

Valuing Languages and Cultures: the first step towards developing intercultural understanding (without images)

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Purpose:

To explore ways to demonstrate our value of languages and cultures in our schools and practice, and teach for intercultural understanding.

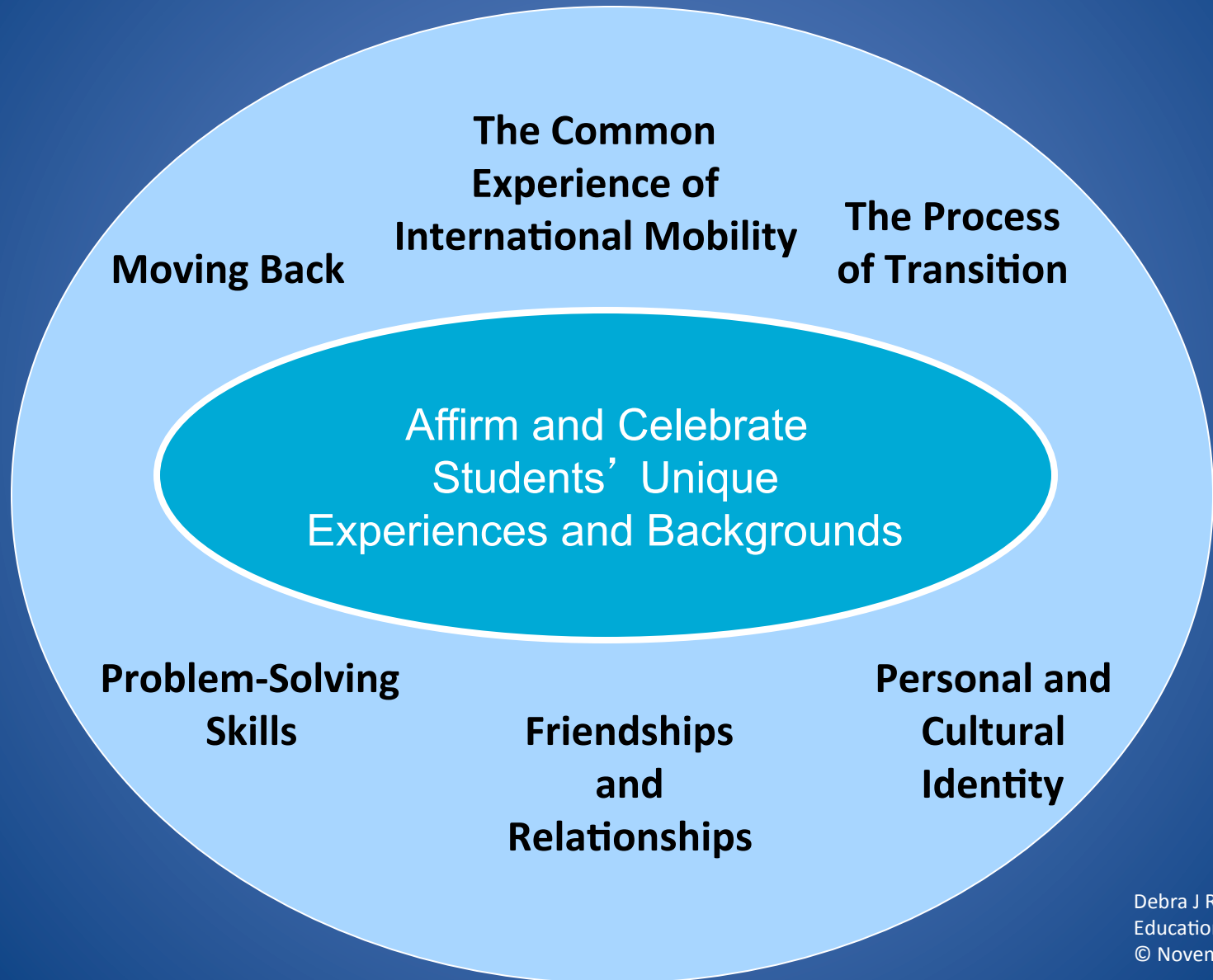
New Kid in School



Using
Literature
to Help
Children
in Transition

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Linda Harris Sittig

TRANSITION EDUCATION - A Model



International-mindedness

International-mindedness is the recognition of our **shared humanity** and an **appreciation and understanding of its diversity**, the **interconnectedness and interdependence** of our world, and our **responsibility** towards each other and our planet.

It is a **disposition** that is developed as a **lifelong process** and includes **knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values** that foster responsible, caring and engaged world citizens who make a positive difference in our world.

Transition Education, International-mindedness and Intercultural Understanding

A strong transition education programme develops international-mindedness, intercultural understanding and global citizenship.

Components for developing International-mindedness:

- Knowledge and Understanding of culture, personal and cultural identity, and global issues
- Effective Intercultural, Interpersonal and Life Skills
- Essential Values and Attitudes
- Engagement in Positive Action

Transition Education, International-mindedness and Intercultural Understanding are best developed if they are:

- Embedded in all we do
- Addressed explicitly, directly and indirectly
- Promoted with greater mindfulness and intentionality

Affirming Identity

When we honour and recognise our students' cultures, languages and identities we connect with them more deeply which leads to an increase in student learning, achievement and wellbeing. It also models our own value of languages and cultures for our students.

Cultural and linguistic
differences are resources
that enrich our lives.

Our challenge is to
demonstrate our value
of languages and cultures
in our practice.

PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

How can and do you demonstrate your value of cultural and linguistic differences in your practice?

How can the classroom and school spaces reflect the languages and cultures of the school community?

How can we make difference visible and cherished in our classrooms and school spaces?

Consider:

- Ways you interact with others
- Visual displays in your classrooms and schools
- Learning engagements and instructional practices

How can we demonstrate our value of languages and cultures?

Key Strategies

- Building community
- Creating culturally responsive and reflective schools
- Modelling
- Honouring and including the cultural traditions and languages in the school community in our classrooms and schools

Effective strategies for honouring languages and cultures

- Greet students, colleagues and parents in their home languages
- Share your knowledge of other languages and cultures
- Utilise parents, students, faculty and staff as language and culture resources
- Include multilingual literature, signage and resources
- Learn about your students' home cultures and languages and include them in authentic ways
- Honour cultures and languages through displays, materials, projects, celebrations and activities including the host culture

Additional Strategies

- Create mother tongue author displays
- Include dual language book reviews
- Create international illustrator displays
- Read to children in the languages you speak
- Display children's projects that reflect language and culture learning
- Increase your multilingual book collection
- Recognise translanguageing as a natural practice
- Publish bi- and multilingual books with your students
- Use children's literature to develop critical thinking

The Physical Space

Consider ways you and your students can create a learning environment that reflects the cultures, languages, interests and passions you and your students bring. Include artefacts, fabrics, artwork, greetings and more.

Develop intercultural understanding and reflect languages and cultures through:

Literature discussions and projects

Writing Workshop: poetry, memoir, narrative

Family history projects

Collage journals

Multi-cultural portraits

Personal time lines

Study of countries and cultures

Consider ways to integrate new technologies.

My Map Book by Sara Fanelli

This book can be used as a basis for students to create their own personal and cultural identity maps. This is a very meaningful learning engagement for exploring one's personal and cultural identity, for both children and adults.

(3 student maps were shared)

Literature shared:

Tokyo Friends by Betty Reynolds
I am the world by Charles R Smith
Painted Words and Spoken Memories by Alike
little blue and little yellow by Leo Lionni
Stellaluna by Janell Cannon
Mrs Katz and Tush by Patricia Pollacco
The Lotus Seed by Sherry Garland
Grandfather's Journey by Allen Say
The Journey is the Destination
Wish by Roseanne Thong
Bloomability by Sharon Creech
What Does it Mean to be Global? by Rana DiOrio
The Name Jar by Yangsook Choi
One Green Apple by Eve Bunting
Growing Up Global by Homa Sabet Tavanger

Intercultural Understanding

Looking to the future....

- What are the implications for teacher training?
- What are the implications for on-going professional development for teachers?
- What are the implications for digital citizenship and intercultural sensitivity online?