

A Guide to Multicultural/Anti-Bias Materials and Resources



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A GUIDE TO MULTICULTURAL/ANTI-BIAS MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

CONTENTS

1. Choosing Materials: Points to Consider
2. “Make and Take” – Teacher Made Materials
3. An Anti-Bias Classroom Checklist – Do You Have?
4. Multicultural and Anti-Bias Resources: Shopping in Vancouver

INTRODUCTION

This Guide to Multicultural/Anti-Bias Resources has been prepared to help child care providers in group and family centres, preschools, and drop-in programs to find books and play materials that will help make every child feel welcome.

We think you will find this a useful package of contacts, lists and points to consider when choosing materials. We do not expect that anyone will go out and purchase all new materials, but we hope that over time, as spending opportunities arise, you will seriously consider acquiring some of the toys and books suggested here.

Visit the Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre Library in Vancouver or browse the online catalogue at www.wstcoast.org/library/index.html.

CHOOSING MATERIALS: POINTS TO CONSIDER

Cultural Diversity - Show similar activities, items or concepts across cultures as an example of "many ways to be."

Racial Balance - When using photographs and other human images, be sure to represent children and families of diverse racial origins, including extended families. Avoid cartoon-style images.

Linguistic Diversity - Label materials where possible in more than one language and script.

Family Diversity - Reflect all the possibilities of family groupings e.g. single parent, extended, blended, gay, adoptive, bi-racial, etc.

Gender Balance - Avoid sex stereotypes. Be sure that girls and boys are represented in both traditional and gender-free roles and activities.

Socio-economic Conditions - In visual materials avoid comparing people in advantaged socio-economic circumstances with people in disadvantaged circumstances. Also avoid stereotyping any group as impoverished and poorly clothed. (Comparisons may be relevant when teaching social justice issues).

Special Needs - Be sure to include children and adults with visible special needs in theme materials such as self and others, families and transportation.

Variety of Settings - Include city, small town, village and rural settings when depicting homes and communities. Try to depict Canadian settings wherever possible.

Comparisons - Be sure to compare everyday with everyday; traditional with traditional; and exotic with exotic; rather than mixing them within one poster, book, or other visual material. (For example, clothing, food, homes.)

"MAKE AND TAKE" - TEACHER MADE MATERIALS

Start a picture file with categories such as:

- community
- families
- friends
- holidays & special days
- music & dance
- reading
- transportation
- work/play

Collect pictures from different sources:

- calendars (esp. UNICEF)
- parenting magazines
- National Geographic (not more that 10 years old)
- Canadian Geographic

Look for pictures that are:

- big, clear & colourful (some small pictures can best be used in books)

Don't include pictures with:

- people smoking
- people being unsafe (ie. riding bikes without helmets or playing in a construction site)
- easily identifiable brands (ie. McDonald's, Disney)

Prepare the pictures to be used:

- trim rough edges
- cut off words
- remove brand identification (ie. The Gap)

If your piece isn't coming together:

- try mounting/framing pictures on plain paper
- try changing the direction of the poster board
- put it away for a while and start something else

Formats for "make and take" materials:

- Books
- Matching Games
- Face Puzzles
- Mobiles
- Felt Board Figures
- Posters
- Illustrated Poems
- Puzzles
- Masks
- Stick-Puppets

Great Handmade Materials Cannot Be Rushed.
If you don't have the pictures you need, wait until you do.

AN ANTI-BIAS CLASSROOM CHECKLIST

“Do You Have?”

In order to avoid stereotypes (e.g. children in traditional costumes) look for multicultural materials and multiracial images which you can use in all your learning centres throughout the year.

DRAMATIC PLAY AREA

- dolls that vary in shape, size and material of construction
- dolls with skin colour, hair and facial features that reflect closely the physical characteristics of both children in the classroom and the community
- anatomically correct dolls
- dolls' beds e.g. cribs, basket cradles, hammocks, etc.
- different styles of dolls' clothing and carrying apparatus e.g. snugglies, body wraps, strollers, cradleboards
- dress up clothing that represent both everyday wear and holiday dress from diverse cultures
- fabric for using as saris, head wraps, etc.
- variety of hats e.g. hard hats, straw hats, caps, etc.
- variety of shoes e.g. Chinese slippers, moccasins, etc.
- jewellery, purses, pouches from a variety of cultures
- food packaging from a variety of cultures with different languages and images on the packages
- kitchen utensils from many cultures e.g. tortilla press, wok, etc.
- variety of baskets from different cultures
- pillows, mats, placemats from different cultures in traditional colours and patterns.

What things could you add to this learning centre?

SCIENCE/DISCOVERY TABLE

- ❑ a variety of spices to smell – look for both known and unfamiliar spices
- ❑ textured materials to feel – look for a variety of materials used in the construction/weaving of the materials
- ❑ objects which occur in the natural world e.g. stones, moss, leaves, sand, etc.
- ❑ collections of things for classifying e.g. seeds, cones, rocks, leaves, interesting small cross-cultural objects
- ❑ objects which occur in the world of work e.g. tools, magnifying glass, scales, abacus
- ❑ cross-cultural pictures of people using tools, machines, etc.

What things could you add to this learning centre?

BOOKS AND STORIES

- ❑ wide variety of multicultural and cross-cultural books
- ❑ wide variety of anti-bias books – showing diverse lifestyles, families, non-traditional occupations/roles, etc.
- ❑ homemade books reflecting cultures in the classroom and community
- ❑ stories on CD reflecting cultures in the classroom and community
- ❑ “teacher-made” felt board stories e.g. simple folk tales
- ❑ multiracial felt board figures (e.g. families, careers)
- ❑ pictures books with no text
- ❑ pictures books with simple text in more than one language
- ❑ books which reflect diverse family groupings
- ❑ books about inter-generational and cross-cultural friendships
- ❑ books about cooperation, peace, conflict-resolution
- ❑ books that discuss fair and unfair behaviours and strategies for problem solving

What things could you add to this learning centre?

SAND AND WATER (SENSORY) PLAY

- ❑ a variety of boats, cars, trains, carts from many places, made of varied materials
- ❑ sea and land animals
- ❑ a variety of digging tools; shovels, wooden spoons, bamboo paddles, smooth edged shells

What things could you add to this learning centre?

TABLE TOYS

- ❑ puzzles and games with pictures of a range of people, different family groupings, reflecting differing abilities, places and scenes from a variety of countries/cultures
- ❑ counting sets using multicultural objects
- ❑ games that are labeled in more than one language e.g. matching cards, counting games
- ❑ toys made out of a variety of natural materials
- ❑ toys and games from diverse cultural traditions

What things could you add to this learning centre?

MUSIC

- ❑ instruments from many cultural traditions, including ones made of natural materials
- ❑ taped music from many cultures (instrumental) and of many moods e.g. lively, soothing, etc.
- ❑ taped music in various languages
- ❑ pictures of people from many places in the world making music
- ❑ children's songs about diversity, cooperation, peace
- ❑ music from children's homes
- ❑ instruments made by the children
- ❑ tapes of children speaking, singing
- ❑ tapes of family members singing in their home language, their songs from childhood

What things could you add to this learning centre?

ART

- ❑ markers, paper, paint, crayons, playdough in “people colours”
- ❑ large paper, in skin tones, to make body outlines
- ❑ collage materials which reflect diversity e.g. multiracial, inclusive, multi-generational magazine photos, fabric scraps of all sorts, objects found in nature (leaves, sand, stones, shells)
- ❑ examples of art from many cultures displayed on the walls
- ❑ clay or playdough with a variety of implements to use

What things could you add to this learning centre?

BLOCKS

- ❑ multicultural, multiracial people (avoid stereotypical images and dress)
- ❑ cross-cultural transportation toys e.g. carts, rickshaws, trains, buses
- ❑ a variety of animals e.g. horse, camel, cattle
- ❑ raw materials like cardboard boxes, canvas, string, tape
- ❑ pictures of buildings, homes, and structures from many places

What things could you add to this learning centre?

VISUAL DISPLAYS

- ❑ photographs and pictures showing people in a variety of roles, occupations, of different ages, and in non-traditional occupations
- ❑ photographs of the children and families in your centre
- ❑ cultural artifacts (objects) from the families in your centre
- ❑ wall hangings from many cultures and countries e.g. bamboo pictures, batiks, woven murals, etc.
- ❑ pictures of foods, eating and cooking from many cultures
- ❑ pictures reflecting current lifestyles of people from diverse cultures, including people with disabilities (avoid stereotypical images)

What things could you add to this learning centre?

SHOPPING IN VANCOUVER

Here are some local suppliers of materials to add to your collection.

Cedar Root Gallery

including First Nations cards

ph: 604-251-6244

www.cedarrootgallery.com

3-H Craftworks

felt stories and puppets; will do custom orders

ph: 604-736-2113

www.3hcraftworks.com

Collins Educational Supplies

general classroom supplies including posters and books

ph: 604-325-5005

www.collinseducationalsupplies.com

UNICEF

"Children Just Like Me" books; calendars; call ahead to ask if they have any posters

ph: 604-874-3666

<http://www.unicef.ca/>

Museum of Anthropology Gift Shop

First Nations cards and books

ph: 604- 827-4810

www.moa.ubc.ca

Vancouver Kidsbooks

will order just about any book if not in stock

ph: 604-738-5335

www.kidsbooks.ca

Ten Thousand Villages

"Fairly traded" handicrafts & instruments from around the world

ph: 604-633-0440

www.tenthousandvillages.ca

You can also visit shops in the different ethnic neighbourhoods in Vancouver. Refer to Exploring Ethnic Vancouver, Garber et al. Serious Publishing: Burnaby, BC. 1995.