

MODULE 2

Understanding Student Differences

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this module, participants will be able to do the following:

- Describe the reception different immigrant groups have had in the United States at different periods in time.
- Discuss the various kinds of diversity found in today's classrooms, including racial and ethnic diversity, linguistic diversity, socioeconomic diversity, and differences in gender and sexual orientation.
- Explain legal and legislative actions that have been undertaken to address the needs of underserved groups of students.

MODULE SUMMARY

In Module 2, participants learn about the kinds of student diversity they are likely to encounter in the classroom. Participants are presented with a brief history of cultural diversity in the United States that includes a discussion of the **melting pot** approach to educating immigrant students. Participants learn that the most recent period of immigration began in the 1960s and coincided with a period of greater focus on ensuring the educational needs of all students including racial and ethnic minorities, English language learners, low-income students, and students with disabilities. Participants learn of key legislation or legal decisions that have affected the education of all students. These include the ***Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*** (1954), **Elementary and Secondary Education Act** (1965), the **Bilingual Education Act** (1968), ***Lau v. Nichols*** (1974), and **P.L. 94-142** (1975).

Participants discuss the impact of these kinds of diversity in the classroom. Participants are offered strategies for responding to differences in culture, including **culturally responsive teaching** and learn about programs for English Language Learners, including: **bilingual education programs, English-as-a-Second-Language programs, and immersion or sheltered immersion programs**. Participants discuss gender and sexual orientation as additional examples of student diversity.

The first video case study in this module affords participants the opportunity to reflect on the topic of bilingual education in a video case study. The second video case study offers participants the opportunity to consider issues of gender equity in a classroom.

KEY TERMS

Assimilation	English Language Learners (ELL)
Bilingual education	Ethnicity
<i>Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka</i>	Inclusion
Compensatory education	Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
Culture	McGuffey Readers
Culturally responsive teaching	Melting pot
Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)	P.L. 94-142 the Education for all Handicapped Children Act
English-as-a-Second Language (ESL)	Race
English Immersion	Socioeconomic status (SES)

MODULE OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
 - A. Scenarios 1 and 2:
 - B. Module Preview
- II. How We Got Here: A Brief History of U.S. Cultural Diversity
 - A. The **Melting Pot** Idea
 - B. Moving Away from the Melting Pot
 1. Low-Income Students
 - a) **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**
 - b) **compensatory education**
 2. Racial and Ethnic Minorities
 - a) ***Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka***
 3. English Language Learners
 - a) **Limited English Proficiency (LEP)**
 - b) **English Language Learners (ELL)**
 4. Students with Disabilities
 - a) **P.L. 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act**
 - C. *Now You Do It*
- III. Diversity in Today's Classrooms
 - A. Racial and Ethnic Diversity
 1. **Culturally responsive teaching**
 - B. *In Your Classroom:* Coping with Cultural Discrepancies
 - C. Linguistic Diversity
 1. **Bilingual Education Programs**
 2. English-only Programs
 - D. *In Your Classroom:* Working with Students Whose First Language is not English
 - E. Socioeconomic diversity
 - F. Gender and sexual orientation
 - G. Diverse Abilities
- IV. Let's Sum Up
- V. *Standards in Action*

DISCUSSION TOPICS, CLASS ACTIVITIES, AND ASSIGNMENTS

1. *Describe history of educating immigrant students in the U.S..* Provide one group with a variety of reading assignments and other resources focused on the melting pot approach to receiving and educating immigrants in the U. S. Provide the second group with readings and resources on more recent immigration procedures (see reference section for resource recommendations). Have each group develop a strengths and limitations chart using information from their readings and other information they may have found. Each group can present their findings to the class.
2. *Second Language Acquisition: Educating English Language Learners.* Have participants investigate approaches to teaching limited English proficient students in the local schools. Participants can interview teachers and administrators as appropriate about the program in use. Participants may also talk to students receiving services, if appropriate. Participants can compare the program as implemented to descriptions of programs in this text or in other sources.
3. *TeachSource Video Case.* Have participants watch clips and examine the artifacts related to the case **Bilingual Education: An Elementary Two-Way Immersion Program**. Pose the following questions for whole-class or small group reflection:
 - a. To which of the models described in this module does this classroom bear the most resemblance? Why?
 - b. How are these teachers demonstrating the teaching tips identified in the *In Your Classroom: Working with Students Whose First Language is Not English* section found in this module?
 - c. Do you agree with the teacher's assessment of the pros and cons of her program? Why or why not? What would you add?
4. *Recognizing and Responding to Diversity.* Assemble a panel of teachers from a variety of local schools and with a range of experience levels to discuss the concept of diversity in the classroom. Be sure to include the following on your panel:
 - a. teachers from schools with multiple racial and/or ethnic groups represented in a typical class
 - b. teachers from schools with high numbers of ELLs
 - c. teachers from both high SES areas and low SES areas
 - d. regular and special education teachers from schools with full inclusion models for special needs students (it would be ideal if collaborative teams of teachers are available to participate)
 - e. regular and special education teachers from schools with partial inclusion models and pull-out/resource models for special needs students
 - f. teachers who are experienced with working with homosexual students

Ask panel participants to identify characteristics of typical students from particular groups and to offer suggestions for ways teachers can go about learning about their specific students' needs and characteristics. Teachers should also provide some recommendations of instructional strategies and models that seem to work best to make learning accessible for all students. Participants should be willing to respond to questions at the end of the session. *An alternative to this approach would be to have individual students find a teacher who meets one of the above criteria, interview him/her, and report back to the class.*

5. *TeachSource Video Case.* Have participants watch clips and examine the artifacts related to the case **Gender Equity in the Classroom: Girls and Science**. Pose the following questions for whole-class or small group reflection:
 - a. Toward the end of the main video in the case, Mr. Cho, the middle school teacher, talks about girls shying away from science because of stereotypes that it is not a “girl job.” The module also discusses the effects of gender stereotypes on academic performance. Besides the one mentioned about science, what are some other gender stereotypes related to academic subjects?
 - b. Do you agree that it is important for students to have gender or ethnic minority role models in different academic and career areas, as the teachers in the video case suggest? Why or why not?
6. *Legislative and Legal Initiatives* Have participants to choose one of the following pieces of legislation or court cases on which to focus: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*; *Lau v. Nichols*; P.L. 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Provide participants with copies of the legislation/court case and access to materials analyzing its impact on the target group of students. Materials may include speakers from your university’s history, education, and/or law school or local scholars, lawyers, or historians with an expertise in any of the areas represented. In what way(s) were participants impacted positively? In what way(s) did the legislation/case have unintended impact? What are the outcomes that are evident in today’s classrooms? What still needs to be done?

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INTERNET RESOURCES

- Center for Immigration Studies at <http://www.cis.org>. This site provides a history of immigration policy in the United States with several references for further reading.
- Center for Teaching: Diversity & Inclusive Teaching site found at http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/resources/teaching_resources/interactions/diversity.htm#sex offers resources and links regarding numerous areas of diversity including racial and ethnic diversity.
- Council of Educators for Students with Disabilities. <http://www.504idea.org/>. Guidance with interpreting regulations as well as resources.
- Council for Exceptional Children. <http://www.cec.sped.org//AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home>. Information on a range of disabilities as well as professional responsibilities and roles including advocacy opportunities.
- Cohen, R.L. Immigration to the United States, *EH.Net Encyclopedia*, Table 1: Immigration Volume and Rates. <http://www.eh.net/encyclopedia/article/cohn.immigration.us>
- Digital History Home at http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/historyonline/immigration_chron.cfm. Includes references and links to primary resources on immigration, a timeline of key events in U.S. immigration history, an ethnic voices section, and resources and lesson plan ideas for teachers.
- Dillon, S. (Aug. 25, 2006). In Schools Across U.S., the Melting Pot Overflows, *New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/27/education/27education.html?ex=1314331200&en=73a8e3fd6c804266&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>
- Evaluation reports and resources related to the Title I program from the U.S. Department of Education can be found at: <http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/disadv/edpicks.jhtml?src=ln>.

The First Measured Century by PBS provides information on Zangwill's play *The Melting Pot* as well as references and links to other sources of information on immigration. Found at <http://www.pbs.org/fmc/timeline/emeltpot.htm>.

Immigration found at <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/immig/introduction.html>. This site walks the participant through vocabulary and terminology associated with immigration discourse and provides statistics, tables, history, and multiple perspectives on immigration at different points in time from a variety of perspectives. There is also information about using this data in classrooms, sample lesson plans for teachers, and project ideas such as oral histories.

National Center for Learning Disabilities. <http://www.ncld.org/>. Information on legislation and its consequences as well as instructional strategies for use with students with a range of disabilities.

National School Board Association site at <http://www.nsba.org/site/page.asp?TRACKID=&CID=383&DID=8624> provides a host of resources on current issues related to racial or ethnicity equity as well as information on recent court cases related to this issue.

Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education provides information about 504s and offers suggestions for protecting the rights of students with disabilities. Site may be accessed at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>.

U.S. Department of Education's website at <http://www.ed.gov/index.jhtml> and enter the search word ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act). Search for Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

U.S. Immigration History resources and links found at <http://www.snowcrest.net/jmike/immigration.html>.

GLSEN – the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Educators Network site found at <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/home/index.html> has information regarding resources for finding out about legislation related to this issue of diversity as well as resources for use in creating equitable and accepting spaces in classrooms for students with alternative sexual orientations.

ASSESSMENTS

Possible short-answer essay questions for Module 2 include:

1. Explain the goals and approaches of the melting pot idea regarding receiving and educating immigrants that existed in the U.S. in the late 1800s and early 1900s. How has this approach changed with the recent wave of immigration? Which approach do you believe best meets the needs of immigrant students and why?
2. Describe the following approaches to addressing the needs of English Language Learners: Bilingual Education Programs, English-as-a-Second Language Programs, and Immersion/Sheltered Immersion Programs. Provide a description and analyze the pros and cons of each.
3. Analyze the issues associated with at least two areas of student diversity (racial/ethnic, English Language Learners, economic, disabilities, gender, sexual orientation) including challenges for teachers and possible strategies for successfully navigating those issues. How can teachers come to know and understand the unique abilities and needs of students in these groups?
4. Analyze the impact of the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* on public schools in the United States.

TEST BANK

1. The assimilationist approach to educating immigrants had as a goal to
 - a. help new Americans become self-fulfilled.
 - b. celebrate the diversity of new Americans.
 - c. help new Americans adopt American beliefs, values, and customs.
 - d. help Americans better understand the beliefs of new Americans.ANS: c
2. The McGuffey Readers, which were widely used in schools in the latter half of the nineteenth century, were used to teach
 - a. immigrant students about their home cultures.
 - b. students with disabilities how to read.
 - c. all students about life in the American colonies.
 - d. immigrant students about American customs and traditions.ANS: d
3. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was designed to
 - a. address the needs of limited English proficient students.
 - b. provide compensatory educational services for students in low-income situations.
 - c. offer additional services for students with disabilities.
 - d. eliminate inequities for minority students.ANS: b

4. In a transitional bilingual education program, English language learners
- are taught in English only for all subjects.
 - receive instruction only in their dominant languages.
 - learn in their dominant languages for English-language instruction, and English-only for other academic subjects.
 - transition from most instruction in their dominant language to most instruction in English.

ANS: d

5. In an English-as-a-Second-Language program, limited English proficient students
- are given targeted English language instruction in small-group or one-on-one settings.
 - are taught only in their dominant language.
 - are paired with fluent English speaking classmates.
 - develop literacy skills in two languages.

ANS: a

6. The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* led to
- the creation of Head Start program.
 - forced integration of some public schools.
 - required instruction in a student's dominant language.
 - the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom.

ANS: a

7. Socioeconomic status (SES) is a term used to indicate a person's
- family size and home town.
 - age and ethnicity.
 - occupational status and income.
 - educational attainment and race.

ANS: c

8. Why was the term "melting pot" used to describe the dominant approach used in the nineteenth century to educating immigrant students.

ANS: It suggested that people of different cultures and ethnicities abandoned their cultures and language of origin and adopted American traditions, language, and culture.

9. Explain the difference between race and ethnicity.

ANS: Race is a physiological descriptor whereas ethnicity describes a cultural grouping.

10. What are some ways that teachers can bridge cultural gaps between themselves and their students? Describe at least three ways.

ANS: Answer should include at least three of the following: culturally responsive teaching, broadening the teacher's own cultural experiences learning about students' cultural backgrounds, explaining middle-class, American values of school as needed, differentiating instruction for culturally related learning styles, coordinating with students' families.