

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND LEADING K-12 DISCUSSION GUIDE



What is Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading?

Illinois adopted culturally responsive teaching and leading standards in 2021. Culturally responsive teaching and leading ensure that educators and school leaders are meeting the needs of diverse students through the inclusion of cultures, customs, experiences, and perspectives to create culturally responsive classrooms. Culturally responsive teaching aims to affirm marginalized stories, histories, and experiences to benefit learning for all students. ISBE describes the benefits of culturally responsive teaching and leading: “Cultural responsiveness improves student outcomes across a range of indicators from math and reading scores to attendance, to postsecondary enrollment. The standards encourage future teachers, administrators, and school support personnel to engage in self-reflection, to get to know their students' families, to connect the curriculum to students' lives, and to support students.”

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading at The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Sponsored by the College of Education at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and approved by the Illinois State Board of Education, faculty, staff, and doctoral students at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's College of Education and iSchool have come together to co-create resources for educators in Illinois and beyond.

Purpose of the Culturally Responsive Discussion Guide

This discussion guide is meant to support educators, community members, organizations, faith community leaders, and policymakers in facilitating important conversations related to the sources affiliated with this

guide.

Your willingness to take on topics related to culturally responsive teaching and/or leading is a positive step towards sparking dialogue, increasing awareness, and moving us towards a community dedicated to strategic action and intentional steps towards progress.

Additionally, this guide will enable you to:

- Engage in conversation concerning underrepresented histories.
- Highlight ways that diverse individuals and communities have contributed to our world.
- Explore the role of unlearning and reflection as it relates to you (the educator/facilitator). How does your own positionality influence your perceptions and how you approach classroom lesson planning? Encourage students to reflect on personal views, decisions, and actions concerning history and the vast experiences of people and communities that make up our world.

We encourage you to use this guide as a tool to guide your lesson planning and navigate the creation of classroom activities. Below are sources to use in your lesson as you build culturally responsive teaching practices into your classroom and leadership. The sources below offer both middle school and secondary sources that consider a variety of learning modalities and readiness. Each of the sources below includes an important aspect of culturally responsive teaching that will help build and scaffold incorporating and sustaining cultural responsiveness in your lessons, discussions, and classroom. This guide includes discussion questions, background reading and links, and resources that can help you build successful, culturally competent classrooms that elevate all voices and stories.

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Discussion Guide Breakdown

The Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Discussion Guide provides a standards-based grade-level breakdown of content related to the Illinois State Board of Education Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards. Including both primary and secondary sources and utilizing diverse mediums to engage all learners, this discussion guide provides a foundation for educators to engage students in elementary, middle, and high school. While all efforts have been made to make this resource as accessible as possible, discussion leaders and educators should be cognizant of other modifications and accommodations their students may need.

Getting Started with the Guide

Step 1: Creating a Safe Space

Culturally responsive teaching and leading deals with a myriad of topics that can elicit many emotions. The subject matter can be personal to many people and is filled with many complex issues, nuanced, and can be difficult to discuss. To create the best outcomes for lessons and classroom activities, you will want to ensure that everyone feels welcome and safe. Including time to pre-plan lessons and activities will help ensure that you (the educator) have taken the necessary steps of considering your own positionality, reflecting, finding credible sources, and collaborating with others. Using the un/HUSH reflection questions shared on the



of unlearning, relearning, and reflecting. Next, you will want to ensure that you establish appropriate classroom procedures and guidelines related to the lesson and discussion you will be implementing.

As you incorporate histories and stories into your learning space, be attuned to listening and remaining open-minded to the discussions and perspectives that occur. Often, our deepest insights can come when we pay attention to our own emotional and visceral reactions. Choose not to turn away, as your reactions are opportunities that can lead to meaningful reflections and discussions. Stay open to your reactions to the feelings, thoughts, and ideas shared, as they touch your fears, anxieties, anger, grief, and joy.

Step 2: Timing

Whether you are starting to incorporate culturally responsive teaching and leading or continuing existing work related to cultural responsiveness, it is important to be consistent when implementing culturally responsive practices and pedagogies. Creating lessons and activities that support and sustain culturally relevant pedagogy is paramount.

Step 3: Follow Up & Extended Learning

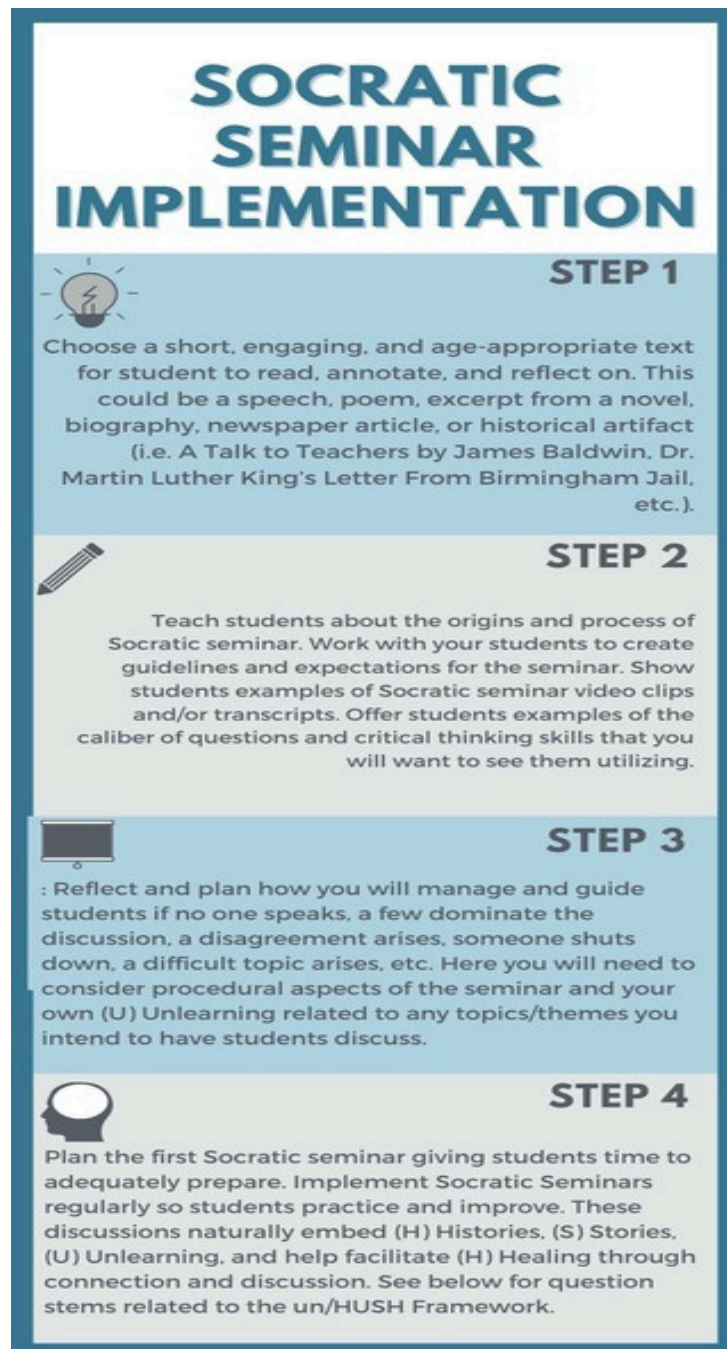
Lessons and activities with complex and rich information will raise questions and opportunities for extended and/or additional learning. Find time to follow up with students 1-1 or with the class as a whole, offering opportunities for further discussion, analysis, or resources. See the un/HUSH resources linked in the resources section at the end of this guide. These resources are related to planning culturally responsive and sustaining lessons and implementation.

Step 4: Pre-planning & Planning:

- Develop your plans for lessons and classroom activities.
- Select sources, compile credible resources, discuss your plans with colleagues, and complete any pre-planning steps.
- Engage with your reflection and unlearning. What gaps in knowledge do you need to address? What biases need to be considered? What aspects of unlearning and relearning need to occur?
- What activities and assessments will correspond with the lesson, and how will you consider all learning modalities?
- What follow-up post-lesson will need to occur? How can you offer opportunities for extended learning to reinforce student engagement and interest?
- Are there ways to incorporate collaboration and/or community? If so, how will you do this?
- What aspects of the lesson will allow you to incorporate histories and stories? What choices will students have to demonstrate their learning regarding this?

A Note Regarding Implementation: Engage the Socratic Method

Using the Socratic seminar method is a way to navigate discussions in the classroom. The graphic below will help you plan and attempt a Socratic discussion in your learning space.



A Note on Terminology

We know that language matters. Having a shared understanding of terminology used is important before beginning a lesson. Please review the following terms beforehand.

Implementing the un/HUSH Framework

Created by Dr. Marlee Bunch in *The Magnitude of Us: An Educator's Guide to Creating Culturally Responsive Classrooms*. The un/HUSH Framework employs culturally responsive and community immersive pedagogy.

We apply this framework to our discussion guide as a reference point for facilitators to cultivate and maintain dynamic, intentional, and careful conversation.

Middle Grades Discussion Guide

Discussion Guide Activity 1

Standards

5- Embrace and encourage a balance of viewpoints and perspectives that leverage asset thinking toward traditionally marginalized populations.

7- Implement and integrate the wide spectrum and fluidity of identities in the curriculum.

11- Promote robust discussion with the intent of raising consciousness that reflects modern society and the ways in which cultures and communities intersect.

Purpose

Students/participants will be able to (SPWBAT) review resources and determine their origin, authority, and validity.

SPWBAT read over a primary source and describe the social and political conditions explained within the text.

Link

Type: Newspaper

Purpose: Comparative Policies and Economic Incentives

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84021917/1953-01-30/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=1770&index=18&rows=20&words=Oriental+students&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=&date2=1963&proxtext=oriental+students&y=0&x=0&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85066387/1910-10-28/ed-1/seq-1/#date1=1770&index=19&rows=20&words=immigrants+oriental&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=&date2=1963&proxtext=oriental+immigrants&y=0&x=0&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>

Notes for Facilitators and Educators

Be sure to read the text beforehand.

Make modifications and condense text as needed for students/participants that may need abridged versions of the text.

Text contains language that some students/participants may find controversial or offensive. Please consider the space and demographics of the group and omit words as needed.

Be mindful that there are two texts. Facilitators can give both texts to all students/participants or disseminate based on learning needs.

Materials Needed

Markers

Large Post-It Paper

Readings Modified Readings (if needed) Dictionaries	
Activation Instructions 1. Break students/participants up into groups. 2. Before reading, have students/participants identify three reasons this source can be deemed as credible. 3. In their groups, have students/participants take turns reading the text and highlighting interesting facts and new words. 4. Allow time for them to discuss the reading amongst themselves and identify meanings to unknown words. You will need to gauge how much time is needed for each group. 5. Pass out large post it paper and markers and have students write both the prompts and the answers to the prompts. 6. Have groups take turns sharing their answers.	
Discussion Questions	Observation: How are Asian Americans viewed in this text? Is the viewpoint positive, negative, indifferent? Inference: What can you infer about the relationship between Black/African Americans and Asian Americans during this time? Connecting Question: What is the United States' outlook on immigration in this article and contemporarily? How do those outlooks and positions vary? Why might that be?
Teacher Reflections (Check off the boxes that applied to your activation, preparation, and additional development of this discussion guide.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/HUSH Self-Evaluation HISTORY indicator.
Teacher Cultural Competency Check-In (Check off the boxes that apply to your intentionality around cultural competency building.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/HUSH Self-Evaluation UNLEARNING indicator.

Discussion Guide Activity 2

Standards 5- Embrace and encourage a balance of viewpoints and perspectives that leverage asset thinking toward traditionally marginalized populations. 7- Implement and integrate the wide spectrum and fluidity of identities in the curriculum. 11- Promote robust discussion with the intent of raising consciousness that reflects modern society and the ways in which cultures and communities intersect.	
Purpose Students/participants will be able to (SPWBAT) use a primary source to make inferences about the political, civil and economic levers shaping people’s lives.	
Link Type: Photo Purpose: Public Policies and Asian American Lives	
Notes for Facilitators and Educators Facilitators will need to make enough COLOR copies to accommodate groups of 3-4. Be sure to print the additional information at the bottom of the photo including the summary and description.	
Materials Needed Construction Paper Markers or Pens Copies of the Photos	
Activation Instructions 1. Split the class/participants into groups of 3 or 4. 2. Pass out one photo per group. 3. Pass out the construction paper and pens/markers. 4. Have students/participants fold the paper to make four quadrants. 5. Instruct students to write one prompt in each quadrant. 6. In the last quadrant (that does not have a prompt), have students create a critical question to pose to another group about the photo. This question should build upon the photo and possibly previous class discussions on race in America as it pertains to Asian Americans.	
	Observation: Write down five observations from the photo. Be sure to take note of the background, the people, the

<p>Discussion Questions</p>	<p>clothing, etc.</p> <p>Inference:</p> <p>What can be inferred about the political economy of the time based on the photo?</p> <p>Connecting Question:</p> <p>Relate the photo to three other events going on in the United States between 1942 and 1943. How can those events be connected to this photo?</p>
<p>Teacher Reflections</p> <p>(Check off the boxes that applied to your activation, preparation, and additional development of this discussion guide.)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/HUSH Self-Evaluation HISTORY indicator.</p>
<p>Teacher Cultural Competency Check-In</p> <p>(Check off the boxes that apply to your intentionality around cultural competency building.)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/HUSH Self-Evaluation UNLEARNING indicator.</p>

Discussion Guide Activity 3

Standards 6- Assess one's story through multiple vantage points to gain a whole narrative that includes all sides of parties involved. 7- Implement and integrate the wide spectrum and fluidity of identities in the curriculum.	
Purpose Students/participants will be able to (SPWBAT) identify the impact of public policies on the lives of everyday people and explain how decisions are made and influenced.	
Link Type: Poem Online Purpose: Macro Policies and Micro Implications https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/144618/from-oil	
Notes for Facilitators and Educators Be sure to read the text beforehand. Make modifications and condense text as needed for students/participants that may need abridged versions of the text. Text contains language that some students/participants may find controversial or offensive. Please consider the space and demographics of the group and omit words as needed.	
Materials Needed Copies of the Poem Modified Copies of the Poem (if needed)	
Activation Instructions 1. Have students/participants read the poem silently to themselves. 2. With a partner, have students/participants answer the following prompts.	
Discussion Questions	Observation: What do you observe about the speaker's tone? Inference: Based on the events described in the text, how might one describe the social climate at the time? Connecting Question:

	Think about a major historical event that has happened during your lifetime. With that event in mind, think of the stakeholders involved--politicians, regular citizens, etc.--and how that event impacted their day to day lives on the ground. Were there emotional, economical, or even physical upshots to this event for regular citizens?
Teacher Reflections (Check off the boxes that applied to your activation, preparation, and additional development of this discussion guide.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/ HUSH Self-Evaluation HISTORY indicator.
Teacher Cultural Competency Check-In (Check off the boxes that apply to your intentionality around cultural competency building.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/ HUSH Self-Evaluation UNLEARNING indicator.

Secondary Discussion Guide

Discussion Guide Activity 1

Standards 1- Understand the difference between prejudice, discrimination, racism, and how to operate at the interpersonal, intergroup, and institutional levels.

6- Explore their own intersecting identities, how they were developed, and how they impact daily experience of the world.

7- Implement and integrate the wide spectrum and fluidity of identities in the curriculum.

Purpose

Students/participants will be able (SPWBAT) to determine credible sources and evaluate the important contributions regarding AAPI/Black/Women's history (Educators and/or facilitators can choose one and direct students, or allow student choice).

Link

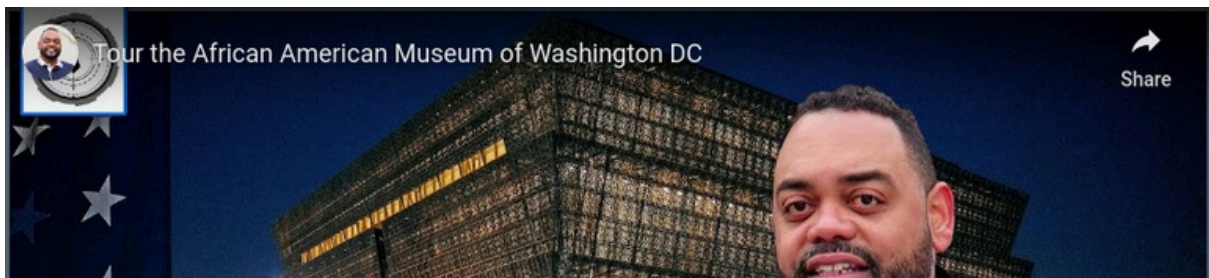
Type: Interview

Purpose: Overview of AAPI/Black/Women's History (Smithsonian)

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/videos/conversations-in-context-honoring-asian-ameri/>

Tour the African American Museum in Washington, DC (Smithsonian) or watch the video regarding Women's history (Smithsonian Education):





Notes for Facilitators and Educators

An overview of AAPI/Black/Women’s History courtesy of the Smithsonian. A broad introduction into AAPI/Black/Women’s history. Please view videos before assigning to students to ensure they align with curricular goals.

Materials Needed

Transcript of interview

Laptop

Paper for notetaking

Activation Instructions

1. Have students/participants listen to the interview and/or video silently independently.
2. With a partner, have students/participants answer the following prompts.

Discussion Questions

Observation:

What do you observe about the video’s tone? What do you observe about the video’s tone?

Inference:

Based on the history and event described in the video, how might one describe the importance of AAPI/Black/Women’s history?

Connecting Question:

Think about a major historical event that has happened during your lifetime. With that event in mind, think of the stakeholders involved-- politicians, regular citizens, etc.--and how that event impacted their day to day lives on the ground. Were there emotional, economical, or even physical upshots to this event for regular citizens? Are there events current day that are not known about and should be?

Teacher Reflections

(Check off the boxes that applied to your activation, preparation, and additional development of this discussion guide.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/ HUSH Self-Evaluation HISTORY indicator.
Teacher Cultural Competency Check-In (Check off the boxes that apply to your intentionality around cultural competency building.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/ HUSH Self-Evaluation UNLEARNING indicator.

Discussion Guide Activity 2

Standards

- 1- Understand the difference between prejudice, discrimination, racism, and how to operate at the interpersonal, intergroup, and institutional levels.
- 6- Explore their own intersecting identities, how they were developed, and how they impact daily experience of the world.
- 7- Implement and integrate the wide spectrum and fluidity of identities in the curriculum.

Purpose

Students/participants (SPWBAT) will be able to determine important historical information regarding AAPI/Black/Women's history.

Link

Type: Podcast/Discussion (Educators and/or facilitators can choose a podcast to assign, or allow students to choose):

Purpose: Evaluate and examine any podcast episode on the site below for Asian American History 101

<https://asianamericanhistory101.libsyn.com/talking-about-righting-wrongs-report-and-status-index-2023>

Heather McGhee (The Sum of Us- the videos are by chapter/topic), overview of Black history or Women's stories from Smithsonian:

<https://womenshistory.si.edu/blog/five-popular-womens-history-stories-sidedoor-smithsonian-podcast>



Notes for Facilitators and Educators Options here include a podcast, interview with author/scholar Heather McGhee, or audio stories. They explore multiple aspects of AAPI/Black/Women's history. This is an ideal place to offer students choice.

Materials Needed

Laptop

Paper for note taking

Activation Instructions

- 1. Have students choose one episode of their interest to listen to independently.
- 2. With a partner, have students/participants answer the following prompts.

Discussion Questions	<p>Observation:</p> <p>What do you observe about the podcast episode/interview/audio story you listened to?</p> <p>Inference:</p> <p>Based on the podcast/interview/audio story, what might you want to share with others about the history and knowledge you gained?</p> <p>Connecting Question:</p> <p>What can the podcast share with us about AAPI/Black/Women’s history? What new perspectives can we gain to guide our efforts towards better understanding and appreciating AAPI/Black/Women’s history?</p>
<p>Teacher Reflections</p> <p>(Check off the boxes that applied to your activation, preparation, and additional development of this discussion guide.)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/HUSH Self-Evaluation HISTORY indicator.</p>
<p>Teacher Cultural Competency Check-In</p> <p>(Check off the boxes that apply to your intentionality around cultural competency building.)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/HUSH Self-Evaluation UNLEARNING indicator.</p>

Discussion Guide Activity 3

Standard

- SS.IS.4.6-8.MdC: Determine the credibility of sources based upon their origin, authority and context.
- SS.CV.1.6-8.MdC: Describe the roles of political, civil and economic organizations in shaping people's lives.
- SS.CV.6.6-8.MdC; Analyze the purposes, implementation, and consequences of public policies in historic and contemporary settings.

Purpose

Students/participants (SPWBAT) will be able to evaluate and analyze the poetry of Angel Island and make connections to current day histories and narratives.

Link

Type: Poetry (Educators and/or facilitators can choose any poem/poet that is most suitable for curricular goals)

Purpose: Evaluate and examine poetry from Langston Hughes



Let America Be America Again

(America never was America to me.) Let America be
the dream the dreamers dreamed— Let it be that
great strong land of love Where never kings conni...

➤ The Poetry Foundation

Notes for Facilitators and Educators

A poem by Langston Hughes.

Materials Needed

Laptop

Paper for notetaking	
Activation Instructions 1. Have students/participants explore the poet and poem of Langston Hughes independently. 2. With a partner, have students/participants answer the following prompts.	
Discussion Questions	Observation: What do you observe about the poetry and inscriptions? Inference: Based on the history, how might one describe the themes and tone of the poetry? Connecting Question: Think about the role of stories in poetry. What stories are being told in these inscriptions? What do they share with us about history? What new perspectives can we gain to guide our efforts towards equity in today?
Teacher Reflections (Check off the boxes that applied to your activation, preparation, and additional development of this discussion guide.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/ HUSH Self-Evaluation HISTORY indicator.
Teacher Cultural Competency Check-In (Check off the boxes that apply to your intentionality around cultural competency building.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Please refer to the un/ HUSH Self-Evaluation UNLEARNING indicator.

APPENDIX

UN/HUSH SELF-EVALUATION

Use this form to self-evaluate your implementation of the framework and culturally relevant lessons. Evaluate using (I) ineffective, (D) developing, (E) effective.

HISTORIES

- ☐ Lessons illuminate histories not often told.
- ☐ Lessons demonstrate cultural and global awareness.
- ☐ Lessons ask and consider who is not included? Why?
- ☐ Students have opportunities to analyze history.
- ☐ We examine how current issues are rooted in the past.
- ☐ Histories are presented through a contemporary lens.
- ☐ Students have space to reflect & ask questions.
- ☐ We examine disparities/gaps in historical information.
- ☐ Lessons lean on lived experiences and oral histories to give voice to marginalized groups.

STORIES

- ☐ Lessons & activities include marginalized stories.
- ☐ I understand that stories build connection.
- ☐ I build stories into classroom lessons & activities.
- ☐ Our classroom works to acknowledge all stories.
- ☐ I use stories to make content & texts relevant.
- ☐ Lessons use stories to examine power dynamics.
- ☐ I elevate inclusive stories beyond calendar events.
- ☐ I use stories to reach instructional objectives.
- ☐ I use stories to forge connections and build relationships.

UNLEARNING

- ☐ Reflection & evaluation are part of my pre-planning.
- ☐ I seek out opportunities to learn and grow.
- ☐ Research is part of my curricular planning process.
- ☐ I regularly journal and consider difficult questions.
- ☐ I examine my own bias and gaps in knowledge.
- ☐ I consider how my positionality impacts my teaching.
- ☐ I seek to understand systemic barriers.
- ☐ I listen to others and seek to understand.
- ☐ I strive to be open-minded and accept feedback.

HEALING

- ☐ Lessons offer opportunities to build connections.
- ☐ Lessons foster empathy and perspective taking.
- ☐ Lessons encourage coalitions and civic engagement.
- ☐ Lessons offer choice and autonomy.
- ☐ Lessons explore action, agency & activism.
- ☐ Lessons offer varied perspectives.
- ☐ My classroom offers students choices in learning.

OTHER AREAS TO CONSIDER

- ☐ What do I want to learn more about?
- ☐ What new strategy am I willing to try?
- ☐ How does my positionality (lens) impact my classroom/lessons/students?
- ☐ What areas of growth should I consider?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional resources and information, please visit

<https://teaach.education.illinois.edu/Recommendations> or see the following padlets with an abundance of resources:

Courtesy of Dr. Sarah Park Dahlen: <https://padlet.com/readingspark/asian-american-k-12-resources-h5gwhfkepoccu65e>

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Resources:

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Guidebook:

https://occrl.illinois.edu/docs/librariesprovider2/crtl/culturally-responsive-teaching-and-leading-guidebook.pdf?sfvrsn=a88a90a5_1

Illinois Learning Standards for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading:

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Culturally-Responsive-Teaching-Leading-Standards.pdf>