

WHY IS THERE A GROWING NUMBER OF ELL STUDENTS WITH LEARNING  
DELAYS, BEING DIAGNOSED WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER, OR  
QUALIFYING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION?

by

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in Teaching.

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### **Summary of Capstone Project**

The goal of my research and project is to explore the research question, *why is there a growing number of ELL students with learning delays, students being diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, or qualifying for Special Education?*

The project that I created as a result of my own classroom experiences and from the research done in the Chapter 2, is four one-hour professional development presentations. The goal of each professional development is to build on the knowledge and awareness on how cultural and language affects learning in each presentation. I have also designed them to be stand alone professional developments as well, but for overall effectiveness, participants should attend all four PDs in order. The first professional development presentation consists of a background of English language learners, the second professional development presentation discusses culture and identity, the third professional development presentation deals with trauma, and the fourth professional development presentation shows how English Language Learners and Special Education students have similarities in their academic needs, but their instructional needs are different.

These professional developments will be beneficial for any educator that teaches English Language Learners, and can benefit any school where English Language Learners are present. My goal is to present the professional development in an elementary K-12 school setting, specifically at the elementary school where I work.

The timeline for the professional development presentations will be given in one school year. The goal is to present one professional development each quarter. Starting with the first one in October, the next in January, the third March, and the last in May.

The professional development project is meant to give teachers a better understanding, so that they don't assume additional services are needed. Instead it will give them awareness to evaluate their outlook, and find other opportunities to gauge academic success. These professional developments will help empower teachers to try a new way of teaching, instead of a new way of learning.

### **Overview of Each Professional Development Presentation**

#### **Professional Development Presentation #1 English Language Learners**

This professional development is the first of four that I've created to build cultural awareness and linguistic awareness and to address the academic needs of English language learners. The outcomes and objectives of this PD are to learn about the background of English language learners, how Language 1 (L1) and Language 2 (L2) are learned, an overview of WIDA language proficiency levels, and an explanation of how to use *WIDA Can Do* descriptors in the classroom. The outcome will be to build more awareness of the resources that can be used to scaffold lesson objectives.

#### **Google Slides Title**

**Heidi Anderson - Capstone PD #1**

Heidi Anderson - Capstone #1

**Handout #1**

BICS vs. CALP	
BASIC INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS	COGNITIVE ACADEMIC LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
Informal	Formal
Concrete	Abstract
Language of the Playground, Dinner Table, and Bus	Language of the Classroom, Text Books, and Assessments
Predominantly Oral	Oral and Written
Tier 1 Words	Tier 2 & 3 Words
3,000 Words or Less	100,000+ Words
Short and Simple	Long and Complex
Commonly Contextualized	Commonly Decontextualized
Can Be "Picked Up" Through Social Interactions	Must Be Explicitly Taught
1-3 Years to Develop	5-10 Years to Develop

Adapted from the West Virginia Department of Education and *Balancing Reading & Language Learning* by Mary Cappellini by 2ivNlearn 2017

**Handout #2**

WIDA CAN DO Descriptors - <https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/can-do/descriptors>

## **Professional Development Presentation #2 Culture and Identity**

The second professional development presentation will build cultural awareness and introduce Rings of Culture and the Cultural Iceberg. This PD will build awareness on how to define culture, and introduce the Rings of Culture. This will bring awareness to educators on how our Rings of Culture strongly influence how we think, believe, and behave, and in turn affects how we teach and learn. I will provide teachers time to reflect on their own identity to help build awareness that their own identity can affect how they teach. I will give an overview on how culture affects learning. The outcome will be to provide ways to ensure that all students have a safe learning environment where they feel respected, valued, and understood.

### **Google Slides Title**

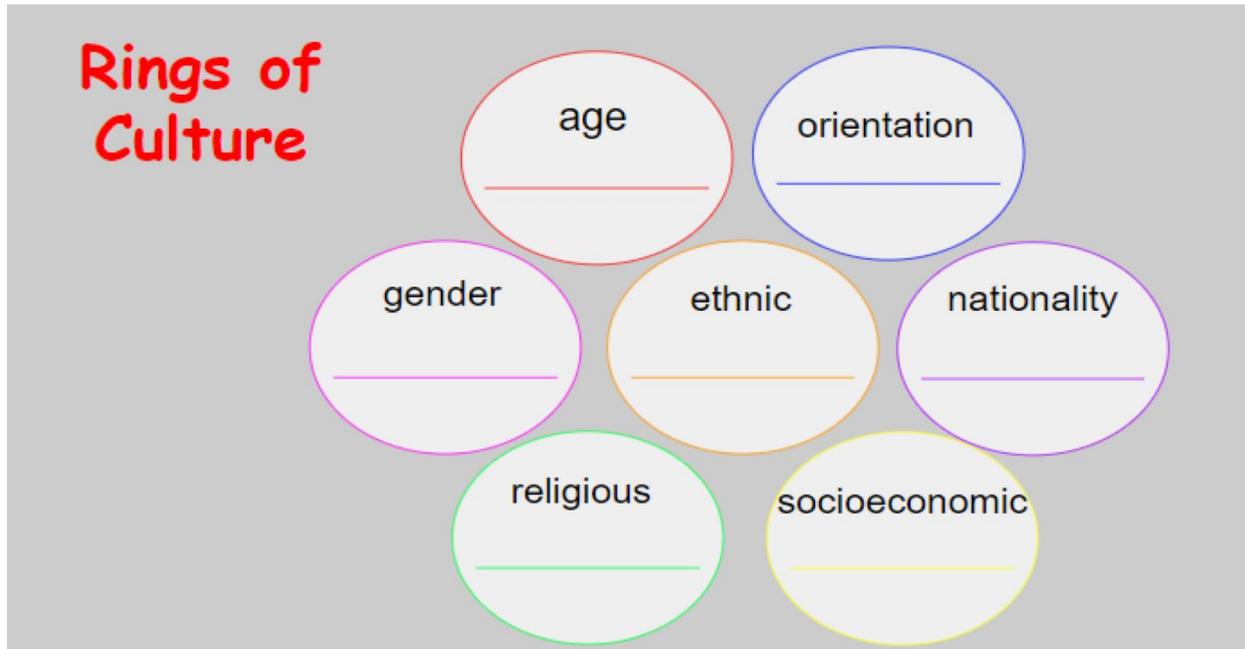
**Heidi Anderson - Capstone PD #2**

Heidi Anderson - Capstone PD #2

## Handout #1

### Rings of Culture Survey

CLR believes in creating instruction that aligns with our students' different rings of culture so that school provides a sense of "home" for all students. Let's reflect on our own *Rings of Culture* to better understand others. (Culturally Responsive Minds, 2020)



These questions that relate to the visual above may help you dig a little deeper into things that you may not even realize you have learned at home. The intention is to gather information to understand the impact of our Rings of Culture, not to delve in your personal business. Please take some time to answer and reflect on the questions below:

1. What did/does your family like to do together?
2. When your family is having a conversation, is it quiet and calm where people take turns talking or is it animated with lots of jumping in to make your point? Or some other kind of way? What do you like or not like about how your family communicates?
3. According to your family, what does it mean to be "respectful" to others? If it depends on the person/situation, describe the general idea as well as the differences.
4. If I was invited into your home, what greeting would your family use to welcome me in words and/or in action? Is it the same or different for when we said goodbye?

5. When you see family members you don't live with, how do you greet each other in words and/or in action?
6. When you see your friends in the hallway, how do you greet each other in words and/or action?
7. What does a typical Sunday morning look like for you?
8. If you attend or used to attend a place of worship, which was it? What did you enjoy most about it?
9. What's your favorite thing to do with friends? Why do you enjoy that so much?
10. What are a couple of your favorite songs? What about those songs make them your favorites?
11. Do you prefer a gathering of just a couple close friends or a gathering of a lot of people? Why is that?
12. Do you prefer activities that are spontaneous or planned? Why is that?
13. Do you prefer getting to make your own decisions or having someone tell you what to do? Why is that?
14. Look back at the rings of culture. Each of these rings represent a set of norms, traditions, and behaviors that impact the way you interact with the world. Which ring(s) of culture do you feel are the strongest in your life as far as their impact on what you do and how you do it?

Handout #2



Hall, E. T. (1976, 1989). Beyond Culture. NY: Anchor Books Editions.

**Handout #3** The 21st century teacher: a cultural perspective.

[https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.hamline.edu/apps/doc/A300980621/PROF?u=clic\\_hamline&sid=PROF&xid=1c03ada3](https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.hamline.edu/apps/doc/A300980621/PROF?u=clic_hamline&sid=PROF&xid=1c03ada3)

### **Professional Development Presentation #3 Trauma**

The outcomes and objectives of this PD is to learn about students' relation to Maslow's hierarchy before they can access Bloom's taxonomy. Participants will be given information to help understand the difference between first, second and third generation immigrants. I will provide information on different types of trauma. I will discuss the different types of immigrants, and provide background on how their immigration stories may have caused trauma or adverse traumatic experiences, such as experiences of refugees. The outcome will be to provide strategies to help build relations with students, and to reflect on what they as teachers are already doing and what they still need to do to be able to understand trauma that their students may be enduring.

The icebreaker for this PD will have Participants will read one of three different scenarios about a student's background. These scenarios of students come directly from the Capstone Chapter 1, who may be suffering from trauma or generational trauma. Each table will give feedback on their scenario to share with the group. Feedback will be recorded on Chart Paper by a volunteer. There will be four questions for each group to consider after they read the scenarios.

- How would you feel if you were this student?
- How would these life experiences impact your perception of school?
- What would you do to get what you want or need?
- Are the students basic and psychological needs being met now?

#### **Google Slides Title**

**Heidi Anderson - Capstone PD #3**

[Heidi Anderson - Capstone PD #3](#)

## SCENARIOS

### Scenario #1

The first student is a kindergartener that I will call Rosa, this is a pseudonym. She is from the Hmong culture, and she was born in America. Her parents say that she has only spoken English, but she hears Hmong and English languages spoken in her home and has since birth. She lives in a home with her parents, siblings, grandparents, aunt, uncle and cousins. All the adults in the family speak Hmong to each other. Her grandparents were first generation Hmong refugees. Her teacher is recommending special education services, because she is behind other kindergarteners in reading, writing, letter recognition, and overall social emotional skills.

### Scenario #2

The second student is a first grader, I will call him Dan, this is a pseudonym. Dan is from China, he has been in America for five months. Dan is what is considered a satellite baby where he was raised by his grandparents in China yet his parents and older sibling lived in America (Wang, 2016). He has not been living with or raised by his parents for 5 years. His adjustment to the USA is not only related to language and school, but also to his parents and a sibling that he hasn't lived with since he was a baby. Dan has entered our school year with very limited English. Dan has not adjusted well to social interactions with his classmates. He does not understand classroom organization or classroom procedures. Dan will engage in some activities, yet often he is looking at books in a corner or by himself at a table. His language proficiency is improving a little bit as he understands and recognizes the letters, letter sounds, and he is beginning to recognize a few sight words. He is beginning to read Level A books. He can count, and knows his numbers up to one hundred. He is learning the names of food, colors, and basic classroom

objects. His teacher is recommending evaluation for a learning delay or a diagnosis of educational ASD, due to his lack of attention to classroom procedures, as he does not follow what his classmates do, nor does he engage in any academics.

### **Scenario #3**

This third student is a third grader from Kenya, I will call him Jon, this is a pseudonym. Jon has been in America for 11 months. His first languages were Kisii and British English. Jon is considered a student with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). He was placed in an orphanage at the age of five when his mother passed away, and lived there for over a year, with his younger brother. He came to America in the spring of second grade after he was adopted by his uncle and aunt. Jon speaks English and understands English for social and instructional purposes. Jon can orally communicate in content academics when given information orally. Jon is at least two years behind grade level in math, reading, and writing. He is progressing in reading and writing proficiency, yet is still behind his grade level peers.

### **Handout #1**

WIDA - SLIFE: Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education  
<https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/FocusOn-SLIFE.pdf>

## **Professional Development Presentation #4 English Language Learners in Special Education**

The fourth professional development presentation will educate educators on the criteria used for assessments, the qualifications that are required to receive special education services, or ASD diagnosis, and I will give information on how these assessments show bias. The PD will also look at the similarities in ELL academic needs and SPED academic needs. This will shed light on why there needs to be better increased awareness on what ELLs need socially, emotionally, and academically in order to have success in the classroom. This final PD will also provide participants with a checklist supported by the Minnesota Department of Education on assessing ELLs for learning delays.

### **Google Slides Title**

**Heidi Anderson - Capstone PD #4**

[Heidi Anderson - Capstone PD #4](#)

### **Handout #1**

Minnesota Department of Education - English Learner Disability Resources - Chapter 6  
<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/sped/div/el/MDE087755>

### **Handout #2**

Department Of Education - Tools and Resources for Addressing English Learners with Disabilities  
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/chap6.pdf>

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