

'Progressive pedagogy' for teachers + how to avoid the risks:

'Progressive pedagogy' definition: An educational movement that encourages the development of the student's potential talents and experiential learning over formal learning.

"Teaching Race and Ethnicity in the Greco-Roman World" by Rebecca Futo Kennedy and Jackie Murray (webinar at Everyday Orientalism)

Things to consider regarding progressive pedagogy

Definitions of racist and antiracist:

Terms like race, racist, racism, antiracist, and antiracism have several meanings. Kennedy Mitchum, a Black woman and recent Drake University graduate, wrote Miriam-Webster in 2020, requesting that the definition of racism be updated to address systemic realities (listen to her interview with the Waiting on Reparations podcast). Previously, their definition of racism addressed the term as a manifestation of individual thinking, rather than addressing the systemic fact. The definitions you agree with serve as a guide for how you do anti-racism and anti-racist pedagogy and what you do. Followers of action-oriented and systemic definitions are more likely to take action and undermine the system in ways that will effect societal change. Consider the following action-oriented definitions for the terms racist and antiracist offered in Kendi's 2019 book *How to Be an Antiracist* (p. 13):

Racist: "One who supports a racist policy through their actions or inaction, or who has a racist thought."

The term "antiracist" means "one who does or says things that support an antiracist policy."

What is your positionality, and how do you show it?

The word "positionality" refers to the many facets of your identity and how these aspects may influence how you understand the world around you. Consideration of one's own race, gender, and sexual orientation is an important part of educational positionality (Adu-Ampong & Adams, 2020; Moore, 2012). Positionality analyses the

micro and macro ramifications of your identities, such as your unique connection and shared experiences among groups. Teaching and researching about one's own biases is an important way to undermine the false sense of objectivity and impartial information that fosters white supremacy.

Ask yourself:

How do you see yourself and the people around you?

What books do you read and why? How does your personality affect how you teach? You like to read books written by these authors the most. What could this do for your students?

How do you feel about these texts? In what ways is this connection different from the rest of the people who have it? What could be done to share the connection in different ways?

It's important for people who teach texts to know how their own lives have shaped their understanding of them. In your class, what do you choose to tell your students about? Why?

In order to know how your students might connect to the material in a different way than you do, think about what you do.

Is antiracist teaching being used in a way that makes sense to you?

When race and racism are discussed in isolation in the classroom as designated activities, the systemic reality and pervasive significance of these debates might be missed. As a result, embedded teaching is a better option since it allows you to incorporate anti-racism and history into your curriculum in a way that stimulates ongoing conversation and reflection throughout the term.

How do you make sure that your students learn about their identities, race, and antiracism through both explicit and implicit ways during the school year?

To what extent does your school's curriculum include both explicit and implicit teaching opportunities for students to gain an understanding of issues surrounding ethnicity, race, and anti-racism? As you teach about current events like Black Lives Matter and the Black Civil Rights Movement, how do you include materials that talk about them?

So how can you make sure that you always have assignments that include reflection papers and short essays that your students can do on their own terms? It's critical that kids of colour, in particular, have participation alternatives that don't impose retraumatization or prejudice. This is another reason why providing kids with different options for books they read and questions they are asked is vital.

How do you improve your critical language awareness?

Critical language awareness is the activity of scrutinising the function and purpose of linguistic features such as word choice, grammar, and language usage in order to improve one's understanding of the world (in all contexts including images and gestures). This method enables students to reflect on their learning and to use critical thinking abilities that may be applied outside of the Classics classroom.

What role does reflection play in your curriculum design and execution?

Reflective practices in the classroom help to decenter you as the educator in the classroom and make space for your students' interpretations and connections to the material. Reflection can also expand your understanding of your students and identify gaps to be addressed in later activities and discussions. Reflective practices (Geng et al., 2019) can be embedded in your curriculum in the classroom, homework, and assessment (i.e. anticolonialism in action that pivots away from traditional exams and standardized tests).

- What do you do yourself now to reflect on your teaching practices?
- How often are you embedding reflection opportunities for your students? Assignments? Classroom discussions?
- What do you do to give your students choices in the texts and essays?
- How can you increase opportunities for students to analyze texts through reflection and considerations of their positionality and perspectives?

What are you doing to practice restorative justice?

Restorative justice in education refers to intentional actions to heal and repair harm caused by educators and school systems including white supremacy in the classroom. Hollweck et al (2019) identify restorative justice in education as the "creation of a restorative school culture in which people and relationships form the cornerstone of safety, belonging and learning" (Hollweck et al., 2019, p. 247). Restorative justice includes building relationships, maintaining relationships, and repairing relationships (Hollweck, 2019; Hendry, 2009). Methods of restorative justice include peer mediation, reflection essays, and the inclusion of counternarratives in the curriculum. In this way, restorative justice methodology overlaps with common antiracist practices including the practice of critical race theory.

- What do you know about the history and purpose of restorative justice? How is it related to the prison system? How has it changed in educational contexts?

- How have you practiced restorative justice in your classroom?
- How can you make more space for restorative justice in your curriculum and how you respond to your students?

What are you doing to combat deficit perspective?

A deficit perspective (Perkins, 2020) views those entering into a discourse of any nature as coming from an inferior position. Deficit perspectives are racist and fail to respect people of color. A statement such as “studying Classics will improve the lives of students of color” is an example of a racist deficit perspective. A counternarrative (antideficit perspective) to this would be a statement such as “Classics has benefited substantially from the presence, voices, teaching, and research of people of color for millennia.”

- Where do you see deficit language in your department? On the website? On your personal pages? On your syllabus?
- On a related note, what role is oppression playing in your curriculum?

How are you communicating your antiracist pedagogy?

Antiracist pedagogy includes many theories and methodologies that have a variety of definitions that have changed over time. The ability to express which theories and methodologies you are engaging in will attract more colleagues and students to support your work and even join in. In addition to what you are doing, it is essential to be able to share with others why you have chosen to practice these particular theories and methodologies.

- How are you communicating your antiracist pedagogy to your students, colleagues, administrators, and the public?
- What language are you using to express your work and how comfortable are you in using this language? Who do you know and trust with whom you can practice expressing your work and your “elevator speech” on antiracist pedagogy?

If you recognize racism in textbooks or resources you would like to have addressed contact multiculturalclassics@gmail.com