

STUDENT-CENTERED TEACHING

Youth Entrepreneurs helps students discover, develop and apply their innate talents and abilities to fully unlock their potential. Through learning Principled Entrepreneurship and embracing the Foundational Values, students will move toward reaching their full potential.

YE is actively crafting guidance that supports educators as you consider how you can implement Social Emotional Learning and culturally responsive teaching practices while facilitating various activities to create a student-centered learning environment. The outline below includes questions and instructional methods to consider as you plan, facilitate and reflect on the classroom experience. Remember: This is a journey alongside your students. You are not expected to be perfect, nor have all of the knowledge!

Environment & Culture

- > What can the educator do to prepare their environment (consider virtual or in-person) to enhance the concepts taught during this activity?
 - Consider how a student may relate their personal or social identity to the environment and/or concepts taught (SEL Core Competency Self-Awareness)
 - How might students better understand theirs or their peers' personal, cultural, and linguistic assets related to the environment or concepts taught?
 - Consider how demonstration of Foundational Values are honored in class and contribute to developing a classroom culture (SEL Core Competency Self-Awareness)
- > What are some examples of behaviors or things that the educator can give YE dollars for connected directly to the student acknowledging and understanding diverse social norms, recognizing situational demands and opportunities, and/or understanding the influences of organizations/systems on behavior (SEL Core Competency Social Awareness)?
- > What questions can the educator ask to help students deepen their background knowledge (related to situational demands or influences of organizations/systems on behavior) in the activity?

Curricula

- > How can the activity be written to increase and support rigor?
- > How is the activity designed to incorporate and challenge students to consider situational demands or influences of organizations/systems?
- > What are 2-3 debrief questions that can be written to discuss the impact of diversity, identities, system barriers and the different experiences of all students?

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Instructional Methods

- > Feel confident in what you know and what you don't know. Being a culturally responsive educator means you get to practice humility when you're asked a question that you may not know the answer to. Remember, conversations of race, ethnicity, diversity, inclusion, systemic barriers, etc. are often uncomfortable and new to everyone. Your role is to create a safe space where students can feel comfortable to ask the questions without judgment or fear of reprimand for inquiring.
 - Remember what might feel "political" to an adult feels personal to a student. They may not understand the politics of topics like immigration or criminal justice but they do know family members that are unable to come visit the U.S. or are locked away in prison without a fair trial or realistic sentence. This is a genuine opportunity to deepen their empathy and social awareness skills.
- > Offer time for students to explore for answers, both the popular and non.
- > Offer time at the beginning of each class period for students to ask questions that might have brewed while away from your class. You may consider having an "anonymous box" for students to write their questions if they are uncomfortable asking in front of others. Use this option only until rapport is built, then encourage students to speak out as this is a soft skill that is important to develop – especially with difficult questions and conversations.

Educator Reflection

- > Did I...
 - Create a learning atmosphere where students felt respected by and connected to one another?
 - Help students favor participating in my class today because they had personal choice and felt the content was relevant to them?
 - Create challenging, thoughtful learning experiences that included my student's perspectives and values?
 - Help students connect that what they learned in my class today impacts something they value?

By striving to answer "yes" to the questions above, you are practicing a model of culturally responsive teaching based on intrinsic motivation. ([Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 1995](#))

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