

Book Study #421

Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain by Zaretta Hammond

You have the opportunity to earn more than 3 CEUs when you take the SORLA book–study class. To earn the additional CEUs, you will need to both read the book and also complete an assignment BEFORE coming to SORLA.

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Lakeville, Thursday, June 25, 12:30-3:30

Assignment to earn a total of 10 CEUs

Please prepare your responses to these questions and be ready to share them during group discussion. Your written responses must be turned in at the end of our session to earn credit for this course. Before you read and respond, please take the PreReading Self Assessment on the third page of this document.

1. When you hear the term **culturally responsive teaching**, what does that mean to you? How would you describe its purpose, elements, and features?
2. How do you experience structural racialization? How do you believe your students experience it? What differences do you notice?
3. Cultural Frames of Reference (pgs 56-58): Respond to 2-3 prompts from each section (surface and shallow culture) about your cultural background. What did you learn about how your cultural experiences shaped your worldview? How might these experiences influence your interpretations of student actions?
4. "In America the dominant culture is Individualistic, while the cultures of many African American, Latino, Pacific Islander, and Native American Communities lean more toward Collectivism" (Hammond 2015). What does this mean for our practice?
5. Consider the chart on page 99. Where do you see yourself? Reflect on your strengths.
6. Why are a disproportionate number of students of color and EL students dependent learners?
7. Identify how the culturally responsive brain rules are (or are not) in operation in your classroom or across your school. What needs to shift at your school in order to bring practices in line with the brain rules?
8. What are your "go to" trust generators?
9. Reflect on your past equity work and diversity training. What insights and understandings about implicit bias are you bringing to your CRT work?
10. Select a student behavior from shallow culture that triggers your amygdala. Run it through Dray and Wisneski's three (3) phases of communication and see if you can expand your interpretation of that behavior based on your growing understanding of collectivism.

11. Often there is a “blame the victim” approach to student mindset that suggest students don’t have a growth mindset or they are simply missing “grit”. How do the dominant narratives about Black and Brown children generally (and black and brown dependent learners in particular) manifest itself at your site?

12. Reflect on this quote and name the ways you see school undermining diverse students’ natural confidence: “Too often we think of a student’s academic mindset as a personal choice or an expression of the family’s valuing of education. In reality, school do a lot more to influence a negative academic mindset than we’d like to admit” (pg. 112).

13. What are the things you do to create a sense of community and connection in your classroom?

14. What is one strategy or change you plan to implement for the upcoming school year, as a result of your learning in this book study? What is your plan for implementation?

Pre-Reading - Self Assessment: Levels of Culture Awareness

For each element related to levels of culture (see corresponding descriptions below), **rate yourself on how knowledgeable you currently feel**. Specifically, think about our students at VVE. For each element listed, place an X in the column that best applies to your current knowledge about the specific cultural element: **Knowledgeable; Still Learning; Unaware**

Surface Culture: Observable and concrete elements of culture			
<i>Element</i>	<i>Knowledgeable</i>	<i>Still Learning</i>	<i>Unaware</i>
Talking Styles/Language			
Clothing/Hair Styles			
Foods			
Literature/Stories			
Holidays			
Shallow Culture: Unspoken rules around everyday social interactions and norms			
<i>Element</i>	<i>Knowledgeable</i>	<i>Still Learning</i>	<i>Unaware</i>
Nonverbal Communication			
Concepts of Time			
Personal Space			
Eye Contact			
Ways of Handling Emotion			
Deep Culture: Tacit knowledge and unconscious assumptions that govern our worldview			
<i>Element</i>	<i>Knowledgeable</i>	<i>Still Learning</i>	<i>Unaware</i>
Worldview			
Core Beliefs			
Preferences for Competition or Cooperation			
Ethics			
Spirituality			