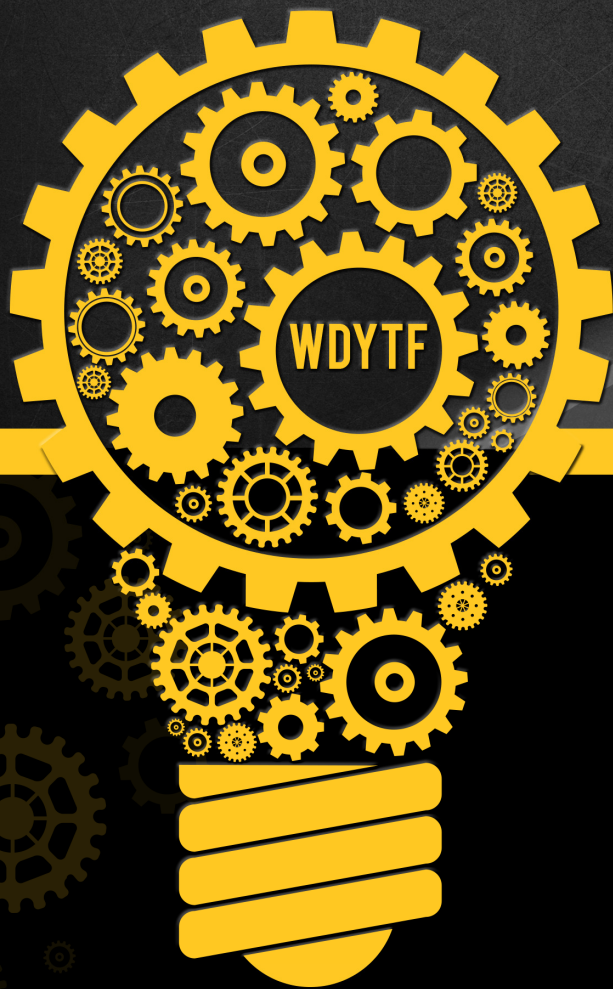


CULTURALLY RELEVANT
CURRICULUM AND CULTURALLY
RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS

Toolkit

2017-2018

*Cultural Resistance
- Education 4 Liberation*



IN THIS TOOLKIT,
YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT THE WEST
DAYTON YOUTH TASK FORCE
CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE CULTURALLY
RELEVANT CURRICULUM AND
CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS
AND THE 12 POINT PLAN TO PUSH
SCHOOL DISTRICTS FORWARD!



Culturally Relevant Curriculum Toolkit Preview

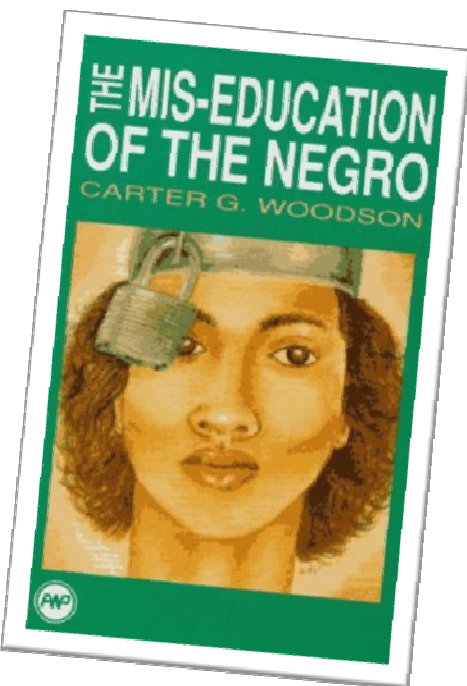
October 2017

Parent organizer Hashim Jabar was volunteering in a 3rd grade classroom during a lesson on genealogy. He watched as a classroom of all Black students read from a handout defining family members, such as uncles, cousins, sisters and brothers. In contrast to the makeup of the classroom, the handout showed pictures of all white people. He questioned how the children were supposed to be engaged in this lesson that was not engaging them and was not relevant to their lives. Worse yet, what message were the students internalizing about themselves and their families who were not represented on the pages?

This experience led Hashim, through his work at West Dayton Youth Taskforce and Racial Justice NOW!, to run a successful campaign to introduce culturally relevant curriculum in Dayton Public Schools, winning a change in the course of study to implement the two books, *Mis-Education of the Negro* and *Up from Slavery*.

Situations like this are happening all the time in classrooms across the country. In response, more and more educators, parents, students and community leaders are calling for the adoption of school curricula that are relevant to the students in the classroom.

Culturally Relevant Teaching is a term created by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994) to describe a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Culturally relevant teaching essentially means that teachers create a bridge between students' home and school lives, while still meeting the expectations of the district and state curricular requirements.



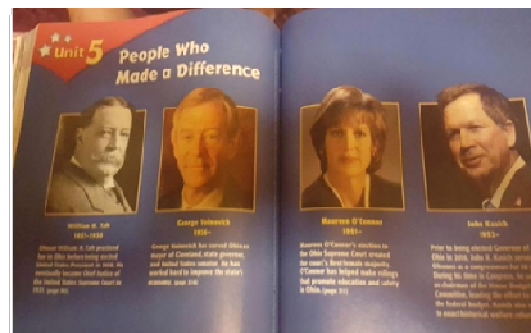
Key Definitions

Curriculum - the lessons and academic content taught in a school or in a specific course or program; the courses that are taught by a school or college.

Pedagogy - the science and art of education, specifically instructional theory; the art or science of teaching; instructional methods.

Culture - the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; also the characteristic features of everyday existence (as diversions or a way of life shared by people in a place or time).

Culturally relevant teaching utilizes the backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences of the students to inform the teacher's lessons and methodology.



An example of culturally irrelevant curriculum, this textbook only features examples of white people as "People Who Made a Difference".

Preview of On-line Toolkit

In 2018, West Dayton Youth Taskforce (WDYTF), Racial Justice NOW! (RJN!) and the Dignity in Schools Campaign (DSC) will release our Culturally Relevant Curriculum Toolkit. Visit dignityinschools.org/crctk as we add new resources and build out the toolkit, including:

- An **introduction** with the mission and vision of WDYTF, RJN! and DSC, which explains how culturally relevant curriculum fights the school-to-prison pipeline.
- More **definitions of key terms** like pedagogy, culture, curriculum and more!
- **Research and scholarly articles** on the positive impacts of culturally relevant curriculum from Dr. Molefi Asante, Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings and Dr. Cheryl Grills.
- The **“Centric Idea,”** which was the greatest takeaway from year one of WDYTF and RJN!’s campaign.
- **A Guide for Advocates**, including how to add books to your school’s course of study, how to approach your school board and superintendent, how to change curriculum, and how to measure how culturally responsive your school is.
- **The Portland Baseline Essays** - The concept of the Baseline Essays was introduced by Dr. Asa G. Hilliard III, consultant to the Portland School District's desegregation plan, in 1982. The term when used by Portland Public Schools means a series of essays that gives information about the history, culture and contributions of a specific geo-cultural group in the areas of art, language arts, mathematics, science, social science and music. The purpose of the essays is to provide the reader with a holistic and thematic history of the culture and contributions of a specific geo-cultural group from ancient times to the present.
- **A sample 12-Point Plan to Push School Districts Forward** that can be adopted by groups looking to implement culturally relevant curriculum in their local schools (see back cover).
- **A Book List** featuring examples for different subjects in school like novels, poetry, fiction and non-fiction, including titles such as *The Mis-Education of the Negro* and *Up From Slavery* and more!

The Centric Idea

“Through observations, inquiry, and discussion, I’ve found that children who are centered in their own cultural information are better students, more disciplined, and have greater motivation for school work.”

Dr. Molefi Asante, Article: Afro-centric Curriculum, Educational Leadership, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Case Example of Education Centered Around a Students’ Culture

For schools serving African-American students, they can adopt an African Centered Education (ACE) to make the curriculum relevant to their students. Here are some examples of key practices:

- Schools should create an “African village of learning community” where everyone shares the responsibility for the instruction of the students and models what is expected of students.
- Teachers should be expected to understand their strengths and challenges, seek professional development, specifically in African Centered Pedagogy, make sure their classrooms feature positive cultural images and practices, and ensure their lessons are connected to the real world.
- Administrators should demonstrate truth, harmony and integrity in their leadership, maintain a cultural dress code, provide professional development, mediate issues among staff and transfer staff who cannot promote the ACE approach.



Schools should integrate cultural traditions of all the students in their classrooms, not just euro-centric holidays and celebrations.

Cultural Resistance

Cultural resistance is the broad use of artistic expression (meanings and symbols)—such as song, dance, poetry, storytelling or traditional practices—to fight oppression and combat a dominant power, often constructing a different vision of the world in the process.

It is a way for a group to define itself on its own terms and to politically resist social control. It is a way of reclaiming our humanity.



CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE CULTURALLY RELEVANT CURRICULUM AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS IN DAYTON, OHIO BY WEST DAYTON YOUTH TASK FORCE AND RACIAL JUSTICE NOW!

Twelve Point Plan to Move Our District Forward!

THE 12 DEMANDS

- 1 Implement mandatory reading in schools of Mis-Education of the Negro and Up from Slavery
- 2 Implement a 3-year district-wide initiative teaching the game of chess and its history (grades 3-12)
- 3 Implement culturally relevant books and course supplements into the course of study (suggested book list available)
- 4 Implicit bias training in the context of oppression
- 5 Incorporate local Black Daytonians into the curriculum
- 6 Professional development in culturally relevant pedagogies including hip-hop pedagogy
- 7 Utilize the Oregon Baseline Essays in professional development for teachers
- 8 Use the work and scholarship of Black scholars to solve the problems of Black children and Black families (i.e. Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu, Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings, Dr. Asa Hilliard III, Dr. Molefi Asante, Dr. John Henrik Clarke)
- 9 Implement a district-wide Academic Olympics with events such as debate team, chess and robotics
- 10 Bring restorative justice and peace circles into the school culture
- 11 Utilize storytellers to build the joy of learning in accord with the Griot tradition
- 12 Address varied learning styles of students (i.e. kinesthetic learners)



LEARN MORE AT WWW.RJNOHIO.ORG