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Lesson Plan Implementation: Walk a mile in my shoes activity.

Time to complete: 50 minutes-1hour and 15 minutes.

Objective: To demonstrate how communication can build bridges of community through better understanding Culture, and Cultural Identity. In order to use Culture as a bridge to connect to an Ecosystem, where our differing cultural backgrounds harvest our ecosystem of humanity. By better understanding our cultural differences, and respecting them, we can strengthen our community, and foster more open communication and dialogue, which in essence, is fostering an “ecosystem.”

Directions: First: Understand Culture. Define Culture, and its meaning, and translate culture to the Dominant culture in our society, (The W.A.S.P. = White Anglo Saxon Protestant) and its influence on all other Non-dominant cultures, (Subcultures) Connect Subcultures as a meaning of value, and significance in terms of individuality, show how culture is a construct of community, and of a shared unified experience linking a group of people together. Therefore, showing culture as an influence beyond social identification (Race, Gender, Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation, Age, Religion, Education, Family, Socioeconomic Status, Sex,) and as an influence of human identification (Hip-Hop culture, Video game culture, Cooking culture, Dancing culture, exercise culture, sports culture etc.)

Now, go across room, and have students identify one Non-Dominant culture they associate with, and write each culture on the board. Underneath the umbrella term “Culture.” Which you’ve written on the board at the top. Once all students have given a culture they’ve identified with, explain, how through perception checking, (Placing oneself in the shoes of another individual different than you) One can have a deeper understanding of how certain “hobbies,” or “contexts,” can be culturally relevant, because they unify a group of people through that shared experience. From there: You transition to the “Walk a mile in my shoes” activity. Where you state the 10 Subcultures that the dominant culture claims are of high cultural value, and are a heavy influence in determining how many obstacles, or challenges one may have to overcome due to these 10 Subcultures. Note: That the subcultures are connotative, and can impact an individual positively or negatively, but what is important to have the students understand is that they have been directly or indirectly impacted by these particular subcultures due to their prevalence in society, in regards to privilege, or lack thereof.

Write down the 10 subcultures of social significance on the board: (Race, Gender, Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation, Age, Religion, Education, Family, Socioeconomic Status, Sex,)

And explain to the students, that they will interview a fellow classmate, (in pairs of 2) and based on the 10 subcultures written on the board, ask their partner which 4 of the 10 has impacted the most and why? The partner must write down the responses, and the roles switch, and the other partner interviews the first interviewer.

Once interviews are complete, devote class time in the same class, or in the next one, and have partnerships introduce their partner to the rest of the class by way of the subcultures they chose and why. This activity then ties into an ecosystem, and how our differences in cultural beliefs, strengthen our community (our classroom) which is acting as our ecosystem.

Then, for outside application, as a homework activity, have the students choose someone they know outside of the classroom. (Mother, father, boyfriend, girlfriend, friend, etc.) and have them conduct the activity “Walk a mile in my shoes” with the person they chose. The difference being to see how well they think they know that individual culturally. By conducting an experiment where prior to the interview, they forecast which four subcultures they believe their interviewee will choose beforehand, and then conduct the interview, to see how accurate their predictions were, and if they learned anything new about that individual. Thus strengthening their ecosystem outside of the classroom as well.

Total time of activity: 1 to 1 and a half sessions of class time, if class time session is 50 minute per class.