

Diversity in Public Schools

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Before reading the first few chapters, I viewed myself as an observant person I believed I was an excellent visual observant person. However, I now see myself as lagging my perception of an observant person. After reading and learning that Native American people are seldom portrayed as contemporary people but as nineteenth-century warriors: Asian Americans are often shown working at computers or in math-related professions: Mexican Americans are presented as gardeners or servants. Problems of omission and stereotyping affect other groups as well. People of disabilities are invisible; blue-collar workers are usually stereotyped if they appeared at all, and women frequently appear as in advertisement as a sex object to sell -products. I respect Aristotle's work and philosophy, but after reading that he viewed women as inferior to men is disappointing to me. I am now starting to question everything around me. Additionally, I am beginning to piece the puzzles together; everything advertised in America is as stated in *Understanding Human Differences*.

My concept of diversity is becoming a pluralistic society, as mentioned by Koppelman, "Pluralism entails perceiving human differences as enriching, and valuing that diversity in our society." My concept of diversity applies to the real world and in the classroom as an educator as genuinely understanding each and every individual. As an educator, my role in addressing religious freedom and diversity is to educate my students about different religions without supporting one religion over another; being neutral with my personal beliefs about religion. I want students to understand that having a different religion is not bad, and conversations about religion must be respected in all aspects. By doing so, I can efficiently use religious diversity to

promote learning and development for students with diverse backgrounds. Teaching about religious diversity not only prepares students for conversations in the real world but also helps meet objectives. As an educator, I can develop my students to accept all types of diversity, including religion.

After watching "*Would you defend gay parents?*", The waitress delivered an anti-gay cultural belief and is assured everyone around knew her thoughts and opinions towards gay couples. The waitress maintained as Koppelman states, "Many Americans still cling to the cultural belief that homosexuality is unnatural, an accusation that calls for reasonable people to consider what it would mean for something to be natural." (p. 272). Several bystanders stated their opinion some went to the extreme and told the waitress she is a horrible person and needed to leave due to her unkind words. One bystander gave the couple a lovely letter and quoted MLK Jr. "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends." As an educator, we must speak up to our diverse students. We need for them to understand they are somebody. We could provoke our students to have high self-esteem if they have faced adversity due to being different such as Dr. Maya Angelou. Words have no meaning if said in a way that judges a person negatively. Struggling empowers confidence, and self-confidence enables one to be powerful, as stated by Koppelman, attitudes affect learning. It is generally understood that if students think they cannot learn something, they aren't likely to learn it. Combs (1979) claimed, "people behave in terms of what they believe about themselves. Whenever we feel adequate or inadequate, it greatly affects how we approach a task" (p. 108). Dr. Maya Angelou's behavior she will rise; states she is confident. As an educator, we can provoke that power to all of our students.

References

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