

Arjen Wynja

Ross Atkinson

EDUC 275 Schooling in the US

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List of Culturally Responsive Teaching Resources

1. ***Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain***, Zaretta Hammond.

General Description: Hammond wrote this text with the intention of giving teachers a tool to enter exploration, study, and practice of culturally responsive teaching, including introducing “new concepts and frames for thinking about culturally responsive teaching as an extension of brain-based learning” (Hammond 5). She aims to make culturally responsive teaching accessible as a practice through provoking thought about it and advocating it as a mindset and continuous practice. She explores concepts such as culture as a social lens, funds of knowledge, learning partnerships, and focus on developing higher-order thinking skills.

Music Education Connection: It’s easy for music educators to relegate culturally responsive teaching in their classrooms to selecting and performing diverse repertoire. However, while those practices are important, it’s important to use other techniques or expand upon existing ones to truly use culturally responsive teaching. This could even be as small as teaching an Italian music term through a Spanish cognate to take advantage of cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge. In addition, this could provide an additional access point to that knowledge even for non Spanish speakers.

2. ***All Students Reaching the Top: Strategies for Closing Academic Achievement Gaps***, the National Study Group for the Affirmative Development of Academic Ability.

General Description: This report from a group of researchers at the North Central Regional Educational Library outlines gains in educational equity as well as the needs that disadvantaged students still have. Furthermore, it analyzes the importance of “affirmative development of

academic ability,” as well as how academic ability is measured. It seems to me like a progress report of sorts: where we are, where we’re going, and what we need to do to get there.

Music Education Connection: The report describes a “wholesale failure” of teaching for transfer of knowledge on page 14. Music is an incredible opportunity to teach through transfer of knowledge, as well as a subject area in which teachers fail to teach for transfer of knowledge. This connects to the idea of “funds of knowledge,” where it’s important to connect learned concepts in music class to existing cultural or academic knowledge.

3. ***Bridging Cultures Between Home and School: A Guide for Teachers***, Elise Trumble, Carrie Rothstein-Fisch, Patricia M. Greenfield, and Blanca Quiroz.

General Description: From a more broad and relationship-based perspective, this one focuses on the communication and partnership teachers can foster with students’ home life and culture. In addition to “thought-provoking,” philosophical material that many of these texts have, it also includes practical strategies for integrating and partnering with parents and families. This is a point where many teachers may disagree - the role of the parent - but this book offers a strong toolbox.

Music Education Connection: This is one question I ask every teacher I interview: “What role do parents play in your program?” Many teachers disagree, and it always depends on the school, the program, and (of course) the set of families and parents. Some find that their students’ parents are a valuable positive reinforcement, or practice helper. That’s one of the central tenets of the Suzuki method is heavy involvement of the parent. However, having a plan for parent involvement is important, so this book could be a great resource for me to draw from.

4. ***The Light in their Eyes: Creating Multicultural Learning Communities***, Sonia Nieto.

General Description: Nieto’s book is more of a practitioner’s article, which, much like the *All Students Reaching the Top* report, discusses changes and progress in education. This book, however, discusses it more from the perspective of teachers functioning in changing and diverse learning communities, rather than changes and disparities in academic achievement. It also

touches on the importance of the dynamic of student and teacher voice in those learning communities

Music Education Connection: Student “voice and choice” in diverse music classrooms is, much like any of the other topics discussed, an important part of the classroom, but difficult to implement effectively. For example, it’s difficult to build a diverse, repertoire-based curriculum and give students some level of choice over music. However, there are opportunities to be taken advantage of in learning about listening and appreciation of music, and the process of choosing music with certain parameters. This could be an assignment activity to have students both help in the repertoire selection process, and have agency and choice in their learning.

5. ***Con Respeto: Bridging the Distances Between Culturally Diverse Families and Schools***, Guadelupe Valdes.

General Description: *Con Respeto* seems to be a very similar text to *Bridging Cultures Between Home and School*, however this one is specifically in the context of Mexican-American families. It includes evidence from 10 real immigrant families. This could be a valuable resource for research, or in a school environment with a large Mexican-American student population.

Music Education Connection: Each culture is different, and knowing the archetypes and needs of each culture (and each family individually) is important in order to determine how to best foster student success, especially in music. I can’t speak much to the culture focused on by *Con Respeto*, but I’m sure it could be a good resource. Similarly to *Bridging Cultures*, it may help with organizing strong family relations as well as helping to recognize funds of knowledge that could be exercised in learning musical concepts.

6. ***Because of the Kids: Facing Racial and Cultural Differences in Schools***, Jennifer Obidah and Karen Teel.

General Description: *Because of the Kids* is the story of a research mission taken on by two teacher-researchers, one black and one white. They study the importance of racial and cultural diversity in Teel’s middle school classroom (in an urban school) over the course of three years. As

well as being a research publication, the text also gives teachers practical advice to use in being a culturally responsive educator; especially since this comes from close study of a middle school classroom environment, I find this to be an intriguing resource.

Music Education Connection: Particularly in an urban school setting, resources for arts education can be hard to come by. This close examination of that environment could be a great resource for determining students' needs, as well as a 'feel' for how I as a music teacher could build a program in an urban school. If nothing else, it could be an opportunity to begin understanding urban school environments before I potentially teach in one.

7. ***Trust and School Life: The Role of Trust for Learning, Teaching, Leading, and Bridging,***

Dimitri Van Maele, Patrick B. Forsyth, and Mieke Van Houtte.

General Description: This is a scholarly research publication on the components and effects of trusting relationships in school. In contrast to the practitioner publications that I've included, this text appears to be a more empirical research piece, which provides an additional contrast of resources. The four parts of the book examine the importance of trust in each of the areas of learning, teaching, leading, and bridging.

Music Education Connection: As an art form, learning music requires both discipline and vulnerability. Thus, students and teachers must build strong, trusting relationships (Zaretta Hammond refers to them as "learning partnerships") that allow both to trust the process of music education. When trust is built, teachers and students can expect discipline and vulnerability from each other and work to help the students thrive.

8. ***Choice Words: How Our Language Affects Children's Learning,*** Peter H. Johnston.

General Description: Johnston's *Choice Words* focuses on the power that a teacher's language habits can have in teaching the whole student - not only building their strengths in subject areas and general brainpower, but helping them learn how to be caring, secure, [and] actively literate human beings. This draws on the topic of application of concepts and skills learned in school in the "real world," as they are always linked to how students are and can be through careful

language use. This text fills a specific niche of teacher language habits in the larger pool of philosophical resources.

Music Education Connection: One of the first things we learn in Music Education is that we have to be great musicians ourselves, and model musicality and musicianship for our students at every opportunity, whether demonstrating Beethoven or a pentatonic scale. The same is true of language in this context - by modeling appropriate discursive language, music educators can foster a classroom environment where students can give each other feedback and support each other through reinforcement and constructive criticism. By modeling appropriate self-talk, teachers can build strong practicing and self-discipline habits in students that are essential for music and beyond.

9. ***Fires in the Middle School Bathroom: Advice for Teachers from Middle Schoolers***, Kathleen Cushman and Laura Rogers.

General Description: Direct testimony from students from across the country, and from varying racial and ethnic backgrounds, is not as common as it should be. Educational research and learning from other practitioners is the core of learning how to be a teacher, however hearing directly from students is incredibly valuable as well. What do they think? *Fires in the Middle School Bathroom* appears to be a great place to start, expanded by my future students.

Music Education Connection: The teacher has disciplinary knowledge and life experience that the students don't have, however they can never "go back in time" to what it feels like to be a K-12 student, especially the early grades and middle school. Thus, it's important to hear from students whenever possible. We the teachers have to know that the students know why we're learning what we are, so that they can be excited about it. We also have to know what their lives are like so we can design instruction that makes sense for them.

10. ***Click: The forces Behind How We Fully Engage with People, Work, and Everything We Do***, Ori Brafman and Rom Brafman.

General Description: *Click* is focused on the reasons and theory on how and why certain people seem to “click” - we all know the feeling - and how this can be applied to work and school situations. The text is a narrative format, and draws from psychological research on the same topic. Having strategies and knowledge for how students and classrooms can get “in the zone” is critical for building a classroom culture of deep work and committed practice.

Music Education Connection: I know, but cannot describe, the feeling of being in a musical ensemble that is “in the zone.” It’s unlike any other, and I want to help my students experience that experience that is so committed to craft and artistry that everything else disappears. Even in skilled collegiate ensembles, this is always tough to come by. *Click* could be a great place to start, and not necessarily on its own, as I can talk to teachers about how they work to build this culture and drive in their classrooms.

Sample Lesson Plan:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Teacher(s): Arjen Wynja | Date: XX/XX/20XX |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|

| Setting | Rationale |
|--|---|
| <p>Time: Band classtime</p> <p>Place/Environment: band classroom</p> <p>Students: Band students</p> | <p>Conceptual understanding, identification, and performance of musical concepts and techniques is critical to individual and independent musicianship. Furthermore, being able to match performance of concepts with other musicians is critical to creating cohesive musical ideas.</p> |

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| Objectives | Materials |
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| <p>1. SWBAT: Perform <i>dolce</i> style on main theme, variation of theme in Air for Band <u>-Know:</u> <i>dolce</i> definition (spanish cognate: dulces) <u>-Do:</u> Identify <i>dolce</i> style, and perform it <u>-Show:</u> Ability to match <i>dolce</i> style in groups</p> <p>2. SWBAT: Perform <i>maestoso</i> style on the coda of Air for Band <u>-Know:</u> <i>maestoso</i> definition (spanish cognate: majestuoso) <u>-Do:</u> Identify <i>maestoso</i> style, and perform it <u>-Show:</u> Ability to match <i>maestoso</i> style in groups</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sheet music for “Air for Band” (Erickson) -Chairs -Stands -Instruments -Pencils |
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Anticipatory Set

Engage: Warm-up (5 min):

4 Quarter notes exercise, use *maestoso* and *dolce* conducting gestures at several dynamic levels.

Frame (5 min):

- Write *maestoso* and *dolce* on the board.
- “Quien sabe las palabras “majestuoso” y “dulce”?”
- What do “majestuoso” and “dulces” mean in English (majestic, sweet)
- Board chart: *maestoso*, majestuoso, majestic. *dolce*, dulce, sweet

Activities

Acquire (20 min):

- Groups of 4 (from groups sheet, randomly chosen and distributed to students at the beginning of the cycle)
- Each group member performs the main theme and coda theme of Air for Band from the lead sheet (teaching tool for repertoire - has the main themes transposed for each instrument and central components and information about the piece).
- Practice (together) main theme AND coda theme in *dolce* and *maestoso* styles
- Each group of 4 performs the main theme and coda theme in the styles of their choosing
- Mr. Wynja performs main theme on clarinet in *dolce* style
- Mr. Wynja performs coda theme on trumpet in *dolce*, transitioning to *maestoso* style
- Students identify which part was which

Memory Strengthening:

- Try options as a group, students describe what each section feels like, and how we can make the music reflect that.
- Play Rutgers Symphonic Band recording to help.
- Goal: play main theme *tutti* with a *dolce* style, and then in the music with the counterpoint.
- Goal: play coda *tutti* with a *dolce* style that moves to *maestoso*

| Assessment | Closure |
|---|--|
| <p>Diagnostic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Testing existing knowledge of terms <i>maestoso</i> and <i>dolce</i> <p>Formative</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can the students perform the styles on their own and in small groups? <p>Summative</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can the band play the styles in the appropriate places, and argue why certain styles should be used in certain parts of the form? | <p>Procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Play through the whole piece; the expectation is that the styles come through. <p>(Optional)</p> <p>Homework:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listen to the recording (linked on Canvas or whatever we use) 2. Practice styles throughout the piece - and apply them where applicable 3. Ready for next lesson, which will cover phrasing now that we've established styles. |

Positionality Statement

In learning to be a culturally responsive teacher, it is important to recognize my own unique position in that practice. I belong to the majority culture group in most of the situations I'm in, and this influences the experiences and funds of knowledge that I can draw on. My students will have both similar and very different experiences from me, and it will be important for me to actively seek to know and understand the experiences of my students before planning instruction and curriculum in-depth. The lesson plan outlined above is designed to work with a diverse student population - with both Spanish speakers and non-Spanish speakers, however given other cultural contents of the class I would adapt the instruction to be most applicable to those students. For example, if there was a large French-speaking population, I would look for French cognates for Italian music terms. This is the definition of culturally responsive teaching - one size does not fit all and, given that I will not know all of the experiences of my students

firsthand, it will be important for me to build connections and rapport with them so I can adapt instruction accordingly.

Reflection

Rarely are there opportunities with reading and writing assignments such as this to prepare for practical application of concepts in the field. I found lots of exciting resources surrounding culturally responsive teaching, including several books that I plan to buy used on Amazon. Furthermore, I structured this assignment so that I can begin to conceptualize the application of culturally responsive teaching in a real classroom, and I think this was successful. I at least have an awareness of a concept that I can build upon in future lesson planning and teaching.

First, I think it's important to include what I have not learned through this project - what I still need to learn in order to consistently practice culturally responsive teaching. First of all, I haven't actually done it. My limited reading, research, and planning on culturally responsive teaching is only a base of background knowledge from which I might start. From there, it depends on the students in the classroom, my own experience, skills, and knowledge of pedagogy, and the school that I'm teaching in. Truly, I don't know what I don't know about culturally responsive teaching, so the purpose of this project was to create an initial awareness of my own ignorance, and to take one step into knowing something about the content, which I believe I achieved.

The empirical and practitioner's research and information resources that I included above were primarily a start of learning what I don't know. Much like Umberto Eco's "antilibRARY," this was a way to open up future learning for when these resources, depending on their specific focus, become immediately relevant to me as a teacher. For example, if I'm teaching at a middle school

with a high population of Mexican-American students, I might read *Fires in the Middle School Bathroom* and *Con Respeto* to gain some background knowledge on some other teachers', students', and families' experiences in a related environment. However, as I stated above, it is more important for me to learn with experience in these situations, with the background knowledge provided by research resources.

The lesson plan, I believe, was the most constructivist part of this assignment - where I put together my own representation of what culturally responsive teaching could look like, in relation to my own fund of disciplinary knowledge. I included music literacy and fluency tenets (musical terminology, styles, form, literature, aural identification, performance, and close listening) along with music pedagogy that I have learned about so far in my degree (lead sheets for centralized information, teacher and student modeling, peer-assisted learning, components of SEL, Zone of Proximal development with students of differing ability levels in groups, modeling on two instruments, and more). These were things I knew, which gave me access to try incorporating newer methods and concepts.

The way I introduced information - through Spanish cognates - accesses a fund of knowledge present in the classroom among students who speak Spanish, and also gives non-Spanish speaking students another way of remembering information. I still remember *andante* better because it sounds like "andar," even before I spoke proficient Spanish, which demonstrates that these methods are applicable and valuable for all students. Furthermore, randomized groupings of four are bound to create diversity, not only in disciplinary knowledge and ability level, but also in cultures of work and learning. One of the things I would assess while I walk around to the groups is who seems to be taking the lead, which can inform me of power dynamics and leadership styles throughout my ensemble, as well as students to focus on to

help develop this capacity. These are two small steps to dip my toe into practicing culturally responsive teaching, but two constructive and powerful steps, I feel.

On a whole, I feel much better positioned to continue learning how to practice culturally responsive teaching after this project - not because I know a whole lot, but I know some of what I don't know, and I know just enough to get started. The most important takeaway is my being able to define culturally responsive teaching, which was a completely foreign concept to me previously. Culturally responsive teaching is all about accessing cultural funds of knowledge (existing knowledge related to a student's worldview and firsthand experiences) as starting places for building individual learning capacities. In my context, it's all about using cultural knowledge as a starting point for building independent, sensitive, emotionally intelligent, effectively communicating, and disciplined musicians that have the capacity for *lifelong musicianship* - my greatest goal in music education.