Culturally Responsive: Educator Mindset and Action
Take a Constructivist Approach

>> So it’s up to us to take the time at every stage in their education to talk to them, to find out their interests, to get them involved, and to incorporate their views and their perspectives into their education, to let them be co-constructors of what education is all about. If we take the time to engage students fully and to listen to their voices, I think that is a key aspect of improving education. And that can be done at any level, be it kindergarten, or it be grade 12.

>> I’m finding that my students come to class with various questions and concerns that deal with social justice issues in the community. And as such, it’s an important aspect to address in the classroom, of course. Secondly of all, I’m finding that it heightens engagement, simply because I’m now able to take a lot of the interests that the students have, mix that with curriculum, with the learning we’re doing in class, and make it relevant to the students.

>> When you present problems, or when you are in tune with issues or concerns, or even just wonders about a child’s local community, you’re beginning to shape your lessons around things that are actually going to matter in that child’s specific life. Not necessarily always inside the classroom, but continue on outside the classroom in their home life, in their social life, eventually in their employment.

>> We’re trying to tell people about safety, pollution, noise and stuff.

>> I think that that was the driving force behind the inquiry that my students had this particular time around, because the problem that they chose to assess and to create change around is a problem that is going to impact the lives of themselves, their family, their neighbours, other people at this school, other people in their community. And that is what motivated them, I think, to affect change, or to persevere.

>> [INAUDIBLE] going to build a bridge. We learned that it wouldn’t be good for our community, because double the pollution, double the noise and double the safety issues. People could get very hurt from it. It’s going to be hard to sleep at night with all that noise, because there’s a lot of trains going back and forth, back and forth during the day every seven minutes. And that’s not good. Too much noise for us.

>> I think that teachers always need to be prepared to give their students that opportunity to create change, and support them in whatever way they see fit, and be there and ask the follow-up questions. Listen to what our students tell us about what they know and don’t know, and what they want to know. And that’s the most important thing we can do right now as educators, while we do the work of learning all that we don’t know, so that we can change our teaching practices. To start with, we start by listening to our students.