

# Teacher as Facilitator

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## 7. Teacher as Facilitator

"A caring adult can make a big difference in the educational outcome of any child that is at risk of experiencing educational failure."

-- Maria Wilson-Portuondo (\*)

WHAT
Teachers should develop a learning environment that is relevant to and reflective of their students' social, cultural, and linguistic experiences. They act as guides, mediators, consultants, instructors, and advocates for the students, helping to effectively connect their culturally- and community-based knowledge to the classroom learning experiences.
WHY
Ladson-Billings (1995) notes that a key criterion for culturally relevant teaching is nurturing and supporting competence in both home and school cultures. Teachers should use the students' home cultural experiences as a foundation upon which to develop knowledge and skills. Content learned in this way is more significant to the students and facilitates the transfer of what is learned in school to real-life situations (Padron, Waxman, & Rivera, 2002).
HOW
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn about students' cultures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have students share artifacts from home that reflect their culture</li> <li>Have students write about traditions shared by their families</li> <li>Have students research different aspects of their culture</li> </ul> </li> <li>Vary teaching approaches to accommodate diverse learning styles and language proficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate cooperative learning groups (Padron, Waxman, &amp; Rivera, 2002)</li> <li>Have students participate in book clubs or literature circles (Daniels, 2002)</li> <li>Use student-directed discussion groups (Brisk &amp; Harrington, 2000)</li> <li>Speak in ways that meet the comprehension and language development needs of ELLs (Yedlin, 2004)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Utilize various resources in the students' communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have members of the community speak to students on various subjects</li> <li>Ask members of the community to teach a lesson or give a demonstration (in their field of expertise) to the students</li> <li>Invite parents to the classroom to show students alternative ways of approaching a problem (e.g., in math: various ways of dividing numbers, naming decimals, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

## References

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