Module: *Shifting Perspectives in Education*

Contributor: E3: Education, Excellence & Equity

E3 imagines a future in which educators embrace the lived and learned experiences of each student and value the strengths that all children bring into the classroom. In this future, all children achieve academic success, graduate from high school, and have the skills required for their next steps in an ever-changing world.

The purpose of *Shifting Perspectives in Education* is to
- Explore other ways of knowing
- Learn about the value of cultural competencies in education
- Examine individual perspective

**Context/Target Audience:**

This module is for teachers, administrators, youth workers, social activists, and problem solvers who would like to create a new paradigm of collaboration. The focus of this learning module is shifting the perspective of what constitutes education evaluation. This module questions ideas around success, what skills are needed, and how success transfers from culture to culture.

The module is divided into sections that are ideally implemented in sequential order, with Conocimiento/Community Building first and the main lesson plan in the middle, bookended by artistic exploration or cultural stories and next steps.

**Materials:** PowerPoint, journals or paper, pen, large sticky pads, markers

**Time:** 4.5 hours, for a 2-hour workshop, please do sections 1 3 & 4.
SECTION 1: Conocimiento: Two Ears, Heart, and Eyes
The Conocimiento stems from the Chicano movement, collectivizing experiences and building bridges between personal perspectives. The word conocimiento means “having knowledge of,” and in the context of Racial Equity Learning (REL) it means to validate each person as a wisdom holder and, as such, valuable to the group in terms of learning and actions. Before doing anything else, you acknowledge the value of knowing the strengths of the community and where the connections are.

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Directions:**
Walk around the room, varying speed from slow to fast and making eye contact with each person. After 1 minute, find a person whom you identify as being different from you. Sit down in chairs facing one another, with knees touching. Ask the first question. Each participant speaks for one minute. The facilitator keeps time. We ask that the partner listen with two ears, their heart, and their eyes (facilitator script below).

After all questions, invite the participants to write in their journal for 1 minute, noting anything that surprised them about their answers and anything they noted about their partner.

After all the questions and reflection journaling, in “round robin” style, have each participant introduce their partner by stating their name, one thing they have in common, and one thing that was surprising.* If you have more time, you may wish to guide the participants through an activity that takes them through all levels of listening, located at the end of the Facilitator’s Guide.*

**Facilitator script:**
The most common problem in communication is not listening! The Chinese symbol for “to listen” is shown on the screen. Its wisdom extends beyond just the meaning of the symbols. The left side of the symbol represents an ear. The right side represents the individual (you). The eyes and undivided attention are next, and finally there is the heart.
Ask each of the following questions, inviting the participants to share a gaze with their partner while answering the question.¹

First to see where you are and what you do:
•  **Who are you?**

Next to explore your context in the world:
•  **Who do other people think you are?**

What is your vision? Where do you want to go:
•  **Who do you want to be?**

¹Adapted from an exercise by Dr. Asa Hilliard, who asserts that unless you know yourself, you can never know your path.
SECTION 2: What do you see?
Using visual literacy to look at and interpret art, the participants are invited to examine different ways of seeing.

Learning Goals:
- To explore how we value difference, and why that is important
- To understand that each person’s way of seeing is informed by their unique personal and cultural experiences
- To practice cultivating a curious attitude by looking at the world beyond the assumptions we make

Time: 1 hour

Materials: PowerPoint

Directions:

Facilitator’s script (please read): Judith Scott uses materials to spontaneously invent her own unique and radically different form of artistic expression. Taking found objects, she wraps them in carefully selected colored yarns to create diverse sculptures in many different shapes. Some resemble cocoons or body parts, while others are elongated, totemic poles. Many of her works also feature pairs. Her art is held in the permanent collections of the following museums: Art Brut Connaissance & Diffusion Collection (Paris and Prague), Museum of American Folk Art (New York City), Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art (Chicago), L’Aracine Musée d’Art Brut (Paris), Collection de l’Art Brut (Lausanne, Switzerland), and the American Visionary Art Museum (Baltimore).

1. Look at the artwork. Participants share as a large group the answers to the following questions:
   - What do you see? What are the technical aspects of the artwork you observed? Note the colors, the way the materials are used, and what the work is made of.
   - Do the technical aspects influence you to like or dislike the artwork?
   - What are your personal and sensory impressions of the artwork?
   - Who do you think made this work?
   - Would you say that the artwork is good? Bad?

   In round-robin style have participants share what they see.

2. Watch the trailer for the film about artist Judith Scott.
Facilitator’s Script: Do you feel differently about the artwork? What happens when we have more of the story? Take a moment to notice how we see things differently, make meaning, fill in blanks, and make assumptions.

**Journal writing/reflection:** (3 minutes)
Take a moment to think about your initial reaction to the work and the group conversation. After watching the movie trailer, did you discover anything that surprised you? Did it change your understanding of the work? Your expectations of the artist?

Ask one or two participants to share their reactions after viewing the video.
SECTION 3: Perspectives in Education: Clips from *Cracking the Codes* and *The Way Home*

People in different cultures have strikingly different ideas of the self, of others, and of how the two relate. Perspective determines how things are experienced. As an example, many Asian cultures have very distinct ideas of individuality that see the individual as part of the collective whole. They emphasize attending to others, fitting in, and harmonious interdependence. American culture does not assume or value this kind of connectedness. In fact, Americans often maintain independence from others by developing the sense of self and by expressing their unique characters. Our system of education is only one place where this cultural perspective shows up.

**Learning Goals:**
- Recognizing the varied reaction to standard education from a youth’s point of view
- Examining alternative interpretations of behavior

**Estimated Time:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** Clips in PowerPoint, *Cultural Resiliency for Youth* handout

**Directions:**
Hand out and examine the definitions of the five skills of cultural resiliency (found at the end of the guide).

Facilitator’s script (please read):

People in different cultures have strikingly different ideas of the self, of others, and of how the two relate. Perspective determines how things are experienced. As an example, many Asian cultures have very distinct ideas of individuality that see the individual as part of the collective whole. They emphasize attending to others, fitting in, and harmonious interdependence. American culture does not assume or value this kind of connectedness. In fact, Americans often maintain independence from others by developing the sense of self and by expressing their unique characters. Our system of education is only one place where this cultural perspective shows up.

In our current system of education, evaluation is based on what you know and how fast you can recall that information. When polled, most employers and institutions of higher education were uninterested in this type of knowledge and very interested in individuals who were capable of Innovation, Critical Analysis, Teamwork, Cross-Cultural Analysis, and Adaptability. By recognizing our
students’ cultural competencies and supporting them in finding these skills for themselves, we can support them in developing the additional skills needed to graduate and succeed in the workforce.

Watch these film clips, after each clip you will direct part of the group to move to a section of the room. Divide the room into four parts:

- **Asian Council – From the Way Home**
  Instruct anyone who identified with this clip to move to position one.

- **Ise Lyfe – From Cracking the Codes**
  Instruct anyone who identified with this clip to move to position two.
  (participants may change their position).

- **Native Council – From the Way Home**
  Instruct anyone who identified with this clip to move to position three. (participants may change their position).

If they do not identify with any clips, ask them to move to the fourth position.

Part 1: In groups, ask the following questions: Why did this clip stand out for you? What do you respond to or identify with? If you did not identify with a clip, why not? What was different about your experience? It is important to note that what we see and believe is part of who we are and that decisions and interpretations are not objective. Our understanding of the world is a very personal one that translates to social interactions, these interactions become politics and policy, and through policy we create systems that reinforce our personal interpretations.

Part 2: Resiliency can be interpreted as response to trauma, but it can also be looked at as appropriate learning in response to challenges. Students that have experienced situations like the speakers develop skills that make future success attainable but often need support in understanding what they have learned. Take 15 minutes to discuss reactions strengths that could be developed in relationship to each experience?

- In examining the stories, name a point where you see the potential for Innovation. Critical Analysis. Cross-Cultural Communication. Teamwork. Adaptability. (Facilitator writes down on the board any places where there are overlaps in the responses.)
- In what ways do these experiences help to prepare students for college or the workforce?
SECTION 4: E3: Education, Excellence & Equity

The markers of cultural resiliency can be seen in a number of experiences that our youth have, both in and out of school. Learning how to translate them, for students, allows them to understand that they are developing skills that support them in job and higher education readiness. Learning to recognize them takes time and a change in perspective.

Learning Goals:

• Determine how cultural resiliency results in an excellent opportunity for learning and growth
• Examine how students develop 21st-century skills for job readiness in a non-academic environment
• Explore how recognizing cultural resiliency allows students to connect to their creativity and their success

Estimated Time: 2 hours (4 hour workshop), 1 hour (2 hour workshop)

Materials: Large paper, markers, crayons
Video link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBEI6ilDv-0
Handouts at the end of the Facilitator’s Guide, Translation from Cultural Resiliency to Academic and Workforce Readiness Skills & Cultural Resiliency for Youth

Directions:

Watch the video. Answer the following questions in your journal or on paper. After a short reflection, participants will create life maps resulting in a spoken-word poem. Three to five participants will share their poem with the group.

Video questions (8-minute video, 7 minutes to write):
1. What is your initial impression after watching the video clip?
2. What questions do you have?
3. What life experiences may result in the development of Imagination/Innovation, Agility/Adaptability, Critical Analysis, Cross-Cultural Communication, or Teamwork?

Spoken word (40 minutes):
1. Each participant begins by brainstorming two challenges that have affected their life as well as two highlights of their life that have really meant a lot to them (possibly informed by the reflection after the introduction video).
2. Each participant receives a large piece of white paper, markers, colored pencils, etc., and begins making a creative representation of their four major events. After charting those, they will include their birth, where they
are now, and any additional things that stand out.

3. Participants share their maps in triads.

4. Using their map as a starting place, participants identify four struggles in their life. (Maybe the conversation with partners sparked the inclusion of additional points on their map.) They should think of three goals or dreams that would continue their time line into the future.

**Two-hour module stops here.** Ask the final question: How could you support your students in developing knowledge of their own points of cultural resiliency?

5. Using the following format, place their experiences and dreams into the following spoken-word format:
   - If you only knew…
   - The truth is…
   - Why does…
   - In my community…
   - I am…
   - I can…
   - I will…

Reflection and group conversation (20 minutes):
Looking at the handout *Translation from Cultural Resiliency to Academic and Workforce Readiness Skills*, can you see where your life experiences supported the development of your college success or job-readiness skills? Did traditional tests like the SAT help you prepare for college or life? Did they define your success? What do you think they measure?

What does education excellence look like in a global society? (4 minutes):
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxTFQcoQ7hs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxTFQcoQ7hs)

In your journal (3 minutes):
Thinking of how you typically respond in the classroom or in a school setting, how do you think about today’s youth and their relationship to success?

Are you someone who…
   - Focuses on high expectations or on poor performance?
   - Focuses on the solution or on the problem?
   - Focuses on standard outcomes or on tailored strategies?
   - Focuses on students who excel or students who fail?
SECTION 5: Tatanka Hunkesi, *The Wisdom of Experience*

**Introduction:** Viewpoint creates our experience of the world, whether we work cooperatively or individually, and how we interact with our world, whether we believe information on faith or require a lengthy, fact-based explanation. In this section we will explore how a change in information allows a change in perspective.

**Learning Goals:**
- Examining multiple points of view
- Exploring the decision-making process when presented with new information

**Estimated Time:** 25 minutes

**Materials:** Printed copies of *The Wisdom of Experience* (found at end of guide)

**Instructions:** Read the story aloud as a round robin, then spend 1 minute reflecting quietly on the story. Turn to your neighbor and answer the following questions:

1. Is it important to be able to see things from different perspectives? Why or why not?
2. Was there ever a time in your life when you had a shift in perspective?
3. How did you feel? Did you change anything about your behavior?

Read aloud:
Today it was warm and I went for a walk. I walked past the place where my father used to live. I thought back to another warm day when I walked this way to visit my father. I was a much younger man, but he was a very wise and old man by then. It was not long after that day before he joined with the Great Spirit. But that morning, I believed he would live forever. He was sitting at his front door, using an old-fashioned stick drill to make holes in small seashells he collected when we went on a trip to the beach. I asked him what he was doing. He said he was making necklaces in the old style as gifts for his granddaughters and great-granddaughters from the shells he collected.

I looked at him with surprise. The drill he used was a homemade drill made from a stick and crossbar of wood, some string, and a nail. It was just like the ones his father and grandfather had used to make holes in shells so many years ago. It was the same exact type of tool our people had used to drill holes in shells and rocks for generations before the white men came to this land. (In the past, they used flint or another sharp rock rather than a nail at the end.)

I watched as his old and bony hands spun the string tightly around the shaft, then pushed the crossbar over and over again. Each time he pushed the crossbar, the string unwound and the drill spun. Then he let the crossbar go, and
used his old fingers to spin the stick, rewinding the crossbar up again and then pushing it down. His old hands did this with such ease that the nail spun on the shell back and forth, making a hole in the center. Still, it was slow and hard work, especially for his old, tired hands.

I pulled up a chair next to him and sat down. I looked at the many shells that were waiting to have a hole drilled in them, sitting in a basket by his side. Then I looked at the handful sitting in another basket, with small holes neatly drilled in each. Knowing my father’s habits, I knew he had been working on his drilling since the early morning. After a short time, I asked him why he wasn’t using a better, more modern drill to make the holes. I suggested he use my modern drill, or even use the old hand-crank drill he had in his toolbox. They would both be faster than the old hand made one he was using. My father did not look up from his work. He kept moving the crossbar on his hand made drill as he worked. "This works as well as I need it to," he said.

“But,” I argued with him, “there are many more ways that would be much quicker.”

My father stopped his work and looked at me. “What benefit would quickness be?” he asked me.

I didn’t understand. I answered him, “You would be done sooner.”

My father looked deep in my eyes and said, “This is exactly why I use this old drill. Our people have been making this type of drill for hundreds of years. It always works in its own time. I could use a new type of drill and have all these shells drilled and strung by noon. But then what would I do? I am making a gift for my granddaughters and their daughters. I am happy in making these gifts. Making the gifts is as much joy to me as giving the gifts. If I were to rush and make them with the tools you suggest, then I would be denying myself the joy that the effort gives me. If I rush, I will not have the time to become one with the things I make.”

Though I wanted to, I did not understand him. I thought he was foolish, and maybe even a bit senile for taking all day, maybe longer, and putting in such an effort to drill the holes in the shells with an old stick drill. I believed my nieces and grandnieces wouldn’t know the difference anyway.

Not long after that day, my father’s spirit joined with the Great Spirit, but not before he had finished the necklaces and given them to his grandchildren and their daughters.

When it came time to clean his home, I found, in his personal effects, a small package with my name on it. I opened it up and found a handmade sheath of leather. The stitching was less than machine perfect, made by my father’s brittle old hands. On it was beaded a bird of Thunder and a medicine symbol. Inside the sheath was a blade of shining, hand-sharpened and polished metal. The handle was made from a deer horn. My name was carved on the base of the handle. Its rough cut and shaped beauty were amazing to behold.
When I held it, I could feel the spirit and energy of my father in every inch of the knife and sheath. His being and his spirit were in this gift. Inside the sheath, along with the knife, was a note. My father wrote, in his shaky hand, words that translate to: “Now I am dead. An old piece of metal and a deer horn, like shells on the beach and a piece of string, tie this old man’s heart to those he loves.”

I could feel the wisdom of my father surround me. I could feel my own ignorance and shame well up in me. I knew then why my father used the old stick drill to work the shells. I also understood then that the fastest way to do something is not always the best. Even if the end result looks the same, or better, it is the soul of the hands that make something that makes that item of value.

This day, as I walked past the place where my father lived, I was an old man. I stopped and looked at the place where my father sat with the old drill and the shells, and I reached to my side to the sheath and knife my father made, which I wear on my belt every day of my life, and I remembered him and his wisdom.
SECTION 6: Resources

“John Powell sets forth a powerful argument that…until we expand our sense of self, we will be unable to create the racially egalitarian and democratic society to which many progressives aspire…. A brilliantly original and provocative challenge to the current social order.” —Michael Omi, author of Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s

Web:
Education Equity: Education Is a Civil Right
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_feXDXgBvM

Sir Ken Robinson: Educating the Heart and Mind
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I1A4OGiVK30

Articles:
Lakota Wisdom: Why Native American Truths Can Heal the World
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joseph-m-marshall-iii/lakota-wisdom_b_1401336.html
Impact of Culture on Education
http://www.education.com/reference/article/impact-culture-education/
Where Are the People of Color in Children’s Books?
http://mobile.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/opinion/sunday/where-are-the-people-of-color-in-childrens-books.html?smid=fb-share&_r=0&referrer=

Books:
Becoming Multicultural Educators: Personal Journey Toward Professional Agency, Geneva Gay
Culturally Responsive Teaching, Geneva Gay
Preparing Teachers for a Changing World, Linda Darling-Hammond and John Bransford
Teaching to Transgress, Bell Hooks

Artists:
Outsider: The Life and Art of Judith Scott (preview)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DA4l6Q0x60s

Websites:
Creative Growth
http://creativegrowth.org/about/
Active Listening:
*Listening is written with the ear, you, eyes, undivided attention, and heart.*

**Exercise 1: Back to Back (listening with our eyes)**
1. Share with your partner in as much detail as possible a description of your clothing, accessories, physical features, etc.
2. After both partners have shared, each turns around to determine the other’s accuracy.

Reflection question: How accurate was your partner and what did he/she focus on?

**Exercise 2: Face to Face (listening with our words)**
1. Share with your partner what you had for breakfast or lunch.
2. The other partner immediately repeats word for word what their partner stated.

Reflection question: How accurate was your partner and how well did you remember yourself what you stated?

**Exercise 3: Face to Face (two parts, listening with our bodies)**
1. Stand face to face, with each person taking one step away
2. For 2 minutes, focus on breathing, focus on your posture, focus on being in their soul
3. Stand face to face, with each person taking one step closer so each other’s shoes touch
4. For 2 minutes, focus on breathing, focus on your posture, focus on being in their soul

Reflection question: What came up for you? What were you trying to communicate, and/or what did you understand from your partner?

**Exercise 4: Face to Face (listening with our prejudices)**
1. Describe your partner in the eight target “-isms”

Reflection question: How accurate was your partner, and how did you feel being described by and describing your partner?

**Exercise 5: Face to Face (listening with our hearts)**
1. Have one partner share some of the challenges he or she has faced in life
2. There is no talking from the second partner, only listening
3. Have the partners switch after 2 minutes
Reflection points about Active Listening:
• Share with your partner what Active Listening looks like?
• Share with your partner what Active Listening sounds like?
• Share with your partner what Active Listening feels like?

Exercise 6: Conclusion (listening with our mind, mouth, eyes, ears & heart)
1. Who are you?
2. Who do other people think you are?
3. Who do you want to be?

Reflection: What does who you are now have to do with who you want to be?
The Chinese Verb “To Listen”  
by Robert M. Sherfield, Ph.D.  

The Chinese verb “to listen” is perhaps the simplest yet most comprehensive example of open-minded, active, complete listening known. The Chinese character that means “to listen” is made up of the characters that mean “eyes,” “ear,” “undivided attention,” and “heart.” The Chinese view listening as a whole-body experience that involves all of these things.

The Ears  
Listening with your ears means that you understand and employ the parts of the listening process, including focusing, understanding, and reacting. It means that you have moved past the hearing stage and made a voluntary decision to listen.

The Eyes  
Listening with your eyes means that you look at the person who is talking. It means that you observe his or her facial expressions, mannerisms, and
nonverbal communication. It means that with your eyes you begin to see what that person is saying, even if he or she is not speaking.

Undivided Attention
This is perhaps the most difficult of actions. Your undivided attention means that you have eliminated all distractions and all barriers that may cloud your ability to listen. It means that you have moved beyond the prejudices and biases that you hold about a person, an issue, or a topic. It means that the person speaking to you is the only thing on your mind.

The Heart
It has been said that empathy is your pain in my heart. This is what listening with your heart entails: sympathy and empathy. It means that you are able to put yourself in other people’s shoes, inside their head, inside their life, and listen to them from their point of view.
# Beyond Our Wildest Dreams

## Racial Equity Learning

### TRANSLATION FROM CULTURAL RESILIENCY TO ACADEMIC & WORKFORCE READINESS SKILLS

![Diagram showing the relationship between Cultural Resiliency and various skills such as Teamwork, Adaptability, Critical Analysis, Innovation & Imagination, Cross-cultural Communication, and Innovation.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I-ACCT</th>
<th>Skills demonstrated in an Academic or Employment Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INNOVATION:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ability to create</em></td>
<td>Example 1: [Blank]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example 2: [Blank]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADAPTABILITY:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ability to ease between transitions</em></td>
<td>Example 1: [Blank]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example 2: [Blank]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CRITICAL ANALYSIS:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ability to identify various factors &amp; perspectives</em></td>
<td>Example 1: [Blank]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example 2: [Blank]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ability to network</em></td>
<td>Example 1: [Blank]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example 2: [Blank]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEAMWORK:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Ability to utilize one's own network</em></td>
<td>Example 1: [Blank]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example 2: [Blank]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HOW EDUCATORS CAN SUPPORT STUDENTS IN DEVELOPING THESE SKILLS IN THE CLASSROOM**

1. **INNOVATION:** Can your students set goals that are both attainable & challenging?
2. **ADAPTABILITY:** Can your students have experiences to test multiple hypotheses?
3. **CRITICAL ANALYSIS:** Can your students synthesize & prioritize results?
4. **COMMUNICATION:** Can your students persuade, reason, & write with their voice?
5. **TEAMWORK:** Can your students work successfully in diverse team settings?
# Beyond Our Wildest Dreams

## Racial Equity Learning

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**CULTURAL RESILIENCY FOR YOUTH:**

I-ACCT: Transferring Your Cultural Resiliency into 21st Century Skills

*Cultural Resiliency* is a term used for the level of proficiency in five competencies identified by E3, based on lived experiences. We propose that these lived experiences develop skills/competencies that have enabled students to survive perceived hardships or struggles. The goal of E3 is to assist educators to recognize these competencies in their students in order to engage them in learning. Each of the following five competencies is derived from life experiences and can be correlated to 21st century skills:

"Don’t let the negativity given to you by the world disempower you. Instead give to yourself that which empowers you." *—Les Brown*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I-ACCT</th>
<th>Example in a Real World Setting</th>
<th>Example in an Academic Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| INNOVATION: Ability to create | Experiences such as artistic ability is innovative because you create your own ways to express yourself.  
Example 1: ____________________________________  
Example 2: ____________________________________ | I was the only one who included background music in my power point presentation.                |
| ADAPTABLE: Ability to ease between transitions | When you move from one home to another or must share a room with siblings, you adapt to sharing the space with each other.  
Example 1: ____________________________________  
Example 2: ____________________________________ | When I didn’t get the grade I wanted, I adapted my study habits so that next time I would be better prepared. |
| CRITICAL ANALYSIS: Ability to identify various factors & perspectives | As you go from your neighborhood to your school, you notice that you have to act a certain way to fit in at home and another way to fit in at school.  
Example 1: ____________________________________  
Example 2: ____________________________________ | I ask questions when I am learning something so that I can understand it better:  
• Who, what, when, where, why  
• according to who, are the sources credible, what makes a source credible |
| CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION: Ability to network | At home you speak Spanish, with some of your friends you speak Spanglish, and with other friends you speak English that includes slang.  
Example 1: ____________________________________  
Example 2: ____________________________________ | When I walk into the classroom, I know how to speak in a respectful way to my teacher without using slang or other inappropriate language. |
| TEAMWORK: Ability to utilize one’s own network | You play a team sport and your friends decide to have a fundraiser through a garage sale. You each find 10 things to contribute and work together on creating a flyer and distributing it all around.  
Example 1: ____________________________________  
Example 2: ____________________________________ | When working on a group project, I am a good team player by listening, giving my opinion, and helping complete the homework that is needed. |

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Today it was warm and I went for a walk. I walked past the place where my father used to live. I thought back to another warm day when I walked this way to visit my father. I was a much younger man, but he was a very wise and old man by then. It was not long after that day before he joined with the Great Spirit. But that morning, I believed he would live forever. He was sitting at his front door, using an old-fashioned stick drill to make holes in small seashells he collected when we went on a trip to the beach. I asked him what he was doing. He said he was making necklaces in the old style as gifts for his granddaughters and great-granddaughters from the shells he collected.

I looked at him with surprise. The drill he used was a homemade drill made from a stick and crossbar of wood, some string, and a nail. It was just like the ones his father and grandfather had used to make holes in shells so many years ago. It was the same exact type of tool our people had used to drill holes in shells and rocks for generations before the white men came to this land. (In the past, they used flint or another sharp rock rather than a nail at the end.)

I watched as his old and bony hands spun the string tightly around the shaft, then pushed the crossbar over and over again. Each time he pushed the crossbar, the string unwound and the drill spun. Then he let the crossbar go and used his old fingers to spin the stick, rewinding the crossbar up again and then pushing it down. His old hands did this with such ease that the nail spun on the shell back and forth, making a hole in the center. Still, it was slow and hard work, especially for his old, tired hands.

I pulled up a chair next to him and sat down. I looked at the many shells that were waiting to have a hole drilled in them, sitting in a basket by his side. Then I looked at the handful sitting in another basket, with small holes neatly drilled in each. Knowing my father’s habits, I knew he had been working on his drilling since the early morning. After a short time, I asked him why he wasn’t using a better, more modern drill to make the holes. I suggested he use my modern drill, or even use the old hand-crank drill he had in his toolbox. They would both be faster than the handmade one he was using. My father did not look up from his work. He kept moving the crossbar on his handmade drill as he worked. “This works as well as I need it to,” he said.

“But,” I argued with him, “there are many more ways that would be much quicker.”

My father stopped his work and looked at me. “What benefit would quickness be?” he asked me.
Beyond Our Wildest Dreams

Racial Equity Learning

I didn’t understand. I answered him, “You would be done sooner.”

My father looked deep in my eyes and said, “This is exactly why I use this old drill. Our people have been making this type of drill for hundreds of years. It always works in its own time. I could use a new type of drill and have all these shells drilled and strung by noon. But then what would I do? I am making a gift for my granddaughters and their daughters. I am happy in making these gifts. Making the gifts is as much joy to me as giving the gifts. If I were to rush and make them with the tools you suggest, then I would be denying myself the joy that the effort gives me. If I rush, I will not have the time to become one with the things I make.”

Though I wanted to, I did not understand him. I thought he was foolish, and maybe even a bit senile for taking all day, maybe longer, and putting in such an effort to drill the holes in the shells with an old stick drill. I believed my nieces and grandnieces wouldn’t know the difference anyway.

Not long after that day, my father’s spirit joined with the Great Spirit, but not before he had finished the necklaces and given them to his grandchildren and their daughters.

When it came time to clean his home, I found, in his personal effects, a small package with my name on it. I opened it up and found a handmade sheath of leather. The stitching was less than machine perfect, made by my father’s brittle old hands. On it was beaded a bird of Thunder and a medicine symbol. Inside the sheath was a blade of shining, hand-sharpened and polished metal. The handle was made from a deer horn. My name was carved on the base of the handle. Its rough cut and shaped beauty were amazing to behold.

When I held it, I could feel the spirit and energy of my father in every inch of the knife and sheath. His being and his spirit were in this gift. Inside the sheath, along with the knife, was a note. My father wrote, in his shaky hand, words that translate to: “Now I am dead. An old piece of metal and a deer horn, like shells on the beach and a piece of string, tie this old man’s heart to those he loves.”

I could feel the wisdom of my father surround me. I could feel my own ignorance and shame well up in me. I knew then why my father used the old stick drill to work the shells. I also understood then that the fastest way to do something is not always the best. Even if the end result looks the same, or better, it is the soul of the hands that make something that makes that item of value.

This day, as I walked past the place where my father lived, I was an old man. I stopped and looked at the place where my father sat with the old drill and the shells, and I reached to my side to the sheath and knife my father made, which I wear on my belt every day of my life, and I remembered him and his wisdom.