Perspective-Taking in the Classroom

Educator develops lesson plans and/or unit plans that demonstrate the impact of perspective-taking skills on student learning.

Key Method

The educator utilizes perspective-taking exercises and projects to engage students in understanding the reasoning and rationale behind decisions, events, and surroundings of their everyday world.

Method Components

Components of Perspective-Taking

- **Promotion of empathy and reasoning of "why" and "how"** – Perspective-taking skills are essential to promoting empathy and a deeper understanding of the problems affecting the world. Perspective-taking is an essential skill students need to interpret "why" and "how" situations happen from another person’s perspective. Promoting perspective-taking gives the students an understanding of drawing unbiased conclusions and answers in their research.

- **Positive Classroom and Learning Environments** – Provides students the opportunity to problem-solve and develop a perspective of their peers within their own learning environment, and provides the students with a learning environment where they learn and thrive in their classroom.

- **Classroom dialogue, collaboration, and implementation** – Providing students time and space to engage and collaborate with each other promotes perspective-taking in the classroom. Students tend to be social animals and promoting a safe environment of student dialogue gives students motivation, resources, and the ability to positively impact student learning.

- **Ability to conduct unbiased research** – Students who are able to use perspective-taking skills to research information begin to understand the reasoning/rationale and consequences of research from an unbiased perspective.

Suggested Implementation

1. Educator discusses with students what "perspective-taking" is.
2. Educator provides perspective-taking skills vocabulary. Educator/s may use picture books, technology resources, etc., to demonstrate a real-world implementation of perspective-taking.
3. Educator, in collaboration with students, develops a classroom constitution and procedure using perspective-taking skills to problem-solve conflict in the classroom.
4. Students in pairs or groups interview each other about their thoughts, perspectives, opinions about current events, etc.
5. Educator utilizes project-based learning to promote problem-solving and perspective-taking to solve problems and conflicts in the classroom.
6. Educator assigns students projects where they need to research and problem-solve a situation, world problem, etc., using various resources, materials, and conflicting ideas to promote perspective-taking.
Suggested Artifacts

- **Student Interviews and Dialogues** – Promoting students to videotape, create dialogue with each other to understand each other and why they think the way they do. Interviews may include students talking to adults about issues affecting them and vice versa. Students may record their own perspective to communicate with parents and adults about real-world issues affecting their world. This may turn into a podcast/series where students interview each other about the diverse perspectives they hold.

- **Classroom Constitution** – As a class, students and the educator discuss common norms, mantras, and rules for the classroom. Allowing the students to converse and understand each other will promote a robust and complete perspective of an effective constitution.

- **Student Mentors. Civil Rights Groups** – Older students can help collaborate with younger students to promote and educate about perspective-taking.

- **Student/Parent Communication** – Students can develop a blog, video series, podcast, etc., of communication with their parent/s about their perspectives of the world.

Supporting Research

According to Ellen Galinsky, president and co-founder of Families and Work Institute (FWI), students must master perspective-taking to succeed in the 21st century. With the rise of social media and the shrinking world of communication, perspective-taking is an essential skill students need to understand the "why" and "how" of a person’s actions, reasoning, and rationale. Perspective-taking in the classroom promotes student learning, relationships, and problem-solving in a positive manner. Establishing classroom norms in relationship to perspective-taking provides students with a safe and positive learning environment.

- Galinsky, Ellen. Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs

This book outlines, through research, seven essential skills 21st-century students need to succeed. The book provides research, methods, and implementation steps that educators, parents, and stakeholders can implement.


Giving students an understanding of perspective-taking through technology integration and videotaping gives instructors a set of personalized resources they can use to teach students about perspective-taking skills.


Perspective-taking can be taught before formal education begins. Beginning to expose students to the social and emotional impact of perspective-taking sets students up to adapt to the various perspectives of the world progressing through their education.

Resources

- “A Closer Look at Social Perspective Taking” | Harvard Graduate School
Harvard professor Hunter Gehlbah, an educational psychologist, discusses the student learning impact of teaching social perspective-taking skills in the classroom. He approaches the situation from the perspective of teachers and students having a clear perspective on social behaviors, learning comprehension, and student impact so the students in the third or back row have a perspective of a positive classroom environment.

- **Children’s Picture Books: Considering Multiple Perspectives**
  

  This PDF provides educators with a resource collection of picture books they may use in the classroom to teach and implement student exercises with perspective-taking in the classroom.

- **Classroom Activities on Perspective Taking**
  

  Another website with various ideas of introducing and implementing perspective-taking in the classroom. The website provides resources for educator/s of various age groups/grade levels.

- **“How to Teach Perspective-Taking to Children”**
  Sascha Mitchell, Teresa S. Foulger, and Keith Wetzel
  

  This website resource lays the groundwork for educators to teach and implement perspective-taking skills in the classroom.

- **Sesame Street – Mark Ruffalo: Empathy**
  
  ![https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM)

  Educators can promote a discussion of empathy which can lead to perspective taking and comparing the two with the childhood classic video of “Sesame Street.”

- **Teaching Ideas for Perspective Taking Skills**
  Jill Kuzma
  

  This blog includes many PDFs, lesson resources, and ideas for promoting perspective-taking and social engagement skills in the classroom.

**Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria**

Following are the items you must submit to earn this micro-credential and the criteria by which they will be evaluated. To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing evaluation for Parts 1 and 3, and a rating of “Applying” or better for Part 2.

**Part 1. Overview Questions**

Responses may include collaboration with students to complete the questions. (200-word limit each)

- What activities did you implement using perspective-taking skills to impact student learning within your classroom?
- How did you informally, formally, and summatively assess your students?
- How did you adapt your lesson to meet the needs of your learners? What resources did you use to introduce your students to perspective-taking skills?
- **Passing**: The responses detail the learning activities and student participation in the classroom. The responses clearly address how the educator assessed the students, the adaptations implemented, and resources used in the classroom to implement perspective-taking. The responses are precise and relevant to the project implementation in the classroom.

**Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts**

To earn this micro-credential, please submit at least three artifacts demonstrating student learning impact. The artifacts may include perspective-taking artifacts. The artifacts may include classroom constitutions to problem-solving, student interviews, student collaboration, and projects implementing perspective-taking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Innovating”</th>
<th>“Applying”</th>
<th>“Developing”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Educator is able to demonstrate student understanding of perspective-taking. Lesson demonstrates student learning impact. Educator meets the requirements of all three targets.  
  ▪ The lesson plan describes the learning targets around perspective-taking.  
  ▪ The lesson plan demonstrates connections to perspective-taking exercises in classroom environment and student learning.  
  ▪ Artifacts demonstrate implementation of perspective-taking in the classroom and student learning impact. | Educator is able to demonstrate student understanding of perspective-taking. Lesson demonstrates student learning impact. Educator meets at least two out of the three targets below  
  ▪ The lesson plan describes the learning targets around perspective-taking.  
  ▪ The lesson plan demonstrates connections to perspective-taking exercises in classroom environment and student learning.  
  ▪ Artifacts demonstrate implementation of perspective-taking in the classroom and student learning impact. | Educator is able to show some/most of the components of the project. Some student learning impact is demonstrated. |

**Part 3. Reflection**

Educator may complete the questions through a choice of solutions. This may include a response of no more than 400 words, a two- to three-minute video response, or a two- to three-minute interview with students about the impact of perspective-taking in the classroom. Educator may collaborate with students to complete the questions.

- Reflect upon the overall process of teaching and implementation of perspective-taking skills in your classroom.
- In collaboration with your students, how does perspective-taking in the classroom promote a positive learning environment?
- Going through the project process, what would you change for future lesson units?

- **Passing**: The reflections clearly address the implementation of perspective-taking in the classroom and how perspective-taking promotes a positive learning and classroom environment. The reflections demonstrate a clear collaboration with students in addressing the responses. The responses are precise and relevant to the project implementation in the classroom.