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What You Can Do to Create a Culturally Relevant Classroom

1. Greet students at the door at the beginning and end of each day.
2. As you are initially greeting students at the door, engage them in conversation about where they are from, and later, about issues important to them. Use these cultural referents throughout your daily lessons. Use students' names and avoid creating nicknames if you are unable to initially pronounce their name.
3. Have students identify themselves each time that they speak.
4. Encourage students to look at peers in the room while speaking, as opposed to just the teacher.
5. Avoid hidden agendas. Share your truth.
6. Use inquiry effectively to gather more information about the needs of your students so you can accurately meet their needs.
7. Recognize that you might carry stereotypes and preconceived notions about students based on their perceived identity.
8. Guide students to reflect upon and question situations using multiple lenses/perspectives rather than relying on a single story.
9. Do not assume that your references will be understood by everyone (e.g., saying, 'The igneous rock in question was bigger than a tennis ball' assumes that everyone knows how big a tennis ball is, when that may not be the case).
10. Use storytelling to illustrate your point.
11. Reference texts by a variety of authors (e.g., different ethnicities, genders).
12. Use call and response to get the attention of the class.
13. Avoid sarcasm, as it will offend some.
14. Do not make generalizations about a group (by race, gender, religion, etc.). Avoid comments like, "All men...," "All women...," or "We all...."
15. Share your story in order to build relational capacity.
16. Build community through collaborative work.
17. Use movement throughout activities—it helps cement memory.
18. Include choral chants to help lock information in memory.
19. Know that biology, family, community, culture, and generation all contribute to a person's tapestry.
20. Create a safe learning environment (by doing all of the items above).

Remember: You cannot *not* communicate. Every behavior is a kind of communication.