

PREFACE

So you are considering answering the call to teach. Congratulations—you have chosen a very worthy profession! Throughout this textbook, I hope to guide you in acquiring the foundational knowledge and dispositions that you will need to begin your journey toward becoming a professional educator. Are you ready to start?

I remember my first teaching job. It was as a fifth-grade social studies teacher in my hometown of Hazlehurst, Mississippi. To be honest, my first year wasn't necessarily a stellar one. In some ways, I felt overwhelmed, even inadequate in the classroom. But with the help of veteran teachers and an understanding principal, I completed that year and became a master teacher by my third year.

There are some things you'll need to succeed. In addition to having a passion for teaching and knowledge of the subject in which you teach, you also have to have the temperament to handle the mental and psychological demands of the profession. I hope to provide some of that support here. You'll learn from the collective wisdom of a host of educators. You'll find scenarios, issues, and teaching conundrums that will prepare you for the realities of today's classroom. Tips, conversation starters, and video examples will also provide you with context and preparation for teaching.

This text will contextualize modern teaching by looking back at the history of education. I'll help you develop your own philosophy of teaching and guide you in understanding the financing and organization of schools. We'll tackle ethical and legal issues in education, look at assessing student learning, and consider curriculum and instruction. We'll walk through today's classrooms, looking at technology, diversity, and reform. And in the end, I'll help you understand how to prepare yourself for the real world of teaching and identify the immediate steps to take to further your journey.

But to best determine whether or not you've been called to teach, we must consider three questions: What is teaching today? Where is education heading? How do you fit in?

WHAT IS TEACHING TODAY?

To know whether teaching is your calling, you need to know what the profession is like today. You need to hear from professionals, see in their classrooms, and understand the changing landscape of students. I've created a handful of special features to aid you in this quest.

• InTASC Standards

Helping you digest the knowledge, skills, and dispositions beginning teachers should possess, each chapter correlates content to relevant InTASC Standards. The beginning of every chapter outlines the pertinent connections between standards and chapter content, and peppered throughout every chapter are margin notes pointing out the dispositions that line up with the material being covered.

• Have You Been Called?

These interactive eText features in every chapter share videos of Council of Chief State School Officers Teachers of the Year from all around the United States. Modeling the dispositions needed to be an effective teacher, these professionals discuss important chapter concepts and apply them to contemporary classrooms.



This eText is an affordable learning tool that includes videos in every chapter, an interactive chapter self-check quiz, and an opportunity for students to get feedback on their answers to the questions posed in interactive features. Look for the play button and other icons to see where video and interactive assessments are available. To learn more about the enhanced Pearson eText, go to www.pearsonhighered.com/etextbooks.

InTASC Standards

In this chapter you'll look closely at the dispositions associated with InTASC Standard 9, "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." (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2011b).

- "9(l) The teacher takes responsibility for student learning and uses ongoing analysis and reflection to improve planning and practice."
- "9(m) The teacher is committed to deepening understanding of his/her own frames of reference (e.g., culture, gender, language, abilities, ways of knowing), the potential biases in these frames, and their impact on expectations for and relationships with learners and their families."
- "9(n) The teacher sees him/herself as a learner, continuously seeking opportunities to draw upon current education policy and research as sources of analysis and reflection to improve practice."
- "9(o) The teacher understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy."



have you been called?

- **A Look Inside**

Another interactive eText feature in every chapter, *A Look Inside*, also offers a glimpse at the real world of teaching. These video features, found in every chapter, share footage of teachers and administrators discussing and applying chapter concepts. In this footage you'll find an image of real-world, K–12 education as it is experienced by those who are already in the field.



WHERE IS EDUCATION HEADING?

The state of American education is fluid and evolving, which makes it an exciting field! Get involved in this conversation right now with these interactive features:

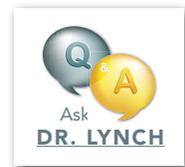
- **Conversation Starter**

Online *Conversation Starter* features a controversial or important topic in the field of education. These features facilitate discussion and debate, engaging higher-order thinking skills and helping you develop your own philosophy of teaching. Look for *Conversation Starter* icons in the chapters to launch the feature.



- **Q&A**

Throughout the text you'll find links to my *Education World* blog, *Ask Dr. Lynch*. These columns address a range of education-related issues and challenges at the classroom, school, and district levels, covering themes of school policy, culture and school climate, and classroom management, as well as offering a wealth of professional tips. Look for *Q&A* logos throughout the book, or find the full archive here: http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/ask-dr-lynch/archive.shtml.



HOW DO YOU FIT IN?

See what contemporary teaching is like. Understand the history, the philosophy, the nuts and bolts. Consider where the field is going. And now, think about where you fit into all of this. How will you handle yourself in a classroom? I created the following special features to help you put yourself in the classroom and see how well it fits:

- **Survival Tip**

Providing invaluable tips on common problems new teachers face, each chapter's *Survival Tip* feature helps prepare you for the realities of the contemporary classroom.



TAKE-HOME PACKETS FOR NEW STUDENTS

Take-home packets are a must for students at the start of each school year. This packet helps you communicate the objectives of the class for the year to students and their parents. It also helps you communicate important information concerning rules and consequences, the school calendar, special events, and any new activities or changes that have been made over the summer months. If you keep parents informed from the beginning, you have made the first step in building strong parent-teacher relationships. Make sure that you include the following in the take-home packet:

- Welcome message to parents
- School rules
- Supply list
- Emergency and approval forms to be signed by parents
- Transport rules and bus route

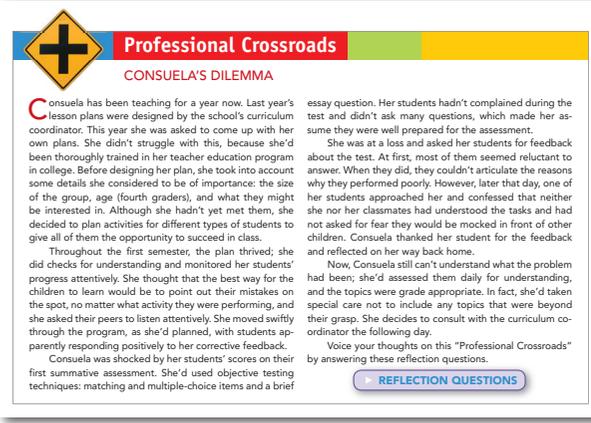
Additionally, you may want to accomplish the following activities during the first week of the new academic year.

- Prepare class rolls and records.
- Create name tags for each child.
- Get to know the schedule for each student, including gym, art, library and lunch schedules.
- Create a folder that can be used by a substitute teacher in case you are unable to make it to the school; this should include the daily schedule and seating chart.
- Create a file for each student that contains information about the child and correspondence from parents.
- Develop tentative lesson plans for the next week, and place them in a folder.

Completing the items on this checklist will help you feel more comfortable, organized, and in control when the horde of excited students appear at your door on the first day of school. Also, by starting the year off with a bang, you are setting the tone for the rest of the school year. Instead of dealing with classroom management issues, organizational issues, and disgruntled parents, you'll be able to enjoy a relatively stress-free first few days.

- **Professional Crossroads**

Promoting reflection, the *Professional Crossroads* feature in every chapter poses a challenging classroom scenario and asks you to consider all sides of the issue. Reflection questions at the end of each feature help you interact with the vignette in a purposeful and reflective way. These can be answered online via our Pearson eText or used to spark classroom discussion.



Professional Crossroads
CONSUELA'S DILEMMA

Consuela has been teaching for a year now. Last year's lesson plans were designed by the school's curriculum coordinator. This year she was asked to come up with her own plans. She didn't struggle with this, because she'd been thoroughly trained in her teacher education program in college. Before designing her plan, she took into account some details she considered to be of importance: the size of the group, age (fourth graders), and what they might be interested in. Although she hadn't yet met them, she decided to plan activities for different types of students to give all of them the opportunity to succeed in class.

Throughout the first semester, the plan thrived; she did checks for understanding and monitored her students' progress attentively. She thought that the best way for the children to learn would be to point out their mistakes on the spot, no matter what activity they were performing, and she asked their peers to listen attentively. She moved swiftly through the program, as she'd planned, with students apparently responding positively to her corrective feedback.

Consuela was shocked by her students' scores on their first summative assessment. She'd used objective testing techniques: matching and multiple-choice items and a brief

essay question. Her students hadn't complained during the test and didn't ask many questions, which made her assume they were well prepared for the assessment.

She was at a loss and asked her students for feedback about the test. At first, most of them seemed reluctant to answer. When they did, they couldn't articulate the reasons why they performed poorly. However, later that day, one of her students approached her and confessed that neither she nor her classmates had understood the tasks and had not asked for fear they would be mocked in front of other children. Consuela thanked her student for the feedback and reflected on her way back home.

Now, Consuela still can't understand what the problem had been; she'd assessed them daily for understanding, and the topics were grade appropriate. In fact, she'd taken special care not to include any topics that were beyond their grasp. She decides to consult with the curriculum coordinator the following day.

Voice your thoughts on this "Professional Crossroads" by answering these reflection questions.

► REFLECTION QUESTIONS

As a result of simply accessing this textbook, you have taken the first step toward becoming a professional educator. The overarching goal of this textbook is to assist you in answering a very simple question: "Do I really want to become a teacher?" The answer to this simple question will change your life.

I hope that by reading this book you will make the decision to answer the call to teach. Why? Because our country needs passionate individuals like you to educate our youth.

Now, shall we begin our journey?

SUPPORT MATERIALS FOR INSTRUCTORS

The following resources are available for instructors to download on www.pearsonhighered.com/educators. Instructors enter the author or title of this book, select this particular 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 (0132908360)

The *Instructor's Resource Manual and Test Bank* includes suggestions for learning activities, additional *Experiencing Firsthand* exercises, supplementary lectures, case study analyses, discussion topics, group activities, and a robust collection of test items. Some items (lower-level questions) simply ask students to identify or explain concepts and principles they have learned. But many others (higher-level questions) ask students to apply those same concepts and principles to specific classroom situations—that is, to actual student behaviors and teaching strategies.

PowerPoint™ Slides (0132908395)

The PowerPoint™ slides include key concept summarizations, diagrams, and other graphic aids to enhance learning. They are designed to help students understand, organize, and remember core concepts and theories.

TestGen (0132908379)

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

The 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)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I would like to thank God for being my strength and my refuge. Of course, I have to acknowledge my parents, Jessie and Patsy Lynch, for giving me their love and support. Also, I want to thank my sisters, Tammy Kemp and Angelina Lynch, for having my back. To their children, Adicuz, Kayla, Kerri, and Kelton: I hope my accomplishments will motivate each of you to live up to your limitless potential. No matter what, remember that your uncle loves you. You are the reason I am so passionate about reforming America's schools.

I would like to also acknowledge my mentor, Dr. Rodney Washington, for his invaluable support, guidance, knowledge, and inspiration. Thanks for being the big brother I never had! Also, thanks for giving me the honor of being your graduate assistant during my doctoral studies, which ultimately provided me with the opportunity to teach my first college-level course, Introduction to Education. I came up with the concept for this textbook while teaching that course.

I also have to thank the scholars and academics who agreed to critique this manuscript and gave invaluable feedback. Your assistance has ensured that my textbook is of the highest quality and will make a solid contribution to the K–12 teacher education arena, while introducing scores of students to the field. Thanks go to the reviewers who provided excellent feedback: Carrie Dale, Eastern Illinois University; Judy Jackson May, Bowling Green State University; Sarah Meltzer, Western Carolina University; Lois Paretto, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Patrick Spearman, Youngstown State University.

I would like to acknowledge the teachers—past, present and future—who have answered or will answer the call to teach. Thank you for educating our children. I have dedicated my life to ensuring that every child in America receives a quality education, and I will not rest until it becomes a reality.



chapter 1

SO YOU WANT TO BE A TEACHER?

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on having taken the first step toward becoming a teacher! As you'll learn throughout this book, a career in teaching has its challenges but is also extremely rewarding. Teachers are called to the profession in a variety of ways, for a variety of reasons. Maybe you chose to become a teacher because of positive childhood experiences with a teacher. Maybe a family member in the teaching profession encouraged your decision. Or you may have a deep-seated desire to work with young people and be a force for positive change in society. Whatever the reason for your calling, I hope this book will enable you to gain a deep understanding of your career choice and all that teaching has to offer.

Teaching does not occur in a vacuum. Changes in the teaching profession move in tandem with changes in the United States and in the world. Teachers adapt to social demands as they teach the content and skills children and youth need to navigate a rapidly changing world. In addition to teaching traditional subjects such as mathematics, science, and social studies, some educators teach subjects that were unheard of in schools only a few decades ago.

Contemporary teachers must be able to work with students from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and must incorporate teaching methodology that respects their students' ethnic, racial, and social class differences. Historically, public schools have been one of the major vehicles through which equal rights for all individuals have been promoted. Teachers who excel in communities with a high percentage of minority students use teaching strategies that incorporate the background and experiences of these students into the learning process. Teaching in the United States will increasingly address the learning needs of diverse groups of students.

Despite these changes, many aspects of schools and schooling have remained constant for decades. For example, in most schools, core classes are still important components of every student's daily studies. Assessment of student learning is an additional mainstay in schools. To uphold the quality and effectiveness of teaching, schools are increasingly using standardized testing to determine what students know and can do to ensure that teachers and administrators have the necessary skills and knowledge. But as you'll see in later chapters, the new emphasis on standardized testing has come under fire from critics who believe it can hinder good teaching.

Teaching is a complex profession that adapts to meet the needs of children as well as the expectations of the general public for high-quality teachers who can provide society with educated citizens. In this chapter you'll gain an overall understanding of the teaching profession and what it means to have a career as an educator in the United States. In "Professional Crossroads," teachers' first-hand accounts of their experiences will help you get a sense of the realities of the profession and learn whether your calling to be a teacher is genuine. You'll also find important information regarding salaries, job outlook, and various teaching environments, along with information on various teaching licenses available to teachers today. And you'll spend some time looking at the dispositions of a successful teacher.

Learning Outcomes

Chapter 1 will lead you toward the following learning outcomes. After studying this chapter, you will be able to

- determine whether you want to become a teacher;
- examine the teaching profession;
- explain the challenges of teaching;
- explain the rewards of teaching.

InTASC Standards

The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) has identified 10 standards of the knowledge, dispositions, and skills expected of effective teachers. You'll examine

these important standards throughout this book. First, you'll look closely at InTASC Standard 9: "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(l) The teacher takes responsibility for student learning and uses ongoing analysis and reflection to improve planning and practice."
- "9(n) The teacher sees him/herself as a learner, continuously seeking opportunities to draw upon current education policy and research as sources of analysis and reflection to improve practice."
- "9(o) The teacher understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy." (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2011b)

WHY BECOME A TEACHER?

Many reasons might motivate you to become a teacher. You may have a passion for particular subject matter, such as mathematics, science, or literature, and want to teach it, or you may simply enjoy being around and helping children. Take a moment to think about the journey that brought you to this place. Why do *you* want to be a teacher? The answer, whatever it may be, outlines the reason you are called to teach.

A *calling* implies a deep-seated belief that teaching is the only profession that makes sense for you to pursue, but it is much broader than that. It can be as simple as a nudge toward the teaching profession from a former teacher, or as complex as a lifelong passion for supporting the children of your community. Regardless of your initial motivation, the following section can help you better understand the realities of the teaching profession, from its rewards to its challenges. First, let's take a look at the most common reasons people decide to become a teacher.

Desire to Work with Young People

A popular reason for going into teaching is a desire to work with children. Some people simply like working with children because of their lively, curious, and idealistic nature, while others want to play a role in building America's future. If you talk with your peers, you'll probably find that many of them are entering or switching to teacher education programs because they want to "nurture the future," in the hope of creating a better world for upcoming generations. Teaching is one of the most direct and effective ways of having a positive influence on future members of society. According to the National Education Association (NEA), roughly 7 of 10 teachers enter the profession to work with young people. The same research also indicates that most teachers remain in the profession because of their desire to improve the lives of their students and other children (National Education Association, 2010).

Like the countless number of teachers who came before you, you may have a sincere appreciation for the unique qualities of youth. Teaching appears to be a highly satisfying profession: based on NEA studies, 68% of teachers "certainly would" or "probably would" choose to teach if they had the choice again (National Education Association, 2010).

Interest in Subject Matter and Teaching

Some people have a desire to teach stemming from a desire to impart meaningful knowledge to students, which can be incredibly satisfying. Your enthusiasm about a particular subject, because of your inherent passion for it, may turn out to be infectious. Having a passion for what you are teaching will encourage your students to be passionate about it as well, which will assist you greatly in teaching the information.

You may also be passionate about the process of teaching and learning in its own right. **Pedagogy**, the art and science of teaching, may be a personal interest of yours, or you may be

interested in working with children who have special needs and offering them better opportunities to participate as valued members of society.

Influence from Former Teachers and Family

Some people decide to become teachers after one or more positive experiences with a former teacher. Others become teachers because of family influences, particularly when a family member is a teacher or the family holds the teaching profession in high regard. You may have been encouraged to choose teaching by that one special teacher you admired when you were in school. According to a survey conducted by the NEA, 31% of the respondents indicated that the influence of a primary or secondary school teacher was the main reason they chose to become teachers (National Education Association, 2010). Teachers also provide a valuable service to society and hold a respected position. Parents, especially, place great trust in teachers by entrusting their children to the care of teachers for the school day. Because teachers are in contact with many students, recognition of the service they provide is unavoidable. Prominent members of the community, such as politicians, bankers, and doctors, will often publicly laud the teachers, and star teachers are often featured in local news.

Job Security

Job security is an important reason for some who choose to become teachers. Private sector employees such as managers, accountants, information technology professionals, and executives experience unemployment during economic slowdowns. No matter how talented, diligent, or creative an employee is, businesses often have to downsize to maintain their profits. In fact, many workers from other fields have turned to teaching as an alternative to less-stable work environments (Hayes & Behrstock, 2009).

Over the past year, many urban school districts in the United States have closed schools in an effort to cut capital expenses. As a result, many teachers within these districts have been laid off; instantly seeing the job security that they once enjoyed taken away. If this trend continues, job security may no longer be a reason for answering the call to teach (Lynch, 2013).

Additional Reasons for Becoming a Teacher

Some educators enjoy the feeling of autonomy in their profession. To a great extent, teachers are in charge of how students spend their time during the school day. Teachers can also be creative in designing lessons and choosing their teaching styles, as long as they remain professional and adhere to guidelines.

For those of you who will be parents as well as teachers, you will enjoy a rather unique family/work schedule. Typically, you will get the same days off as your children, giving you more time to spend with them, compared to parents in other professions. Normally, students and teachers get 2 to 3 months off during the summer, with breaks during winter and spring. During the summer break, in particular, teachers have time for professional development and time to prepare for the return to the classroom. Some teachers may decide to travel or work a part-time job. The flexibility to use time during the summer in a number of different ways is an attractive plus for many who choose to teach.

What Are the Dispositions to Teach?

Dispositions to teach. Throughout this book, I'll refer to the dispositions to teach, as defined by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). NCATE defines dispositions to teach as the "values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors." Disposition is guided by your attitude and your beliefs and therefore directly influences how you interact with students, families, communities, and other professionals.

One example of disposition is the statement "All students can learn." While most educators will, in principle, agree with this statement wholeheartedly, when given a challenging student or situation, the true disposition of the teacher shines through. A teacher with a positive disposition will

InTASC Dispositions

9(l) The teacher takes responsibility for student learning and uses ongoing analysis and reflection to improve planning and practice.

search for a way to get through to the student and find a solution to the problem. A teacher with a negative disposition is more likely to throw his or her hands up in despair or try to shift the problem to someone else.

Disposition is central to education. NCATE stresses the importance by listing it as the number-one standard for accreditation. In addition, even the teacher education program includes an assessment of your disposition to teach as you complete your degree.

have you
been called?

InTASC standards. InTASC has developed a detailed list of professional standards for the licensing of new teachers, describing what new teachers should know, how they should perform, and the necessary disposition for effective teaching. The standards transcend all of the subject areas and the grade levels. And most colleges and universities use the InTASC standards to voice their expectations required for new teachers (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). You'll study these standards in depth later; a brief description of each standard follows:

1. **Learner Development**

The teacher understands how students learn and how they develop. Teachers apply this understanding to each student in the context of the student's cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical abilities, because they understand that students' abilities differ. Teachers respect these student differences and leverage differences to allow all students to reach their full potential, focusing on and drawing out their individual strengths. Teachers actively take responsibility for their students' growth and development, receiving input from and collaborating with families, colleagues, and other professionals.

2. **Learning Differences**

The teacher understands individual differences in culture, language, and socioeconomic status of his or her students, incorporating them in teaching to create inclusive learning plans. Teachers use this understanding to adapt their lesson plan content and delivery to ensure that they promote and encourage diversity, particularly for students who have special needs. Teachers respect these individual differences, believe that all students can achieve at high levels, make students feel valued, and assist students in realizing their full potential.

3. **Learning Environments**

The teacher understands how to develop and provide supportive learning environments for his or her students. Teachers apply this understanding to create activities that facilitate both individual and collaborative learning, while also promoting positive social interaction between students of different backgrounds. Teachers value their students' input, allowing them opportunities to provide input, and listening attentively and responsively. Teachers support students in developing self-motivation, assisting them with problem solving, decision making, and exploration within a safe and validating environment. Teachers also engage appropriately with local and global communities to provide diverse learning environment opportunities for all students.

4. **Content Knowledge**

The teacher understands the central concepts of the subject or subjects that he or she is required to teach, with an in-depth understanding of how to make the content accessible and approachable to all students. Applying this standard, teachers commit to keeping up-to-date and relevant in their content areas, in both local and global contexts, incorporating and promoting cross-cultural understanding. Teachers encourage and appreciate students' critical analyses and ensure that students are appropriately challenged with adequate resources to support their learning. And teachers are sensitive to the potential for bias, actively seeking to address it when covering any learning content.

5. **Application of Content**

The teacher understands how to apply and connect different concepts within the learning content, using this understanding to engage students and to help them apply these concepts to the

real world. Teachers also use this understanding to draw from content material outside their own area of concentration, helping students to understand how their education as a whole is composed of interrelated components. Including local and global examples, teachers draw on culturally and socially diverse perspectives and collaborate with other teachers to provide an example that encourages students to explore, think critically, and develop their own innovative skills.

6. Assessment

The teacher understands and applies various methods of assessment that encourage and support the growth of his or her students. Using this understanding, teachers can appropriately modify assessments to make them culturally or ethnically relevant or to allow the adequate testing of students with varying abilities in English and of students with individual needs. Ethical application of these assessment methods allows students to understand and reflect on their own growth and learning. Providing descriptive feedback on student progress encourages students to focus on areas of difficulty where appropriate.

7. Planning for Instruction

The teacher understands the curriculum goals and standards required of his or her students and appropriately uses knowledge of content areas and cross-disciplinary skills to plan learning that will allow each student to achieve these goals and standards. Effective teachers adapt and plan effective instruction that will allow learners of varying skill levels and at various levels of development to leverage their own strengths to achieve what is required of them. Applying this standard also involves the input of students' family members, the community, and professionals both inside and outside education, to ensure the highest possible levels of classroom achievement.

8. Instructional Strategies

The teacher understands how to encourage students to use and develop a deep understanding of content and connections between content using a variety of instructional strategies. Allowing students to develop their critical thinking, problem-solving, and research abilities, and allowing them to perform learning tasks independently as well as with the teacher, are all applications of this standard. Teachers plan to accommodate students from diverse backgrounds and with a diverse range of abilities, incorporating and encouraging the use of various technologies that will support students in retrieving or assessing the required information. Teachers can also adapt exercises and materials to cope with new information received from students during their research, updating and improving their own knowledge base.

9. Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

The teacher understands the importance of ongoing personal reflection regarding teaching and lesson planning methods, personal and teaching goals, as well as continued striving for development. Applying Standard 9, teachers perform frequent self-evaluation, and encourage feedback from students, students' families, and colleagues or supervisors. Teachers must see themselves as continual learners, always seeking new opportunities to further their knowledge, particularly of their content base.

10. Leadership and Collaboration

The teacher seeks out and assumes leadership roles that match his or her skills. Teachers who apply Standard 10 understand the importance of collaboration and demonstrate this understanding to their students. They take direct responsibility for the success of their learners, working with them to help them achieve their potential. And this collaborative spirit extends to the students' families and community; when teachers actively seek opportunities for growth by engaging with other education professionals and accessing and providing support where required, the school as a whole is empowered to move forward in achieving the school's mission and goals.



In the video *A Principal's Views on Standards*, a principal describes her views on standards and accountability.

Five Professional Commitments

Being a professional comes with obligations to act, think, and commit to presenting yourself like a professional should. Outlined next are the five professional commitments that are essential for you to remember in making a difference in the lives of students (Pugach, 2005).

Commit to being a lifelong learner. As a teacher, you'll continue to learn from multiple sources of knowledge throughout your career. Learning from practice, by making mistakes, from your students, and from other teachers and administrators are all sources of knowledge. The commitment also includes aggressively challenging yourself to excel.

Opportunities to learn are all around the classroom and the school. With each new student and each new challenge, a new opportunity to learn arises. Professional development, workshops, conferences, or furthering your education are all avenues to obtaining knowledge. Although a degree is a great starting point, teaching looks very different when you're a practicing teacher than when you're a student in a classroom. And teachers who are continuous learners are modeling the importance of learning to their students.

Use the curriculum responsibly. While a school district may provide you with a set curriculum to teach, you as the teacher decide what is important, how to make it interesting and relevant, and how to measure the progress. Responsibility to the curriculum means teachers actively make choices that allow them to best meet the needs of the learners.

Cross your own familiar barriers and beliefs to meet the needs of all learners. Teachers must embrace diversity, including differences in ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, disability, and sexual orientation. You must take steps to ensure that you don't marginalize or exclude any students because their beliefs differ from yours. You must also commit to bridge the gap, not just with all your students, but also with their families.

Meet the needs of individual students. While a classroom is one large group by design, it is made of many unique individuals with unique needs. You can meet learners' needs by providing a variety of teaching methods, including direct instruction, grouping students, and rearranging the groups as needed.

To reach the individual student, you must strive to motivate each individual, involve him or her in learning, and understand how to teach everyone, not simply aim to teach the average student. You must also be an advocate for your students as individuals, ensuring that they have all the resources they need to succeed.

InTASC Dispositions

9(n) The teacher sees him/herself as a learner, continuously seeking opportunities to draw upon current education policy and research as sources of analysis and reflection to improve practice.

Actively contribute to the profession. Collaborating and contributing to the school and classrooms are not just part of the job; they are teachers' responsibilities. **Active teachers** seek to advance and improve all areas of education. **Passive teachers**, on the other hand, come to work to do their minimum to collect a paycheck. Teaching is not a nine-to-five job where you can clock in and clock out at the same time every day without a thought to things being left undone; teaching is a process that must be constantly nurtured by all stakeholders, especially teachers (Beane & Apple, 1995).

IS TEACHING A PROFESSION?

A Definition of Teaching

According to *Webster's Dictionary*, a *profession* is defined as "a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation." Do you think this definition fits for teachers? Ballantine and Spade (2008) list six characteristics that distinguish a profession from other occupations. These characteristics provide assistance in responding to the question of whether or not teaching is a profession. In this section, you'll look at each characteristic in turn.

- **Are there credential and licensing requirements for aspiring teachers?** American teachers are required to have a teaching license. Credentialing is handled by individual states (Teach, 2013). Alternative certification programs, such as *Teach for America*, have been introduced. These

types of programs allow graduates from various fields (including graduates from schools of education) to participate in intensive preparatory programs lasting several weeks to enable them to join the teaching workforce. This makes increased numbers of teachers available but may compromise the acquisition of required pedagogical skills. Every state has a process for conferring teaching credentials (licensure) to pre-service teachers who have completed the state requirements for teaching certification. The process may include graduating from an accredited teacher education program and passing teaching licensure exams. When states experience a shortage of teachers, they can issue emergency licensure to college graduates who want to educate students but haven't met all of the state requirements for licensure. Emergency licensure or credentials are given on the assumption that these teachers will be able to pass the state licensure exam or complete the required coursework. To find out, you'll need to research your state requirements for teacher licensure. Your state's department of education Web site will have this information. The teacher licensure requirements vary from state to state, so a lot of states have reciprocity agreements that make it fairly easy for educators who hold licensure in one state to gain licensure in another state. Over 40 states have pledged to follow this process, and in many cases it's as easy as filling out a few forms. In others, the process can be more tedious. To know whether your state has a reciprocity agreement, visit its department of education Web site (*Guide to Education Degrees*, 2012).

- **Do U.S. schools have induction and mentoring programs for new teachers?** Several programs facilitate teachers' introduction to the profession. In the United States, the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants Program provides nearly \$3 billion per year to states to train, recruit, and prepare new teachers. The main provisions of these funds are the implementation of teacher induction programs (Isenberg et al., 2009). The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 also provides grants that facilitate teacher induction and mentoring programs for new teachers. Mentorship relationships are also common practice, with experienced teachers mentoring new or beginning teachers during their first year of teaching.

- **Do U.S. schools offer professional development support and opportunities?** In the United States, most schools provide their teachers with regular professional development opportunities. These opportunities include workshops and other activities organized internally by the school or externally by other professional organizations (Ballantine & Spade, 2008). Teachers may also choose to participate in professional development voluntarily by enrolling in courses at a local college or university.

- **Are there specializations within the teaching profession?** In the U.S. school system, specializations are determined by the grade level and the subjects teachers are certified to teach. An elementary teacher's training differs significantly from a secondary school teacher's. And at the secondary level, teachers are more specialized by subject matter; for example, a biology teacher's training necessarily differs from a French teacher's.

- **Are teachers well compensated?** There is ongoing debate about the adequacy of teacher salaries. The gap between starting salaries and end-of-career salaries for teachers is significant, so there is room for promotion and increase in salary for teachers who want to advance their careers (Ballantine & Spade, 2008).

- **Do teachers enjoy prestige and high social standing?** The teaching profession has average prestige and social standing when compared to other professions. Teachers are considered less prestigious than physicians, attorneys, and engineers, but have higher social standing than police, bank tellers, and social workers (Ballantine & Spade, 2008).

Because all six criteria are satisfied to some extent, teaching may be considered a profession (Ornstein & Levine, 2008).

What Are the Public Opinions About and Expectations of Education and Teachers?

In the age of globalization, education (particularly in mathematics and science) has become critical to ensuring America's role as a leader on the worldwide stage. Americans are convinced that mathematics and science skills are crucial for the future, with strong majorities believing more jobs and



In the video *Teachers as Professionals: Two Principals' Views*, two principals discuss what it means to be a professional.

college opportunities will be available for students with those skills (Hayden et al., 2011). A growing body of research suggests Americans are falling behind in mathematics and science education when compared to students of other countries. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) ranked American students 21st in the world in science skills and 25th in mathematics (J. Johnson, Rochkind, & Ott, 2010). Among American students graduating from high school, only 43% are “ready” for U.S. college-level math and a mere 27% are “ready” for U.S. college-level science (ACT *College Readiness Report*, 2011).

The high priority placed on education in the United States will result in continued scrutiny of teachers. Jobs will be available, but teachers will be expected to be highly qualified and able to motivate, support, inspire, and guide their students.

InTASC Dispositions

9(o) The teacher understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy.

The public continues to have a great deal of trust and belief in teachers. In a survey asking which people were most trustworthy regarding public issues, teachers were rated the highest, above members of the armed forces, national experts, and community activists, according to the National Credibility Index (K. Ryan & Cooper, 2010). The public is also aware of the direct relationship between a highly qualified teacher and student learning. When asked to rate factors that have the greatest impact on student learning, 44% chose the qualifications of the teacher over other factors, such as class size or socioeconomic conditions of the student and school (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007).

Who Makes Up the Teaching Force Today?

The profession of teaching has changed dramatically in the past few decades. Teachers now educate in schools with grade configurations that vary considerably, teach an enormous range of subjects, and teach students with different needs. Popular grade configurations are elementary schools that include pre-kindergarten or kindergarten through fifth-grade levels, middle schools that include sixth- through eighth-grade levels, and high schools that include ninth- through twelfth-grade levels. Another, less popular, configuration beyond the elementary level is the junior high school, which includes sixth- through ninth-grade levels, and the senior high school, which includes tenth- through twelfth-grade levels. Table 1-1 shows typical grade configurations.

Teacher Qualifications

Teachers today have higher standardized achievement test scores and higher grade-point averages than their counterparts several years ago. According to a study by the developers of the **Praxis**

TABLE 1-1 Typical Grade Organizations

School Level	Grade Ranges
Elementary school	K-2
	K-3
	K-5
	K-6
	K-8
Middle/junior high school	5-8
	6-8
	7-8
	7-9
	8-9
High school	9-12
	10-12

test, teacher grade-point averages (GPAs) increased from 27% of teachers with a 3.5 GPA or higher during 1994 to 1997 to 40% having a 3.5 GPA during 2002 to 2005. Additionally, candidates' verbal SAT scores rose 13 points and mathematics scores rose 17 points in the same period (Toppo, 2007). Most states require that teachers have a certain GPA and complete a specific sequence of coursework before applying for a teaching license. States also require teachers to pass professional and content-specific exams, such as Praxis II, before they can be licensed (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2007).

Pre-K teachers. If you attended pre-K as a child, you might recall learning through playing with other classmates and through participating in interactive classroom activities. Pre-K teachers are very different from elementary and secondary school teachers. They typically develop children's language and vocabulary skills through storytelling and rhyming games; their social skills through cooperation and teamwork games; and their scientific and mathematical concepts through counting games and simple mathematics problems.

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the ages included in pre-K education range from birth to age eight. Pre-K teachers play a critical role in the development of children. Early childhood learning and experiences shape students' views of themselves and the world and influence their later success in school, work, and their personal lives.

Elementary school teachers. Elementary school teachers are usually responsible for a group of children, roughly 20 to 25. They teach several subjects and are responsible for one grade level. In some schools, several elementary school teachers work together to teach a group of students. Other schools also have teachers who teach a special subject, such as music, art, mathematics, or science, to a number of classes. Some schools have teachers who instruct students from several grade levels. Elementary school teachers are responsible for a wide variety of activities:

- Establish and enforce rules for maintaining order in the classroom.
- Prepare materials and classrooms for class activities.
- Adapt teaching methods and instructional materials to meet individual students' needs.
- Establish objectives for all lessons, and communicate the objectives to students.
- Assign and grade class work and homework, and use homework to evaluate student performance.
- Read books to students.
- Use computers, audiovisual aids, the Internet, and other equipment and materials to enhance lessons.
- Meet with parents to discuss their children's progress.
- Attend meetings, conferences, and training workshops to maintain and improve professional competence.
- Administer standardized achievement tests to determine students' areas of strengths and weaknesses.
- Store, order, and issue classroom equipment.
- Provide assistance to students with disabilities.
- Promote and sponsor extracurricular activities such as clubs and academic contests.



Pre-K teachers are charged with providing students with the educational building blocks they'll need to succeed in elementary school and throughout their lives.



Elementary teachers teach all subject areas and usually teach one grade level.

TABLE 1-2 Typical Schedule for a First-Grade Classroom

Mrs. Lynch's First-Grade Class Schedule	
8:30 AM	School day begins
8:30–8:45 AM	Morning announcements
8:45–10:30 AM	Language arts (includes reading and writing)
10:30–11:20 AM	Math
11:20–11:50 AM	Lunch
11:50–12:20 PM	Story time
12:20–1:15 PM	Center time (various subjects)
1:15–1:45 PM	Physical education
1:45–2:30 PM	Social studies/science
2:30–2:45 PM	Afternoon announcements
2:45–3:00 PM	Dismissal

Table 1-2 shows a typical schedule for a first-grade classroom.

Middle school teachers. Unlike elementary school teachers, middle school teachers generally teach one specialized subject, such as social studies, English/language arts, mathematics, or science, to several groups of students each day. But some middle schools have teachers who teach all major subjects to one classroom of students.

To students in grades five through eight, middle school teachers represent key authority figures and role models. Middle school children are at a developmental stage where they are developing interests in specific areas such as mathematics, music, English, or science; learning a variety of social lessons; and dealing with a wide range of physical, intellectual, and emotional challenges. Middle school teachers are not simply educators; they are also coaches and facilitators for these children. This is a very sensitive time for students, and what they learn from their teachers during these years can greatly influence their experiences and successes as adults.

In most schools, middle school teachers appear in several classes, spending less time with each student than their elementary school counterparts. They may have larger classes in public schools, or smaller classes in private schools. They may also be involved in extracurricular activities such as coaching a sport or sponsoring a club. These activities traditionally go beyond regular teaching responsibilities and sometimes come with an additional stipend.

High school teachers. High school teachers are highly trained specialists in one, two, or several subjects. They teach their specialty areas to high school students between the ages of 13 and 18. For example, a high school mathematics teacher might teach several classes of algebra and geometry, and a class or two of trigonometry and calculus. A science teacher might teach several classes of general biology, one class of advanced-placement (AP) biology, and an elective in zoology. They prepare lessons, exams, assignments, and reading lists in their subject matter in imaginative, innovative ways, in an attempt to generate interest among their students.

In addition to teaching classes, high school teachers also plan and take students on field trips, coach after-school sport teams, or are involved in other extracurricular activities. High school teachers work very long hours in an effort to enrich their students' lives, both in the classroom and in the real world. They are leaders and motivators who also grade exams, correct homework, and meet with parents.

Specialized teachers. A number of teachers have specialties that allow them to teach all grade levels, pre-K through grade 12. These teachers specialize in areas such as art, music, and career and technical education, among others. Some teachers concentrate on teaching students with special needs or teach students for whom English is not the primary language.

Art teachers. A career as an art teacher typically requires a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) or a BA in art with additional training in education. Art teachers teach students the basic principles of art and, very often, art history. Fortunately for art teachers, art is typically included in the curriculum of most elementary and secondary schools. Art teachers encourage creativity and teach techniques of various mediums including painting, drawing, and sculpture. They must have a wide range of knowledge about art, including art history, and an understanding of abstract concepts. Art teachers must be able to spot and develop talent and help all students discover their creativity.

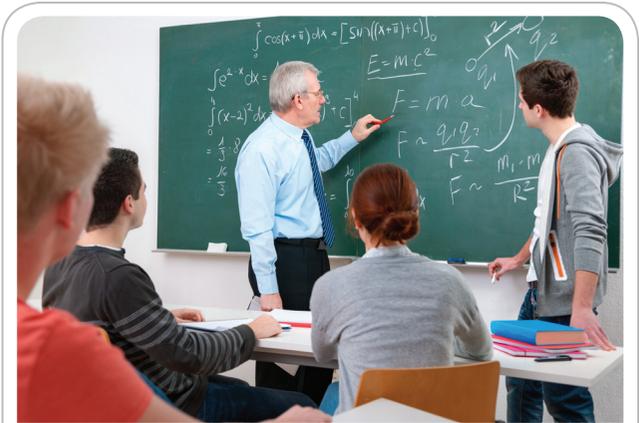
Unfortunately, when schools are on a tight budget, art and music classes are often the first cut. Art teachers who have difficulty finding employment in schools can also find careers as trained artists, art gallery associates or owners, or as art teachers in community-based art centers.

Music teachers. If you love music and children, consider a career as a music teacher. Individuals planning to become music teachers normally major in music with an emphasis in instrumental or choral music. Some universities offer a major that combines both. Music teachers teach both music appreciation and instrumental and choral performance. At the elementary and secondary school level, music teachers often direct the school chorus, choir, orchestra, or marching band. They instruct students in the technical aspects of music and evaluate performances. Sometimes music teachers take students on field trips to music concerts and may serve as sponsors when students engage in choral or instrumental music competition.

Career and technical education teachers. Career and technical education used to be called “vocational education.” These teachers may teach at the middle and/or high school levels. They often teach skills-based courses that are in high demand by employers who provide input to the curriculum and may offer internships in areas such as business, secretarial science, data processing, and practical nursing. Career and technical education teachers may work in public or private schools. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, roughly 16,000 teachers taught career and technical education at the middle school level in 2006, and 96,000 taught at the high school level (U.S. Department of Labor, 2008). Typically, teachers in this subject area will use a hands-on approach to teach skills to prepare students for the real world of specific technical careers.

Physical education teachers. A physical education teacher’s ultimate goal is to introduce students to physical activities that will develop and promote good health and nutrition and will encourage a lifelong dedication to physical exercise. If you find sports irresistible and want to work with children, then becoming a physical education teacher might be a great career path for you.

At the elementary level, physical education teachers work with students to introduce them to a wide range of physical activities. The intensity and variety of physical activity increase at the high school level. Physical education teachers may teach indoor and outdoor sports such as swimming, golf, baseball, dance, and aerobics. They also teach and demonstrate the use of equipment such as trampolines and weight-lifting equipment. An important aspect of teaching physical education is imparting the notion of sportsmanship and fair play. In the past, physical education stressed the importance of competitive sports, such as running and competitive basketball. Students who did not perform well in such competitive activities often experienced a lowered sense of self-esteem. Today, physical education has changed and aims to offer physical exercise for students of all needs and abilities.



High school teachers usually teach in one subject area, such as science or mathematics. They usually teach several courses within that subject area (e.g., a teacher of mathematics may teach courses in algebra, geometry, and calculus).

Teaching physical education isn't all fun and games. Planning exercises and monitoring your students' progress throughout the school year is a large part of the job, and not an easy one. Also, like every other elementary or secondary school teacher, you may have other duties such as monitoring students, attending parent–teacher conferences, and administrative work.

Special education teachers. Special education teachers work with children who have a variety of disabilities such as speech or language impairments, mental retardation, emotional disabilities, hearing or visual impairments, autism, and other health problems. Most special education teachers work with students at the pre-K, elementary, middle school, or high school levels. They typically use a modified general education curriculum to meet each child's individual needs. Special education teachers use an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each student who has special needs. The IEP establishes personalized goals for each student and is customized to meet each student's individual needs.

Special education teachers are increasingly using **assistive technology** to aid learning for students with special needs. They may incorporate the use of computers with synthesized speech, interactive educational software programs, and audiotapes to address their students' learning needs.

As schools are becoming more inclusive, special education teachers are more frequently working alongside general education teachers in the classroom. Special education teachers assist general educators in adapting curriculum materials and teaching techniques to successfully teach students with disabilities. They coordinate with teachers, teacher assistants, therapists, social workers, and other personnel to address students' needs. Some special education teachers work in separate classrooms with a small group of students. Others may work in residential facilities or tutor students at home or in hospitals. Some special education teachers choose to work with younger students, such as infants or toddlers, in the child's home alongside parents. Special education teachers provide valuable information and skills to parents, children, and other educators.

Teachers of English Language Learners. The number of students in the United States without English as a first language is increasing. A study of the 94 largest school districts in America, for the 2005–2006 school year, revealed that 13% of all students in these districts were **English Language Learners (ELLs)** (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008b). You may be surprised to know that most teachers of these students have not received specialized training to teach ELL students. In fact, only about 30% of teachers of ELL students have received training, and less than 3% of ELL teachers received a degree in English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual education (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). Despite this obvious obstacle, many teachers believe they can still perform their job well without additional training, primarily due to their commitment to teach. Many school districts offer professional development to existing teachers so that teachers can better address the learning needs of ELL students. In fact, some states now offer an ESL endorsement (with completion of required course work) to teaching certificates (Feistritz, 2005b). These changes are in recognition of the importance of ensuring that the educational needs of a growing ELL student population are addressed. Figure 1-1 shows a variety of ELL instruction programs.

InTASC Dispositions

9(l)The teacher takes responsibility for student learning and uses ongoing analysis and reflection to improve planning and practice.

FIGURE 1-1 Instruction Programs for Students Who Are English Language Learners

Bilingual Maintenance	Transition Programs	English as a Second Language	Immersion
Teach English while still maintaining students' native language.	Use students' first language initially, and then introduce English gradually.	Provide instruction in English, but attempt to adapt instruction to learner needs.	Place students in English-only classes with minimal adjustments to the curriculum or instruction.

Teachers in nontraditional school settings. Many teachers decide to work in nontraditional school settings. These may be private schools; but there are many public nontraditional schools, such as charter schools, alternative schools, and magnet schools.

Private School Teachers: Because they are not controlled by local, state, or national governments, private schools generally have the right to select students. Private schools are funded almost entirely through student tuition. Many private schools have affiliations with religious denominations, and nearly all religious denominations manage schools across the country. For example, many private schools are founded on the Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Quaker faiths. The Catholic Church has one of the largest networks of religious schools in the country, with 5,889 elementary/middle schools and 1,205 high schools. Total Catholic school student enrollment for the 2009–2010 academic year was 1,507,618 at the elementary and middle school level and 611,723 at the secondary school level (National Catholic Education Association, 2010).

Although private school teachers tend to be paid less than public school teachers, there are many benefits to teaching in a private school. The U.S. Department of Education *Schools and Staffing Survey* suggests that private school teachers are more satisfied with their positions than public school teachers (Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, 2009). The survey indicates that, by a significant margin, private school teachers are more content about their classroom size and receive a lot more support from other teachers and administrators than their public school counterparts.

Alternative School Teachers: No single definition applies to all alternative schools or programs. Although these programs are built around a solid set of principles, the field of alternative education is still evolving (National Alternative Education Association, 2009). Alternative schools are usually small, highly individualized schools that operate apart from traditional schools, although they are usually a part of a school district. They share distinguishable characteristics such as small classes, close student–teacher relationships, diverse curriculum, peer guidance, and strong parental involvement.

Typically, alternative schools are established in communities where social problems such as violence, drugs, and use of weapons threaten children’s ability to receive an adequate education. Alternative schools are designed to educate **at-risk students**, who are likely to fail or drop out because of obstructive environmental circumstances. At-risk students are characterized by low grades, high absenteeism, disruptive behavior, suspension, pregnancy, or similar factors associated with early withdrawal from school (Spring, 2009). Alternative schools seek to reduce the impact of negative community influences that lead to problems that interfere with children’s access to an education. Sixty-four percent of districts in America reported having at least one alternative school or program for at-risk students during the 2007–2008 school year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010).

What Are the Salaries, Benefits, and Other Incentives for Educators?

Teachers are generally considered to be inadequately compensated. Although teachers are modestly compensated compared to certain other professions, they do benefit from very stable and generous benefit packages and virtually guaranteed annual salary increases.

Salaries. A study of teacher salaries conducted by the American Federation of Teachers (2008) showed that the average teacher salary in the United States was \$51,009, while the average starting salary was \$35,284. Teacher salaries vary considerably based on many factors, such as state, region, or community.

- *The state where they teach:* Generally, states having a high cost of living are likely to pay teachers more. Consequently, in 2007, the highest average salaries were paid in California (\$64,424) and the lowest in South Dakota (\$36,674).
- *The grade level they teach:* A beginning elementary teacher is paid less than a beginning high school biology teacher.
- *The level of formal education completed:* Teachers with graduate degrees receive higher salaries.
- *The length of employment:* Someone with 20 years of teaching experience is typically paid more than someone who has just started teaching (Ferris, 2008).

Another way to look at the average salaries of teachers is to compare teachers' salaries to the average salaries of other professions. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012), the mean salary of various other professions was as follows:

- Lawyers: \$112,760
- Pharmacists: \$111,570
- Professors: \$62,050
- Physicians and Surgeons: \$166,400
- Psychologists: \$68,640

These salaries compare to the average salary of \$51,380 for elementary teachers, \$51,960 for middle school teachers, and \$53,230 for high school teachers.

Teachers' average salaries clearly are lower than those of professionals in other fields. Fortunately, teacher salaries are on the rise. Americans who want a better education for their children are willing to pay teachers higher salaries in order to increase the quality of teachers in their school districts.

The National Center for Education Statistics (2008) estimated that in 2006, schools across the United States hired more than 2 million elementary teachers and 1.4 million secondary teachers. These numbers do not reflect the number of new hires to replace retiring teachers. They also do not factor in the number of additional teachers that will be needed to accommodate the increased number of "baby boom echo" students. As you can see, the need for teachers is on the rise and will remain relatively high for the next few decades as more and more students continue to enter the nations' elementary and secondary schools.

Benefits. Although teachers' salaries are not high relative to some of the more lucrative professions, teachers have access to much better benefit programs, which include pensions and health care. Teachers also enjoy full pension benefits after 30 to 35 years of service, regardless of their age at retirement, as long as they meet state-determined retirement formulas. According to Costrell and Podgursky (2009), the median age of retirement for teachers is 58 years, compared to a median retirement age of 62 for most of the labor force. They also suggest that teachers with 30 years of service could conceivably receive an annuity of 60% to 75% of their final salary at the time of retirement, as they retire in their mid- to late 50s. Many professions in the private sector require people to work until a certain age before they can benefit from retirement plans. In addition to a solid pension plan, teachers have access to extensive health care packages and insurance plans offered by their school districts.

Other incentives. In addition to salaries and benefits, teachers may be offered sign-on bonuses and annual "local supplements." In some districts, teachers can receive up to \$2,000 in local supplements and up to \$1,500 in sign-on bonuses. The amount of these incentives depends on the teacher's specialty area. For example, teachers hired to teach mathematics, science, foreign languages, technology, or special education could receive \$1,500 in supplements. Teachers in elementary education, media, or career and technical education could receive \$1,000 in supplements. Earning a graduate degree can further increase the starting salary. For example, in 2006, the average salary for teachers with a bachelor's degree was \$44,138, while the average salary for teachers with a master's degree was \$52,710 (National Education Association, 2010).

Some teachers may be intrigued by the idea of working in districts that offer year-round teaching opportunities. A number of states have moved to a nontraditional year-around schedule to address both financial- and achievement-related issues. From a personal perspective, teachers may be attracted to the idea of taking more time off throughout the academic year. From a professional perspective, others may be drawn to a school structure that holds promise for addressing difficult issues in the teaching profession, like the achievement gap between students from low-income backgrounds and those from middle-income backgrounds (Lynch, 2011).

Merit pay. One hotly contested issue is the compensation of teachers through **merit pay**. The philosophy behind merit pay is to reward teachers who produce better results in the classroom. Though this may sound reasonable at first glance, the issue is highly complex. Districts with varying

characteristics use merit pay for a number of reasons, including rewarding teachers for certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), teaching excellence, and recruiting and retaining teachers. And it's important for you to know that the NEA adamantly opposes merit pay (Holland, 2005). Before you read more about merit pay, decide whether you agree, disagree, or are neutral about it. Jot down the reasons for your view. Now, let's take a look at the arguments for and against merit pay.

Support for Merit Pay

- **Americans value hard work and efficiency.** Indeed, our entire capitalist system depends on rewarding those who work hard and produce results. Many people cite “the pay for results” explanation as the primary reason for their support of merit pay. In most professions, employees are offered bonuses and salary increases when they do exceptional work. Teaching should have similar rewards. Consider the scenario where a hardworking, decent teacher earns the same salary as a lazy, incompetent teacher.

- **Providing incentives to teachers will encourage them to teach better and work harder.** Without the merit pay system, teachers have no monetary reasons to teach more effectively and work to produce better results. Providing extra cash to educators would most likely increase the motivation of many teachers to increase the quality of their teaching.

- **Merit pay programs will help recruit and retain high-quality teachers.** Merit pay may encourage high-quality teachers to enter and remain in the profession. It is often upsetting to extraordinary teachers when they see their less-dedicated colleagues make equivalent salaries. Merit pay may help end the stream of educators leaving the profession because it's not rewarding enough for their exceptional talents and diligence.

- **For those who believe that teachers are underpaid, merit pay will help to address this issue.** As mentioned earlier, teaching is not an exceptionally well-paid profession. Both educators and non-educators find teacher salaries lacking compared to salaries in other professions. Merit pay would be one big step toward alleviating this problem. What better way is there to reward those who are most deserving?

- **America currently has a shortage of teachers.** By implementing merit pay, teaching may become attractive enough to draw in fresh college graduates who may have been considering a teaching career. Merit pay would make teaching a viable career option for them, rather than an act of personal sacrifice.

- **The desperate condition of the American education system requires the consideration of all possibilities.** Traditional methods of running schools and motivating teachers have resulted in limited success. In a time of crisis, we need to examine all valid ideas as a possible solution.

Opposition to Merit Pay

- **When merit pay is based on student performance outcomes on standardized tests, teachers tend to focus on teaching to the test rather than their passion for teaching students.** When test performance is the primary criterion for merit pay, the teachers' primary focus becomes increasing student test scores, rather than teaching individual students. Additionally, standardized tests alone do not provide the best measure of a teacher's performance.

- **Competition may arise among teachers, leading to a decline in cooperation and good will.** In a non-merit pay system, teachers typically work as a team and help each other to arrive at good solutions. Under a merit pay system, teachers may develop a habit of looking out for themselves, resulting in a decline in cooperation. Ultimately, students will suffer and receive a lower-quality education.

- **Success is difficult, if not impossible, to define and measure.** Many attempts to define success have failed miserably in the past. A good merit pay system will require a well-defined set of goals and outcomes for teachers to reach. Unfortunately, due to the complex nature of schools and students, defining such a set of goals will be nearly impossible.



To hear one superintendent's views about performance pay, examine the video *Performance Pay: A Superintendent's Perspective*.

- **Pay teachers more.** Many opponents to the merit pay system propose increasing all teachers' salaries. Improved salaries will attract and retain talented teachers.
- **Merit pay systems will encourage dishonesty and corruption.** Teachers and administrators will be tempted to engage in dishonesty to receive more money. Merit pay systems create environments where legal and moral issues become problematic. An administrator's favoritism toward some teachers over others could lead to an increase in lawsuits. Ultimately, our students will suffer from the corruption that a merit pay system will create.

Figure 1-2 illustrates the debate over merit pay.

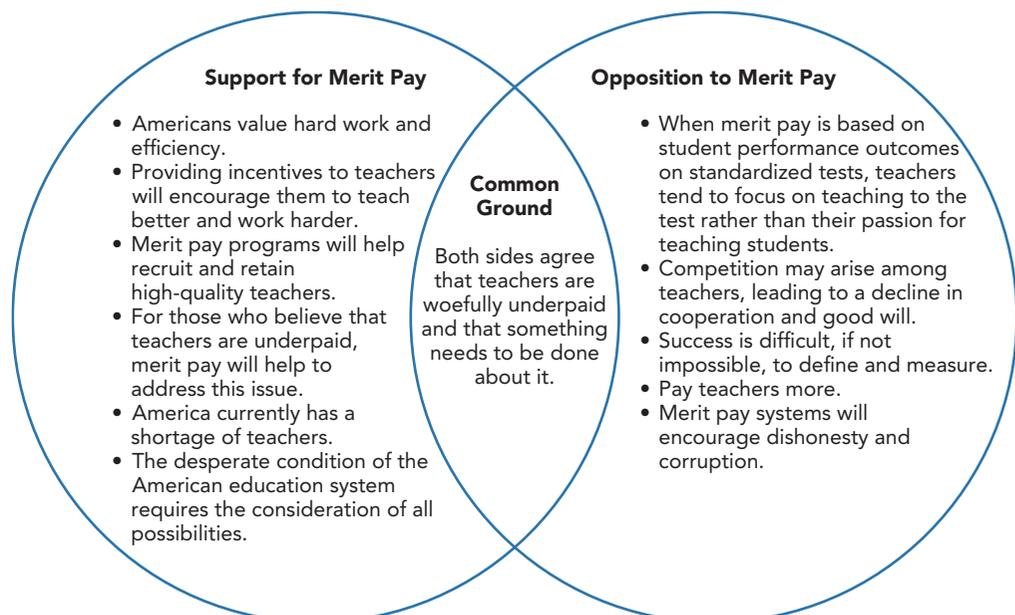
What Is the Job Outlook for Teachers?

An important question for pre-service teachers to ask is how easy it will be to find a job after graduation. With an anticipated increase in demand for teachers from 3.5 million in 2004 to almost 4.2 million in 2016, or an increase of 18%, the outlook for finding a job after graduation is very good, when compared to previous job seekers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). Unlike manufacturing, or even professions such as accounting and law, teaching cannot be outsourced. Teachers are not in danger of losing their jobs to workers in China and India. Between 2007 and 2008, about 49.6 million students attended public or private elementary and secondary schools. These students were taught by nearly 4 million teachers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008b).

Many job openings will occur as school districts move to replace the large number of retiring teachers expected through 2016. Availability will continue to be influenced by both school location and the area of teaching license. For example, positions will be more plentiful in inner cities and rural areas than in suburban areas. There will be more mathematics and science positions than positions in other areas of teaching. Still, working as a teacher with any qualification and in any subject area has significant advantages with regard to job security. The U.S. Department of Labor expects to see an increase by 12% of grades pre-K through 12 teachers, from 3,954,000 in 2006 to 4,433,000 in 2016 (Ferris, 2008).

FIGURE 1-2

The Debate over Merit Pay For opponents and proponents of merit pay to come to a compromise, they will have to use common ground as a starting point.



WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF TEACHING?

Any teacher will tell you that teaching is a challenging job. It tests not only the physical endurance of those who decide to teach but also the emotional and psychological fortitude of the individual. If you've discussed your plans with a family member or former teacher, you may have already been warned about the difficulties you might encounter. This section discusses some of the challenges you may face as a teacher.

Physical and Emotional Stress

Teaching can be very stressful and physically and emotionally taxing. It may surprise some of you to realize how taxing teaching can be on the body, especially the legs and bladder. Teachers stand for a number of hours throughout the day. Physical stress is exacerbated by limited access to breaks. Teaching is also very demanding emotionally. Sometimes students intentionally give their teachers a difficult time, which requires patience and understanding by the teacher as the adult and the professional.

Even when teachers are not feeling well physically, the thought of being away from work can be emotionally stressful. Unlike corporate employees, who can simply call in sick and not worry too much about the effects of their absence, teachers have a difficult time taking days off, especially on short notice. Teachers who miss work have to prepare lessons for substitute teachers, which can take several hours. Considering how much time this takes, many teachers believe it is easier to forego the day off and teach their classes themselves.

Teaching Is a Serious Profession with Serious Repercussions

When corporate employees make a mistake, they can usually fix the problem with time or money. However, teachers sometimes encounter problems that cannot be easily fixed. A child who goes home to an abusive parent, children who have been sexually abused on their way home, or a child going missing on field trips are all scenarios that teachers must be prepared to deal with. Many difficulties that students encounter are entirely beyond their teachers' power to control, and although teachers may strongly desire to do so, they may be unable to make things better for their students.

Teachers themselves are not allowed to make too many mistakes. Parents are trusting teachers with not only their children's education but also their children's health and safety. So teachers must be very careful both inside and outside the classroom. For example, on field trips teachers must take extra precautions to ensure students' safety. The extraordinary amount of responsibility that teachers have makes it a very challenging job, indeed.

Work Outside the Classroom

A teacher has to work approximately 1 hour outside of class for every 2 hours in the classroom. This is not far from the national average. According to an NEA study, teachers devote an average of 52 working hours a week to their jobs. Roughly 37 hours are devoted to required tasks; however, at least 10 hours of work time per week are uncompensated (National Education Association, 2010). Teachers are in their classrooms 5 to 6 hours a day, but outside this time, they grade papers, take phone calls, receive e-mails from parents, and prepare lesson plans. The problems of the school day weigh heavily on the minds of teachers through the night and even during the weekends. In some cases, teachers never get a break from their job. For instance, during holiday breaks, teachers often spend their time thinking about new lesson plans or examining their teaching styles. Contrast teaching to other jobs: when office workers leave the office, they can usually stop worrying about what went on at the office. Many other professions allow for enjoyable, worry-free days off.

Technologically Advanced Students

While young people are naturally attracted to the latest technologies, keeping pace with rapidly changing technology is difficult for some teachers. Understanding how to incorporate new technologies

into teaching has become an important component of successful teaching. Students spend several hours a day using media. One study showed that the average student spends about 8.5 hours a day using some type of media, a minimum of 4 hours of which are spent watching TV and 50 minutes playing video games. In contrast, the average student spends only about 50 minutes doing homework (Rideout, Roberts, & Foehr, 2005). Today's teachers must blend students' eagerness to use technology with their need to learn content. Effective use of technologies, such as classroom management software, blogs, and interactive activities, are becoming increasingly necessary for teaching.

Why Do Some Educators Leave the Profession?

People leave the teaching profession for many reasons. Sometimes a teacher is forced to relocate for personal reasons and cannot find another teaching job; others leave for financial reasons. Despite recent efforts to improve teachers' salaries, teacher pay still falls radically short of other professions. It is unlikely that teachers' salaries will ever equal or exceed the salaries of other professionals, such as doctors or business employees. But many teachers decide to stay in the profession because of the extraordinary amount of satisfaction teaching brings them. The personal satisfaction of bringing meaning to the lives of younger members of society often overrides financial concerns.

Teachers as a group are highly mobile. They are constantly entering and leaving the teaching profession, and many move from one teaching position to another throughout their careers. The most commonly identified reasons teachers leave the profession are retirement (20%), family reasons (16%), pregnancy/child rearing (14%), wanting a better salary and benefits (14%), and wanting to pursue a different kind of career (13%) (Provasnik & Dorfman, 2005).

Nevertheless, teacher attrition has become an enormous problem, with estimates that up to half of teachers entering the field leave within 5 years (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). Many school districts are developing extensive induction and mentoring programs to support new teachers, in an effort to reduce the number of new teachers leaving the profession. In mentoring programs, new teachers are paired with more experienced teachers to help them inside and outside the classroom deal with demanding situations and challenging students. School districts are also paying closer attention to their overall professional development programs. Ellen Moir, executive director of the New Teacher Center at the University of California at Santa Cruz, describes five essential stages of a comprehensive system of professional development:

- Recruitment: When a person considers becoming a teacher.
- Pre-service preparation: When a person studies to obtain a teaching license.
- Induction: When a person is hired. This phase includes the first critical year of teaching.
- Professional development: Continuing teaching, training, and receiving mentorship.
- Instructional leadership: When a person grows in experience, skills, and confidence, allowing the person to become a leader among peers (Moir, 1999).

As new teachers enter the teaching profession, it is very important for them to receive support in each stage. Studies show that teachers who receive helpful and thoughtful support in their earlier years, especially in the crucial first year, are less likely to quit teaching than those who do not receive such help (Marzano, 2007).

Here, in "Professional Crossroads," is the story of Anthony Smith, whose difficulties and concerns are typical of new teachers across the country.

What Are the Day-to-Day Activities of Teachers in the Classroom?

What do teachers do in the classroom? That may appear to be an easy question to answer, but teachers do a lot more than you may have observed in your experience as a student: there is plenty going on behind the scenes. We see teachers as people with a set of responsibilities, including asking questions, evaluating students, lecturing, praising or critiquing, assigning homework, supervising and grading examinations, and, at the end of the semester or year, grading each student. As you learn



Professional Crossroads

ANTHONY, THE NEW TEACHER

Ever since Anthony Smith was a young child he wanted to become a teacher. His father and mother were both teachers. His father worked at a nearby university and taught undergraduate mathematics, while his mother was a social studies teacher at the local middle school. Every day, Anthony eagerly waited for his parents to return home so he could listen to them talk about their school day. Sometimes his mother would tell him about how great her students were and what she taught them about the wonderful world of social studies. Anthony knew he wanted to be a teacher. After all, his parents were so happy and satisfied with their jobs, and he wanted to follow in their footsteps.

Years passed, and Anthony became increasingly interested and motivated to teach. He was particularly interested in teaching younger children. He thought to himself, "What a great joy it would be to spend each day with young children, teaching and laughing with them." Anthony's love of working with children became an important part of his life and was critical in his decision to pursue a path toward a teaching career.

By the time Anthony entered college, he had developed a fascination for the life sciences. He was fascinated by various life forms, and so he decided to major in biology and minor in education. A few years later, Anthony graduated and began job hunting. He was lucky enough to find a job quickly. Unfortunately, the job was thousands of miles away from his parents' home. After graduation, he'd planned to live near his parents for support, as he suspected being a teacher would be financially and emotionally difficult in the first year. Still, he was committed to sharing his knowledge of the sciences with others. Anthony accepted the job, despite the long distance from home.

He started teaching in the fall of 2001 at a public high school. His school colleagues greeted him warmly, and the administrators were welcoming as well. Anthony was excited to start teaching. To his dismay, however, his students did not seem motivated or excited by his lessons.

He remembered having to study very hard in college and wanted to prepare his students for the challenging road ahead of them. As a result, his lessons included a lot of reading and written assignments (both in and out of the classroom) for students to complete. He overheard one of his students say to a classmate, "I think Mr. Smith is a great teacher! He has a lot of knowledge, but to be honest, his presentations are so boring!"

Anthony continued to teach in what he believed to be the right approach to teaching life sciences. Day after day, his students seemed to lose their enthusiasm to learn, and eventually most of them stopped listening entirely. Anthony was devastated and had no idea what went wrong with his teaching methodology. At the end of his second semester at the school, the principal asked Anthony to attend teaching seminars being offered during the summer. Anthony reluctantly agreed, still believing wholly in his teaching style.

During the summer, Anthony went to a few seminars and a teacher conference. Through these, he learned the importance of using multimedia and technology to retain his students' attention. Having signed an agreement with the school to learn and apply new, more inviting teaching methods, he decided to apply what he had learned during the summer in his classes in the new school year. To his surprise, they worked amazingly well! Suddenly, his students were paying more attention in class, and his nickname changed from "Mr. Snooze-Fest" to "Dr. Awesome." Anthony felt deeply satisfied not only with his progress but more important, with his students' progress. He vowed to continue learning more interesting ways of teaching the same material. Anthony is still working at the same school and is considered one of the best teachers in the district due to his innovative and creative teaching strategies.

Voice your thoughts on this professional crossroads by answering these reflection questions.

▶ REFLECTION QUESTIONS

more about teaching, you'll find that teaching involves a lot more than just performing a set of actions in front of students. A significant portion of a teacher's work in the classroom is mental and requires a teacher to provide solutions to problems as they arise.

Generally, our understanding of teaching is based on our recollection of our teachers in school—the good and the bad, the easy and the hard, the interesting and the boring. Our memories lead us to conclude that we know what teaching is and what teachers do. However, in a seminal article titled "The Way Teaching Is," educational researcher Philip Jackson noted the changing nature of classrooms, due in no small part to differences in the nature of the classroom environment created by different teachers (Jackson, 1965). In some ways, our notion of what it means to teach may be an amalgamation of the various classrooms we were a part of.



Most students in this small group are working together—except one student. How would you react to the problematic student?

As we discussed earlier, teaching is not simply a profession that relies on the repetition of a set of actions. Instead, teaching is a science and an art that requires teachers to continually examine and modify lessons based on the experiences of their students. In his book *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Framework for Effective Instruction*, Robert J. Marzano suggests there is no one way to teach and no one right method that will lead to effective instruction for all children. If the one effective method existed, it could be taught in the same way that children are taught to ride a bike and everyone could implement it. Marzano leans toward the belief of teaching as an art: effective teachers, he feels, find the right blend of strategies given the students they are teaching (Marzano, 2007).

The teacher as a role model for students. We know teachers can be role models for their students. At the pre-K and elementary school levels, students look up to teachers as adult role models. At the secondary school level, teachers can be extremely powerful influences on the development of positive attitudes and behaviors among students. Students

learn as much from what teachers say as from what teachers do (Ormrod, 2006). Also at the high school level, student–teacher relationships are critically important. Students often seek out teachers when they are experiencing academic, social, and/or emotional issues. Teachers have the responsibility of encouraging in their students a positive attitude toward learning, not only for today, but also for tomorrow as part of a lifelong experience.

The teacher as a spontaneous problem solver. Teachers must be able to respond rapidly and appropriately to completely unpredictable situations that may occur in the classroom. For instance, a self-proclaimed relative pulls one of your students out of class. How do you respond? A student may decide to stop listening to any of your lectures, or another may faint due to health issues.

While it may be easy for teachers to plan and reflect on previous experiences outside the classroom, such luxuries are usually not available when working face-to-face with students. Teachers need to be able to think on their feet and respond to complex, ever-changing situations. For many teachers, this unpredictability is part of the excitement and challenge of teaching. However, for those people who require deep structure in their daily lives and who get flustered in unexpected situations, teaching may be emotionally upsetting.

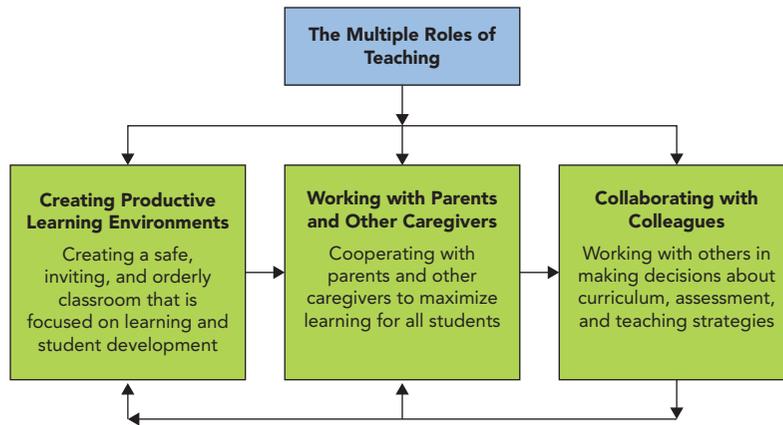
The teacher as a reflective thinker. Teaching has an element that cannot be defined or described—it can only be experienced. It is important to realize that you will gradually develop your ability to listen to students and to communicate to your students a genuine sense of concern for their education. How you show this concern will depend on your personality and your strengths, as well as your educational background. Teachers' thought processes are influenced by a wide variety of factors, such as the curriculum, the community, the school principal, and personal theories and beliefs about teaching. More important, teaching is a reciprocal art. What teachers do is influenced not only by their own thoughts but also by the responses and behaviors of their students before, during, and after each lesson. This dynamic and complex experience contributes to the uniqueness of the teaching experience.

See Figure 1-3 for a summary of the multiple roles of teaching.

What Does Society Expect of Me as a Teacher?

Teachers are the conduit for the quality of life in America, because they touch just about every adult in the nation at some point in their lives. Let's look at some of the reasons society trusts teachers and what society expects of teachers.

Public trust. Teachers carry a great responsibility. They are educating American youth, the future members of society, and they are perceived by society as highly important. Teachers are also given a lot of power over children. Parents expect teachers to do a good job in teaching and influencing their children and expect their children to obey and respect teachers.



Source: Reprinted with permission from Kauchak, D. (2013). *Introduction to Teaching: Becoming a Professional* (p. 12). Columbus, OH: Pearson.

FIGURE 1-3
The Multiple Roles
of Teaching

Teacher accountability. Even though the public may not agree completely about what should be taught, there is general agreement that teachers should be held accountable for promoting student learning. As a teacher, you'll be expected to understand and adjust to various student characteristics, such as student background, learning styles, and attitude toward education, to carry out your teaching responsibilities. You must create a safe and positive learning environment for all students. You'll also be responsible for maintaining professional working standards and equalizing educational opportunities.

Teacher competency and effectiveness. Society requires teachers who are competent and effective at their jobs. As a teacher, you'll be expected to have a deep understanding of a wide range of instructional strategies, curriculum materials, classroom management techniques, and educational technologies, and the ability to incorporate these into the learning environment. And although students today come from diverse backgrounds, you'll be expected to bring out the potential in all your students. To achieve this, you'll need to draw effectively from a wide selection of instructional strategies and resources to promote student learning.

InTASC Dispositions

9(o) The teacher understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy.

WHAT ARE THE REWARDS OF TEACHING?

The rewards associated with teaching can be divided into two categories, **intrinsic rewards** and **extrinsic rewards**. *Intrinsic rewards* refer to the private self-improvement or psychological fulfillment you can derive from teaching, or internal rewards that you perceive within yourself. Some examples of intrinsic rewards are enjoying your work and feelings of accomplishment for providing an essential service to society. *Extrinsic rewards* come from a source external to you. Some of the extrinsic rewards of teaching include the salaries, power, and influence associated with teaching.

Working with Students

For many teachers, working with students is an intrinsic reward and is often the most attractive feature of the profession. Coming into contact with students on a regular basis, having conversations with them, motivating them, and working with them to overcome various difficulties are all deep sources of satisfaction for many teachers. This satisfaction goes both ways: according to a survey, 58% of teenagers mentioned that teachers influenced them in becoming the people that they are today (Ferris, 2008).

conversation
STARTER

Sense of Civic Duty

To many teachers, the most important intrinsic reward of teaching is the sense that they are doing something positive and constructive for the greater good. Unlike members of professions such as pharmacy or accounting, who are somewhat dissociated from the outcomes of their efforts, teachers can enjoy the fruits of their

labor almost every day. Teachers actively prepare students for their next stage of life, whether that is moving on to their next phase of schooling or life outside of school. Teachers are aware of their pivotal place in developing an effective, close-knit society, not least because, as they gain experience, they receive letters and other expressions of gratitude from former students.

Status and Authority



An important extrinsic reward of teaching is status, which can be considered to be the honor or prestige attached to a teacher's position in society. In America, although societal views of teachers have varied greatly over the years, teachers are still held in high regard. Parents entrust their children to teachers for the duration of the school day, with the understanding that teachers will impart not only education but also good social and moral direction for their children. Fortunately for teachers, the U.S. government is committed to education reforms that could result in improved image and status, as well as improved financial benefits, for those in the teaching profession (U.S. Department of Labor, 2008).

Teachers have a considerable amount of authority and autonomy at their disposal as a result of their status, and it is their responsibility to put this authority to good use. They use this authority to establish classroom rules, to discipline students, or even to remove disruptive students from the classroom when necessary to maintain a learning-focused environment. The establishment of the NBPTS in 1987 elevated the level of teacher professional authority by providing a means for teachers to become board certified, similar, for example, to board certification for doctors. A set of principles for what teachers should know and be able to do was established by teaching professionals, rather than entities outside of the profession. Today, practicing teachers can become board certified by completing a year-long certification process to establish themselves as highly qualified teachers. This has considerably enhanced the status granted to teachers.

The Process of Teaching

Many teachers find the process of teaching itself to be exciting and intrinsically rewarding. Some teachers strive to become better at expressing their ideas, designing presentations, and working with students. Social contact is an inherent part of being a teacher, and this contact can help to improve student understanding. Exposure to a wide variety of different students allows teachers to have unique influences on each of them, and imparting enthusiasm and love for a subject that a student may have previously seen as boring is rewarding for any teacher.

Job Security

With the fluctuations in economic performance prevalent in modern society, few careers offer the job security of teaching. As an extrinsic reward, this can rank fairly high, considering that, although teacher salaries are considered lower than those of other professions, the demand for teachers is high and growing. Teachers can gain **tenure** after a relatively short period of employment when compared with other occupations. *Tenure* means guaranteed job security at a specified institution, and it is generally awarded to teachers who perform well for a certain number of years. Tenure can be granted at any time between 3 and 5 years of teaching. After a relatively short period, a teacher can be guaranteed a stable position until retirement.

Job opportunities for teachers are also on the increase, partly as a result of the **baby boom echo**. Children of baby boomers (the generation born following World War II) and Generation X (those born from 1961 to 1981) are beginning school or are currently in the early years of school. During the 2007–2008 school year, 49.3 million students were enrolled in American elementary and secondary schools. This number constituted an increase from around 40 million students two decades ago (Noel & Sable, 2009). As the number of students increases, the demand for teachers increases. This increase in opportunity will make teaching an increasingly attractive career option for years to come.



Survival Tip

STARTING THE NEW YEAR—WELCOMING YOUR STUDENTS

As the new school year begins, most students look forward to joining their new class. Students are usually a little nervous, so it's important to create a welcoming environment. Many commercial products on the market can help; but you'll need to consider many aspects of the classroom environment before spending precious dollars on these products. The setup and layout of the classroom will determine the ease with which the children can move around the classroom. And it's important to consider your approach to teaching while you arrange the classroom. Here are tips to consider when deciding the classroom layout:

1. **Teacher's desk.** In the traditional setting, this is one item that is generally kept in the far corner of the room or toward one wall to avoid positioning it in the middle of high traffic. On the other hand, if your approach to instruction is likely to be more flexible and interactive, you might want to have your desk closer to the students' tables and chairs.
2. **Students' desks.** The layout of students' desks depends on the kind of interaction that you want with students. Perhaps you'll frequently rearrange the desks, depending on the kind of lesson you're planning, provided the desks are not bolted to the floor. Here are some layout options for you to consider:
 - a. Students face the front of the room: This option is best for sessions that involve direct instruction.
 - b. Students face the center of the room: This layout creates a friendly environment and is best for interaction and debate.
 - c. Students grouped in clusters: This is ideal for student group work or collaborative projects.
3. **Overhead projector or multimedia projector screen.** The screen should be at a height and angle that allow everyone to see the screen easily. Make sure you sit in seats in various parts of the room to determine if you can view the screen comfortably from all positions.
4. **Classroom supplies.** Items that are frequently used need to be handy and kept closer to the students. Items used less often can be stored in a cabinet. The pencil sharpener and trash should be positioned slightly away from the students to avoid distraction.
5. **Notice board.** Decorate the board to liven up the classroom, as well as to communicate with students about important events during the academic year. Consider these suggestions:
 - a. Make the board colorful with students' project work.
 - b. Put up a "quote of the day" that is relevant, inspirational, and motivating. You may also make this a revolving duty of the students.
 - c. Allow students to put up pictures of places they visited on a holiday.
 - d. Educate your students about something pertaining to their curriculum by pinning up newspaper or magazine editorials.
 - e. Use another bulletin board for important school information, like the academic calendar, fire-drill instructions, classroom rules, and so on.

Follow these guidelines, and you can be sure that the new academic year will start with a bang!

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Why become a teacher? People become teachers for many different reasons. A desire to work with young people is perhaps the most common reason. A special interest in a certain subject area can lead someone to want to impart that knowledge. And some people become teachers because of the high job security educators enjoy.

The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) has developed a useful set of standards that describe the dispositions necessary to be a successful teacher. An understanding of these dispositions—along with commitments to being a lifelong learner, using the curriculum responsibly, meeting the needs of learners, and contributing to the profession as a whole—can be helpful in deciding whether you are called to teach and in guiding you along the way.

Is teaching a profession? Teachers are accredited, have induction and mentoring programs, have opportunities for professional development, are specialized, enjoy opportunities for advancement, are well compensated, and enjoy social prestige. So teaching satisfies the requirements for being a profession.

Teachers may specialize in a number of areas: by age (pre-K, elementary school, middle school, high school) or by subject area. They may teach art, music, physical education, special education, or English as a second language. There are many alternative opportunities for teaching, including in private schools.

Teachers' salaries are lower than those of other professionals, but the benefits and incentives are often excellent. The issue of merit pay is often debated: Should teachers be compensated according to the perceived quality of their work? Job security for teachers is good at the present time, but the recent trend of school closings and teacher layoffs in urban districts is threatening to undermine this status.

What are the challenges of teaching? Teaching can be a stressful job, both physically and emotionally. Teachers shoulder the responsibility for their students' well-being, which can be challenging. Teaching is hard work, with 1 hour of work outside of class for every 2 hours of teaching. Keeping up with the latest technology can also be challenging for some teachers. Teachers tend to be highly mobile, moving from school to school and from position to position within a school. Teacher attrition is a problem, and adequate professional development is needed at each stage of a teacher's career to overcome this. The day-to-day responsibilities can be heavy, and society has high expectations of teachers.

What are the rewards of teaching? Many teachers love working with young people and have a sense of accomplishment from helping students grow. They take pride in knowing that they are essential to the well-being of the society as a whole. They enjoy immense prestige in the eyes of the community. Many teachers simply enjoy imparting knowledge: the process of teaching is fun. Teachers also enjoy some of the highest job security of any profession, particularly at present, as the "baby boom echo" affects the population.

▶ CHAPTER SELF CHECK

Check your understanding of the chapter's concepts by taking this "Chapter Self-Check."

UP FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the important role that teaching plays in a modern society.
2. As professional educators, what can we do to improve perceptions of education held by the general public?
3. What should new teachers ask for, suggest, or fight for to better prepare themselves for more effective interaction with students?
4. What reasons may be unacceptable when considering becoming a teacher?
5. How certain do people need to be before starting a career as a teacher?

REFLECTIONS AND DISPOSITIONS

1. Why are the InTASC standards and the five professional commitments important to learn?
2. What is a disposition to teach? What is your disposition toward teaching?
3. Make a list of the reasons you have chosen or may choose to become a teacher. Compare your list with the reasons discussed in this chapter.
4. Think about teacher compensation. Was the discussion on teacher compensations close to or far from your expectations? Discuss your reactions regarding compensation with your peers.
5. After reading the pros and cons of merit pay, has your stance on the issue changed? Discuss the merit pay issues you feel are the most important with your peers.
6. Can you think of possible compensation reforms to resolve the perceived lack of balance between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of teaching?
7. InTASC disposition 9(1), provided at the beginning of the chapter, states that "The teacher takes responsibility for student learning and uses ongoing analysis and reflection to improve planning and practice." What are some things you can do to develop this disposition?

8. After reading about the various types of teachers and the variety of school settings, do you think you will make any adjustments to your overall plan to become a teacher?
9. Based on your experience, do you think the amount of support available for new teachers is sufficient and effective? If not, what changes might you suggest for improving the quality of support?
10. Can you imagine reasons why you might leave the teaching profession? Make a list, and discuss these with your peers.
11. Write down the rewards of teaching that are most important to you. Next to each reward, label them as either extrinsic or intrinsic. Discuss these with your peers, and explain why you labeled rewards as you did.
12. Imagine for a moment that you are participating in a career fair. You are asked why you are exploring teaching as a career field. Briefly explain your answer.

DEAR JOURNAL

1. Discuss some of the reasons that make you want to become a teacher. At what point did you believe that a career in teaching would be the right choice for you?
2. Recall a teacher who was a role model for you. Describe the teacher's influence on you. Did this particular teacher influence your decision to become a teacher?
3. The majority of public school teachers today are White. What are schools and departments of education doing to recruit Hispanic and African American educators? Why is this an important recruitment exercise?

FIELD EXPERIENCE ACTIVITIES

1. Make an appointment with a teacher who is currently at the elementary, middle, or high school level. First, ask the teacher why he or she became a teacher. Next, ask if the teacher is still happy with that decision. What words of wisdom or advice can he or she offer you at this point in your exploration?
2. Interview two classmates, and find out why they are considering becoming a teacher. Are your reasons for wanting to teach different from or similar to theirs?
3. Write a philosophical statement of education that addresses these questions: Why should there be a formal education system? What should this system accomplish? How do teachers fit into this system?
4. Talk to any of your classmates. Ask them to share their ideas of a teacher's responsibility in a formal education system. Note: When conducting this interview, don't be judgmental about your classmate's response. You've asked for their opinion, so don't challenge it.
5. Now interview one of your teachers, and ask them the same question. Conduct this interview with teachers in grades K–12, if at all possible. If you do not have the access to a classroom teacher, ask one of your professors these questions.

PORTFOLIO TASK

List your reasons for deciding to become a teacher. The first few will probably come easily; challenge yourself to think deeper, and take into consideration all of your motives. The following questions and categories will help you reflect on your reasons, but don't restrict yourself to them.

Personal reasons: Do you have teachers you admire and want to emulate? Do you have family or friends who are teachers? Do you gain a sense of fulfillment by helping others?

Professional reasons: Do you feel that you have a talent for explaining concepts to others? Do you view education as fulfilling a need in society or the community? Do you think you will function well in a structured environment like a school?

Social reasons: Do you consider yourself to be a "people person?" How do you feel about the idea of being surrounded by people the whole day? How do you feel about recognition in the community for your work?



chapter 2

TEACHING IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION

To understand today's classrooms and improve the culture of schools, you'll need to identify and understand the primary components of American culture. Culture and education are intrinsically connected: American culture shapes education, and education subsequently shapes American culture. When educators understand this relationship, schools can improve culture-based education and can reflect and promote different cultural worldviews.

An important aspect of culture is **school culture**, which consists of shared values and beliefs, as well as shared meanings of the community as a cohesive unit (Hobby, 2004). As a teacher, it's essential for you to incorporate both community and diverse worldviews in your teaching. A number of resources are available to ensure students maintain a strong sense of cultural identity. When you incorporate culturally based materials and content into the curriculum, students learn not only about their culture but also the diverse cultures around them.

Early in the history of the United States, society focused on **segregation** and **assimilation** to address differences between ethnic groups. People of northern European heritage were often assimilated into American culture, but people of an obviously different heritage, such as African or Asian, were excluded from participation. This focus has changed: today, the goal is to recognize and celebrate cultural and ethnic differences. Still, more change needs to occur, and American classrooms are on the front lines of making this goal a reality.

All children go through many of the same or similar feelings and experiences as they grow up. All children have a desire and a need to test boundaries. All children are curious and mischievous and can be at times kindhearted and at other times blunt when they speak. These traits can sometimes make working with children a challenge. The differences and diversities make teaching children an even greater challenge and yet a blessing at the same time. This is a challenge that every teacher in today's classrooms must face, in order to give children the best support possible as they pursue their education.

Learning Outcomes

Chapter 2 will lead you to the following learning outcomes. After studying this chapter, you will be able to

- define American culture;
- identify the roles of ethnicity and multiculturalism in today's schools;
- describe how teachers can embrace their multicultural classrooms;
- describe religious and linguistic diversity among our students;
- describe how U.S. schools promote linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom.

InTASC Standards

In this chapter we look closely at the dispositions associated with InTASC Standard 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(1)The teacher believes that all learners can achieve at high levels, and persists in helping each learner reach his/her full potential."
- "2(m) The teacher respects learners as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, abilities, perspectives, talents, and interests."
- "2(n) The teacher makes learners feel valued and helps them learn to value each other."
- "2(o) The teacher values diverse languages and dialects and seeks to integrate them into his/her instructional practice to engage students in learning." (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2011b)

WHAT DOES CULTURE MEAN IN THE UNITED STATES?

Culture is often difficult to define, as it consists of intricate interactions among individual human beings. It is understood through observation of a set of shared attitudes, practices, and behaviors of particular institutions, organizations, or groups, in relation to their environment. In its simplest definition, **culture** can be defined as the behavior, beliefs, traditions, and values that exist among a certain group of people. These characteristics are governed by rules that differ among different groups. Rules existing in cultures are learned throughout life and form part of the subconscious, so that individuals of a given society usually function without thinking about the rules (Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel, 2009).

In the introduction to this chapter, you read that **school culture** can be defined as the shared beliefs, traditions, and behaviors within the school community. Considering the diverse nature of today's society, it is sometimes difficult for students, parents, and/or teachers within a school community to understand their culture relative to that of the school, particularly when the two cultures do not easily mesh.

Although the United States consists of a population with a vast range of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, a number of themes in American culture influence all Americans, regardless of background differences. But individuals and groups tend to experience these themes differently, in many instances based on the nature of their individual and group characteristics.

Protestant Ideology and American Culture

Core values of American society are historically and fundamentally based on concepts of Protestantism, capitalism, and republicanism (Hollins, 2008). The influence of Protestant ideology dates back to the first half of the 19th century and was evident in certain school activities (e.g., Bible reading and prayer were a normal part of schooling) (Anweiler, 1977). At the time, schools were the vehicle for **Americanization**, a process by which immigrants were assimilated into the dominant culture. Schools were widely used in guiding morals, attitudes, and knowledge of American culture to all children attending American schools. They operated as a mechanism through which immigrant children were assimilated by learning American language, traditions, and beliefs that primarily reflected those of white Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs).

Diversity has long been a central element of the American way of life. **Diversity** refers to differences in racial or ethnic background, age, gender, sexual orientation, and religion. The Constitution

was designed to protect the rights of all American citizens. These rights provide members of society maximum freedom within the confinements of established laws. But throughout the history of the nation, certain groups of citizens have needed to wage campaigns to secure these rights (Hollins, 2008). And today, there are still some groups (e.g., sexual minorities) whose rights aren't protected by the Constitution. Individuals and groups who don't reflect the WASP status quo have historically had more difficulty accessing rights in the United States.

Figure 2-1 illustrates the four dimensions of student diversity.

Personal Freedom and Individuality

Many of the core values that form the foundation of American culture are legally protected. But there are subtle variations in the demonstration of these values within the various groups that make up American society. A core value of particular interest is personal freedom and the emphasis on its value.

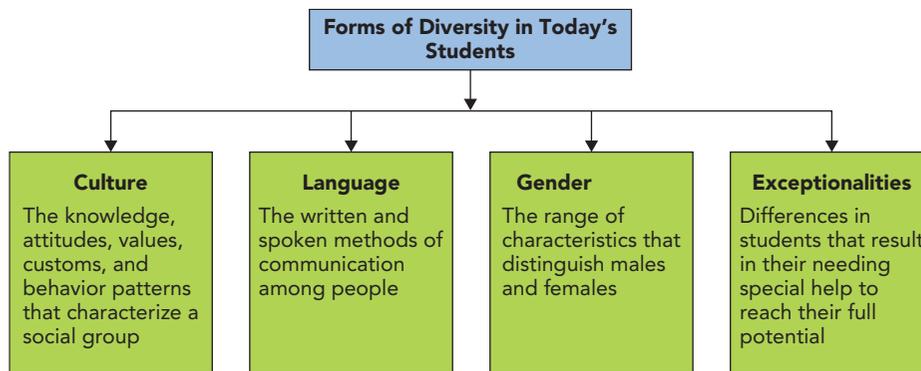


In this video one educator talks about ways you can embrace student and family cultures to create a welcoming school environment.



The American flag is an enduring symbol of freedom to many. In American schools, students are taught that education is the doorway to happiness and freedom. To the scores of minority students who are not receiving an adequate education in America, does this ring true?

FIGURE 2-1
The Four Dimensions of Student Diversity



Source: Reprinted with permission from Kauchak, D. (2013). *Introduction to Teaching: Becoming a Professional* (5th ed., p. 72). Columbus, OH: Pearson.

Personal freedom originates from the idea of being free of government constraints, and it is an essential component of constitutional democracy. Personal freedom includes the right to live in dignity and security and to seek fulfillment. Members of society are given the opportunity to think for themselves and make their own decisions—values that emphasize individualism, creativity, and autonomy. Individuals are also entitled to a set of public freedoms including the right to vote.

The notion of personal choice is deeply embedded in American culture. An average American is forced to make hundreds of calculated decisions in a single day; each one is influenced by the external and social environment. Some choices are highly valued by society, while others are limited by inequities in social class, unequal access to education and wealth, and biases that include racism and sexism.

In addition, the quest for self-reliance and autonomy is an important part of culture in the United States. Some Americans experience conflict between **autonomy** and **assimilation**. In many ways, schools reflect this contradiction and the challenges it may present. Students are encouraged to conform to dominant cultural norms at school, which may not coincide with minority cultural norms students experience away from school.

Political and Social Equality

Political and social equality, although ideal in theory, have been difficult to achieve; inequities among groups and communities persist. Legislative actions at the national level have been necessary to ensure the realization of these American values. For example, the Nineteenth Amendment, ratified in 1920, gave women the right to vote and run for public office, and the National Voting Rights Act of 1965 prohibited discriminatory voting practices that had interfered with the right of African Americans to vote.

Social equality—with all groups or members of a community having the same status—has been one of the most elusive goals in American culture. To maintain social equality, every person is entitled to equality under the law; the law must be applied impartially regardless of the individual's identity or status (Bond & Smith, 2008). Social equality includes equal access to a number of resources (education, health care, equal opportunities to work) as a means for avoiding the creation of a privileged class. Despite our laws promoting social equality, socioeconomic stratification in the United States has resulted in differentiated access to resources. But the notion of social mobility (the ability of individuals to move up the social socioeconomic ladder) is a tenacious ideal: the “American dream.” It is so embedded in American culture that blame for the inability to improve one's station in life is often attributed to the individual.

Justice for All

Another theme prevalent in American culture consists of two intertwined concepts: equality and justice. The American concept of justice is based on laws that have evolved over the course of American

history. These laws inherently include a number of privileges, responsibilities, constraints, and consequences put in place to maintain order within society. But as the gap in the distribution of wealth and resources in society has continued to widen, the challenge of managing a fair justice system in relation to constraints and consequences has emerged.

De jure and de facto segregation. De jure segregation, or legalized segregation of Black and White people, was present in almost every aspect of life in the South during the Jim Crow era: from public transportation to cemeteries, from prisons to health care, from residences to libraries. It decreed that Black and White people were to be separated, purportedly to minimize violence (Vann, 1955). De jure segregation, or “Jim Crow,” lasted from the 1880s to 1964. Jim Crow laws were efficient in perpetuating the idea of “White superiority” and “Black inferiority” (Klarman, 2006).

De facto segregation is the direct manifestation of de jure segregation, because the U.S. government could mandate that laws that segregated the races were unconstitutional, but it couldn’t change the hearts and minds of its people. If people didn’t want to be in the presence of another ethnicity or race, they could certainly make this a reality. So, de jure segregation was implemented by law; de facto segregation, by common understanding and personal choice. After the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, many White citizens simply moved to the suburbs to avoid mixing with Black citizens. This “White flight” led to the creation of “chocolate cities” and “vanilla suburbs,” which are still prevalent today (Klarman, 2006).

In relation to education, the legal segregation of the races in Southern schools was deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). In the United States today, however, Black and Hispanic students tend to be concentrated in schools where they make up almost the entire student body. Also, the percentage of Black students in majority White schools has decreased to a level lower than in any year since 1968 (Kozol, 2005). De facto segregation is a huge problem in the United States as it allows bigotry and discrimination to occur more easily. The outcome is that many schools in mostly Black neighborhoods find themselves unequally funded and seriously neglected (Klarman, 2006).

Persistent stratification. The disparities between rights of certain ethnic groups in American culture can easily be identified by the disparity in the number of individuals incarcerated in the nation’s prison systems. African American men are arrested and imprisoned at disproportionately higher rates. Reports indicate that even when similar crimes were committed by White and African American men, the penalty was more severe for the latter (Bond & Smith, 2008).

As a result of this socioeconomic stratification, a privileged class exists, with some Americans receiving benefits unavailable to others. For example, data from the U.S. Department of Labor reported higher unemployment rates for African Americans and Hispanics across all major age and gender groups in 2009 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2010). The number of children from ethnic minority groups living in poverty continues to increase as well. In 2006, approximately 13 million children were living in poverty. The number of Hispanic children living in poverty has increased by 23% since 2000, and the number of African American children living in poverty increased by 8.4% (U.S. Department of Labor, 2010). A 2006 study showed that social status had a significant influence on mortality rates, as well as “chronic diseases and injuries with well-established risk factors such as alcohol use, tobacco smoking, obesity, elevated blood pressure, cholesterol, and glucose” (Murray et al., 2006).

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF ETHNICITY IN OUR SCHOOLS?

Defining Ethnicity

A discussion of culture is rarely complete without a discussion of ethnicity. Different ethnic groups have, during various times in the nation’s history, played different roles, with the result that the United States now has a wide variety of ethnic groups. *Ethnicity* can refer to the common bond

within a group of people, based on their race, religion, customs, and cultures, but commonly refers to a mixture of all of these factors. For instance, although people from India are considered to be of the same racial group, their religious beliefs, customs, cultures, languages, and physical appearance may vary dramatically, even though they may consider themselves ethnically and/or racially “Indian.” Discussions about ethnicity, however, generally tend to focus on race as a particularly prevalent form of interpersonal discrimination. **Race** specifically refers to the physical characteristics shared by subgroups of the overall population. Although racial classifications may be historically important, it is important to be aware that they can be based on prejudices, and so should be avoided in favor of ethnic classification, which has a broader basis for classification.

Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in the United States

Teachers need to be familiar with the various ethnic and cultural minority groups living in the United States today. These groups include:

- African Americans
- Hispanics/Latinos
- Native Americans
- Asian Americans
- Multiethnic individuals

See Figure 2-2 for the percentages of public school students by race and ethnicity.

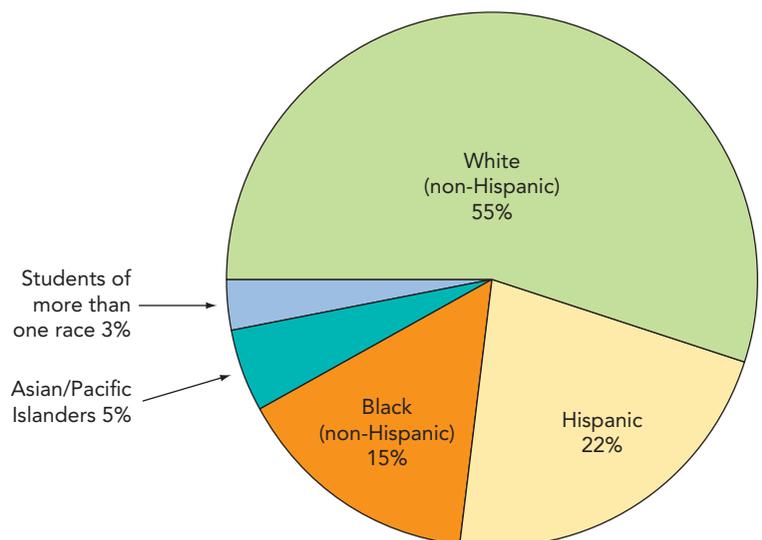
African Americans. Americans of African descent might be the first racial minority you think of when considering minority groups. African Americans were historically either forcibly brought from Africa between 1500 and 1800 to work as slaves for European American people in the New World or came as free immigrants, seeking a different life. Many African American families have been in the United States longer than many European American families (State Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina, 1937).

African Americans have had a difficult history in the United States. As slaves, they were considered to be property, not people, and were largely kept illiterate; their owners were afraid that if slaves could read they would begin to demand rights and freedom from slavery (J. Harris, 2012). Although some White people in the mid-1700s fought to educate Black Americans in the name of religion, laws were passed making it illegal to teach slaves to read or write. These laws were passed in South Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, Virginia, and Alabama. Eventually, support for the education of African Americans grew, and the first school for African Americans, the African Free School, opened in New York City in 1794. Slavery was finally abolished in 1865. From that date until 1890, African Americans enjoyed equal education in their own schools and received funding to run the schools. Unfortunately, as the European Americans saw African Americans becoming



Many schools and classrooms today are highly diverse. Students bring both differences and similarities that contribute to both the joys and challenges of teaching.

FIGURE 2-2
Percentages of Students by Race and Ethnicity in U.S. Public Schools



Source: Reprinted with permission from Kauchak, D. (2013). *Introduction to Teaching: Becoming a Professional* (5th ed., p. 73). Columbus, OH: Pearson.

educated and taking jobs they felt were rightfully theirs, this equality took a backward step, and in the early 1900s Black people were once again given fewer educational opportunities than their White counterparts.

Hispanics. Many Hispanic (or Latino) people in the United States, particularly in the Southwest, come from families that have been in California, Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico since the time these states were still a part of the Republic of Mexico. Many Latino families have been in the United States much longer than many families of European descent. Other Hispanics immigrated more recently from countries such as Cuba as well as countries in Central and South America. Historically, there are parallels in the educational experiences of Hispanic children and African American children, as both attended segregated schools. Hispanic children were able to attend desegregated schools in 1973 (*Keyes v. School District No. 1 Denver*, 1973). Despite that ruling, today, two of every five Hispanic students still attend intensely racially segregated schools. Almost 90% of Hispanic students attend public schools in urban centers, with almost absolute racial isolation (MALDEF, 2008).

The Hispanic population continues to grow in the United States, and their academic achievement will have a huge impact on society for years to come. American schools as a whole are not succeeding in educating Hispanic students. Recent statistics on the educational attainment of Hispanic students paint a bleak future, unless proper measures are taken (Fergus, 2009).

In terms of academic attainment, Hispanic students are not achieving a level of success comparable with that of their peers. More than 50% of fourth-grade Hispanic students are not skilled in math and reading, and by the time they are 17 years old, many exhibit math and reading abilities equivalent to those of 13-year-old White students. Only around half of Latino students finish high school, and the graduation outlook is even worse for Latino males. One predictor of academic success is school attendance. For whatever reason, Hispanic students are absent from school at higher rates than their peers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004).

Several issues contribute to these statistics. According to Fergus (2009), these include the following:

school structure (tracking, testing, teacher quality, curriculum, instruction, equitable access, and so on), district/school resources, immigrant status/nativity, language barriers, home-school culture compatibility, teacher expectations, location (urban, suburban, and rural; region of the United States), academic and racial/ethnic identity compatibility, and racial/ethnic identification. (Fergus, 2009, p. 350)

To boost the academic achievement of Hispanic students, American schools need to create interventions that can counteract the effects of these issues.

Native Americans. The original inhabitants of the land, Native Americans have been in the United States longer than any other ethnic group, yet their children comprise only about 1% of the student population in American schools. There are a number of reasons for this. One of the most profound reasons is that the Native American people lost a large percentage of their population to European diseases and wars with European settlers. While Native Americans were made slaves during colonial times, they were given the opportunity to become educated in the late 1800s. Unfortunately, their education was a form of **deculturalization**, as they were sent to boarding schools with the goal of assimilating them into American culture. They were frequently physically abused when they spoke their traditional language and/or engaged in Native American cultural behaviors.

Since the 1960s, Native Americans have been given an increasing amount of control over the education of their children on Native American reservations. They can hire their own teachers and create their own curriculum, and they still receive government funding (Bilingual Education Act of 1968). This has allowed them to create schools that keep their culture and traditions alive. Today, Native Americans are often grouped with other indigenous groups to include Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians. Each group is distinct, however, with its own histories, cultures, and languages. Their schooling experiences have differed as well.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. People from Asia and the Pacific represent another diverse group. They have ancestral origins from many different countries, including China, Japan,

Korea, the Philippines, Cambodia, and the Samoan Islands. Like other minority groups, early Asian immigrants to America, notably those from China, were excluded from the American way of life (Buff, 2001). They too were made to attend segregated schools, a practice that declined after World War II as Asian Americans began to move into more integrated settings. Asian Americans have often been stereotyped as the model minority, and their children have been stereotyped as being good students. This evaluation places undue pressure on Asian American students, particularly those who need additional support to succeed academically. Some of the pressure, however, stems from attitudes inherent in certain Asian American families, as the child's performance in school is seen as a direct reflection on the family. Being viewed from stereotypical perspectives can be confusing and stressful for students of any cultural background.

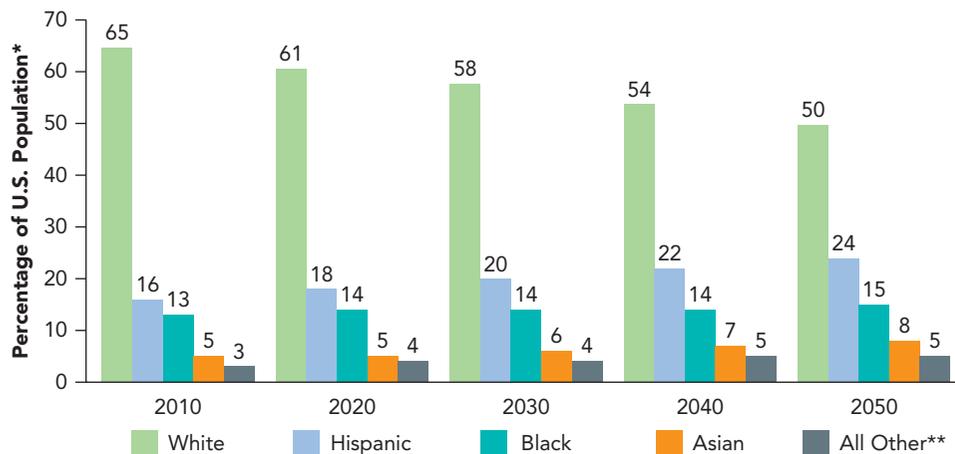
Asian Americans are as multifaceted a group as any other minority, and they suffer from some of the same issues and problems. They also demonstrate great variability in academic achievement. When compared to their peers, Asian Americans often score similarly to European Americans and higher than other underrepresented groups in reading and verbal tests. Also, Asian Americans outperform European Americans in terms of their overall or average grades, grades in math, and test scores in math. This overall finding is mostly for students in later elementary, middle, and high school, but not necessarily in the transition to school or in college (Siu, 1996).

Many Asian Americans have central cultural values that guide and influence their school experiences. Working successfully with Asian American students requires an understanding of their cultures and its issues. The most pressing issue of Asian American students is the “model minority” label. It can be viewed as a good thing, but it does have some negative implications for students. This status implies that Asian American students are superior to other minority groups and that this is true for their entire ethnic group. There are always students who are exceptions to this rule, and they will be held to unrealistic standards. This can place an undue burden on underachievers, and in some instances has led to suicide (Sui, 1996).

See Figure 2-3 for the projected changes in the U.S. population, from 2010 to 2050.

Multiethnic students. Finally, the number of **multiethnic** students in U.S. schools is growing. These are children whose parents are from different racial or ethnic backgrounds. The 2010 U.S. Census showed that children who identified (or were identified by their parents) as multiethnic increased by 50% since 2000, making it the fastest-growing group among young people (Saulny, 2011).

FIGURE 2-3
Changes in U.S. Population Projected from 2010 to 2050



*Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

** American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander

Laws prohibiting marriage between individuals of different races are called **miscegenation** and have existed for hundreds of years. Miscegenation was only ruled as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1967 (*Loving v. Virginia*). Labels that can be psychologically damaging are often placed on multiethnic children. Many of these youth attempt to throw aside the labels, as they seek to establish a sense of identity. In the past, racial identities were externally imposed on multiethnic children. For example, a child with an African American and a European American parent was automatically considered to be African American (J. Harris, 2012). Now, multiethnic individuals can self-identify, based on changes that were made during the 2000 Census.

InTASC Dispositions

2(n) The teacher makes learners feel valued and helps them learn to value each other.

For your multiethnic students, you'll need to be sensitive about the identity issues some of these children may face. Creating learning environments that are generally accepting of diversity will help all children, including multiethnic children, feel more comfortable about the unique racial, ethnic, and cultural background characteristics they bring to the classroom.

See Table 2-1 for data on race and ethnicity from the 2010 U.S. Census.

With an understanding of your students, you can create learning environments that are respectful and that allow students to more easily bridge the worlds of home and school. Gloria Ladson-Billings, a professor at the University of Wisconsin, conducted a study in which she picked a number of teachers believed to be top teachers of multicultural students, based on the votes of both parents and principals. She then studied these teachers to find out why their students were so

TABLE 2-1 Race Data from the 2010 U.S. Census

Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percentage of U.S. Population
White or European American	223,553,265	72.4 %
Black or African American	38,929,319	12.6 %
Asian	14,674,252	4.8 %
American Indian or Alaska Native	2,932,248	0.9 %
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	540,013	0.2 %
Some other race	19,107,368	6.2 %
Two or more races	9,009,073	2.9 %
Non-Hispanic White or European American	196,817,552	63.7 %
Non-Hispanic Black or African American	37,685,848	12.2 %
Non-Hispanic Asian	14,465,124	4.7 %
Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native	2,247,098	0.7 %
Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	481,576	0.2 %
Non-Hispanic some other race	604,265	0.2 %
Non-Hispanic two or more races	5,966,481	1.9 %
White or European American Hispanic	26,735,713	8.7 %
Black or African American Hispanic	1,243,471	0.4 %
American Indian or Alaska Native Hispanic	685,150	0.2 %
Asian Hispanic	209,128	0.1 %
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Hispanic	58,437	0.0 %
Some other race Hispanic	18,503,103	6.0 %
Two or more races Hispanic	3,042,592	1.0 %
Total	308,745,538	100.0%

Source: Data from U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). *Overview of race and Hispanic origin: 2010*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-02.pdf>

successful. Based on her findings, she recommends three principles for teaching in multicultural classrooms:

- Build students' self-esteem by helping them experience academic success.
- Ensure that students attain and maintain cultural competence, using their home culture as a basis for learning.
- Ensure that all students become critical thinkers and that they become actively involved in challenging social injustice. (Ladson-Billings, 2009)

Ethnicity, Equality of Educational Opportunity, and the Law

Remember that any law can be interpreted to suit the needs of a community and the historical period in which they live. The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is a case in point. One clause of the amendment emphasizes the principle of equality under the law, and states that “No State shall . . . deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” Under the equal protection clause, all persons, regardless of race, religion, gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, are to be treated equally under the law.

In the eyes of the law, equality means that every person has the right to access the education system provided by the government. But in many cases, people have been excluded from U.S. schools based on their ethnicity. A good example is the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case of 1896 (Watras, 2002). Plessy was one-eighth African American and seven-eighths European American. Because he had African American blood, he was required by law to ride in a railroad car separated from European American patrons, as all African Americans were required to do at the time. Plessy lost his challenge to racial segregation, and racial segregation continued to be legal until *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954).

Given the Supreme Court's decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, it was legal for states to provide equal but separate education. In other words, as long as European Americans and African Americans were both receiving an education, they were being treated equally in the eyes of the law. In too many instances, however, the curriculum, materials, and facilities to which African American children were exposed were not equal to that of European American students. The decision in the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) case determined that separate was not equal, and schools were ordered to desegregate. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was instrumental in speeding up school desegregation. Schools could lose federal funding if they ignored the civil rights act and continued to promote segregation. The act was highly effective in reducing the number of segregated schools in the nation. To support compliance with federal desegregation goals, criteria were developed to determine if schools still practiced segregation. Schools found to be in noncompliance had to develop desegregation plans.

Even though students were allowed to attend the same school regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, or socioeconomic status, the mindsets of the children who attended these schools, their parents, and teachers and school staff did not change quickly. Today, more than half a century later, students in some learning environments continue to face ridicule because of their cultural, socioeconomic, and/or language background. They often face difficulty in school because their needs, if different from the average White American child, are not being adequately met.

Teaching about Racism

Despite legislative changes that have made schools accessible to everyone, the mindsets of individuals who attend or work in schools have been slower to adapt and change. Racism has been prevalent for so many decades that once students are put together, racist attitudes will be present in the classroom and must be dealt with. One effective way this is currently being done is through the *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children*, which was developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Spring, 2009). The key here is to begin educating young children so the level of prejudice is significantly diminished as they move through grades beyond

preschool or kindergarten. Children as young as 2 years old are keenly aware of racial intolerance. Research has found the following progression:

- *Age 2:* Children are aware of gender differences and the various names for different skin colors around them.
- *Ages 3 to 5:* Children begin to define themselves and who they are by comparing themselves to those of different gender and skin color.
- *Ages 4 or 5:* Children begin to select friends on the basis of race and begin to recognize and take on the gender roles that society has promoted (Derman-Sparks, Tanaka Higa, & Sparks, 1980).

With conscious effort, racism can be curbed by slowing down or halting the development of biased attitudes and behaviors (Infantino & Wilke, 2009).

Teaching Tolerance is an example of a program used to address prejudice and intolerance among older children and teens. This program was created after a 1988 attack on an Ethiopian man by a group of teens in Portland, Oregon. It focuses on racism as a psychological attitude and aims to promote tolerance, which is the capacity to recognize and respect the beliefs and practices of other groups. The main goal of the program is to ensure the availability of resources and materials that promote and teach an understanding of race and culture between White and minority groups in all schools. One of the primary problems facing teachers and educators today when teaching about racism and tolerance is the psychological impact of such teaching on White students. With the knowledge of racism and the role played in perpetuating it, students often experience feelings of guilt and shame. Because these are strong and undesirable emotions, it is far easier for teachers to avoid teaching about racism than deal with the feelings that accompany a topic that continues to be difficult to discuss. The key is to help the students produce a positive self-image in dealing with racism, and to promote feelings of allied relations as various minorities fight racism together. This will counter the feelings of guilt that come with the realization that racism continues to exist (Tatum, 2007).

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF MULTICULTURALISM IN TODAY'S SCHOOLS?

Multiculturalism refers to the acceptance of multiple cultures coexisting in a society by providing equitable status to distinct ethnic groups. It is a concept that allows individuals to express themselves relative to society. Adopted by many Western nations in the 1970s, multiculturalism focuses on removing domination by one culture, while promoting diversity. During the first half of the 19th century, the absorption of immigrants into American culture resulted in cultural assimilation characterized by the “melting pot” myth. The melting pot is a metaphor for the notion that immigrants were not expected to abandon their culture. As immigrants assimilated, so the thinking went, a new Americanized culture was formed that included attributes of all cultures present in society. Critics of the melting pot notion suggest that the dominant culture in America was not substantively influenced by immigrant cultural characteristics: the changes all went in one direction.

Multiculturalism, however, is surging in the United States. In light of an emerging **globalization**, the “melting pot” concept is being replaced by one more accurately characterized by a “salad bowl” or “patchwork quilt” analogy. In this conception, cultural differences are preserved intact, valued, and emphasized for their unique qualities and contributions to the varied texture of society as a whole (Cochran et al., 2009).

Look at how Samantha, in the first “Professional Crossroads” in the chapter, dealt with Susan, her student who celebrates Wiccan rituals. Rather than squelch the interest of Susan’s classmates, Samantha encouraged Susan to talk about her religion and explain her beliefs to the rest of the class. This led to contributions from the rest of the class, affirming the religious diversity and freedom to believe what they want.

InTASC Dispositions

2(m) The teacher respects students as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, talents, and interests.



Professional Crossroads

SAMANTHA: LESSONS ON RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Samantha teaches a sixth-grade class. It is nearing the Christmas holidays, and the class is winding down. On the morning of December 22, Susan comes in with a new iPod and a great new cell phone. Matthew pipes up and says that Christmas must have come early to Susan's house. The class laughs at his remark, but then Susan says, "We don't celebrate Christmas at our house."

Samantha is intrigued by this, especially because the class has been studying different cultures and religions over the fall term.

"What do you celebrate, Susan?"

"We celebrate the Winter Solstice," Susan replied.

Many students in the class know about the Winter Solstice from a scientific point of view, and Samantha had done a lesson on it with the class the day before, but as a religious celebration it was an entirely new thing. They seemed eager to learn about it, so Susan told them the tradition in her family.

"We are Wiccan in our house, which means that we live our lives based on the rhythms of nature. At the Winter Solstice, we celebrate on the evening of the Solstice with a big family dinner, and then we have a ritual to honor the birth of the Sun King as he comes into the world again. It is the longest night of the year, and the next morning we watch the sun rise."

"What is your ritual like?" asked Sarah.

Susan looks at Samantha, wondering if she should continue. Samantha nods and smiles and she goes on and describes their ritual of casting a circle of sacred space, calling in the directions, and honoring the new Sun King. The class is amazed, hanging on the edges of their seats.

"That sounds really awesome," says Sarah. "Could we do something like that here, in class?"

Samantha nods and says, "Susan, would you be willing to lead the class in a small ritual tomorrow?"

"Really?" asks Susan. "Sure. I'm sure my mom will help me prepare something."

Samantha asks if everyone in the class is willing to participate in the ritual. "It would be nice for you to experience something different, but I don't want anyone feeling uncomfortable." Some children raise their hands. "That's great, don't feel shy. You are welcome to watch the ritual without taking part." One child asks if it would be okay for her to ask her parents first before confirming if she will take part. "That's perfectly fine too." Samantha responds. "Susan, please don't feel offended if the other students do not want to take part. We all want to learn something new, but it is important that we allow people to participate freely."

The next day the class holds a small ritual of the sort that Susan participates in at home. Samantha is surprised to find that many of the children went home and had discussions about religion with their families. They have all come back with new stories and viewpoints, and this begins a lively discussion about Hanukkah, the Jewish tradition, and Sam brings in a menorah to show the class. Two students in the class, Eric and Madison, don't celebrate anything during the holidays, and they explain about their beliefs as Jehovah's Witnesses. The final days leading up to the Christmas holidays are filled with spontaneous discussions and readings on the various traditions of that time of year. The students bond more deeply with each other and with Samantha.

Voice your thoughts on this "Professional Crossroads" by answering these reflection questions.

▶ REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Cultural Differences

A person's culture and upbringing have a profound effect on how he or she sees the world and processes information. Richard Nisbett discussed this in *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently . . . and Why* (Nisbett, 2008). Nisbett worked with psychologists in Japan and China and determined that the holistic way of viewing the world typical of many students from those countries differed from the point of view of their American counterparts, who tended to view the world as composed of parts or distinct classes of objects that could each be defined by a set of rules. In other words, Asian children saw the world in terms of the relationship between things, whereas American children saw the world in terms of the objects as distinct entities. This information is helpful when we consider how cultural backgrounds influence approaches to learning and school performance. A number of theories seek to explain the differences in school performance among racial and ethnic groups. Three theories stand out: the cultural deficit theory, the expectation theory, and the cultural difference theory.

Cultural deficit theory. According to this theory, some students do poorly in school because the linguistic, social, and cultural nature of the home environment does not prepare them for the

work they will be required to do in school. As an example, some students are not read to at home as frequently as other children are, and this has a negative influence on their vocabulary development. Vocabulary development may also be stifled by the amount and nature of verbal interaction in the home. As a result, some children arrive at school lacking the expected level of vocabulary development. The cultural deficit theory proposes that deficiencies in the home environment result in shortcomings in skills, knowledge, and behaviors that contribute to poor school performance.

Expectation theory. This theory focuses on how teachers treat students. Teachers often expect less from students of certain racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. When teachers expect students to perform poorly, they approach teaching in ways that align with their low levels of expectations. Students tend to perform at the low levels expected of them by teachers. This theory was tested in 1968 by Rosenthal and Jacobson in their Pygmalion Effect study. A group of teachers were told that their students were due for an intellectual growth spurt during the school year. Even though the students were average in terms of academic performance, the teachers interacted with them based on this expectation. All students in the experimental group improved both academically and socially by the end of the year. Based on the notion of a self-fulfilling prophecy, students who experience high expectations seek to reach the level of expected behaviors. Correspondingly, students who experience low expectations act to meet the level of behavior expected of them (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968).

Cultural difference theory. Based on the idea that students who are raised in different cultural settings may approach education and learn in different ways, the cultural difference theory stresses that it is important for teachers to be aware of the difference between the school atmosphere and the home environment. People from different cultural traditions may have an approach to education that differs from the mainstream approach used in American schools. For instance, in the Polynesian concept of learning, younger children are generally taught by older children rather than by adults (Banks, 2008). This is a very different approach to learning, and one that teachers may need to consider in an American school that is attended by Polynesian students.

A good reason for seeking out and acknowledging cultural differences among students is related to Piaget's notions that learning involves transfer of information from prior knowledge and experiences (Piaget, 1952). To facilitate this transfer process, it is important to acknowledge the students' background and to validate and incorporate their previous knowledge into the process of acquiring new information. All students begin school with a framework of skills and information based in their home cultures. This may include a rudimentary understanding of the alphabet, numbers, computer functions, some basic knowledge of a second language, or the ability to spell and write their names. It also includes a set of habits, etiquette, and social expectations derived from the home (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). See the accompanying "Survival Tip: Culturally Responsive Classroom Management."

If students can't relate new information to their own experiences, or connect the new material to a familiar concept, they may perceive the new information as frustrating or difficult or may dismiss it completely, believing it to be in conflict with their already tenuous understanding of the world. Teachers have the responsibility to seek out cultural building blocks students already possess, to help build a framework for understanding. Some educational pedagogy refers to this process as "scaffolding." Recognition of a student's cultural differences provides a positive basis for effective learning and a "safe" classroom environment (Banks, 2008), as the teacher Alysha shows in the accompanying "Professional Crossroads."

HOW CAN TEACHERS EMBRACE THEIR MULTICULTURAL CLASSROOMS?

It is not news that the American classroom is increasingly made up of students from diverse backgrounds. Of course, from the beginning of the history of the United States, the country has been multicultural, but the growth of minority populations is expected to increase annually. Now, 37% of school-age children fall into the category of "minority population," and this figure is projected



Survival Tip

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Every semester, I receive the following questions about culturally responsive education from my pre-service and in-service teachers: How can I create a culturally responsive environment for my students?

What does classroom management look like in a culturally diverse environment?

It's critical to consider classroom management techniques when you build a culturally responsive learning environment. You should be aware of culturally dependent interpersonal behaviors. Otherwise, you might misinterpret behaviors that are normal within the scope of a student's culture as a behavioral problem or learning disability. In general, conflicts between teachers and students are likely to arise if the teachers haven't educated themselves about their students' cultures and accompanying behavioral patterns.

For instance, many Asian children are taught by their community that it is a sign of disrespect to look an adult in the eyes. On the other hand, in the European-American community it is considered a sign of disrespect if you don't look someone in the eyes when they're speaking to you. A teacher who is not sensitive to such nuanced cultural differences may interpret a sign of respect in entirely the wrong way.

As another example, consider the standard style of discourse in a European-American classroom. Students are expected to sit quietly in rows of desks and absorb information that their teacher chooses to share with them. Students who wish to participate are required to indicate this by raising their hand and waiting patiently until they are given permission to communicate their thoughts.

On the other hand, in the African American culture, interaction is much more assertive and straightforward (J. Harris, 2012). If an African American student blurts out the answer to a question without permission, a teacher in a traditional classroom would be likely to mistake profound interest in the material for deleterious rule breaking. And when a teacher quashes culturally normal behavior, the message to the student is that his or her style of discourse is "wrong" while the instructor's style of discourse is "right."

Instead of engaging in authoritarian classroom management techniques, an instructor in a culturally responsive classroom creates a caring, nurturing bond with their students, and the students think twice about jeopardizing their relationship with the instructor by making poor behavioral decisions. Potential methods for building rapport with students include spending time on social-building games over the first few weeks of class, starting up conversations with students outside of class, and starting the class in a welcoming manner despite whatever behavioral problems may have occurred during the last meeting of the class. Such an amicable partnership between student and teacher tends to foster a healthy learning environment.

A key principle of culturally responsive classroom management is explicit instruction about rules in a caring way. If students fail to adhere to a rule, contact is initiated in a caring fashion. The instructor should consider that children do things for a reason and that it is the instructor's job to figure out what that reason is. Is it due to a culture clash? Is it a reaction to a perceived power differential or social injustice? If so, the rule itself may need to be revisited.

Creating a culturally responsive classroom can be challenging, but the results are well worth the effort. If you use the strategies outlined here, you will have a well-managed, culturally responsive classroom in no time.

to increase significantly in the next few years. In 2000, Hispanics replaced African Americans as the largest minority population in America (P. L. Marshall, 2002). Official figures also showed an increasing percentage of people of Asian background.

Young people often make up a large part of these "minority groups." The percentages of minority youths in some states are extremely high and increasing. Children of color are expected to make up more than half of all American classrooms by the year 2040. Texas, Florida, California, and New York are expected to account for more than one third of the nation's young people by 2040, and according to previous projections, 52% of the youth population of each of these states will be from "minority" groups (Rong & Preissle, 2009). The implications of these statistics are more far-reaching than if taken at face value. It's not just about ethnic and racial diversity; it's also about the huge diversity in belief systems, academic levels, educational expectations, and linguistic diversity. This last issue is crucial in education. Large numbers of students are now entering schools with little or no competence in the English language and, regardless of their educational level, will immediately fall behind the state expectations (Black, 2005).

▶ have you
been called?



Professional Crossroads

ALYSHA: MULTICULTURAL TEACHABLE MOMENTS

One of the best semesters Alysha had as a teacher began with a series of near-misses. She had a group of very curious sophomores in a World Literature class, which began with a comparative study of the origin of myths. She had always loved mythology and tried to incorporate world myths as often as possible because most high school students, she believed, were familiar with the antics of Zeus, Aphrodite, Apollo, and Hermes. It seemed a particularly appropriate beginning for the semester, because her students would be studying Homer's *Iliad* and the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, both rich in mythological elements.

That semester, her sophomores seemed eager and interested, as they were good readers and unusually enthusiastic for their ages. A few students with learning disabilities were eligible for modifications, but they too seemed excited about the material. One student had moved to America from India over the summer. The boy had not yet been tested for English as a second language (ESL), but he informed Alysha that he had studied English at a private school in Bhopal. He spoke English well, but struggled a bit with vocabulary and would probably come in after school sometimes for extra help. His name was Harsh Shah, and he loved literature.

"Shah?" Alysha asked, "Doesn't that mean *king* in Persian?"

Harsh beamed and said, "Yes ma'am, in India I'm a king, but in America, just a new Indian student."

Alysha liked his quick wit, and his classmates seemed to enjoy him instantly. Alysha asked if his first name was also Persian. Harsh told her, "No, it is an Indian word for *joyful*." One of the boys explained that "harsh" had negative connotations in English and that a "harsh king" would not be appreciated. Harsh laughed this off and said, "Then you should move to India, where it is the opposite!"

Harsh made friends quickly and easily and was soon a class favorite. Over the next 2 weeks, the class discussed Greek mythology, comparing it with Asian myths, Nordic myths, and Native American myths. They began reading the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, comparing Gilgamesh to some of the archetypal Greek heroes. The students discussed the significance of the flood references in Sumerian, Greek, and Chinese cultures, and eventually read the story of Noah's ark. Harsh became very excited. "But it was a fish, this god who told him to build a boat. The god was a fish!"

"Matsya?" Alysha asked.

"Yes!" Harsh squealed. He was surprised Alysha had heard of Matsya, the Hindu flood story. She asked if Harsh would like to bring in a copy of the tale, so that students could compare the elements.

"To read, in class?" he asked.

"Of course," Alysha told him.

"We could make another column on the wall chart," one student suggested.

Harsh brought in a copy of the tale, and Alysha asked him to read it for the class. After comparing characters, plot elements, and details, students added these to their growing chart of myth archetypes. Harsh explained that the story emphasized Hindu values of wisdom and receptiveness to messages from one's god, even when those messages come from unexpected sources. Other students recalled the instance of the burning bush, in the Hebrew story of Moses and examples of talking creatures from Greek myth.

The class textbook featured a short section of the Hebrew Bible following the Gilgamesh excerpts. They would tackle those next, and then students would read a substantial portion of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It had seemed too daunting for sophomores in past years, but this group was on a different plane. They were on board for as much mythology as they could get, and by the end of the semester, they were singing David Bowie's "Changes" as if Bowie had composed it with Ovid in mind. Before Alysha began to teach *Metamorphoses*, however, she prepared students by comparing various creation myths, and students read the Hebrew creation story.

Harsh asked what the story was about. Ramon explained that it was the story about Adam and Eve and the Devil. This was of particular interest to Harsh, who explained that Hinduism had no devil or its equivalent. Another animated discussion ensued after reading the account in *Genesis* that refers to a serpent but doesn't specifically mention "the devil." This prompted some indignation from other students.

A Jamaican girl named Shandi interjected, "Just because you do not believe in the devil does not mean there are no spirits of evil." While students continued to their debate about devils, the forces of evil, and the fall of man, Hana, a shy Asian girl who was normally silent, rose from her seat and quietly went to the whiteboard. She asked if she could use the markers, and Alysha nodded. Intently, Hana drew two sets of Chinese characters on the board. Alysha coaxed the boys to be quiet long enough for Hana to explain, and this time Alysha was the one rendered speechless.

The first group of characters, Hana pointed out, was a series of several simple characters: the pictographs for concepts of motion, a garden, a man, privacy, a devil, trees, and a secret. When those simple lines were combined, she explained, they formed one character, the word *temper*. This was an ancient symbol, she said. The second group of simple characters, she explained, represented the concepts of dust, breath, and walking. Combined, she said, they

formed the character for to create. The students wanted more, and so did Alysha. Hana laughed shyly and said she really was not very good at this. Her father had shown her a few others, but she did not remember how to form them. A flood of questions ensued.

That semester provided many spontaneous teachable moments that would be hard to replicate. The following week, a Jewish student volunteered to recite some of the Torah in Hebrew. Later in the semester, two senior students

performed traditional dances from *Bharatanatyam* for the class. The sophomores were fascinated by the storytelling dances, the gestures, and the amount of concentration these girls showed in their art. Alysha was continually amazed and learned more than she had ever anticipated.

Voice your thoughts on this “Professional Crossroads” by answering these reflection questions.

▶ REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Because of the diversity in the classroom, a “typical student profile” no longer exists. Education in America must suit the needs of all its students. So, multicultural education is a hot topic. More classroom teachers have studied the concepts of multicultural education in the past few years than ever before. Textbook publishers are integrating content into their books that reflects and respects the changing face of American schools and society.

According to Banks (2008), obtaining a multicultural education should provide a positive opportunity for all members of the system (including European Americans). It should aim to build skills, knowledge, attitudes, and passions for all members of the ever-changing society that is full of diversity and contrast. After all, it is within this very society that all current students will become contributing and benefiting adults. Multicultural education should improve for minority groups (including disabled students) especially, and their specific needs, skills, strengths, and weaknesses should be consciously addressed to a greater extent than is currently the case (Banks, 2008). Educators need to develop and implement a range of specific classroom strategies to improve multicultural education for minority groups and so that the educating system as a whole can benefit. Improving education in a multicultural context involves four major elements:

1. Educators should write and implement a curriculum that is more inclusive of different cultural perspectives and the contributions related to each subject or concept. A history or sociology course, for example, should discuss the contributions, differences between, and importance of African American, Native American, and Hispanic peoples and cultures, and their impact and influence on the society as a whole.
2. Teachers and schools should be conscious of, and deeply committed to, helping all students reach their full potential, without prejudice or discrimination regarding academic achievement, race, culture, and physical or mental disability.
3. Teachers, schools, and educators should be aware of, and address, racist tendencies and any actions that convey discrimination, prejudice, or stereotyping of minority groups.
4. Teachers and schools should provide help and support for students, to aid their understanding and treatment of social and structural inequalities in American society. Teachers should encourage open dialogue about issues such as classism, racism, and sexism (Banks, 2008).

Multicultural Approach to Education

The growing number of immigrants in the United States has created an interesting challenge for American schools. Multiculturalism is by its very nature based on the premise of social equality and an appreciation of all cultures. By advocating a multicultural approach to education, we foster a positive environment that encourages both individual uniqueness and pride in cultural diversity. One of the greatest challenges for teachers is to teach students from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. But the importance of maintaining cultural diversity in today’s classrooms is absolutely essential in a diverse society where values and experiences remain based on race and ethnicity. In today’s classroom, cultural diversity requires teachers to provide a wide range of learning options, as they seek to meet the needs of all students. Hollins (2008) encourages the promotion of simultaneous inclusion

in the educational setting by designing the curriculum to address both the common needs among all students and the needs of students from particular cultures. Teachers must be prepared to promote unity between students in their classroom and at the same time, celebrate cultural differences (Orlich et al., 2010).

Culture has been described as the “software of the mind.” In his studies of intercultural cooperation, social psychologist Geert Hofstede asserts that all individuals are “mentally programmed” through their culture. The programming “code” is detected through cultural indicators. These include values, which are attributes believed essential for survival; heroes, real or fictional, who exemplify those values; symbols, including gestures, language, and pictures that have special meaning; rituals, which may include religion or table manners; and folklore, including sayings, stories, and norms, which are the societal rules that members follow for acceptance and success within a particular culture. People who share common mental programming share culture (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

Examining cultural diversity through this lens, it’s easy to see why a “melting pot” environment is neither productive nor desirable. Ignoring cultural differences can profoundly impact the learning environment. Diversity is to be valued and respected in the classroom, in order to broaden our understanding of the human experience and enrich us as a society. Sensitivity to cultural codes is a powerful tool for success in a blended society (Orlich et al., 2010).

InTASC Dispositions

2(l) The teacher believes that all learners can achieve at high levels and persists in helping each learner reach his or her full potential.

In your classroom, you’ll need to ensure that you incorporate methods of teaching that accommodate the various beliefs and cultural notions that students bring to school. This will require you to develop an understanding of your students’ culture and to know your students as individuals. And it will be important for you to ensure that you treat all students equally and have high expectations for each, so that they will all strive to reach their full potential.

School and Cultural Norms

School climate and school culture directly impact student success. As a result, it is particularly important for the school culture (and the classroom culture) to reflect, acknowledge, and celebrate diversity. Schools must recognize not only the diversity evident between broad ethnic groups (e.g., Asian or Hispanic) but also the diversity *within* these groups. For example, Chinese and Japanese students may share common cultural characteristics as a result of being Asian but will also have distinctly Chinese and Japanese cultural characteristics that differ. In the interest of treating students equally and giving them equal chances for success and equal access to the curriculum, teachers and administrators must recognize the uniqueness and individuality of their students. Teachers have a particular responsibility to recognize and structure their lessons to reflect student differences. This encourages students to recognize themselves and others as individuals. It also encourages the appreciation of a diverse school population and creates a sense of connection between disparate cultural heritages within a single school’s culture. It is certainly in the best interest of students and teachers to focus on the richness of our diversity. Recognizing and acknowledging our differences is part of treating students fairly and equally (Banks, 2008).

School organizations and curricula are based on the needs and values of the societies they represent. Approaches to education emerge based on political and social structures and are replete with heroes, values, symbols, rituals, and norms. As the American social structure expands to include a more diverse population, our schools must expand the curriculum to reflect a more global community. Students today will live as adults in a society more accepting of diversity, and one where global influences are more apparent. They must be prepared to live in that world.

American schools attempt to monitor learning through nationally standardized assessment instruments such as the Criterion Reference Competency Test (CRCT), American College Testing (ACT), and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Schools emphasize particular topics and fields of study and use mastery of these subjects to determine grade progression and the ability to gain admission to college. Schools also use age-level grouping, along with periodic assessment of students’ skills and knowledge, to regulate class sizes and progressions through a structured system of learning. Progress reports are frequent. In addition to these academic learning activities, state-mandated drills

are held to learn school procedures for fire safety, inclement weather, and other emergency situations. Most school systems implement a district-wide policy controlling disciplinary infractions with guidelines for truancy, suspension, and other serious infringements. Each of these processes and procedures reflect certain values of American society, such as the need for structure and order, the desire to maximize potential, the desire to recognize achievement, and the importance of multiple opportunities for individual success (Cochran et al., 2009).

The customs and regular practices that reflect our beliefs and value systems with regard to education make up a school's culture. The structure of school boards, districts, superintendents, and curriculum committees resembles the structure of the national government. It also parallels the values of a largely Protestant, capitalist population, with an emphasis on individual accomplishments, competition, and equality. School infrastructure also reflects the cultural inequities and imbalances of the larger society.

Even though the widely accepted values, norms, assessments, and practices described here are indicators of school culture, schools may have individual **school climates**. Educators have debated about the definition of *school climate* but haven't developed a single, accepted definition. Some argue that the feelings and attitudes of teachers, students, staff, and parents are influenced by a school climate that is based on intangibles (Hunt, Carper, Lasley, & Raisch, 2010). Hunt and coworkers have suggested that school climate has four domains and that to achieve a positive school climate, these domains must have the following characteristics:

- *Physical Safety*. The physical environment must be safe, and welcoming, and must support learning.
- *Social Relationships*. The school must encourage positive communication and interaction among students, teachers, and the wider community.
- *Emotional Environment*. Students must feel emotionally supported to encourage high self-esteem and a sense of belonging.
- *Academic Support*. The academic environment must be conducive to learning and achievement for all students (Hunt et al., 2010).

Culturally Responsive Curriculum

Instead of using the “color-blind” approach to instruction, overlooking students’ race or ethnic background in the interests of equality, it is wise to be “color aware” in designing your classroom climate and curriculum. Although students are individuals, they are also products of their environments—no one grows up in a vacuum. A multicultural society is best served by a **culturally responsive** curriculum. Schools that acknowledge the diversity of their student population use this model as an effective tool for school unification, as well as to promote cultural understanding. As a result, a culturally responsive curriculum is **inclusive**, in that it ensures that all students are included within all aspects of the school. A culturally responsive curriculum also encourages teachers’ understanding and recognition of each student’s nonschool cultural life and background and provides a means for teachers to incorporate this information into the curriculum, promoting inclusion (Horsley & Walker, 2005).

An alert and sensitive teacher will not only be aware of students’ varied backgrounds but will also highlight moments that emphasize the interesting differences among students. Remember Alysha, the teacher in the second Professional Crossroads for this chapter? It’s certainly possible that her new Indian student, Harsh Shah, might be ridiculed for his name. But her interest in his background helps validate him. When he notes the similarity between the flood story in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and a myth from his homeland, she encourages him to share this.



Culturally responsive teaching is both inclusive and particularistic. It seeks to include students in all aspects of the school community while respecting unique differences students may possess.

Schools have a responsibility to teach all students how to synthesize cultural differences into their knowledge base, to facilitate students' personal and professional success in a diverse world. A culturally responsive curriculum helps students from a minority ethnic/racial background develop a sense of identity as individuals, as well as to proudly identify with their particular culture group. Schools with a culturally responsive curriculum strive to develop a balanced understanding of history, because this perspective reflects both the positive and negative experiences of all of America's ancestors. It is also important for teachers of monocultural classrooms to integrate multicultural learning experiences into the curriculum. Multicultural learning experiences tend to build a tolerant, accepting, and nondiscriminatory classroom environment. They foster empathy and appreciation for other cultures and prevent prejudices built on ignorance and lack of exposure (R. W. Cole, 2008). According to education icon Gloria Ladson-Billing, students in monocultural learning environments should also be exposed to the history and perspectives of diverse populations. Such learning experiences expand their understanding of individuals they will likely encounter in a diverse adult world (Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Embracing Your Multicultural Classroom

Spending time outside school with students and their families could have a positive impact on your cultural comprehension level, not only of the culture and background of your students, but also on the best ways to deal with, speak to, instruct, and discipline them.

Before addressing any behavior in a classroom, teachers must comprehend it. Teachers must know enough to be able to respect their students' backgrounds, must have an idea of the struggles and problems their students may face now or in the future, and must be confident enough to address obstacles as they arise. For teachers to understand their students' different ethnic backgrounds, they must gain knowledge and information about them. Reading books, magazines, and papers on different cultures will greatly increase comprehension of students' backgrounds. Attending workshops, seminars, and cultural activities will all add to a clearer idea of the multitude of cultures in the student population and possibly even a better understanding of teachers' own cultures in comparison to others.

Getting to know the families and communities of students will give teachers an invaluable insight to the personality, attitudes, and behavior of any student. Asking parents to help in class or asking students to bring in items and speak about them in class will help address multiculturalism, eliminating ignorance, fear, and discrimination. Actively speaking to the students about their hobbies, jobs, or history and heritage of their ethnic group will give teachers clues and tools for dialogue.

Dialogue between teachers and students and families will create an atmosphere of genuine acceptance, while encouraging students to have a sense of pride in who they are and where they come from. Without pride, a student will struggle with a lack of confidence. To promote the notion of taking pride in one's cultural background, teachers should attempt to seamlessly include information about a wide range of different peoples, countries, and cultures, across the curriculum, disciplines, and activities. This helps to unite the learning environment with the students' identities (Quay, 2011). Multicultural education presents multiple perspectives and viewpoints to help students understand how events can be interpreted differently by various groups and is therefore applicable to all students, whether they belong to a minority or not.

Crucially, multicultural education should not mean lowering expectations or making excuses for low performance. Teachers should not lower the bar or limit the objectives for students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds or for minority students but should rather keep standards high for all students, providing support where needed to meet these goals (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2008).

HOW RELIGIOUSLY DIVERSE ARE OUR STUDENTS?

Religious diversity has grown in leaps and bounds over the last 30 years, with a pronounced upward curve in the last 10 years. The Protestant and other non-Catholic religions of the European settlers were almost universally practiced in the nation's early years, 200 years ago, but today a plethora of religions are practiced in the United States. According to a recent survey of religious preferences among

adults in America, Protestants accounted for 51.3%, Catholics made up 23.9%, and other Christian religions made up 3.3%. Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, and Hindu religions added up to 4.7%. The rest, about 16.9%, claimed either no religious affiliation or did not respond (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008). This diversity of religious affiliation is important to note in a discussion of education, in light of the fact that the Christian religion and education were at one time intimately intertwined.

In the 1600s, children were educated at home or in Dame Schools, which were schools run in a woman's home for 6- to 8-year-olds. Regardless of where children were educated, the primary reason for their education was to learn the Bible and their prayers. Books like the *New England Primer* emphasized religion and learning the academic basics.

By the 1820s the tax-supported common school was organized, though it did not become widespread until a decade or two later. Indeed, universal education wasn't available to most students until after the Civil War (Anweiler, 1977). While care was taken to ensure that no single religion predominated in the common school, religion continued to have a presence in schools attended by children of all religious backgrounds. The reasoning behind this was that schools were responsible for the moral development of the children and, in the minds of many, religion had to be involved because religion and morality were solidly linked.

It wasn't until 1963 that the Supreme Court ruled that Bible readings and prayers were no longer allowed in public schools. Because the Constitution of the United States guarantees religious freedom to American citizens, and there are now such diverse forms of religious beliefs throughout the country, the role of religion in education often surfaces as an issue for debate. The separation of church and state (because schools are state entities), as required by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, is often at the center of these debates.

In the classroom, teachers are almost as likely to have a student who has no religious beliefs, or an alternative religious belief, as they are to have a Protestant or Catholic student. This means that teachers need to become familiar with various religious traditions so they can have a deeper understanding of the beliefs and values that are integral to a student's sense of identity. In areas such as the social sciences, literature, language, the arts, psychology, and even science, it is nearly impossible to avoid mentioning religious-based issues such as gods, spirituality, evil, and an afterlife. These issues are intrinsic to the work of ancient and modern writers and continue to permeate the political arenas of our time. Students will ask probing questions and must be allowed to share their views and beliefs without infringing on the rights of others to do so as well.

Discussing differences between religions within the context of the lesson is important and enriching. For example, the influence of the Puritans on American and English literature is indelible, as are the influences of Islam and Judaism on much of world history. Students may become defensive and passionate about these issues, and teachers must structure these discussions in ways that promote understanding. Although a student's sense of righteous indignation may be admirable, it's important to respect the rights of others to disagree. Teachers must redirect these discussions back to the course content and gently remind students that we are all entitled to choose what we believe or do not believe. It's certainly acceptable to encourage students to pursue and study their faiths, but teachers must take care to remember the separation of church and state and not to engage in religious indoctrination. They must not express favor or disfavor for any religious belief discussed during the class (Hubbard, Hatfield, & Santucci, 2007).

HOW LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE ARE OUR STUDENTS?

Linguistic diversity has always existed in the United States, with varying degrees of acceptance. Language is associated with culture. For many ethnic groups, a decline in the use of the language of the homeland signals a decline in an understanding and



At times, evidence of cultural differences may be overtly obvious. Cultural meanings attributed to nonverbal communication and gestures are less apparent and may require more attention during cross-cultural interactions.

acceptance of the culture. That's why immigrants of the late 1800s and early 1900s established schools to ensure their children would learn their homeland language and culture, in addition to English and American culture (Anweiler, 1977). Schools were developed by Germans, Polish, Italians, French, and the Japanese, for example.

Organization of schools based on diverse languages and cultures continued until the 1890s, when continued development of these schools met with a wave of **nativism** in the United States. Immigrants from southern and eastern Europe were targets of an anti-immigrant sentiment that occurred along with a renewed sense of nationalism. Theodore Roosevelt drew attention to the need for English to be the primary language taught in schools, as a means for ensuring the stability of an American nationality. By 1924, laws were passed that restricted immigration of southern and eastern Europeans, and banned the immigration of Japanese. The 1920s and 1930s saw a severe decline in language schools. They were outlawed in some states and lacked the support of others (Kominski, Shin, & Marotz, 2008).

The demand for students to speak only English in schools continued into the 1960s. In Texas, for example, students who were caught speaking Spanish anywhere in the school were given "Spanish detention," and it was illegal for teachers to teach in any language other than English until 1973 (Padilla et al., 2012). Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, protests and boycotts pressured school systems to include bilingual education. While funding was committed to bilingual education by the federal government and legislation was passed in California and Massachusetts, it was the famous *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) case (described in greater detail later in this chapter) that addressed discrimination against students who did not speak English. In that case, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it was discrimination against the Chinese-speaking students to teach them in a language they could not understand.

Despite the fact that the U.S. government began funding bilingual education and several languages were supported across the country, the new legislation met with skepticism. Some were concerned about a form of linguistic segregation, where students who spoke a different language would continue to be separated from English-speaking students, even though they attended the same school. Others feared a potentially growing apartheid. Still others who favored an American melting-pot ideology supported the idea of teaching non-English speakers English, so they could then mix with the English-speaking students (Kominski, Shin, & Marotz, 2008). Although linguistic diversity has a long-standing presence in the United States, schools continue to wrestle with how best to address the array of issues associated with students whose English is limited or nonexistent.



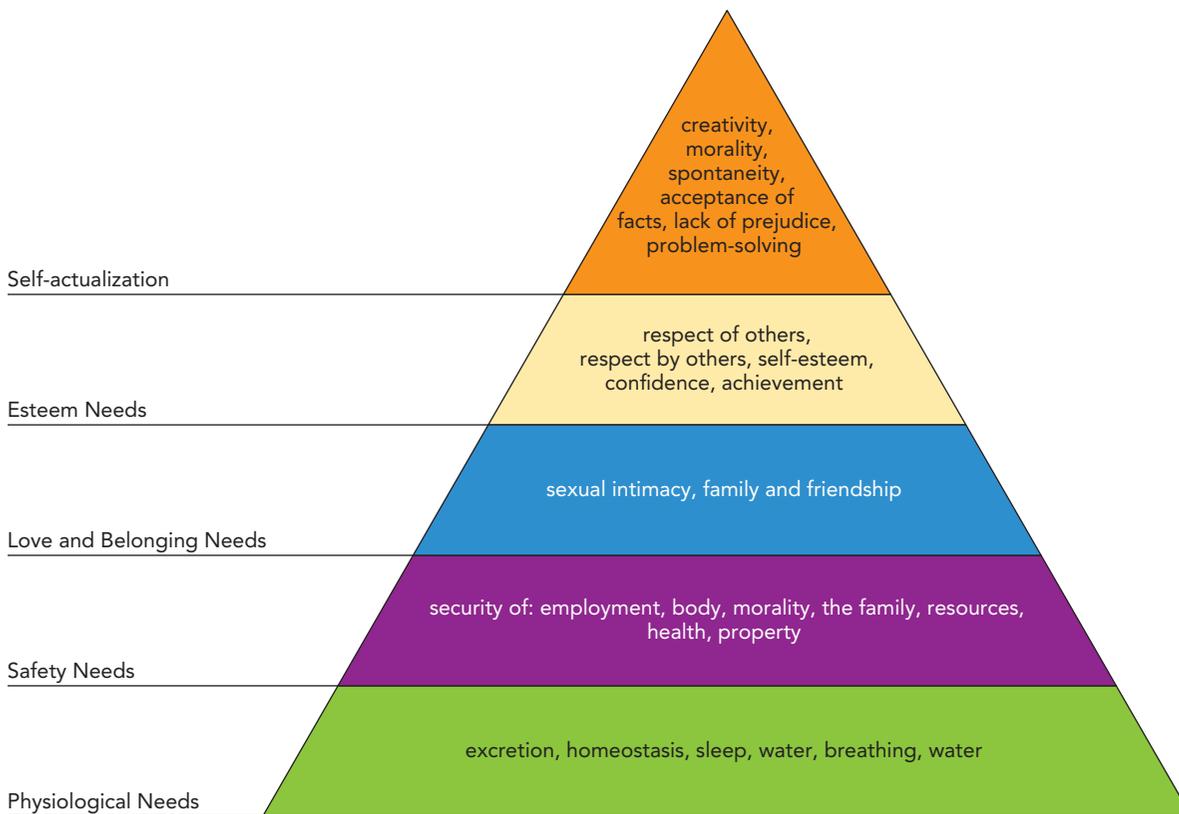
Language, Literacy, and Culture

In addition to the variety of languages other than English spoken in homes, the levels of literacy in the home language vary. Low levels of home-language literacy occur for a number of reasons. L. Reese, Thompson, and Goldenberg (2008) maintained that literacy development for children whose primary home language is not English is influenced by the use of language in both the home and community, as well as by opportunities for literacy-based experiences in the community, among other factors. All of these factors make the placement of students who are English language learners (ELLs) in American schools a complex process. Students who are not literate in their home language are sometimes misidentified as special needs students and are assigned to special education classes. Often there is a catch-up process before students can be appropriately placed in any classroom, even if the subject is being taught in the native tongue. Age alone cannot determine placement. Lack of education in their countries of origin complicates the determination of how best to approach the education of some language-minority students. Still, they must begin at their own levels, which may be lower than the grade level appropriate for their age, to ensure they have equal access to a fair and appropriate education (Preston, 2007).

In understanding the variations in ELL students, Abraham Maslow's theories are worthwhile and are widely used in this area. Maslow introduced his concept of the hierarchy of needs in a

FIGURE 2-4

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs All humans are motivated by needs. Our most basic needs are innate and have been shaped by tens of thousands of years of evolution. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1954) helps explain how these needs motivate us.



paper entitled, “A Theory of Human Motivation,” (1943) and in his book *Motivation and Personality* (1954). In the hierarchy of needs, he suggests that individuals are biologically driven to satisfy their most basic needs before considering higher level ones. Modern conceptions of the hierarchy usually depict it as a five-tier pyramid, with the lowest levels of individual needs displayed at the bottom and more advanced needs sitting at the top (see Figure 2-4). At the lowest level are basic biological needs such as water and sleep. An individual has to satisfy these basic needs before moving to the next level of safety and security. Moving up the pyramid, needs become more social, and soon the need for friendship and love begin to take precedent. As an individual moves toward the acme of the pyramid, the need to succeed in life takes priority, which is an outgrowth of the need to develop and maintain healthy self-esteem. At the top of the pyramid is the need for self-actualization, or the desire to grow and live up to individual potential. Only a small percentage of society ever makes it to this stage (Maslow, 1954).

It is important for a teacher to understand where a student falls in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, because a key factor for success in any learning environment is the teacher's perception of a student's ability to learn.

Teachers' perceptions about the language acquisition process are often based on misinformation. Many teachers mistakenly believe that students learn better if they are restricted to using only English in the classroom. Some teachers also believe that ELL students should be proficient after only a year or two of English instruction. In a survey conducted by the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), only 39% of the participants advocated allowing learners to use both English and their native tongues in the classroom. In the same study, 7% of teachers believed their students should be fluent after 2 years of ELL courses (A. Walker, Shafer, & Liams, 2004).



Listen as educators discuss and show different approaches to teaching English language learners.

Students actually need 5 to 7 years to achieve proficiency in a second language. Also, the success rate for learning a second language grows dramatically with each passing generation. For example, a widely publicized report by the Pew Hispanic Center found that 88% of second-generation Hispanic children raised in the United States learned English by the time they were adults, despite the fact that more than 75% of their parents were not proficient in English. For third-generation children, 94% reported they were strong English speakers (Hakimzadeh & Cohn, 2007; Preston, 2007).

Home Language Issues

While a student is learning a functional level of English at school, many other factors play a role outside the classroom. Like most skills, language is not learned in a vacuum. If the student's parents speak no English and are not learning English, the student will have little reinforcement at home to support the language learning process. The lack of regular practice of the language outside the classroom results in limited opportunity to apply what the student has learned. If students watch American television, play video games in English, or use Web sites constructed in English, they receive some reinforcement outside the classroom. These activities may even motivate students to learn English faster. Although it's difficult to ensure that any English is used outside school, it's impossible to ensure proper reinforcement for correct English. This is another reason many educators insist on an English-only classroom. If students frequently hear the language used incorrectly, it will be difficult for them to master correct usage of the language (Black, 2005).

DOES AMERICA PROMOTE LINGUISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM?

Language is intimately tied to culture. As mentioned previously, immigrants initially attempted to ensure that aspects of their homeland culture were instilled in their youth through establishment of language schools. Inabilities to speak, read, and write English continue to serve as barriers to education in American schools. While some students new to the United States have studied English to some degree in their home countries, the majority has not. As immigrant families enroll their children in American schools, language is one of the first issues addressed (Banks, 2008). Provisions in the 2001 legislation of No Child Left Behind require that all federally funded schools must help students who are learning English as a second language (ESL) to develop English proficiency, because those students are required to meet the same state and local achievement standards met by students for whom English is the primary language.

Regulations concerning the language barrier are not new. You'll recall that the ruling in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) stipulated that students must be taught subjects in their primary language until they can effectively learn in English. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 required that students with a home language other than English be taught in the regular classroom with English-speaking students and English-speaking teachers (Padilla et al., 2012). While speaking another language is certainly not a handicap or disability, it can be an impediment to receiving a **Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**. FAPE and receiving an education in the least restrictive environment can be applied to all types of diversity (Clauss-Ehlers, 2009).

The United States has never declared an official language, despite repeated congressional efforts to the contrary. Thirty states have declared English the official language, but no federal laws stipulate a national language. English is clearly the language of the majority, but a number of other languages are regularly spoken as well (Padilla et al., 2012). A 2008 study conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau indicated that 80.3% of the American population (older than the age of 5) spoke English as a home language. The remaining 19.7% spoke other languages at home. Of those, 60.2% spoke Spanish, 4.4% Chinese, 2.7% Tagalog, 2.4% French, 2.2% Vietnamese, 2% German, and the remaining 26.1% of the non-English speaking population spoke a variety of 32 other languages at home. The majority

of the population that speaks a language other than English at home was concentrated in Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

These statistics underscore serious challenges for teachers as they attempt to accommodate the growing percentage of the population speaking languages other than English at home. More than 300 languages are currently spoken in the United States. As the statistics indicate, the majority of the second-language population is concentrated on the coasts and in large urban areas. As the immigrant population grows, immigrant residential trends will change as well. Jobs in rural areas and small cities are attracting overwhelming numbers of immigrants because of the lower cost of living in these areas. Unfortunately, long-term residents of these areas often share traditional, dominant cultural perspectives, and are often resistant to accepting and incorporating the influx of immigrants into their everyday life. As a result, fear and misunderstanding of immigrants felt in the broader community influence the local school climate (A. Walker et al., 2004). In these circumstances, schools must address both cultural and language issues to ensure a welcoming and accepting school climate.

Teaching and Learning English

Most schools have implemented a language program for non-English speakers. These programs follow a variety of approaches and employ a variety of terminology. To fully understand this section of the chapter, you'll need to understand the following acronyms associated with English language learning programs:

- **ESOL:** English for speakers of other languages
- **ESL:** English as a second language
- **LEP:** limited English proficiency
- **ELLs:** English language learners (R. W. Cole, 2008)

It is also important to know the difference between acquiring language (actually gaining language, using it, and speaking it fluently) and learning language (recognizing isolated sentences or copying words out of context and memorizing them). Language *acquisition* is subconscious, through opportunities for natural communication and learning, for example, by interacting with school friends. Language *learning* is not communicative, and students are taught the rules of the language in a less natural way. The language learning process may result in students' lacking strong speaking and writing skills in the second language. Because the goal is to prepare students to learn in an English-speaking classroom, acquiring language is the goal (Haynes, 2007), and most school programs are designed to serve the language acquisition process. The use of different approaches to teaching English indicates that educators do not agree about which method is most effective to address the needs of both the language learner and the school. Regardless of the teacher's personal ideology about an official national language, teachers must be aware that it is not the learner's goal, and should not be the school's goal, to replace the native tongue with English (Black, 2005).

English Language Learners and Limited English-Proficient Students

Students who are not proficient in English are referred to as **English language learners (ELLs)** or limited English-proficient (LEP) students. More than 5 million ELL students are currently enrolled in American schools, which represents greater than 10% of the total school enrollment. Most ELL students reside in the states of Texas, California, New York, and Florida, and as you saw earlier in the chapter, in Figure 2-1, most of these students speak Spanish.

Surprisingly, nearly two thirds of all ELL students were born and raised in the United States, while the other third are recent immigrants. In 2008, 24% of 5- to 17-year-olds in the United States spoke a language other than English language at home (Batalova, Fix, & Murray, 2005).

InTASC Dispositions

2(o) The teacher values diverse languages and dialects and seeks to integrate them into his/her instructional practice to engage students in learning.

This situation creates a major disadvantage for these students at school. Far too often, ELL students drop out of school.

The Bilingual Education Act, which passed in 1968, was the U.S. government's solution to the problem posed by the education of ELL students. This act has been amended several times over the years to ensure federal funding is available to develop programs. Again, the *Lau v. Nichols* case (1974) was the prime factor in the decision to fund and develop programs for ELL students, and a series of other cases throughout the 1970s helped to push this development along (Batalova, Fix, & Murray, 2005).

Bilingual Education Models

A major outcome of the *Lau v. Nichols* case was that the U.S. Office of Civil Rights created a series of guidelines for schools to follow with respect to linguistic diversity. The "Lau Remedies," as they were called, required that all ELL students should be taught core academic subjects in their home language until their proficiency in English allowed them to fully benefit from instruction in English. So ELL students had to learn both their core subjects and English. Numerous program models address the need for non-English speakers to learn both English and required academic subject matter. These include the immersion model, the transition model, and developmental bilingual education.

The immersion model allows ELL students to learn all core subjects in English, although teachers deliver lessons using simpler language than they use with English-speaking students. **English as a second language (ESL)** uses a modified form of immersion, offset by pullout classes. In ESL, students attend regular classes for the majority of the day and then are pulled out for additional specialized instruction. Students receive special instruction and support in English reading and writing, to assimilate them into the English-only classroom as quickly as possible (Ferguson, 2006).

The transitional model divides ELL students' instructional time between rigorous training in the English language and instruction in at least some of their core academic subjects in their home language. In this way, students learn English so they can transition into English-only classes, and at the same time receive instruction that prevents them from falling behind academically.

Developmental (or maintenance) bilingual education is given to students who have the basics of the English language but need to continue to improve their English language skills. This model carries through education in both languages and cultures throughout their education. Some schools take this a step further, with dual-language programs that are designed to ensure that both the ELL and English-speaking students become bilingual. In these programs, the students are combined in one class and receive instruction in both languages (White-Clark, 2005).

The dual-language education model (a form of the developmental method) has been tested with great success but has not been commonly implemented, for a variety of reasons. This method has been used at the elementary level but has not been practiced in the secondary setting. Researchers have tested this method in Maine with French and in California and Houston, Texas, with Spanish. Under this model, ELL students begin language classes at the earliest stages of elementary school, in an integrated classroom among their native-language peers. After 4 years of the dual-language program, former English learners who were achieving at the 31st percentile before the program started had reached the 72nd percentile in English reading on the Terra Nova, well above grade level. The findings demonstrate that the two-way language model is extremely effective in closing the gap for achieving a second language. Native English speakers learned Spanish as ELL students learned English, with equal instructional time for both languages. The study also showed that ELL students need 6 to 8 years to reach grade level in the second language, and so they are tested on grade level in their first language in most curriculum areas. Although these students are still closing the language gap, testing in English does not reflect their actual levels of achievement (Chen, 2009).

The dual-language model has many opponents, including parents of these students. These parents advocate English-only classes, hoping for a fast-track approach. Although English-only classes

may help with spoken fluency, it has not been proven effective for learning the written aspects of the language (Chen, 2009).

Another approach to teaching ELL students involves specially designed academic instruction in English, also known as “sheltered English” classes. These classes present grade-level curriculum material using simplified English and modified curriculum concepts.

Bilingual Controversy

The debate on how best to educate ELL students continues, with little promise of a clear-cut way to proceed emerging anytime soon. Meanwhile, the diversity of languages spoken in U.S. schools continues to expand. Languages include Spanish, Hmong, Urdu, Arabic, Russian, Chinese, Polish, Korean, Tagalog, Swahili, and more. Achieving the goal for all students to obtain a satisfactory level of learning is often compromised by the cultural, social, and language differences among various groups. The inability to provide the best approach for the learning needs of ELL students places them at greater risk of falling behind (Crowther & Fathman, 2006).

The original enthusiasm for bilingual programs has diminished, and these programs are now criticized as ineffective. Support for the immersion model has also declined, and initial supporters now believe ELL students simply aren’t learning English quickly and thoroughly enough. They now suggest that the immersion program does not facilitate ELL students’ ability to cope with American culture, not only in school but also beyond school boundaries. The slower learning curve experienced by ELL students in immersion programs may plague them for the rest of their lives. This belief is based on research suggesting that Hispanics who were enrolled in bilingual programs from the 1970s through the 1990s have earned less money on average than Hispanic students educated during the same period in an English-only setting. Hispanic high school dropouts who were in English-only classrooms are also fewer in number and more likely to return to school later (Shannon & Milian, 2002). Immersion makes it difficult for the teacher to provide support for all students’ needs. In the case of a complex assignment such as a research paper, language and usage are challenging even for fluent students. The further complication of using a second language puts ELL students at a serious disadvantage if they don’t have special support. The immersion method of teaching has yet to establish itself as an effective program for minority students (Mercado, 2009).

Supporters of the transitional and developmental models insist that students taught at least some of their core academics in their native language can better keep pace with their English-speaking peers. According to research studies, transitional instruction in both the native language and English helps students learn English more quickly and effectively. Transitional instruction helps students become more literate in their native language, which in turn improves their ability to learn English.

An issue that complicates the education of the ELL learners is the lack of training among teachers and the apparent lack of urgency on the part of states to ensure highly qualified ELL teachers. Most states have no requirements for new teachers to demonstrate competency in ELL instruction. And most states do not have incentives for teachers to pursue a license or endorsement in ELL instruction. Regardless of the model chosen, qualified teachers are needed to ensure quality programs.

Supporting Second-Language Learners

It is very important for teachers helping ELL students succeed in regular education classrooms to educate *themselves* about the language acquisition process. Teachers should contextualize learning so that content is relevant to students’ experiences with their families. And teachers must not allow the language barrier to interfere with a belief that ELL students can learn. High expectations are a key element for success with language development as well as learning in other disciplines. Teachers must be willing to learn about ELL students, their families, and their communities, to structure meaningful learning experiences.

Teachers can use technology, including recordings, videos, and presentations, to emphasize language concepts (Robbins, 2009). Students should be allowed to demonstrate their language acquisition through dramatization or video, with subtitles in their native language. Some programs endorse the use of translation devices or electronic dictionaries in the classroom. There is some debate, however, as to whether or not these forms of assistive technology actually defeat the purpose of English language learning (Robbins, 2009).

Teachers should consider ways to include ELL students' families and communities in the learning process. One possibility is to host presentations or entertainment nights so students can show parents what they've learned. The community can be included as a means for support by inviting bilingual guests to share their language-learning experiences with students. ELL students will learn that language is a challenge for everyone and that learning a second language becomes a valuable, admirable skill. Cooperative and collaborative learning can also be effective. Many ELL students learn best in small-group discussions where there is less pressure to speak perfectly. Introducing the entire class to a third language might be beneficial, to help instill empathy for the new language learners.

Visual aids also support learning among ELL students. These include nonverbal behavior such as pointing, body language, signals, and gestures, as well as photos, videos, and dramatizations. ELL students should be encouraged to use graphic organizers and to keep picture journals of the words they have learned. Writing journals and learning logs also support learning among ELL students. Also helpful are alternative versions of texts or novels and teacher-provided notes for lectures or presentations (Banks, 2008).

CHAPTER SUMMARY

What does “culture” mean in the United States? Culture in the United States can be separated into several elements, including behavior, beliefs, traditions, and values. In the early years of the republic, American culture was indelibly associated with European-derived, English-speaking Protestant culture. More recently, however, the influx of new languages, religions, and other cultural ingredients has created a more diverse and challenging environment.

Many elements of personal freedom, including freedom of religion and speech, are protected by the legal system. But there's a conflict between autonomy and assimilation: Is it better to press students into a monocultural mold or to celebrate their diversity?

What is the role of ethnicity in our schools? Determining ethnicity can be complex and includes factors such as race, religion, customs, and culture. The United States is becoming increasingly diverse. Americans of Asian, African, and Hispanic origin are on the rise, and this is reflected in classroom populations. Furthermore, individuals who are multiethnic (who associate with more than one ethnic group) form an increasingly large portion of the student population. Laws have changed in the United States to reflect the value of cultures and languages other than the traditional European ones. It is important that teachers are aware of and are prepared to deal with racism in the classroom.

What is the role of multiculturalism in today's schools? Multiculturalism is the acceptance of multiple cultures coexisting in a society that provides equitable status to distinct ethnic groups. The former “melting pot” ideology is being replaced by a “patchwork quilt” perspective, in which cultural identity and language are preserved. A number of theories have been floated to explain the variety of performance levels in children of different backgrounds, including the cultural deficit theory (students don't do well because of an inadequate home environment), the expectation theory (teachers have lower expectations of certain students), and the cultural difference theory (students from different cultures have different ways of learning).

How can teachers embrace their multicultural classrooms? Currently, 37% of U.S. students view themselves as coming from multicultural backgrounds, and the percentage is increasing. By 2040, children of color will make up a majority of students. Schools are currently engaged in producing more inclusive curricula, which reflect the backgrounds of their student population. Teachers should be “color aware,” rather than “color blind,” and should encourage students to share and celebrate their diverse backgrounds and experiences by being inclusive and particularistic.

How religiously diverse are our students? Today, only 51% of U.S. students are Protestant. Groups such as Hindus, Jews, Muslims, and Buddhists make up around 5% of the population, though this percentage is growing rapidly. The separation of church and state in the educational sphere has grown more pronounced in recent years, and it is now against the law, for example, to have school prayers. But it is important to encourage students to share about their religious experiences, and to celebrate all forms of religious experience.

How linguistically diverse are our students? In the early part of the 20th century, laws were passed limiting the teaching of languages other than English. More recently, however, those laws were challenged. Students may now be taught in languages other than English, and transitional services are offered in many schools.

Does America promote linguistic and intellectual diversity in the classroom? The United States does not have an official language. About 80% of Americans speak English at home. Other families speak languages such as Spanish, Tagalog, Hmong, French, and Chinese. As a result, most schools now include language programs for non-English speakers. The Bilingual Education Act and similar legislation stipulate that ELLs must be provided with the tools to acquire English. Models vary, however, and include the immersion model, the transition model, and developmental bilingual education.

▶ CHAPTER SELF CHECK

Check your understanding of the chapter’s concepts by taking this “Chapter Self-Check.”

UP FOR DISCUSSION

1. What types of diversity or individuality among students do you think will present you with the greatest challenge or challenges?
2. Should cultural diversity be celebrated in the classroom or should it be overlooked? Why, or why not?
3. In what ways has your cultural identity influenced your education? What impact has it had on your education?
4. In what ways will you apply your knowledge of differences in culture to the classroom?
5. What measures can teachers and schools take to solve the equality of education problem? Can you identify examples of how this problem has been successfully addressed?

REFLECTIONS AND DISPOSITIONS

1. Consider your culture. Generate a list of values, beliefs, or traditions that distinguish your culture from others with which you are familiar.
2. Based on your list, what have you learned about yourself or your culture?

3. The InTASC standard for this chapter espouses that, “**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.**” What steps can you take to learn more about the community or communities from which your students come?
4. Are educational opportunities equal or unequal for various ethnic groups? Can you think of examples that illustrate this case?
5. How diverse was the elementary and/or secondary school you attended? How was the curriculum influenced by your school’s diversity? Did your teachers know “how to access information about the values of diverse cultures and communities,” as suggested by the InTASC standard?
6. Do you believe certain areas of instruction should be inclusive and others particularistic? Why or why not?
7. How can schools bridge the school–home language divide between schools and homes where English is not the primary language, in ways to support English language learning among students?
8. InTASC disposition 2(l), provided at the beginning of the chapter, states that “The teacher believes that all learners can achieve at high levels and persists in helping each learner reach his/her full potential.” How will you convey to them your faith in their ability to learn and help them to reach their potential?

DEAR JOURNAL

1. In what ways can you accommodate students from a background with a worldview that differs from your own, such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, or atheism?
2. What characteristics are displayed by teachers who are effective in teaching students from cultural backgrounds that differ from their own? Of these characteristics, which can be developed or acquired by education or training?

FIELD EXPERIENCE ACTIVITIES

You can complete the following activity in a field experience classroom or in one of your university-based classes. As a pre-service teacher, you must identify cultural differences among students and the impact of this diversity on classroom dynamics.

1. What cultures and/or ethnicities are represented in the classroom? Do some students consider themselves American, while others use more descriptive self-identifiers such as Irish American, Hispanic American, or African American?
2. Are there noticeable differences in classroom behavior between male and female students? Is one group more or less vocal than the other? Do you notice any differences in the way the teacher/professor interacts with male and female students?
3. What is the evidence that the content and/or the approach to instruction are/is culturally responsive? If no evidence exists, how would you change one or both (i.e., instruction or content) to make it more culturally responsive?
4. Ask your teacher/professor about his or her perception of the diversity in the classroom, and what effect does it have on the way he or she conducts the class?

PORTFOLIO TASK

Janus was the Roman god who had two faces, which allowed him to view the past and the future at one time. Use the following activity to look at the past, and use this as your springboard into the future. Imagine what it was like to be a teacher when you were in elementary or secondary school.

1. How multicultural was your classroom when you were in school? How did your teachers address issues of race and ethnicity? What actions, interactions, and/or activities do you remember?
2. When thinking of yourself as a teacher, in what way(s) will you be similar or dissimilar to your response to question number 1?
3. With your knowledge about our increasingly multicultural society, how do you envision the task(s) of a teacher to be different in 5, 10, or 20 years from today?