

Considering EVERYTHING we have studied about issues related to diversity, what have you learned in Ed Psych and how will you use it in your classroom?

If I had been asked to define the term diversity coming into this class, I would have only defined it in terms of racial diversity. I would have defined diversity in the classroom as having several different races among the students in my class. After learning about the topic of diversity in this class, my idea of the term has greatly changed. Diversity can be present in more than just racial form. Within the classroom, I will experience intellectual diversity, religious diversity, political diversity, socioeconomic diversity, and cultural diversity, among other differences in students.

Diversity in the classroom can be used as a great help for students. The greatest help, I think, would come from intellectual diversity. I would be able to use intellectual diversity to benefit both the students who are on the high end of the academic scale and the students who are on the low end of the academic scale. I can do this by having the students occasionally work with partners on their homework. By pairing students who have a greater understanding of the material with students who lack some of the understanding, both students will benefit. By having the student who already understands the material teach it to the other student, their learning will be reinforced. The student who is struggling with the material will have the benefit of working one on one with someone, allowing for them to ask questions and dig deeper into the material.

Religious diversity will occur in both the public and private setting, but it can be used as a learning tool more effectively in the private setting. I can use this form of diversity to teach the students about what they believe and why they believe it. If a student were to come in contact with another student and they did not share the same religious views, not only will they learn more about the other religion, but they may learn how to defend their beliefs. These types of conversations don't have to turn into a debate; rather they could be used in a friendly discussion. Instead of a student attacking the other student and claiming that it is "my way or the highway", they can merely discuss their beliefs and give reasons why they hold them. Political diversity can be turned into a learning aspect in the same format.

Cultural diversity can be grouped with racial diversity sometimes, but it can also be separated. Different races tend to have different cultures, but there can also be different cultures within an individual race. These differences in culture can range anywhere from when the students' family opens Christmas presents to the language that they speak. Cultural diversity will probably be the broadest, most frequently occurring diversity in my classroom because it covers such a wide variety of subjects. Culture is defined as the language, attitudes, behavior, and other aspects of life that offer similarities between people, so almost all differences that occur between students could fall into this category.

No one student in my classroom will be like another, unless of course I have siblings, but even so they will still have differences. Diversity within a classroom can be looked at in a few different ways, but most importantly, it can always be used to benefit the students within the class. My goal as a teacher will be to integrate knowledge construction, so that the students understand how they are gaining their knowledge through the aspect of diversity; prejudice reduction, so the students can always remain open

and positive about learning new things about the different cultures and beliefs; and finally, I will do my best to use equity pedagogy, which will help me to help students of all backgrounds achieve success.