Culturally Conscious Instructional Strategies

EDEquity, Inc.

CCI are researched based strategies that have been recorded to engage students with classroom instruction. CCI strategies are not additional strategies but it is an approach that will enhance the instructional repertoire and mind-set of the teacher. Teachers will learn how to directly integrate affective domain (relational) strategies with the academic/achievement strategies.

In a direct coaching support model, teacher(s) will be provided with modeling of the key CCI strategies that have increased student engagement and increased student achievement. Student learning styles, culture and home language will be key components of the teacher's training.

The following strategies (Gay 2004) will be included in the support model for teachers:

Strategy #1
Use a variety of instructional strategies and learning activities. Offering variety provides the students with opportunities to learn in ways that are responsive to their own communication styles, cognitive styles, and aptitudes. In addition, the variety helps them develop and strengthen other approaches to learning.

Strategy #2
Consider students' cultures and language skills when developing learning objectives and instructional activities. Facilitate comparable learning opportunities for students with differing characteristics. For example, consider opportunities for students who differ in appearance, race, sex, disability, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, or ability.

Strategy #3
Incorporate objectives for affective and personal development. Provide increased opportunities for high- and low-achievers to boost their self-esteem, develop positive self-attributes, and enhance their strengths and talents. Such opportunities can enhance students' motivation to learn and achieve.

Strategy #4
Communicate expectations. Let the students know the "classroom rules" about talking, verbal participation in lessons, and moving about the room. Tell them how long a task will take to complete or how long it will take to learn a skill or strategy, and when appropriate, give them information on their ability to master a certain skill or complete a task. For example, it may be necessary to encourage students who expect to achieve mastery but are struggling to do so. They may need to know that they have the ability to achieve mastery, but must work through the difficulty.

Strategy #5

Provide rationales. Explain the benefits of learning a concept, skill, or task. Ask students to tell you the rationale for learning and explain how the concept or skill applies to their lives at school, home, and work.

Strategy #6

Use advance and post-organizers. At the beginning of lessons, give the students an overview and tell them the purpose or goal of the activity. If applicable, tell them the order that the lesson will follow and relate it to previous lessons. At the end of the lesson, summarize its main points.

Strategy #7

Provide frequent reviews of the content learned. For example, check with the students to see if they remember the different concepts or skill(s) being taught. Provide a brief review of the previous concept(s)/skill(s) before continuing on to a new and related lesson.

Strategy #8

Facilitate independence in thinking and action. There are many ways to facilitate students' independence. For example, when students begin their work without specific instruction from the teacher, they are displaying independence. When students ask questions, the teacher can encourage independence by responding in a way that lets the student know how to find the answer for him or herself. When teachers ask students to evaluate their own work or progress, they are facilitating independence, and asking students to perform for the class (e.g., by reciting or role-playing) also promotes independence.

Strategy #9

Promote student on-task behavior. Keeping students on-task maintains a high level of intensity of instruction. By starting lessons promptly and minimizing transition time between lessons, teachers can help students stay on-task. Shifting smoothly (no halts) and efficiently (no wasted effort) from one lesson to another and being business like about housekeeping tasks such as handing out papers and setting up audiovisual equipment helps to maintain their attention. Keeping students actively involved in the lessons-for example, by asking questions that require students to recall information-also helps them to stay focused and increases the intensity of instruction.

Strategy #10

Monitor students' academic progress during lessons and independent work. Check with students during seatwork to see if they need assistance before they have to ask for help. Ask if they have any questions about what they are doing and if they understand what they are doing. Also make the students aware of the various situations in which a skill or strategy can be used as well as adaptations that will broaden its applicability to additional situations.

Strategy #11

Provide positive descriptive frequent feedback. Feedback at multiple levels is preferred. For example, acknowledging a correct response is a form of brief feedback, while prompting a student who has given an incorrect answer by providing clues or repeating or rephrasing the question is another level. The teacher may also give positive descriptive feedback by stating the appropriate aspects of a student's performance. Finally, the teacher may give positive corrective feedback by making students aware of specific aspects of their performance that need work, reviewing concepts and asking questions, making suggestions for improvement, and having the students correct their work.

Strategy #12

Require mastery. Require students to master one task before going on to the next. When tasks are assigned, tell the students the criteria that define mastery and the different ways mastery can be obtained. When mastery is achieved on one aspect or portion of the task, give students corrective feedback to let them know what aspects they have mastered and what aspects still need more work. When the task is complete, let the students know that mastery was reached.