

What is Tourist Curriculum?

We teach a *tourist curriculum* when we inadvertently reinforce stereotypes through the ways we teach (or don't teach) about other cultures, nations and their peoples.

We can avoid tourist curriculum by doing this...	<i>Instead of this...</i>
<p>Try to share facts about other countries as they are relevant throughout the entire year (ex: Chinese inventions, Egyptian astronomy, etc...)</p> <p>Celebrate Holidays! Just don't let that be your students only exposure to a cultural group. Also, celebrate them equally. (In other words, don't spent one week on Christmas but five minutes on Hanukkah)</p>	<p>Only teaching about a nation or group of people through their holidays or ceremonies (ex: Cinco do Mayo, Chinese New Year, etc...)</p>
<p>Show people in a variety of accurate portrayals of everyday life, not just stereotypical situations.</p> <p>Think about clothing, activities, jobs, etc...</p>	<p>Using books, posters and calendars which depict people only in ceremonial or stereotypical situations and dress (ex: girls in Japan do <i>not</i> dress in geisha clothing regularly and most do not wear kimonos to school)</p>
<p>Make multiculturalism and anti-bias part of classroom environment <i>all the time</i>; not just special lessons, toys or music some of the time.</p>	<p>Teaching 'Around the World' themes where each nation is focused on for only one day, this reinforces stereotypes because only minimal content is covered about each</p>

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<p>Teach about differences! Just don't call them words like <i>weird</i>, <i>strange</i> or <i>gross</i> and steer the children away from those adjectives too. Talk with children about how those words would make them feel if they were directed at them.</p> <p>Teach about similarities, too!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exotifying people by using or allowing the children to use inappropriate, denigrating language to describe them: • look at the <i>funny</i> writing • representing traditions as <i>strange</i> or <i>weird</i> because they are different • describing food as <i>gross</i>

Quick things we can do to be selective regarding materials...

- look for authentic items
- be careful of the internet as the only source for information
- Think about dramatic play clothing, dolls, puppets-do they have facial features appropriate for their race, or do they all look exactly like the Caucasian doll, but made with another color paint? Do they have appropriate eye color? If the doll clothing is stereotypical, can it be interchanged with the other dolls clothing if the children wish to do so? If not, can this be used as a topic of classroom discussion?
- posters and calendars -be wary of those with people wearing only ceremonial dress
- literature and textbooks -watch out for the alphabet books that use "I" for Indian etc
- worksheets (if used in your classroom) -again, watch out for the "I" for Indian
- evaluate materials before buying or using them -do they reinforce stereotypes or represent people accurately, fairly?