

6 Key Aspects of Social Justice Pedagogy



Social Justice =
opposition to oppression
(both systemic and internalized)

- Key concepts from Paulo Freire:**
- False generosity
 - Sub-oppressors
 - Dual consciousness/ fear of freedom

WARM DEMANDER

Develop your students as human beings first

Family & Culture: understand & honor the strengths of the community

Authenticity: model vulnerability and humility, be an ally, respect your students

Clear Boundaries: Show Strength, Listen & Affirm, Challenge & Offer a Choice

Growth Mindset: believe in the “impossible,” embrace failure

STUDENTS AS INTELLECTUALS

Develop your students as a community of warrior-scholars

Inquiry: there is no “right answer,” questioning, evidence, students as sources of knowledge

Collective Accountability: classroom as intellectual community

Code Switching: academic language & discussion formats

Intellectual Challenge: high-level multicultural texts, complex problems, big ideas, less is more

KNOWLEDGE OF STUDENTS

Start where your students are, not where you want/imagine them to be

Prior Knowledge: what do students know? what are their experiences, preconceptions?

Student Voice: what do students care about? what do they think? (examples of activities like sort, chalk talk, dot voting, etc.)

Individual Needs: differentiation without tracking, adjusting instruction based on formative assessment

Choice: students have real choices about how and what they learn

SAFE CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

Protect your students in a potentially dangerous world

Prevention: clear expectations, talk about values, Teacher Voice, One Mic

Rituals: Mindfulness, Talking Circle, Strong Start, Strong Finish

Jedi Awareness & Control the Mood: be aware of the class culture & respond proactively

Intervention: assume positive intent, keep it in perspective, deliberate escalation, when to stop the curriculum and when/how to remove students

TEACHER AS COACH

Let your students do the work

Metacognition: students should know how they learn & how to self-assess

Academic Skills: binders, annotations, note-taking skills, etc.

Culture of Revision & Practice: models of excellent work, multiple revisions, guided practice

Team Work: heterogeneous groups, clear roles, focus on the process, address status

SOCIAL JUSTICE CURRICULUM

Teach a curriculum that helps students understand the real world

Clear Purpose: students know what they are doing and why it matters

Relevance: curriculum helps explain the real world & oppression (including multicultural curriculum, community connections, & cross-curricular connections)

Encourage Dissenting Opinions: critical thinking is the goal

Human Values: curriculum grounded in justice, fairness, dignity, & cultural strengths