposition 227 opponents argue that the Unz initiative was not backed by research or scientific data. Rather, they argue, it was based on observations of the high failure and dropout rates of ELL students, primarily Hispanic students. It was also based on Unz's presumption that most ELL students are able to grasp the fundamentals of speaking English in a year. They support their arguments against the proposition by citing research (e.g., Cummins, 1984) suggesting that only basic conversational skills can be acquired in such a limited time but not the necessary academic language skills, which take years to develop adequately. Opponents of Proposition 227 contend that the law is a "one size fits all" approach to educating students and that it cannot have lasting benefits. Obtaining waivers is often problematic for parents, especially if their English skills are limited and they have difficulty communicating with school personnel. There are also concerns that the law intimidates teachers and administrators and inhibits them from doing what they know is educationally appropriate for students.

A year after the implementation of Proposition 227, achievement test scores for ELL students in the Oceanside Unified School District, which had faithfully followed the mandates of the proposition, showed an 11 percentage point increase. The achievement test scores the following year were also positive, providing validation for Proposition 227 supporters.

Subsequent research (e.g., Hakuta, 2001a, 2001b; Hakuta, Butler, & Bousquet, 1999; Orr, Butler, Bousquet, & Hakuta, 2000) found that in the first two academic years of testing (1998–99 and 1999–2000), achievement test scores improved somewhat across the board in the state. Scores rose for ELL students in both English-only classrooms and bilingual education classrooms. These researchers found that some school districts that had maintained various forms of bilingual education experienced similar increases to that of Oceanside Unified District. They strongly suggested that a statistical phenomenon known as **regression to the mean** had been in operation for the Oceanside students. With regression to the mean, scores at the extreme ends of the statistical distribution move toward the population average (mean), with low scores moving higher and high scores moving lower. These researchers also pointed to class size reduction, which had just taken place in California schools, as contributing to the improved scores. While the test scores for ELL students had improved, they were still low.

By 2001 the Oceanside School District's percentile scores for ELL students had evened out and in some instances dropped. That year, ELL third-grade reading scores were 1 percentage point below the state's ELL percentile score. District-wide, ELL test scores in more than half the schools had declined compared to the previous year, contrary to the rising state ELL test scores.

While data regarding improved educational outcomes as a result of Proposition 227 are inconclusive, it is clear that there is still an achievement gap between English learners and their peers who enter school proficient in English (Wentworth, Pellegrin, Thompson, & Hakuta, 2010).

One result of Proposition 227 is conclusive: Unz's goal to dismantle bilingual education in California was mostly successful. In the 1997–98 academic year, there were 409,897 ELL students enrolled in bilingual education programs in California schools. By the 2005–06 academic year, bilingual enrollments had dropped to 95,155.

Goldenberg (2013), in reviewing bilingual education research, stated the obvious: that teaching in the primary language promotes achievement in the language. He further suggested that bilingual education produces better outcomes in English and, at the worst, provides results comparable to those of English immersion programs.

In recent years, there have been some indications that a shift is developing around the issue of ELL instruction in California. Almost 20 years after California voted to eliminate most bilingual programs, a state-wide referendum was scheduled, seeking to overturn Proposition 227 (Maxwell & Will, 2014). In addition, state legislators in California, acknowledging the political realities and the numerous advantages of a multilingual population, approved a "seal of biliteracy" that high school students can earn in order to demonstrate fluency in two or more languages (Egnatz, 2014).

Other Efforts to Dismantle Bilingual Education. English language learners are often caught in the middle of politics. Both sides of the English Only movement believe strongly that their positions are best for language-minority immigrant students. Ron Unz and his supporters continue their efforts to bring what they consider a success in California (both the passage of Proposition 227 and the educational results) to other parts of the country. In 2000 Arizona voted into law Proposition 203. This law required English-only instruction in the public schools. By 2004 enrollment in bilingual programs in Arizona dropped from 32% of ELL students to 5%. Studies since the passage of Proposition 203 have indicated that ELL students in Arizona still suffer from an achievement gap (Mahoney, MacSwan, Haladyna, & Garcia, 2010).

In 2002 Massachusetts voted into law Chapter 386, which mandated sheltered English immersion programs as the method of instruction for ELLs. This effectively ended transitional bilingual education in the state. While Massachusetts has not completed a thorough evaluation of the impact of Chapter 386, Mahoney et al. (2010) reported that dropout rates for ELL students had increased, as had the academic achievement gap.

In November 2002 Colorado voters rejected Ron Unz's anti–bilingual education, English immersion Amendment 31 (Escamilla, Shannon, Carlos, & Garcia, 2003). This was Unz's first defeat in his four statewide efforts to dismantle bilingual education.

Opponents of the English Only movement readily agree on the importance of learning English. However, they view their adversaries as individuals trying to force Anglo conformity by ending essential services in foreign languages. They view the attacks on bilingual education as unjustified because good bilingual education has been shown to be effective. Bad bilingual education, they concede, is ineffective and is seldom bilingual education, except in name. Opponents of bilingual education, they argue, have seen to it that these programs fail by giving inadequate support or resources, by staffing programs with unqualified personnel, by obtaining faulty test results on bilingual education students, by testing all students in English, and by using other means that cast a negative light on bilingual education.

In spite of their differences, the majority of the individuals who support bilingual education, as well as those who are opposed to it, are well-intentioned individuals who want to enhance the educational opportunities for immigrant children. If all interested parties would be less concerned with the politics of the issue and base their programmatic preferences on sound, well-documented research, the students would be the ultimate winners.

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate / Curtailing Bilingual Education

With the Supreme Court decision in the *Lau v. Nichols* case in 1974, bilingual education came to the forefront in American education and was given a greater sense of legitimacy. While *Lau v. Nichols* did not mandate bilingual education, it required schools to address the linguistic needs of their students from diverse backgrounds.

Over the past 40-plus years, the road for bilingual education has often been bumpy. Although some researchers continue to affirm its value, others conclude that while not harming students, bilingual education provides no particular advantage. Some critics have attacked it as a colossal failure and advocate for English immersion classes and the discontinuation of bilingual education. Under the George W. Bush administration, the name of the U.S. Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs was renamed the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA).

FOR

- ☐ Opponents of bilingual education advocate sheltered English immersion limited to one year, yet they have no research to back the efficacy of what they propose.
- ☐ Research by Cummins and Hakuta has clearly shown that ELL students cannot become proficient in English for academic purposes in one year's time.
- ☐ The problems with bilingual education are rooted in the lack of qualified personnel trained in bilingual education techniques, the lack of adequate resources, and the lack of commitment at both the federal and state levels.
- ☐ Research has clearly demonstrated that bilingual education, properly implemented, is highly effective.

AGAINST

- ☐ More than 400,000 California students began the school year as non–English proficient, prior to Proposition 227, and at the end of the school year, only 5% had learned English.
- ☐ Prior to California's Proposition 227, English language learners studied grammar, reading, writing, and all other academic subjects in their own native languages—almost always in Spanish—while receiving only small amounts of English instruction.
- ☐ Achievement test scores for immigrant children are low, and dropout rates are high.
- ☐ Bilingual education in California, Arizona, and Massachusetts has been reduced to a fraction of what it used to be. The same should happen throughout the rest of the United States.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. What should programmatic decisions (e.g., on the type of program that should be offered for ELL) be based on?
2. Are the attacks on bilingual education justified?
3. What has the research shown with respect to language acquisition and ELL?

Source: From Unz, R. (October 19, 1997), Bilingualism vs. Bilingual Education, One Nation, http://www.onenation.org/opinion/bilingualism-vs-bilingual-education/; Boyd, R. (November 29, 2012), Educating English Language Learners in Public Schools, League of Women Voters of Irving, http://www.lwvirving.org/files/educating_english_language_learners.pdf

SUMMARY

Language and Culture

Language is a system of both vocal sounds and nonverbal systems by which members of various groups communicate with one another. While the United States has historically been Eurocentric educationally and linguistically, it has become increasingly linguistically diverse in recent years. Numerous languages, dialects, and accents are spoken by students in our schools. Federal laws now require educators to provide for the linguistic needs of the diverse groups of students entering our schools.

The Nature of Language

While society tends to place different values on various language groups, from a linguistic point of view, there is no good or bad language. All languages serve the purpose of meeting the

linguistic needs of those who use them and, in that sense, are equal. Language is cultural and tends to be related to one's ethnic, geographic, gender, or class origins. Languages are dynamic and, as such, change constantly.

Language Differences

In the United States, there are nearly 12 million children who speak languages other than English in their homes. The vast majority of this group, approximately 8.5 million, are Spanish speaking. Bilingualism provides benefits especially in an increasing global economy, which tends to value multilingual competencies.

In the United States there are numerous regional and social accents and dialects, which can be found throughout the country. African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and other non-standard dialects have been attacked by educators and others over the years. While the inability to speak Standard English may limit an individual socially and economically in some circumstances, it should be remembered that AAVE is spoken by a large segment of the African American population, and this and other dialects and accents are entitled to the respect of educators.

Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication can be as important as verbal communication and is an integral part of the communication process. It conveys messages through one's attitude, personality, manner, and even physical appearance. It augments and reinforces or contradicts what one says.

Culture plays an important role in nonverbal communication. Educators should be cognizant of cultural differences in nonverbal communication, being aware that typical nonverbal behaviors and gestures in the United States may have very different and even opposite meanings to other cultural groups, even to some who are English speaking.

Second-Language Acquisition

There are currently more than 4 million English language learners in U.S. schools, with the vast majority Spanish speaking, followed distantly by those speaking Asian or Pacific languages. Research by Cummins has found that basic conversational skills (basic interpersonal communication skills) can be acquired by non-English-speaking students in two years. However, these skills are inadequate for higher-level academic functioning (cognitive academic language proficiency), which may require an additional five to seven years to function well in highly structured academic settings.

Differentiating Instruction for All Language Learners

Disproportionately large numbers of children of color and linguistic minority have been placed in classes for children with disabilities, while disproportionately low numbers of these children are placed in classes for the gifted and talented. Assessment instruments used to assess children for placement have often been widely criticized for being normed on middle-class majority group children and for being biased against children whose cultural differences preclude full comprehension of assessment items. While it is highly unlikely that truly unbiased assessment instruments will be developed in the immediate future, the problem is recognized, and educators are making efforts to alleviate the problems. Both the Supreme Court mandate in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) and the acts Congress has passed regarding education for children with disabilities have provided some degree of assurance that linguistically diverse children and children with disabilities will be properly identified and placed in appropriate programs to meet their educational needs. Programs for linguistically diverse students are often provided in bilingual education or English as a second language programs.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts



8 Religion

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- **8.1** Explain the importance of religion to the cultural makeup of an individual and the diversity of religions across the United States.
- **8.2** Discuss the First Amendment and its impact on education.
- **8.3** Describe the importance of religion and the diversity of religious freedom internationally.
- **8.4** Discuss how religion in the United States has changed in the past several decades and continues to change. Provide specific examples.
- **8.5** Describe the interaction of religion with gender, gay and lesbian identity, and race.
- **8.6** List examples of legal challenges to the separation of church and state in the United States and the courts' responses.
- **8.7** Provide examples of what schools can and cannot do with respect to religion.

The teachers and administrators of Edison Onizuka Middle School near San Francisco had put the finishing touches on their plans for the school's honors convocation. They had selected Ramakrishna Patel and Rebecca Rose, who were tied with the highest grades in the eighth grade, to be recognized in a convocation ceremony. Each student was asked to make a 7- to 10-minute speech on the value of an education. Because the faculty and Dr. Hovestadt, the principal, wanted the district superintendent to be part of the ceremony, they had agreed to schedule the event at 3:00 p.m. on the fourth Saturday in May, the superintendent's only available time.

Dr. Hovestadt called the Patel and Rose families to inform them of their children's selection as convocation speakers. As expected, both sets of parents were delighted at the news of their son's and their daughter's accomplishments and selection. Mr. Rose indicated, however, that Saturday was quite impossible because it was the Sabbath for their family, who were Orthodox Jews. The Sabbath, a day of religious observance and rest among Jews, is from sundown on Friday until sundown on Saturday. Orthodox Jews are a conservative branch of Judaism who strictly observes religious law. The event had to be rescheduled for any other day but the Sabbath. It was impossible, Dr. Hovestadt pleaded. All the plans were made, and no satisfactory alternative dates were available. "Would you plan the event on a Sunday?" Mr. Rose exclaimed. "I would not ask you to. Then why do you schedule it on our Sabbath? You must change the day." With the two at an impasse, Dr. Hovestadt knew he had to come up with an alternative plan in a hurry.

REFLECTIONS

1. Is Mr. Rose being unreasonable?
2. What if the event in question took place in a homogeneous community that was primarily Christian, and the Rose family were one of only two Jewish families in the community? In a democracy, should the majority rule?
3. How would you feel if you were a Christian living in a non-Christian community, and a major event that you were expected to attend was scheduled on Christmas Day?
4. Do the rights of every individual have to be considered?



Religion and Culture

In the early treatment of multicultural education, religion was seldom if ever addressed as one of the prominent subcultures influencing a student's perceptions and behaviors. Religion is likely as important in shaping an individual's persona as gender, class, or ethnicity. The purpose of this chapter is to assist you in understanding how religion can be an important part of the cultural makeup of an individual, not to provide a comparative review of various religions. We will briefly examine the larger religious groups in the United States and a few of the smaller ones. It is impossible to address every religious group or sect in a single chapter. Our decision to limit the groups or denominations discussed is not to suggest that some lack importance. All religions and religious groups are important, especially to those who belong to them. We will discuss here some of the most common religious groups U.S. educators may see in their schools. Considerable coverage in this edition will be devoted to evangelical Christians because of their current influence on the political process and the efforts of some within the evangelical movement to influence educational systems.

In this edition, there is also a focus on Islam. The events of September 11, 2001, the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the growth of Islam in the United States and elsewhere throughout the world are some of the obvious reasons for our focus on this religion.

Religious Composition of Schools

The religious pluralism of the school in which one teaches is determined, in part, by the school's geographic region in the United States. Immigration and migration patterns result in different ethnic and religious groups settling in different parts of the country. The perspectives of the religious community often influence what parents expect from the school. If the religious values of the parents are incongruous with the objectives of a school, serious challenges for educators are likely. A look at the religious composition of schools in various sections of the country will provide a sense of the diversity to be found in our schools.

As one visits various schools across the United States, distinctive patterns are apparent. In some regions, schools are greatly influenced by religious groups in the community. In these communities, the members of the school board, the appointment of the school administrative leadership, and the curriculum may be shaped by the dominant religious groups. In other regions, religion may have little if any influence on the nature of the schools. Consider these examples:

- A rural high school in the South may be composed primarily of students from conservative Protestant backgrounds such as Southern Baptist and the Church of Christ. Some students may be members of United Methodist or other less conservative churches. In such a district, local churches serve as the primary social institution for many of the students. The curriculum and textbooks may be carefully scrutinized by the school board for what it considers objectionable subject matter, such as sex education, evolution, and alternative lifestyles.

Watch the video "Amish Buggies and School Children" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4xhZgOhnxg) to see how Amish children dress and the means of transportation they and their families use.

- In Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Iowa, or Ontario, Canada, a visitor may find some students from Amish or Mennonite families. The Amish students can be identified by their distinctive attire, and the students from Mennonite groups also dress conservatively. The Amish students remain in school until they complete eighth grade. In accordance with their beliefs, they will then leave school and work on their family farm, which uses neither electricity nor motorized equipment. They often travel in horse-drawn buggies. Most Mennonite students will complete school, and some will go on to higher education and face no prohibitions against the use of electricity or motorized vehicles.
- In Utah and some communities in Idaho, a visitor to the public schools may find that most of the students are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS), also known as Mormons. Religion cannot be and is not taught in the public schools, but church values may still be reflected in everyday school activities. In many of the predominantly LDS communities, students in secondary schools are given release time from their schools to attend seminaries, which are adjacent or in close proximity to their public schools. The seminaries provide religious training by instructors employed by the LDS church. Upon completion of high school, many of the male LDS students and a few of the female students will serve for two years on church missions.
- In another U.S. community one encounters a wide range of religious backgrounds. Some students are Roman Catholic, some are Baptists, and some are Jewish, while others are Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist. A few are atheists, and some are agnostics. The atheists believe that there is no God, while the agnostics argue that we do not and cannot know whether in fact God or gods exist. While religion may be important to some of the students and their families, it does not heavily influence the curriculum or daily life in the schools in this community.

These examples suggest that communities in the United States, Canada, and some other countries are religiously very diverse and that the religious makeup of some communities may be influential in the overall culture of the schools.

Like other institutions in the United States, most schools have a historical legacy of white Protestant domination. Such influence has determined the holidays, usually Christian holidays such as Christmas, celebrated by most public schools. Moreover, the dominant Protestant groups have determined many of the moral teachings that have been integrated into the public schools.



The First Amendment and the Separation of Church and State

The First Amendment clearly states that Congress is prohibited from making laws establishing a religion or prohibiting religious worship. This has been consistently interpreted by the courts as affirming the principle of separation of church and state. One of the most valued parts of our Constitution, this provision is also one of the most controversial. Throughout the history of this country, various individuals and groups have sought to interpret this amendment to meet their own needs and interests. For some, religious emphasis is appropriate in the public schools as long as it is congruent with their own religious persuasion. These same individuals, however, may be quick to cite the constitutional safeguards for separation of church and state if other groups attempt to infuse their religious dogmas. Equity and propriety are often in the eye of the beholder, and one's religious orientation may strongly influence one's perception of what constitutes objectivity, fairness, and legality.

Since the removal of prayer from the schools by a 1963 Supreme Court decision, religious groups have continued to fight to restore prayer in the schools through state and federal legislation. Parent groups have also fought on religious grounds to prevent the teaching of sex

education and evolution. Parents have fought verbally and even physically over what books their children should read and what curriculum should be used in social studies and science classes. Members of more liberal Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish denominations often say that they want their children exposed to the perspectives of different religious and ethnic groups. Members of the more conservative groups may argue that they do not want their children exposed to what they consider the immoral perspectives and language inherent in certain instructional materials.

Community resistance to cultural pluralism and multicultural education has, at times, been led by individuals associated with conservative religious groups. Because cultural pluralism inevitably involves religious diversity, multicultural education is sometimes viewed as an impediment to efforts to maintain the status quo or to return to the religious values of the past. Multicultural education, however, provides a basis for understanding and appreciating diversity and minimizes the problems related to people being different from one another.

Of all the subcultures examined in this book, religion may be the most problematic for educators. If the educator is from a religious background that is different from that prevalent in the community or has a perspective about the role of religion that differs from that of the community, misunderstanding and conflicts may arise that prevent effective instruction. If an educator does not understand or ignores the role of religion in the lives of students, it may be difficult to develop appropriate instructional strategies or even retain one's position.



Religion as a Way of Life

Many religions are particularistic, in that members believe that their own religion is uniquely true and legitimate, and all others are invalid. Other religious groups accept the validity of distinct religions that have grown out of different historical experiences.

The Importance of Religion in Our Lives

The United States can be considered a religious country. Seventy-eight percent of Americans say that religion is very or fairly important to them (Newport, 2013).

Religion is clearly an important aspect of the lives of many people. Although it may have little impact on the lives of some, it influences the way many individuals think, perceive, and behave. Religious groups can influence the election of school board members as well as the curriculum and textbooks used in schools. Principals, teachers, and superintendents have been hired and fired due to the influence of these groups.

Freedom of Religious Expression

Brazil, Japan, the United States, Italy, South Africa, and the United Kingdom are among the nations with the least restriction on religious expression. However, individuals in other countries are not as fortunate. Grim (2013) reported that approximately one-third of the world's countries have restrictive policies on religion. Adding to this concern is the alarming fact that nearly 70% of the world's population live in these countries. Some of the restrictions are primarily a function of the government, while social hostilities may be imposed on citizens with unfavorable religious ties. At times, government and society restrictions work in tandem.

Globally, the Middle East and North Africa tend to have the most stringent government and social restrictions on religion. Iran, Egypt, Indonesia, Pakistan, and India are among the countries most restrictive with respect to both governmental pressures and social hostilities toward religious minority groups. World leaders were hopeful that the Middle East and North Africa Arab Spring uprisings (2010–11) would result in an easing of the regions' religious restrictions. However, a study by the Pew Research Center found that the already high restrictions actually increased (Pew Research Center, 2013a).

While religious differences often cause frustration and acrimony in school and society, those who live in a country such as the United States often take freedom of religious expression for granted. It is this freedom that allows citizens to disagree. Students should be taught that many others in the world do not enjoy our religious liberties and that we ourselves need to be vigilant to ensure that unconstitutional restrictions and rulings are not imposed on our citizenry.

Religious Groups Addressed in the Text. The United States and other countries such as neighboring Canada are unique in the religious diversity of their people. Religion is particularly important to those who adhere to a religious faith. As such, the authors of this text consider all religions to be important. We believe that religious diversity should be embraced and celebrated wherever peaceful and harmonious coexistence is valued.

Some religious groups, which exist in smaller numbers in our schools, will not be addressed in the text. If there are students from these groups in your schools, we urge you to research them on the Internet or through the use of a good text of comparative religions. Familiarizing yourself with the religious beliefs and practices of your students and their families will enable you to provide more effectively for their needs.



Religious Pluralism in the United States

Religion in the United States is constantly changing. While some may assume that most Asian Americans adhere to Asian-based religions, such as Buddhism, they are often surprised to learn that 42% are Christians (Pew Research Center, 2012a). Some African Americans have left traditional African American Protestant churches and joined the ranks of the Black Muslims. Tens of thousands of Latinos have left the Roman Catholic Church for Pentecostal churches, and some college students have embraced Buddhism.

Americans tend to identify not only with major groups, such as Protestants, Catholics, or Jews, but also with smaller groups or denominations within these major religious groups. For example, former President Jimmy Carter, a Southern Baptist, identifies himself as a "born again" Christian. Others may identify themselves as charismatic Catholics. Within each major group is considerable heterogeneity.

Most denominations have remained in their traditional regional strongholds, with Catholics in the Northeast, liberal and moderate Protestants in the Northeast and Midwest, and conservative Protestants in the South. Some groups, however, have expanded their base considerably. For example, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and members of the United Church of Christ are no longer as concentrated in the Northeast as they once were; some numerical base shifts have been made into the Sun Belt, primarily the southern and southwestern regions. Conservative Protestants, such as Southern Baptists, are growing in all regions, including the Northeast and the West. Mormons have extended their influence far beyond the borders of Utah, Idaho, and Nevada. Their presence is felt in every state, as well as in many other countries. The Jewish population tends to be located in metropolitan areas throughout the country, with large concentrations in the mid-Atlantic region.

Seventy-seven percent of the U.S. population identifies themselves as Christians. Until early in the twentieth century, Protestantism was by far the dominant religious force in the country. In 2012, 48% of U.S. residents identified themselves as Protestant (Associated Press, 2012), 23.3% as Catholic, 2.1% as Mormon, 1.7% as Jewish, and 0.6% as Muslim (Newport, 2012). Islam, in recent years, has grown rapidly in the United States, more than doubling in number of adherents since 1990. Those who did not respond or indicated no religious identity represent 15.6% of the population. Although Judaism has decreased numerically and as a percentage of the U.S. population, it is still routinely listed as one of the three major religious groups. This may be due to the fact that Judaism has been a driving force for such a long period of U.S. history and because Jewish individuals have provided so much leadership in the cultural, economic, and political landscape of the country.

Some denominational differences have their origins in ethnic differences. The English established the Anglican (Episcopalian) and Puritan (later Congregational) churches here; the Germans established some of the Lutheran, Anabaptist, and Evangelical churches; the Dutch, Reformed churches; the Spanish, French, Italians, Poles, and others, Roman Catholic churches; and the Ukrainians, Armenians, Greeks, and others, Eastern Orthodox churches. Over time, many of these ethnic denominations united or expanded their membership to include other ethnic groups (Ellwood & McGraw, 2014; Fisher, 2014; Young, 2013).

Although religious pluralism has fostered the rapid accommodation of many American religious movements toward acceptability and respectability within society, groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses have maintained their independence. The smaller groups that maintain their distinctiveness have historically been victims of harassment by members of mainstream religious groups. Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Children of God, and the **Unification Church** are minority groups that have been subjected to such treatment.

Conflict among the four major faiths (Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, and Islam) has also been intense at different periods in history. Anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim, and anti-Catholic sentiments are still perpetuated in some households and institutions. Although religious pluralism in our past has often led to conflict, the hope of the future is that it will lead to a better understanding and respect for religious differences. In the following sections, we examine in greater detail four major faiths and a few others that educators may find in various U.S. schools.

A Changing Religious Landscape

While the United States has remained primarily a Christian nation, with strong Protestant influence, the country has seen slow but steady changes in the past few decades. A survey by the Pew Research Center (2015b) revealed some interesting trends that may be alarming to

TABLE 8.1 TRENDS IN SUBPOPULATIONS

Groups Indicating No Religious Identification (nones)	Percentage of Nones
Whites	21
African Americans	17
Mexican Americans	14
Younger Americans (18–24)	32
Middle-age Americans (45–54)	16
Older Americans (75+)	7
Men 1990	10
Men 2012	24
Women 1990	6
Women 2012	16
High school dropouts	16
Advanced degrees	24
Political liberals	40
Political moderates	18
Political conservatives	9
Mountain states	28
Pacific states	25
Northeast states	24
Midwest states	19
Southern states	15

Source: From Hout, M., Fischer, C. S., and Chaves. M. A., (March 7, 2013), More Americans Have No Religious Preference: Key Findings from the *2012 General Social Survey,* Institute for the Study of Societal Issues: Berkeley, CA, http://christianityinview.com/faithsurvey/download/gss2012.pdf. Used by permission.

some religious groups, especially Protestants. In the 1960s, two out of three Americans identified themselves as Protestants. As recently as 2007, Protestants were still a majority, at 53% of the population, but by 2014, Protestants were down to 40.1% and no longer a majority.

The decrease in the number of Protestants may be due in part to the increase of the **nones**, or those who claim no religious affiliation. In 1972, only 5% of the U.S. population indicated no religious affiliation. In 1990, 8% did, and by 2014, the *nones* increased to 22.8% (Pew Research Center, 2015b). Hout et al. (2013) indicated that "no religion" does not equate to "atheism." They suggested that atheism is actually rather rare, with only 3% indicating that they did not believe in God.

The General Social Survey provides unique insight into the views of some groups of Americans and their perceptions about religion and about God or a supreme being (Hout et al., 2013). The survey found that as a group, women tended to be more religious than men, whites were more likely to indicate no religious affiliation than some other groups, and older Americans tended to indicate a higher degree of religious identification than their younger counterparts. Less educated people and political conservatives are either more religious or maintain a higher level of religious identity than do those with advanced degrees.

One of the variables contributing to the changing religious landscape of the United States is the demographic characteristics of the newest immigrants granted permanent residency. Over the past two decades, permanent residency has been obtained by about 1 million individuals each year. The geographic origins of these immigrants have been shifting from Europe and the Americas to Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and North Africa. These shifts have been accompanied by the religious diversity of the new residents.

In the East San Gabriel Valley of Los Angeles County, the Hsi Lai Temple, the largest Buddhist temple in the Western Hemisphere, is located in Hacienda Heights, California.



Top left to right Hsi Lai Temple in Hacienda Heights (Buddhist), the Walnut Gurudwara (Sikh temple), the First Korean Southern Baptist Church of Walnut, and the San Gabriel Valley Islamic Center are located within close proximity of each other in the San Gabriel Valley in southern California. All photos (© **Philip Chinn**)

In 2013, a new Islamic center was built in the adjacent community of Rowland Heights. A Korean Southern Baptist church is located just over a mile away, in the City of Walnut, and a Sikh temple is also located in Walnut, a mile away. A Hindu temple was completed in 2012 in a nearby community, Chino Hills. These are but a few examples of how America's immigrants have changed not only the ethnic landscape of the country but the religious landscape as well.

The religious landscape of Canada has also been changing. While two-thirds of Canadians identify themselves as Catholic or Protestant, these percentages have been dropping. Between 1971 and 2011, the percentage of Canadians identifying themselves as Catholic dropped from 47% to 39%. The drop among Protestants was even greater, from 41% to 27%. These drops came against the gains of those identifying other religions, which increased from 4% to 11%, and those with no religious affiliation, from 4% to 24%. Between 1986 and 2012, religious attendance in Canada dropped from 44% to 27%. Much like their U.S. counterparts, the youngest groups showed the largest percentage of non-religious affiliation (29%), while the older groups the lowest percentage of non-affiliation (12%). Among immigrants to Canada arriving between 2001 and 2011, 22% were Catholic, 17% Protestant, 39% other religions, and 21% unaffiliated (Pew Research Center, 2013c).

North America is exceptional in its changing religious landscape. Brazil is an example of another country in another continent where significant religious changes have taken place in recent years. Brazil has more Roman Catholics than any other country in the world, an estimated 123 million. However, in recent years, the percentages of Protestants, other religions, and non-religiously affiliated individuals has grown. Between 1970 and 2010, the percentage of Brazilians identifying as Catholics dropped from 92% to 65%. The percentage identifying as Protestants increased from 4% to 22%, other religions from 2% to 5%, and religiously unaffiliated from 1% to 8%. This is an example of how the status of religion is dynamic in much of the world, changing with the times and with the overall demographics of its residents (Pew Research Center, 2013b).

Much of Europe, once a citadel for Christianity, has become increasingly secular in the past several decades. A prominent British politician has complained that aggressive secularists have made it difficult for people of faith to live with their faith (Baggini, 2012).

The End of Christian America?

In April 2009 the feature article in *Newsweek* was titled "The End of Christian America" (Meacham, 2009). Based on the findings of the American Religious Identification Survey (Kosmin & Keysar, 2009), it sent shockwaves across much of the country's religious communities. The declines in religiosity in the Northeast, considered the foundation or the home base of American religion, were seen as especially troubling. The increasing numbers of individuals identifying themselves as "unchurched," or "nones," fueled concern then as is it does now among religious groups. The number of individuals who described themselves as atheists or agnostics had increased from 1 million in 1990 to 2.4% of the population, or as many as 7 million (Lipka, 2013).

While 3 out of 4 Americans continue to identify themselves as Christians, the country is less Christian than it was 25 years ago, when 86% indicated that they were of that faith (CNN.com, 2009). However, the United States continues to be a religious country. Some of the concerns emanate from conservative Christians, who feel that they are losing the battle over issues related to school prayer, abortion, and same-sex marriage. They are fearful of what they perceive as non-Christian religious influences brought into the country by immigrants. Concerned that the country may be moving toward a Europe-like secular state, they seek to return the country to their vision of a Christian America.

As contemporary Christianity evolves in U.S. society, there is an apparent dichotomy between the conservative Christian community and the liberal/moderate Christians and non-Christians. Some conservatives choose to home-school their children to shelter them from what they view as objectionable elements in society. They may tend to avoid those who do not share their conservative values.

These findings have implications for both educators and students. Educators who share conservative values, even if in keeping with majority community values, are professionally obligated to respect the religious values of all of their students, even when they have personal

concerns regarding their students' religious or spiritual life. Educators also need to be vigilant for students who demonstrate religious intolerance toward others. Some religious groups emphasize the importance of proselytizing to win non-believers to their faith. Although it is their right to hold these beliefs, it is not their right to impose them on others in the public school setting.

Protestantism

The Western Europeans who immigrated to the United States in large numbers brought with them their various forms of Protestantism. While claiming 40.1% of the population (Pew Research Center, 2015b,), Protestants in the United States no longer constitute the dominant numerical majority as in previous decades but continue to influence society and institutions.

To illuminate the differences within Protestantism, the faith is sometimes divided into two broad categories—liberal and conservative. **Liberal Protestants** include denominations that may be characterized by some as moderates. Sometimes referred to as Mainline Protestants, they stress the right of individuals to determine for themselves what is true in religion. They believe in the authority of Christian experience and religious life rather than the dogmatic church pronouncements and interpretations of the Bible. They are likely to support and participate in social action. They may or may not believe in the virgin birth of Jesus, and they may not share their conservative counterparts' belief in the inerrancy of the Bible. Some may not accept the miracles cited in the Bible as factual. The United Church of Christ and Episcopal churches are examples, although the degree of liberalism depends on the individual congregation. Methodists and Disciples of Christ represent more moderate denominations within this category. In recent years, Mainline Protestants have suffered most of the Protestant losses, although conservative Protestants have also experienced some losses (Bradshaw, 2013).

Conservative Protestants generally believe that the Bible is inerrant, that the supernatural is distinct from the natural, that salvation is essential, and that Jesus will return in bodily form during the Second Coming. They emphasize personal morality rather than social ethics. Southern Baptists are the largest group in this category.

Effects of Protestantism on Education.

Protestants have a long history of involvement in both public and private educational programs. Differences in beliefs among Protestants have resulted in many court cases to determine what can or cannot be taught to or asked of students in the public schools. Efforts by some **fundamentalist Christians** to institute the teaching of creationism has resulted in litigation. Jehovah's Witnesses have had issues with schools because some of their children have refused to salute the flag. Some Amish have fought in courts to remove their children from public schools after they have completed eighth grade. Other religious groups continue to fight against the 1963 Supreme Court decision that disallowed prayer in school.

In 1701, 10 Connecticut clergymen founded Yale, the nation's third-oldest university. Now considered a non-sectarian institution, Yale still maintains some religious influence with its prestigious Yale Divinity School. Baylor University (Southern Baptist), Southern Methodist University (United Methodist), Goshen College (Mennonite), and Centre College (Presbyterian) are a few examples of the hundreds of Protestant institutions of higher education in the United States that have educated and influenced the lives of millions of American and international students.

Evangelicals.

Evangelicals have been part of the religious landscape of the United States since the mid-1700s. Billy Graham and his ministry is one of the best-known examples of contemporary evangelical Christianity. Evangelicals are conservative Christians, primarily Protestants, who insist on the necessity of a conversion, or "born again," experience; acceptance of the authority of the Bible; and acceptance of the birth, miracles, and resurrection of Jesus as supernatural events (Corrigan & Hudson, 2010; Hopfe & Woodward, 2012). Estimates suggest that between 23% and 24% (Wright, 2013) and 26.3% (Pew Research Center, 2014a) of the U.S. population identify themselves as evangelicals.

In recent years, there has been phenomenal growth in evangelical churches. They have utilized mass communication, including television, to get their message to their faithful. Some have become megachurches, with weekly attendance of 2,000 or more—some exceeding 10,000—and providing an array of services including job banks, counseling, and even dating services.



Watch the video "Multi-Site Megachurches Multiply in America" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_TXFet1RBCs) to see an evangelical multisite megachurch.

Evangelicals are strong supporters of the pro-life movement. Opposition to abortion has become a centerpiece of the Catholic–Protestant alliance for conservatives. Evangelicals have opened crises pregnancy centers near Planned Parenthood centers to counter the work of pro-choice advocates. They campaign for laws that reflect their pro-life positions, limiting access to abortions.

Gay and lesbian behaviors go against the values of evangelicals, who strongly believe that one can overcome what they believe is a sin with the help of God and the religious community.

Evangelicals are also fighting against what they view as alarming changes in culture, involving issues such as gender, sexuality, and the family. They are distressed over changing sexual standards, the ordination of women, birth control, divorce rates, the decline in family authority, the ban on prayer in schools, and the teaching of evolution.

To advance their agenda, evangelicals have sought to influence the outcomes of many local and national elections and have in some instances helped shape public policies. Joining with conservatives from Jewish and Catholic groups, they have been influential in the outcomes of some presidential elections (e.g., George W. Bush) as well as the 1994 and 2010 midterm elections. Many actively supported Mitt Romney in the 2012 elections, as well as Republicans in Congressional, state, and local elections. They have had an impact on state and local elections, direct and indirect influences on the composition of school boards, and a say in judicial appointments. Their support in electing conservative presidents has resulted in the appointment of conservative federal justices, whose interpretation of the law will have a lasting effect for decades.

There has been an increasing division between some conservative evangelicals and their moderate counterparts. Some moderate evangelicals have taken a more conciliatory approach to gays and lesbians. These moderates, tiring of the divisive politics of religion, are embracing a wider-ranging agenda, with an emphasis on reaching out to the poor and disenfranchised and focusing on other social and human rights issues. While these evangelical moderates tend to lean more toward the middle both politically and religiously than their fundamentalist evangelical counterparts, they are typically far more conservative than most mainline Protestants.

Evangelicals and Education. Evangelical Christians have differing views on education. Some of the more conservative evangelicals prefer to send their children to private Christian schools, while others prefer to home-school their children. Some believe it is their responsibility to take over the schools and to infuse the curriculum with a Christian orientation.

Evangelicals are concerned about the hiring of gay and lesbian teachers, and also with the modern curriculum, which they view as harmful to America's children because it lacks a Christian influence.

School prayer remains an important issue among many evangelicals. Tuition tax credits are another issue that is often raised, especially among individuals who have removed their children from public schools in favor of private Christian schools. These issues are addressed later in this chapter.

Some evangelicals do support the schools instilling a common core of values and morality, a policy many in the country would support. They want the schools to focus on basic academics—reading, writing, and mathematics—rather than social concerns (e.g., poverty, human rights violations, gender equity, ethnic studies). They are concerned with what they view as unfair discrimination against religious studies in the schools, such as creation science or intelligent design.

Evangelicals are among those who reject Charles Darwin's view of evolution. Newport (2010) reported that 40% of Americans surveyed believe that God created humans 6,000 to 10,000 years ago in essentially their current form. Evangelicals are firmly behind the movement to either rid the schools of evolution in the curriculum or to establish alternative theories. The most often cited alternative theory is **creation science**. Creation science accepts the creation of all living things in six days, literally as presented in the Bible (Farwell, 2014).

Opponents of creation science suggest that it is not a science, but a theory based on a biblical account.

A third theory has been proposed: **intelligent design**. Supporters of intelligent design say that only an intelligent being could have created a natural world that is so complex and so well ordered (Fisher, 2014). Some scientists and evolutionists suggest that intelligent design is creationism veiled in a relatively new term.

Evangelicals may not be a numerical majority in the United States, but they are an influential force in our society. Their efforts affect politics, our judicial system, our legal system, and our schools. Whether educators agree or disagree with their views and practices, it is important to understand that what evangelicals want for the country is no different from what most other religious persuasions seek. They envision a safer, more moral America, one free of drugs, crime, and violence. While some educators may not share the values of the evangelicals or agree with how they intend to accomplish their goals, it may be helpful to recognize who they are and what they seek to achieve. This can help being respectful of their values and may minimize the likelihood of conflict over curriculum and student assignments.

Political Influence of Protestants and Other Religious Groups. The political leadership in the United States often reflects the influence of various religious groups. Ninety-eight percent of members of Congress indicate a specific religious affiliation. The vast majority are Christian. In 2014, as in the past, Protestants led in representation in Congress, with 56%, as compared to the 48% of the general population who indicated they were Protestants. Roman Catholics followed, with 31%, higher than the Gallup finding of 23.3% for the general population. Jewish members of Congress made up 6.2% of the House and Senate seats, considerably higher than their 1.7% proportion of the general population. The Mormon presence in Congress was 2.8%, also higher than their 2.1% in the overall population. Three members of Congress are Buddhists, two are Muslims, and one is Hindu. Eleven members of the 113th Congress do not list a religious affiliation (Manning, 2014).

While the American electorate has shown its willingness to send significant numbers of Jewish individuals, and smaller numbers of Muslim and Buddhist individuals, to Congress, religious affiliation continues to be an issue in elections for public office. In 1928, Alfred Smith, the Democratic presidential candidate, lost in a landslide. Many Protestants were fearful that Smith would be strongly influenced by the Vatican. When John F. Kennedy became the Democratic presidential candidate in 1960, some of the same concerns were echoed regarding his Catholic faith. Kennedy was able to overcome these concerns, and the rest became part of U.S. history. In 2012, Mitt Romney became the Republican Party's presidential candidate, and his affiliation with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS or Mormon) became an issue among some of the electorate. While Romney lost the election, he won 79% of the evangelical support, even more than the 73% that Senator John McCain had won in the 2008 election (Ekstrom, 2012). Senator Harry Reid, who became the Senate majority leader in 2007, is also a Mormon.

In 2012, Mazie Hirono was elected as the first Buddhist member of the Senate. The House seat that Hirono gave up was won by Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu elected to Congress (Ekstrom, 2012). The increasing diversity in the U.S. Congress reflects the increasing diversity of the country. It also indicates a willingness of segments of U.S. society to elect candidates from less traditional backgrounds. Although the United States is not yet free from religious bias, the religious landscape is changing.

Catholicism

Although the doctrine and pattern of worship within the Catholic Church are uniform, individual parishes differ to some extent according to the race, ethnic background, and social class of their members. Individual dioceses also may differ in keeping with the conservative or liberal (progressive) views of the presiding bishop. Unlike the Protestant faith, however, which includes denominational pluralism, the Catholic faith is a single denomination under the Pope, who has authority over all Catholics throughout the world.

With 23.3% of the U.S. population identifying with the Roman Catholic Church (Newport, 2012), there may be close to 70 million in the American Catholic Church.

Today, the Catholic Church in the United States is the wealthiest national church in the Roman Catholic world and contributes approximately half of its income to the Church in Rome. The increasing numbers of American cardinals and American priests appointed to important posts in Rome attest to the growing importance of the Catholic Church in the United States (Corrigan & Hudson, 2010).

Diversity among Catholics. The movement toward conservatism has not been limited to Protestants. In many instances, conservative Catholics have joined forces with conservative Protestants on such issues as abortion and sexual morality. Some Catholics have even abandoned their traditional support of the Democratic Party to support conservative Republican candidates. On the other end of the continuum, some Catholics have protested the conservative position of their church regarding the limited participation of women in leadership roles, and some support the pro-choice movement. Some Catholics ignore their church's position on certain forms of birth control, while others continue to strictly follow church directives.

Membership in U.S. Catholic churches involves many different ethnic groups. Some parishes are predominantly Irish, while others are predominantly Italian, Polish, Mexican, Puerto Rican, or other ethnic groups. A parish may choose to conduct services in the predominant language group of its parishioners or may have individual masses for different language groups. Cultural events of the ethnic groups may be incorporated into the daily activities of the particular parish (e.g., **Quinceañera** for Latino females reaching the age of 15).

Pope Francis. In March 2013, the **College of Cardinals** in Rome elected Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Argentina as the new Roman Catholic pope. At that time, he took the name Francis, and he has since been known to the world as Pope Francis. As the first non-European Pope, Francis is an outsider chosen to succeed two previous conservative popes, John Paul II and Benedict.

Pope Francis immediately demonstrated a change in style from his predecessors by rejecting the personal residence in the Papal Palace in favor of a modest three-room apartment. He travels in ordinary cars rather than limousines, carries his own bag, and has washed the feet of non-Catholics. When asked about his attitude about gays and lesbians, Pope Francis responded, "Who am I to judge?" This is in contrast to the usual position of the Catholic Church that homosexuality is an "intrinsic disorder" (Phillips, 2014).

Many in the Catholic Church who have endured abuse by priests see a hopeful sign that Pope Francis will bring about reforms and make the Catholic Church a more welcoming and inclusive church. While the style of the pope has changed from that of his predecessor, the likelihood of substantive change remains to be seen. The pope must work with the Roman Curia, the administrative body of the Church, which is a powerful body run by many conservative cardinals.

Effect on Education. In addition to its phenomenal numerical growth, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States has developed the largest private educational system in the world. In many communities, Catholic parochial schools offer quality educational options to both Catholic and non-Catholic students at a lower cost than most other private institutions.

With thousands of elementary and secondary schools from Vermont to Hawaii and such internationally recognized universities as Notre Dame, Creighton, and Loyola, Roman Catholic schools and universities have educated millions of Americans and greatly influenced the culture of the country.

Judaism

Judaism is one of the oldest religions known to humanity and also provides the historical roots of both Catholicism and Protestantism. Primarily as a result of Jews from many countries amalgamating under the identification of Jewish American, Judaism has become one of the

major faiths in this country. While the Jewish population in the United States is relatively small, the contributions of Jewish Americans to the fields of medicine, science, academia, business, economics, entertainment, and politics in the United States have been profound.

In the nineteenth century, large numbers of Jews emigrated from Germany, and many began moving from Jewish enclaves along the East Coast to other parts of the country. Religious persecution in countries such as Russia and Germany brought additional Jewish refugees to the United States in the twentieth century.

Newport (2012) estimated the U.S. Jewish population to be 1.7% of the total U.S. population, which would today total approximately 5.4 million. Compared with the Protestant and Catholic populations, the Jewish population has decreased significantly numerically and in percentage of the general population over the past 50 years, partly as a result of intermarriage and low birth rates. Yet, as a group, the Jews remain a distinctive, identifiable religious minority whose social standing and influence are disproportionate to their numbers. Education, including higher education, has played an important role in the Jewish community by advancing young people from the working class into white-collar and professional positions.

Diversity within Judaism. There is no Jewish race. Jewish identity is a blend of historical, religious, and ethnic variables. Early Jewish settlers in the United States found it difficult, if not impossible, to practice Judaism in the traditional ways that they had observed in Europe. Jewish religious practices and patterns were modified to meet the needs of the immigrants and in ways that made them characteristically American.

While some Jewish families have maintained their ties to Orthodox and Conservative Judaism, the majority of American Jews are now affiliated with Reform synagogues. Reform Jews represent the more liberal end of the continuum. According to Jewish law, one who is born to a Jewish mother or who converts to Judaism is considered a Jew. Reform Jews also accept children born to non-Jewish mothers as Jews. Orthodox Jews tend to hold firm to Jewish law, including rules on diet and dress. Conservative Judaism represents the moderates in Judaism. They are more conservative than the members of Reform congregations and often more liberal than the Orthodox Jews. "Conservative" indicates the group's attempt to conserve traditional Judaism rather than to reform. It does not indicate political conservatism. Some Conservative Jews observe **kosher** dietary laws, while others do not. Both Reform and Conservative Judaism allow women to be ordained as rabbis.



A thirteen-year-old Jewish male in a Reform synagogue in Hawaii observes his Bar Mitzvah by reading from the Torah in Hebrew, while his cousin, his uncle, and the cantor look on. This event marks his entry into religious adulthood.
(© Philip Chinn)

Although most Jews identify with their religion, the Jewish practice of religion is relatively loose regarding synagogue attendance and home religious observance. Nevertheless, the U.S. synagogue is the strongest agency in the Jewish community. Although they may not attend services regularly, a large percentage of Jews retain some affiliation with a synagogue. Attendance on **High Holidays**, such as Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover, however, is usually high. The synagogue in the United States serves not only as a place of religious worship but also as a primary base for Jewish identity and cultural survival.

Effect on Education. The majority of Jewish children attend public K–12 schools. Many of the Reform Jewish temples or synagogues throughout the country operate private preschools and kindergartens. In some of the larger Jewish communities, particularly among the Orthodox groups, yeshivas, or private religious schools, provide instruction in both academics and in-depth religious studies. Jewish universities such as Yeshiva University in New York and Brandeis University in Massachusetts have made significant contributions to higher education in the United States.

For decades American schools have observed the Christian holiday of Christmas. In the past 30 or 40 years, educators have become increasingly sensitive to the diversity of the students in their schools. December is usually the time of the year when Jewish families observe Chanukah (Hanukkah), an eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating a historical event in Jewish history. Many schools, in the spirit of inclusiveness and sensitivity, now refer to the holiday vacation period as the December school recess and December school parties as holiday parties.

Anti-Semitism. Jews in the United States and throughout the world have been targets of prejudice and discrimination, sometimes leading to attempted annihilation of the population. During World War II the Jewish Holocaust resulted in the deaths of millions of European Jews. For several years, the civilized world ignored the overwhelming evidence of the Nazi atrocities and did nothing to intervene. Now, in the twenty-first century, neo-Nazis and others suggest that the Jewish Holocaust was a myth that never happened. Other attempts at genocide persist in various places in the world. It is the responsibility of educators to help their students understand that, even today, genocides are taking place in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and other parts of the world.

Anti-Semitism is rooted in Jewish–Gentile conflicts that have existed for centuries. In the United States, Jews and Catholics were also targets of the Ku Klux Klan. In the 1960s some Jews were forced to flee the South in fear of the Klan (Hopfe & Woodward, 2012). Discrimination has occurred in both occupational and social life. In some instances, Jews have been denied high-level corporate management positions and have had limited access to or been barred from membership in social clubs. Periodic synagogue burnings and defacement are reminders that anti-Semitic sentiments still exist.

Islam

As a religious term, **Islam** means to surrender to the will or law of God. Islam is one of the major religions of the world, with over 1.6 billion adherents worldwide, and 23% of the world's population (Pew Research Center, 2012a). Worldwide, Islam is expected to be the fastest growing religion in the next four decades, nearly equaling the number of Christians by 2050. By that year, Christians will still be the largest group with 2.92 billion adherents, but Muslims will be close behind with an estimated 2.76 billion adherents (Pew Research Center, 2015c).

Islam is also one of the fastest-growing religions in the United States. The number of Muslims in the United States varies greatly and depends on who is doing the reporting. The Pew Research Center (2011b) estimated that there were 2.75 million Muslims in the United States in 2011. Newport (2012) estimated that Muslims comprise 1.6% of the U.S. population. That would amount to about 2 million adherents. The Pew Research Center (2011b) estimated that 80,000 to 90,000 Muslim immigrants enter the United States annually. Grossman (2012) reported that there were 2,106 mosques located throughout the United States in 2010, an increase of 74% from the 1,209 reported in 2000. While many Americans believe Islam is primarily a Middle Eastern religion, only a small portion of the world's Muslims live in that region. Indonesia, Pakistan, and India all have larger Muslim populations than any Middle Eastern country. Indonesia, which has a Muslim population of over 209 million (DeSilver, 2013), has as many as two-thirds as many Muslims as the Middle East and North Africa combined.



Watch the video "Mosques in US Grow Dramatically over the Past Decade" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWsuugQSUIA) to learn more about the growth of Islam in the United States.

More than 100 years ago, a group of immigrants from the Middle East settled in Cedar Falls, Iowa. They were among the first Muslims to settle in this country. The descendants of those immigrants have maintained the religion of their ancestors, built a new mosque, and become an integral part of their community. As everyday citizens, businesspeople, and professionals, they dress, talk, and act like any other Americans. Only their religion tends to distinguish them from their Christian and Jewish neighbors.

Islamic Beliefs. Those who practice Islam are **Muslims**. Islam is both a belief system and a way of life for individuals and entire societies. Islam is based on the holy writings of the **Qur'an** (or **Koran**). Muslims believe that the Qur'an consists of the exact words that were revealed by God through the Angel Gabriel to the prophet Muhammad (A.D. 570–632). The

Qur'an's basic theme is the relationship between God and His creatures. It provides guidelines for a society that is just, with proper human conduct, and an economic system that is equitable. Muslims believe that Islam began with Adam and continued through the line of prophets including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammad. The basic tenets of Islam include:

1. *Faith:* Belief in one God (**Allah**) and in Mohammad as his last messenger.
2. *Prayer:* Five times daily, facing Mecca.
3. *Charity:* Contributing to the poor.
4. *Fasting:* No food or water from sunrise to sunset during Ramadan (the ninth month of the Islamic year).
5. *Pilgrimage:* A visit to Mecca once in one's lifetime (the Hajj) (Ellwood & McGraw, 2014).



Educators will continue to see increasing numbers of religious minority group students in their classrooms, reflecting the religious diversity of the United States.
(© Con Tanasiuk/Design Pics Inc/ Alamy)

The pilgrimage to Mecca is an obligation for those who are physically and financially able. Muslims worship the same God (Allah) as do Christians and Jews. Christian Arabs also refer to God as Allah (Denny, 2011; Ellwood & McGraw, 2014).

Islam and the West. The events of September 11, 2001, which resulted in the loss of thousands of lives, focused world attention on Islamic extremists. Since then, the United States has been in almost continuous conflict with Islamic extremists in Afghanistan and Iraq. Around the world, in countries such as Spain, the Philippines, Great Britain, and Indonesia, hundreds of lives have been lost at the hands of Islamic extremists.

The continuing conflicts in both Iraq and Afghanistan and the ongoing strained relations with Iran have drawn daily attention to Islamic extremists. By mid-2014, 4,412 U.S. service personnel had lost their lives in Iraq and another 2,200 in Afghanistan, with tens of thousands more wounded (U.S. Department of Defense, 2014).

Since the events of 9/11, many Americans have maintained negative views toward Islam, Muslim Americans, and Arab Americans. According to Siddiqui (2014), 42% believed law enforcement to be justified in profiling Arab Americans and Muslim Americans. Favorability toward Arab Americans was 36% and toward Muslim Americans 27%, significantly lower than it was in 2010. Various incidents involving militant Muslims have contributed to the increased negative attitudes. Examples include the ongoing civil war in Syria, the atrocities by the militant Islamic group **ISIS** (aka ISIL), the abduction of young girls in Nigeria by **Boko Haram**, and the 2012 attack on the American mission in Benghazi, Libya. These resultant attitudes have left many in the Western World with what Kincheloe, Steinberg, and Stonebanks (2010) referred to as **Islamaphobia**. The writers suggested that Muslims have been inaccurately defined by the media and politicians, resulting in a trickle-down effect into the communities and the schools.

There certainly have been horrendous acts of violence committed by some individuals in the name of Islam. Americans have often questioned why Muslim leaders have not denounced the terrorist activities. However, they have done so, repeatedly and emphatically. The actions of the bombing terrorists in Boston were strongly denounced by Muslim leaders, as were the actions of Boko Haram. Ninety percent of the victims of Islamic terrorists are Muslims. ISIS killed a Muslim professor in Iraq who had denounced ISIS persecution of Christians. The two largest Muslim organizations in the United States, the Council on American–Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), have unequivocally denounced ISIS, stating that the group's behaviors are un-Islamic and morally repugnant. Their denunciation of ISIS was joined by that of 100 Sunni and Shia imams in Great Britain. Muslim leaders in Turkey and Indonesia echoed their sentiments (Obeidallah, 2014).

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Ship Them Back to Where They Came From?

The news media was replete with coverage of the attack on the U.S. embassy in Benghazi, Libya, by Islamic militants resulting in the loss of Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans. With this horrific incident on the minds of many Americans, sixth-grader Bart Sherman entered his classroom and stated that his father had said that we should just drop a really big bomb and nuke all of those Muslims in Libya, and we should ship all of the Muslims in the United States back to where they came from. "My Dad's right," Bart stated. "That's what we should do." Many in the class echoed their approval. Laura Gonzalez, Bart's teacher, noticed Karimah Hoseini near the back of the room with her eyes fixed to the floor. Ms. Gonzalez knew that Karimah was a Muslim and that both she and her parents were born in the United States. Her father was a highly respected dentist in the community. It was obvious that this verbal attack on Muslims was painful for Karimah.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. **What should Ms. Gonzalez do about this situation?**
2. **What are some of the appropriate actions that Ms. Gonzalez could have taken when Chris began his attack on Muslims?**
3. **What can Ms. Gonzalez do to assure Karimah of both her understanding and support?**
4. **How might Ms. Gonzalez turn this into a learning experience without seemingly attacking Bart's father?**

Diversity within Islam. Believers are of two major groups. Sunni Muslims, who comprise 85% of Islam, believe that the rightful leadership began with Abu Bakr and that the succession has passed to caliphs, or political leaders. Shi'i or Shiite Muslims are a smaller but highly visible group. Shiite Muslims believe that Muhammad intended the succession of leadership to pass through the bloodline of his cousin and son-in-law, 'Ali. Shiite Muslims have attracted considerable world attention, in part because of their insistence of adherence to Islamic law by their countries' governments (Denny, 2011; Hopfe & Woodward, 2014).

Sunni Muslims dominate the Islamic world, including the Middle East. However, Shiite Muslims are the majority numerically and in political control in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon. Saddam Hussein, who led Iraq for many years, was a Sunni Muslim. He and his Sunni followers dominated the numerically superior Shiites in his country by force and at one time waged war with the Shiite government in Iran. The overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003 enabled the long-oppressed Shiite majority to rise to power.

While the early religious differences between Shiite and Sunni Muslims continue, they are probably not primary contributing factors to the ongoing violence between the two groups. Politics and the struggle to maintain control of power has been the most likely issue. The hardliners on both sides tend to see this as a struggle for the survival of their sect (Mizban, 2013). After the Shiites took control of the government in Iraq, they were resistant to sharing the governance of the country with the Sunnis or the Kurds.

While there is often conflict within their own countries, members of the two sects often involved themselves in conflicts in other countries. The civil war in Syria has fueled much of the tensions and hatreds in the Middle East. President Assad's regime has been backed by Shiites in the region, including Lebanon's Shi'a militant Islamist group, **Hezbollah**, which has sent fighters to the conflict. This has inflamed the Sunnis throughout the region and sent fighters including ISIS into the conflict (Mizban, 2013).

By August 2014, ISIS was occupying areas in northern and western Iraq and some key areas within Syria. ISIS pursued thousands of Yazidis, an Iraqi ethnic minority/religious group, onto the top of the barren Mt. Sinjar in northern Iraq. There the Yazidis were forced to remain and die without food or water. ISIS considers the Yazidis, whose beliefs are an ancient blend of religions including **Zoroastrianism**, Islam, and Christianity, to be devil worshipers. They were threatened with slaughter if they did not convert to the ISIS form of

Islam (Jalabi, 2014; Lee, 2014). Eventually the U.S. and coalition forces made food and water drops to the Yazidis and provided an escape corridor down the mountain.

The goal of ISIS is to create an Islamic state with a sphere of political influence over Iraq, Syria, and neighboring countries in the region. Well-equipped and well-funded ISIS is a potent military force that U.S. leaders have stated are more powerful than **Al-Qaeda** was on 9/11, and are intent on bringing terror to the United States and the rest of the Western world (Gregory, 2014). The ISIS army was estimated to be between 10,000 and 40,000 in the fall of 2014. With the 1.6 billion Muslims in the world, suggestions that the behaviors of the ISIS militants reflect the attitudes typical of most Muslims are unfair and unjustified. The vast majority of Muslims tend to be contemptuous of the actions of terrorists like ISIS. In 2014, Islamic countries such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates joined the United States and their allies in attacks against ISIS. This was particularly notable since it meant that Sunni Arab countries attacked other Sunnis in order to eliminate Islamic terrorism.

Effect on Education. The majority of Muslim students in the United States and Canada attend public schools. The September 11, 2001, attacks and the more recent hostilities in the Middle East have increased concerns of some Muslim students in U.S. schools about their personal safety and concerns that the wearing of traditional attire (e.g., head coverings for women) could draw unfavorable attention to them. Educators need to remember that only a very small minority of Muslims are militants and that the vast majority living in the United States want to be an integral part of American society. Culturally responsive teaching requires educators to examine their own attitudes and beliefs before they attempt to educate their students. All educators should be committed to the creation of a school environment that is emotionally and physically safe for all students.

In the United States, about 40,000 students attend 240–250 private Islamic schools. These schools are designed to provide full-time educational programs to help children grow into productive citizens in society and productive citizens in the hereafter (Huus, 2011). As a group, U.S. Muslims tend to be reasonably well educated. Eleven percent indicate that they have gone through graduate study, another 15% are college graduates, and an additional 19% have had some college. Fifty-nine percent were working part or full time, the same percentage as in the general U.S. population (Pew Research Center, 2011b).

Black Muslims. While U.S. **Black Muslims** have primarily aligned themselves with the Sunni form of Islam, they form a unique identity of their own. They are generally thought of as separate from the rest of Islam.

Elijah Poole (1875–1975), who became known as Elijah Muhammad, led the Nation of Islam into national visibility. In the early 1960s Malcolm X (1925–1965) became the most articulate spokesperson for the Nation of Islam (Ellwood & McGraw, 2014; Fisher, 2014).

Malcolm X and other Black Muslims sought to use the Nation of Islam to engage African Americans in economic nationalism and to instill in them a sense of pride and achievement. This was accomplished through rejection of Christianity, which they taught was a symbol of white oppression in America.

Wallace Deen Muhammad became the leader of the Nation of Islam after the death of his father, Elijah Muhammad, in 1975. Under his leadership, the Nation of Islam embraced traditional Sunni Islam and changed its name to the American Muslim Mission. During the 1970s and 1980s, W. D. Muhammad, as he is known, dispensed with the racist rhetoric of his sect's past and led his followers toward orthodox Koranic Islam. As a result, the group often supports conservative causes such as the free market. Hard work, personal responsibility, and family values are expected of members (Fisher, 2014).

Louis Farrakhan, the well-known leader of the Black Muslims, led a splinter movement in the 1980s that resumed the use of the original name, Nation of Islam (NOI), and the black separatist position. He continues to receive considerable attention from the press and political leaders because of his sometimes inflammatory rhetoric as well as his appeal to non-Muslim African Americans. The anti-gay and anti-Semitic rhetoric by Nation of Islam leaders, including Farrakhan, has limited the acceptance of the NOI by mainstream religious groups (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2014b). However, members have become role models in many inner



Watch the video "For African-American Muslims, Ramadan Has Special Meaning" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhOSMhTWMGk) to learn more about the experience of Black Muslims in the United States.

cities as they establish businesses. They often serve as visible neighborhood guardians against crime and drug abuse and have assumed an important role in the rehabilitation of individuals released from prison (Fisher, 2014).

Buddhism

Buddhism is one of the world's major religions, with nearly a half billion adherents worldwide. The Pew Research Center (2012a) indicated that the largest concentration of Buddhists, approximately 480 million, live in Asia and the Pacific region. The distant second-largest region is in North America, with approximately 3.8 million. Immigration of Asians from countries such as China, Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, Japan, and Tibet brings thousands of additional Buddhists into the United States and continually changes the religious demographics of the country. In the 20-year period between 1992 and 2012, over a million Buddhist immigrants entered the United States. With Buddhists coming from so many regions of the world, there are invariably different forms of Buddhism practiced. Buddhist schools of thought or belief are united in a twofold orientation toward existence: a fundamental negative attitude toward life and a pessimistic approach to ordinary existence. Buddhists view existence itself as the problem with life. As long as there is existence, there is suffering. The second common orientation of all Buddhists is that Buddha provides a solution to the frustrations of life. Each school of Buddhism provides a pathway to overcome the meaninglessness of life. Buddha is the solution to life's dilemma (Fisher, 2014; Young, 2013).

Buddhism teaches that the path to enlightenment is neither through a life of luxury nor through self-deprivation but through the middle way, away from the extremes. Salvation and enlightenment occurs when one realizes his or her place of non-self in the world. With enlightenment comes the state of nirvana, meaning a person's individual desires and suffering go away (Hopfe & Woodward, 2012; Young, 2013).

Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese individuals are often influenced by Confucian philosophy, which guides daily behaviors in much the same way that a religion does. Thus, some individuals may be Buddhist (or Christian or some other religion) with a strong philosophical overlay of Confucianism. The commitment to academic excellence and respect for parents, elders, and authority are characteristics often found among these groups of Asian students. Many of these cultural traits can be directly or indirectly attributed to the Confucian philosophy deeply instilled in many Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese students from an early age.

Hinduism

Hinduism is the major religion of India and the world's third-largest religion, after Christianity and Islam. There are approximately 1 billion adherents in the world, representing 15% of the world's population (Pew Research Religion and Public Life Project, 2012b). The number of Hindus in the United States is estimated to be around 1.8 million, or an estimated 0.6% of the U.S. population (Pew Research Center, 2012a). Generally regarded as the world's oldest organized religion, it differs from Christianity and other Western religions in that it does not have a single founder. Hinduism has no central organization. Hinduism is credited with influencing the development of both Buddhism and Jainism (Hopfe & Woodward, 2012).

Like most other religions, Hinduism involves basic beliefs about divinities, life after death, and how followers should conduct their lives. Unlike Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, Hinduism does not limit itself to a single book or writing. Several sacred writings contribute to the basic beliefs of Hinduism.

Teachings of Hinduism. Hinduism teaches that the soul never dies. When the body dies, the soul is reincarnated. The soul may be born into an animal or another human being. The law of karma states that every action taken by an individual influences how he or she will be reincarnated. Those who live a good life will be reincarnated into a higher state. Those who do evil will be reincarnated in lower forms, such as a worm. Reincarnation continues until a

person reaches spiritual perfection. The soul then enters a new level of existence, referred to as moksha, from which it never returns (Ellwood & McGraw, 2014).

Other Denominations and Religious Groups

In addition to the four major faiths in the United States, there are several other religions an educator might encounter in a community. They include Christian religious groups and others that do not fall into the discrete categories of Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, or Islam.

Latter-Day Saints. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS or Mormon) is a rapidly growing group that is neither Catholic nor Protestant. In the early 1830s, Joseph Smith founded the LDS Church in western New York State. By his own account, Smith was instructed to translate a history of ancient inhabitants of North America written on tablets of gold, which had been stored in a nearby hillside. The translations were published in 1830 as the Book of Mormon, which together with the Old and New Testaments and some of Smith's later revelations became the sacred scriptures of Mormonism (Young, 2013).

Watch the video "Young Mormons on a Mission" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-IaoBHJ3m0) to learn more about Mormon missionaries and the differences between the LDS Church and other Christian groups.

Smith and his followers met opposition from Protestant groups, and they were harassed and violently driven out of various communities. The Mormon practice of polygamy (discontinued in 1890) exacerbated their unacceptability to other groups, and in 1844 Smith and his brother were killed by a mob in Carthage, Illinois. With the death of Smith, Brigham Young became the new leader of the group and led them to Utah, now the religious center of the Mormons. The Mormons aggressively proselytize and as a result have grown to a membership of 6.4 million in the United States and 15 million worldwide (Newsroom, 2014).

Eastern Orthodoxy. The Eastern Orthodox Church is another Christian religion that does not fall into the two major groupings of Protestant and Roman Catholic. One reason that the Eastern Orthodox Church is lesser known in this country may be that its members, from Syria, Greece, Armenia, Russia, and the Ukraine, only immigrated during the last century. Although they split with the Roman Catholic Church in 1054 over theological, practical, jurisdictional, cultural, and political differences, to many outsiders they appear very similar to the pre–**Vatican II** Catholic church.

Worldwide, the Eastern Orthodox churches together have an estimated combined membership of 260 million, or 12% of the world's Christian population. There are approximately 2 million Orthodox Christians in the United States (Pew Research Religion and Public Life Project, 2011). There are 15 self-governing Orthodox churches worldwide, each with its own patriarch, metropolitan, or archbishop as its spiritual leader (Fisher, 2014).



Interaction of Religion with Gender, Gay and Lesbian Issues, and Race

Religion can significantly influence one's perceptions, attitudes, and values. In some respects, religion can be much like other cultures. One who lives in and with a religion absorbs the values of that religious culture and often integrates it into his or her personal value system. Religion influences attitudes toward issues such as gender, homosexuality, and race.

Religion and Gender

In an era of gender equality in the general society of the United States, issues of gender equality are often raised in religious institutions. In many of the more conservative religious bodies, the

role of women is clearly defined and limited. There are no female priests in the Roman Catholic Church or Eastern Orthodox churches, no woman can attain the priesthood in the Mormon Church, and very few conservative churches or denominations have ordained or are willing to ordain women ministers. The same can be said about many other religious groups. At the 2000 annual Southern Baptist Convention, the 16,000 delegates voted on an explicit ban on women pastors. This action followed an earlier one by the Baptists to support the submission of women to their husbands.

While Lydia, Phoebe, and Priscilla were women mentioned in the New Testament as having prominent roles in the early days of Christianity, other biblical passages are used to justify the limitation of women in religious leadership roles. In supporting the limitations of female leadership and submission of wives, some draw attention to the fact that Jesus' disciples did not include women. Biblical verses (e.g., I Corinthians 14:34–35) admonish women to submit themselves to their husbands and indicate that the husband is the head of the wife.

Some believe that God gave men, through Adam (Genesis 1:26–27), dominion over Eve and, therefore, men dominance over women. However, others argue that such an interpretation is incorrect and that both Adam and Eve (man and woman) were given dominion over every other living thing. There are other biblical examples of women who were leaders or prophets (e.g., Deborah; see Judges 4–5). The participation of women in leadership roles in both Protestantism and Judaism is a function of where the particular denomination falls on the liberal to conservative continuum. Liberal Protestants (e.g., Episcopalians) ordain women as priests. Likewise, the Reform Jewish movement has ordained women as rabbis since 1972. The Conservative Jewish seminaries began ordaining women as rabbis in 1985, but the Orthodox Jewish movement has not embraced this policy.

Limitations on the participation of females in religious activities are by no means the sole province of Judeo-Christian groups. Islam and other religions either limit the participation of females or typically rest leadership in the hands of men. Islam views women as equal to but different from men. They do not worship alongside the men in their mosques but in separate areas. They are expected to observe all pillars of Islam, including the five daily prayers and fasts during Ramadan.

Women in some Middle Eastern countries have severe limitations placed on them (e.g., rules against working, attending school, or driving a car, and requiring face covering). These limitations are more a function of the culture of the country or region than they are mandates of Islam.

Due to the diversity of the backgrounds of adherents as well as the society in which they live, many Islamic women in the United States function differently than Islamic women in other parts of the world. Differences include the extent to which they work outside the home, assume active roles in Islamic centers and community life, and interact with the non-Muslim community.

In addition to defining the parameters of religious participation of males and females, religion may also be used to prescribe male and female roles outside the religious context. Such prescriptions may be done either directly or indirectly. In religious groups in which women are given a less prominent status, this may carry over into general family life and other aspects of society as a natural course. In other instances, the pronouncements may be more direct. Religious writings of great importance, such as the Bible, are continuously interpreted, studied, and analyzed. In the United States, the Bible is viewed as sacred by most citizens who claim Christian church membership. Consequently, the Bible and other religious writings, such as the Koran, have a profound influence on many Americans.

Issues related to gender equality are treated extensively in Chapter 4. It is important for educators to be aware that many of society's attitudes toward gender equality or inequality may be rooted in religious practices. If religious practices dictate that wives are to be subservient to their husbands, or if women are prohibited from the highest or even high levels of leadership within a faith, then this practice often carries over into other aspects of everyday life. Educators who themselves observe gender limitations in their religious life or in their homes have a right to do so. However, they must not draw inferences from these beliefs to impose limits on the potential for leadership in the classroom, the school, or the future for their female

students. It is important that female students at an early age be encouraged and given opportunities to develop leadership skills. This will enable them to pursue their future careers and personal choices and enable them to maximize their full potential.

Religion and Gay and Lesbian Issues

Gay and lesbian issues have become among the most controversial dilemmas facing religious institutions today. Attacks on gays and lesbians in the religious context are often justified through biblical interpretation or from other religious writings. Some argue that the textual interpretation and, in some cases, translation of biblical passages regarding same-sex relationships are not clear and may be subject to influence by misguided beliefs. Others argue that the Bible is clear on the issue of same-sex unions, as in the book of Genesis, where God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of sinful behaviors, including the gay behaviors of the inhabitants. The debate is serious, as are the consequences. Conservative Christians and conservatives of other religious groups tend to view LGBT behavior as a matter of choice—a sin and an abomination. More liberal religious groups tend to believe that the only choice is whether the individual engages in such behavior. They contend that the individual is born LGBT.

In 2008, California's Proposition 8, a voter initiative, banned gay marriage. It was strongly supported by the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon), evangelical Christian groups, Orthodox Jewish, Eastern Orthodox, and other religious groups (Johnson, 2013). Over $83 million was spent on the proposition, making it one of the most expensive state initiatives in history. The initiative, which passed with a margin of 52.24%, received considerable funding from out-of-state church-related groups. However, all six of the Episcopal diocesan bishops in California, the Board of Rabbis of Southern California, various Jewish groups, the California Council of Churches, and certain other religious groups voiced their opposition to Prop 8. In 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court left in place a lower court's decision that Prop 8's ban is unconstitutional, and also struck down key portions of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) (Barnes, 2013).

Issues related to gay marriages in society have also become religious issues. As the general public becomes increasingly accepting of gay marriage, some states have legalized the unions, and the courts have affirmed the rights of gay couples. Churches have been forced to reassess their doctrines and positions on the matter. While some churches and denominations have held steadfastly against gay and lesbian lifestyles and same-sex marriage, some have welcomed gays and lesbians, ordained gay ministers, and performed same sex marriages. The United Methodists, a mainline denomination generally considered theologically moderate, have held church trials and defrocked ministers for performing same-sex unions. These actions have resulted in strong dissent among some Methodists and have threatened the unity of the denomination.

Episcopalians have elevated both a gay (2004) and a lesbian (2010) as bishops. These actions have severely strained relations between the parent Anglican Church and the American Episcopal Church, and have resulted in a schism in some Episcopal congregations over what they consider excessively liberal practices.

Views toward LGBT vary considerably among other religious groups. There are often intergroup as well as intragroup differences. The Roman Catholic position on same-sex behavior is in keeping with that of many other conservative groups. These groups view such practices as violations of divine and natural law (Catholic Answers, 2014).

The Catholic Church, along with American Baptists, Southern Baptists, Latter Day Saints, Missouri Synod Lutherans, and Orthodox Jews, prohibit same-sex marriages. Reform and Conservative Jewish congregations, Quakers, Unitarians, United Church of Christ, and Evangelical Lutherans sanction these marriages. The Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches sanction blessings of same-sex unions. Buddhists and Hindus have no clear position on the matter (Masci, 2014).

The Catholic Church has had to address issues related to gay sex abuse among its own clergy. The unfortunate clergy abuse scandals involving young males in the United States and abroad that have surfaced in recent years have caused great spiritual and economic turmoil in various dioceses and resulted in deep emotional scarring among many of the victims. Even though the abuses have been linked to a minority of priests, the scandal has caused immense problems for the Church.

Gay behaviors in Islam are viewed as lewd and sinful. There are two primary references to gay orientation in the Qur'an (Qur'an 7:80–81 and 26:165). Both address gay behaviors negatively. In South and East Asian Islamic countries, no physical punishment for homosexuality is considered warranted. However, some Middle Eastern Islamic countries tend to deal with it harshly, especially Iran and Afghanistan when under the rule of the Taliban (Robinson, 2014).

Graham (2014) suggested that the evangelical community is a major stronghold of anti-gay sentiment and likely one of the key political groups in the fight against same-sex marriages. As much of the general public and other religious groups have softened their stance against gays and lesbians, evangelicals have seemingly been immutable in their stance. However, Graham suggested that there appears to be a small but significant number of theologians and other conservative Christians who are beginning to develop moral arguments that it may be possible to affirm same-sex relationships within orthodox theology. They are building a case that the Bible, properly interpreted, does not condemn such relationships. It is unlikely that the evangelical movement will embrace gays and lesbians in the near future, but even the Southern Baptists, one of the most conservative denominations, are beginning to soften their stance (Farmer, 2014).

Religion and political affiliation are closely interwoven in the United States. Religious conservatives, particularly evangelical Christians, have closely aligned themselves with the Republican Party, whose leadership has generally opposed same-sex marriage and gay relationships (Sullivan, 2013). The Democratic Party platform in 2012 supported gay marriage (Stein, 2012). When religion and politics become closely entwined, there is a concern that legislators will attempt to mandate, through legislation, who may and who may not be allowed to teach, what curriculum is permissible, and what material in textbooks should be censored. It is essential to bear this in mind in deciding what individuals and platforms to support in elections.

Religious views toward LGBT issues have considerable implications for the educational setting. Educators have a right to their personal views toward homosexuality. They do not have a right to impose their views in the public school setting. They cannot allow students to harass or bully one another, and they cannot allow students to voice their personal opinions and attack other students verbally or otherwise in the classroom or on school grounds. It is the responsibility of every educator, including staff members, to provide a safe and accepting environment for all students.

Religion and Race

In the United States, as in many other countries, religion has had a profound impact on race and ethnic diversity issues. When individuals misinterpret biblical scriptures or interpret them to justify aberrant behavior, the consequences can be severe. At their 1995 meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention, the country's largest Protestant denomination, in an unprecedented act of contrition, apologized for the role it had played in the justification of slavery and in the maintenance of a culture of racism in the United States. For decades, well into the 1950s, noted ministers and religious leaders from various denominations defended segregation and helped to keep the practice alive.

Slavery and Racism. The Bible does not condemn slavery, and its practice can be found throughout both the Old and New Testaments. In the New Testament, there is no record of either Jesus or Paul specifically condemning slavery, which was a common practice during that period. Paul returned a slave to his master rather than provide refuge, as was required by Jewish law (Deuteronomy 23:15–16). Therefore, proponents of slavery believed that this institution had a solid biblical foundation.

The Catholic king of Spain and his ministers viewed it as their divine right and obligation to enslave and Christianize or slaughter the natives of Latin America. Both Cortés and Pizarro operated under papal and governmental authority as they enslaved or killed thousands of natives and justified their behavior with biblical texts.

Anti-Semitism also finds many of its historical roots in the Bible and other religious works. Bach's *Passion of St. John*, though musically beautiful and inspiring, has been perceived

by some to have anti-Semitic German lyrics, though others disagree with this contention (von Rhein, 2012). Biblical passages are often used to justify anti-Semitic behaviors (e.g., Matthew 27:25–26, Romans 3:1). It is ironic that those individuals, especially Christians, who justify their anti-Semitic behaviors through religious doctrines and sacred writings tend to ignore the fact that Jesus and his earliest followers were themselves Jews.

Role of Black Religious Groups. Historically, African Americans often organized their own religious institutions due to racism, which either prohibited or limited their membership, participation, or attendance in mainstream denominations. Black churches and religious institutions have served their communities in different ways. Some provide food, shelter, and occasional employment opportunities. Others, such as the Black Muslims, have provided pride and a self-help philosophy. They have encouraged education and black entrepreneurship.

Civil Rights Movement and Black Churches. The modern civil rights movement was centered in the South's African American churches. Many of the civil rights leaders were or are ministers or church leaders (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr., Ralph Abernathy, Andrew Young, Jesse Jackson). From their pulpits, these religious leaders were able to direct boycotts and organize civil disobedience and nonviolent confrontations. Prior to the successful 1955 Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott, seating for black bus riders was segregated. Civil disobedience included sit-ins at segregated public places such as restaurants, where black individuals refused to leave when asked or ordered to do so. In these protests, church leaders instructed participants to respond to confrontations nonviolently.

African American churches deserve much of the credit for bringing about the civil rights gained in the past 50 or more years. Alienated and disillusioned by mainstream politics, few African Americans registered to vote in the past. African American clergy nationwide have advocated church involvement in social and political issues. In recent years, black churches have been extremely successful in registering millions of voters and thereby becoming an important voice in the electoral process.

Disenchantment among Younger Generations. Some young African Americans, particularly the younger generations, have become increasingly disenchanted with their black churches. They may feel that the churches are not aggressive enough with social issues or may feel that they are out of touch with today's real world. They have turned to secular organizations, which they feel deal more directly with their life situations and with the social problems they face. This does not mean the demise of the black church. While some will remain out of habit, others are unwilling to give up the important associations and relationships available to them in their respective churches. The historical nature of the black church as the center of black community life makes it unlikely that the masses will abandon it.

In some religious groups, African Americans were permitted membership but prohibited from attaining the higher positions of church leadership. These prohibitions were justified through biblical interpretations or through divine revelations claimed by church leaders. Although nearly all such racial limitations on membership and church leadership have been removed in recent years, the long-term effects of these religious prohibitions remain to be seen.

Like the gender issues that have become the focus of religious debate, racial issues have been debated for decades. As the courts and society have turned their backs on segregation and racially limiting practices, most religious bodies have also taken an official position of openness. Although the official position and the actual practice may differ somewhat, in churches that stress brotherly love, at least, the two may be moving to a higher level of congruence.

It is important to understand that clergy and other church and religious authorities have considerable influence on the people they lead. They, the writers and theologians who influence others, often find their inspiration or the justification for their positions in religious scriptures and writings. These writings are then interpreted for laypersons and may be used to shape their perceptions of self and others.

Children may learn that the LGBT life is an abomination, or they may learn to believe that it is an innate and natural sexual orientation for some. They learn that if females have limitations within the religious institution, they are meant to carry over into school and society. However, they may instead learn to believe in gender equity and that girls can become leaders in their classroom, excel academically, and pursue their career dreams. They may learn to believe that some races are superior to others or that all men and women are created equal, without regard to race or ethnicity. Hopefully they will learn to respect all individuals as valued members of society.



Separating Church and State and Other Issues

School districts and various state legislators who seek to circumvent the principle of separation of church and state continually test the First Amendment. It is difficult to believe that state legislators, many of whom are attorneys, are not aware of the laws related to church and state. It is likely that these legislators or school officials believe it their responsibility to infuse their concept of morality and ethics into the school's activities or curriculum. The Supreme Court, however, has the responsibility of ruling on the constitutionality of such directives. The following are examples of Supreme Court rulings related to education, the First Amendment, and the principle of the separation of church and state:

- *Engel v. Vitale*, 82 S. Ct. 1261 (1962) [New York]. The Court ruled that any type of prayer, even that which is nondenominational, is unconstitutional government sponsorship of religion.
- *Abington School District v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203 (1963) [Pennsylvania]. The Court found that Bible reading over the school intercom was unconstitutional, and in *Murray v. Curlett*, 374 U.S. 203 (1963), the Court found that forcing a child to participate in Bible reading and prayer was unconstitutional.
- *Epperson v. Arkansas*, 89 S. Ct. 266 (1968). The Court ruled that a State statute banning the teaching of evolution was unconstitutional. A state cannot set a course of study in order to promote a religious point of view.
- *Stone v. Graham*, 449 U.S. 39 (1980) [Kentucky]. The Court ruled that the posting of the Ten Commandments in schools was unconstitutional.
- *Wallace v. Jaffree*, 105 S. Ct. 2479 (1985) [Alabama]. The Court ruled that the state's moment of silence in a public school statute was unconstitutional, as a legislative record revealed that the motivation for the statute was the encouragement of prayer.
- *Edwards v. Aquillard*, 107 S. Ct. 2573 (1987) [Louisiana]. The Court found it unconstitutional for the state to require the teaching of "creation science" in all instances in which evolution is taught. The statute had a clear religious motivation.
- *Lee v. Weisman*, 112 S. Ct. 2649 (1992) [Rhode Island]. The Court ruled it unconstitutional for a school district to provide any clergy to perform nondenominational prayer at elementary or secondary school graduations. It involves government sponsorship of worship.

Nationally, adherence to the principle of separation of church and state has been schizophrenic at best. Oaths are typically made on Bibles and often end with the phrase "so help me God." U.S. coins and currency state "In God We Trust." We have military chaplains and congressional chaplains, and we hold congressional prayer breakfasts. The Pledge of Allegiance includes the words "under God." This has been interpreted by some to mean that the separation of church and state simply means that there will be no state church.

Complete separation of church and state, as defined by strict constitutionalists, would have a profound effect on social-religious life. It is likely that the American public want some degree of separation of these two institutions, but it is equally likely that some would be outraged if total separation were imposed. Total separation would mean no direct or indirect aid

to religious groups, no tax-free status, no tax deductions for contributions to religious groups, no national Christmas tree, no government-paid chaplains, no religious holidays, no blue laws, and so on. The list of religious activities, rights, and privileges that could be eliminated seems almost endless.

Public schools are supposed to be free of religious doctrine and perspective, but many people believe that schools without such a perspective do not provide desirable values orientation for students. Debate about the public school's responsibility in fostering student morality and social responsibility is constant. A major point of disagreement focuses on who should determine the morals that will provide the context of the educational program in a school. Because religious diversity is so great in the United States, that task is nearly impossible. Therefore, most public schools incorporate commonly accepted American values that largely transcend religions.

Although schools should be secular, they are greatly influenced by the predominant values of the community. Educators must be cognizant of this influence before introducing certain readings and ideas that stray far from what the community is willing to accept within their belief and value structure. Teachers face difficult choices when school administrators give in to parental demands to violate the principles of separation of church and state by infusing school prayer or religious instruction into the curriculum.

School Prayer

There are several controversial issues in schools that challenge the principle of separation of church and state. In many instances, the majority in a given community may support an issue that may already have been ruled against by the courts. Among the controversial issues that are often on the agenda of the evangelical Christians and fundamentalist religious groups are school prayer, school vouchers, and censorship. Despite the 1962 and 1963 Supreme Court decisions regarding school prayer, conservative groups have persisted in their efforts to revive prayer in the schools.

School prayer continues to receive majority support (61%) from the American public (Riffkin, 2014). What is at issue for the courts is not whether the public favors school prayer but whether it is constitutionally valid. The law in no way forbids private prayer in school. The Supreme Court decisions do not prevent teachers or students from praying privately in a school. Any teacher or student can offer his or her own private prayer before the noon meal or pray alone between classes and before and after school. The law forbids public group prayer. Advocates of school prayer sometimes advance their efforts under the term "voluntary prayer." The interpretation of what constitutes voluntary school prayer has become a main issue in the prayer controversy. Some proponents of school prayer advocate mandated school prayer, with individuals voluntarily choosing to participate or not participate. It is likely that if such laws were ever enacted, the considerable social pressure to participate would make it difficult for some, especially younger students, to refuse participation.

In 2000 the Supreme Court ruled against a Texas school district that had permitted prayer over the public address system at a football game, maintaining that the football games are extracurricular. Students were not required to attend and be a part of the prayer (*Santa Fe Independent School District v. DOE*, 2000). Seldom had this practice been challenged in the past, as it had the support of the majority of students and parents. However, the Court ruled that this is a violation of the separation of church and state.

School Vouchers

Various groups raise school voucher initiatives periodically. **Vouchers** are intended to provide parents with a choice of schools, public or private, for their children. The funds for vouchers come from tax monies, which vary from state to state and among school districts. Fourteen states plus the District of Columbia offer vouchers, which may range from $4,200 for students in general education to $20,000 for students with autism and special needs. Individual school districts may also provide vouchers. Voucher initiatives are often strongly supported by

religious factions, particularly those that send their children to private religious schools. It is for this reason that school vouchers are included in this chapter as a controversial issue.

Parents and others who support these initiatives point to the failure of the public schools to educate their children adequately. They point to the states' low national rankings in student math proficiency, reading proficiency, SAT scores, class sizes, and teacher/student ratios. They also point to falling system-wide test scores and to the moral decline in schools, as evidenced by school violence, drugs, and teen pregnancies. They believe that school vouchers will make it possible to send their children to the schools of their choice.

Proponents of voucher programs argue that vouchers will not require any further appropriations since school districts can provide vouchers to students who are not using their services, thereby decreasing their expenses. They argue that when parents redeem a school voucher, part of the expense that would otherwise cost the school to educate the student can remain in the public schools. Supporters of the voucher program believe that it will enable the school system to ensure the quality education that all parents wish for their children.

Opponents to voucher initiatives maintain that vouchers will indeed take away needed funds from public schools. School districts have many fixed costs and already are suffering from inadequate funding. Opponents also suggest that voucher systems will exacerbate the fiscal crisis in the public schools. They further state that the funds provided by the vouchers will not enable most children to go to any school of choice. Many private schools have annual tuitions of $20,000 to $40,000 or more, and the vouchers will not even begin to cover the cost of the full tuition. While some schools may grant partial scholarships to deserving students with financial need, it is not possible to provide support to all. Private schools tend to be located in the more affluent areas of communities. Transportation would be a major problem for students who live in areas distant from the preferred schools. Opponents also contend that the primary beneficiaries of the school voucher programs will be the wealthy, who can afford the private schools and already enroll their children in them, and the few financially borderline families who can send their children to private schools only with the help of vouchers.

Censorship

Censorship occurs when expressive materials such as books, magazines, films, videos, or works of art are removed or kept from public access, including the removal of materials from textbook adoption lists and materials from school libraries. Censorship may be based on the age and other characteristics of the potential user. Targets for the censors are books and materials that are identified as disrespectful of authority and religion, destructive to social and cultural values, obscene, pornographic, unpatriotic, or in violation of individual and familial rights of privacy.

Books may be banned for a multitude of reasons (Huffington Post, 2013). These include the use of offensive language, including profanity (e.g., *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Color Purple*); the use of racial slurs (*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Of Mice and Men*); the use of witchcraft (e.g., the Harry Potter series); and violence (*The Color Purple*, *Slaughterhouse Five*). Books written by or about gays and lesbians (Singapore banned a book about gay penguins) are also frequently attacked, as are those that are sexually explicit, those with excessive violence, and those with pictures containing nudity.

In a conservative community, magazines such as *Time* or *Newsweek* are sometimes attacked because they publish stories about war, crime, death, violence, and sex. Dictionaries with words and definitions described as offensive have been forced off book adoption lists. The emergence of African American literature, sometimes written in the black vernacular, is sometimes targeted by censors.

Individuals or groups may be self-appointed and pressure school districts or libraries, video stores, publishers, art galleries, and other venues not to stock or show, publish, or distribute the targeted materials. Censorship may also come from groups appointed by a state or school districts as textbook selection committees. Censorship of textbooks, library books, and other

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate/School Prayer

In 1647 the first American school system was established in Massachusetts to ensure that children would grow up with the ability to read the Bible. Many, if not most, schools had some form of school prayer until 1962, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Engle v. Vitale* to affirm the separation of church and state by ruling against school prayer. The U.S. general public overwhelmingly supports some form of school prayer, and there have been organized efforts to either have the Supreme Court reverse its decision or amend the Constitution to make school-sponsored prayer permissible.

FOR

- ☐ The country was founded on religious principles by people who believed in freedom to practice one's religion openly. Our students should be able to participate in this heritage and seek strength and support from God as they begin each day.
- ☐ Voluntary prayer does not constitute government establishment of religion. The school prayer ban is not freedom of religion but a ban against observing religion.
- ☐ Voluntary prayer does not require the participation of all students. Those who do not wish to participate would have the freedom not to.
- ☐ The vast majority of Americans want school prayer. Banning prayer is undemocratic and allows the minority to rule.
- ☐ Since school prayer was banned, the nation has been in a moral decline. Divorce rates have climbed, as have the rates of drug use, pornography, out-of-wedlock births, violent crime, street gang membership, abortion, and open homosexuality. School prayer would help restore moral values in America's youth.

AGAINST

- ☐ School prayer has never been outlawed by the Supreme Court. Students have never been banned from reading the Bible, the Koran, or any other religious work. Schools can provide classes that study religions, compare religions, or discuss religions in an objective manner. Students are not barred from praying before their meals or in their own private moments. Public schools are government funded and as such are prohibited from the sponsoring or promoting of religion or providing formal school prayer.
- ☐ School-sponsored prayer is a clear violation of the principle of the separation of church and state.
- ☐ Religious upbringing is the responsibility of the parents and family, not the schools and government.
- ☐ The argument that students would not be required to participate in school-sponsored prayer is invalid. Students who leave or protest prayer are subject to being ostracized by their peers.
- ☐ There is no evidence that school-sponsored prayer would solve society's problems.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. Should the majority opinion always rule? What if the majority in a given community wanted to ban African Americans or Asians or whites from attending public schools? Should the majority rule? Does the majority opinion necessarily represent the morally correct opinion?
2. Can students learn and maintain sound moral values if these values are not taught in schools?
3. Should prayer also be banned in private schools?

learning materials in education has become another major battleground in education for conservative groups.

The impact of censorship in the public schools cannot be underestimated. Censorship or attempts at censorship have resulted in the dismissal or resignation of administrators and teachers. It has split communities and has the potential to create as much controversy as did the desegregation of schools. Those who seek censorship feel passionately that the cause they support is just and morally right. Censors believe that they are obligated to continue their fight to rid schools of objectionable materials that in their opinion contaminate supple minds and contribute to the moral decay of society. Opponents of the censors also share the conviction

that they are the ones in the right and that censors infringe on academic freedom as they seek to destroy meaningful education.

The failure to communicate effectively with parents is a contributing source of alienation between educators and parents. Teachers need to communicate the objectives of new curricula and to explain how these programs enrich the educational experience. Showing parents how the curriculum will support rather than conflict with basic family values can prevent potential conflict.

Teachers are well advised to make certain that they have fully and accurately assessed the climate within the community before introducing new, innovative, or controversial materials, teaching strategies, or books. Experienced colleagues and supervisors can usually serve as barometers as to how students, parents, and the community will react to various new materials or teaching techniques.



Classroom Implications

Although religion and public schooling are to remain separate, religion can be taught in schools as a legitimate discipline for objective study. A comparative religions course is part of the curriculum offered in many secondary schools. In this approach, the students are not forced to practice a religion as part of their educational program. They can, however, study one or more religions.

In discussing religion in the public school classroom, there are a number of caveats that every teacher should remember:

- Schools are allowed to sponsor the study of religion. However, they may not sponsor a religion.
- Schools may instruct the beliefs of a religion but may not indoctrinate nor in any way try to convert.
- Schools may teach students what people of various religions believe, but they may not teach students what to believe.

As part of the curriculum, students should learn that the United States (and indeed the world) is rich in religious diversity. Educators show their respect for religious differences through their interactions with students from different religious backgrounds. Understanding the importance of religion to students and their families is an advantage in developing effective teaching strategies for individual students. Instructional activities can build on students' religious experiences to help them learn concepts. This technique helps students recognize that their religious identity is valued in the classroom and encourages them to respect the religious diversity that exists.

At the same time, educators should avoid stereotyping all students from one denomination or church. Diversity is found within every religious group and denomination, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Within each group are differences in attitudes and beliefs. For example, Southern Baptists may appear to be conservative to outsiders. Among Southern Baptists, however, some are considered part of a liberal or moderate group, whereas others would be identified as conservative.

Not only should educators understand the influences that drive the communities in which they teach; they should also periodically reexamine their own interactions with students to ensure that they are not discriminating against students because of differences in religious beliefs. It is imperative that educators recognize how influential membership in a religious subculture is in order to help students develop their potential.

SUMMARY

Religion and Culture

In this chapter we have seen how religion and culture are integral parts of the fabric of the American public and how religion significantly helps shape the persona of many individuals. This is evidenced by the vast majority of Americans indicating that their religion is important to them and that half of them attend weekly religious services.

The First Amendment and the Separation of Church and State

The significance of religion prompted the nation's founding fathers to stipulate by law that there was to be a freedom of religion without government interference and that there would be a separation of church and state. This principle has often been challenged by individuals and by religious groups. However, the courts have held firm to the basic principles set forth in the First Amendment to the Constitution.

Religion as a Way of Life

Many Americans have taken for granted their religious liberties, since they have enjoyed the freedom of religious choice and worship set forth as a basic right in the country's founding principles. However, many individuals throughout the world are faced with restrictive policies by their governments and socially by their fellow citizens.

Religious Pluralism in the United States

While a large majority of the U.S. population identify themselves as Christian, the country continues to experience considerable religious pluralism. The majority of the earliest European settlers were Protestant, and the religious landscape of the country has been changing with each passing decade. Many immigrants are arriving from areas such as Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, bringing their religions with them.

Among the groups attracting attention in recent years are the "nones." Nearly 1 in 5 Americans now indicates no religious affiliation. Some may be atheists, some agnostics, and others choose not to affiliate with organized religious groups. Evangelical Protestants also have attracted media and societal attention because of their strong religious commitment and desire to influence schools, curricula, and policies. Attention in recent years has also focused on Muslim Americans because of world issues and tensions related to militant Islamists. These extremists are a small minority of Muslims, and educators need to be vigilant to prevent unjustified attacks on innocent students.

Interaction of Religion with Gender, Gay and Lesbian Issues, and Race

Experiences and values in churches, synagogues, temples, and mosques are often transferred into everyday life. Many positive values are transferred into home, work, and school settings. However, care must be taken that restrictive gender practices in religious settings and negative attitudes toward gays and lesbians and toward other racial groups are not carried forth into school practices and behaviors by students or educators.

Separating Church and State and Other Issues

Religious groups, school boards, and parent groups have persisted in attempts to circumvent laws and principles related to the separation of church and state. We have in this chapter examined several examples of court decisions prohibiting open school prayer, infusion of religion into the curriculum, and posting of religious materials in schools. However, these rulings continue to be challenged. Groups have continued to advocate for school vouchers, with the intention of funding private religious school education, and for school prayer. Various groups have also worked diligently to infuse their religious values into school curricula and to control school boards.

Classroom Implications

The classroom implications of this chapter are numerous. Educators, like many of their students, come from different religious backgrounds and may have different values in relation to the importance of religion or what they believe. It is critical that the school provide a safe and accepting environment for every student, every educator and staff member. The Constitution of the United States guarantees religious freedom, and most of our leaders espouse a culture of religious tolerance and acceptance. If we are to make it a reality, it must begin in our schools as well as in the home.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts



9 Geography

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- **9.1** Discuss geography's impact on culture.
- **9.2** Provide specific examples of regional diversity in the United States.
- **9.3** Compare and contrast rural, urban, and suburban areas.
- **9.4** Explain factors leading to migration.
- **9.5** Describe the history and impact of globalization.
- **9.6** Provide specific examples of how to incorporate students' cultural and geographic differences in the classroom.

In November a new student, Jack Williams, appeared at Mark Polaski's classroom door. Jack, whose family had moved to the neighborhood last week, appeared to be just another white middle-class student. Mr. Polaski assigned him a desk, asked him to introduce himself, and continued with the lesson.

Before a month had passed, Mr. Polaski noticed that other students had not accepted Jack. In fact, they were making fun of his mannerisms and dialect. He overheard a couple of the boys calling him a hillbilly. As he thought about Jack's involvement in the class up to that point, Mr. Polaski realized that Jack had been very quiet, not actively participating in the lively discussions that were encouraged. He was performing as well as most other students on the few tests that had been given, and he had turned in the required short paper on time just after Thanksgiving. Mr. Polaski tried to recall where Jack said he had last attended school. He was sure it was in a rural area of the state.

REFLECTIONS

1. Why was Jack not fitting into this diverse suburban school?
2. How does growing up in a different part of the country or world affect one's experiences in school?
3. How could Mr. Polaski learn more about Jack's cultural background?
4. If you were Mr. Polaski, how would you get the students to stop picking on Jack?



Geography and Culture

Our identities are closely linked to the geographic area in which we grew up and the places we later lived. One of the first questions we ask when meeting someone new is, "Where are you from?" We then use the answer to determine whether we share a common background and experiences. Although our membership in other groups or subcultures may have a great impact on our identity, the place or places in which we have lived provide a cultural context for living.

Because we grew up in the same or a similar geographic area as our neighbors or friends does not mean we experienced the place in the same ways. Some members of a community have lived there much longer than others and have different histories and experiences that sometimes lead to conflict with more recent arrivals. The area takes on a different meaning based on a member's race, ethnicity, religion, age, and language, as well as how membership in those groups is viewed by other members of the community. One's job and educational background may take on different significance in one geographic area than in another. For example, almost all adults in one suburban neighborhood may have post-baccalaureate degrees and work as professionals or managers. Farming and related jobs are common in one area, logging and fishing in another, and manufacturing in yet another.

The natural surroundings and climate make a difference in the way we work, relax, and interact. People from Hawaii, Alaska, the mountains of Colorado, and the prairies of Nebraska adapt to their spaces in different ways. People in new environments may find that the "natives" use unfamiliar dialects and phrases and react to events somewhat differently than they are used to. Jack in the opening scenario, for instance, has a dialect and mannerisms that are different from those of other students in his new school. This strangeness is particularly noticeable when we travel outside the United States, but it also appears to some degree in different parts of the same city and in different regions of the United States.

Different individuals and groups perceive places and events differently. Because their perceptions are different, their responses tend to be different as well. Some will find a given locale the ideal place to live and raise a family; others will feel isolated, crowded, or trapped. Mountains are critical to the well-being of some; others feel the need to be near bodies of water or the desert or greenery. Wide-open spaces in which one can live for a long period of time with little interaction with others provide freedom for some but boredom and confinement for others. Cities can be exciting and stimulating places for some but stifling and impersonal to others. Thus, places provide complex multiple identities for the people who live in them. Understanding the place, including the particular part of the city or county, from which our students have come helps us know the context of their everyday experiences.

What Is Geography?

You probably studied geography in elementary school as you learned about different parts of the world and memorized state capitals. We are enticed to learn more about a country when a disaster occurs, such as the mysterious disappearance in 2014 of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 somewhere in or near the South China Sea. Prior to the 2014 Ebola epidemics in Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone, many Americans would not have been able to locate the countries on a map and may not even have known that they are in West Africa. People who are fortunate enough to travel to other parts of the country and world become familiar with geographic, cultural, and language differences. People who are place-bound and unable to travel far beyond their own neighborhoods may have to learn about these differences in books, from the media, and on the Internet.

Geography comes from the Greek word *geographia*, which means a description of Earth's surface. It is the study of places, cities, countries, mountains, deserts, rural areas, oceans, continents, and communities. Geographers try to determine why places are the way they are.

They not only explore the physical features of a place but also examine the economic activities, human settlement patterns, and cultures of the people who live there. The place where one lives is the space or land area that is distinctive and has meaning or symbolism for the people who live there.

Physical geography is the study of the physical features of Earth, such as the climate, soils, vegetation, water, and landforms. **Human geography**, on the other hand, is the study of the economic, social, and cultural systems that have evolved in a specific location. It encompasses many of the topics that are discussed in this book, such as classism, racism, ethnicity, poverty, language, sexual orientation, religion, exceptionalities, and age differences.

Geographers use a number of tools to record and track the physical and human geography of a place. Maps are the most common, as you probably remember from your study of geography. With today's technologies, geographers are able to understand an area in great and intricate detail through the use of computers, Global Positioning System (GPS) devices, and satellite images. Throughout this chapter we will use maps to understand the differences in the places our students live or used to live and the importance of location in one's everyday life.

Our Place in the World

Placing the United States within the world provides a context for understanding where we and others live. First, people are concentrated in certain areas since few choose to live in Earth's cold or dry areas. Three of every four people currently live in the Northern Hemisphere—the area north of the equator (Dahlman & Renwick, 2014). Over half of the world's population of 7.2 billion live in Asia. China, with a population of over 1.364 billion, and India, with 1.296 billion, are the two largest countries in the world in terms of population (Population Reference Bureau, 2014). The United States, the world's third-largest country, had a population estimated to be 320,090,632 in 2015 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015a), just less than 5% of the world's population. By 2050, the Population Reference Bureau (2014) is projecting that India (with estimated population of 1.657 billion) will overtake China (1.312 billion), and Nigeria (396 million) will overtake the United States (395 million) as the third-most-populous country.

North America has a culturally diverse population, with most of its people emigrating from other parts of the world over the past 400 years. It is a resource-rich region that has undergone a great deal of economic development over the past 200 years. Its **metropolitan areas** are technology rich and oriented to a global economy. The region is very consumer oriented, with many people buying up the latest versions of the products its businesses produce. Although it is an affluent area, however, many of its citizens live in poverty.



Regional Diversity in the United States

Regional differences become apparent to educators as they move from one area to another to work. Sometimes local and regional differences are hardly noticeable. At other times, they lead to a number of adjustments in the way one lives, the content that can be taught in the classroom, and the manner in which one interacts with the community. For example, religion plays a more important role in some regions of the country than others, which could influence a teacher's approach to teaching sex education or evolution. Not only teachers move around the country and globe; so do students and their families, especially if the parents are in the military or on a fast track at a multinational corporation. Students such as Jack in the chapter-opening scenario may experience cultural shock, something that should be considered as they settle in a new school. To meet the needs of students, educators have to be aware of the influences of geography on the culture of the people who live in the area, especially school-age children.

Regional comparisons are at times difficult to make, with different sources utilizing different regional categories. The federal government tends to use four regions: Northeast, South,

Midwest, and West. However, some reporting is broken down into smaller regions (e.g., New England, Appalachia, Southwest, Great Plains). Each region is distinctive, often with different political leanings, racial and ethnic differences, cuisine, and religious values.

The 2010 Census revealed that the minority (non-white) population had grown in every region of the United States. This was characterized by the 43% increase in Hispanics. Nearly half of the population in the West (47.2%) is minorities. Minorities comprise 40% of the population in the South, 22% in the Midwest, and 31% in the Northeast regions of the United States (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011).

The states with the highest minority percentages are primarily in the West, while those with the lowest are primarily in the Northeast. In four states—Hawaii (77%), California (61%), New Mexico (60%), and Texas (56%)—as well as the District of Columbia (65%), minorities comprise more than half of the population. In addition, Arizona, Florida, Maryland, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, and New York had minority populations exceeding 40% and could become minority majority states in this decade (DiversityInc., 2015; Teixeira, 2013). The states with the lowest percentages of minorities were Maine, Vermont, West Virginia, and New Hampshire. While the minority percentages in these four states were below 10%, all four of these states had at least 25% increases in their minority population during the 2000 to 2010 census period, which far outpaced increases in the white population (Humes et al., 2011). Figure 9.1 shows the percentages of the minority populations in the four regions of the United States in the 2000 census and 2010 census.

From 1892 to 1954, immigrants entered the country by boat at Ellis Island on the East Coast. By the end of the twentieth century, most were entering through airports in New York City, Los Angeles, and Seattle. They established or moved to ethnic enclaves that were similar to areas they had just left. In these communities, they did not have to assimilate into the dominant culture and could continue to use their native languages. Examples can be found in the metropolitan Los Angeles area, where communities such as Little Saigon, Little Tokyo, Chinatown, and Koreatown have been established.

A larger percentage of more recent immigrants are joining family members who live in **suburbs** or in small towns. Some, especially refugees, have been sponsored by churches or community agencies in non-urban areas. Others have been attracted to the Midwest and South for jobs in the meatpacking and farming industries. Still others have chosen rural areas because they think the values and lifestyle are closer to their own there than in urban areas.

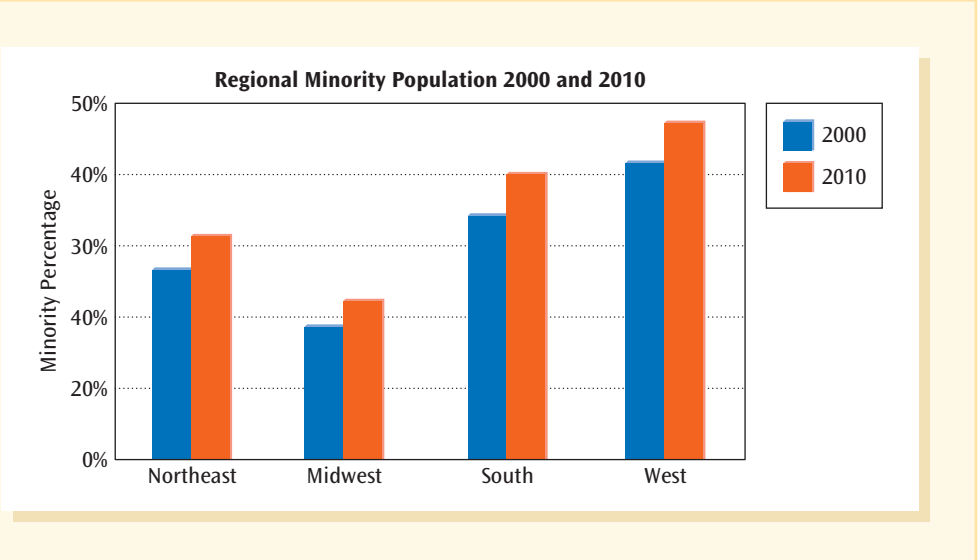


FIGURE 9.1 Regional and Minority Population, 2000 and 2010

Source: Adapted from Humes, K. R., Jones. N. A., & Ramirez, R. R. (2011). Overview of race and Hispanic origin, 2011. Retrieved June 15, 2015, from http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-02.pdf

Whites represent many ethnic groups with different cultures and experiences, some whose families emigrated from Europe several centuries ago and others who are new immigrants. Whites in the South and New England are predominantly from Anglo backgrounds, but the ethnic diversity within the white population is increasing with migration from other states. The Mid-Atlantic and Midwest states have a greater mix of European ancestry from Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Poland, and other Eastern European countries. A large portion of the population in the central Great Plains states is German American. Swedes and Norwegians settled in the northern states of this region (Johnson, Haarmann, & Johnson, 2015).

Characteristics of the population and land on which people live can be used to group geographic areas with similar landscapes and histories. The racial, ethnic, and religious diversity varies from one region to another. The interests and perspectives of those who live in various geographic regions often are reflected in their stands on state and federal issues, as reflected in national elections, which distinguish red (Republican) and blue (Democrat) states. We will explore some of these regional differences in this section.

Regional Differences in Education

As one travels across various regions in the United States, significant differences can be found across areas in relation to education. Individuals exploring teaching opportunities will find that the average salaries in some states are considerably higher or lower than in others. Teacher salaries in the 50 states and the District of Columbia average $56,689, as shown in Table 9.1. However, there are considerable variations in salaries by region and by state. Average state teacher salaries range from $40,023 in South Dakota to $76,566 in New York (National Education Association [NEA], 2014).

State per capita student expenditures may also be indicative of a state's commitment or ability to support public education. To some extent, the expenditure variations may be a function of the regional cost of living. The National Education Association found that expenditures varied considerably across states and reported that the average per capita student expenditure in the United States was $10,938. New York spent a high of $19,523 per student, while Arizona's expenditure was a low of $6,949 (NEA, 2014).

Educational attainment varies across regions. The percentage of individuals age 25 and above without a high school diploma varies across the different regions in the country. The Northeast and Midwest were at 11.4% and 10.1%, respectively, as of 2011. The South and West regions did not fare as favorably, with 15.3% and 14.6% without secondary completion (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010a). The West fared best in terms of bachelor's degrees (21.6%), followed by the Northeast (20.6). The Northeast led the regions with advanced degrees (12.9%), followed by the West (10.8%). The lack of high school completion could be a function of any of a number of variables (e.g., older immigrants without high school completion, higher dropout rates).

TABLE 9.1 AVERAGE TEACHER SALARIES BY REGION, 2013–2014

50 States and D.C.	$56,689
New England	$67,343
Mideast	$70,581
Southeast	$48,348
Great Lakes	$57,700
Plains	$50,601
Southwest	$48,891
Rocky Mountains	$51,104
Far West	$65,198

Source: Adapted from National Education Association. (2014). Rankings & Estimates: Rankings of the States 2013 and Estimates of School Statistics 2014. Retrieved June 15, 2015, from http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/NEA-Rankings-and-Estimates-2013-2014.pdf.

Regional Religious Differences. Religious differences are one of the most important—and perhaps the most important—of the regional differences in the United States, as well as other parts of the world. The daily behaviors and values of an individual may have a direct correlation to the individual's religious beliefs. Diet, values, and politics are often functions of one's religion, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 8. Because values are often reflected in the platforms of political parties, individuals tend to support either liberal or conservative platforms, parties, and candidates. The Republican Party typically adopts the more conservative platforms and thus has tended to win the support of states and regions where the residents are religious conservatives. Thus, in recent national elections, states in the South and Midwest, along with the Mountain West, have generally supported Republican candidates. The Northeast and the Pacific West, including Hawaii, have tended to support Democratic candidates.

Newport (2014) found significant geographic differences in the religiosity of the American people. Based on a self-indication of the importance of religion in their lives and attendance in religious services, individuals were classified for this study as very religious (41%), somewhat religious (29%), or nonreligious (29%). Ten of the most religious states were in the South. Utah was the exception. Mississippi led the nation as the most religious state, followed by Utah, Alabama, and Louisiana. The least religious states were in New England and the West. Vermont was designated the least religious state, followed by New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts.

Mississippi and Alabama (77%) led the country as the most Protestant states in the country, followed closely by three other southern states, Arkansas, Tennessee, and South Carolina. Rhode Island had the highest percentage of Catholics (54%), followed by New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York.

New York (7%) led the country with the highest percentage of individuals identifying themselves as Jewish. New Jersey, Massachusetts, and the District of Columbia followed with the largest Jewish populations. Utah (60%), as expected, had the largest percentage of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons). It was followed by Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, and Montana.

Regional Cuisine. Next to religion, for many individuals the most important factor associated with geography is food. The mention of Philly cheese steak sandwiches, tamales and enchiladas, New England clam chowder, barbecued ribs, sushi, deep dish pizza, or country ham and red-eye gravy quickly brings a warm smile to the face of an individual from the region associated with the particular food. One person's feast, however, may bring a frown to someone who is unfamiliar with that cuisine. American regional cuisines are as different as regional dialects and regional religious and political values.

As individuals migrated to the United States from different parts of the world, they brought with them their cuisines. Different groups of immigrants settled in different regions of the country, and each regional cuisine developed over time, influenced by the natural ingredients of the region and the historical cuisines of the settlers. New England cooking is heavily influenced by local ingredients such as seafood, apples, and cranberries, and by the cooking styles of the early English settlers. Midwest cuisine relies heavily on beef, corn, dairy products, and the influence of German and Scandinavian settlers. Cuisine of the South is influenced by Spanish, English, and French settlers and the African slaves who served as the family cooks. We often see ingredients such as black-eyed peas, okra, and turnip greens served with Southern meals. The Southwest has been heavily influenced by the Spanish and Mexicans. The Northwest cuisine has much of its influence from local ingredients such as fish and game.

Hawaii plantation owners brought in contract workers from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Portugal, Puerto Rico, and Europe. The Hawaiian cuisine is perhaps one of the most eclectic of all cuisines, reflecting not only the influence of the native Hawaiians but also that of the many immigrant groups that settled in the islands. Consequently, food items often identified by many from the U.S. mainland as "Hawaiian" are in reality ethnic foods that are labeled as Hawaiian. The popular Hawaiian BBQ short ribs are Korean in origin. The popular Hawaiian sweet bread found in many locations around the country is Portuguese sweet bread, which is also popular in New England cuisine.

Regional Health and Well-Being. Witters (2015) reported that Alaska ranked at the top of the list of states with the highest well-being score, followed closely by Hawaii and South Dakota. The well-being index is composed of five sub-indexes: purpose, social, financial, community, and physical. Midwestern and western states were among the highest-rated states. West Virginia ranked lowest on the index, followed by Kentucky and Indiana. Southern states were disproportionately represented on the lower end of the index.

The negative effects of smoking have long ceased to be a debatable issue. In a Gallup study, Mendes (2011) reports that Kentucky (29%) led the country with the largest percentage of residents who smoked. In states throughout the South and Midwest, 1 in 4 or more Americans smoke. Utah had the lowest percentage of smokers, followed by California and Hawaii. Western states were well represented among the states with low smoking percentages.

In a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study, Stahre and colleagues (2014) found that the mountain region states and Alaska had the highest numbers of alcohol-related deaths in the nation. New Mexico led, with 16.4% alcohol-related deaths, followed by Alaska (15.9%), Colorado (14.2%), Arizona and Wyoming (13.4% each), and Montana (13.2%). In comparison, the national average was 9.8%. Maryland had the lowest number of alcohol-related deaths (7.5%), followed by New Jersey (7.8%), New York (7.9%), and Hawaii (8.0%).

Western and mountain states tended to have the best scores in terms of obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes. West Virginia and southern states were disproportionately represented in the states with the worst scores in these areas (Levy, 2014; Mendes, 2012). Life expectancy is lowest (worst) in southern states and best in the northeastern, mountain, western, and far western states (Daily Beast, 2013).

Health issues are often closely associated with regional diets. Some Southern states are known for their high-calorie foods such as fried chicken, country (or chicken) fried steaks, fried catfish, barbecue, and delicious desserts. While these foods may be culinary delights, excessive amounts may contribute to health risks. In addition to diet, socioeconomic and planned physical activity factors may influence these findings.

These health risks have significant implications for the possibilities of heart attack, strokes, and other debilitating conditions. They have important instructional implications for the classroom. From the time students enter kindergarten until they graduate, a strong emphasis on healthy living should be an integral part of the curriculum.

Regional Political Differences. During and at the conclusion of every national election, maps of election results are posted in the media in the form of color-coded maps of all of the states. The maps use the traditional red for states won by Republicans and blue for those won by Democrats. In the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections, and both the 2014 congressional and gubernatorial elections, many of the results were somewhat predictable. The states in the northeastern and far western United States were mostly shaded in blue, with the notable exception of Alaska, which is typically Republican. The South, Midwest, and Southwest are primarily Republican and red, as are most of the Mountain West states, such as Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana.

Figure 9.2 is a map, which provides the results of the U. S. 2012 presidential election. The States shown in blue went to President Obama. The States in red were won by the Republican candidate Mitt Romney. Massachusetts, Maryland, and Rhode Island are the most Democratic states in the country. Wyoming, Utah, and Idaho are the most Republican states (Jones, 2015). Many of the states around the Great Lakes, such as Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, are sometimes considered "battleground" or "swing" states, in which neither major political party has such overwhelming public support that election results can be taken for granted. The electorate in one of these states may switch political preferences from one election to another, depending on the major issues at the time of the election (e.g., unemployment, the economy, war).

There are many other regional differences—too many to include here. However, this sampling of some of the important differences may help understand how diverse the United States is. Understanding the diversity of one's own country should lead to the realization that many, if not most, other countries must also be diverse.

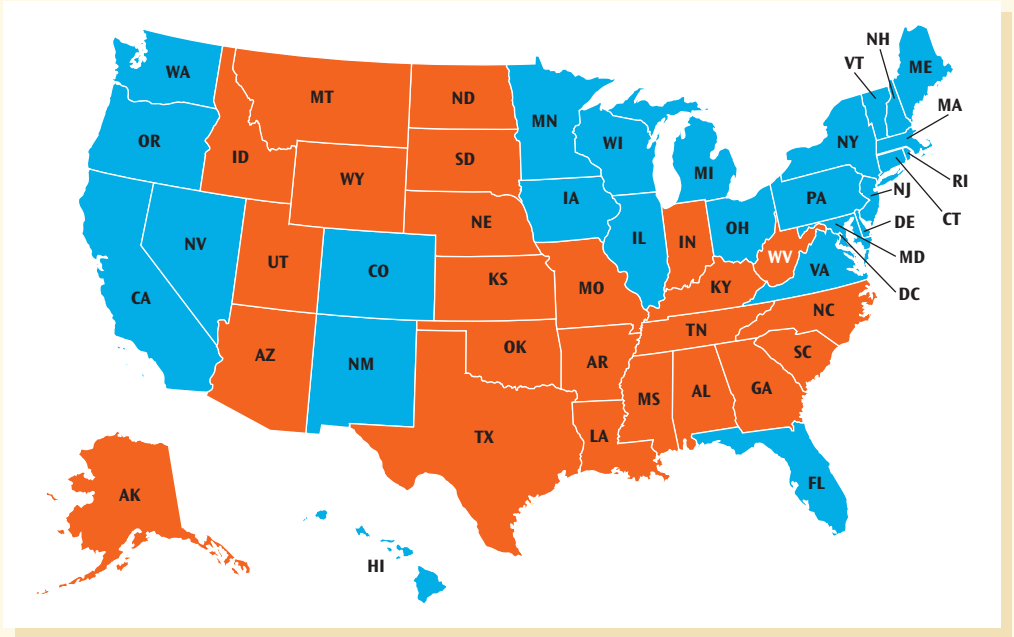


FIGURE 9.2 Results of the 2012 Presidential Election, with Blue Indicating Democratic States and Red Republican States (© iQoncept/Fotolia)



Rural, Urban, and Suburban Areas

Now that we have explored some regional differences in the United States, let's examine differences within each region that also influence our lives. The way we experience life and our culture is greatly influenced by the people who share the space and place in which we live. We become very familiar with the place in which we live and know what is expected of us and others. This sense of comfort is a reason many teacher candidates indicate that they want to teach in or near the area where they grew up.

Eighty-one percent of the U.S. population live in towns, cities, and metropolitan areas with 50,000 people or more (ProQuest, 2014). Teaching in an isolated rural area hundreds of miles from a shopping center is very different from teaching in a wealthy suburban area with access to a wide range of cultural and sporting events. Let's examine the characteristics of rural, urban, and suburban areas that may help you determine where you would like to teach.

Rural Areas

In 1900 a majority of Americans lived in rural areas. Beginning early in the twentieth century, large numbers of rural workers migrated to cities for employment. Today rural areas are the location of choice for 19% of the U.S. population (ProQuest, 2014), as well as many other people around the world. People may choose to live in rural areas because they enjoy the wide-open space, the stars in the sky, and fishing, hunting, and other outdoor activities. Rural areas feature fewer people with whom to contend and the freedom to have more control of one's life. Many of us have grown up in rural areas, but a growing number have moved from cities to escape the crowding, traffic, crime, pollution, and bureaucracies of city life—to recapture a quality of life that some believe provides a healthier environment for families.

While there may be a tendency to think of rural areas as populated primarily by individuals involved in farming, fewer than 1% of Americans farm for a living today and 2% live on farms. Today, there are approximately 2.2 million farms in the United States (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2015).

The massive areas of rural land are dotted with small towns, some of which serve as the county seats for government purposes. The residents of these towns may work in a nearby city or in local manufacturing establishments. They may provide services to the farming communities as the managers and laborers at grain elevators, where the process of distributing grain to national and world markets begins. Businesses sell supplies needed to raise crops or animals, buy and sell meat products at the stockyards, and produce and deliver gas and oil required for farming. Grocery stores and other retail stores serve farm and small-town residents, although some people must drive many miles to the nearest mall to access larger stores and more options.

Populations of Rural Areas. The states with the largest rural populations are Texas, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Georgia, in that order (ProQuest, 2014). The rural population across the country is predominantly of European background. However, the majority of the 1.9 million American Indians and Alaskan Natives who receive services from the Department of the Interior through the 565 federally recognized tribes live in rural areas (U.S. Department of Interior, 2015a). In recent decades, increasing numbers of Hispanic and African Americans have moved into rural areas. They are attracted to jobs in meatpacking, food processing plants, and agriculture.

Economics in Rural Areas. Not all is idyllic in rural living. The rural workforce earns less than its urban counterparts, and the poverty rate is higher than in other places. The poverty level is consistently higher in rural America than in urban areas in all areas of the country. Regionally, the highest poverty tends to be found in the South, followed by the West, the Northeast, and the Midwest. Figure 9.3 shows the poverty rates for various regions of the country from 2009–2013, both in metro and non-metro areas.

The rural economy is sensitive to fluctuations in manufacturing and export rates. Farm production can fluctuate with crop prices, which are controlled by the world economy, and weather. Successful farmers today use technology and business principles, as well as their knowledge about agriculture, to manage a farm. In addition to watching the weather, they

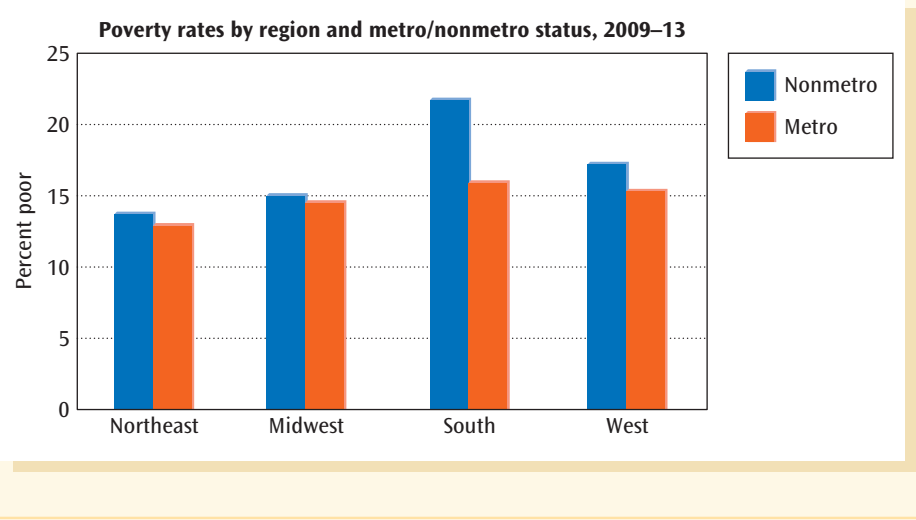


FIGURE 9.3 Poverty Rates by Region and Metro/Non-metro Residence 2009–2013
Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 Annual Social and Economic Supplements

monitor the market to determine the best time to sell. They must have the resources to store products during times of low prices, including storage facilities and adequate finances to sustain them. The nature of the business is making it difficult for small farmers to survive. The number of individual and family farmers has decreased over the past few decades. Although families still own the majority of farms in the country, corporation ownership is growing.

Multinational corporations have outsourced many of the manufacturing jobs that were once available in rural areas to lower-cost labor markets in other parts of the country or world. Processing plants for meat, poultry, and fish continue to be located near the source of the raw product. Local residents are often unwilling to work in the low-paying, physically demanding, and sometimes dangerous jobs. To meet the labor demands, immigrants and individuals of color have been filling a number of these jobs in areas that previously had little racial or ethnic diversity.

Watch the video "Fingers to the Bone: Child Farmworkers in the United States" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfEtO00DSvI) to see the plight of many young children who work alongside their parents in difficult work that many permanent residents would never consider doing.

Rural Schools and Their Issues. Are you interested in teaching in a rural area? There are advantages and limitations. Schools in rural areas are smaller than those in suburban and urban areas, meaning that there are fewer students to manage and a better opportunity to get to know students' families.

The lower enrollment in rural schools usually results in a relatively low student-to-teacher ratio, allowing more individual attention for students. One of the problems in small schools is that teachers often must teach subjects for which they are not prepared (e.g., physics, chemistry, biology). Schools often do not have sufficient resources to offer foreign language classes, technology education, music, art, or advanced placement courses. However, satellite connections in some rural areas allow students to take such courses via distance learning.

School consolidation can be a contentious issue in rural communities. In some rural and even urban schools, enrollments may be very small. Debates about the value and implications of closing a school can be expected. Moving students to a school located many miles away will limit the participation of parents in school activities. Long bus rides to and from the consolidated school may cause hardship for some families.

Proponents of consolidation argue that the curriculum can be expanded to include subjects not available in a small school, buildings can be upgraded with educational equipment and technology, and students can be better served when small schools are combined. Nearly 150,000 schools were closed in the United States in the past century due to budget issues, busing, academic issues, and even to strengthen athletic programs. The advent of online learning, however, has helped save and improve rural schools. It allows rural schools to provide instruction in subject matter where they would otherwise be unable to hire teachers. Through online instruction, students in some rural schools may now have access to advanced subjects that might otherwise be unavailable, such as math, physical sciences, foreign languages, and computer science (Vander Ark, 2013).

Approximately 42,000 American Indian and Alaska Native children are educated by the Bureau of Indian Education at 164 elementary and secondary schools on 64 reservations in 23 states. Fifty-eight of the schools are operated by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), while 125 are tribally operated under contracts or grants from BIE (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2015b).

Urban Areas

Some people choose to live in urban areas because of the excitement and access to amenities such as restaurants, theater, and music opportunities. Large cities offer abundant professional jobs as well as sports complexes, numerous libraries, colleges and universities, recreational activities, restaurants that vary greatly in cuisine and cost, and clubs with entertainment. Other people live in the city because they grew up or accepted a job there. They may choose to remain in the city because they like it or because it adequately meets their needs. Others have no choice because of family or economic obligations or just don't have the opportunity to break loose from the grip of the city. Many who live in the city have never taken advantage of the activities that attract people to the city, mainly because of limited income.

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Moving from the City to a Rural Community

Erica Stevens had just completed her teacher education program at a university in the city where she had lived her entire life. Erica was determined to leave the city, the traffic, the crime, and the crowds. She gladly accepted a high school math teaching position in an isolated rural community nestled at the foothills of a mountain far away from big city life.

On a Thursday in October, Erica was surprised to find that barely over half the class was present for the first-period class. All the female students and only 2 of the 12 male students were present. "Where are the boys?" she asked. Julie, seated in the front row, shrugged her shoulders, and no one else responded. She went on with her lesson. When the students came in for her second-period class, there were no boys present. "Okay, what's going on?" she asked the class. "Why are there no boys in class today? Come on, I want to know what's going on. Tell me." Finally Jessica spoke up. "It's no big deal, Ms. Stevens. Deer season starts this weekend, and they have all taken off with their fathers to get a good site before it starts. Most of them will be back in class on Monday morning, and a few will be gone another day or two." "But they are cutting class," she said in frustration. "I have some important lessons planned for today and tomorrow." "Just relax and go with the flow, Ms. Stevens. All the other teachers do, and we don't do anything very important for the next couple of days."

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. **When moving to a different region of the country, what types of cultural differences might a new teacher anticipate?**
2. **What regional biases are you likely bring to a new school?**
3. **Should Erica do as suggested—relax and "go with the flow"?**
4. **Should Erica go on with the lessons as planned and let the absent students suffer any consequences, or should she make accommodations and allowances for what has been considered in that community "understandable absences"?**
5. **Is this something Erica should discuss with her colleagues or the principal?**
6. **Is this a matter of a cultural difference in Erica's new chosen community that she should learn to accept?**

Geography plays a role in defining the conditions of a city. The upper middle class and the wealthy live together in one or more particular areas of the city; the middle-class and low-income families live in other areas of the city. The homeless are usually shepherded into specific areas where most others will not see them. Housing in the city is more expensive than in other places, and the cost of living is usually high. A small two-bedroom condominium can cost over $500,000 in or very near a city. Low-rent housing is limited and often in disrepair. Most cities do not have enough public housing to meet their needs. The cost of owning a car and paying for insurance on it may be exorbitant. Public buses and subway systems serve as major means of transportation.

Some people like the city because they can live their lives free from the prying eyes of neighbors. Neighbors in the city often don't know each other, let alone details about the families or roots of those who live around them. One is able to live alone within a great mass of humanity. On the other hand, there are communities within cities in which people do know their neighbors and work together on community projects. The city does not allow for a single stereotype that fits all of its residents. Economic conditions, ethnicity, race, and language sometimes divide cities into neighborhoods, such as Little Italy and Chinatown, which clearly distinguish one group from another.

Population of a City. One-half of the world's population live in megacities. New York City is the largest city in the United States, with a population of around 9.3 million, which grows to over 20 million when extended into the metropolitan area that includes its suburbs

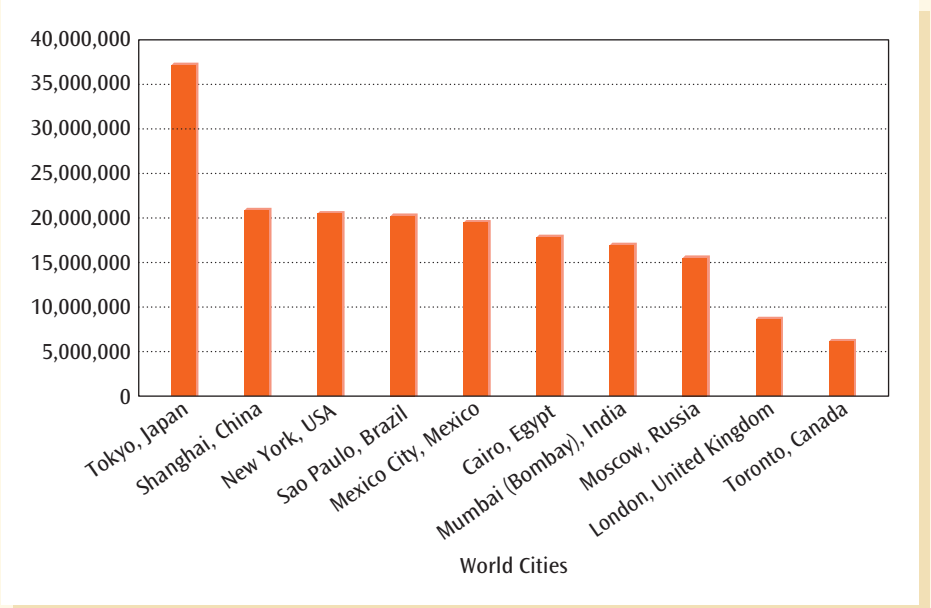


FIGURE 9.4 **Metropolitan Population of Selected Large World Cities**
Source: Worldatlas (best estimates from 2012 census) http://www.worldatlas.com/citypops.htm

(Worldatlas, 2012). Figure 9.4 shows how New York City compares in size to other major cities around the world.

Cities in **developing nations** have limited means or resources to provide housing, sanitation, and a healthy environment for their growing populations. Not all new immigrants and migrants in the United States have access to adequate and inexpensive housing, and oftentimes multiple families share very small homes or apartments, sometimes in violation of city ordinances. Some families end up homeless.

Fifty-two metropolitan areas in the United States have over 1 million residents (ProQuest, 2014). They range in size from the metropolitan New York–Newark–Jersey City area, with approximately 20 million, to Grand Rapids–Wyoming, Michigan, with just over 1 million. The ethnic and racial diversity is usually greater in cities than in other areas, in part because many new immigrants from around the world initially settle in urban areas.

Contradictions of Cities. Cities are centers of extremes and contradictions. They are places where people from different cultural backgrounds intermingle. An expensive, elite restaurant may be found on one block and a soup kitchen on the street behind it. Some of the highest salaries in the world are earned in the corporate headquarters housed in or near a city, while large numbers of African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, others of color, and women who work in the city are paid so little that their families live in poverty.

While the city provides creative energy for many, it is oppressive and dangerous for others. Many city residents live in safe and comfortable environments with good schools, parks, and recreational facilities. Others live near waste dumps that have contributed to a disproportionately high incidence of asthma and other diseases. The night—and sometimes the daylight—may be interrupted by the sounds of gunshots, ambulances, and police raids in some sections of a city.

Our nation's capital, Washington, D.C., the seat of power and home to many of the country's elite, is also home to countless individuals living in poverty, and residents in some neighborhoods are in constant danger from daily violence. Indices indicating risk factors for

children in the District of Columbia are among some of the worse in the nation (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012).

Some new immigrants may try to become Americans as defined by the dominant culture, but others strive to maintain their culture within the American context. Immigrant parents may raise their children in the cultural context with which they are most familiar, using their native language or their developing English. Children may try to shed their immigrant ways in order to be accepted by their American counterparts, which often leads to conflict between children and parents.

For oppressed people in the city, the dominant values may not be serving them effectively. The hope, joy, and freedom associated with living in cities have not been the experience for many. Those who are more advantaged and living comfortably may view the poorer sections of the city as places of chaos and immorality. Such views are reinforced when they see accounts of violence in the media. City leaders find it difficult to raise the resources necessary to improve city services, ensure adequate housing and food, provide schools of the same quality across the city, and also pay enough to attract and retain highly qualified teachers. Low-income and public housing almost never is built in or near the economically advantaged areas of the city. The aging infrastructure of many cities may be neglected—often tended to only as a response to catastrophic failures.

Urban Schools. Enrollment in the largest 100 school districts ranges from 46,522 in Anchorage, Alaska, to 1,036,053 in New York City schools (American School and University, 2014). Between 2001 and 2011, the number of white students P–12 in U.S. public schools decreased from 28.7 million to 25.6 million—from 60% to 52%. Since the majority of immigrants and individuals of color tend to migrate to large metropolitan city areas, it is reasonable to assume that a very large number of students in most urban schools are from ethnic minority backgrounds (National Education Association, 2014).

Hudley (2013) suggested that in some instances, *urban school* is essentially a code term for poor, minority schools. She indicated that, on average, 64% of the students receive free or reduced-price lunches, which is an indication that their families are either near or at the federal poverty line. She further stated that these schools often have outdated texts, inadequate technology and equipment, insufficient materials, and deteriorating physical plants. In addition, she said, teachers are often unqualified to teach the subject matter to which they are assigned. These schools often lack advanced placement classes that would provide better students the preparation they need to be competitive in higher education admission or matriculation.

Not all schools in a city are equal. Parents in upper-middle-class neighborhoods are able to donate funds to hire teachers of art and music. They can pay for tutors to ensure that their children have the knowledge and skills necessary for entry into desirable colleges and universities. California has a system of private foundations that support local school districts. The school districts in affluent areas benefit from fundraising events, coordinated by parents and local citizens, that enhance the programs in the district. The less affluent school districts may not have such supporting foundations, or the funds their foundations raise may be limited. This can contribute to great disparity between schools and school districts.

Some low-income parents are engaged actively in their children's education. They communicate with teachers, and they monitor their children to make certain that they attend school regularly and complete their assignments. However, most low-income parents do not have a great deal of cultural capital. They do not have income that allows them to support school activities (e.g., paying the fees for extracurricular activities), and their work situations may inhibit participation in school activities and meetings. Limited English skills on the part of some parents or their lack of education may lead to reluctance to interact with the educational system. One means of enhancing the involvement of immigrant parents is to meet with them in an environment that is perceived as less threatening, such as a local church.

Urban schools are sometimes characterized as highly centralized, authoritative, and bureaucratic. However, a number of urban school districts now elect their school boards, have reduced the bureaucracy, have decentralized, and have allowed the establishment of alternative schools. At the same time, mayors have taken over the management of schools in cities such as New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C.

Magnet schools are public schools in which the curriculum emphasizes a particular subject or field, such as performing arts or science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Magnet schools usually receive additional funding that provides resources for their students, supplies, teachers, and educational programs (Chen, 2014). Advantaged and well-educated families seek admission to select magnet schools, especially if their neighborhood school does not meet their standards.

A number of school districts allow parents, teachers, community groups, and entrepreneurs to establish **charter schools**. Charter schools are public schools of choice that operate free from many of the regulations that apply to traditional public schools. The "charter" includes a performance contract detailing the school's mission, program, goals, students served, methods of assessment, and ways to measure success.

Some urban school students have family responsibilities and demands placed on them that children from more affluent areas do not. In some instances there is a lack of a supporting parental figure.

Some inner-city schools are in disrepair, and the economic problems of many communities and states have forced extreme cuts in school budgets. This has resulted in massive teacher and staff layoffs and cutbacks in resources for students.

Suburban Areas

In the 1930s a relatively small number of Americans lived in the suburbs. Today over half of the population lives there. After World War II, the suburbs offered an opportunity to own a single-family house with a yard in an area that seemed safer than the city and more desirable for raising children. The wage earner—usually the father at that time—commuted to the city daily to work. Most wives stayed at home to care for children and became involved in developing a community.

Development of the Suburbs. The desire for home ownership was one of the primary reasons for the development of suburbia. With a minority of families unable to afford homes in many U.S. cities in the mid-twentieth century, lower-cost suburban developments became an attractive alternative. Low-interest loans to returning veterans enhanced the opportunities for many more families.

Most of the suburbs during the 1920s were racially and economically homogeneous. While African Americans established their own suburbs in a few places, neither they nor members of other ethnic groups of color were encouraged to settle in the suburbs. Racist governmental policies and business practices at the time exacerbated racial and class inequalities and kept suburbia almost exclusively white. At the same time, programs for public housing, urban renewal, and replacement of homes with highways were undermining the stability and vibrancy of African American neighborhoods in the cities. In addition, African Americans were being denied mortgages to buy their own homes (Watkins, 2011).

Although racist official policies were dismantled years ago, zoning policies and homeowner association building requirements and restrictions can limit loans to those who are more economically advantaged.

Suburbia did not last long as just bedroom communities for people who worked in the city. Soon grocery stores, gas stations, parks, community services, schools, and churches were built to support the needs of suburban families. These were followed by malls and a variety of retail stores. In time, more upscale suburban developments were built to meet the needs of affluent families wanting to escape the problems of cities.

Shopping malls were joined by office complexes, high-tech landscaped industrial parks, and an extensive network of highways. Wage earners no longer had to go to the city for work; factories and other businesses existed in their own backyards. Along with these changes came the problems that others had tried to escape by leaving the city—unemployment, homelessness, drugs, and crime. Most suburbs are economically, racially, ethnically, linguistically, and religiously diverse. Diversity in some communities is actively solicited and celebrated. In others, little is done to encourage it.

Software, electronic, and biotechnology companies found suburban business centers to be ideal for their development and research. They attracted entrepreneurs and professionals, who moved into upscale housing developments near their jobs. These office and research parks began to interact academically and economically with research universities and both public and private groups to develop and use their products. Silicon Valley, south of San Francisco, is the center of much of the U.S. high-tech industry and an example of a suburban business and research complex.

Suburban Schools. The quality of schools is often one of the reasons that families move from cities to suburbs. Because the suburbs are fairly new, their schools are usually not in disrepair, as are many in urban areas. Wealthy suburbs are more likely to have beautiful schools with the latest technology, qualified teachers, advanced placement courses, gifted and talented programs, and numerous extracurricular activities.

However, not all suburban schools are of this high quality. Those that predominantly serve students with limited English skills, from low-income families, and from backgrounds other than Europe are likely to be the older schools in the region. Lacking in facilities, new equipment, and advanced technology, these schools may find the recruitment of teachers challenging.

The problems of urban schools affect many suburban schools as well, especially drugs, student-on-student harassment, and lack of attention to students who may need it the most. Not all suburban schools have the resources to adequately support counselors, social workers, and others who can help students deal with the complexity of today's life. In addition, not all suburban schools have the computers and technology that are important in preparing students for their future work world.



Migration

Throughout history, people have been on the move. They voluntarily move across international borders and within their own countries for educational and work opportunities. However, many are also forced to move for political and religious reasons. We have seen millions of refugees fleeing war-torn regions such a Syria, central Africa, and Ukraine. Others are forced to leave their homes and seek refuge because of climatic conditions. Rising sea level is placing large populations at risk of flooding. The Pacific island nation of Kiribati is experiencing a rising sea level that is threatening its very existence. Kiribati has recently purchased land in Fiji to move its residents should sea flooding force them to leave. Droughts and extreme weather such as hurricanes and tornados have forced individuals to find safer locations. Bremner and Hunter (2014) suggested that there are 230 million international migrants, and when global warming takes hold, millions more could be affected by future climate change.

Thousands of workers, many from impoverished Asian and African backgrounds, have been drawn to the Middle East with questionable promises of good wages and living conditions. One report claims that there were at least 146,000 female migrant domestic workers from Asia and Africa working in the United Arab Emirates, some under abusive conditions (Chonghaile, 2014). The oil-wealthy nation of Qatar was awarded the 2022 World Cup. Football (soccer) stadiums are under construction, with a budget of over $300 billion, using migrant construction workers primarily from India, Nepal, and Bangladesh. Between 2012 and 2013, nearly 1,000 of these workers died, forced to work long hours in temperatures exceeding 120°F (49°C), and in substandard living conditions.

About 13% of the world's population, over 600 million, indicate that they would like to leave their country permanently. Of that number, around 150 million indicate that they would like to move to the United States, with the United Kingdom and Canada distant second and third choices. Those indicating their desire to immigrate to the United States are primarily from highly populated countries (e.g., China, Nigeria, India). Conspicuously absent from this survey is Mexico, which has the largest number of immigrants entering the United States (Clifton, 2012). The report indicated that the primary desire to immigrate was

driven by opportunity to join family members already in the desired county, opportunity to start a business, freedom to express views, and seeing their children treated with respect. One of the reason for the desire to immigrate to the United States is the perceived openness and favorable reception given to immigrants.

Between 1990 and 2013, the total number of migrants internationally rose from 154 to 232 million. The United States is the leading destination for migrants, with 46 million now residing there (Conner, Cohn, & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2013). Today's migrants are primarily moving to high-income countries such as the United States and Germany and are born in middle-income nations (e.g., Mexico, India). For many, a major factor in the decision to migrate is the ability to send remittances (money) to their families in their home countries. The total annual remittances are in excess of $500 million (Conner et al., 2013).

Second-generation Americans are the children of immigrants. There are currently about 20 million of these individuals in the United States. Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans comprise approximately 70% of this group of 20 million adults. With respect to median family income and home ownership, their characteristics tend to mirror those of the general U.S. population, with nearly identical statistics. More in this group (36%) as compared to the general population (31%) are college graduates, and fewer (11%) live in poverty compared to the general U.S. population (13%) (Pew Research Center, 2013e).

While second-generation individuals tend to identify with their family's ancestral roots, most consider themselves to be typical Americans. They also view themselves as more liberal. Substantially more of both the immigrant and second-generation groups identify themselves with the Democratic Party than with Republicans. The Pew Research Center (2013e) estimated that by 2050, the combined first- and second-generation adults and children could grow from 76 million to 160 million and account for 37% of the nation's population. If political leanings remain the same for this population, there could be significant implications for U.S. politics.

While in years past, Americans tended to live their entire lives within a few miles of the place of their birth and their family home, this is no longer always the case. There are an increasing number of reasons individuals and families are moving to different regions of the country and the world.

Travel has become increasingly accessible for most Americans. Air travel, though expensive, is still within the means of most. The interstate highway system is a vast improvement from the old highway system of 60 years ago, making travel to other regions of the country available to almost anyone who has access to a car.



Much of the world's population live in squalid conditions. Educational opportunities may be minimal or nonexistent for most of these children.
(© Jake Lyell/Water Aid/Alamy)

An increasing number of women are joining men in higher education, in the military, and in the civilian workforce. As these individuals pursue educational opportunities, some may matriculate to colleges and universities in other areas of the country and abroad. Exposure to new regions could lead them to seek employment in areas away from their homes. Career opportunities and advancements may involve moving to other areas of the country or even the world, causing families to be uprooted and relocated. While most of these relocations may be temporary, some individuals will prefer the changes and make their relocation permanent.

School districts, private schools, and government agencies from foreign countries often send recruiters to job fairs and conferences to recruit teachers, just as national and international businesses recruit promising individuals to work in new, interesting, and sometimes distant regions. If you are interested in teaching outside your area or even abroad, check for scheduled job fairs on the Internet.

In 1820 permanent legal U.S. resident status was given to 8,385 immigrants. By 1900 the number had grown to 448,572, and by 2012 to 1,031,631. In addition, another 3,049,419 temporary foreign workers and their families entered the United States in 2012 (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2013).

After years of rapid growth, the numbers of undocumented immigrants took a downturn during the U.S. recession that began in 2007. Prior to that recession, there were about 12.3 million of these immigrants living in the United States. The numbers had leveled off to about 11.3 million in 2013 (Passel, Cohn, Krogstad, & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2013). In 2012, 5.9 million, or about half of the undocumented immigrants, were from Mexico. California, Texas, Florida, New York, New Jersey, and Illinois accounted for about 60% of the undocumented immigrants in the United States. These immigrants comprised 5.1% of the labor force in 2012. About 7% of K–12 students had at least one parent who was undocumented.

Some critics contend that undocumented individuals and their children drain state and federal and local resources. However, others argue that they provide a necessary labor pool for the difficult, dangerous, and low-paying positions that many in the resident population are unable or unwilling to assume.

Migration Worldwide

In much of the world, migration refers to people crossing borders temporarily. The host country views them as temporary guest workers who will eventually return to their homelands. They sometimes have been forced out of their homelands because of civil war, persecution, or economic depression, and they may be living in refugee camps rather than working in the new country. They may later return home once economic and political conditions are stable. However, many migrants never return to their homelands. The United Nations reported that 51.2 million people were forced migrants or refugees at the end of 2013, an increase of over 6 million from 2012. The major source countries for refugees by the end of 2013 were Afghanistan (2.56 million), Syrian Arab Republic (2.47 million), and Somalia (1.1 million) (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2014). The most compelling reasons are war, famine, life-threatening disasters, and government coercion or oppression.



Watch the video "Syria Crisis: One Million Refugee Children" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjN28GraSPQ) to see the effects of forced migration on the millions of children from war-torn countries.

The worldwide trend is migration from rural to urban areas. This trend is particularly salient in less developed countries, where families can no longer sustain themselves in rural areas. They hope to find jobs and greater economic stability in an urban area. The problem is that most cities in developing countries are unable to provide necessary services for a rapidly growing population. Housing, food, water, waste treatment, and jobs do not exist. As a result, large numbers of migrants are living in shanty villages on city borders without clean water and sanitation. When they can find work, it is often in the informal economy of selling wares on the street, gathering items to sell from garbage dumps, or participating in illegal activities. Death rates are high, and life expectancy is low. Schooling for children in these areas is very limited or nonexistent.

Migration in the United States

As the U.S. government expanded its territory in the nineteenth century, the population of the early colonies migrated west. Some groups, like the Cherokee and other American Indian tribes, were forced by the government to move to lands west of the Mississippi River. In the 1920s, 1940s, and 1950s, large numbers of African Americans moved from the South to northern and western industrial areas to fill jobs that were then open to them. Today, migration within the United States takes place continuously.



Globalization

The realities of the twenty-first century call for us to know not only the places where we live but also the places where others live. We are connected to other countries through economic, political, environmental, and cultural systems. One of five students in our schools has a foreign-born parent. We live in a global world that is becoming more controlled by international conglomerates.

We think and respond globally for different reasons and in different ways. When major world events occur, responses from the international community are often a function of a number of variables. If countries have a vested political or economic interest in the country affected, the response may be swift and decisive. If no action can be identified that is in the best interest of a country, then inaction may be the option of choice.

U.S. and international responses were prompt after the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, the Haitian earthquake in 2010, the New Zealand and Japanese earthquakes in 2011 and the Nepal earthquake in 2015. However, the results for responding to political unrest are mixed. For example, the decision by the United States to intervene or not to intervene in the internal conflicts within various North African and Middle Eastern countries has been determined in part by the political ties the United States had with each country's leadership and what its economic and political interests were with regard to the individual country. The United States and the United Nations were slow to respond to the genocides in Bosnia and Rwanda in the 1990s and more recently in Darfur. The United States and the United Nations have responded cautiously to the war and the political and civil unrest in Libya.

The early stages of **globalization** occurred when European nations began to colonize the Americas, Africa, and India in the late fifteenth century. Europeans wanted both the raw materials and the labor of these countries, usually taking them by force and sending them back to their home countries. The colonizers followed a policy of **manifest destiny**, in which they saw their own cultures as superior to all others and destined to rule over others. After the United States became independent of England, it became a colonizer itself, making and breaking treaties with American Indian tribes and gaining land by annexing it or winning it in wars with Mexico and Spain. In 1898, the United States annexed Hawaii. By the mid-1800s the Europeans had colonized Indonesia, Indochina, and all of Africa except for Ethiopia and Liberia. They controlled the crops that would be produced and limited industrial development. Globalization during this period moved resources primarily in one direction—from the colonized country to Europe or America.

It wasn't until after World War II that many countries were able to become independent from their colonizers. However, the colonizers quickly centralized their power in 1948 by establishing GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Taxes), which later became the World Trade Organization (WTO). With a membership beyond the European colonizers, the goal of the WTO was to reduce barriers of trade so that goods and labor could move more easily across national borders. The International Monetary Fund and World Bank were established to help defend the world's monetary system and make investments through loans in the infrastructure of developing countries. Not eager to give up their control of global economic and political issues, the old colonizing countries (Germany, Great Britain, France, and Italy) joined the other economically and politically powerful countries (United States, Canada, Japan, and Russia) to form the Group of Eight (G-8) to oversee the world's future development, which will affect the lives of both the richest and poorest people of the world. Russia's membership was suspended by the group in 2014 because of its annexation of Crimea.

Globalization also impacts the ability of the world's population to live without famine, debilitating and killing diseases, and brutality brought on by poverty, religious beliefs, or war. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other international organizations see the education of children and women as critical to changing their economic status and ability to be self-sufficient. The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child identified early childhood care and education, especially for the neediest children, as its top goal, and it is collecting data to track the progress of countries in meeting this goal (United Nations Human Rights, 2015).

Economics

Events in one country can affect other countries around the world. For example, when adjustments are made to the stock market in China, the stock markets drop or rise in Japan, Europe, and the United States. When rain forests are depleted in Ecuador, the natural production of oxygen for the world is reduced, and the indigenous groups depending on the rain forests lose

their livelihood. When the 2011 earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster struck Japan, much of the country's business infrastructure from manufacturing to shipping was severely compromised. Few Americans realized initially how this would impact U.S. manufacturing. However, many components that go into the assembly of American automobiles (e.g., pigment for red and black auto paint) and into high-tech equipment are manufactured in Japan, and shipments to the United States were affected. Worldwide, there is so much interdependence that no country can operate in total isolation from others.

Hungry for a quick fix of American food while traveling overseas? You will have little difficulty finding a McDonald's cheeseburger in Zermatt, Switzerland, or in Xian, China. McDonald's has tens of thousands of locations in well over 100 countries, including a kosher site in Buenos Aires. If you prefer fried chicken, KFC, which has its imprint in more than 115 countries, has more than 4,500 locations in hundreds of cities in China. Need cash in Iguaçu, Brazil, or Barcelona, Spain? Your Bank of America ATM card in those locations will likely provide access to your own bank account at home. Many U.S. brands have become international, and many foreign brands are so prevalent that many believe them to be U.S. companies (e.g., Shell Oil, Budweiser, 7-Eleven, Trader Joe's). These are all examples of globalization and how the countries of the world have become increasingly interdependent.

Do you need technical support for a problem with your computer? If you call your U.S. computer manufacturer, your call may be routed to a technical support call center in Delhi, India. Someone who has recently been given the Western work name "Kevin" will literally take control of your computer and correct your problem. Many U.S. factories and assembly plants have moved their production to Mexico, Vietnam, China, and other overseas locations (although some are now moving back to the United States). There are no longer pineapple canneries in Hawaii, as American companies are now growing their products in countries with lower labor costs, such as Costa Rica. Financial globalization usually involves the goal of profitability, either from reaching new markets or saving capital against higher U.S. labor costs. The latter may or may not lower consumer costs but may result in loss of American jobs.

It would be difficult to complete a wardrobe with clothing made entirely in the United States. Even the most expensive American designer labels typically are made overseas. Products are sometimes produced by children or women in sweatshops under conditions that would be illegal in the United States. Consumerism of U.S. products is promoted around the world, and cheaper products from other countries are consumed in the United States as imports grow. The managers and owners of large corporations have profited greatly from their global connections.

Although economic growth remains strong in the old industrialized countries and is becoming strong in developing countries such as India and China, many people in the world are struggling to live from day to day. In 2011, 2.2 billion people lived on less than $2 a day (World Bank, 2014). More than one-fifth of the people in these countries live in absolute poverty, many undernourished and without clean water and sanitation. In developed nations such as the United States and some countries in Europe, many groups of people of color and new immigrants have not benefited from the economic growth of their countries, living in poverty—sometimes in conditions similar to those in developing countries. Around the world, the disparities between the rich and poor continue to increase.

Technology is both changing the job market and opening communications across national borders. It provides opportunities to connect people around the world. The use of computers and cellular phones around the globe has increased dramatically over the past decade. The Internet allows direct communications across national, political, and geographic boundaries. Individuals are able to communicate with each other around the world instantaneously via e-mail and video conferencing. However, the digital revolution is not reaching the majority of the world's population, especially people in developing nations.

Environment

The environment is also greatly influenced by global conditions, changes, and decisions. A volcano, an explosion, a fire, or an oil spill in one country can impact the environment and economy of many other countries, as ash or other pollutants are spread by wind or water around

Earth. A number of factors contribute to the degradation of the environment and the world's **ecosystem**. As the world's population increases, the needs for food, clean water, sanitation, and jobs also increase. Rapid economic growth, which draws on natural resources, is expected to continue in countries such as China and India. Another factor is the increased consumption of natural resources and produced goods by the populations of industrialized countries.

Although the destruction of the environment is a global problem, some countries contribute much more to the problem than others. Industrialized nations are the greatest offenders, using more than their equitable proportion of natural resources and adding more than their share of pollutants to the environment. The United States is among the leading consumers and environmental polluters. Although the U.S. population is only 5% of the world, it consumed more oil than the next three highest consuming nations (China, Japan, and Russia) combined in 2013 (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2015), and it emits disproportionately high amounts of carbon dioxide. The United States is also the third-largest consumer of water, behind China and India, but the leader in per capita consumption. This is particularly problematic in regions such as California, which has been suffering drought conditions for several years.

Most scientists believe that the damage can be halted and steps taken to dramatically improve the environment. Such a change in direction requires a global commitment from multinational corporations, local companies, policymakers, and the public to do things differently. Industrial leaders have traditionally argued against environmental control because it may cost more money, hurting their competitiveness and profits. However, the tide may be turning. A number of companies are marketing sustainable development. A growing number of cities are enforcing their own greening policies to support a sustainable environment.

In 2012, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed new standards for automobile emissions beginning in 2016. Each year the amount of emissions is targeted for additional reductions. In 2016, the target for auto emissions is 225 grams/mile of carbon monoxide. By 2020 the target is 182 g/m, and by 2025, 142 g/m.

Resistance by Indigenous People

Not all people are excited about the globalization that is opening up the world to the interests of corporations, investors, and politicians. Skeptics do not believe that these groups have the best interests of the people and the environment in mind as they make decisions that consider only their profits and their own economic and social well-being. Indigenous people are the most severely affected by global decisions, but they have had limited or no voice in the decisions that dramatically change their lives.



Watch the video "How Big Coal Is Evicting Entire Villages in Colombia" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJrPXWHNdIs) to see what happens to villagers when their interests come into conflict with those of big business.

Indigenous people are only 5% of the world population, but some are living on the natural resources that others desire. At least 370 million people live in thousands of indigenous societies in some 90 countries. They are spread around the world: in the Amazon jungles; the mountains of the Andes; the tundras of the far north; the forests of Canada, Siberia, and Indonesia; the islands of the Pacific; the agricultural lands of the Philippines, Guatemala, Mexico, and the United States; and the grasslands and deserts of Africa. They face immediate threats to their cultures and lives as others seek to acquire their natural resources, such as their forests for timber.

The influence of the outside world has often had negative consequences for many of the world's indigenous people. In the United States, Native Americans are 600 times more likely to contract tuberculosis and 62% more likely to commit suicide than the general population. Worldwide, life expectancy is 20 years lower for indigenous people than for their non-indigenous counterparts. Indigenous people also experience disproportionately high levels of health issues, such as HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, cardiovascular illness, infectious diseases, and infant and maternal mortality (United Nations, 2010).

Community values are central in the lives of indigenous people. Many in the dominant groups, on the other hand, value individual freedom and the right of the individual to accumulate his or her own wealth and power.



Many of the world's indigenous peoples struggle to protect their languages, cultures, religions, artifacts, and traditional knowledge and sciences.
(© Karin Duthie/Alamy)

Another core value of many of the indigenous peoples is their reciprocal relationship with nature. As Earth gives them the gifts of water, food, and protection, they must give back to Earth and take care of it. To them, globalization has given the powerful the ability to dominate both people and Earth for the purpose of making money—with no commitment to take care of either. To indigenous people, these strangers who want to take and even destroy the land on which they have lived for thousands of years have no relationship with their land. The land and its produce have much more meaning to the natives than providing substance for living. In 2011, the Ojibwe Indians were faced with threats from individuals outside their community. Lawmakers and business interests were working to loosen Minnesota's water quality standards. Relaxing water standards would make copper mining easier, but it would put the wild rice used for food and medicine at risk. Most indigenous groups practice **subsistence living**, in which they produce enough food for their communities to survive, but do not accumulate food or money for private use. The wild rice is viewed as sacred, a gift from their creator, and central to their identity (Karnowski, 2011).

Collective ownership is a core value of many indigenous groups. European settlers in the 1830s tried to convince the Cherokee to divide their lands in the southeastern United States into private plots that would be owned by individual Cherokee. The intent of the European settlers was to buy the property plot by plot from the owners, thus removing the Cherokee from the land that the new settlers desired. The Cherokee resisted individual ownership, which resulted in their being moved forcibly from their homes by federal troops. Indigenous peoples are constantly confronted with others trying to exploit their collective ownership.

Many indigenous groups have suffered from the invasion of their lands by highways and pipelines. They have been relocated to make way for hydroelectric dam projects that flood their lands (e.g., Three Gorges Dam, China) and destroy their livelihoods. Some have become ill because of contamination from the dumping of oil and chemicals into the water. They are not immune to diseases and problems such as alcohol abuse that arrive with industrial development. When people are removed from their land and subsistence living, they are forced to enter the capitalist economy, in which they have to sell their products to buy the necessities of life. The indigenous society becomes endangered as family members are forced to find jobs away from their native lands.

Today groups of indigenous people are fighting in courts and public forums for their rights to sovereignty, self-governance (e.g., Hawaiian sovereignty movement), and collective ownership. Many do not want to assimilate into the dominant society. Indigenous people around the world struggle to protect their languages, cultures, religions, artifacts, and traditional knowledge. Theirs is often a losing battle against the globalization that could destroy their families and communities.

Incorporating Students' Cultural and Geographic Differences into the Classroom

Students and their families may have lived in the community served by a school for all their lives, as with the generations before. But some may have recently moved from another part of the city, another area of the state, or another state or country, as in the chapter's opening scenario. The local protocols for behavior in schools and social settings may be strange to these newcomers. Students may speak a language or dialect for which they are teased or harassed.

Teachers should recognize that these differences are not shortcomings on the part of students. Instead, they are an outgrowth of their own histories and experiences outside the local community. Educators may have to become acquainted with other cultures to serve the new students effectively. Meeting with parents and listening to the students' own narratives of their experiences will help in providing a context for effective teaching and learning.

Teaching Immigrant Students

Immigrant students, especially at the high school level, tend to be overlooked by their teachers and other officials. Their education is affected by a number of factors that impact their families. A large number of immigrant students are living in segregated, low-income communities. The parents of some Hispanic students are undocumented immigrants who worry about being deported and separated from their families. Some students in rural areas will be in the school a short time as their parents participate in seasonal agricultural work and then move to another area of the country where they can be employed. Many immigrant students will be English language learners who are participating in one of the language programs discussed in Chapter 6.

Older students in urban areas may be assigned to a special newcomer school or program that is designed to help them learn English and adjust to the U.S. school culture. Younger students are more likely to be assigned to a class where the majority of students are native born. Most rural schools and many urban and suburban school districts will not have special schools or programs for older immigrant students. Instead, the students will be integrated into current classrooms with or without support to help them adjust to their new settings.

Where should you begin if an immigrant student is assigned to your class? First, you should be welcoming and supportive of the student. Second, you should find out from a school administrator what support the school district offers for immigrant students. You should learn whether the district has translators or student advocates who can assist you in working with the student and his or her parents. If the student is an English language learner and you have no background in ESL or bilingual education, enroll in a staff development or local university course. Courses may be available online to provide you with assistance. Talk with other teachers in your building or school district who have been successful at integrating immigrant students into their classrooms and helping them be academically successful. In some cases, a school district will not have support systems for either the student or the teacher. You may have to learn on your own.

Immigrant parents will come from a wide range of backgrounds. Some may be highly educated, while some may lack even the most basic educational background. Most believe that education is critical to their children's future success and will be supportive of the teacher's efforts to help their children learn. In many cultures, the parents respect the role of teachers and trust them to have the best interests of their children in mind. You should consider the family an ally.

As you work with immigrant students, you should make it clear that you have high expectations for them and do everything you can to help them meet those expectations. While parents may have hopes that their children will attend college, the children do not always have the appropriate academic preparation for college. They may not have a full understanding of college requirements, admissions procedures, and how they might access financial aid, even if this has been communicated to them in writing or verbally. With the professional staff cutbacks that are occurring in schools, guidance counselors and advisors may be overwhelmed and may not be able to give adequate attention to all students in need. Teachers should be alert to such students and be prepared to obtain assistance for them.

You should be conscious of the ethnic identification of immigrant students. They may be at very different stages of assimilation, which means they cannot be thought of as a homogeneous group. Some students will identify strongly with the dominant group. Others will be transcultural or successful in figuring out how to fuse the culture of the dominant society with their native culture. Still other students will strongly identify with their native cultures and even resist or develop opposition to the dominant culture. If you understand where they are, you can better understand how to use their native cultures to help them learn and possibly counter their opposition to academic achievement.

Honoring Family Cultures

Students' cultural backgrounds should be reflected in the examples used to teach. Rural students do not relate to riding a subway to school or work, nor do inner-city students easily relate to single-family homes with large yards and no other houses around them. It would be hard to relate to a story in a book about a father who is a pilot if you have never even been close to an airport. If students seldom see representations of themselves, their families, or their communities in the curriculum, it is difficult for them to believe that the academic content has any meaning or usefulness for them. It will appear to them that the subject matter has been written and delivered for someone else. At the same time, they can still learn about other lifestyles based on different cultural backgrounds and experiences. The teacher's repertoire of instructional strategies should relate content to the realities of the lives of students.

A teacher who understands the experiences of students from different cultural backgrounds can use that knowledge to help students learn subject matter. A teacher's sensitivity to those differences can be used to make students from oppressed groups feel as comfortable in the class as those from the dominant culture.

Incorporating Global Perspectives

Because our world has become so interdependent and will become even more so in the future, it is important that students have an understanding of global connections and how they impact their lives. As you plan lessons, think about how you can integrate worldwide events and actions. A natural disaster such as a tsunami, an earthquake, or a volcanic eruption provides an opportunity to learn about the part of the world in which the disaster occurred, the people affected, and the implications for the United States and even for them in particular. Students can learn more about the areas in which the United States is at war or involved in peacekeeping missions, who lives there, and how they are affected. A lesson on manufacturing should investigate where around the world products are being made and who is working in the factories or sweatshops. Students could study child labor laws and how children are involved in the manufacture of products they buy. A lesson on music could explore the influence of U.S. music around the world and the influence of music from other countries on the United States. How could you bring other parts of the world into the subject you plan to teach?

Another strategy for incorporating global issues into the curriculum is to help your students think about topics from the perspectives of different classes of people in another country. Their perspectives on an issue could be the same or quite different from those of students in your classroom. Globalization itself will look quite different from the perspective of a less developed nation than from the perspective of a developed nation. Indigenous people look at the environment in a very different way than oil companies. Presenting different perspectives will help students clarify the issues and understand why different people think quite differently about the same issue.

Using the Internet, your students can connect to students in classrooms around the world. Some schools connect their students as pen pals to students in other countries. Students in different countries could work together on projects to learn more about each other or on an issue or a project in which both countries are engaged. Students from all kinds of schools participate in exchange programs with families around the world. Teachers sometimes sponsor trips for students to visit other countries. The possibilities for interacting with people from other countries will continue to expand as we increasingly use technology to work together.

Working with Families and Communities

Not all parents feel welcome in schools, in part because most schools reflect the dominant culture and language rather than their own. Therefore, school personnel may need to reach out to parents rather than simply wait for them to show up at a meeting. A true collaboration requires that parents and teachers become partners in the teaching process. Teachers need to listen to parents and participate in the community to develop a range of teaching strategies that

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

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

Because members of the community may object to the content and activities in the curriculum does not mean that educators cannot teach multiculturally. It does suggest that they

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate/Incorporating Global Perspectives in the Curriculum

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

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

FOR

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

AGAINST

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

QUESTIONS

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

know the sentiments of the community before introducing concepts that may be foreign and unacceptable. Only then can educators develop strategies for effectively introducing such concepts. The introduction of controversial issues should be accompanied by the education of parents and by the presentation of multiple perspectives that place value on the community's mores.

In addition, the community becomes a resource in a multicultural classroom. We can learn much about cultures in the community through participation in activities and by inviting community members and, perhaps, some parents into the school. Community speakers and helpers should represent the diversity of the community. Speakers also should be selected from different roles and age groups. Not only will students learn about other cultural groups, but so will you.

SUMMARY

Geography and Culture

Where an individual grows up and lives will have a profound influence on the individual's personality, values, and other variables, such as vocation, religion, and political affiliation. An individual may have no choice in what part of the world—what country, region, or community within a country—he or she is born and lives, but educational opportunities, marriage, or work may take us to distant places with different people and different cultures.

Regional Diversity in the United States

The diversity of United States is multifaceted. As one visits different areas of the country, there will be considerable diversity in terms of ethnicity and race, religion, politics, socioeconomic factors, well-being, and food.

Rural, Urban, and Suburban Areas

As with regional differences, there can be significant differences for those living in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Some urban areas tend to become magnets for immigrants seeking housing and work. Large cities offer much to those who are privileged with satisfying jobs and quality housing and are able to enjoy the many offerings of the city, such as restaurants and entertainment. For many, however, the city is a place of misery, featuring unemployment, poor-paying jobs, and substandard housing.

Education can also be a challenge for some who attend and who teach in underfunded schools lacking adequate materials, supplies, and technology. Some schools in wealthy areas of the city have the advantage of strong parental support, with parents often finding ways to enhance the school facilities and offerings. Suburban schools can also vary considerably; some of them are financially well supported, and others struggle.

Rural schools often face considerable challenges. Some are located in sparsely populated areas and are unable to offer some classes that students need. Consolidation, the Internet, and satellite instruction have minimized some of the problems and limitations.

Migration

Throughout history, people have been migrating. They migrate within their own country and to other countries. They migrate to what they perceive to be a better life in another place, free from famine, wars, discrimination, and persecution. Some travel to distant places for education, and they find the new home to their liking and remain there.

Climatic conditions are creating havoc for some of the world's residents, forcing them to flee due to drought or rising oceans. The United States, the most sought-after immigrant destination in the world, is a country of immigrants. There are very few indigenous peoples in the country—only Alaskan natives, American Indians, and native Hawaiians. The rest of us are immigrants, children of immigrants, or descendants of immigrants. Each year, 1 million or more immigrants enter the United States. Many are children, and it is our obligation as educators to welcome them and to facilitate their adjustment to their new country.

Globalization

Isolationism is a thing of the past for most countries and most individuals. The Internet connects us immediately with almost any part of the world. We are able to have video conferencing with individuals halfway around the world. Our friends experiencing a winter storm in New England or even France can point their smartphone or tablet out the window and show us instantly what the weather looks like. Our Japanese car is assembled by American workers in the United States, and our neighbor's American car contains parts made in places we have never heard of or in countries we have only seen on TV. We have no fears of having a craving for American fast food in most places around the world. There are more KFC stores in China than in our home state. The world has gone global, and as we visit exotic places around the world, at the same time, we will have more students in our classrooms from distant countries.

Incorporating Students' Culture and Geographic Differences into the Classroom

As we experience the arrival of new students from abroad in our schools, it is critical that as educators we are prepared to make their adjustment as seamless as possible. Students may come from a variety of backgrounds. Some may come from families that are better educated and financially more comfortable than the average student in your school. Others, however, may come from families with limited educational backgrounds, limited finances, and limited or even no English speaking skills. While we attempt to help immigrant students adjust and learn the culture of their new country, there is much we as educators and our other students can learn from the rich culture our new students bring into our classrooms. It is the obligation of every teacher and every school to honor the culture of each student and to do what we can to help them achieve their goals and aspirations.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts



10 The Youth Culture

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- **10.1** Describe the developmental context of today's young adults and list some of their typical characteristics and behaviors.
- **10.2** Explain the impacts of poverty, prejudice, child abuse, and obesity on today's children.
- **10.3** Describe the challenges some adolescents face as they transition to adulthood.
- **10.4** Explain how teachers can support children and adolescents in the classroom.

Due to the closing of his father's factory, 16-year-old Sean Thornton had moved across the country with his family to an area where his grandfather found a job for his father. Sean had lived in a medium-size city in the Midwest, where he had a few friends at school, and he was now living in a small southwestern town of 30,000, where he had no friends. Sean was gay but had never openly discussed it with his parents, who had uncomfortable feelings about some of his behaviors but tried to ignore them.

His speech patterns and mannerisms, which his parents tried to ignore, were very much noticed by his new classmates. Not long after he arrived, his classmates began to talk about him. At first they made comments behind his back, but then they began to make them to his face. The comments were cruel and involved name calling and continuous teasing. They then escalated to threats. Several of the teachers had noticed Sean's mannerisms and speech, but they chose to ignore them. One teacher had actually overheard some of the teasing but, having strong negative feelings about gays, had done nothing and said nothing to anyone.

Sean told his parents that he wanted to drop out of school, and he pleaded with them to allow him to do so. When asked why, he said that he missed his old school and that the teachers and students in his new school were unfriendly. They told him that he had to stick it out and finish high school and go to college. They assured him that things would get better. They did not. Physical intimidation took place at school, with some of the larger boys shoving him against his locker, knocking his books to the floor, grabbing at his rear end, and laughing. Some of the girls watched and joined in with the laughing.

Some of them used their phones to make a video of Sean being bullied and posted it online. It went viral in his school, and students laughed at him when he walked by. Sean told his parents he was dropping out of school. This time he was not asking for permission. Angered, his father swore at him and told him to suck it up and get over it. No one in the family had failed to finish

high school, and he was not to be the first. A week later, Sean's body was found in a wooded area behind his grandparent's home. He was dead from a gunshot wound to the head from his grandfather's hunting rifle. Sean had become one of the 2,000-plus teenagers in the United States who would take their own lives that year.

REFLECTIONS

1. Who was at fault in Sean's death?
2. What should Sean's parents have done when they first noticed mannerisms that they thought atypical for a teenage boy?
3. Should the teachers have done anything if they only observed mannerisms they thought might suggest that he was gay?
4. Was the teacher who observed some of the bullying and chose to ignore it guilty of negligence or unprofessional behavior?
5. What is the responsibility of the school toward gay and lesbian students?



The Culture of Youth

Each person who lives long enough will become a part of every age group. Without choice, we must all go through the various stages in life and eventually join the ranks of the aged. Like other subcultural groups, we feel, think, perceive, and behave, in part, based on the age group to which we belong. In this chapter, we focus on school-age groups and the age cohort that many young preservice students and beginning teachers belong to: young adulthood. We include young adults to demonstrate how many in this age group tend to function or are perceived to function by others. We examine how ethnicity, gender, social status, and other determinants of culture interface with the periods in an individual's life. We examine how peer pressure affects behavior in some age groups. Critical issues such as child abuse, childhood obesity, adolescent substance abuse, and adolescent suicide are examined. Finally, we examine how an understanding of age groups can affect the educational process.

Having an understanding of the various age groups is helpful in providing appropriately for the needs of students. A student's classroom behavior is often related to his or her relationships with parents, siblings, and significant others. As these family members and significant others move through various age stages in their lives, their behavior and their relationship to the student may change. Consequently, a student's behavior may, in part, be influenced by the age changes of the significant people in his or her life.

How we behave is often a function of age. Although many adolescents behave differently from one another, the ways they think, feel, and behave are at least partly a result of their being adolescents. At the same time, age is not alone in affecting the way a person behaves or functions. Ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, and gender interact with age to influence a person's behavior and attitudes.

In this chapter, we do not attempt to examine all developmental stages and age groups. That information can be obtained through a human development text. Instead, we examine some critical issues related to various age groups. Because it is impossible to address all critical issues affecting each age group, we selectively address issues affecting schools directly or indirectly.



Young Adulthood

The young adulthood age group, comprising more than 31.2 million people in the United States (Forum on Family and Child Statistics, 2014), can be defined as ages 18 to 24. Young adulthood is a critical period in the life of an individual because it is the time when one's hopes

and aspirations begin to take shape or, for some, when one's dreams are shattered. The latter is often the case for the millions of low-income and disenfranchised young Americans. This is the period when many who seek careers in education begin their preservice preparation and some others begin their teaching careers. We begin our discussion of age groups with young adults because this is the target age group for K–12 educators as they prepare their students for the world of work, including military service or higher education.

The young adult years are an exciting time—a time of important decision making coupled with stress and sometimes pain. Young adults are under pressure to make some of the most important decisions they will ever make, and some of those decisions may have an impact on the rest of their lives. Decisions are often made about education beyond high school; vocational choices are often decided; and decisions regarding a partner, marriage, and children may also be made during this period.

At the same time, unwise choices in education or vocation along with disappointments in relationships can bring frustration and emotional pain. To many Americans in poverty, young adulthood brings the reality that they are among the disenfranchised in this country. If they are among the minority groups frequently targeted for discriminatory practices, life can be particularly difficult. Lack of financial resources may make the reality of a higher education elusive. Good jobs may be scarce, as preference is often given to members of the dominant group and to individuals from more favored minority groups. During a recession, these individuals tend to be the most affected. They may suffer from abject poverty, unemployment, and poor living conditions and may find it difficult to escape from this way of life. Frustration and anger may evolve, along with an intense feeling of impotence.

In 2012, 522,000 young adults were serving on active duty with the U.S. armed forces, while another 180,000 of this age cohort were incarcerated in correctional institutions in 2011. In 2013, 84% of young adult women and 81% of young adult men had completed high school. College enrollment for young adults in 2013 was 41%. Nineteen percent of this group was neither in school nor working (Forum on Family and Child Statistics, 2014). Those with strong family support and connections are often able to gain entrance to prestigious colleges and universities and upon graduation may receive generous and sometimes highly satisfying employment options.

The Millennials: The Me Generation

Young adults fall within a larger and highly visible group, the **millennials**, or the **"me" generation**. This group, born between 1980 and 2000, numbering 80 million Americans, includes some who have completed college, some who have completed graduate school, some who are still in school, and some who have already entered an increasingly diverse and multigenerational workplace. They constitute the most racially and ethnically diverse cohort group in the United States.

They are less likely to have served in the military, are on track to be the most educated, and are among the less religious generations. While fewer identify themselves with organized religion, however, they are not necessarily a-religious. As a group, they indicate that they pray as often as their elders did in their youth. Their high levels of education may have been a function of both the demands of the current knowledge-based economy and job scarcity during the 2007–2009 recession (Pew Research Center, 2010).

The older members of this cohort witnessed on TV the Los Angeles riots following the Rodney King incident, and they also have experienced, with their younger cohort, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the Virginia Tech shootings, and the rise and threat of militant groups such as ISIS. A Russian nuclear attack has never been a concern to them, but they are aware of possible Iranian and North Korean nuclear capabilities. They have had to learn to avoid areas of known street gang activity and go through tightened airport security, and they consider the threat of terrorist attacks real. Twenge (2014) suggested that after a childhood of optimism and high expectations, they were hit with the reality of the recession of 2007. Saddled with sizable student loans, many graduates found the anticipated high-paying jobs elusive and were forced to take unsatisfying positions for which they believe they were overqualified.

Millennials are involved in multiple forms of self-expression, from social media to tattoos and body piercings. Only about 60% of them were raised by both parents, and while they value parenthood, they are not necessarily rushing into marriage. Compared to their parent's generation, only half as many marry at the same stage in life. A third of the mothers in this generation were single when they had their children. (Pew Research Center, 2010).

This is a generation defined by technology, social media, and globalization, and millennials have never known the world any other way. They have been described as the most technologically advanced generation educators have ever seen. Born around the time when the PC came on the scene, they have grown up with technology, and learning to use it came as naturally as learning to walk. Most, though not all, have access to computers in their homes, and some have their own websites.

Millennials have grown up with the ability to access people worldwide through their computers. Tablets, smartphones, and social media are an everyday part of their lives. A majority are plugged in 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They are heavily immersed in the digital world and prefer text messaging, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and other online technology to telephone calls and time-consuming forms of written communication. Cocotas (2013) stated that smartphone users ages 18 to 24 send an average of a staggering 2,022 text messages a month.

Parents and educators have sought to enhance the likelihood of success in this cohort by instilling self-esteem, praising them even for minimal accomplishments. Awarded and rewarded all their lives, millennials tend to have a very positive self-image, which at times may be unrealistic. Stein (2013) suggested that this self-image sometimes leads to narcissism, which is higher for millennials than for similar-age subjects of early cohorts. Used to instant gratification and grade inflation, some millennials may enter the real world of work dangerously naïve.

The unique characteristics of millennials (and those in any other age cohort) were formed by the culture in which they were raised. Each cohort grows up in a particular time period, with events and circumstances such as terrorist attacks, wars, new technology, recessions, and high unemployment created by older cohorts. These experiences shape the characteristics of the newly emerging cohort. As the new generation evolves, members of that cohort may themselves contribute to the shaping of that particular generation. Much of the technology surrounding the millennials was developed primarily by older generations (e.g., baby boomers Steve Jobs and Bill Gates). However, much of today's most popular social media has been created by millennials (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).



Both adolescents and young adults tend to be connected to the Internet 24/7, relying on technology and social media to communicate with their friends and family members. (© Phil Chinn)

While highly adept at utilizing social networking, some in this age group have realized too late the consequences of placing inappropriate information about themselves on the Internet. College admissions officers and potential employers often access the information from social media sites, and they may base admissions and hiring decisions on their findings. At times, the consequences of mean-spirited postings on social media are far greater than intended, with dire and sometimes tragic results.

The Internet poses other challenges and dangers for younger millennials. Many websites can be a means of sharing excellent information and ideas. However, they are, unfortunately, an avenue by which sexual predators seek out potential victims. This has been particularly problematic with social media, in which individuals have been known to falsify information, use bogus photographs, and make contact with children and teens while posing as younger individuals.

While educators are often in awe of the computer skills of young students, it is incumbent on educators to provide students with the necessary skills in effective library and research use of the Internet. Without these skills, it is unlikely that they will develop into effective scholars. Familiar with the Internet and knowing how to utilize search engines such as Google,

these young students are not always astute enough to evaluate the quality of sources and to determine whether the information they have found on the Internet is valid. Often seeking the most expedient way to obtain answers or information to complete their reports, they lack the background to determine whether data should be utilized. Even college students and professors are sometimes led astray by the Internet. While some of the information in the online encyclopedia Wikipedia is accurate, not all of it is. There is no close scrutiny to verify the accuracy of materials, which are submitted voluntarily by individuals who are not always qualified to do so. Some students wrongfully assume that anything in print must be correct and may be unable to determine the qualitative difference between popular publications such as *People* and scholarly journals.

While writers have focused on the negative attributes of millennials, this cohort has many positives as well. We have already indicated that this group is superior to most other groups in terms of skills in technology. With their high level of education and continuous connection to the Internet, they are far more knowledgeable about the world than most other groups. They are confident, and many are extremely capable. One of the most encouraging characteristics of this generation is that they are perhaps the most tolerant generation in this country's history. Because they themselves are products of interracial or multicultural marriages or are friends of those who are, they tend to rail against racism, sexism, and homophobia. As a group, they tend to get along well with their parents, with less acrimony than older adults report having had with their parents. The recession has resulted in more of this generation continuing to live at home or returning home to their parents. They tend to respect their elders and credit them with high moral values and work ethic. More than half feel they should be responsible for having elderly parents living with them if the latter so choose, a sentiment not shared to the same extent by older generations. While this group has much to learn from the older generations, and older generations can also learn from the millennials (Pew Research Center, 2010).

Beloit College Mindset List. Since 1998 Beloit College in Wisconsin has distributed its **Mindset List** to both school faculty and staff. The list identifies some of the characteristics—the mindset, or the facts of life—that distinguish the incoming freshman class from the students of years past who preceded them. The class of 2018 entered Beloit College in 2014. Most were 17 or 18 years old and were born in or around 1996. The complete 2018 Mindset List can be accessed online. A sampling of the 75 items on the Mindset List follows (Beloit College, 2014):

- They identify wire-rimmed glasses with Harry Potter rather than John Lennon.
- Same-sex marriage bans have always been overturned by the courts.
- Both the Citadel and the Virginia Military Institute have always admitted female students.
- The NBA has always had female referees.

While most undergraduate students can easily relate to this mindset, their baby boomer professors will be continuously reminded that they belong to another generation.



Childhood

Childhood is an especially critical time in the life of an individual. This group is included in the age cohort group referred to as Generation Z, those born after the Millenials (usually identified as born after 2005). Childhood is a time when the individual begins school, where he or she will be socialized and exposed to cultures other than that of the home, family, and neighborhood. Educational setting can have a profound influence on a young child. Teachers can provide support to the parents' efforts toward appropriate rearing practices or try to counter anything that negatively affects the child.

The child's response to new cultural experiences may be influenced by the home and the school. Children will develop habits during this time that can affect their health throughout

life. The school should assist them in making sound choices. Signs related to child maltreatment may be observable in the school. Educators should always be vigilant, with a concern for the overall well-being of their students.

Social Class and Poverty

Teachers in the inner city and in some other communities may find that nearly all of the children in their classrooms live in poverty. Poverty creates numerous problems for children. In many instances, children live with a single parent, typically the mother. When the father is absent, children often lack adequate male role models, and the mother often bears the entire burden of discipline and financial support. Single mothers living in poverty must often work outside the home to provide for their families. Appropriate child care is often difficult, if not impossible, for working mothers to provide. If none is available, and they leave young children alone in order to work, they risk the possibility of accusations of child neglect.

Mothers from middle and upper socioeconomic groups may not need to work outside the home. Those who choose to do so can often be selective in their choice of a day care setting to obtain an environment congruent with their family values. Day care settings are often important in the socialization process because many of a child's early behaviors are learned from peers and caregivers. Parents from less affluent groups, however, may have limited choices for their children's day care environment. In some instances older siblings, themselves children, may be required to assume family child care responsibilities with the parent(s) working outside the home. Inadequate child care may compromise the child's socialization and development processes.

Children, Ethnic Awareness, and Prejudice

After years of work in improving race relations in this country, the 1980s and 1990s saw growing optimism that the United States had turned the corner on race relations. The hate crimes and racial violence that have emerged in recent years, however, remind us that the ugliness of racism remains with us. Although we as educators may expect to see racism among adults and, to some extent, adolescents, we are sometimes shocked and often dismayed when it is evidenced in the behavior of young children. Attention by educators to signs of developing prejudice in young children can, in some instances, have a positive effect in countering its influence.

Among young children, ethnic awareness and prejudice tend to increase with age. At some point, prejudice may decline but ethnic awareness may remain high. Although it may be necessary for a child to be aware of ethnic differences before he or she can develop prejudice, ethnic awareness in itself is not bad in a child. Attempts to discourage children from noticing that people are different, that they have different pigmentation, have different hair and eye colorization, or speak differently, denies an accurate perception of reality in children.

Some white children grow up unaware of the white privilege that is conferred upon them by society simply for being white or European American. They view themselves as the societal norm. If whiteness is the norm, how are they to perceive their neighbors and classmates who are not white? In contrast, children of color often grow up aware that they are not perceived as part of this norm. Many if not most become aware of the institutional racism that exists but to which most white children are oblivious. Children of color often observe or hear discussions by their elders regarding daily discrimination in employment and biased treatment by law enforcement and the justice system.

Children are influenced by what those around them think, do, and say. Even when parents model tolerance, children may still be exposed to the racist behaviors of others. They observe how some individuals do not associate with members of certain groups. They may observe how some of the European American teachers tend to sit only with other European American teachers in the cafeteria. They may see that a particular teacher's table is filled primarily with individuals of color. Unwittingly, these teachers are modeling behaviors for the students.

The popular media has always had its villains. From the American Indians to the Japanese and Germans in World War II, villains of choice have evolved into the Russians, then Latin American drug lords, and now Arabs and Muslims. It is easy to see how children, particularly

European American children, can grow up having prejudicial attitudes toward certain groups of individuals. This is especially so when there is so little effort to show that the majority of the people in these groups are good, law-abiding, loyal Americans.

Children with poor self-images are prone to developing prejudices. They may perceive targeting individuals they can put down as a means to bolster their own self-worth. It enables them to feel more important and powerful than those they attack.

Because prejudice appears to be somewhat prevalent among young children (ages 4 to 7) and because children are cognitively capable of becoming less prejudiced, it would appear to be very appropriate to utilize activities that have a potential to reduce prejudice during the early years of elementary school such as creating an inclusive environment.

Child Abuse

Each year hundreds of thousands of child abuse cases are reported. Child abuse is the physical or psychological mistreatment of a child. In the United States, state and local child protective services (CPS) receive more than 3.4 million referrals a year of abused or neglected children. More than 4 children die every day as a result of child abuse. Three out of 4 victims are under age 4 (CDC, 2014a).

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2014a), more than 686,000 children in the United States were identified as victims of child abuse and neglect in 2012, and 1,640 children died as a result. Seventy percent who died were victims of neglect, and 44% were victims of physical abuse or a combination of abuses. Seventy percent of the fatalities were children under age 3.

Twenty-seven percent of the abuse victims were under age 3, and 20% between 3 and 5 years; children under age 1 were the most victimized. Girls were victimized slightly more than boys. Most maltreatment came at the hands of parents. Four-fifths (80.3%) of the abusers were parents, 6.1% other relatives, and 4.2% unmarried partners of parents. In 2012, 54% of the perpetrators were women, and 45% were men.

Abuse-induced stress can disrupt early brain development in young children. Abused children may experience serious problems in school, in terms of both disruptive behavior and academic achievement. The CDC (2014a) indicated that "maltreatment can have a long-lasting effect on an individual. Extreme stress can have a negative effect on the nervous and immune systems, resulting in higher risks for health problems as an adult. These problems include alcoholism, depression, drug abuse, eating disorders, obesity, high-risk sexual behaviors, smoking, suicide, and certain chronic diseases."

Child abuse or maltreatment is usually categorized as physical abuse, physical neglect, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse. The U.S. Government defines **child abuse** as:

- Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker that results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or
- An act or failure to act that presents an imminent risk of serious harm (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2015).

According to the CDC (2014d), these are the most common types of child abuse:

- *Physical abuse* is the use of intentional physical force, such as hitting, kicking, shaking, burning, or other show of force against a child.
- *Sexual abuse* involves engaging a child in sexual acts. It includes fondling, rape, and exposing a child to sexual activity.
- *Emotional abuse* refers to behaviors that harm a child's self-worth or emotional well-being. Examples include name calling, shaming rejection, withholding love, and threatening.
- *Neglect* is failure to meet a child's basic needs. These needs include housing, food, clothing, education, and access to medical care.

Visit the CDC website for more detailed definitions.

Corporal Punishment in the Home and School. Nearly 40 countries prohibit corporal punishment of children in both homes and schools. However, it continues to be allowed in homes in all U.S. states and in schools in 19 states. There is sometimes a fine line between what is corrective discipline and abuse, and the distinction is not drawn uniformly across state lines. Most states indicate that physical punishment must be reasonable and not excessive. However, what is reasonable and not excessive may be debatable.

In 2014, Adrian Peterson, a popular and highly successful National Football League player, was charged with reckless and negligent injury to his four-year-old son after he struck him repeatedly with a switch and caused bruising and injuries to various areas of the child's body. Peterson subsequently pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor charge of recklessly assaulting his son, paid a fine, was placed on probation, and agreed to community service. He was suspended from playing for the entire 2014 season. Remorseful and apologetic, Peterson indicated that he had been similarly disciplined as a child. Many parents today were themselves disciplined physically by their parents. However, standards for reasonable non-excessive corporal punishment in past years may not be acceptable to child protective services today, and teachers and parents should be careful in their choice of discipline. Table 10.1 lists signs that may be indicative of child abuse or neglect.

All states have a legal requirement that educators, care providers, and others must report suspected child abuse. If you suspect abuse of one of your students, you must report it to a supervisor.

TABLE 10.1 SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

The Child
• Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance
• Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parent's attention
• Has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
• Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
• Lacks adult supervision
• Is overly compliant, passive, or withdrawn
• Comes to school or other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home
• Is reluctant to be around a particular person
• Discloses maltreatment
The Parent
• Denies the existence of—or blames the child for—the child's problems in school or at home
• Asks teachers or other caregivers to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves
• Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless, or burdensome
• Demands a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot possibly achieve
• Looks primarily to the child for care, attention, and satisfaction of emotional needs
• Shows little concern for the child
The Parent and Child
• Rarely touch or look at each other
• Consider their relationship entirely negative
• State that they do not like each other

Source: Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2013). What is child abuse and neglect? Recognizing the signs and symptoms. Retrieved November 30, 2014, from https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/whatiscan.pdf.

Childhood Obesity

The prevalence of childhood obesity in the United States has increased significantly among children and adolescents in the past 30 years. Obesity in children ages 6 to 11 years increased from 7% in 1980 to nearly 18% in 2012. More than one-third of children and adolescents were overweight or obese in 2012 (Ogden, Carroll, Kit, & Flegal, 2014). Children who are overweight have excess body weight from fat, muscle, bone, water, or a combination of these for their particular height. Children who are obese have excess body fat. Children and adolescents become overweight or obese because their caloric intake exceeds the calories expended. The caloric imbalance is typically a function of genetic, behavioral, and environmental factors (CDC, 2014b).

Obesity has both immediate and long-term consequences. Obese children and youth face an increased risk of cardiovascular disease (e.g., high blood pressure, high cholesterol). In addition, obese children face an increased likelihood of diabetes, bone and joint problems, and sleep apnea. Another obvious consequence is the potential for social and psychological problems. Obese children are sometimes ridiculed, ostracized, and bullied. This in turn can lead to self-concept issues. Long-term consequences can be severe. Obese children and adolescents are likely to become obese adults, placing them at risk for numerous health issues such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and several types of cancer.

In addition to the personal cost to the individual, the societal cost of obesity is immense. The National League of Cities (n.d.) estimated that annually, the national health care cost of obesity related illness is $190.2 billion. Childhood obesity alone accounts for approximately $14 billion in medical costs.

Both children and adults are overweight or obese for many reasons. There is probably no single cause we can attribute to the problem. Among the contributing factors are:

- Food and marketing
- Parental influences on eating behavior
- Dietary intake
- Lack of physical activity or exercise

Unfortunately for many individuals, the foods that seem to taste the best are the ones that are often unhealthy. The youth in the United States (and other parts of the world) have grown up in a culture where fast food is an integral part of daily life. Much of it may be tasty, but it is often high in saturated fats.

For many years some schools added to the problem by providing less-than-nutritious meals and providing vending machines filled with unhealthy snacks and drinks. Fortunately, some individuals championed better and healthier meals, including some in Congress. In 2010, the bipartisan Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Congressional Act was passed and signed by President Obama. This act enabled the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to make the first major changes in school meals in 15 years, and it is designed to raise a healthier new generation of students. USDA standards will ensure that school meals will incorporate the latest and best of nutrition science (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2014). In addition, the act also enabled the USDA to effectively ban the sale of candy, cookies, sugary drinks, and sport drinks from school vending machines in 2013. When schools opened in the fall of 2014, vending machines were expected to be stocked with healthier alternatives, such as whole-wheat crackers, granola bars, and dried fruit, replacing the previous unhealthy options (Strom, 2013).



Schools are now providing healthy options for student lunches to combat obesity and other health problems. (© David Pearson/Alamy)

Parents may exacerbate the problem by encouraging or even forcing their children to eat all of their food and clean their plates, even if they are already satiated. Other parents, also hooked on unhealthy foods, purchase these food items and serve them to their children.

Another concern is the sedentary lifestyle that many of our youth have adopted. Again, parental modeling is often flawed. Today's youth have more entertainment options than earlier generations, often with unlimited access to television, video games, and computers. The lack of physical activity among many young people today is a major contributor to their obesity and lack of physical conditioning.

In 2010 First Lady Michelle Obama launched the Let's Move campaign to address the childhood obesity epidemic. Let's Move emphasizes eating healthier and moving more (at least 60 minutes of vigorous physical activity per day). This initiative proposes the creation of partnerships among schools, businesses, communities, and federal and state governments to assist in that effort (Let's Move, 2014).



Adolescence

Adolescence, approximately ages 13 through 18, is perhaps one of the most challenging times in the life of an individual and the family. It is a long transitional period during which the individual is suspended between childhood and adulthood. During adolescence, emancipation from the primary family unit is the central task of the individual. It is a difficult period for a young person, who is attempting to be free from the role of a child but is not fully equipped to assume the responsibilities of adulthood.

Relationship with Parents

As an adolescent shifts emotional ties from the family to peers, a restructuring may take place in the parent–adolescent relationship. The adolescent may view parents more objectively. Parents may become more concerned about peer influence as they experience increasingly less interaction with their child. These changes have the potential to turn the period of adolescence into one of dissonance and alienation from parents and other members of the family. One need only observe a few adolescent–family situations, however, to realize that the degree of dissonance and alienation varies greatly.

The attitude of the parents may contribute to the alienation. Parents who expect problems with their children in the adolescent period sometimes fall into the trap of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Their expectation of alienation generates a hostile attitude on their part. In contrast, parents who have confidence in their children may promote a feeling of confidence and trust. These children often develop sufficient self-confidence to resist peer pressure when resistance is appropriate.

Alienation is disturbing to families, to adult members of the community, and to adolescents themselves. In their efforts to achieve autonomy, sexual functioning, and identity in order to become productive, self-sufficient individuals, some adolescents think they must turn away from the family. As adolescents assert their rights to assume adult behaviors, they sometimes are unable to assume complementary adult-like responsibilities. Recognizing this shortcoming, parents are understandably reluctant to grant adolescents adult privileges; this further adds to the alienation.

At-Risk Youth and High-Risk Behavior

It is important to differentiate between the terms *at risk* and *high risk*. **At-risk youth** are those with a disadvantaged living status. This may be due to conditions such as poverty, discrimination, family instability, genetic or constitutional factors, parental neglect or abuse, or major traumatic events. **High-risk youth** are youth who engage in activities that make them or others vulnerable to physical, social, or psychological harm or negative outcomes. At-risk youth do not necessarily engage in high-risk behaviors. High-risk behaviors include, but are not limited to, the use of harmful substances such as alcohol or other drugs, and sexual behaviors leading to unwanted pregnancies or sexually transmitted diseases. These behaviors are initiated during adolescence, are frequently interrelated, and often extend into adulthood.

Substance Abuse

The use of harmful substances, primarily by children and adolescents, has been one of the most problematic areas faced by parents, schools, communities, and law enforcement agencies in the past few decades. It will inevitably continue to be a major problem into the next decade. **Substance abuse** is the use of banned or illegal drugs and substances or the overuse of legal substances. The problem is a national phenomenon, and many of the problems of adult substance abuse have their roots in adolescence.

Substances are abused to produce altered states of consciousness. The adolescents who use them often seek relief, escape, or comfort from stress. The social institutions to which the adolescents must relate, including family and particularly the educational system, may be perceived as unresponsive or openly hostile. Their inability to focus on long-range goals, their desire for immediate gratification, and their lack of appreciation for the consequences of their behavior may contribute to some adolescents' misuse of substances.

There are two broad categories of adolescent drug users: experimenters and the compulsive users. Experimenters make up the majority of adolescent drug users. A few progress from experimenters to compulsive users. Although most experimenters eventually abandon such use, the possibility of progression to compulsive use is a serious concern of parents and authorities. Recreational users fall somewhere between experimenters and compulsive users. For them, alcohol and marijuana are often the drugs of choice. Use is primarily to achieve relaxation and is typically intermittent. For a few, however, the goal is intoxication, and these individuals pose a threat to themselves and others.

The national Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) monitors priority health risk behaviors among youth and young adults. These include use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, as well as sexual behaviors that contribute to unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). The 2014 YRBS provided disturbing statistics for students in grades 9–12: 15.7% smoked and 8.8% used smokeless tobacco; 34.9% had at least one drink of alcohol; and 23.4% used marijuana, 5.6% cocaine, 2.2% heroin, 8.9% inhalants (e.g., glue, spray cans), 7.1% hallucinogenic drugs (e.g., LSD, acid, PCP), 6.6% ecstasy, and 3.2% steroids without a prescription (Kann et al., 2014).

Adolescent substance abuse may have serious long-term consequences. Berk (2012a) suggested that youth who rely on alcohol and drugs do not learn healthy coping techniques and responsible decision-making skills. As a result, they may suffer from anxiety, depression, and antisocial behavior.

Numerous problems related to substance abuse affect the community at large. Intravenous drug users are one group at high risk for AIDS. The spread of the deadly human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) among adolescents has affected thousands of U.S. youth.

Our coverage of adolescent substance abuse has been brief. However, the importance of the problem is such that every educator should be aware of the problem and work toward providing children at an early age with appropriate drug education. No agency, group, or individual can wage an effective campaign against substance abuse alone. Only with a united effort can an effective battle be waged. Possible symptoms of alcohol or drug abuse among adolescents often overlap with those of individuals who are at risk for suicide. There are numerous online websites that provide both physical and behavioral warning signs of possible substance abuse among teens and other individuals. Table 10.2 lists a few of the warning signs an educator and family members may observe.



Experimentation with smoking, alcohol, and drugs often occurs during adolescence, sometimes at the urging of peers.
(© Monkey Business/Fotolia)

In the event that these signs are observed in the classroom to a degree not reasonably explainable, the school nurse should be notified. If none is available, then someone in a responsible position who can and will take appropriate action should be notified.

TABLE 10.2 WARNING SIGNS OF POSSIBLE SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- Bloodshot eyes
- Dysfunctional speech
- Significant weight loss or gain
- Burns on fingers from marijuana joints
- Lack of attention to appearance or hygiene
- Frequent illness
- Truancy and declining quality of school work
- Increase in money borrowing
- Increased secrecy about possessions or activities
- Use of incense, room deodorant, or perfume (to hide smoke or chemical odors)
- Subtle changes in conversations with friends (more secretive, using "coded" language)
- Secretive phone calls
- Changes in relationships with friends and family members

Adolescent Sexual Behaviors

The 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Kann et al., 2014) indicated that 46.8% of high school students had had sexual intercourse at least once, while 34.9% were considered sexually active, having had sexual intercourse at least once in the three months prior to the survey. Among those sexually active, 25.3% reported that they or their partners had used birth control pills, an IUD or implant, a shot, a patch, or a birth control ring to prevent pregnancy. An additional 59.1% reported that they had used condoms. These statistics clearly suggest that America's high school students are involved in activities that can lead to pregnancy and STDs, including HIV infection. While some are utilizing protection measures, there are still some who are not, and some are exposing themselves to the possibility of developing STDs, some of which can have lethal consequences.

The CDC (2014c) reported that in 2012, a total of 305,388 babies were born to women ages 15–19. While some of the births were problematic in that they represented a financial challenge for the young mothers, the numbers show a positive trend. Teen births have been on a steady decline, and the 2012 numbers represent a 6% decline from the previous year. Decreases have taken place in all racial groups. Teen pregnancies have typically been disproportionately higher among lower socioeconomic groups. Johnson, Musial, Hall, and Gollnick (2014) suggested that poverty appears to be the most important factor contributing to teen pregnancy. They stated that many teens associate sex with the freedom and sophistication of adulthood and that girls and women often connect sex with being accepted, being attractive, and being loved. These associations may be more pronounced among adolescents living in poverty. Their problems are often exacerbated by limited supervision due to parents working long hours or being absent for other reasons. They may also lack access to adequate medical care and advice.

In 2013 in the United States, 2,440 individuals ages 15–19 were diagnosed with HIV infections and another 548,032 were diagnosed with chlamydia, gonorrhea, or syphilis (Kann et al., 2014). Although there has been a decline in STDs, the rate in the United States remains much higher than the rates in Canada and Western Europe. Of all age groups, adolescents have the highest rate of STDs. If their STDs are untreated, adolescents are at risk for serious lifelong complications (Berk, 2012a).

As many as 20% of teenagers have been engaging is a disturbing practice referred to as **sexting**, which involves the sending of sexually explicit messages or even of nude or semi-nude pictures from cell phone to cell phone or other means of communication. It typically involves

sending a picture to a boyfriend or girlfriend. One study found that for some teens, sexting may be a prelude to actually having sex. In a group of 946 students, primarily tenth-graders, almost 28% indicated that they had sent nude pictures of themselves (Norton, 2014). Child pornography laws are very strict, and the distribution or possession of nude photos of underage individuals, even of oneself, may be a serious felony, subject to imprisonment and registration as a sex offender. Problems are exacerbated when photos are shared with friends who in turn upload the pictures to social networking sites. Parents and educators need to impress on teens the seriousness and consequences of such activities.



Watch the video "Sexting at School" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnGLbylUdzA) to see some of the problems created by sexting.

Other High-Risk Behaviors

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of deaths among youth and young adults 10 to 24 years of age. High-risk behaviors may be among the primarily contributing factors. In a survey of teens 15–19, 64.7% indicated that they had driven a car in the 30 days preceding the survey, and 41.4% admitted to having texted or e-mailed while driving. This is particularly alarming since the CDC reported that each day, 9 people are killed and 1,153 injured in accidents involving distracted driving. In addition, 34.9% of teens had drunk alcohol and 23.4% had used marijuana while driving (Kann et al., 2014).

Adolescent Suicide

Some of America's youth are apparently troubled. Some are depressed to the point of thoughts of suicide, and some actually carry through with the act. During the 12-month period preceding the 2013 CDC Youth Surveillance Survey, 29.9% of students nationally indicated that they had felt sad or hopeless daily for a period of two or more weeks. The prevalence was higher for females (39.1%) than for males (20.8%). Among the students surveyed, 17% indicated that they had seriously contemplated suicide in the 12 months preceding the survey, while 13.6% had made suicide plans, and 8% had attempted suicide. The prevalence of females considering, making plans, and actually attempting suicide was significantly higher than (in most cases nearly double) that of males. Hispanic females in general were at far greater risk for feelings of sadness and hopelessness, contemplating and planning suicide, and attempted suicide (Kann et al., 2014).

Youth suicide is a serious problem. The CDC reports that each year approximately 4,600 young people ages 10 to 24 die from suicide, the third-leading cause of death for that age group. In addition, another 157,000 receive emergency medical care for self-inflicted wounds. While suicide attempts were higher for females than for males, actual suicides were significantly higher for males (81% of deaths) than for females (19%). The highest rates of youth suicide deaths are among Native American/Alaskan Native youth (Kann et al., 2014).

It is likely that the actual number of adolescent deaths due to suicide is higher than that reported. Some suicides are likely reported as accidents, especially high-speed automobile crashes where no suicide notes are recovered. Likewise, some gunshot deaths may be reported as accidents.

Numerous theories have been advanced for the adolescent suicide phenomenon. Among the reasons offered are the decline in religiosity, tension between parents, the breakup of the nuclear family, family tensions and conflict, substance abuse, and the competitiveness of school. A disproportionate number of gay and lesbian youth have attempted or committed suicide. In recent years attention has been drawn to students who have been bullied, including cyberbullying, and who have resorted to suicide.

Because of their lack of experience in making accurate judgments, depressed adolescents may be more prone to respond to the suggestion of suicide than adults. Adolescent depression is a function of a wide range of situations, perhaps involving failure, loss of a love object, or rejection. It can also be a function of biochemical imbalances in the brain or the

loss of a parent through death, divorce, separation, or extended absence. The widespread availability and use of both legal prescription and illegal drugs may be another contributing factor.

Globally suicide is the leading cause of death among older adolescent girls. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), adolescent girls have the least power to overcome barriers to health care access, discrimination, trauma, abuse, violence, relationship conflict, and social isolation. Poverty and social isolation are prevalent among girls in Southeast Asia, where suicide is high. Girls suffer high rates of violence in many forms. In some poor urban neighborhoods in India, some women suffer domestic violence at the hands of their husbands and extended family members. Child brides in some areas face social isolation, as well as early and unwanted sex (Worley, 2014).

Adolescents may manifest a number of warning signs when contemplating suicide (Table 10.3). An observant educator can often catch these signs and solicit appropriate intervention.

A suicide attempt is often a desperate cry for help and more of an attempt to be heard and understood than an act whose true intent is to end one's life. Those who contemplate suicide but do not follow through with an attempt often report that their plans were changed by someone's simple act of concern.

TABLE 10.3 WARNING SIGNS OF ADOLESCENTS CONTEMPLATING SUICIDE

- Sleep changes
- Withdrawal from others and from routine activities
- Aggressive and hostile behaviors, including running away
- Unusual passive behavior
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Neglect of personal appearance
- Personality changes
- Persistent boredom, difficulty concentrating, or a decline in the quality of schoolwork
- Frequent complaints about physical symptoms, often related to emotions (e.g., stomach aches, headaches)
- Loss of interest in pleasurable activities
- Loss of interest in schoolwork and activities
- Complaints of being a bad person or feeling bad inside
- Verbal hints, with statements suggesting that they will no longer be a problem, that things no longer matter, or that they will not be around much longer
- Behaviors suggesting that the individual is putting affairs in order, such as giving away or throwing away valued possessions
- Euphoria following depression
- Expressions of hopelessness and helplessness
- Unusual reckless, life-endangering behaviors (e.g., speeding)
- Stressful life event or loss
- History of previous suicide attempts
- Exposure to suicide of others

Source: Based on multiple sources, MedicineNet.com, http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=55145; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/riskprotectivefactors.html; American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, http://www.afsp.org/preventing-suicide/suicide-warning-signs; Teen Suicide, http://www.teensuicide.us/articles2.html

Adolescent Self-Injury

Because self-injury is typically done in private, most educators are unaware of its prevalence and its seriousness. Self-injury or self-mutilation is the act of harming one's own body. This may include cutting or burning oneself. It may also include behaviors such as swallowing toxic substances, self-bruising, or breaking bones. Tattoos and body piercing are not considered self-injury unless done deliberately to harm oneself.

Self-injury may begin as early as age 7, although most such behaviors tend to begin between ages 12 and 15. In a study by Barrocas, Hankin, Young, and Abela (2012), of 665 youth ages 7–16, 53 (8%) reported engaging in nonsuicidal self-injury (NSSI). Nine percent of girls and 6.7% of boys reported engaging in NSSI; 7.6% of third-graders, 4.0% of sixth-graders, and 12.7% of ninth-graders reported self-injury. Among these subjects, ninth-grade girls (19%) were at greatest risk. The Mayo Clinic suggested that teens and young adults, particularly females, are at greatest risk for NSSI. Other variables that contribute to risk include having friends who self-injure and having life issues such as being neglected, physically abused, or sexually abused. Also at risk are those with identity issues, unstable families, and mental health issues (Mayo Clinic, 2014).

Individuals may engage in NSSI behavior because it provides a means to manage painful feelings, cope with anxiety, and relieve stress and pressures. Symptoms include, but are not limited to, scars, fresh cuts, frequent claims of accidents, broken bones, and wearing long sleeves or long pants in hot weather. If you observe or suspect symptoms, report these to appropriate school authorities so that help can be provided in developing more appropriate behaviors for coping with the contributing problems.

Bullying

Almost everyone can remember the popular kids in school and those who were treated as social outcasts. From an early age, children can be incredibly cruel. Bullying may involve teasing, taunting, verbal abuse, shoving, hitting, spreading rumors, or deliberately excluding someone. Bullying by peers can have serious long-term consequences for young children. It takes a considerable toll on their physical and mental health. According to Kann et al. (2014), an estimated 19.6% of high school students reported being bullied on school property in 2013, with a higher prevalence among females (23.7%) than males (15.6%). Nationally, 14.8% of students reported being electronically bullied through e-mail, texts, chat rooms, instant messaging, and websites. Females (21%) were victimized electronically to a greater extent than males (8.5%). White females were the group bullied the most both electronically and on school grounds.

One of the most notorious cases of bullying involved Phoebe Prince, a 15-year-old who emigrated from Ireland to South Hadley, Massachusetts, with her mother and siblings in the fall of 2009. Prince was bullied by students in her school for months. She was reportedly called a whore and an Irish slut on Twitter, Facebook, and other forms of social media. She was threatened and harassed in the school hallways and library. In January 2010, an empty drink can was thrown at her from a car while she walked home from school. She continued walking home, where she hanged herself. Her tormentors then used Facebook to mock her death. They told police investigators that they had nothing to do with Prince's death and then went back to school, where they allegedly continued to mock her.

The case drew international media attention to bullying in American schools. Eventually five of Prince's tormentors where charged, found guilty, and received probation or probation and community service. The district attorney in charge of the case said that numerous faculty members, staff members, and administrators at Phoebe Prince's high school had been aware of the bullying—some even witnessed physical abuse—and had done nothing (Cullen, 2010; Kennedy, 2010). Although this occurred too late to save Phoebe Prince, the Massachusetts legislature subsequently passed anti-bullying legislation, and later that year a committee at Prince's school adopted a more comprehensive anti-bullying policy.

In 2011, there were shocking suicides of a young Canadian and a New York teen. Eleven-year-old Mitchell Wilson of Ontario, Canada, suffocated himself after being beaten and bullied. Wilson suffered with muscular dystrophy. While he was allegedly beaten to get a cell phone, his father indicated that he was bullied as well because of his disability, and he became extremely fearful of going outside the home and to school (Duell, 2011).

Fourteen-year-old Jamey Rodemeyer, of Buffalo, New York, was bullied and tormented for being gay. Cyberbullies made posts such as, "Jamie is stupid, gay, fat, and ugly. He must die." Another read, "I wouldn't care if you died. No one would. So just do it" (James, 2011).

Educators cannot lose sight of the fact that a lot of bullying begins in the early school years. Sensitivity training must begin in the early grades and continue through high school. If we are to have no tolerance for the carrying of weapons to school, there should be none for bullying, as it can also kill.

Youth Violence

Violence is one of the greatest problems facing young Americans today. Although the violent crime rate in the United States has declined in recent years, this trend has not been evident in the juvenile violent crime rate. A 2013 survey found that 17.9% of students nationally had carried weapons (e.g., gun, knife, club) in the 30 days prior to the survey (Kann et al., 2014). Of that group, 5.5% indicated that they had carried a gun at least one day. In that same survey, 5.6% had carried a weapon (gun, knife, or club) onto school property. During the 12 months prior to the survey, 6.9% of students had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property. Nationally, 24.7% of students reported that they had been in a physical fight one or more times in the 12 months prior to the survey. Perhaps even more surprising is that 19.2% of females reported having been involved in one or more physical fights. Nationally 7.1% of students indicated that they had not gone to school for at least one day because of fear for their personal safety.

The CDC (2013) reported that in 2010 there were 4,655 homicides among young people ages 10 to 24. There were 150 homicides among those ages 10–14, 1,659 among those ages 15–19, and 2,846 among those ages 20–24. In that same year, 738,000 individuals ages 10–24 were treated in emergency facilities for assault-related injuries. The cost to Americans due to these 2010 assaults and injuries is estimated at $16.2 billion in lifetime combined medical and work loss costs.

Mass school shootings have unfortunately become a worldwide phenomenon. They have occurred in Europe, Asia, South America, Central America, Africa, and the United States. These tragedies have disproportionately occurred in the United States. The most notorious in recent years include the 1999 Columbine High School, Colorado, shootings, with the loss of 13 lives; the 2007 Virginia Tech University massacre, which claimed 32 lives; and the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School, Connecticut, shootings, resulting in the loss of 27 lives, 20 of them young children.

Everyone in the United States was shocked and stunned when the images of the April 1999 shootings at Colorado's Columbine High School reached their TV screens and by the shooting rampage at Virginia Tech University eight years later. In the first incident, in a few brief moments, two outcast students shot and killed 12 of their classmates and a popular teacher/coach at Columbine High School and then killed themselves. On the Blacksburg, Virginia, campus a solitary, troubled student gunman took 32 lives and wounded many other people before taking his own life.

The two Columbine assailants planted at least 30 bombs in the school, with the intention of killing even more of their classmates. Fortunately, the bombs never detonated. While the Columbine incident involved high school students, the Virginia Tech incident involved a troubled 23-year-old college student. His emotional problems were said to have been diagnosed as early as middle school.

The Sandy Hook School massacre involved a local 20-year-old male, Adam Lanza, who lived in the area and had attended the same elementary school years earlier. Lanza was described

as intelligent but showed early signs of problems. In a book that Lanza co-wrote in fifth grade, a character kills wantonly. Another character indicates that she likes hurting people, especially children. Middle school, where Adam had to change classrooms, was apparently too difficult for him to cope, and he began showing signs of distress, which worsened over time.

In 2007, when Adam was 14, clinicians at Yale observed him to have severe emotional problems and offered him treatment that they felt would help him. Adam resisted, and his mother placated him by turning down Yale's offer of treatment. A psychiatric nurse reached out to the family, indicating that medication would help Adam and warning of consequences without treatment. He was later diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder; he resisted therapy and became obsessed with mass murders online. He limited his communication with his mother to e-mails, and he eventually killed her before killing himself and the others at the Sandy Hook School. A 2014 report (Griffin & Kovner, 2014) pointed to the parental denial after the Yale diagnosis as one of many missed opportunities. Coupled with the parental inaction were the shortcomings of physicians, educators, and mental health professionals who failed to get Adam Lanza the help he needed (Solomon, 2014).

In 2010, 2,694 children and teens in the United States were killed by gunfire. This one-year loss of life was greater than the total number of U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014. In addition, 15,576 children and teens were injured by gunfire in 2010. Gun violence is the leading cause of loss of life for black children and youth in the United States, ages 1–19, and the second leading cause of death for all children and youth. U.S. children and teens are 17 times more likely to die from gun violence than comparably aged young people in 25 other high-income countries (Children's Defense Fund, 2014).

The Columbine, Virginia Tech, and Sandy Hook incidents are just three among a string of violent attacks against students and teachers across the United States in recent years. From the time of the Sandy Hook incident to the end of 2014, there were more than 95 school shootings on K–12 and college campuses—an average of nearly 2 a week (Tribune Wire Reports, 2014). Most of these high-profile shootings have involved young males, most of whom have been depicted as alienated individuals or outcasts. Often, their peers had ridiculed them, and consequently they associated with other disaffected individuals in outcast groups.

Many of the warning signs of potentially aggressive behavior overlap with the warning signs of individuals considering suicide (e.g., depression). Whether or not the presence of these signs is indicative of suicide consideration or imminent danger to others, it is a warning of a potentially troubled individual. Parents, teachers, and school authorities cannot risk taking such warnings lightly.

Depression does not necessarily indicate the likelihood of violent behaviors; however, violent behavior is related to depression. If you have reason to suspect that a student is depressed, refer the individual to a school counselor or to another appropriate authority. With all the mass murderers in recent years, there were indications that they were troubled individuals. It is critical that educators be provided with adequate training to recognize danger signs and report them to responsible authorities.

Educators must not allow such behavior to go on without intervention. The stakes are far too high. The problems associated with school violence actually extend beyond the reported incidents.

The reasons for such untoward violent behaviors are varied. By age 18, the average American child will have viewed about 200,000 acts of violence, including 16,000 murders, on television alone (Dolgin, 2011; Kids Health, 2014). The frequency of violence on Saturday morning cartoons, watched by children, exceeds that of prime time (Love Our Children, 2014). Too frequently, children are exposed to prime-time network crime shows (e.g., CSI, NCIS, etc.). These programs so often include such realistic and graphic scenes that they have the potential of negatively affecting their young viewers. Though highly entertaining to some viewers, these graphic scenes of violence are unsuitable for young children and perhaps even for younger adolescents. However, some children have a television in their own rooms, and when left unsupervised may be watching these programs.

Beresin (2014) suggested that very young children may imitate the aggressive acts they view on TV in their play activities with peers. Before age 4, children are unable to distinguish

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate / Zero Tolerance

Because of the increasing violence in the schools, officials have instituted zero-tolerance regulations in which specific behaviors and items are banned from the school. In general, violators are dealt with immediately and sometimes harshly (e.g., immediate expulsion), regardless of the intent, the age of the offender, or the severity of the offense. Often administrators have no discretionary powers to make exceptions. The tough rules are designed to ensure that the schools will be safer, with every violation having a mandatory punishment.

FOR

- ☐ **Seemingly harsh punishment for infractions is a small price to pay for keeping our schools and children safe.**
- ☐ **Students and their parents know what the rules are. If they break the rules, then they must suffer the consequences.**
- ☐ **Zero tolerance means that there are consequences for every infraction.**
- ☐ **Good zero-tolerance policies do not require the maximum punishment for every offense.**

AGAINST

- ☐ **Young children are expelled simply for forgetting some minor item.**
- ☐ **Zero tolerance has gone too far. Innocent children are treated like criminals, which scars them for life.**
- ☐ **Zero tolerance takes away a teacher's autonomy to settle minor incidents.**
- ☐ **Zero tolerance does not take into account the age of young children.**
- ☐ **Zero tolerance policies can be discriminatory to students with special needs.**

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. **If they don't institute zero-tolerance policies, what can schools do to make students and parents realize that they are serious about curbing violence?**
2. **Should there be more flexibility for administrators in dealing with elementary school offenders than with older students?**
3. **Is zero tolerance really zero tolerance if administrators have discretionary powers and can make exceptions?**

fact from fiction and may perceive the violent acts they see on TV as everyday occurrences. In movies and on TV, the good guys often eradicate the bad guys with acts of violence and become heroes as they punish the victimizers.

Newer media exposing children and adolescents to violence are the Internet and video games. Some games involve violent attacks with graphic and realistic scenes of shootings, knifings, and even decapitation. In these forms of entertainment, individuals are able to act out their own violence rather than just passively observe, as with movies and TV. Unfortunately, some children live in violent environments, and the violent media they experience is too often reinforced by real-life events. Producers of such movies, TV programs, and video games may be more concerned with profit than with the effects on our youth. Consequently, the responsibility to control the viewing by children rests with parents. Programming decisions rest with government agencies that rate or censor films and games for younger viewers and government agencies that enforce standards and viewer restrictions.

The reality is that much of what is supposed to take place to protect children never happens. Some parents fail to adequately educate their children about the negative consequences of violence. Neither do some parents teach them how to interpret what they see in the media, including the intent and content of commercials. Schools can play an important role in sharing in these responsibilities. Schools may help children become increasingly able to discern right from wrong and identify which media messages are valid (Beresin, 2014).

Adolescents in poverty, especially those of color, are more likely to live in neighborhoods with conditions that contribute to criminal activity. The literature also suggests that African American youth receive differential treatment from the juvenile justice system. They are

more likely to be arrested, convicted, and incarcerated than white youth for similar offenses. The poor typically have court-appointed attorneys, and the trial and subsequent incarceration often seem like mere formalities. Youth from middle-class and privileged backgrounds may have the benefit of privately retained attorneys who may be able to secure probation, reduced sentences, or even expunged records. Incarceration severely impacts the future of these individuals, limiting educational opportunities, employment opportunities, and income. The overrepresentation of juveniles of color in the juvenile justice system may be more a result of the inequities of the juvenile justice process than the seriousness or persistence of their offenses. Minority youth are disproportionately adjudicated delinquent and sent to severe levels of the justice system. They are more likely to be incarcerated in large public institutions than in privately operated specialized treatment facilities or group homes where youth from more privileged backgrounds might be sent (Bartollas & Miller, 2014).

Street Gangs

Prior to the 1980s, middle-class white Americans had few concerns with respect to street gangs. By the mid-1980s, street gangs composed primarily of adolescents and young adults were engaged in drug distribution and protected their interests from their rivals with violence. Problems were exacerbated by the use of sophisticated weapons, including high-capacity semi-automatic pistols and assault weapons, and gang members began injuring and killing not only their rivals but also innocent bystanders, including children. Gang members consider guns essential for passing through the turf of other gangs, avenging insults, and retaliating for a rival gang's previous assault.

Individuals are attracted to street gangs because of family stress, protection against victimization, the money they receive through illicit dealings, the sense of power, and the sense of family the gang offers (Bartollas & Miller, 2014). For many, affiliation with a gang provides status in a community. The gangs acquire power in a community through violent acts and the fear that such behavior generates.

Gang membership is often structured by race or national origin. The most visible are Hispanic, African American, and Asian gangs and Jamaican posses. Predominantly or exclusively white gangs have been in existence for decades. Some of them are white supremacist in nature (e.g., Skinheads). Some gang members belong to the same gangs that their fathers joined before them. Among the best-known gangs are the African American Bloods and Crips. The Crips began in the Los Angeles area as high schoolers who extorted money from classmates and were involved in other violence. Both gangs have extended well beyond Los Angeles, spreading as far north as Alaska and as far east as Washington, D.C., making inroads in communities across the country.

Asian gangs are most prominent in Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Filipino communities. Asian gangs are, by their own choice, less visible but capable of the same levels of violence as the other ethnic gangs. It is believed that some Asian gangs have ties to organized crime groups in Asia, such as the Hong Kong and Mainland China triads. They also have spread across the United States and Canada. Their typical activities include gambling, extortion, theft of luxury cars to be shipped overseas, and smuggling of illegal immigrants.

Historically, gang members have been identifiable by their clothing, communication, graffiti, and tattoos. Bloods and Crips often wear bandannas on their heads. The color of the Bloods is red, the Crips blue. Clothing may identify individuals as gang members. Gang-specific clothing may include jackets or sweatshirts bearing gang names. Tattoos on the hands, arms, and shoulders are common among Latino gang members but are not as frequently displayed by African American gang members. Hand signs may be used to identify an individual with a specific gang. In recently years, gangs have toned down the use of their colors and tattoos in an effort to be less identifiable by law enforcement and crime witnesses. Some gangs have moved into white-collar crimes (e.g., credit card and identify theft) and realize that excessive displays of colors and tattoos are detrimental to their success.

Graffiti used by gangs can provide considerable information. African American and Latino gang graffiti differ from one another: Black gang graffiti often contains profanity and other



Graffiti may be an indication of street gangs marking their turf. **(© Nancy Honey/Cultura/Getty Images)**

expressions that are absent from Latino gang graffiti. Latino gang graffiti has more flair and more attention to detail. Gangs use graffiti to stake a claim to turf. If the graffiti is crossed out and new graffiti written over it, another gang is challenging the former's claim to the turf. Through careful observation, law enforcement can determine a gang's sphere of influence. Graffiti will indicate where the gang has unchallenged influence and where challenges are posed and by whom.

The emergence of street gangs over the past three or four decades has become a major challenge for educators. Gang members may attend school in order to distribute drugs, recruit new members, or extort or intimidate other students. Their presence in a classroom is challenging for the teacher, especially when untoward behavior is manifested. In some instances, schools have become scenes of violence, resulting in the installation of metal detectors and the hiring of security guards at the schools.

Either the solutions for ending gang membership have not yet been found or the will to solve the problems has not yet been sufficient. If law enforcement is unable to stem the growth of gang violence, it is unlikely that educators are any better equipped to do so. As with other issues related to youth, gang participation is often a function of poverty that disproportionately affects individuals of color. Somehow society has failed to provide better alternatives to gang membership. Perhaps that is one of the major challenges for education.

As each new school year begins, some eagerly look forward to seeing their friends and taking on the new challenges of academics and school activities. Others may dread waking up early and facing full days filled with stress. Some may fear bullying, while some may face the reality of having few friends and being ignored by classmates. Others are facing the high expectations of their parents to excel academically, while participating in athletics and/or other extracurricular activities. Success will enhance the likelihood of acceptance in a top tier university. Some are fearful of the possible failure of meeting their parents' expectations and may even take drastic measures to cope.

In this section, we have deliberately focused on some of the critical and problematic issues facing adolescents today. We should emphasize, however, that most adolescents go through this period of their life in a productive manner and that this can be one of the happiest and most memorable periods in one's life.

Watch the videos "Hidden America: Inside Chicago's Gang War" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MGHU_BOHPw) and "Hidden America: Chicago Gang Members on Tough Street Life" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4w9N-8OyLQE) to see the impact of street gangs on a community.

America's Youth in Today's Classrooms

Like other cultural groups, the various age groups of the U.S. population contribute greatly to the pluralistic nature of this society. Some basic educational considerations should be examined in the study of age groups as a function of culture. American society in general has not always been viewed as particularly supportive or positive in its perceptions of all age groups. Adolescence is often viewed as a time of storm and stress, although in some cultures this period passes with few crises. In American society, the former view tends to prevail. In addition, the elderly are not viewed in U.S. culture with the respect or reverence that is found in many other cultures. While we did not address the elderly in this chapter, we would like to acknowledge here that ageism—discriminatory attitudes toward the elderly—does exist and is, regretfully, as much a part of our social system as racism, sexism, and discrimination against those with disabilities. Thanks to advances in medical science, the elderly are living longer, which may be positive but at the same time will require those working to assume a greater tax burden to support the aging through social services.

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Honor Student and Star Athlete

Kevin Johnson is a senior in a top-rated suburban high school and is in his last term of the school year. He was the co-captain of the football team and an all-conference running back. He has excelled academically as well and has been offered a full scholarship to an Ivy League university. An important physics exam is coming up in Ms. O'Leary's physics class, where Kevin has maintained a grade average between an A minus and an A. Two days before the scheduled exam, Tony Morris, also a senior in the physics class, enters Ms. O'Leary's room shortly after school is out. He asks if he can speak with her briefly. She responds affirmatively, and he then tells her that Kevin and Earl Swenson, who sits next to him in the back of the class, have been cheating on exams the entire year. He states that he has observed them doing this repeatedly. He describes how it is done and tells Ms. O'Leary that if she watches them carefully, she will see what he has described about their cheating process. He states that he is fed up with the two because he and others have had to work so hard for their grades, and Kevin and Earl have been cheating their way through school.

On the day of the exam, Ms. O'Leary watches all of the students carefully, but especially Kevin and Earl. Then she sees exactly what Tony had described about the cheating process. She has some important decisions to make.

If Ms. O'Leary takes decisive action, it will create a major scandal. Kevin is no ordinary senior student. He is among the top five students in the senior class, and exposing him will have serious consequences. If he is severely disciplined and the Ivy League school learns of his cheating, he may lose the scholarship and even forfeit his admission.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. Should Ms. O'Leary confront Earl and Kevin on the spot in front of the class?
2. Should she wait until after the exam and risk the evidence disappearing?
3. Should she confront them privately and administer her own punishment?
4. Should she report the incident to the principal?
5. If it is proven that Kevin and Earl have been cheating, should the school put into question all of Kevin's previous high grades?

For these reasons, it is critically important that students learn to understand and value the contributions of all age groups and cultures. Moreover, studying age and its relation to culture is important because students, if they live to their full life expectancy, will become members of each age group in turn, including that of the elderly. Thus, unlike with the study of different ethnic groups, students can learn to understand and appreciate cultural groups of which they have been members, are presently members, or will eventually become members. By addressing the issues of various age groups in the classroom, educators can help students better understand their siblings, parents, and other important people in their lives. Knowledge can eliminate fear of the unknown as students begin to move into different age groups at different times in their lives. It is important that issues related to age groups be appropriately introduced into the curriculum because students need to understand the concept of ageism. Just as the school assists students in understanding the problem of racism, the school should be responsible for helping students understand the aged and dispel the myths related to this group. Field trips to retirement homes or visits to the class by senior citizens may provide useful experiences. As students become aware of the nature and characteristics of each age group, they will develop the perception of each individual, regardless of age, as being an important and integral part of society.

It is critically important for educators to understand age as it relates to both students and their parents. Understanding the particular age group characteristics and needs of students can assist educators in better understanding and managing age-related behavior, such as reactions or

responses to peer group pressure. Understanding the nature of parents, siblings, and other important individuals (e.g., grandparents) will assist educators in parent–teacher relationships and in helping students cope with their interactions with others. For example, when an elderly grandparent moves into the family setting, this event may affect a child and his or her classroom behavior.

The school is perhaps in the best position of any agency in the community to observe both potential and developing problems among students and problems that are already taking place. The classroom teacher is a key agent in detecting and reporting abuse and in all states is required by law to do so. To do this, the teacher must be aware of the problem of abuse, the manifestations of abuse, and the proper authorities to which abuse is reported. If the teacher's immediate supervisor is unresponsive to the reporting of a potential abuse problem, the teacher should continue to seek help until competent and concerned individuals in positions of authority provide it.

The single most important factor in recognizing possible child abuse is the physical condition of the child. Telltale marks, bruises, and abrasions that cannot be adequately explained may provide reason to suspect abuse. Unusual changes in the child's behavior patterns, such as extreme fatigue, may be reason to suspect problems. The parents' behavior and their ability or lack of ability to explain the child's condition and the social features of the family may be reason to suspect abuse. Although physical abuse or neglect may tend to have observable indicators, sexual abuse may occur with few, if any, obvious indicators. Adults may be unwilling to believe what a child says and may be hesitant to report alleged incidents. There is no typical profile of the victim, and the physical signs vary. Behavioral manifestations—such as chronic depression, isolation from peers, apathy, and suicide attempts—are usually exhibited by the victims but are often viewed as insignificant or are attributed to typical childhood stress.

A large number of school-aged students are infected with the HIV virus and thousands more with other STDs; prevention efforts must be multifaceted if these diseases are to be eradicated. The school has a major role to play, and there are specific steps that can be taken. School-based programs are critical in reaching youth before they engage in risky behaviors. Topics such as HIV, STDs, unintended pregnancy, and tobacco and other drug abuse should be integrated into the curriculum and should be an ongoing program for all K–12 students. The development of these programs should be done carefully and should take into consideration parental and community values.

The majority of suicides are planned and not committed on impulse, and most suicide victims mention their intentions to someone. Often, a number of warning signs can alert teachers, other professionals, and parents (see Table 10.3); educators should take these signs seriously.

If teachers or other school personnel suspect trouble, a friendly, low-key question or statement may provide an appropriate opening: "You seem down today" or "It seems like something is bothering you." If an affirmative response is given, a more direct and probing (but supportive) question may be asked. If there is any reason whatsoever to suspect a possible suicide attempt, teachers and other school staff should alert the appropriate school personnel. Teachers should recognize their limitations and avoid making judgments. The matter should be referred to the school psychologist, who should, in turn, alert a competent medical authority (psychiatrist) and the child's parents. Assistance can also be obtained from local mental health clinics and suicide prevention centers. Prompt action may save a life.

SUMMARY

Young Adulthood

Today's youth are uniquely different from those of earlier generations. They face more challenges than most of the earlier generations, and they often do not share the same cultural values and attitudes as the older cohorts. Globally they are the most technologically skilled generation we have ever seen. Young adulthood is a period when the dreams and aspirations of many individuals begin to take shape and perhaps are dashed, temporarily or even permanently.

Childhood

Childhood is a critical time in the life of an individual. Schooling begins during this time, ethnic and racial awareness takes place, and the behaviors and words of significant others

can greatly influence the individual. Factors such as socioeconomic status of the family and treatment by family members and significant individuals greatly influence the development of the individual during this time. Educators need to be vigilant to the physical and emotional well-being of children and report any potential problems to responsible parties.

Adolescence

Adolescence is a time when the individual is seemingly suspended between childhood and adulthood. It does not have to be the storm and stress period that some writers describe. Adolescents face many challenges, including issues in and out of school, such as bullying, emotional disorders, their emerging sexuality, violence, substance abuse, and other risky behaviors.

America's Youth in Today's Classrooms

While the aged do not have a section devoted to them in the chapter, students need to understand ageism and how it can be as insidious as racism and sexism. Elderly individuals can have a profound effect on the family structure. If elderly family members are unable to care for themselves, they may be integrated into the family home, which can significantly change the family structure and culture.

Educators are in a unique position to observe students for signs of potential distress. They should familiarize themselves with some of the warning signs of students at risk. Many individuals speak fondly of teachers they remember because of the positive experiences these teachers brought to their lives. Each educator has the potential to be one who makes a difference.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts.



11 Education That Is Multicultural

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- **11.1** Discuss the goals of education that is multicultural.
- **11.2** Place students at the center of teaching and learning
- **11.3** Create a classroom climate that promotes human rights and respects the cultures of students and their families.
- **11.4** Recognize that all students can learn when teachers care about them and hold high expectations for their academic achievement.
- **11.5** Plan culturally responsive teaching to integrate the life histories and experiences of students and their families in the curriculum.
- **11.6** Model social justice and equality in the classroom by helping students think critically and fostering learning communities in which students work together to promote learning.
- **11.7** Expand your knowledge and skills so you can deliver education that is multicultural.

Natisha Loftis had not said a word to any of her teachers since the beginning of the school year. She was a decent student, turning in assignments and earning B's. She certainly didn't cause her teachers trouble. Therefore, the high school counselor, Mr. Williams, was somewhat surprised to hear that she was dropping out of school. He had been Natisha's advisor for more than two years, but he couldn't really remember her. Nevertheless, it was his job to conduct interviews with students who were leaving school.

Natisha described her daily experience as coming to school, listening to teachers, and going home. School was boring and not at all connected to her real life, in which she had the responsibility to help her father raise her five brothers and sisters. She might even be able to get a job with the same cleaning firm that her dad worked for. Certainly, nothing she was learning in school could help her get a job. And she knew from more than 10 years of listening to teachers and reading textbooks that her chances of becoming a news anchor or even a teacher were about the same as her chances of winning the lottery. The last time a teacher had even asked about her family was in sixth grade, when her mom left. The only place anyone paid attention to her was in church.

School had helped silence Natisha. Classes provided no meaningful experience for her. The content may have been important to the teachers, but she could find no relationship between that information and her own world.

REFLECTIONS

1. What has contributed to Natisha's decision to drop out of school?
2. How can the curriculum be made more meaningful to students who are not middle class or white?
3. How can teachers engage a student like Natisha and help her become excited about learning?



Making Teaching Multicultural

After learning the sociopolitical aspects that provide the framework for multicultural education in the earlier chapters of this book, you are probably wondering how to put it all together to provide education that is multicultural. There is no recipe for how to respond to students from different cultural groups. For one thing, differences within groups can be as great as differences among groups. In addition, we all belong to many groups, depending on our sex and sexual orientation and the racial, ethnic, language, and socioeconomic groups in which we were born. The interactions of our membership in these groups and where we fit in the power structure of society impact our cultural identity. Therefore, a recipe would work for some students in a group but not all of them. This chapter is designed to provide some suggestions for delivering multicultural education, incorporating the multiple identities of your students into your teaching, and becoming more multicultural yourself.

It is no easy task to incorporate cultural knowledge throughout teaching. In the beginning, you must consciously think about multiculturalism as you interact with students and plan lessons and assignments. You should approach multicultural teaching as an enthusiastic learner with much knowledge to gain from students and community members who have cultural identities different from your own. You may need to remind yourself that your way of believing, thinking, and acting evolved from your own culture and experiences, which may vary greatly from those of the students in your school. You will need to listen to the histories and experiences of students and their families and integrate them into your teaching. Students' lives will need to be validated within both their in-school and out-of-school realities—a process that is authentic only if you value the cultures of your students.

Educators are often at a disadvantage because they do not live, and have never lived, in the community in which their students live. Too often, the only parents with whom they interact are those who are able to attend parent–teacher meetings or who have scheduled conferences with them. In many cases, they have not been in their students' homes nor been active participants in the community. How do we begin to learn the cultures of other people? Using the tools of an anthropologist or ethnographer, we can observe children in classrooms and on playgrounds. We can listen carefully to students and their parents as they discuss their life experiences. We can study other cultures. We can learn about the perspectives of others by reading articles and books written by LGBTQ and straight men and women from different ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, and religious groups. Participation in the religious and ethnic activities in the community can provide additional perspectives on students' cultures.

Our knowledge about our students' cultures will allow us to make the academic content of our teaching more meaningful to students by relating it to their own experiences and building on their prior knowledge. It should help us make them and their histories the center of the education process in our effort to help them reach their academic, vocational, and social potential. In the process, students should learn to believe in their own abilities and become active participants in their own learning. Students should be able to achieve academically without adopting the dominant culture as their own. They should be able to maintain their own cultural identities inside and outside the school.

Teaching multiculturally requires the incorporation of diversity and equity throughout the learning process. If race, ethnicity, class, and gender are not interrelated in the curriculum, students do not learn that these are interrelated parts of a whole. Although the multiple cultural groups of which we are members are separate and distinct, they should be interwoven throughout our teaching. For example, if activities are developed to fight sexism but continue to perpetuate racism, we are not providing multicultural education. At the same time, we must integrate the experiences of women of color and women in poverty when discussing the impact of sexism and other women's issues.

All teaching should be multicultural, and all classrooms should be models of democracy, equity, and social justice. To accomplish this goal, educators must:

1. Place the student at the center of teaching and learning.
2. Establish a classroom climate that promotes human rights.
3. Believe that all students can learn.
4. Acknowledge and build on the life histories and experiences of students and their families through culturally responsive teaching.
5. Analyze oppression and power relationships in schools and society to understand racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, ableism, and ageism.
6. Model social justice and equity in the classroom and in interactions with students, families, and the community.

Teachers and other school professionals can make a difference. Making our teaching and classrooms multicultural is an essential step in empowering both teachers and students. Delivering education that is multicultural requires us to ensure an equitable education for all students. In addition, we need to confront the barriers that prevent many students from being able to access the education that is so critical to their future.

Remember that multicultural education is for all students, not just English language learners and students of color. European American students also belong to racial and ethnic groups and need to understand that their race and ethnicity have been privileged in schools. A strength of multicultural education is that we learn about our similarities and differences as we struggle to provide equity for all people. Students who are in segregated classrooms or in communities with little religious, language, ethnic, and racial diversity need to learn about the pluralistic world in which they live and the role they can play in providing social justice in their communities and beyond. Social justice and equity are integral parts of our commitment to a democratic society.



Placing Students at the Center of Teaching and Learning

Our children are the foundation of our future, but they are among the most powerless groups in the country, especially if they were born into a low-income family. More than one-fifth of the nation's children live in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014i); over 8 million of them are living in extreme poverty (Children's Defense Fund, 2014). Too many of them are abused or neglected by their parents or caregivers. Three times as many children and teens have been killed by guns since 1963 as troops have been killed in combat (Children's Defense Fund, 2014). These figures suggest a crisis among our children that deserves immediate attention. Nevertheless, states spend 2½ times as much on a prisoner as they do on a public school student (Children's Defense Fund, 2014). Don't our children deserve better? Next to parents, educators should be the major advocates for children, especially for their right to a quality education.

The major purpose of education is to help students learn the concepts and skills that we are teaching. However, teaching is much more than knowing the content we teach. We must know and understand our students. Who are they? What is important to them? What do they like? How can we engage them in learning? Teaching should be all about our students and moving them to their highest potential academically, socially, physically, and emotionally.

Helping them develop their potential in these areas at the same time that they are learning to read and compute well enough to pass standardized tests at a proficient level is our challenge as teachers. How can we ensure that students and their learning are the primary focus of our work in schools? How can we make education work effectively for students?

Student Voices

Multicultural teachers seek, listen to, and incorporate the voices of students, their families, and communities into the classroom. Students are encouraged to speak from their own experiences, to do more than regurgitate the answers that the teacher would like to hear. Teaching that incorporates the student voice allows students to make sense of subject matter within their own lived experiences and realities. Listening to students helps a teacher understand their prior knowledge of the subject matter, including any misinformation or lack of information that may suggest future instructional strategies. Student voices also provide important information about students' cultures.

Watch the video "Listen, Dammit! Student Voice, Are You Listening?" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-v51H2R88VY) for a teacher's perspective on the importance of incorporating student voices in the classroom.

Most schools today legitimate the voice of the dominant culture—Standard English and the world perspective of the European American middle class. Many students, especially those from oppressed groups, learn to be silent or disruptive, or they drop out, in part because their voices are not accepted in the classroom as being legitimate. Culturally responsive teaching requires educators to recognize the incongruence between the voice of the school and the voices of students. Success in school should not be dependent on the adoption of the school's voice.

Teachers can use an approach in which instruction occurs as a dialogue between teacher and students. Rather than depend on a textbook and lecture format, the teacher listens to students and guides them in the learning of the discipline through dialogue. This approach requires discarding the traditional authoritarian classroom to establish a democratic one in which both teacher and students are active participants.

Too often, teachers ignore students' attempts to engage in dialogue and, as a result, halt further learning by many students. However, introducing student voices to the instructional process can be difficult, especially when the teacher and students are from different cultural backgrounds. The teacher may face both anger and silence, which in time will be overcome by the use of dialogue that develops students' tolerance, patience, and willingness to listen. Although this strategy increases the participation of students in the learning process, some teachers are not comfortable handling the issues that are likely to be raised by students.

In addition to dialogue between students and teacher, student voices can be encouraged through written and artistic expression. Some teachers ask students to keep journals in which they write their reactions to what is occurring in the class, community, or world. The journals make the teacher aware of the learning that is occurring over time. To be effective, students must feel comfortable writing whatever they want without the threat of reprisal from the teacher. The dialogues developed through these approaches can help the teacher and other students understand the perspectives brought to the classroom by students from different cultures. The resulting dialogues can help students relate subject matter to their real world and encourage them to take an interest in studying and learning it.

Engaging Students

Culturally responsive teaching encourages student participation, critical analysis, and action. Classroom projects focus on areas of interest to students and the communities in which they live. As they participate in these activities, they apply and extend the mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies that they have been learning. Teachers and students in these classrooms are developing a vision for a more egalitarian and socially just society. Projects can engage students in collective action to improve their communities.

After conducting research and collecting and analyzing data, students sometimes move their recommendations through the democratic processes of their local communities to make changes toward improving conditions. In one Nebraska school, students and their teacher became very concerned about the treatment of new immigrants in the local community and businesses. They drafted legislation requiring the study of race in social studies classes across

the state. Facing opposition from some, they lobbied the state legislature on behalf of the bill and were successful in having it adopted. These students not only were able to affect school curriculum through their actions but also learned about the legislative process of their state through hands-on experience.

In inner-city Chicago, fifth-grade students decided to fight for the improvement of their blighted school. In the process, they developed analytical and literacy skills as they planned their project, contacted political leaders, spoke to community and government groups, and attended professional conferences. Students transformed themselves and came to believe in their own abilities while they were engaged in improving their school (Schultz, 2008).

A group of teenagers from across the country shared their views on how teachers can keep students engaged, motivated, and challenged in the book *Fires in the Bathroom: Advice for Teachers from High School Students* (Cushman & the Students of What Kids Can Do, 2003). These students from diverse populations suggest that teachers get and keep students motivated by:

- Being passionate about their subjects and work
- Connecting to issues that students care about outside school
- Giving students choices on things that matter
- Making learning social
- Making sure students understand
- Responding with interest when students show interest
- Caring about students and their progress
- Helping students keep on top of their workload
- Showing pride in students' good work
- Providing role models to inspire students



Climate That Promotes Human Rights

Over 10 years before the civil rights movement exploded in the 1960s, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which called on countries around the world to provide human rights and social justice to their populations. It called for the right to an education; social security; equitable wages; an adequate standard of living allowing families to be able to afford housing, food, clothing, and medical care; and participation in the cultural life of the community. The United States and a number of other Western countries supported the civil and political rights that were incorporated into the UDHR but resisted the inclusion of social and economic rights that were part of an Eastern tradition. Nevertheless, the UDHR was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

The UDHR views education as a basic human right for all people. It also expects schools to teach about human rights, with the goal of eliminating poverty, discrimination, and exploitation—conditions that often have led and continue to lead to conflicts that threaten world peace (Grant & Gibson, 2010). After the adoption of the UDHR, the United States made great strides in the human rights area, with the passage of the Voting Rights Act, the Civil Rights Act, and the Equal Pay Act. Congress created Head Start for preschool services and Title I to support the education of children from low-income families. It passed legislation for bilingual education, IDEA for students with disabilities, Title IX for sex equity in schools, and technical assistance related to race, national origin, and sex equity.

Almost 70 years after UDHR was adopted, the U.S. Congress continues to debate the role of the government in enforcing social and economic rights for the population. With government support for public education waning since the 2008 recession, many multiculturalists are questioning the country's commitment to human rights, especially with respect to the nation's children. Today's issues of racism again are exposed in public policies, police actions, and housing patterns that force students in low-income families into high-poverty schools. Conflicts around the world pit one ethnic or religious group against another. The mandate of the UDHR is needed more than ever.

School Climate

Visitors entering a school can usually feel the tension that exists when cross-cultural communications are poor. They can observe whether diversity is a positive and appreciated factor at the school. If only students of color or only males are waiting to be seen by the assistant principal in charge of discipline, visitors could wonder whether the school is providing effectively for the needs of all of its students. If bulletin boards in classrooms are covered only with the pictures of European Americans, visitors could question the appreciation of diversity in the school. If the football team is composed primarily of African Americans and the chess club of European Americans, they could wonder about the inclusive nature of extracurricular activities. If school administrators are primarily men and most teachers are women, or if the teachers are European American and the teacher aides are Latino, the visitors could suspect discriminatory practices in hiring and promotion of staff. These are examples of a school climate that does not reflect a commitment to multicultural education.

Staffing composition and patterns should reflect the diversity of the country. At a minimum, they should reflect the diversity of the geographic area. Women as well as men should be school administrators; men as well as women should teach at the preschool and primary levels. Persons of color should be present in the administration and teaching ranks, not concentrated in custodial and clerical positions. When education is multicultural, faculty, administrators, and other staff see themselves as learners who are enhanced and changed by understanding, affirming, and reflecting cultural diversity. Both teachers and administrators are able to deal with questions of race, intergroup relations, and controversial realities on an objective, transparent, and professional basis.

When diversity is valued within a school, student government and extracurricular activities include students from different cultural groups. In a school where multiculturalism is valued, students from various cultural backgrounds hold leadership positions. Those roles are not automatically delegated to students from the dominant group in the school.

Many schools are very proud of their international or ethnic festivals, where immigrant families share their native cuisine, traditional dress, music, and dances. Everyone feels good about the diversity in the school during that time. The problem is that the value of diversity expressed during that event does not always extend to the valuing and acceptance of the immigrant or ethnic group in the school culture or curriculum. If we never discuss the racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, or inequality that many of our students face in and out of school, they come to believe that we don't really care about them no matter how many events celebrate their diversity. The celebrations become an empty promise for inclusion and equity.



Effective cross-cultural communications between students and teachers promote student learning. When the cultural cues between students and teachers are not understood, communications and learning often are affected adversely.
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If the school climate is multicultural, then multiculturalism is reflected in every aspect of the educational program. In addition to those areas already mentioned, assembly programs reflect multiculturalism in their content as well as in the choice of speakers. Bulletin boards and displays reflect the diversity of the nation, even if the community is not rich in diversity. Cross-cultural communications among students and between students and teachers are positive. Different languages and dialects used by students are respected. Both girls and boys participate in technology education, family science, calculus, bookkeeping, physics, and vocational classes.

Students from different groups participate in college preparatory classes, advanced placement classes, special education, and gifted education at rates equal to their representation in the schools. Differences in academic achievement levels disappear between males and females, white students and students of color, and upper-middle-class and low-income students. Instructional materials are free of biases, omissions, and stereotypes. All students see themselves positively in the books they read and the lessons in which they are engaged. In a positive multicultural climate, they feel that they are an integral part of the school rather than an unwelcome stranger.

Watch the video "English Language Learners: Equity and Language" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HU80AxmP-U), in which teachers whose native language is not English discuss their experiences as students.

In a school climate that promotes human rights, discrimination against students from different cultural groups is not tolerated. Students respect the cultural differences within the school population, and harassment of students does not exist. Students assist each other in the learning process, helping students who are struggling to understand a concept or a problem. Students are not afraid to let teachers and other students know that they need assistance because they know they won't be labeled academically challenged or lazy. Students and teachers work together to learn and support each other in that process.

The school climate must be supportive of multicultural education. When respect for cultural differences is reflected in all aspects of students' educational programs, the goals of multicultural education are being attained. Educators are the key to developing this climate.

Hidden Curriculum

In addition to a formal curriculum, schools have a hidden curriculum that consists of the unstated norms, values, and beliefs about the social relations of school and classroom life that are transmitted to students. The hidden curriculum includes the norms and values that support the formal curriculum. It teaches lessons about self-esteem, one's place in society, and the need to submit to authority (Ayers & Ayers, 2014). Although the hidden curriculum is not taught directly or included in the objectives of the formal curriculum, it has a great impact on students and teachers alike. It includes the organizational structures of the classroom and the school, as well as the interactions of students and teachers.

Another aspect of the hidden curriculum is unequal power. In many ways, this is a dilemma of childhood. By the time students enter kindergarten, they have learned that power is in the hands of adults. The teachers and other school officials require that their rules be followed. In addition to enforcing the rules, teachers may directly or indirectly send the message that students should not use their home languages or dialects in the classroom. Instead, students should be encouraged to be bicultural, practicing both their home and dominant cultural language and patterns. They will be well served by knowing more than one language in an increasingly interdependent world.

Messages to Students

Unknowingly, educators transmit biased messages to students. Most educators do not consciously or intentionally stereotype students or discriminate against them. They usually try to treat all students fairly and equitably. We have learned our attitudes and behaviors, however, in a society that is ageist, ableist, racist, sexist, and heterosexist. Some biases have been internalized to such a degree that we do not realize we have them. When educators are able to recognize the subtle and unintentional biases in their behavior, positive changes can be made in the classroom. Students of color are often treated significantly differently than white students. Because many white students share the middle-class culture of the teacher, they also share the cultural cues that foster success in the classroom. Students who ask appropriate questions at appropriate times or who smile and seek attention from the teacher at times when the teacher is open to such gestures are likely to receive encouragement and reinforcement from the teacher. In contrast, students who interrupt class or seek attention from the teacher when the teacher is not open to providing it may not receive the necessary reinforcement.

As a result of the teacher's misreading of the cultural cues, ethnic or racial boundaries are established within the classroom. This situation is exacerbated when students from the dominant group receive more opportunities to participate in instructional interactions and receive more praise and encouragement from the teacher. Low-income students and students of color generally are provided fewer opportunities to participate, and the opportunities may be of a less substantive nature. They also may be criticized or disciplined for breaking the rules more frequently than their European American peers.

Unless teachers can critically examine their interactions with students in the classroom, they will not know whether they are treating students inequitably because of cultural differences. Once that self-examination has been undertaken, changes can be initiated to ensure that

cultural identity will not be a basis for automatically relating differently to students. Teachers may need to become more proactive in initiating interactions and in providing encouragement, praise, and reinforcement to students from cultural groups different from their own.

Teachers evaluate students' academic performance through tests and written and oral work. Much more than academic performance is evaluated by teachers, however. Student misbehavior occurs when classroom rules are not adequately obeyed, which may result in some sort of punishment. Discipline varies with the infraction and student but sometimes is influenced by the gender, race, class, and the sexual orientation of the student. Similarly, students who have been assigned low-ability status often receive negative attention from the teacher because they are not following the rules rather than because they are not performing adequately on academic tasks. Our interactions with students should be evaluated to ensure that we are actually supporting learning rather than impeding it.

Student and Teacher Connections

Although the development and use of culturally responsive materials and curricula are important and necessary steps toward providing multicultural education, alone they are not enough. Relationships among teachers and students determine the quality of education (Nieto, 2010). Teachers send messages that tell students about their potential and whether they can or cannot learn. They can make students feel either very special or incompetent and worthless. Teachers who know their subject matter, believe that all students can learn, and care about students as individuals can have a great impact on students and their learning. Unfortunately, "close connections between students and their teachers are most markedly absent in the large urban schools most low-income students of color attend" (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 63).

Gloria Ladson-Billings (2009) observed elementary school teachers who were able to help their African American students learn at high levels. She found that these teachers were able to interact easily with their students and gave them individual attention as needed. When a student was struggling, one teacher sat at the student's desk and asked him to explain the problem to her. The student became the teacher, which required him to explain the process or help the teacher perform the task. Many of the successful teachers expected the students to help each other learn by working together to solve problems while the teacher monitored their progress. The classroom was like an extended family that would not let anyone fail.

Who knows the most about effective teaching? Students themselves can tell you which teachers are caring and which teachers have helped them learn. In a major study of thousands of teachers funded by the Gates Foundation, the evaluations of teachers by students proved to be better predictors of teacher effectiveness than other measures. Teenagers recommend that teachers show respect, trust, and fairness by:

- Being clear about what they expect from students and listening to what students expect from them
- Knowing the subject that they are teaching
- Having high expectations for each of the students and encouraging them to do their best
- Being prepared to teach every day
- Making sure each student is learning
- Grading fairly and not giving advantages to some students
- Admitting when they have made a mistake
- Not denigrating students
- Not showing biases in the classroom
- Treating students like they are mature young people
- Listening to students and asking what they think
- Caring about students' lives and what's happening to them
- Not betraying students' confidences (Cushman & the Students of What Kids Can Do, 2003)

To provide the greatest assistance to all students, we cannot apply the same treatment to each student; we should work toward meeting individual needs and differences. We must be

sure we do not treat students differently, however, based solely on their group memberships. With the elimination of bias from the teaching process and the emergence of proactive teachers who seek the most effective strategies to meet the needs of individual students, the classroom can become a stimulating place for most students, regardless of their cultural identities, abilities, and experiences.

How can you analyze your own classroom interactions and teaching styles? You can video yourself teaching a class and then systematically record the interactions as you view or listen to the video later. An outside observer could be asked to record your interactions with students during the school day. An analysis of the data would show you how much class time you spend interacting with students and the nature of the interactions. These data would reveal any differences in interaction based on gender, ethnicity, or other characteristics of students. Such an analysis would be an excellent starting point to ensure that you are not discriminating against male or female students or students from different ethnic or socioeconomic groups.

Every effort possible should be made to ensure that our prejudices are not reflected in our interactions with students. We should continually assess our interactions with boys as opposed to girls, students from dominant and oppressed groups, and students with disabilities to determine whether the interactions involve different types of praise, criticism, encouragement, and reinforcement based on the culture of the student. Only then can steps be taken to equalize treatment.

Student and Teacher Communications

Lack of skill in cross-cultural communications between students and teachers can prevent learning in the classroom. This problem is usually a result of misunderstanding cultural cues of students with cultural identities different from our own.

Just as cultures differ in the structure of their language, they also differ in the structure of oral discourse. The moves made in the teaching–learning discourse, who is supposed to make them, and the sequence in which they should be made vary from culture to culture. These rules are not absolute laws governing behavior; in fact, students learn them in their interactions within their own cultural groups. But when these patterns differ between the culture of the teacher and the culture of the child, serious misunderstandings can occur as the two participants use different patterns and assign different social meanings to the same actions.

These differences are likely to prevail in schools with large numbers of students from oppressed groups. Miscommunication occurs when the same words and actions mean something different to the individuals involved. When students are not responding appropriately in the classroom, we should consider the possibility that teachers' communication cues do not match those of their students.

Direct and continuous participation in cultures that are different from our own can improve our competency in other communication systems and help us be more sensitive to differences in cultures with which we are not familiar. Teachers who are aware of these differences can redirect their instruction to use the communications that work most effectively with students. At the same time, the teacher can begin to teach students how to interact effectively in situations that make them uncomfortable. This approach will assist all students in responding appropriately in classroom situations that are dominated by unfamiliar interactions.



Belief That All Students Can Learn

Education that is multicultural requires teachers and other school professionals to possess dispositions that support learning by students from diverse populations. **Dispositions** are the values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, commitments, and professional ethics of educators. They influence our teaching and interactions with students, families, colleagues, and communities. They affect our view of student learning, student motivation, and student development, as well as our own professional growth. They include values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. Multicultural educator Sonia Nieto (2010) indicated that one of the

purposes of schools is "to provide all students with an equal and high quality education," which requires that we "begin with the belief that all students are capable and worthy of learning to high levels of achievement" (p. 30). It is not just multiculturalists who believe that this disposition is important for all teachers. The InTASC standards, which are used for licensure by many states, also call for new teachers to believe that all students can learn (Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, 2011). This section will explore ways that teachers can implement the belief that all students can learn in their classrooms.

Focus on Learning

It is important to multicultural teachers that all of their students learn regardless of the obstacles they face because of their disabilities or economic conditions that limit their social capital. These teachers recognize when some students are not learning, reach out to them, and try different pedagogical strategies to help them learn. They do not allow students to sit in their classrooms without being engaged with the content. They do not ignore students who are withdrawn, depressed, or resistant to classroom work. They do everything they can to help students see themselves as learners and value learning.

The focus on learning is not limited to the basic literacy and numeracy skills that all people need in order to function effectively in society. Multicultural educators help students understand the **big ideas**, the concepts that undergird a subject. They encourage students to question what is written in textbooks and newspapers and what they see on television and in movies. They do not treat students as receptacles into which knowledge is poured. They help students learn by doing, involving them in hands-on activities and community projects, collecting data from their neighborhoods, and testing their ideas.

The Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE) has identified the following five standards as critical to improving the learning of diverse students (CREDE, n.d.):

1. **Joint productive activity.** Teachers and students producing together facilitate learning, especially when the teacher and students are from different cultural groups. To realize this goal, the teacher and students must work together on projects. Depending on the project, students should be organized into groups by different criteria, such as interests, cross-ethnic groups, or cross-ability groups. The teacher monitors and encourages interactions among students and him- or herself as they work to solve a problem, develop a product, or complete a project.
2. **Language development.** Developing language across the curriculum improves competency in the language and literacy of instruction. Because literacy is the most fundamental skill necessary for academic access, all teachers must assist students in becoming literate. Teachers should respect students' native languages and dialects and build on them to teach students the patterns of discourse in schools. Teachers help students connect their language with the subjects they are teaching through speaking, writing, reading, and listening activities that help students develop their literacy skills.
3. **Contextualization.** Connecting teaching and curriculum to students' lives gives meaning to the subjects being taught. Students who are not from middle-class families may not see how a subject has any meaning to their everyday lives. Teachers need to design instruction that will make these relationships clear. This means connecting new knowledge to the past experiences of the students, not the past experiences of the teacher. By being involved in the school community and working closely with parents, teachers can develop their knowledge bases about the cultures and experiences of their students, which may be very different from those of the teacher.
4. **Complex thinking.** Teaching complex thinking challenges students to develop cognitive complexity. Some teachers mistakenly do not provide the same academic challenges to English language learners, students with disabilities, students from low-income families, or students of color because they think that these students already face too many challenges or perhaps are not as capable of handling academic challenges as their peers. Too often, these students are engaged in repetitive, rote drill activities that

are uninteresting and boring. Teachers should maintain standards for student performance that challenge all students, which requires designing activities that advance understanding at deeper levels.

5. **Instructional conversation.** Teaching through conversation engages students through dialogue. Sharing and questioning ideas and knowledge are critical components of instructional conversation among students and the teacher. In this method, teachers use teacher–student dialogue with a clear academic goal to explore the topics and concepts being taught rather than lecturing about them. They guide student conversation, building on students' prior experiences and knowledge to help them learn.

A key to helping students learn is to connect the curriculum to their culture and real-world experiences. They should be able to see themselves in the curriculum to provide meaning for their own lives. Otherwise, they may resist the curriculum and learning, which are seen as the dominant culture's way of denigrating their culture. Researchers at CREDE have tested and refined these standards in a number of schools with diverse populations. Lesson plans and multimedia resources for using the standards, as well as research reports, can be found at CREDE's website at http://manoa.hawaii.edu/coe/crede/.

High Expectations

Some teachers respond differently to students on the basis of their group identities. They may have low expectations for the academic achievement of students of color and students from low-income families, based on negative generalizations about a group and its members' ability to learn at high levels. When these generalizations are applied to all or most students from those groups, grave damage can be done. Students tend to meet the expectations of the teacher, no matter what their actual abilities. Self-fulfilling prophecies about how well a student will perform in the classroom are often established early in the school year, and both student and teacher unconsciously fulfill those prophecies. Thus, educators should develop strategies to overcome any negative expectations they have for certain students and plan classroom instruction and activities to ensure success for all students.

Cultural group membership cannot become an excuse for students' lack of academic achievement. Empathy with a student's situation (e.g., being homeless) is appropriate, but we must prevent it from subsequently lowering our expectations for her or his academic achievement.

Not all expectations are low. Teachers often expect high achievement from Asian American students. Upper-middle-class students are disproportionately placed in high academic tracks, whereas low-income students are disproportionately placed in low academic tracks. Even when students have no differences in ability, academic tracks often reflect race, gender, language, and class differences (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Students who end up in the low-ability classes have limited academic mobility; they rarely are perceived as capable of achieving at a level high enough to move them to the next level (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Nieto, 2010). Teaching behavior for high-ability groups is much different than for low-ability groups. Middle-ability groups usually receive treatment more similar to that of high-ability groups. Students in the lowest tracks are often subject to practice and review drills. In the higher tracks, students are engaged in interesting and motivating intellectual activities. To a large degree, students learn to behave in the manner that is expected of the group in which they are placed (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Students may be grouped or tracked by a teacher's assessment of their academic ability. However, tracking does not appear to work, especially if the goal is to improve learning.

Heterogeneous grouping is more helpful in improving academic achievement for students from low-income and oppressed groups (Nieto, 2010). Contrary to popular belief, such grouping does not limit the academic achievement of the most academically talented students, especially when the instruction is geared toward challenging all students. The students who suffer from tracking practices are those who are disproportionately placed in the low-ability groups. Compared with students in other tracks, these students develop more negative feelings about their academic potential and future aspirations (Gay, 2010). Educational equity demands a different strategy. It requires that all students be academically challenged with stimulating instruction that involves them actively in their own learning.

Caring



One of the characteristics of teachers who are successful in working with students from diverse populations is caring. As part of their caring, they have high expectations for academic achievement and push students to achieve at those levels.
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One of the complaints of students is that their teachers don't know them and don't care about them. Students are more willing to work, and their performance improves when they feel that teachers care about them (Gay, 2010). However, caring does not mean going easy on students or being permissive, letting students do what they want. It is not enough to just like the students. A caring teacher has high expectations for students and pushes students to meet those high expectations.

Caring means honoring students and their families. Caring teachers have overcome their racial biases and do not stereotype students just because they do not know their father, their parents are gay, their mother is on drugs, or they wear the same clothes day after day. They do not punish students because they do not conform to the dominant culture's expectations for normalcy. They do not label students or "find them unlovable, problematic, and difficult to honor or embrace without equivocation" (Gay, 2010, p. 49) because they are from different cultural groups than the teacher.

Caring teachers are patient, persistent, and supportive of students. They listen to students and validate their culture. They respond to students' personal lives and the institutional barriers they encounter (Nieto, 2010). They empower their students to engage in their own education. Caring teachers don't give up on their students. They understand why students may not feel well on some days or may be having a difficult time outside of school. Nevertheless, these teachers do not accept failure.

"Caring interpersonal relationships are characterized by patience, persistence, facilitation, validation, and empowerment for the participants" (Gay, 2010, p. 49). It is more than being nice (Nieto, 2010). Caring requires us to adapt to the needs of our students rather than expect them to adapt to our needs (Tomlinson, 2015). Natisha, whose story began this chapter, did not have teachers who tried to learn why she was silent. Her teachers did not care enough about her to reach out and engage her in her education.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive teaching is an essential component of education that is multicultural. This pedagogy affirms the cultures of students, views the cultures and experiences of students as strengths, and reflects the students' cultures in the teaching process. It is based on the premise that culture influences the way students learn (Nieto, 2010; Gay, 2010; Hollins, 2011; Nieto, 2010). It moves beyond the dominant **canon** of knowledge and ways of knowing. "Students are taught to be proud of their ethnic identities and cultural backgrounds instead of being apologetic or ashamed of them" (Gay, 2010, p. 36).

In this section we will explore elements of the teaching–learning process that you could develop to become a culturally responsive teacher. Begin now to incorporate these practices into your lesson plans and work in classrooms. Look for evidence of these practices as you observe teachers in schools and identify other practices that support culturally responsive teaching.

Multicultural Curriculum

The curriculum should define the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn in a course or program. It is also political. Whose story, whose culture, and whose values will be reflected in the curriculum being taught and the textbooks and readings that are assigned? Will



Adults in the community can be valuable resources in discussions of cultural differences. When community members trust school officials, they become partners with teachers in improving students' learning. (© Hero Images/Getty Images

Watch the video "What Matters: Multicultural Education Is Local" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqH83LWfhMg), in which a teacher connects the community to her classroom.

students be pushed to assimilate the dominant culture, to make its stories their own? Or will the curriculum value the students' cultures and teach them their histories and experiences along with those of the dominant culture? A **multicultural curriculum** supports and celebrates our diversity in the broadest sense; it includes the histories, experiences, traditions, and cultures of students in the classroom. In classrooms with limited diversity, the curriculum introduces them to the major cultural groups in the state and nation.

Regardless of the grade level or subject being taught, the curriculum should be multicultural. All students should be able to acknowledge and understand the diversity in the United States and the world. Students in settings with limited diversity may have few opportunities to interact directly with persons from other cultural groups. However, they can learn to value diversity rather than fear it. They should come to know that others have different perspectives on the world and events that are based on different lived experiences.

Although communities are not always rich in ethnic diversity, they all are diverse. Educators need to know the cultural groups that exist in the community. Schools on or near American Indian reservations include students from the tribes in the area as well as students from other ethnic groups. Urban schools typically include multiethnic populations and students from different socioeconomic levels and religions; inner-city schools have a high proportion of low-income and immigrant students. Rural schools include low-income and middle-class families. Teachers who enter schools attended by students from diverse groups will need to learn about the cultures in the community. Otherwise, both students and teachers could suffer.

A traditional curriculum is very good at incorporating the histories, experiences, and perspectives of the dominant group. The problem is that the experiences of other groups are often marginalized or ignored, either not appearing at all or appearing as an afterthought, not as integrated, important parts of society. Multicultural teaching should tell it as it is. Diversity existed in the United States when Europeans arrived, and it became greater with each passing century. To teach as if only one group is worthy of inclusion in the curriculum is not to tell the truth. Instructional materials and information about different groups are available to students and teachers. It may be more difficult to find resources on groups where the membership is small or somewhat new to the United States, but it is not impossible. Both students and teachers can use the Internet to locate information, including personal narratives, art, music, and family histories. Although teachers cannot possibly address each of the hundreds of ethnic and religious groups in this country, they should attempt to include the groups represented in the school community, whether or not all of them are represented in the school.

In western Pennsylvania, a teacher should include information about and examples from the Amish. This approach will signal to other students that the diversity in their community is valued. In schools in the Southwest, the culture of Mexican Americans and American Indians should be integrated throughout the curriculum. In other areas of the country, the curriculum should reflect the histories, experiences, and perspectives of Mormons, Muslims, Vietnamese Americans, Lakotas, Jamaican Americans, African Americans, Chinese Americans, Puerto Ricans, or whatever groups are appropriate. It is important for students to see their own histories and experiences. If these groups are not included in the textbook, you will have to find other resources, which could provide the opportunity for you and your students to work collaboratively on a project.

Educators are cautioned against giving superficial attention to groups. Hosting an international festival where immigrant groups wear native dress, share native foods, and teach native dances acknowledges the diversity in the community. However, it will not ensure their inclusion in the curriculum or the academic achievement of their children. Multicultural education is much more than food, festivals, fun, heroes, or holidays. Even celebrating African American history only during February or women's history during March is not multicultural education.

Critical Incidents in Teaching

Teaching about Thanksgiving

Michele Johnson was observing a kindergarten class in a school near her campus during the fall semester of her junior year. She was taking a class in multicultural education at the same time and was expanding her knowledge base regarding groups of color. The week before Thanksgiving, the teacher she was observing gave her materials for students to color as a part of their study of Thanksgiving. When she looked through the materials, she discovered that the kindergartners were to cut out and decorate headbands that they would wear with feathers while presenting gifts to the pilgrims for Thanksgiving. She was appalled that the teacher was perpetuating stereotypes of First Americans and their relationships with the European settlers. She worried that the students were already learning stories about cultural groups that were inaccurate.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. **Why does Michele think the project to teach about Thanksgiving is not appropriate?**
2. **What do you know about the first Thanksgiving? Do you think its presentation in Michele's classroom is accurate? Why or why not?**
3. **How would you teach kindergartners about Thanksgiving? What images would you use to project First Americans and pilgrims in relation to each other?**
4. **Should Michele say something to the teacher who might later be evaluating her performance? Why or why not?**

It is much more complex and pervasive than setting aside an hour, a unit, or a month. It should become the lens through which the curriculum is presented.

The amount of specific content about diverse groups will vary according to the course taught, but awareness and incorporation of the nation's diversity can be reflected in all classroom experiences and courses. No matter how assimilated students in a classroom are, it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that they understand diversity, know the contributions of members of both dominant and other groups, and hear the voices of individuals and groups who are from cultural backgrounds different from their own.

Multiculturalism is not a compensatory process to make others more like the dominant group. As an educator integrates diversity into the curriculum, the differences across groups must *not* become deficits to be overcome. Teachers who believe that their own culture is superior to students' cultures will not be able to build the trust necessary to help all students learn. When you begin to teach multiculturally, allow extra planning time to discover ways to make the curriculum and instruction reflect diversity. With experience, this process will become internalized. You will begin to recognize immediately what materials are not multicultural and will be able to expand the standard curriculum to reflect diversity and multiple perspectives.

Culture in Academic Subjects

Knowledge about students' cultures is important in teaching subject matter in a way that students can learn it. Culturally responsive teaching increases academic achievement because the subject matter is taught within the cultural context and experiences of the students and the communities served. In this approach, the subject begins to have meaning for students because it relates to their lives and experiences. Today's students are not satisfied with passively listening to a teacher tell them what they need to know. They need to be involved in their learning. They learn from hands-on activities. They like to explore, experiment, and test new ideas. Using technology to learn can help spark interest.

Teachers must know a subject well to help students learn it. Subject matter competence alone, however, does not automatically translate into student learning. Without an understanding of students' cultures, teachers are unable to develop instructional strat-

egies related to students' life experiences. You will have to pay attention to the stories being read in your class to ensure that students see themselves in some of the stories while learning about people and families from other cultures in other stories. You will need to pay attention to the projects you assign and classroom activities to determine whether some students' cultures are being privileged over others. You may need to substitute word problems used in math and science to better reflect the cultures and experiences of the students you are teaching. For example, a problem that focuses on crop production by acre has meaning in a rural setting but little or no meaning to students who have lived in the city all of their lives. A problem asking urban students to figure out the best route to a location using buses and the subway would present an unfamiliar context for rural students.

Multiple Perspectives

It is important for students to learn that individuals from other ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic groups may have perspectives on issues and events that are different from their own. Movies, books, and music provide different perspectives on local, national, and world issues that expand our knowledge about the way others live and experience events. Comedians from diverse groups also provide different views of the world from their own and others' experiences. The more we listen to others, the more we can expand our cultural knowledge.

Most members of the dominant group have not had to face the negative, discriminatory experiences that people of color have in schools, with the police, in government offices, or in shopping centers. They may not understand the privilege they enjoy based solely on their skin color. The experiences and the histories of our own group provide a lens for viewing the world. Perspectives vary for good reasons. Understanding the reasons makes it easier to accept that most other perspectives are just as valid as our own. At the same time, perspectives and behaviors that degrade and harm members of specific groups are unacceptable.

Culturally responsive teaching requires us to examine sensitive issues and topics. It requires us to look at historical and contemporary events from the perspective of European American men, African American women, Puerto Ricans, Japanese Americans, Central American immigrants, Jewish Americans, and Southern Baptists. Reading books, poems, and articles by authors from diverse cultures is helpful because it exposes students to the perspectives of people from other groups. Perspectives on controversial topics can be explored through debates, mock trials, and role playing. These strategies can engage students in topics about which they care and help them develop critical thinking skills (Varlas, 2014).

The community and students may view as untrustworthy teachers and others who are unable to accept alternative perspectives on an issue or event. An example is the inability of whites to see the racism inherent in almost everything experienced by African Americans. Even when African American students point out a racist action, many white teachers and students cannot see it, in part because they have no experience being subjected to racism. Instead of acknowledging it, they often argue that the reporter misinterpreted the action or that the action was not meant to be racist. As a result, many African Americans learn that whites do not recognize racism and are indifferent about it (Tatum, 2011). Immigrant students, other students of color, students with disabilities, and girls and young women have similar narratives that are given little or no credence by many members of the dominant group.

Children ask questions that often make adults uncomfortable. "Why is that man's skin so black?" "Why does Johnny always get to mow the yard while I do the dishes?" "Why does that person talk funny?" "Why is Susie in that chair [wheelchair]?" "Why are those women wearing scarves?" These questions are often asked of parents when they are with their children in a public place like a shopping center or grocery store, but they are also asked in classrooms. The answers help those who are asking determine appropriate behavior. The answers can clarify or confuse the issues. Children may learn that they shouldn't ask those

questions. Adults sometimes answer such questions directly and honestly; at other times, they aren't truthful or forthright in their responses. For teachers, these questions in the classroom and on the playground provide opportunities to discuss issues related to diversity, equity, and social justice. They provide opportunities to denounce name calling and harassment against other students. They are "teachable moments" that allow the correction of myths or misperceptions students have about people who are different from themselves.

Inequity and Power



Watch the video "Mission Possible .mp4" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kh5Q0CiDjQI) to learn how teachers and students in an Australian school approach issues of inequity and power.

Teachers are sometimes reluctant to answer or address the questions raised above, and the questions and issues become even more complex and controversial as students move from elementary school to middle school to high school. Young people of color begin to ask why so many of them are not learning, why teachers do not care about them, and why they are disciplined more often than other students. Young women struggle with the mixed messages they receive about their expected behavior, sexuality, potential, and self-actualization. Students from low-income families may ask what school is doing for them or wonder how they could possibly afford to attend college. At base, many of these students are questioning the power relationships and inequity that they are experiencing in their lives, although they may not be able to frame their questions and concerns in those terms. Many of them are feeling their powerlessness; others are beginning to rebel against the inequities they are feeling.

Teachers may be uncomfortable in addressing these serious but sometimes controversial issues (Sapon-Shevin, 2010). They may be confused about the issues themselves. They may feel that they don't know enough about the topic to discuss it with students or that talking about the topic would just "rock the boat." They may worry that a discussion of the topic might get them in trouble with parents, the principal, or their colleagues. With the focus on preparing students for upcoming standardized testing, some teachers decide they don't have time to address issues such as racism, poverty, homelessness, abuse, sexual identity, disabilities, or religious diversity.

Some educators might think that it is inappropriate to address topics related to social and economic inequities in the classroom, especially with younger children. However, preschool and elementary teachers can address these topics in developmentally appropriate ways, relating topics to the realities of their students' lives (Sapon-Shevin, 2010). Not only can teachers help students understand why something happens, they can also help a student know what to do when another student is called "gay," when a Jewish student doesn't understand why she has to participate in Christmas activities, or when a student in a wheelchair can't go on a field trip. Students at any age can learn that they can make a difference and that they can speak up when they see an inequity (Sapon-Shevin, 2010).

Race is an issue that some teachers find difficult to address in the classroom. Yet it affects the work of schools. Most European American students probably don't believe that racism is a factor in their lives; they may even question its existence. Most people of color, on the other hand, feel the pressure of racism all around them. They don't understand how their white peers and teachers could possibly miss it. To ignore the impact of racism on society and our everyday world is to negate the experiences of students and families who suffer from its impact. Can we afford to ignore it because it is complex, emotional, and hard for some students to understand and handle? As teachers incorporate diversity throughout the curriculum, there should be opportunities to discuss the meaning of race in this country and the debilitating effect that racism (as well as sexism, classism, etc.) has on large numbers of people in this country and the world.

There is value in racial and ethnic groups working together to overcome fears and correct myths and misperceptions. This healing can begin with educators being willing to facilitate the dialogue about race. Discussions of race often challenge teachers' and students' deeply held beliefs about the topic. Some students react with anger and despair; others are defensive and feel shame or guilt (Tatum, 2011). At the beginning, many white students resist reexamining their worldviews, acknowledging the privilege of whiteness, and accepting the existence of discrimi-

Focus Your Cultural Lens

Debate/Teaching "Black Lives Matter"

The killings of Trayvon Martin, Jordan Davis, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Renisha McBride, and other African American youth in 2013–2015 have raised national attention to issues of institutional racism to a level not seen for decades. These murders, along with those of unarmed African American men, have spawned the Black Lives Matter movement. Other slogans express the despair of African Americans as reflected on T-shirts at marches and protests: "I Can't Breathe" and "Hands Up, Don't Shoot."

Black students have been pivotal in forcing the public's confrontation with police violence and the destruction of their communities through foreclosures, gentrification, and unemployment. More than 1,000 students walked out of Seattle's Garfield High School when the police officer who killed Michael Brown was not indicted. Students across the country have followed suit, participating in walk-outs, die-ins, protests, and marches to fight the injustices that African Americans have suffered and the system that continues to allow those injustices. African American students are not alone in this battle. They are joined by other youth and adults who are white, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, and immigrants to fight for justice. Should teachers and schools bring Black Lives Matter into the classroom?

FOR

- ☐ The Black Lives Matter movement provides the opportunity to use history and literacy skills to explore the murders of African Americans by police.
- ☐ Listening to student voices about police violence and racism is important in developing respect for the different and inequitable experiences of each other.
- ☐ All students should learn about institutional racism and injustices in society. Black Lives Matter provides the opportunity to expand the knowledge base of all students.
- ☐ Students' understanding of the Black Lives Matter movement will contribute to addressing injustices in schools and society.

AGAINST

- ☐ The introduction of the disproportionate killing of African Americans by police could lead to intense feelings and debates among students that should be avoided.
- ☐ There is too much disagreement in my community about whether the police were right to introduce this topic in our schools.
- ☐ Class discussions on these issues might lead to student protests or walk-outs at school.
- ☐ Teachers in my school don't have the background or experience to discuss Black Lives Matter with students.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. What are the changes that the Black Lives Matter movement would like to see?
2. How important is trust between a teacher and students in effectively addressing Black Lives Matter and other issues related to injustices and racism?
3. How would you advise students who ask you about their involvement in a walk-out or protest to support Black Lives Matter?

Source: Based on Editors (2015, Spring). Black students' lives matter. *Rethinking Schools,* 29(3): 4–7.

nation. These changes do not occur overnight. They take months, and sometimes years, of study and self-reflection. Some people never accept that racism exists and needs to be eliminated.

Another topic that is difficult to analyze critically is poverty, especially its causes. Too often, families and individuals are blamed for their own poverty. It is difficult for many, especially those advantaged by the current economic conditions, to acknowledge that our system does not provide the same opportunities for all people. Teachers can help students explore the contributions of the labor class as well as the rich and powerful. They can examine various perspectives on eliminating jobs in one area of the country and moving them to cheaper labor markets in another part of the country or world. Students could examine the changing job markets to determine the skills needed for future work. They could research child labor that is used to produce products that we purchase in the United States. They could discuss why companies are seeking labor outside the United States for high-tech jobs as well as low-paying

jobs in meat processing companies and agriculture. They could critique different perspectives on seeking labor outside the country and its impact on U.S. workers and families.

Social Justice and Equality

Social justice is "a philosophy, an approach, and actions that embody treating all people with fairness, respect, dignity, and generosity" (Nieto, 2010, p. 46). Teaching for social justice requires a disposition of caring and social responsibility for those who are not advantaged. But it is much more than a disposition. Teachers who practice social justice confront untruths and stereotypes that contribute to inequality and discrimination against groups. Social justice requires the provision of resources to all students equitably to promote their learning. It means believing in students, having high expectations for them, and providing rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction to assist them in developing social and cultural capital to meet their potential. It requires teachers to build on students' languages, cultures, and experiences to nurture their talents and strengths. Socially just teachers provide a learning environment that encourages critical thinking and prepares students to be active citizens in a democracy (Nieto, 2010).

Socially just classrooms are democratic, engaging students and teachers in learning together. Establishing a democratic classroom helps overcome the power inequities that exist between students and teachers. Students become active participants in governing classrooms and in critically analyzing school and societal practices related to equity and social justice.

A socially just curriculum helps students recognize the biases and discrimination that prevent some students and families from taking advantage of society's benefits. In this environment, students learn to identify discrimination and inequities in the school and the community and become involved in projects working for the elimination of these inequities. Within the school, students work toward the elimination of bullying and harassment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students. High school students could choose to tutor younger students to improve their chances for academic success. In the community, they could work with community leaders to improve the environment, establish better services for the young and elderly, and create youth centers to promote the physical and intellectual development of young people.



As part of social justice education, teachers establish learning communities among students to encourage them to work together in the learning process. The learning communities with members from different cultural groups can also promote cross-cultural interactions and understandings.
(© Huntstock.com/Shutterstock)

Thinking Critically

As a result of being taught multiculturally, students learn to think critically about what they are learning and experiencing. **Critical thinking** challenges the status quo, encourages questioning of the dominant canon and culture, and considers alternatives to the inequitable structure of society. Students should be supported in questioning the validity of the knowledge presented in textbooks and other resources. They should be encouraged to explore other perspectives. Developing the skills to think critically about issues helps students make sense of the events and conditions that affect their lives.

Multicultural teaching requires students to investigate racism, classism, and sexism and how societal institutions have served different populations in discriminatory ways. Even though we may overcome our own prejudices and eliminate our own discriminatory practices against members of other cultural groups, the problem is not solved; it goes beyond what we individually control. The problem is societal and is imbedded in historical and contemporary contexts that students should be helped to understand.

Most students accept the information written in their textbooks as the absolute truth. However, critical thinkers do not automatically accept the content of textbooks as truth. They understand that authors write from their own perspectives, with their own biases. The presentation is usually from the perspective of the dominant culture rather than from the perspective of persons who have been oppressed because of events and practices supportive of the dominant culture. Teaching for social justice encourages students to question what is written in textbooks or appears in multimedia materials. Students are expected to conduct research that provides other facts and perspectives to balance the content in the textbook.

Educators can help students examine their own biases and stereotypes related to different cultural groups. These biases often surface during class discussions or incidents outside the classroom. They should not be ignored by the teacher. Instead, they should become teachable moments in which issues are confronted and discussed. Accurate information can begin to displace the myths that many hold about people who are from cultural groups different from their own.

Fostering Learning Communities

Numerous studies show that interactions and understandings among people from different racial and ethnic groups increase as they work together on **meaningful projects** inside and outside the classroom. In social justice education, meaningful projects address equity, democratic practices, and critical social issues in the community.

Teachers should ensure that students are integrated in cooperative groups and group work. **Cooperative learning** is a popular strategy for supporting learning communities. It involves grouping students to work together on a project to support and learn from each other. It minimizes competition among students and encourages them to share the work necessary to learn. They can establish opportunities for cross-cultural communication and learning from each other, but teachers should ensure that groups represent the diversity in the classroom.

Teaching as a Political Activity

Teachers who have made their teaching multicultural confront and fight racism, sexism, and other discrimination in schools and society. They develop strategies to recognize their own biases and overcome them. They use their knowledge and skills to support a democratic and equitable society.

Politically active teachers are advocates for children who have been marginalized by society. They may be active in political campaigns, supporting candidates who are positive advocates for children and for adults with the greatest needs. They become involved in local political action to improve conditions in the community. They are teachers who work for equity, democracy, and social justice.



Preparing to Teach Multiculturally

Educators should undertake a number of actions to prepare to deliver education that is multicultural. First, they should know their own cultural identity and the degree to which they identify with the various groups of which they are members. Second, they should accept the fact that they have prejudices that may affect the way they interact with students and parents. When they recognize these biases, they can develop strategies to overcome or compensate for them in the classroom.

Know Yourself and Others

One of the first steps to becoming multicultural is knowing your own cultural identity. Many European American students do not identify themselves as ethnic or racial. They have not

thought about their privilege in society. Students of color may have thought little about their own multiple identities because their race or ethnicity has been the center of their identity. How much do you know about the cultural background of your family?

In addition to knowing yourself, you need to learn about groups other than your own. You can read about them, attend ethnic movies or plays, participate in ethnic celebrations, visit different churches and ethnic community gatherings, and interact with members of different groups in a variety of settings. If you enjoy reading novels, you should select authors from different cultures. The perspectives presented may be very different from your own. Novels may help you understand that other people's experiences lead them to react to situations differently than you would. It is often an advantage to discuss one's reactions to such new experiences with someone else to clarify and confront your own prejudices or stereotypes.

You should make an effort to interact with people who are culturally different from you. Long-term cultural experiences are probably the most effective means of overcoming fear and misconceptions about a group. You must remember, however, that there is much diversity within a group. You cannot generalize about an entire group on the basis of the characteristics of a few persons. In direct cross-cultural contacts, you can learn to be open to the traditions and ways of the other culture in order to learn from the experience. Otherwise, your own traditions, habits, and perspectives are likely to be projected as better rather than as just different. If you can learn to understand, empathize with, and participate in a second culture, you will have a valuable experience. If you learn to live multiculturally, you are indeed fortunate.

Teachers also should take a critical look at their own interactions with students and communities of color. Ask yourself if you have the ability to:

1. Know bias, discrimination, and inequity if you see it
2. React thoughtfully and equitably to bias, discrimination, and inequity
3. Study bias, discrimination, and inequity in a societal context
4. Support and promote bias-free, discrimination-free schools and communities (Gorski & Swalwell, 2015).

Many teachers have not critically examined the meaning of race and racism and their role in maintaining the status quo. If educators are unable to acknowledge the existence of racism and understand the effect it has on their students, it will be difficult to serve communities of color effectively, and it will be nearly impossible to eliminate racism in either schools or society. Becoming a multicultural teacher requires deep reflection on our experiences and perspectives of the students and communities with which we work and the willingness and commitment to change by critiquing "our own attitudes and behavior with a social justice lens" (Samuels, 2014, p. 82).

Reflect on Your Practice

To provide education that is multicultural, professional educators need to continually reflect on their practice in the classroom. Multicultural educators care that the content of textbooks and district-wide curriculum accurately portray diversity and perspectives beyond the dominant culture. They ask questions about school practices that lead to a disproportionate number of students of color being suspended from school; disproportionate numbers of Asian Americans and upper-middle-class white students in gifted and talented programs; and disproportionate numbers of low-income males and English language learners in low-ability classes. They recognize racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism and confront students and colleagues who are not treating others with respect. They correct their own behavior when they learn that their prejudices are showing.

As you begin working with students and other professional educators in schools, continue to observe how you and others interact with students, parents, and colleagues of cultures different from your own. Think about ways you can use the students' cultures to help them learn the subjects and skills you are teaching. By reflecting on what works and does not work in the classroom, you can continuously improve your teaching for all students.

SUMMARY

Education That Is Multicultural

Education that is multicultural respects the cultural diversity of students and supports equity and social justice, with the goal of helping students reach their academic, social, physical, and emotional potentials. Teachers are the major ingredient in ensuring that students learn. They can make a difference in students' lives.

Placing Students at the Center of Teaching and Learning

The voices of students and the community are valued and validated in classrooms that are multicultural. Teachers should make an effort to know all of their students, build on their strengths, and help them overcome their weaknesses.

Climate That Promotes Human Rights

Positive student relationships can support academic achievement, regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, religion, language, sexual orientation, exceptionality, or where one lives. Oral and nonverbal communication patterns between students and teachers can be analyzed and adjusted to increase the involvement of students in the learning process. Teachers must be sure, however, that they do not treat students differently solely on the basis of group membership.

Belief That All Students Can Learn

An important teacher disposition is the belief that all students can learn. Teachers with this belief do not give up on students. They take on the challenge of finding a way to help a struggling student learn a concept, solve a problem, or develop a skill. Teachers should regularly evaluate their academic expectations for students and their own biases to ensure that they are helping all students learn.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive teachers help students increase their academic achievement levels in all areas through the use of teaching approaches and materials that are sensitive and relevant to students' cultures and experiences. A multicultural curriculum incorporates the culture of the community and students in the classroom. Multicultural education starts where people are, builds on the histories and experiences of the community, and incorporates multicultural resources from the local community. Teachers introduce students to the social and historical realities of U.S. society. They need to help them gain a better understanding of the causes of oppression and inequality, including racism, classism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, and ageism. In the process, students explore the roots of inequities and oppression and learn how to take action against them.

Social Justice and Equality

By teaching social justice, teachers encourage students to think critically by considering multiple perspectives on a topic or an event. They are encouraged to question the content of textbooks, news reports, movies, and other media as they develop their own knowledge bases and ideas. Teachers establish democratic classrooms in which students are active participants in their own learning and in helping their peers learn.

Preparing to Teach Multiculturally

One of the first steps in becoming a multicultural educator is examining and clarifying your own cultural identity. In addition, you should become familiar with the cultures of other groups, especially those in the area in which you will be teaching. Teaching multiculturally requires continuous reflection to determine what is working and what needs to be changed to help all students learn.



Chapter Quiz: Click here to gauge your understanding of chapter concepts



Glossary

Accent. How an individual pronounces words, especially associated with a particular region of the country or world.

Acculturation. Adoption of the dominant group's cultural patterns by a new or oppressed group.

Acting white. The adoption of the behaviors, values, and attitudes of the dominant white culture by a student of color.

Additive bilingualism. The development or addition of a second language with no detriment to the first language.

Adequate yearly progress (AYP). A minimum level of improvement—measurable in terms of student performance—that school districts and schools must achieve within a specific time frame, as specified in the federal law No Child Left Behind.

Adolescence. Approximately ages 13 through 19.

African American English. Another term for Black English, Vernacular Black English, or Ebonics. A dialect used by many African Americans, primarily those in working-class families.

Afrocentric curriculum. A curriculum centered on or derived from Africa.

Alienation. Estrangement or disconnectedness from oneself or others.

Allah. God in Arabic. It is the term used for God by Muslims and Arab Christians.

American Sign Language (ASL). A natural language that has been developed and used by people who are deaf that is based on a system of manual gestures.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Public Law 101-336, passed on January 26, 1990, designed to end discrimination against individuals with disabilities in private-sector employment, public services, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications. It was intended to complete what Section 504 was unable to. The increased accessibility in buildings, to public transportation, and at sidewalk curbs, for example, can to a great extent be credited to ADA.

Argot. A somewhat secret vocabulary of a coculture group.

Arizona Proposition 203. Voter initiative passed in 2000 and patterned after California's Proposition 227. Designed to eliminate bilingual education and to require sheltered English immersion programs for English language learners (ELLs).

Assimilation. Process by which groups adopt and change the dominant culture.

Asylees. Individuals who travel to the United States from another country and request asylum or protection from persecution in their native country.

At risk. Refers to children and youth who are economically disadvantaged to a degree that can affect their educational opportunities.

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). A chronic disorder that interferes with an individual's ability to regulate activity level, control behavior, and attend to tasks in developmentally appropriate ways.

Authenticity. An approach that relates the curriculum and activities to real-world applications with meaning in the lives of students.

Authoritarian. The concentration of power in one figure, usually the teacher or principal in schools.

Barna group. An evangelical Christian polling organization focusing on faith and culture.

Basic interpersonal communications skills (BICS). Everyday conversational skills, which English language learners can develop in approximately two years.

Biased assessments. Assessments that favor one group over another group. One example is tests that, in the past, were typically developed and normed on white middle-class children. Children of color, particularly African Americans and Latinos, have been and often still are at a disadvantage in testing because the content and context of test items are more familiar to white middle-class children. The bias may lie in the instrument, the administration of the assessment, or the interpretation of test results.

Bicultural. Ability to function effectively in two distinct cultures.

Bidialectical. Refers to an individual who has the ability to speak or utilize two or more dialects.

Big ideas. The major concepts that support a subject such as mathematics or English language arts.

Bilingual education. The use of two languages as media of instruction. The system accepts and develops native language and culture in the instructional process to help students learn English and learn academic subject matter. Bilingual education uses the native language, as well as English, as the medium of instruction.

Bilingualism. The ability to function in two languages. While some contend that bilingualism implies native-like fluency, others measure competency in two languages as adequate to be considered bilingual.

Bisexual. Having a sexual attraction to both members of the same sex and those of the opposite sex.

Black English. Another term for African American English, Vernacular Black English, or Ebonics. A dialect used by many African Americans, primarily those in working-class families.

Black Muslims. A group of African Americans who now align themselves primarily with the Sunni form of Islam. Black Muslims in the United States likely had their beginnings in the late 1800s, but at that time had little in common with traditional Islam. In the 1970s Elijah Muhammad led them into national visibility.

Blue-collar. Designation for jobs or workers characterized by manual labor that is usually mechanical and routine.

Born again. Refers to Christians who have had a conversion experience with a spiritual rebirth into a new life.

Break dancing. A form of dancing involving fast acrobatic moves in which different parts of the body touch the ground; typically done solo with rap music (also referred to as B-boying or breaking).

Buddhism. The fourth largest religion in the world. Founded in 535 B.C. by Siddhartha Gautama, who was believed to be a prince of India. Buddhists believe in reincarnation and emphasize virtue, good conduct, morality, concentration, meditation, mental development, discernment, insight, wisdom, and enlightenment.

Canon. The principles, rules, standards, values, or norms that guide a Western European education.

Case law. Published opinions of judges, which are used to interpret statutes, regulations, and constitutional provisions.

Castilian Spanish. The variety of Spanish spoken in north and central Spain or as the Spanish language standard for radio and TV.

Catholic. Members of the Roman Catholic Church who believe that the Pope in Rome is God's visible lieutenant on earth and the rightful leader of Christianity.

Charter schools. Public schools that are exempt from many of the bureaucratic regulations of traditional public schools.

Child abuse. The physical or psychological mistreatment of a child.

Civil rights. The rights of personal liberty guaranteed by the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and by acts of Congress.

Class. A group sharing a particular economic and social status.

Classism. The view that one's class level (e.g., middle or upper class) makes one superior to members of classes perceived as below one's own.

Cocultures. Groups of people who exist and function apart from the dominant culture (e.g., street gangs, drug dealers, prostitutes).

Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). The higher levels of proficiency required in highly structured academic situations.

Colloquialisms. The informal or conversational speech in a community. An example of a Texas colloquialism is "I like to got hit by that car," meaning "I was almost struck by that car."

Color blindness. The claim that one does not see a person's race and treats everyone equally, regardless of race.

Compensatory education. The provision of special services to students who have limited economic or educational advantages.

Composition index. An index that compares the percentage of a group in a program with the percentage that group represents in the overall population. It gives us the answers to two questions, such as: What is the percentage of African American students in classes for students with intellectual disabilities, and what is the percentage of African Americans in the school-age population?

Conservative Protestants. Protestants who believe in the virgin birth of Jesus, the inerrancy of the Bible, and Jesus as the son of God being essential to salvation.

Cooperative learning. Strategy for grouping students to work together on a project or activity to support and learn from each other.

Creation science. The designation advocated by conservative Protestants who support the teaching of the biblical account of creation.

Creolization. The result of European Americans, African Americans, and American Indians intermarrying and developing unique cultures, languages, and dialects.

Critical thinking. An effort to see an issue clearly and accurately in order to judge it fairly without a preset bias.

Cultural borders. Boundaries between groups based on cultural differences that may limit an individual's understanding of people from a different cultural background.

Cultural capital. Endowments such as academic competence, language competence, and wealth that provide an advantage to an individual, family, or group.

Cultural pluralism. The maintenance of cultures as parallel and equal in status to the dominant culture in a society.

Culturally responsive teaching. A pedagogy that affirms the cultures of students, views the cultures and experiences of students as strengths, and reflects the students' cultures in the teaching process.

Culture. Socially transmitted ways of thinking, believing, feeling, and acting within a group. These patterns are transmitted from one generation to the next.

Curriculum. A sequence of courses offered by an educational institution.

De facto segregation. Separation of people by race that occurs by the choice of the people involved.

De jure segregation. State-mandated separation of people by race.

Deductive. A way of thinking and reasoning where one begins with general principles to reach conclusions about particular details.

Democracy. A government in which power is vested in the people and exercised directly or indirectly through elected representatives.

Developing nations. Countries that have lower per capita income, greater poverty, and much less capital development than the nations that wield global economic power such as the United States, Japan, and some European countries.

Developmental disabilities. Mental or physical impairments that occur during birth or by the adolescent years. Typically, functional limitations are seen in at least three areas of major life activities, such as self-care, language, learning, mobility, and independent living.

Dialects. Variations of a language usually determined by region or social class (e.g., Southern drawl).

Discrimination. The arbitrary denial of the privileges and rewards of society to members of a particular group.

Dispositions. Values, attitudes, and commitments that guide the work of teachers and other school professionals.

Dominant group. The cultural group whose values and behaviors have been adopted by most institutions in society, including schools. In the United States, this group is the middle-class, white, English-speaking, heterosexual Christian culture with its historical roots in Europe.

Dual language immersion programs. Programs in which the language of instruction is English and a second language.

Ebonics. Another term for Black English, Vernacular Black English, or African American English. A dialect used by many African Americans, primarily those in working-class families.

Ecosystem. The natural system of animals, plants, and microorganisms functioning together in the physical and chemical environment in which they are located.

Egalitarianism. A belief in the guaranteeing of social, political, and economic rights and privileges for all people.

Emotional abuse. A pattern of behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of worth.

Enchiladas. A Mexican dish consisting of a rolled tortilla (flat cornmeal pancake) with a filling of meat or cheese and served with a chili sauce.

Enculturation. The process of acquiring the characteristics of a given culture and becoming competent in its language and ways of behaving and learning.

Endogamy. Marriage within a single ethnic, cultural, or religious group.

English as a Second Language (ESL). Educational program that relies exclusively on English for teaching or learning the English language. ESL programs are used extensively in this country as a primary medium to assimilate English language learners (ELLs) into the linguistic mainstream as quickly as possible.

English language learners (ELLs). Students who have limited or no English skills and are in the process of learning English.

English only. Used interchangeably with "official English."

Equality. The state in which one cultural group is not inferior or superior to another and all individuals have access to the same benefits of society regardless of their group memberships.

Ethnic group. Membership based on one's national origin or the national origin of one's ancestors when they immigrated to the United States.

Ethnocentrism. The view that one's cultural group is superior to all others.

Evangelicals. Conservative Christians who fall under a broad umbrella. Some are considered more moderate within the group and focus on social action agendas in addition to their religious agenda. Another group tends to be more conservative and focus on issues such as pro-life and an anti-gay agenda. Evangelicals generally agree in three areas: (1) one must have a "born again" conversion experience, (2) one must encourage others to believe in Jesus Christ as the son of God, and (3) the Bible is the actual word of God.

Exceptional children. Children with learning and/or behavior problems, children with physical disabilities or sensory impairments, and children who are intellectually gifted or have special talents.

Feminists. People who advocate for the rights of women.

Formal standard. The acceptable written language that is typically found in grammar books.

Freedom. Not being unduly hampered or constrained in choice or action by others.

Full inclusion. Serving students with disabilities and other special needs entirely within the general classroom. This is an important difference from inclusion, as students in full inclusion do not receive any of their education in segregated settings.

Fundamentalist Christians. Conservative Christians who advocate the teaching of creation as presented in the Bible as opposed to the theory of evolution. There are many different groups of fundamentalist Christians. Each has its own unique set of distinctions to set it apart from other groups.

Gay. Refers to males who are sexually attracted to other males. The term is sometimes used to refer to all people who are not heterosexual.

Gay-straight alliance (GSA). A student-initiated club of LGBTQ and straight students that provides a safe place for students to discuss issues and meet others with similar interests.

Gender. The respective characteristics associated with femininity and masculinity as determined by culture.

Generation X. The generation born between 1965 and 1976.

Generation Y. The children of baby boomers, and the younger siblings of Generation X, who were born between the early 1980s and 1994.

Generation Z. The age cohort of individuals born after 1990.

Gifted and talented. Refers to students with very high intelligence or such unusual gifts and talents in the arts that they require special educational programming to reach their full potential.

Globalization. A system that connects countries economically, politically, environmentally, and culturally through a global economy supported by free trade, international corporations, and worldwide labor markets.

Hajj. Pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, which every adult Muslim is supposed to make at least once in his or her lifetime.

Heteronormativity. The assumption that heterosexuality is normal and any other sexual identity is abnormal.

Heterosexism. An irrational fear of or aversion to homosexuals that leads to prejudice, discrimination, and sometimes violence against gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered individuals. Although "heterosexism" is the more accurate term, "homophobia" is more commonly used.

Heterosexual. Having a sexual attraction to members of the opposite sex.

Hidden curriculum. The unwritten and informal rules that guide the behaviors and attitudes expected of students in school.

High-risk behaviors. Actions such as drug use or premarital sex that could lead to alcohol or drug dependency, teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, or some other undesirable outcome.

Hinduism. The major religion of India and the third largest religion in the world. Unlike Christianity and Islam, Hinduism does not limit itself to a single religious book of writings, or to one God. Hinduism relies on a number of sacred writings and a number of gods. They believe that the goodness of an individual's life will determine how he or she will be reincarnated.

Hip-hop culture. Popular urban youth culture closely associated with rap music and with the style and fashions of African American inner-city youth.

Homophobia. An irrational fear of or aversion to homosexuals that leads to prejudice, discrimination, and sometimes violence against gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered individuals.

Homosexual. Sexual attraction to people of the same sex.

Human geography. The study of the economic, social, and cultural systems that have evolved in a specific location of the world.

Immigrated. Entered into a country other than that in which one was born for the purpose of becoming a permanent resident.

Immigration. The process of entering into a country other than that in which one was born for the purpose of becoming a permanent resident.

Inclusion. The placement of special education students in general education settings. (See also *full inclusion*.)

Income. Money earned in wages or salaries.

Indigenous. A population that is native to a country or region. In the United States, Native Americans, Hawaiians, and Alaska Natives are indigenous populations.

Individualism. A dominant feature of Western culture that stresses the rights, freedom, and importance of the individual versus groups.

Individualized Education Program (IEP). A written program required for all children with disabilities under IDEA. It includes statements concerning the student's present performance, annual goals, short-term objectives, specific educational services needed, relevant dates, participation in regular education, and evaluation procedures. Parents should participate in the development of the IEP and sign the document.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Public Law 101-476, which emphasizes the individual over the disability, forever changing how individuals with disabilities are referred to in the literature (e.g., "students with mental retardation" took the place of "mentally retarded students").

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (P.L. 108-446). Passed in 2004 and sometimes referred to as IDEA 2004, this law added new language about "academic and functional goals." IEPs are required to include "a statement of measurable annual goals," including academic and functional goals. It aligned IDEA with the No Child Left Behind requirement of "highly qualified teachers."

Inductive. A way of thinking and reasoning where one begins with specific facts or details to reach a general conclusion.

Inequality. A condition marked by distinctions in economic success, educational achievement, educational credentials, and power among groups of people.

Informal standard. The language considered proper in a community.

Intellectual disabilities. Impaired intellectual functioning with limited adaptive behavior. Also referred to as "cognitive disabilities" and "mental retardation."

Intelligent design. The theory that only an intelligent being could have created a natural world so complex and well ordered as ours. Some if not most supporters of the evolution theory view intelligent design as a new term for creationism or creation science.

Intersex. People born with the sexual organs of both men and women.

Involuntary immigrants. People who did not choose to emigrate from their native countries, but were forced to leave or were conquered by a dominant group.

Islam. The second largest religion in the world, which is still growing in numbers and influence. "Islam" means to submit to the will of Allah or God and is derived from the same Arabic word as "peace." Islam offers hope and salvation to the righteous and God-fearing individuals of all religions. Muslims believe that the Qur'an (Koran) is the final message delivered to his prophet Muhammad. The holy writing contains laws, moral precepts, and narratives guiding the lives of nearly one fifth of the world's population.

Islamaphobia. Extreme or irrational fear of all Muslims.

Jim Crow laws. Legal restrictions on people of color sharing public accommodations with whites.

Koran. The holy writings of Islam, believed by Muslims to be the exact words revealed by God or Allah to the prophet Muhammad. It is also written as Qur'an in English.

Kosher. Food prepared in accordance with Jewish dietary laws. Kosher may also refer to anything ritually fit or proper by Jewish law.

Language. Written or spoken human speech. It is a system that enables people to communicate with one another and to share their thoughts and ideas with one another.

Learning disability (LD). A disability of unexpected underachievement, typically involving reading, that is resistant to treatment.

Least restrictive environment (LRE). The educational setting closest to a regular school or general education setting in which the child with a disability can be educated. For many children, this may mean a general education classroom. Others may require a less inclusive setting to best meet their needs.

Lesbian. Woman who is sexually attracted to other women.

LGBT. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

LGBTIQ. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, or queer/questioning.

LGBTQ. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer/questioning.

Liberal Protestants. Protestants, considered to be on the liberal end of the religious continuum, who view Christianity in ways that are meaningful in a world of science and continual change. They stress the right of the individual to determine what is true in religion. They may or may not believe in the virgin birth of Jesus and may or may not believe the Bible to be inerrant.

Magnet schools. Schools in which the curriculum emphasizes a particular subject or field, such as performing arts or mathematics and science. Generally, students from anywhere in a school district can apply to attend these schools.

Mainline Protestants. Identified as liberal, this was once the largest group of Protestants but now has a lower membership than evangelical groups. Includes United Methodists, Evangelical Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, American Baptists, United Church of Christ, and the Christian Church.

Manifest destiny. A doctrine in which a nation or culture believes itself superior to all others and that it is destined to rule over other nations and cultures.

Marginalization. Relegation to a position that is not part of the mainstream or accepted by most people.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The federal legislation that outlines the education rights of and protections for homeless children and youth.

Meaningful projects. Student projects that address equity, democratic, and social justice issues in the community.

Median income. An income value such that the number of persons, families, or households who earn more than this income is the same as the number who earn less than this income.

Meritocracy. A system based on the belief that an individual's achievements are based on his or her own personal merits and hard work and that the people who achieve at the highest levels deserve the greatest social and financial rewards.

Metropolitan. A geographic area including a densely populated city and its less populated suburbs.

Microcultural. Pertaining to subcultures such as religion, gender, and ethnicity.

Middle class. Group whose members earn annual incomes that allow them to have a standard of living that includes owning a home and a car. Members include blue-collar workers, white-collar workers, professionals, and managers.

Miscegenation. Marriage between people of different races.

Monolingualism. The ability to speak only one language.

Multicultural curriculum. An educational concept that addresses cultural diversity and equity in schools. It incorporates the different cultural groups to which individuals belong with an emphasis on the interaction of race, ethnicity, class, and gender in students' lives.

Multicultural education. An educational construct that addresses cultural diversity and equity in schools. It incorporates the different cultural groups to which individuals belong, with an emphasis on the interaction of race, ethnicity, class, and gender in students' lives.

Multiculturalism. The condition in which different cultural groups can maintain their unique cultural identities while participating equally in the dominant culture.

Multiethnic curriculum. A curriculum that incorporates accurate and positive information about the history, experiences, contributions, and perspectives of the ethnic groups that comprise the U.S. population.

Muslims. Believers and followers of Islam.

MySpace. Social networking website that allows users to create web pages and interact with other users. Users of the service are able to create blogs, upload videos and photos, and design profiles to showcase their interests and talents.

Nativism. Policy protecting assimilated ethnic groups against the interests of immigrants.

Net worth. The amount of money remaining if all owned property were converted to cash and all debts paid.

New Age. A spiritualistic movement that began in the early 1980s. New Age has roots in nineteenth-century spiritualism and in the counterculture movement of the 1960s, rejecting materialism and favoring spiritual experience to organized religion. New Age emphasizes reincarnation, biofeedback, shamanism, the occult, psychic healing, and extraterrestrial life. The movement is difficult to define, as there are so many variations of followers.

Nonsexist education. Education that attends to the needs of girls and boys equitably by incorporating females as well as males in the curriculum, ensuring that girls and boys achieve at the same levels in all subjects, and encouraging girls and boys to choose subjects which they traditionally would not have selected.

Nonstandard dialect. A dialect of a given language (e.g., English) that is not considered standard (e.g., Black English).

Nordic race. Germanic people of northern Europe who are white with a tall stature, long head, light skin and hair, and blue eyes.

Normalization. Making available to all persons with disabilities or other handicapping conditions patterns of life and conditions of everyday living that are as close as possible to—or, indeed, the same as—the regular circumstances and ways of life of society.

Official English. A position supported by U.S. English, a citizen's action group that seeks to have English declared the official language of the United States by Congress. Individuals who support this movement believe that all public documents, records, legislation, and regulations, as well as hearings, official ceremonies, and public meetings should be conducted solely in English.

Orthodox Jews. The oldest, most conservative, and most diverse form of Judaism. Orthodox Jews look upon every word in their sacred texts as being divinely inspired. They adhere to a strict dietary law (kosher), which requires the use of special ingredients and preparation.

Otherness. Emphasis on the differences between other cultural groups and our own.

Overreferrals. In special education, typically the excessive referrals by teachers of students or groups of students to classes for students with disabilities.

Patriarchal. Social organization in which the father controls the family and the wife and children are legally dependent on him. It also refers to men having a disproportionately large share of power in society.

Prejudice. Negative attitudes about a general group of people.

Privilege. Advantages and power over others in society because of one's socioeconomic status, race, native language, gender, or other group membership.

Proficiencies. Knowledge, skills, or dispositions that students or teachers must acquire to meet standards.

Proposition 227. An initiative passed by California voters in 1998 requiring all language minority students to be educated in sheltered English immersion programs, not normally intended to exceed one year. Proposition 227 was designed to eliminate bilingual education from California's schools.

Proposition 8. A California ballot initiative passed in 2008 that eliminated the right of same-sex couples to marry. It was the most heavily funded initiative to that time (over $80 million total on both sides), with much of the support coming from religious groups.

Public Law 94-142, Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Comprehensive legislation signed into law in 1975 that guarantees all children ages 3 to 21 with disabilities a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment.

Q. A Christian organization founded by Gabe Lyons.

Queer. General term for persons who are not heterosexuals. It is a more political way to connote nonconformity.

Queer theory. Theory that challenges the categories of man/woman and gay/straight.

Qur'an. See Koran.

Racism. The belief that one race is inherently superior to all other groups and therefore has a right to dominance.

Ramadan. The ninth and most sacred month of the Islamic calendar, lasting 30 days, during which strict fasting is observed from sunrise to sunset.

Red eye gravy. Popular gravy in the southern United States made from the drippings of pan-fried country ham, bacon, or other pork, sometimes mixed with black coffee.

Refugees. Persons recognized by the U.S. government as being persecuted or legitimately bearing persecution in their home country because of race, religion, nationality, or membership in a specific social or political group.

Regression to the mean. A statistical phenomenon implying that scores at the extreme ends of the statistical distribution move toward the population average (mean), with low scores moving higher and high scores moving lower.

Response to intervention (RTI). A multi-tiered pre-referral method involving increasingly intensive interventions. Usually associated with learning disabilities, RTI has the primary aim of providing intervention to students who are not achieving at comparable rates with their peers.

Risk index. A measure of the percentage of a group in a program compared to other groups. It provides us the answer to a question such as: What percentage of African American students are in classes for students with intellectual disabilities as compared to white students?

Sabbath (Shabbat). A day of rest and holiness observed by Jews and a minority of Christian denominations (e.g., Seventh Day Adventists). It is observed from sunset on Friday night until nightfall on Saturday. Most Christian groups observe Sunday as the Sabbath.

Section 504 of Public Law 93-112. Part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 designed as a counterpart law for individuals with disabilities to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It requires reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities, and prohibits the denial of participation in any program receiving federal funds solely on the basis of one's disability.

Secular humanism. A non–religiously based philosophy promoting man as the measure of all things. It typically rejects the concept of a personal God and regards humans as supreme. Secular humanists tend to see God as the creation of man, rather than man being a creation of God.

Self-fulfilling prophecy. A teacher's prediction of a student's academic achievement that becomes true as the student progresses through the education process. This is often the result of socioeconomic, social, and cultural factors that lead to placement in an academic track that may or may not match the student's academic potential.

Sexism. The conscious or unconscious belief that men are superior to women, resulting in behavior and action to maintain the position of power by males in society and families.

Sexting. Sending sexually explicit messages or photos electronically, primarily between mobile phones.

Sexual abuse. Sexual activity among males and females or members of the same sex that is unwelcome. The abuse can be among peers or on the part of adults involved with children or underage adolescents.

Sexual harassment. Unwanted and unwelcome sexual behavior that includes verbal, visual, or physical abuse that interferes with the victim's normal life.

Sexual identity. The sexual orientation with which one identifies.

Sexual orientation. One's sexual attraction to persons of the same or the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Shaman. A medicine man or priest found in certain tribes of North American Indians.

Sheltered English immersion. A process of English language acquisition structured so that nearly all instruction is in English. This is the instructional method mandated by California Proposition 227 and is normally limited to one year.

Signed English. A system that translates an English oral or written word into a sign.

Sikhism. A religion founded by Guru Nanak during the fifteenth or sixteenth century B.C.E. in India. He drew from the elements of Hinduism and Islam, and stressed a universal single God. Union with God, he said, is accomplished through meditation and surrender to divine will. He believed in reincarnation, karma, and the destruction and rebuilding of the universe, but he rejected the Hindu belief in the caste system.

Social justice. A philosophy calling for citizens to provide for those in society who are less advantaged.

Social media. Media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, including online technology tools enabling people to communicate via the Internet to share information and resources.

Social role valorization. Giving value to individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Social stratification. Ranking of people and families based on specific characteristics such as income, education, occupation, wealth, and power.

Socialization. The process of learning the social norms and expectations of the culture and society.

Socioeconomic status. Composite of the economic status of families or individuals on the basis of occupation, educational attainment, income, and wealth.

Spanglish. A hybrid language combining words and idioms from Spanish and English, notably Spanish speech that borrows many English words and expressions.

Standard English. The English spoken by a particular group of individuals in a community. Typically this group is the professional educated middle class, the group with a high degree of influence and prestige in the community.

Stereotyping. The application of generalizations, many of which are negative and inaccurate, about a group with no consideration of individual differences within the group.

Structural assimilation. The assimilation of groups to the point where they share primary relationships, intermarry, and maintain equality with the dominant group.

Subcultures. Groups within a society that are connected to cultural group memberships such as gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, exceptionalities, language, and age.

Subsocieties. Groups within a society, such as punks, gangs, skinheads, or hippies, that have developed their own values, attitudes, and behaviors, which are different from the norm and often not acceptable to the dominant cultural group.

Substance abuse. Use of drugs or alcohol to the level of addiction or other at-risk behaviors.

Subtractive bilingualism. The situation where a second language replaces the first.

Suburbs. The communities that surround a city and are home to many of the city's workers.

Tamales. Mexican dish comprised of chopped meat or cheese and crushed peppers, highly seasoned and wrapped in cornhusks spread with masa (dough made of dried corn), and then steamed.

Title IX. Legislation passed by Congress in 1972 to provide females equal access to all aspects of education, including the curriculum and athletics.

Tracking. Assignment of students to a specific class or program (e.g., gifted) based on their perceived academic abilities, educational potential, or vocational interests.

Transgender. People whose gender does not match their biological sex.

Transition plan. A needs assessment and planning tool for the transition from student into adulthood. Transition plans became a requirement for all children with disabilities by age 14 in IDEA 1990.

Transitional programs. Programs emphasizing bilingual education as a means of moving from the language most commonly used for communication in the home to English. The native language of the home is used to help the student make the transition to the English language. The native language is gradually phased out as the student becomes more proficient in English.

Transsexuals. Those who have surgically changed their genitals and characteristics to match their gender identity.

Transvestites. Persons who dress in the clothes usually associated with the opposite sex.

Unchurched. Individuals who are not a part of an organized church or religious group. It does not necessarily mean that the individual is without religion or spiritual values.

Underreferrals. Disproportionately low referrals by teachers of children for specific programs or activities. These often include the disproportionately low numbers of children of color (particularly African American, Latino, and American Indian) in classes for the gifted and talented or advanced placement classes.

Unification Church. A religion founded in Korea in 1954 by the Reverend Sun Myung Moon. Individuals outside of the faith refer to the group's adherents as "Moonies," a label considered derogatory by its members, who refer to themselves as Unificationists. Rev. Moon moved to the United States in 1972 and began a major effort to proselytize members into his church.

Upper class. Group whose members earn the highest annual incomes and have the greatest wealth.

Upper middle class. Affluent group in the middle class whose members are highly educated professionals, managers, and administrators.

Values. Qualities or principles that are considered desirable and important.

Vernacular Black English. Another term for Black English, African American English, or Ebonics. A dialect used by many African Americans, primarily those in working-class families.

Vouchers. Certificates issued by a government to parents to be applied toward the cost of private school education.

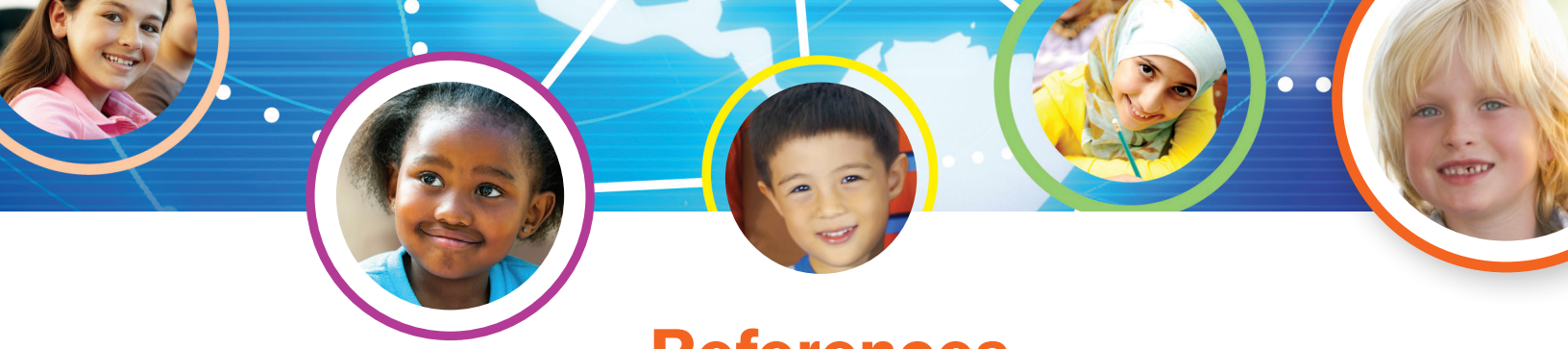
Wealth. Accumulated money and property such as stocks, homes, and cars that can be turned into cash.

White-collar. Designation for jobs or workers characterized by nonmanual labor in offices, retail stores, and sales.

Working class. Group whose members hold manual jobs that do not generally require postsecondary education, except for the more skilled jobs.

Yiddish. The language of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe and their descendants, resulting from a fusion of elements derived principally from a High German language written in Hebrew characters.

YouTube. A website where users can upload, view, and share videos.



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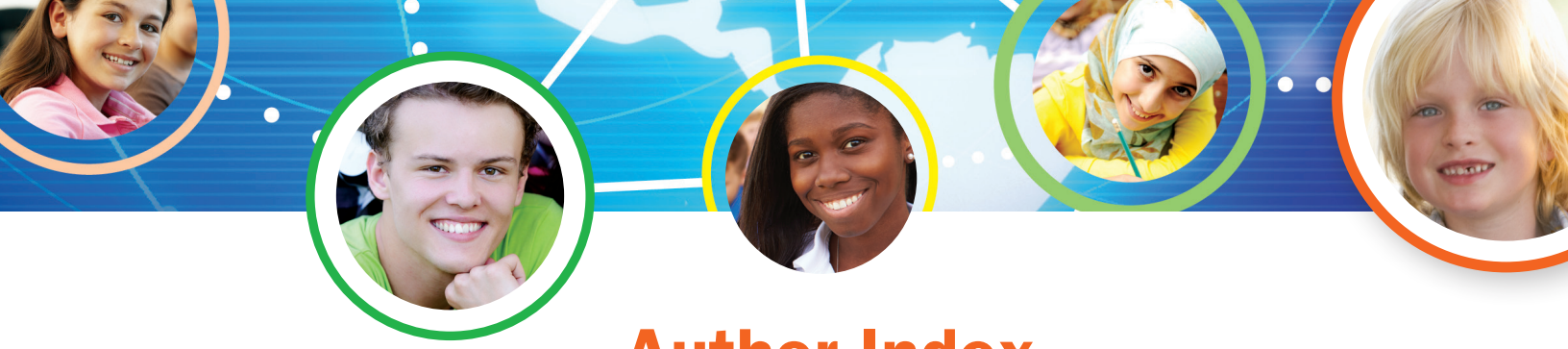
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