



Research. Results. Practice.

CULTIVATING CROSS-CULTURAL TOOLS

Tool #5: Intercultural Interaction

Building the knowledge, experiences, and skills that replace bias-based beliefs.

Why This Tool Matters

Cross-cultural competence is ultimately demonstrated through action. **Intercultural interaction** is the ability to communicate and build relationships respectfully and effectively with people whose cultural identities and experiences differ from our own. It requires educators to move beyond awareness and intentionally practice culturally informed behaviors in everyday interactions.

Intercultural interaction is strengthened through repeated experiences that replace stereotypes with authentic relationships. As educators interact across differences, they develop more accurate understandings of students, families, and communities.

What It Looks Like in Schools

Your chapter emphasizes that effective intercultural interaction begins with understanding cultural customs rather than relying on assumptions. Whether entering a mosque, attending a cultural celebration, or participating in school events with unfamiliar communities, educators demonstrate respect by learning and honoring cultural norms.

The chapter also recommends practical experiences such as attending community events, joining book clubs featuring diverse authors, participating in school cultural celebrations, and engaging in authentic interactions with families and colleagues from different backgrounds. These experiences help replace stereotypes with relationships.

Cultivating This Tool

- Attend community cultural events.
- Participate in school multicultural celebrations.
- Join discussion groups featuring diverse authors and perspectives.

- Build authentic relationships beyond your familiar social circles.
- Practice respectful communication across cultural differences.

Reflection Questions

- What intercultural experiences have challenged my assumptions?
- How have authentic relationships changed my understanding of a community?
- What new interactions could I intentionally pursue?

Fill Your Shopping Cart

This month...

- ☐ Attend one cultural event in your community.
- ☐ Read a book by an author whose lived experiences differ from your own.
- ☐ Engage in a meaningful conversation with someone from a cultural background different from yours.

Related Tools

-  Perspective Taking
-  Cultural Learning
-  Cultural Reasoning
-  Diplomatic Mindset

References

Fergus, E. (2024) *Desegregating Ourselves*, Chapter 5.

Allport, G. W. (1954). *The Nature of Prejudice*.

Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory.