

Mindfulness for Culturally Responsive Teaching

Use the chart on the next page to help you see how your assumptions and implicit biases may be impacting your relationship with students. Prior to beginning this reflection, settle into your body with three to five deep, cleansing breaths. Focus on suspending your judgment of whatever emotions or truths may arise. Commit yourself to taking an emotional risk, navigating your vulnerability, and seeking support from someone you trust if necessary.

In the top row (a), reflect under each column:

- **Event:** An interaction with a student that was tense, challenging, or negative in some way.
- **Description:** Describe what happened factually. There will be no value judgments; just list the sequence of events.
- **Interpretation:** How did you glean meaning from the event? For example, a student kept calling out without raising their hand. Did you interpret this to mean the student was misbehaving or being intentionally disruptive?
- **Evaluation:** Note the value judgment you placed on the situation. For example, did you consider it bad that the student spoke out of turn?

In the bottom row (b), use the same event, but consider how you could interpret it differently.

- Spend a few minutes writing about it, considering specifically how you may have misinterpreted the student's behavior. For example, was the student speaking out of turn because they were so interested in the lesson?
- How have past experiences informed this current moment?
- What factors may be involved? For example, what caused or motivated the student to speak out of turn?

Now reevaluate the situation from a neutral perspective. Make note of where your assumptions creep into your evaluation and find the gap between your expectations (for example, students raise their hands) and reality (this student failed to meet that expectation). Is there a way you can support this student? Shift your expectations? Keeping this in mind, rewrite the situation from this perspective.

Mindfulness for Culturally Responsive Teaching

REFLECT			
Event (a)	Description (a)	Interpretation (a)	Evaluation (a)

REEVALUATE			
Event (b)	Description (b)	Interpretation (b)	Evaluation (b)

Adapted from Dray, B. J., & Wisneski, D. B. (2011). Mindful reflection as a process for developing culturally responsive practices. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 44*(1), 28-36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004005991104400104>