
Stereotyping

Women and minorities are invaluable contributors to society. However, how are they portrayed in your materials? Follow the directions to observe how their importance and contributions are reflected in the materials you have selected.

Males

Females

African Americans

Asian Americans

Hispanic / Latino Americans

American Indian

White

For each of the groups:

- List the occupations portrayed
- Count the number of times shown in active role
- Count the number of times shown in passive role

Are the living environments of different cultures varied (composition of family, differing economic circumstances, different regions of the country...)?

Language Bias

Language sends a message. Sex bias in language can have a negative effect on self concept and occupational choices. Is the language in your material inclusive and gender fair? For example, does it use words like repairperson instead of repairman, or mankind instead of humanity? This is the bias you will count under occupation/title category. When counting biases in grammar there are several things to look for. First, check if the language refers to males when talking about hypothetical people. For example, "Anyone can be a good student if he tries," should be "Anyone can be a good student if he/she tries." Another bias is the gratuitous modifier which implies a deviation from the norm and can distort the meaning. For example, powerful woman attorney, or first-rate male nurse. Leave these modifiers out.

Count the number of times you find biases for:

occupation / title

grammar



Fragmentation - Isolation

Are minorities and women considered less important and not a part of the cultural mainstream in the materials you have selected? To determine this, count the number of times the following happens:

Number of times minorities and women are presented in secondary roles.

Number of times minorities and women are excluded from the main body of content.

Imbalance

Find a historical event (i.e. discovery of America, westward migration, civil war...) and look to see if multiple perspectives are used to interpret/present the event. If you are reviewing a science, math, or English book, look for diversity of contributions to the field of study by:

Males

Females

African Americans

Asian Americans

Hispanic/Latino Americans

American Indian

White

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Invisibility

Review the pictures in your material and count the number of times you find pictures of individuals in the following groups:

Males

Females

African Americans

Asian Americans

Hispanic/Latino Americans

American Indian

White

Minorities and women are often excluded from curriculum content and materials, bulletin board displays, and in the classrooms. Do your textbooks, classroom materials, and curriculum content perpetuate misrepresentations, myths, and demeaning exaggerations about minorities and women? Do you think that general statements about minorities and women are accurate? To assess the forms of biases found in curriculum materials and the classroom, select a chapter from your textbook. Count how many times minorities and women are portrayed in passive and/or active roles, stereotypical life experiences, and are seen in decision-making or inclusionary roles.

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a curriculum
and materials
assessment

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