

EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGEMAKING

From Global Vision to Classroom Practice

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Founder

ALAS Initiative





Introduction

- **Spanish and Bilingual Education**
- **Taught in Isaac School District**
- **Call to Social Justice**
 - **Seminary: Presbyterian Pastor (PCUSA)**
 - **Community Organizing**
- **Executive Director, Arizona Faith Network**
- **ASU Global Launch**
- **Founder, ALAS Initiative**

Workshop Agenda

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**Definition of Social
Change**

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**Lens of Values-Based
Social Change**

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*UN Global Purpose of Education***

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Social Change Framework**

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**Application in TESOL
Curriculum and Classroom**



What is **Social Change**?

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

-(attributed to) Mahatma Gandhi

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

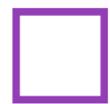
-Barack Obama



Social Change



What do we mean by social change?



At its **heart**, social change is about the **collective work** of **envisioning a better future** for our communities and **acting** to bring it to life.



It requires us to

- **reimagine our reality**
- **learn from our past and one another**
- **take social action that transforms**



Social Change can happen slowly or quickly, in a linear, cyclical, or even pendular fashion.

(Bourn, 2022, p.33)

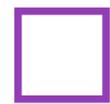
“Ultimately, the direction it takes depends on how deeply we care, and how willing we are to shape the future together”

(Spanos Dunfey, 2023).

Social Change vs. Social Justice



Why not use the term “social justice”?



Social Justice values:

- equity
- fairness
- equal access
- inclusion
- diversity
- inherent dignity and worth of every human being



Shifting the conversation to

SOCIAL CHANGE:

- allows us to take a step back
 - talk about values
 - talk about goals
 - talk about process
 - allows us to examine social change heroes
- We don't assume that everyone has the same values, goals, process, etc.

Values-Based Social Change Lens

Teach and Inspire Social Changemakers



Reason 1

Invites us to examine our values
first

Reason 2

Creates spaces for dialogue on our
values.

Reason 3

We understand one another better which
promotes respect, collaboration, and mutual
support.

Education for **Social Changemaking** Framework

A **values-centered** approach to learning that transforms classrooms into **laboratories for life**, learning communities where students and educators develop **critical awareness** and **practice dialogue**, **creative problem-solving**, **collective action**, and ongoing **reflection** to shape society together as engaged citizens of the world.



Pedagogical Basis for Education for Social Changemaking

Paulo Freire, Henry

Giroux, bell hooks

Learning as
consciousness-raising
about contradictions in the
world. Praxis.

**CRITICAL
PEDAGOGY**

**TRANSFORMA
TIVE
LEARNING
THEORY**

Jack Mezirow

Learning changes how
people understand
themselves and the world.
Learning is not just additive
but transformational.

John Dewey, David

Kolb

Learning happens through
experience, inquiry, and
reflection. Education
prepares learners for
participation in civic life.

**EXPERIENTIAL
LEARNING**

**SOCIAL
LEARNING
&
COLLECTIVE
AGENCY**

Antonio Bandura,

Paulo Freire

Agency develops through
participation, modeling, and
collective effort. Collective
efficacy matters more than
individual heroism.

United Nations and Education

1948

The UN adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Everyone has a right to education.

Purpose of Education:

- Directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- Shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial, and religious groups.
- Shall further the activities of the United Nations to maintain peace.

2019

UNESCO noted wider purposes of education in the *Right to Education Handbook*, linking education not only to **building peace** but also **driving sustainable development**.

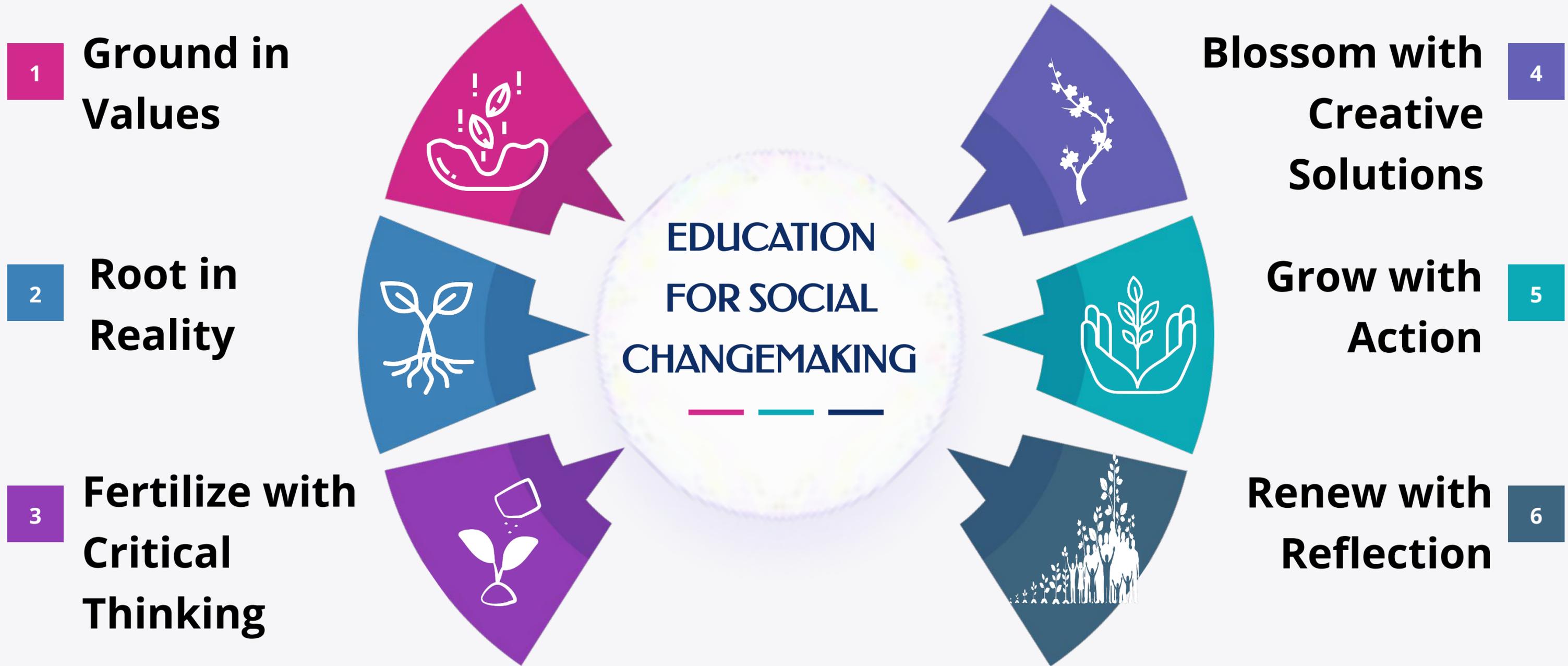
Purposes of education:

- Promote social justice aims. Education is well-known as an equalizing force that can be used to reduce social, political, and economic exclusion and marginalization, combat all forms of discrimination, and promote equality.
- Overcome persistent and entrenched challenges, such as gender inequality.

Education for **Social** **Changemaking** **Framework**

A **values-centered approach** to learning that transforms classrooms into **laboratories for life**, learning communities where students and educators develop **critical awareness** and **practice dialogue**, **creative problem-solving**, **collective action**, and ongoing **reflection** to shape society together as engaged citizens of the world.





“Equipping people to be the change they want to see in the world”



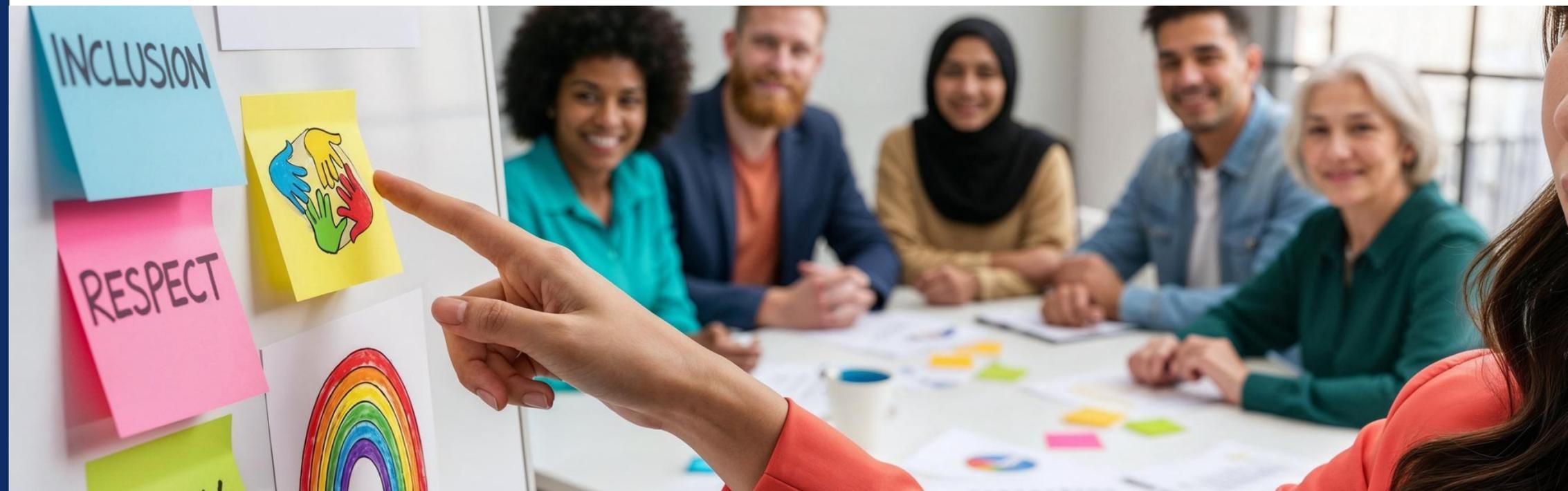
□ Ground in Values



Essential Elements of Education for Social Changemaking

1) Ground in Values

Students express and reflect on individual and shared values, consider their origins, and connect them to what matters most in their lived experiences.



1) Ground in Values

TESOL Short Lesson

Activity: Students reflect on and express their individual and shared values

Materials: Language-Learner-Friendly Values List, Sentence frames

Language Goal: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to use values vocabulary in simple sentences to express personal beliefs utilizing the sentence frame:

I value _____ because _____.

Bridge to creating class list of values.

Language Skills Practiced:

- vocabulary development
- speaking in complete sentences
- expressing opinions using *because*



Essential Elements of

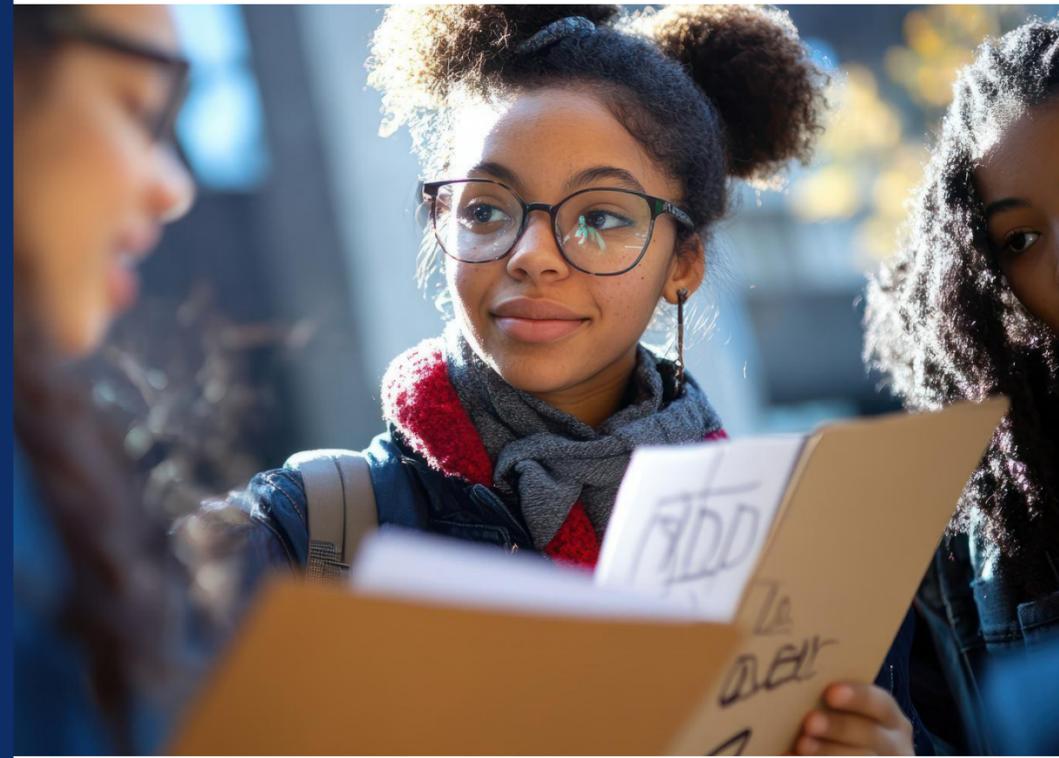
Education for Social Changemaking

2) Root in Reality

Students engage in “reading the world” and identifying social issues by recognizing gaps between current realities and desired conditions, grounding their thinking in their values and lived experiences.

“When learning is grounded in real lived experience, students are better equipped to critically analyze systems of injustice and imagine pathways towards meaningful change.”

-E. Tamayo



Ground in Values



Root in Reality



2) Root in Reality

TESOL Short Lesson

Activity: Students observe images or short videos of classrooms, schools, or communities and describe what they see. Students then identify whether their observations match or do not match their values

Materials: Images or short videos of classrooms, schools, or communities, class values list, sentence frames (Optional: printed images for partner/small group discussion)

Language Goal: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to use observation and values vocabulary in simple sentences to describe reality and connect it to their values, using the sentence frames:

- I noticed _____.
- I saw _____.
- This shows _____.
- This matches the value of _____.
- This does not match the value of _____.

Bridge to the next lesson on practicing *Critical Thinking*.



Essential Elements of

Education for Social Changemaking

3) Fertilize with Critical Thinking

Students move beyond awareness by analyzing causes, perspectives, impacts, and power dynamics. They draw evidence-based conclusions and connect learning to contemporary and historic movements.

Students develop *Critical Awareness* through:

- observation
- asking questions
- listening
- engaging the world in dialogue



Ground in Values



Root in Reality



Fertilize with Critical Thinking



3) Fertilize with Critical Thinking

TESOL Short Lesson

Activity: Students observe paired images or videos of situations, at least one of which does not match their values (e.g., a well-resourced classroom versus a classroom with limited and/or outdated books). They describe what they see, share their thoughts, and investigate why the situation exists. Students begin to understand that systems, rules, and conditions can influence outcomes.

Materials: Images or videos showing contrasting school conditions, Class Values List, sentence frames

Language Goal: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to use critical thinking and inference language in simple sentences to explain possible causes of real-world situations, using the sentence frames:

- This happens because _____.
- Maybe this happens because _____.
- I think this happens because _____.
- One reason could be _____.
- My research says _____.

Bridge to the next lesson on *Creative Solutions*.



Essential Elements of

Education for Social Changemaking

4) Blossom with Creative Solutions

Students synthesize their learning, values, research, lived experiences, and resources to envision the change they hope to see. They take part in *social innovation*, the process of imagining, designing, and experimenting with new solutions to address social challenges.

Students may be invited to:

- Create a collage using images and words to represent their visions for change.
- Write a diary or journal entry describing a future community shaped by the change they hope to see.
- Build a physical model out of recycled materials
- Design a virtual model (e.g., in Minecraft)
- Express their ideas through role play, storytelling, song, or other creative forms.



Ground in Values



Root in Reality



Fertilize with Critical Thinking



Blossom with Creative Solutions



4) Blossom with Creative Solutions

TESOL Short Lesson

Activity: Students imagine creative solutions to a problem they observed. They design, draw, write, or build their idea and explain the change they want to see. Students identify who can help make the change happen and how they can take steps to move the idea forward.

Materials: Images from previous lesson, paper, drawing materials, building materials, computers, sentence frames, (optional: simple *Power Map* visual activity to identify decision-makers)

Language Goal: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to use the future tense and modal verbs to describe solutions, identify decision-makers, and explain next steps using the sentence frames:

- We want _____.
- My idea is _____.
- This will help _____.
- _____ can help.
- _____ is a decision-maker on this issue.
- We can _____ to get started.

Bridge to choosing one real action to move the solution forward.



Essential Elements of

Education for Social Changemaking

5) Grow with Action

Students step into the *laboratory of life* by putting their ideas and solutions into action. They test their ideas in moving toward change and develop their own agency by joining with others to create change.

“They learn that their voices matter, that their collective effort can create momentum, and that change is something they can participate in, not just study.”



Examples of Actions:

- **Raising Public Awareness-** such as holding a community meeting or writing an opinion article
- **Creative and Grassroots Action-** such as holding a press conference
- **Advocacy and Civic Engagement-** such as meeting with decision makers



Ground in Values



Root in Reality



Fertilize with Critical Thinking



Blossom with Creative Solutions



Grow with Action



5) Grow With Action

TESOL Short Lesson

Activity: Students choose and carry out one real or simulated action to support their solution. They practice raising awareness, taking creative action, or engaging with decision-makers. Students select one type of action: 1) Raising Public Awareness – hold a class community meeting, or write an opinion article 2) Creative or Grassroots Action – hold a mock press conference, 3) Advocacy and Civic Engagement – meet with a decision-maker (role-play). Students prepare and present their action in small groups or as a whole class.

Materials: Action choice list, planning templates, sentence frames, (optional: role-play name tags for decision-makers)

Language Goal: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to use persuasive language and the future tense to carry out a changemaking action using the sentence frames:

- The problem is _____.
- We are here to talk about _____.
- We want _____.
- This is important because _____.
- We ask you to _____.
- This change will help _____.

Bridge to reflecting on the results and the impact of their action.



Essential Elements of

Education for Social Changemaking

6) Renew with Reflection

Transformation requires *praxis*, an ongoing cycle of action and reflection through which people come to know and shape the world (Freire, pp. 106-107).

After students act, there is a need to pause, look back, observe and make meaning of what occurred.

Students can then plan for further action if necessary, leaving behind what no longer serves them and moving forward with new insight and partnerships.



Reflection Questions:

- What happened because of our action?
- What went well? What was difficult?
- What did we learn? Whose ideas did we hear? Whose ideas did we not hear yet?



Ground in Values



Root in Reality



Fertilize with Critical Thinking



Blossom with Creative Solutions



Grow with Action



Renew with Reflection

6) Renew with Reflection

TESOL Short Lesson

Activity: Students pause after taking action to reflect on what happened. They discuss what worked, what was challenging, and what they learned. Students then decide one next step to improve or continue their efforts

Materials: Reflection questions (on slide or handout), sentence frames, (optional: reflection journal or class chart paper)

Language Goal: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to use the past tense, future tense, and modals to describe outcomes, draw and plan next steps using the sentence frames:

- After our action, _____ happened.
- One thing that worked well was _____.
- One challenge was _____.
- We learned that _____.
- Next time we can _____.

**Bridge to a summary activity
or restart the cycle toward a new action.**





“Equipping people to be the change they want to see in the world”

Benefits of Education for Social Changemaking

Education for Social Changemaking

- Fosters a sense of social responsibility
- Strengthens a sense of community
- Cultivates a sense of agency
- Increases civic engagement
- Gives individuals and groups the tools, skills, and practice to participate in a democratic society
- Creates a stronger link between the classroom and everyday life in the broader community

Social Changemaking inspires others

“When people recognize their ability to shape their world and to take action, this inspires others to do the same, creating a cycle of momentum.” -Erin Tamayo



Guiding Commitments

Education for Social Changemaking is

guided by a commitment to:

- **Nonviolence**

Nonviolence affirms human dignity and rejects harm as a means of transformation. This includes our actions, language, and strategies for change.

- **Community and Collective Action**

Learning and making change are relational and dialogical, rooted in community wisdom, shared responsibility, and community power.

- **Lived Experience as Knowledge**

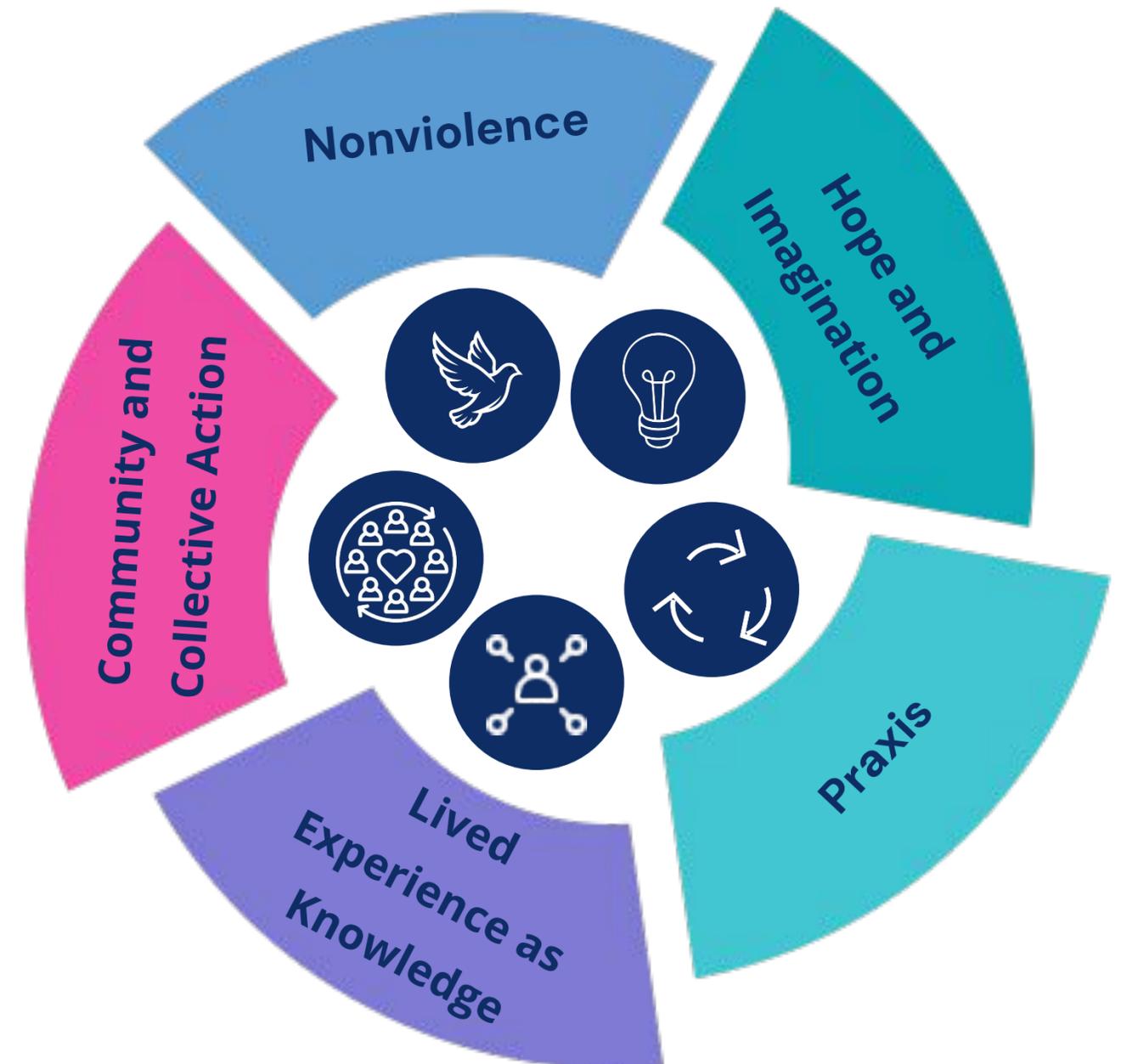
Students' lived experiences and community stories are valued sources of knowledge alongside academic and historical information.

- **Praxis**

Transformation happens through ongoing cycles of reflection and action. Changemaking requires humility, adaptability, and persistence.

- **Hope and Imagination**

Changemaking requires the ability to imagine alternatives. We hold strong to hope that the world can and must be better.





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ALAS INITIATIVE: GROWING THE WINGS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

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ABOUT ALAS INITIATIVE



Our Mission

ALAS (Aligned Learning and Action for Social Change) empowers educators, leaders, students, individuals, and communities with transformative educational materials and opportunities that bridge the gap between

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