PICTURE A... LESSON PLAN

Overview:

This lesson will help participants recognize that cultures vary in their perceptions of particular professions. The activity was developed originally for STEM students, asking them to explore differences in their perceptions of a scientist. However, it could just as well be used to explore the perception of a nurse or a teacher in various cultures.

Note: Before completing this activity, participants should have an introduction to cultural identities (based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, ability, etc.) or complete a self-awareness worksheet such as from the Who Am I? Identity Dialogues or Social Identity Wheel tools.

Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Identify differences in their own perceptions of a scientist and the perceptions of others.
2. Speculate on how these differences could affect the interactions between scientists from different cultures.

Time:

30-45 minutes

Group Size:

Entire group

Materials:

Sample drawing photos (computer, projector).

Optional: Paper, writing utensils. Copies of "How Does Culture Shape Students' Perceptions of Scientists" (in Downloads).

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Curiosity:

- To ask complex questions about other cultures.
- To seek out and articulate answers to these questions that reflect multiple cultural perspectives.

Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks:

- To demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.

Activity Instructions:

1. (10-20 minutes) Depending on the amount of time available, each participant should either draw (takes longer) or describe what they see when they think of a scientist. The factors that should be addressed are below:
    - What does the scientist look like?
    - What is the scientist wearing?
    - Where is the scientist?
    - What do the scientist's surroundings look like?
    - What is the scientist doing?
2. (10 minutes) Break into small groups and share pictures and/or descriptions. What characteristics are similar? What characteristics differ? Speculate on cultural reasons for the differences. Consult other participants as cultural informants.
3. (10 minutes) Debrief whole group. Debriefing questions:
    - What happened? What did you learn? What differences did you find?
    - So what? Why might it be important that people have different conceptions of a scientist?
    - How did you feel? Were you surprised to find that there are differences in perceptions of scientists?
    - Now what? Going forward, how might you put what you learned into action?
4. (Extra)(5 minutes) Read study of school childrens' drawings of scientists: "How Does Culture Shape Students' Perceptions of Scientists."
    - Show representative pictures for Chinese and American children.
    - Observe the differences.
    - Speculate: what could account for these differences?

Related Tools:

Similar tools:

- Core Qualities of a Successful Professional
- Draw a House
- Draw a Tree
- Hidden Ways in Which Culture Differs, The
- Lemons

Tools to use in conjunction with this lesson:

- Social Identity Wheel
- Who Am I? Identity Dialogue