

Frameworks

An Overview of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

This document offers a brief overview of CRT and its overlap with SEL.

What is SEL?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a positive youth development framework that refers to the building of skills needed to recognize and manage emotions, develop care and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and handle interpersonal situations effectively. These capabilities are critical foundations for academic learning and for a person's long-term personal and professional success.

What is CRT?

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) is a way of teaching that emphasizes the importance of using cultural references that are familiar to students in order to make learning meaningful and accessible. CRT is focused on relationships, cognitive scaffolding, and critical awareness. Cultural responsiveness is not a practice; it's what *informs* our practice so we can make better teaching choices for eliciting, engaging, motivating, supporting, and expanding the intellectual capacity of *all* of our students in ways that acknowledge and celebrate cultural diversity.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

- ★ “Using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of references and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more appropriate and effective for them; it teaches to and through the strengths of these students.”

(Gay, 2010, p. 31)



*Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxXeZzcPAik>



The Eight Principles of CRT

1. Communication of high expectations
2. Active teaching methods
3. Practitioner as facilitator
4. Inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse students
5. Cultural sensitivity
6. Reshaping the curriculum or delivery of services
7. Student-controlled discourse
8. Small group instruction

**Source: The Dreamkeepers by Gloria Ladson-Billings*

CRT and SEL Myths and Realities

Myth: Culturally Responsive Teaching is only helpful or necessary for some students.

Reality: CRT is a pedagogy that empowers *all* students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Most important is the fact that CRT is about the intellectual, social, and emotional foundations of learning. Students learn best when we honor and build off of their backgrounds and assets.

Myth: Only teachers of color have the skills to be truly culturally responsive.

Reality: Being a culturally relevant educator is less about the teacher's racial identity and more about his or her "cultural eye," or how (s)he views and responds to the cultural differences in the classroom. This requires teachers to self-reflect about their own cultural identities to avoid misinterpreting or underappreciating the various ways of thinking, doing, and knowing that students offer. This awareness and appreciation of differences is central to SEL, as well.

Myth: CRT and SEL both are "soft" and focus on building relationships and self-esteem.

Reality: Building healthy relationships and student self-esteem is necessary for setting the stage for academic learning. Doing so allows students who have been marginalized to feel welcome and supported and makes students more able and willing to do challenging work.

Myth: Being culturally responsive requires a teacher to master the details of every culture represented in his classroom.

Reality: In reality CRT does not require that teachers individualize to that degree. The focus is on the schools demographics and finding out the largest demographic groups. This can lead to a focus on two to three different cultures, finding where their norms, values, beliefs, and ways of doing intersect and overlap.

**Source: 5 Common Myths about Culturally Responsive Pedagogy by Zaretta Hammond*

CRT and SEL Together

CRT and SEL both help students get into the right mental state for learning. If a student's brain is full of the stress hormone cortisol, the brain's learning center shuts down. School has not always been a safe space for the most vulnerable students, but CRT honors who they are and builds trust so that they can feel relaxed, can be their authentic selves, and can focus on learning.

**Source: CASEL Q&A with Zaretta Hammond*

Social-Emotional Learning Skills & Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

- Adaptability
- Stress tolerance
- Control
- Self-motivation
- Self-fulfillment

Self-Management

- Demonstrate and practice:
- Resilience in the face of obstacles
 - Regulating one's emotions
 - Compassion for self and others
 - Perseverance
 - Pause between stimulus and response
 - Healthy boundaries
 - Setting and monitoring personal and academic goals

Self-Awareness

Identify:

- Feelings and needs
- Strengths in self, community and culture
- Relationship between feelings, thoughts and behaviors
- Judgments and biases
- Level of optimism

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

- Recognition
- Influence
- Groundedness
- Self-confidence
- Optimism



Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

- Empathy
- Inclusiveness
- Perceptiveness
- Resourcefulness
- Diversity

Social Awareness

- Demonstrate and practice:
- Empathy
 - Awareness of strengths in self and others
 - Cultural competence
 - Appropriate use of humor
 - Recognizing family, school and community resources
 - Perspective taking
 - Reflective listening

Responsible Decision-Making

- Demonstrate and practice:
- Considering the well-being of self and others
 - Recognizing one's responsibility to behave ethically
 - Basing decisions on safety, social and ethical considerations
 - Evaluating realistic consequences of various actions
 - Making constructive, safe choices about self, relationships, and school

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

- Prudence
- Respectfulness
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Contemplation

Relationship Skills

- Demonstrate and practice:
- Building relationships with diverse individuals and groups
 - Listening and communication skills

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

- Connection
- Encouragement
- Cooperation
- Discretion

© 2013 Acknowledge Alliance/ Collaborative for Reaching & Teaching the Whole Child
Based on "Social and Emotional Learning Core Competencies." Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning and Culturally Responsive Teaching

Adapted from <https://www.seltedconsortium.com/sel-ted-cultural-resilience--equity.html>