Teacher's Notes: Diversity Discovery Activity

The best way to make this class interesting and meaningful to you & your classmates all year is to find out who you are! Try this …

This activity may be a good way to begin the course or improve the atmosphere if your class is suffering from too much negativity or lacking a sense of relevance to their lessons. Take it seriously, as it can elicit very personal, private responses from students. You may want to use this after you complete the “Respect Rule” lesson.

1. Brainstorm about Culture

Everyone has at least one culture they come from or identify with. But what does this mean? To find out, think up a list of different groups of people you know of in Hawai‘i & share this info with the class. Hint: think of race, age, religion, art, music, sports, experiences, values, traditions, history that people share.

If students have trouble with this, use yourself as an example &/or consider these cultural groups:

- teachers
- surfers
- fishermen
- Baby Boomers
- ukulele players
- Hawaiians
- Pidgin speakers
- voyagers
- Christians

2. Easy Easy Homework

Think of 1 thing you can share with the class about your culture. If you feel you belong to more than 1 culture, share something for each. What you bring can be an object, a story, food, activity or anything else you feel is important. It should be general to your cultural group, but can also be personal to you. It can be negative or positive, since we don’t always like everything about our cultures.

Tell students to bring food to share or recipes; something to wear; a game to play; a story, song, poem or chant; a memory; a gift given or received; information to explain activities their family or cultural group does together.

3. Talk Story & Reflect

Some people think it’s easy to talk about yourself in class, but sometimes it’s very hard. In this activity, you only need to share what you are comfortable saying out loud - but remember, what you say may make someone else, especially someone like you, more comfortable and happy to be in this class.

Please also write more about yourself on the back of this sheet before &/or after you talk story with the class. Mahalo! ☺

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This activity can help create a very positive, respectful & close learning environment in your class – but it can also be explosive! To avoid creating any negativity, please prepare yourself and your students in advance by looking over the information below prior to doing Activity #3 with the class!

Have a look at how some researchers perceive cultural identity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four Acculturation Patterns</th>
<th>Is it valuable to you to maintain your cultural identity &amp; characteristics?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it valuable to maintain relationships with other groups?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student responses in Activity #3: Talk Story & Reflect may lead you to see students who are:

⊕ comfortable with Hawaii’s mainstream culture & their own (Integration)
⊕ comfortable w/ HI’s mainstream culture, but not their own (Assimilation)
⊕ comfortable with their own culture, but not HI’s mainstream (Separation)
⊕ uncomfortable w/ their own culture & HI’s mainstream (Marginalization)

⊕ Students may also be unsure about their cultural identity as teens typically do lots of “soul searching” &/or may not yet have considered their culture ... with them & others, be sure not to inadvertently guide them to adopt your own culture - or that of our education system where it’s not appropriate!

CAUTION: Hawaiian researchers note the “mainstream” culture here, even in our schools, cannot be assumed to be Western Caucasian or native Hawaiian. In fact, depending on your community, students may fit in with the majority group locally or not, and may fit in with many cultures here or even distant cultures not well-represented in your school’s community.

Continued ...
The purpose of this activity is not to identify or resolve cultural issues within individuals or communities, of course, as that is a challenging task best left to experts in the field.

It is simply to give all class members a chance to:

- know each other better
- to acknowledge who each person is & who their 'ohana (family) is
- set a tone of respect & relevance for all future learning in the course

Note: 'ohana are very diverse in Hawai'i ... it can be any or all of: immediate family; extended family; hanai family (adopted through Hawaiian custom); foster family; neighborhood; &/or cultural or religious community.