

Making Space



Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice
Throughout the K-12 Curriculum

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Introduction and Context

Background and Rationale

Making Space is designed to help K-12 teachers in virtually every subject area find ways to promote

- **awareness and understanding of the diversity that exists within our society**—differences that are visible (e.g., race, ethnicity, sex, age, physical ability) and differences that are less visible (e.g., culture, ancestry, language, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic background, mental ability)
- **support for the achievement of social justice for all people and groups**—particularly in ensuring that people’s backgrounds and circumstances do not prevent them from achieving the full benefits of participation in society, and in addressing injustice faced by those who historically have been and today frequently continue to be marginalized, ignored, or subjected to discrimination or other forms of oppression.

These two objectives are closely linked, as the achievement of social justice depends very much on citizens having an understanding of and appreciation for

- the differences in circumstance or attributes that have long existed among people worldwide, recognizing that Canada’s population today is to some extent a reflection of the global population
- the talents and accomplishments of individuals identified with each and every diverse group within our society
- the ways in which some individuals or groups within our society have been and are still treated unfairly by others
- the extent to which all people have common physical and psychological needs (e.g., to be heard, to feel safe, to be treated with respect), regardless of the differences in their attributes, capacities, or backgrounds.

In helping teachers promote awareness and understanding of diversity and support for the achievement of social justice, this guide builds on established policy and legislation that applies to the BC school system.

Social Justice is a philosophy that extends beyond the protection of rights. Social justice advocates for the full participation of all people, as well as for their basic legal, civil, and human rights.

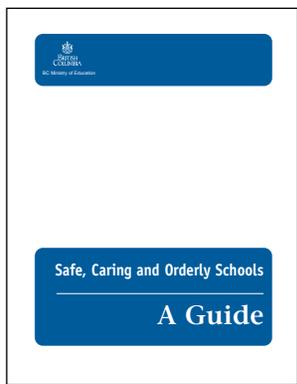
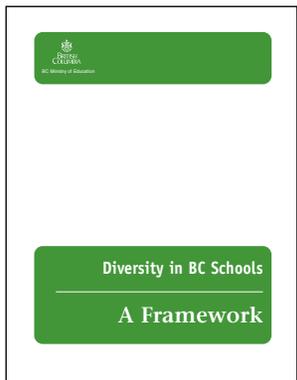
The aim of social justice is to achieve a just and equitable society. It is pursued by individuals and groups—through collaborative social action—so that all persons share in the prosperity of society (*Diversity in BC Schools: A Framework*, 2004, p. 13).

Certain groups within our society have experienced both systemic and attitudinal barriers that have prevented “full and equitable participation in community services, employment and education” (ibid., p. 9). These barriers include “policies and practices that intentionally or unintentionally exclude, limit and discriminate against individuals and groups” (ibid., p. 9). People may, intentionally or unintentionally, interact with others in biased ways; the media may perpetuate harmful cultural stereotypes; bureaucracies may operate based on assumptions that exclude or marginalize.



The *School Act* articulates the purpose of the British Columbia school system as being “to enable all learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic, and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.”

To achieve this purpose, the school system must strive to ensure that differences among learners do not impede their participation in school, their achievement of prescribed learning outcomes, or their capacity to become contributing members of society. The school system must also promote values expressed in federal and provincial legislation with respect to individual rights. In this regard, key pieces of legislation include the *Constitution Act*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Official Languages Act*, the *Multiculturalism Act*, the *BC Human Rights Code*, and the *Employment Equity Act*, as well as the *School Act*. (For more information, refer to Appendix E of this resource.)



Two Ministry of Education framework documents set out in some detail how the school system as a whole can be expected to respond to this challenge. *Diversity in BC Schools: A Framework* (2004) describes the scope of the challenge, explaining the relationships between promotion of diversity and concepts such as multiculturalism, human rights, employment equity, and social justice. This framework also indicates how various provincial policies and initiatives (e.g., with respect to provincially prescribed curriculum, provincially recommended learning resources, the social responsibility performance standards) provide support for “diversity education,” and suggests how schools and boards/authorities might approach implementation of diversity education initiatives.

Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide (2004) sets forth a vision of the type of school culture that will be properly inclusive and respectful of all students, and provides indicators for assessing the success of districts and schools in realizing this ideal. Roles and responsibilities within the system are reviewed, and school-wide and district-wide strategies for making improvements are discussed (e.g., Codes of Conduct, record-keeping and incident reporting systems).

Both of these guides identify and reproduce extracts from legislation that should guide development of policies, procedures, and practices related to these areas. *Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools* also identifies several very specific resources that address particular issues of concern for parents, students, and educators (e.g., bullying, Internet safety). Both guides are directed at systemic needs and aimed at provincial, district, and school administrators or at school or community planning teams.

This present guide, *Making Space*, however, is designed specifically for classroom teachers, as it is the classroom teacher whose day-to-day work most directly affects the learning of students. The focus here is on instructional and assessment activities, rather than classroom management practice. This focus recognizes that teachers already seek to follow classroom management practices that ensure safety and inclusiveness for all students. This focus is also based on the assumption that teachers most effectively promote among students a healthy respect and support for social diversity when they

- actively *teach* about social diversity, social justice, and the value of developing understanding and respect for all persons
- personally *model* understanding and respect for all persons in practice by using inclusive examples, language, and resources in their classroom.

Whatever their area of specialization and whatever the grade level of the students they work with, teachers will find here information and ideas on how they can incorporate the necessary teaching into their practice.

The school system therefore strives to create and maintain conditions that foster success for all students and that promote fair and equitable treatment for all. These conditions include

- equitable access to and equitable participation in quality education for all students
- school cultures that value and honour diversity and respond to the diverse social and cultural needs of the communities they serve
- school cultures that promote understanding of others and respect for all
- learning and working environments that are safe and welcoming, and free from discrimination, harassment and violence
- decision-making processes that give a voice to all members of the school community
- policies and practices that promote fair and equitable treatment for all.

(*Diversity in BC Schools: A Framework*, 2004, p. 4)



Pluralistic Ideals in a Classroom Setting

Attributes of the BC Graduate—Human and Social Development

- the knowledge and skills required to be socially responsible citizens who act in caring and principled ways, respecting the diversity of all people and the rights of others to hold different ideas and beliefs
- the knowledge and understanding they need to participate in democracy as Canadians and global citizens, acting in accordance with the laws, rights and responsibilities of a democracy
- the attitudes, knowledge and positive habits they need to be healthy individuals, responsible for their physical and emotional well-being
- the attitudes and competencies they need to be community contributors who take the initiative to improve their own and others' quality of life

What do your learners need to develop these qualities?

Teachers generally recognize the importance of a positive sense of personal identity in allowing students to achieve success with their learning. Some, however, might not be as sensitized to the challenges that this poses for students who are or perceive themselves to be part of a less privileged or minority group within society, the community, or the classroom.

To address this, teachers not only need to focus on student aptitude and performance with respect to the subject area(s) they teach; they also need to systematically and deliberately focus on

- finding ways to make their classrooms and schools welcoming of diversity
- testing their assumptions about students' emotional comfort levels and non-academic needs (e.g., with respect to feeling included, socially supported, or recognized)
- supporting the development of students' varied and personal identities through explicit reference to diversity and how it is reflected in what students are being asked to study.

For many teachers, a helpful first step is assessing the extent to which their existing practice

- reduces the sense that only “mainstream” forms of contribution, self-expression, and appearance are desirable or acceptable
- optimizes the social and affective comfort levels of students who might have reason to feel marginalized or disadvantaged due to their race, ethnicity, sex, age, ability, culture, ancestry, language, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or socioeconomic background.

The accompanying rating instrument (Self-Assessment: How I Address Diversity and Social Justice in My Teaching Practice) can be used to do this.



Self-Assessment: How I Address Diversity and Social Justice in my Teaching Practice

Indicator	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1) I recognize and think about the visible and less visible diversity that exists within my class(es) and community—specifically in relation to race, ethnicity, sex, age, mental and physical ability, culture, ancestry, language, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic background.				
2) I avoid making assumptions related to the diversity of students in my classroom (e.g., I recognize that not all students may know about their cultural background(s), I am sensitive to diverse family structures when conducting activities related to Mother’s Day and Father’s Day).				
3) I consider diversity when selecting resources to plan my instructional program.				
4) I seek out and try to use new resources to address social justice with my students.				
5) My classroom posters, displays, etc. embrace positive and affirming messages that promote respect for diversity and inspire action to counter injustice or abuse of rights.				
6) The guest speakers and visitors that form part of my instruction reflect the diversity within the local community.				
7) I support various national and international initiatives that promote diversity and social justice (e.g., International Women’s Day, International Day to Eliminate Racism, National Aboriginal Day, International Day of Disabled Persons, International Human Rights Day), and promote the activities planned within the school and district during that week.*				
8) I deliberately tailor instruction to respond to the diversity among my students.				
9) I ensure that provisions to address issues related to the promotion of diversity and social justice are included in my ongoing instruction and are not seen as separate entities.				

(*see Appendix D for more information about a variety of national and international events related to social justice)



Indicator	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
10) My classroom activities are designed to promote social justice and are inclusive of all forms of diversity (visible and less visible).				
11) I reflect on how my teaching practices might unintentionally reinforce social inequalities, and make changes accordingly.				
12) I model social justice in my classroom by making an effort to involve students actively in their learning (e.g., in choice of resources, activities, assessment criteria).				
13) I make an effort to provide all students with real opportunities to express their views and perceptions about diversity in the school, in a manner that provides them respect, dignity, and the opportunity to talk without fear of retribution.				
14) I give my students structured opportunities to show generosity and support to fellow students, staff, and members of the greater community.				
15) I address and confront belittling behaviour among my students (e.g., jokes or comments that target someone on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, family structure, or physical or mental ability) when I witness or learn of it, by naming it as a form of intimidation and engaging the students in critical thinking about it.				
16) I routinely acknowledge students, both publicly and privately, for the actions they take to assist in the development of a community free of ableism, homophobia, racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination or hurtful behaviour.				
17) I discuss with my colleagues ways to promote diversity and social justice in classroom practice.				
18) I actively network with various communities concerned with the promotion of diversity and social justice, and look for ways to incorporate their contributions in my classroom.				
19) I seek out Professional Development opportunities that will equip me with the knowledge and skills to address controversial issues and resolve conflict in the classroom.				
20) I seek out Professional Development opportunities that will help me better address issues of diversity and social justice in my classroom.				

Considerations for Teaching about Diversity and Social Justice

In considering how best to provide support for diversity and social justice, teachers will naturally take account of

- **what they can determine about the learners in their classrooms and their likely needs**

This goes beyond assessing their students' aptitudes, skills, and knowledge with respect to the subjects being taught, though it remains important to recognize that identifying all of a student's varying attributes will seldom be possible. While some attributes are **visible** (e.g., race, ethnicity, sex, age, physical ability), others are **less visible** (e.g., culture, ancestry, language, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic background, mental ability). Because some differences are less visible and because it's impossible to know every student's situation, teachers should strive to use inclusive language and examples as much as possible.

- **the extent to which they feel it is appropriate to incorporate student “democracy” in their classroom practices (e.g., in choosing resources, activities, assessment criteria)**

There exists a natural and strong connection between democratic processes (including classroom processes) and the achievement of social justice, in that consciously engaging in democratic processes helps further students' sense of responsibility and appreciation for the participation of all community members in decision-making. At the same time, teachers need to apply professional judgment in deciding when having students “assume control” of learning processes will best further their learning, recognizing that any incremental increases in students' awareness and understanding of democracy and social justice are valuable.

- **what they know about the context of the wider community**

Effective teaching about diversity and social justice requires teachers to take account of the social and cultural contexts within which their students live. Attentiveness, communication, and engagement with the community allow teachers to become familiar with community demographics, issues, and concerns and aware of prevailing community attitudes, expectations, and social assumptions. This in turn enables teachers to make good decisions about when and



Equality is achieved when all groups and individuals receive the same treatment, have the same opportunities, and are able to attain the same achievements, and where any differences are not based on prejudice or forms of oppression.

how best to approach topics related to diversity and social justice. However, this doesn't mean that teachers should omit teaching about people and issues that may not be visible or evident in the local community. Students still belong to a provincial, national, and global community, and learning about differences that aren't seen every day is often critical in appreciating diversity. Although pre-planned lessons involving a structured approach to learning are an essential ingredient in all teaching, being able to respond spontaneously to presented opportunity (the "teachable moment" when student receptivity or attention is present) is also extremely valuable. While directly challenging social assumptions may sometimes be appropriate, it may be more valuable to raise questions, instill awareness of alternatives, help students make connections, expand knowledge of situations and events, encourage reflection (including self-reflection), focus critical thinking on situations involving social justice, and reaffirm commitment to universal principles.

Ultimately, classroom practice that provides positive learning experiences, inclusiveness, respect, and safety for all learners is the goal of any teacher who values diversity and seeks to contribute to the human and social development of his or her students.

Complexities of "Social Location"

Teaching is an extraordinarily complex undertaking, and teaching about and for social justice compounds the challenges. What teachers intend for students to learn from the study of a particular novel, for example, may not be realized, because of the assumptions and life experiences that students bring to the reading and interpretation of the text. Two equally competent teachers might begin with the same lesson idea, but achieve different results, in part because of who they are, because of the mix of students in their classrooms, or both.

Equally significant is the fact that teachers themselves cannot personally represent all of the diverse identities whose voices need to be recognized and heard if diversity and social justice are to be truly addressed within the classroom. If teachers are privileged in relation to most of the students in their class, they need to attend closely to approach and tone and to make sure they have reflected ahead of time on possible biases they may bring to a topic. Teachers may avoid certain topics for fear of making students uncomfortable or because they assume that students already know about it from personal experience. For example, a white, middle-class teacher

may avoid discussing poverty with inner-city students or racism with racial minority students. But, if the teacher approaches the discussion with sensitivity and with honest acknowledgment of her or his own limitations, the students may welcome a chance to have their lived reality acknowledged and placed into context.

In teaching about forms of oppression based on differences that are less visible, such as sexual orientation, teachers can anticipate that students may ask them about their motivations and whether they have a “personal agenda.” One possible response is refusing to divulge one’s sexual orientation out of solidarity. Another is to articulate reasons for opposing such oppression (e.g., support of human rights), which a person might subscribe to regardless of her or his sexual orientation. Some teachers who are LGBT may choose to reveal their sexual orientation to students, and may also discuss why they have chosen to reveal this information (e.g., to reduce homophobia). The question can also lead to a discussion about the difference between visible and invisible diversity, and how ignorance can lead to fear and prejudice.

Managing Conflict

At times, discussion related to social justice topics (e.g., examining the history of a particular group’s oppression) can give rise to certain forms of student defensiveness and possibly conflict among points of view. In managing this type of situation, it is important to remember that respecting students’ needs and rights to self-expression and inclusion does **not** involve a validation of any or all opinions. Self-expression that is ignorant or hurtful or that can readily be construed as a perpetuation of oppression should not be a part of classroom discourse and will need to be addressed if it arises. Teachers who have had opportunities to participate in professional development activities that focus on skills and strategies for conflict management will be well equipped to do this. Yet even without this type of training, teachers can employ proven strategies that will enable them to effectively negotiate challenging situations. The recommended approaches include both anticipatory and responsive strategies.

Anticipatory measures and strategies (those that the teacher seeks to have in place before entering into teaching situations with a potential for conflict) include the following:

- establishing guidelines for acceptable classroom behaviour (e.g., with respect to verbal expression, respect, inclusion, listening behaviour) as a point of reference that can be invoked at any time





- modelling respectful and just behaviour in all speech and actions toward individuals and toward/about groups
- modelling consistent use of language and concepts (e.g., fairness, equity, respect)
- clarifying the connections between a controversial issue to be introduced and the overall teaching themes or objective
- providing examples of where people are privileged in relation to a particular form of oppression, in order to avoid positioning people as either victims or perpetrators or encouraging students to feel identified as one or other (see more about the hierarchy of oppressions discussion in relation to responsive strategies below)
- identifying the negative dynamic to be avoided.

Responsive measures and strategies (those that the teacher might call upon if a conflict situation develops unexpectedly) include the following:

- acknowledging situations of fundamental disagreement (e.g., the conflict between respect for personal rights related to sexual orientation and respect for religious beliefs related to sexual orientation), and using relevant questions to help refocus the discussion away from the “rightness” or “validity” of the conflicting points of view; for example, introducing questions such as the following can help students transcend the impasse of disagreement:
 - Does it make more sense to talk about a person being good or bad or to talk about actions being good or bad?
 - What right do we associate with freedom of religion?
- productively channelling a certain amount of student “venting” toward intended learning objectives
- responding to hurtful or bullying behaviour that happens in the classroom in a way that addresses the underlying social justice issues rather than merely through prohibition (e.g., “how do you think ___ feels when you do/say that” instead of saying simply “that’s inappropriate”); this helps evoke empathy and provides opportunities for critical thinking

- challenging stereotypes by reminding students that “culture” is dynamic and multifaceted and that groups (e.g., groups of people who share the same cultural background, or same socioeconomic situation, or same sexual orientation) are seldom homogeneous—so not everyone within a given community thinks or behaves the same way
- recognizing and helping students transcend the hierarchy of oppressions debate (i.e., helping students recognize the essential “no resolution” sterility of debates such as “was a middle class woman in Victorian England more or less oppressed than a working class man?”); this type of debate can occur when students feel defensive in discussions about particular forms of oppression, and seek to identify as victim or perpetrator; when recognized, this type of debate can be defused by pointing out the complexity of every individual’s “social location” (e.g., almost everyone is privileged in some respect relative to some oppressed group) and shifting the focus elsewhere (e.g., what steps were, are, or can be taken to address the injustice)
- intervening in a discussion to make connections as necessary (e.g., drawing an analogy between heterosexism and racism to show the similarities)
- either personalizing (tell a personal story) or establishing some distance (e.g., link to literature, history, role play), as the context warrants.

Discrimination occurs when a person—on the basis of characteristics such as her or his sex, age, sexual orientation, race, religion, or physical or mental ability—suffers disadvantages or is denied opportunities available to other members of society.



Using the Social Responsibility Performance Standards

The BC performance standards for social responsibility provide a framework that schools and families can use to focus and monitor their efforts to enhance social responsibility among students and improve the social climate of their schools. They provide educators, students, and families with a common set of expectations for student development in four areas:

1. Contributing to the Classroom and School Community
 - sharing responsibility for their social and physical environment
 - participating and contributing to the class and to small groups
2. Solving Problems in Peaceful Ways
 - managing conflict appropriately, including presenting views and arguments respectfully, and considering others' views
 - using effective problem-solving steps and strategies
3. Valuing Diversity and Defending Human Rights
 - treating others fairly and respectfully; showing a sense of ethics
 - recognizing and defending human rights
4. Exercising Democratic Rights and Responsibilities
 - knowing and acting on rights and responsibilities (local, national, global)
 - articulating and working toward a preferred future for the community, nation and planet—a sense of idealism



Social Responsibility Performance Standards Continuum

				
K-3	4-5	6-8	8-10	11-12
CONTRIBUTING TO THE CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL COMMUNITY				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually welcoming, friendly, kind, and helpful participates in and contributes to classroom and group activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> friendly, considerate, and helpful contributes and shows commitment to classroom and group activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> routinely kind and friendly, and helps and includes others if asked takes responsibility, contributes, and works co-operatively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually kind and friendly takes some responsibility for the school or community and contributes willingly to class and group activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> kind, friendly, and inclusive works actively to improve the school or community; often volunteers for extra responsibilities and shows leadership skills
SOLVING PROBLEMS IN PEACEFUL WAYS				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in conflict situations, tries to express feelings honestly, manage anger appropriately, and listen politely; most often relies on adult intervention without considering alternatives can clarify problems and generate and evaluate strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tries to manage anger, listen to others, and apply logical reasons to resolve conflicts; usually knows when to get adult help can explain simple problems or issues and generate and select simple, logical strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tries to solve interpersonal problems calmly; often shows empathy and considers others' perspectives can clarify an increasing range of problems or issues, generate and compare potential strategies, and anticipate some consequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in conflict situations, usually manages anger appropriately, listens respectfully, presents logical arguments, and can paraphrase opposing views can clarify problems or issues, generate strategies, weigh consequences, and evaluate actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in conflict situations, shows empathy and a sense of ethics, presents soundly reasoned arguments, and considers divergent views can clarify problems or issues, generate and analyze strategies, create an effective plan, and use evidence to evaluate actions
VALUING DIVERSITY AND DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increasingly interested in fairness; treats others fairly and respectfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> treats others fairly and respectfully; often shows interest in correcting injustice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually treats others fairly and respectfully; tries to be unbiased; shows some support for human rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> respectful and fair; increasingly willing to speak up or take action to support diversity and defend human rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> respectful and ethical; speaks out and takes action to support diversity and defend human rights, even when that may not be a popular stance
EXERCISING DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows emerging sense of responsibility, generally following classroom rules; able to identify simple ways to improve the school, community, or world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows a growing sense of responsibility toward the classroom, school, community, and world; wants to make a difference, but needs help identifying opportunities for action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows a sense of community and an interest in making the world a better place; tries to follow through on planned actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows a sense of responsibility and community-mindedness; increasingly interested in taking action to improve the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows a strong sense of community-mindedness and accountability; can describe and work toward an ideal future for the world

Full text of the performance standards for social responsibility is available in schools, as well as online at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/perf_stands/social_resp.htm.



How to Use this Resource: Teaching Diversity and Social Justice through Prescribed Curricula

All provincially prescribed curricula in BC are guided by three principles of learning:

- Learning requires the active participation of the student.
- People learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
- Learning is both an individual and a group process.

In addition to these three principles, it is recognized that British Columbia's schools include young people of varied backgrounds, interests, abilities, and needs. Wherever appropriate for each curriculum, ways to meet these needs and to ensure equity and access for all learners are integrated into the learning outcomes and achievement indicators. Accordingly, British Columbia's provincially prescribed curricula provide many opportunities for boards/authorities, schools, and teachers to address diversity and social justice.

To support teachers in integrating diversity and social justice education across the curricula, the four grade-level sections of this resource contain any or all of the following types of information, as applicable:

- Curriculum Connections—specific curriculum expectations that provide a fairly clear mandate to address diversity and social justice (e.g., in health and career education, social studies, English language arts, the four fine arts subject areas), as well as curriculum expectations where there exists an opportunity to address diversity and social justice, even if it is less immediately obvious (e.g., in mathematics, science, technology education)
- Diversity and Social Justice Extensions—general strategies for incorporating social justice issues into a range of classroom activities
- Sample Lesson Plans—more detailed examples using specific methodologies (and, in some cases, resources)
- Using Existing Curriculum-Based Materials—a listing of relevant units from Classroom Assessment Models from IRPs produced 2004-2008, and from Assessment and Evaluation (Appendix C/D) from IRPs produced 1995-2003.

Many of the strategies and resources contained in these four grade-level sections are identified for one curriculum area but can be adapted for use with other subject areas.

Note that the various texts cited in this resource (especially in relation to English language arts) have been chosen to illustrate particular diversity and social justice issues, and therefore may contain language and images that are difficult or even painful for some students to read or hear. Note also that the texts listed throughout this resource include recommended texts (from the Grade Collections) as well as additional texts that have not been approved provincially. Teachers are reminded that any text not included in a Ministry grade collection is subject to evaluation and approval through a local, board/authority-approved process.

Full text of all current IRPs is available online at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/irp.htm.

Strategies for Addressing Diversity and Social Justice in any Subject Area

The next section of this resource includes grade- and subject-specific strategies that can be called upon to address diversity and social justice themes in relation to the study of particular topics, processes, or texts. In addition, however, there are a number of strategies (or procedural principles) that can be applied in virtually any subject area and at any grade level:

- spotlight or make visible the perspectives of groups ignored, disadvantaged, marginalized, or stereotyped
- brainstorm reasons for omissions in textbooks or other resources
- challenge assumptions in texts (books, films, music, etc.) or discussions that exclude certain groups of students (e.g., immigrants who may not understand references to pop culture or the news during discussion of current events)
- link discussions to students' diverse backgrounds
- create opportunities for students to find and share narratives that reflect a greater diversity of perspectives (e.g., oral histories)
- include all students in decision-making about what and how they learn, providing scaffolding and supports as necessary (e.g., designing assignments, setting and weighting evaluation criteria, self-assessment, student-led conferences), so as to foster a sense of agency and give students the sense that their opinions, contributions, and actions do count



- identify the challenges that students are currently experiencing and the barriers to their learning
- connect assessment to students' experiences of social justice (assessment for and as learning)
- include students in the creation of school-wide policies (e.g., anti-racism or anti-homophobia school policies, school code of conduct)
- name demeaning, exclusionary language and behaviour (e.g., mockery of languages other than English, homophobic slurs, name sexist jokes or language as sexism) as a form of oppression or as a practice that sustains the way certain groups have been historically disadvantaged
- model critical thinking by challenging taken-for-granted oppression and prompting students to question problematic assumptions, to think about the effects of particular actions, and to learn to recognize situations where some are privileged and others are disadvantaged
- draw analogies between forms of oppression (starting from the experiences and concerns of particular groups of students and building from there).

