

Critical Thinking, Active Learning, and the Flipped Classroom: Strategies in Promoting Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice in the B.Ed. Classroom

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Summary

In Canada, the national rhetoric of tolerance for diversity oftentimes does not match up to student experiences in the classroom (Dei, Mazzuca, McIsaac, & Zine, 1997). Many students face discrimination because of ethnicity, religious, gender, sexuality, disability, and socioeconomic status. Such discrimination negatively impacts not only students' ability to perform at high standards, but future economic capital (Harvey & Houle, 2006; Ryan, Pollock, & Antonelli, 2009). The implication for educators in creating more inclusive, socially-just classrooms becomes significant when one looks at Canada's changing demographic trends (see Eggertson, 2007). It is incumbent that policymakers, researchers, and educators move beyond rhetoric and prepare future teachers with the skills for teaching in Canada's growing, diverse, and young classrooms.

This workshop is designed for instructors who teach in Bachelor of Education programs at any Canadian university. At the same time, it is adaptable to non-Canadian, and/or non-B.Ed. classrooms. The aim is dual and intertwined: to model pedagogy and instruction that instructors can adopt or adapt in teaching for equity and social justice in their own classrooms, and to guide instructors, using stimuli from written and visual text, to interrogate and evaluate their own teaching practices, and re-align them to foster aims of inclusion and social justice. Towards these ends, the workshop employs a triad of strategies, namely critical thinking, active learning, and the flipped classroom.

Keywords

equity and social justice; critical thinking; active learning; flipped classroom; online learning; teacher education

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Critical Thinking, Active Learning, and the Flipped Classroom: Strategies for Promoting Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice in the B.Ed. Classroom

Donna Swapp, The University of Western Ontario

SUMMARY

In Canada, the national rhetoric of tolerance for diversity oftentimes does not match up to student experiences in the classroom (Dei, Mazzuca, McIsaac, & Zine, 1997). Many students face discrimination because of ethnicity, religious, gender, sexuality, disability, and socioeconomic status. Such discrimination negatively impacts not only students' ability to perform at high standards, but future economic capital (Harvey & Houle, 2006; Ryan, Pollock, & Antonelli, 2009). The implication for educators in creating more inclusive, socially-just classrooms becomes significant when one looks at Canada's changing demographic trends (see Eggertson, 2007). It is incumbent that policymakers, researchers, and educators move beyond rhetoric and prepare future teachers with the skills for teaching in Canada's growing, diverse, and young classrooms.

This workshop is designed for instructors who teach in Bachelor of Education programs at any Canadian university. At the same time, it is adaptable to non-Canadian, and/or non-B.Ed. classrooms. The aim is dual and intertwined: to model pedagogy and instruction that instructors can adopt or adapt in teaching for equity and social justice in their own classrooms, and to guide instructors, using stimuli from written and visual text, to interrogate and evaluate their own teaching practices, and re-align them to foster aims of inclusion and social justice. Towards these ends, the workshop employs a triad of strategies, namely critical thinking, active learning, and the flipped classroom.

KEYWORDS: equity and social justice; critical thinking; active learning; flipped classroom; online learning; teacher education

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Define the concepts equity, inclusion, and social justice, and discuss the importance of teaching that is centered on these three concepts.
- Identify and discuss three inhibitors and three enablers of equity, inclusion, and social justice in the classroom.
- Reflect on the aims of social justice-oriented teaching, and apply critical, higher-order thinking to evaluate and (re)construct their own teaching practices in keeping with these aims.

REFERENCE SUMMARIES

Allen, D., & Tanner, K. (2005). Infusing active learning into the large-enrollment biology class: Seven strategies, from simple to complex. *Cell Biology Education*, 4, 262-268.

In this article, the authors explore seven strategies for infusing active learning in large class sizes. They aim to challenge the assumption that active learning can only happen in small-sized classes. These strategies vary in complexity and, through questions, feedback, and other inquiry approaches, offer engaging alternatives to lecturing that facilitates scaffolding and fosters critical thinking, thereby

providing students with rich opportunities to apply abstract ideas and concepts to real-world situations, and gain knowledge beyond the parameters/boundaries of a course. A particular strength of this article is that these active learning strategies (ALS) promote critical, higher-order thinking, an integral component of this workshop. Active learning strategies are employed throughout this workshop design, including discussions, problem-based learning, and case studies. In addition, facilitators should draw participants' attention to these and other ALS so they can see how active learning can be meaningfully incorporated in face-to-face contact time.

Angelo, T. A., & Cross, K. P. (1993). *Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

This book offers valuable information on how to plan and implement classroom assessment strategies. It describes and shows how assessment can be tailored to the classroom context, whereby teachers collect valuable information on student learning using processes that are hands-on, informal, continuous, and based on close observation and active engagement of students in the learning process. The authors emphasize that the data gathered on student learning from using these classroom strategies meaningfully inform the next steps in the instructional process, and are likely to improve student outcomes. Techniques range from having students write a 'minute paper' whereby they simply state one thing they learned, to writing out the 'muddiest point' of something that still presents a challenge, to creating a 'concept map' that links key concepts, to 'documenting problem solutions' in which students identify a problem and then come up with a list of steps in solving it. Facilitators should explicitly refer to these (or other) examples as strategies participants could apply in their own classrooms. Two of these classroom assessment techniques (CATs) are incorporated into the design of the workshop to check for understanding and actively engage workshop participants. Facilitators can tailor the subsequent steps in the workshop based on the feedback from participants.

Athanases, S. Z., & Martin, K. (2006). Learning to advocate for educational equity in a teacher credential program. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(6), 627–646.

The authors in this article draw on a five-year study of how educational equity was taken up in a pre-service teacher education program in the United States. The program focused on equity pedagogy and aimed to develop the advocacy skills of teacher candidates in addressing inequities in schooling, especially in the context of cultural and linguistic diversity. The program fostered a social justice-oriented approach to teaching, encouraging teacher candidates to question the status quo, and examine how economic, social, and political factors shape student access and achievement, and how schools serve to reify or disrupt this status quo. This article's critical approach informs the workshop's guiding questions, and the lens through which participants evaluate their own teaching and understand why teaching for equity and social justice is important.

Marks, D. B. (2015). Flipping the classroom: Turning an instructional methods course upside down. *Journal of College Teaching and Learning*, 12(4), 241-248.

This article is central to the overarching instructional design of this workshop. The author explores how teaching practices can be aligned with current global advances, especially in reaching the current

generation of technology savvy learners. The article also foregrounds aims of developing critical, higher-order thinking. These two goals are facilitated using a flipped classroom design. In a flipped classroom, work that is traditionally done during class is moved outside of class (i.e., online, or at home). In-class time is reserved for active engagement and discussion. Hence, there is more time to address student needs and engage in higher-order, critical engagement of content. The flipped classroom model of instruction provides incentives for students to prepare for face-to-face classes, ways of assessing understanding, and rich opportunities for students to engage in content a priori to class. Students can then build on the knowledge they have gained by engaging in higher-critical and problem solving skills in class. Facilitators will employ the flipped classroom strategy in this workshop to achieve similar goals. This approach allows facilitators to present varied and relevant content to students outside of class, and utilize class time to engage with this content in deeper, more critical ways.

Pithers, R. T., & Soden, R. (2000). Critical thinking in education: A review. *Educational Research*, 42(3), 237-249.

In this article, the authors review the literature on the teaching of critical thinking skills in higher education and find it wanting. Broadly, the article offers a way to teach students/teacher candidates to generalize beyond a specific course or discipline. The authors argue that instructors tend to focus on the teaching of the subject matter of the discipline as opposed to the more important goal of developing and harnessing critical thinking. The paper thus explores ways of helping students 'learn to think', highlighting eight inhibitors and eight facilitators to critical thinking, then details some useful, implementable strategies for building critical thinking, metacognition, and scaffolding. The strategies foster active learning, emphasize the role of the instructor as more of a guide in the development of critical thinking, and demonstrate the value of having students teach themselves to refine strategies and develop metacognitive knowledge and skills. This article's emphasis on problem based learning as an effective method to developing and harnessing critical thinking skills informs two of the problem based ALS employed in the workshop to get participants to evaluate their own practices.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Benedetti, C. (2015). Online instructors as thinking advisors: A model for online learner adaptation. *Journal of College Teaching and Learning*, 12(3), 171-176.

Cazden, C. B. (1990). Differential treatment in New Zealand: reflections on research in minority education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 6(4), 291-303.

Dei, G., Mazzuca, J., Mclsaac, E., & Zine, J. (1997). *Reconstructing "dropout": A critical ethnography of the dynamics of black students' disengagement from school*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Eggertson, L. (2007). *The face of public education in Canada is changing*. Toronto, Canada: The Learning Partnership. Retrieved June 6, 2016 from <http://www.tlpcanada.ca/document.doc?id=75>

Gomez, M. L. (1994). Teacher education reform and prospective teachers' perspectives on teaching "other people's" children. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 10(3), 319-334.

Harvey, E., & Houle, R. (2006). *Demographic changes in Canada and their impact on public education*. Toronto, Canada: The Learning Partnership.

Kaur, B. (2012). Equity and social justice in teaching and teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 28*(4), 485-492.

Milner IV, H. R. (2008). Disrupting deficit notions of difference: counter-narratives of teachers and community in urban education. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 24*(6), 1573–1598.

Ryan, J., Pollock, K., & Antonelli, F. (2009). Teacher diversity in Canada: Leaky pipelines, bottlenecks, and glass ceilings. *Canadian Journal of Education, 32*(3), 591-617.

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Duration (MIN)	Subject	Activity	Purpose
20	Introduction and Icebreaker	<p><u>Introduction</u> Welcome participants and provide overview of the workshop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional: facilitator may use a short PowerPoint, Prezi, or other presentation – about five slides/images). • Emphasize that participants are free to ask questions at any time, and add that this is something instructors can/should encourage their students to do in their own classrooms. • Make connections between the present workshop and the online component participants fulfilled prior to attending the day’s session. • State the three learning outcomes participants will achieve by the end of the workshop. • Emphasize that this workshop is but an introduction; a first step towards debunking and problematizing issues surrounding equity, inclusion, and social justice. The workshop in no way can, or aims to, resolve systemic 	<p>Create a sense of community and set the tone for the rest of the workshop.</p> <p>The icebreaker puts participants at ease and fosters a feeling of familiarity (participants learn something about each other) and community (participants feel they are working towards a shared goal). The icebreaker adds purpose to the workshop by having participants contribute personal learning outcomes.</p>

		<p>discrimination and/or other taken for granted assumptions impeding student success in Canadian classrooms. Instead, it serves as a foundation upon which to mount a course of action designed to challenge instructors (and educators) to create more socially just and equitable classroom spaces.</p> <p><u>Icebreaker</u> Ask participants to introduce themselves to the whole class by sharing their name, course(s) taught, one outcome they hope to realize from the workshop, and an adjective which best captures their personality.</p>	
45	Define and Discuss Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (Learning Outcome 1)	<p>This activity focuses on the four articles and videos that were distributed online to participants prior to the workshop (see Appendices A and B).</p> <p><u>Small Group Discussion</u> (~15 min) Ask participants to sit in four groups, according to the particular article and video they examined. Determine an easy way to direct participants to the appropriate groups (e.g., table place cards) prior to the workshop.</p> <p>Encourage participants to discuss the articles and videos by evaluating them against the following three questions. Ask participants to justify their responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) How does the article/video define the concepts equity, inclusion, and social justice in relation to teaching and learning in the classroom? (ii) What does the article/video consider to be the aim of a teaching and learning approach that centers notions of equity, inclusion, and social justice? (iii) Why does the article/video think a focus on social justice in teaching is important and relevant? 	<p>Model the use of discussion strategies and classroom assessment techniques that foster critical, higher-order thinking that participants can use in their future classrooms. These methods also help the facilitator check for misunderstandings during the workshop.</p> <p>Have participants engage with the concepts of equity, inclusion, and social justice, and evaluate the aims and implications of teaching for social justice.</p> <p>Help participants to develop their own critical thinking skills, and apply them in a teaching context.</p> <p><u>Small Group Discussion</u> Get participants to demonstrate ascending skills of analysis: reading an article for comprehension; discerning the article's aim and central argument; and,</p>

		<p>Circulate the room to determine if participants are able to articulate the major ideas presented in the articles and videos and analyze them for implications. Encourage participants to use critical thinking in their evaluations and discussions. Spend some time with each subgroup listening, commenting, and employing the following discussion strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bookending Strategy.</i> Ask a question when appropriate to guide/steer/focus discussion and promote participants' critical thinking skills. For instance, the facilitator may ask, "What is problematic about treating all students the same?" Or, "How might equality and equity be different in a mixed ability classroom?" Frame questions around the specific discussions taking place in the groups. • <i>On the Spot Feedback Strategy.</i> Give positive reinforcement and encouragement to participants, affirming their contributions by relating their comments to the content of the workshop and prodding them to refine their thinking. <p><u>Large Group Discussion</u> (~25 min) Reconvene the large group. Have a member from each group briefly share highlights of their discussion.</p> <p>Solicit specific feedback from the participants using the following classroom engagement techniques from Angelo and Cross (1993):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Minute Paper</i> (~1 minute). Ask participants, "From your engagement with the workshop material (article and video), was there anything specific that (new) you learned or was reinforced for 	<p>justifying/explaining reasons for their contributions.</p> <p><u>Large Group Discussion</u> Allow participants to gain a better understanding of the major findings and implications of the articles and videos they did not examine.</p>
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		<p><i>you? If so, what?"</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Muddiest Point (~1 minute). Ask the group, "Based on your engagement with the material, was there an idea or statement that challenged your thinking regarding teaching social justice in the B.Ed. classroom?" And, "Was there any part of the discussion you disagreed with, felt was missing or overlooked, and why?"</i> <p>Invite several participants to share their responses, emphasizing that contributions are optional.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to use On the Spot Feedback after each volunteered response, and frame questions for participants that focus on how the article and video in question describe/speak about equity, inclusion and social justice, and the broader implications of applying principals of equity and inclusion in teaching for social justice. • End this segment of the workshop with a meta-teaching moment by explaining the purpose of the exercise – i.e., discussing workshop material, sharing in groups, and challenging thinking to identify and justify core tenets of teaching for equity, inclusion, and social justice. • Emphasize that the development and harnessing of critical, higher-order thinking skills is integral to the realization of inclusive and socially just educational/learning outcomes for students. Make connections to the next activity. <p>Collect the Minute Paper and Muddiest Point responses from participants. There might be time during the summary to cover any additional points or questions but consider sending an email following the workshop to address any remaining concerns.</p>	
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20	Inhibitors and Enablers of Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (Learning Outcome 2)	<p>Now that participants can articulate what the concepts equity, inclusion, and social justice signify within the context of teaching and learning, and appreciate the importance of social justice teaching, the workshop will move to identifying and discussing some inhibitors and enablers of social justice in the classroom.</p> <p>Continue this activity in the large group setting. Ask participants to identify (from the articles, videos, or personal experience) strategies, actions or attitudes that enable (foster) or inhibit (impede) aims of equity, inclusion, and social justice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write responses on a whiteboard (or similar). See below for examples. • Ask participants to expand on their responses, solicit feedback from the rest of the class, and plug in any missing information or knowledge gaps. <p><i>Possible Responses: Enablers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing care for students • Questioning the status quo (e.g., asking how things can be different to accommodate all students) • Advocating for students both inside and outside the classroom • Differentiating instruction <p><i>Possible Responses: Inhibitors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not showing care for students (only concerned with completing syllabi/course content) • Maintaining the status quo (“I’ve always done it this way.”) • Not speaking up for students • Relying on homogeneous teaching (i.e., teaching all students the same way). 	Engage in a reflection on the previous activity and draw on personal experiences in order to extrapolate behaviours and attitudes that enable or hinder socially-just student learning outcomes.
20	Self-Reflection (Learning Outcome 3)	Participants use the enabler and inhibitor criteria generated in the previous activity to evaluate their own teaching practices and philosophical approaches to teaching.	Give participants an opportunity to apply (new) knowledge and (reframed) dispositions to critique their

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants to work independently and reflect on the knowledge gleaned from the articles and videos (and any prior knowledge) as a basis for their self-critique. • Instruct participants to complete the following sentences: <i>"I believe that the aim of teaching should be..."</i> <i>"I am concerned with... in my classroom."</i> <i>"My role as an instructor is..."</i> • Participants can then evaluate whether their thinking or approach fosters or impedes aims of equity and social justice. • Have participants identify one area in which they enable the aims of social justice in their classrooms, and one area in which they could improve. • Ask participants to describe one or more concrete actions they could take to create more inclusive and socially just learning climates. For example: <i>"In order to help EVERY student realize his/her fullest potential, I will..."</i>, or <i>"I will take steps to... in order to help EVERY student reach his/her fullest potential".</i> <p>Circulate through the room while participants are engaged in this activity. Ask permission to review responses one-on-one and provide feedback whenever possible.</p>	<p>own teaching practices and (re)construct their teaching philosophy and methodology along more inclusive, equity, and social justice-oriented lines.</p> <p>This independent exercise measures the scope and depth of <i>individual</i> participants' understanding and ability to evaluate their teaching practices and (re)align same with the goals of equity and social justice-oriented teaching.</p>
15	Summary	<p>Reconvene the large group. Encourage participants to continue working on their self-reflections after the workshop. Spend a few minutes answering any outstanding questions.</p> <p>Recap the learning outcomes set at the beginning of the workshop or described by</p>	<p>Wrap up the workshop.</p> <p>Motivate participants to apply their new knowledge and skills to creating more inclusive, equitable, and socially-just learning experiences for their</p>

		<p>participants. Reiterate that teaching for equity and social justice, and becoming a more social justice-driven educator, calls for continuous self-reflection, interrogation of assumptions and practices, and a commitment to pedagogy that aligns with equity and inclusion.</p> <p>Thank participants and commend everyone for their interest and hard work. Provide contact information for any follow-up questions.</p>	<p>students.</p>
<p>Total Time: 120 minutes</p>			

PRESENTATION STRATEGIES

“There is no coming to consciousness without pain. People will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own Soul. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious.” - Carl Jung

Educators who are driven to either teach or teach *for* equity and social justice face a daunting task, not only in choosing appropriate pedagogy and instruction, but in fostering a climate that is conducive to open and meaningful discussions. Social justice teaching fosters aims of equity and inclusion. It is critical, nuanced teaching that requires a commitment to problematizing the status quo, examining issues from the lens of others, and advocating for students. If every student is to realize their fullest potential, educators must attend to the kinds of systemic, social, and cultural factors which can impede student achievement. This is especially important for educators who enjoy some form of privilege, whether due to race, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, religion, or other.

The plan for this workshop recognizes the challenges of teaching and teaching for social justice, and acknowledges that participants may pay lip service to issues surrounding discrimination and inclusion. To mitigate this potential, the workshop was designed around blended instruction which comprises an online component and a range of face-to-face, active learning strategies. This design aims to fully engage participants in critical, higher-order thinking in interrogating their own teaching philosophies and predispositions, examining how these may negatively impact student learning outcomes, reconstructing said philosophies and predispositions to align with aims of equity, inclusion, and social justice, and defending the value and importance of creating more inclusive, socially-just learning outcomes for *all* students.

The workshop is designed for 20 participants but facilitators can modify the activities to suit any number of participants. Four articles (Appendix A) and four brief video clips (Appendix B) should be made available to participants in advance of the workshop. Facilitators can e-mail the articles and video links to participants, or post them online (e.g., through the institution’s learning management system). Facilitators should place participants in groups prior to the workshop, and provide each group with one article and one video. As part of this process, participants have the opportunity to introduce themselves

to each other and build a rapport in advance of the workshop. Alternatively, facilitators may assign specific articles and videos to individual participants and save formulating groups until the beginning of the workshop. In keeping with the aim of the flipped classroom method (Marks, 2015), workshop time is reserved for face-to-face, deeper interactions with the materials.

The assigned articles are among others covered in a review by Kaur (2012) titled, “Equity and Social Justice in Teaching and Teacher Education”. Guiding questions were designed to engage participants in active, critical thinking on the topic. Three guiding questions invite participants to engage broadly with the articles before the workshop. During the workshop, three other (but related) questions are designed to get participants thinking about equity and social justice on a deeper and more specific level. Hence, the questions vary for each article but are the same for all four videos.

Twenty minutes is allotted for introductions because it is important that participants feel comfortable before open and active interactions will take place. With regards to the grouping of participants, the aim is to keep groups small enough to generate meaningful discussion but large enough that each group gets an opportunity to share the outcomes of their discussion with the rest of the class. The specific discussion and assessment strategies are carefully selected to realize the workshop’s three learning outcomes. The activities are designed around the learning outcomes and serve as a scaffold to push participants to interrogate their own teaching practices.

The facilitator should visit the room before the workshop begins to ensure technology and space are satisfactory and to also set up the room. It is ideal if the seating can be arranged in pods, especially for the small group activity (4 pods for 20 participants). The facilitator should feel free to move between the pods and around the room throughout the workshop.

APPENDIX A

Facilitator Materials: Suggested Articles for Flipped Classroom Activity

Create four groups of about five individuals. Assign one of the following articles to each of the groups. Ask participants to read their assigned article and respond to the guiding questions before attending the workshop. Participants will have the chance to discuss their responses during the workshop.

Guiding questions and article summaries are adapted from Kaur (2012)¹. The summaries are provided here as an overview of each article and are intended *only* for the workshop facilitators.

Group 1

Athanases, S. Z., & Martin, K. (2006). Learning to advocate for educational equity in a teacher credential program. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(6), 627–646.

The authors in this article draw on a five-year study of how educational equity was taken up in a pre-service teacher education program in the United States. The program focused on equity pedagogy and aimed to develop in teacher candidates advocacy skills in addressing inequities in schooling, especially in the context of cultural and linguistic diversity. The program fostered a social justice-oriented approach to teaching, encouraging teacher candidates to question the status quo, and examine and understand how economic, social and political factors shape student access and achievement and how schools serve to reify or disrupt this status quo. The authors found the results of the study to be generally positive. Teacher candidates felt prepared to teach in culturally and linguistically diverse settings and expressed willingness to advocate for their students, and were able to articulate the impact of the program on their practices. However, one teacher shared that the program (advocating for equity) is very demanding on/for new teachers, and Kaur (2012) writes that it remains unclear to what extent the program focused on getting teacher candidates to interrogate their own beliefs and biases.

Guiding Questions

1. What parallels can you draw between the context taken up in this article and your province/state?
2. What important lessons can you take from this article, in relation to how professors, lecturers and other teachers in teacher education programs might go about preparing teacher candidates to advocate for equity in a culturally and linguistically setting?
3. Evaluate the comments that advocating for equity puts huge demands on new teachers. Do you agree? Why or why not? How might you as an instructor of teacher candidates/teacher educators move beyond this challenge?

Group 2

Cazden, C. B. (1990). Differential treatment in New Zealand: reflections on research in minority education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 6(4), 291–303.

¹ Kaur, B. (2012). Equity and social justice in teaching and teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28(4), 485-492.

This article situates classroom experiences and teacher student interactions as important sites of inequalities. The author explores unequal opportunities of participation in school faced by Māori (Indigenous) children as opposed to Pākehā (European/non-Māori) children. The study found that Māori children were more frequently tracked into low ability groupings than non-Māori/Pākehā children and that teachers, especially Pākehā teachers, were more likely to ask this latter group to expound on their responses than Māori children.

Guiding Questions

1. What parallels can be drawn between this case and your own national context?
2. How might the classroom environment and teacher-student interactions be “important sites of learning inequalities”?
3. How might such a classroom be transformed into a more inclusive, equity- and social-justice-oriented place of learning?

Group 3

Gomez, M. L. (1994). Teacher education reform and prospective teachers' perspectives on teaching “other people's” children. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 10(3), 319–334.

This article explores how teachers, as part of a homogeneous teacher population that is White, middle class, English-speaking, and predominantly female approach and engage in the teaching of “Other” children, i.e., visible minorities, poor, and working class, English language learners (ELLs), and other such diversities. The author highlights that despite acknowledging the importance of equity in education, these teachers were not expecting to teach children from backgrounds different from their own, nor were they prepared for such teaching in their B.Ed. programs. Teachers generally viewed diversity as a “problem for schools and teachers”.

Guiding Questions

1. What parallels can be drawn between this and your provincial/state context?
2. How might equity and social justice be operationalized in this context?
3. How might diversity be reconceptualised other than as a “problem”? What is problematic about this conceptualization of diversity?

Group 4

Milner IV, H. R. (2008). Disrupting deficit notions of difference: counter-narratives of teachers and community in urban education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(6), 1573–1598.

Milner examines the “counter-narratives” of three successful, urban school teachers in this article. He refers to a “deficit discourse” (Kaur, 2012) of the urban school culture in which students, families, and communities are described as “marginalized”, “disadvantaged”, “at risk”, and “oppressed” without attention to the institutional structures and norms which perpetuate inequity and reify the status quo. Milner draws on critical race theory to show how these teachers problematized these deficit notions and disrupted these types of dominant, negative discourses through pedagogy and personal philosophies.

Guiding Questions

1. How might the educational context examined here relate your provincial/state context?
2. What important lessons can you take from this article, in relation to how teacher educators might go about preparing teacher candidates in a diverse setting to engage in the kinds of counter-narratives presented in this article?
3. How prepared are you as a teacher educator to engage in such counter-narratives? Reflect on how you might become better prepared to do so.

APPENDIX B

Videos for Flipped Classroom Activity

Assign one of the following videos to each of the groups. Each video is about 5-10 minutes in length. Ask participants to view their assigned video and respond to the guiding questions before attending the workshop. Participants will have the chance to discuss their responses during the workshop.

Guiding Questions

1. What do you think was the aim of this video?
2. What do you think was missing from the video? Or, is there anything the video failed to consider?
3. What do you consider to be the underlying implication/s for equity and social justice approaches to teaching that the video conveys?

Group 1: John Dewey & Two Teacher Candidates

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgvQ8ILfc6o&feature=youtu.be>

In this video, two students discuss seven types of counter-productive thinking advanced by John Dewey. These include ideological thinking, reactive thinking, nostalgic thinking, and dogmatic thinking. As the students discuss, each of these seven types of thinking hinder productive and critical, higher-order thinking. The students then discuss five important ways Dewey asserts that these kinds of negative and counter-productive thinking can be averted/stemmed. The ways discussed include backing away from the fixed meaning of things and terms we use, using words that are less ideologically rooted, examining issues through the lenses of others, setting aside our present ideas as we study issues, and reconsidering facts we believe to be true. Dewey espouses that it is only by separating ourselves from the limits and confines of our own emotional and intellectual positions, can we begin to see others' perspectives.

Group 2: Aboriginal Education

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tswVV2YkjKA&feature=youtu.be>

This video explores notions of equality and equity, relative to the context of inequality. It provides compelling and significant statistics on Aboriginal education, especially against the backdrop of mainstream (non-Aboriginal) education. As the video depicts, Aboriginal education in Canada is not funded to the same degree as mainstream education. More than half of Aboriginals living on reserves will not graduate high school, while thousands are not attending school at all, and one in three reads at a level one. In addition, Aboriginals are more likely to be in poor health. The unemployment rate is twice as high in comparison to non-Aboriginals, and more than half of the unemployed are under the age of 25. The video invites viewers to consider the future of all children, and emphasizes that education is the key to change.

Group 3: Narrowing the Achievement Gap

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBEI6ilDv-0&feature=youtu.be>

The central argument in this video is that educational excellence cannot be achieved without attending to equity. The video invites viewers to redefine what we mean by “being smart”. Smart is no longer based on just “knowing stuff”. Hence, it is not so much what you know but how to navigate what is known. The context is US-based but resonates internationally. The video highlights the educational achievement gap based on race, class, gender, immigration status, and language barriers. The video also posits that 75% of white students graduate high school, a figure that is 65% for Black and Hispanic Americans. Millions of young Americans are considered either at-risk, in-risk, or future at-risk, as their academic, economic, and social outcomes are in jeopardy. The video takes up important questions, such as who is privileged, and who is not regarding educational outcomes, and invites viewers to understand the consequences of privilege. The video also outlines some twenty-first century skills that are important in the American workforce, such as critical analysis, adaptability, cross-cultural communication, collaboration, innovation, and cultural resiliency.

Group 4: Equity & Equality

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APDxrppvtKQ&feature=youtu.be>

In this video, two community relations facilitators explore social justice through the lens of equity and equality. They invoke the example of the popular movie, *The Hunger Games*, and the protagonist Katniss. Katniss is a villager from District 12 who is untrained in weaponry and has no experience in combat. She volunteers to fight in order to protect her younger sister. Tributes from District Two, on the other hand, are prepared for the games, well-trained in weaponry and they volunteer to fight out of a sense of pride. The facilitators’ point is to distinguish between equality and equity. Equal means treating everyone the same. However, to be equitable, it is necessary to take people’s situations into consideration/account. As the facilitators argue, everyone has the same opportunity to apply for college but not everyone has the same access to resources (that would have prepared or will prepare them for college). Another great example the facilitators refer to is financial aid. On the one hand, everyone can be given the same amount of money (equality). However, not everyone needs financial aid to complete their education. Equity involves dividing the money available among students based on needs and family situations.

Additional Resources: Ontario Documents

Reach Every Child <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/energize/energize.pdf>

Ontario Equity Strategy <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equityquickfacts.pdf>