

WHAT ARE NAEYC STUDY GUIDES?

Study guides provide a glimpse of the content within NAEYC books by providing questions designed to guide discussions on different early childhood topics. Reflection questions included below are pulled directly from the book. Explore the concepts below and purchase *Spotlight on Young Children: Equity & Diversity* today to continue the conversation.

HOW DO I USE THE STUDY GUIDES?

CENTER DIRECTORS

Use study guides as a companion piece to your copy of *Spotlight on Young Children: Equity & Diversity*, and include as a professional learning component to your staff meetings.

TRAINERS

Use the reflection questions as training prompts to design your own workshops based on the content of *Spotlight on Young Children: Equity & Diversity*.

TEACHER EDUCATORS

Incorporate book content in your curriculum to enhance discussions and learning activities for teachers.

CHAPTER 1

The Gifts of the Stranger: Learning from Others' Differences

1. This article identifies four factors that are needed to build communities of mutual learning: a nurturing environment, story sharing, reflective practice, and open dialogue. Which of these do you feel your program or classroom excel at? Which present a challenge?
2. What are some ways you currently (or plan to) help children learn from their differences? How have you (or can you) emphasize these differences as strengths?
3. Consider a time when you made a false assumption about someone else based on limited information (either in a personal or professional capacity). After reading this article, think about some steps you might have taken to help prevent this misunderstanding.
4. Think about a specific practice or routine in your classroom. How might you modify it to make it more engaging of and responsive to all children and families your program serves?
5. Have you ever had a situation where your beliefs about what would be developmentally appropriate for a specific child did not match his family's expectations? Knowing that developmentally appropriate practice requires attention to family and cultural expectations, how did you resolve the issue?

CHAPTER 2

Moving Beyond Anti-Bias Activities: Supporting the Development of Anti-Bias Practices

1. How do you feel when you hear a child make a comment that could be construed as racially charged or that you are not sure how to handle? What do you do?
2. Examine the headings in the "Framework for Anti-Bias Teaching" figure on page 21. Which step do you think best matches your development as an educator? At which step might you encounter the most challenges?
3. What anti-bias issues are currently being discussed in your center, school, or community? How might these issues impact your work with children?
4. How might your identity and personal history impact your perception of children, including who they are and what they can and should do as part of their learning experiences, especially as related to anti-bias topics?
5. Because of societal inequities, too many children still do not have access to the basic human rights due them. Imagine a world of justice and equal opportunity for all. How would the world look different for each of the children you work with? How would the world look different for the program you work in?

CHAPTER 3

Capitalizing on Culture: Engaging Young Learners in Diverse Classrooms

1. How do you make sure that all of your students see themselves reflected in the curriculum?
2. What steps do you take to aid and support children who are in the ethnic and racial minority in your classroom?
3. In what ways do you reflect on your own personal racial and cultural biases to ensure that they are not informing your practices?
4. What strategies and resources can you use in your classroom to help children appreciate racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity?
5. How do you address your students when issues related to racial differences come up, either in the classroom or the wider community?

CHAPTER 4

Addressing the African American Achievement Gap: Three Leading Educators Issue a Call to Action

1. After reading this article, identify some reasons why it is possible for healthy, well-developed African American children with supportive families to struggle or fail in school.
2. Can you think of something from your community's history (e.g., a ritual, a story, a belief) that is still important to you today?
3. Privilege is a benefit that comes with who you are, not what you do. Can you think of specific situations in which you've benefited from privilege or times in which others have been privileged over you?
4. Cultures are almost always changing. Talk with older members of your family or community to identify prejudices that have changed over time and those that have persisted.
5. Is your community segregated? Consider education spaces (Are schools composed of people who are mostly one race?), housing (Do African Americans and White Americans live, for the most part, separately from one another?), and social interactions (Do you belong to organizations, clubs, or friend groups that are primarily one race?).

CHAPTER 5

Voices of Immigrant Families in Early Childhood Settings

1. Does your program serve immigrant families and communities? How have immigration patterns changed in recent years in your community?
2. What strategies do you use to learn more about immigrant families and communities and support them effectively?
3. How does the information shared in this article influence your programming?
4. Which of the seven suggestions from immigrant families do you feel your classroom or program can implement immediately? Which do you think will require more long-term planning?
5. Are there any agencies or organizations in your community that could help you strengthen your cultural responsiveness?

CHAPTER 6

Challenging Gender Stereotypes: A Teacher's Reflections on Counteracting Gender Bias

1. Conduct informal research in your classroom. Look at the books, materials, and displays. Do you notice any signs of stereotypical gender roles or gender biases? How do they counter gender stereotypes? Now observe the children to see whether their play and interactions reflect stereotypical gender roles or gender biases. Notice and reflect on how you help children see that girls and boys are capable of doing "anything they set their hearts and minds on."
2. What is your response when you see children in your group displaying stereotypical gender behavior and gender biases (girls not building in the block center, boys not playing with dolls)? What reasons do you have for your response?
3. As a teacher, what role do you play in countering biases and stereotypes with young children?
4. What do the children's responses to Nadia's work at the sensory table reflect about their skills and competencies in learning about the world around them?
5. Try some of Nadia's ideas. How do the children in your group think about gender differences? What impact do your actions have on their thinking and play?

CHAPTER 7

**Reading Books, Writing Books:
Reading and Writing Come Together
in a Dual Language Classroom**

1. How can you incorporate authentic writing opportunities into the classroom for the children you teach?
2. In the article, the children are assessed in both languages they are learning. Oftentimes, however, teachers do not speak the home languages of their students. Despite this barrier, how might you discover what the children already know about literacy when they enter your classroom?
3. How can you help children in your classroom develop reading and writing skills in concert with each other?
4. Why do you think it is important for young children to identify themselves as authors?
5. Think about your classroom environment and practices. What might you change to better support dual language learners' reading and writing skills?

CHAPTER 8

**Becoming Upended: Teaching and
Learning About Race and Racism with
Young Children and Their Families**

1. Think about a time that you were "upended" in your perspective on issues of race. What aspects of this experience opened you to a different perspective? How did this experience change your approach to teaching?
2. What kinds of experiences could you facilitate for others (e.g., colleagues and families) that might expand their perspective on issues of race?
3. Why is it important for teachers working with children of color to address issues of race and racism in our work? Why is it important for teachers working in predominately White schools to address these issues? Are there different considerations in how we address these issues, depending on the demographics of the children we are working with?
4. Imagine that the family member of a child in your class comes to you and shares that they are uncomfortable with you teaching about issues of race and racism. What could you say or do that might open him up to understanding the value of this work?
5. Approximately 80 percent of the teaching workforce is White. White teachers' lives do not always provide them with perspective on people of color's experiences of race and racism. What can White teachers do to educate themselves about race and racism?

CHAPTER 9

Supporting Gay and Lesbian Families in the Early Childhood Classroom

1. In your experience, what strategies have proven most effective in working with gay and lesbian families?
2. This article addresses the importance of communication, bias awareness, and construction of inclusive environments. In what other areas can you extend your work of supporting gay and lesbian families?
3. How do your program's policies demonstrate sensitivity to working with children of gay and lesbian families?
4. How do your current practices support a welcoming environment for all types of families?
5. What immediate steps can you take to ensure all families feel welcome and supported in your classroom?

CHAPTER 10

Developing Biliteracy with Intentional Support: Using Interactive Word Walls and Paired Learning

1. What meaningful language experiences could you create to establish a context for the use of a word wall in your classroom?
2. Besides word walls, what other resources or strategies do you (or might you) incorporate in your classroom to promote the development and practice of first and second languages?
3. Reflect on a lesson you recently taught or planned. Identify two ways you could incorporate partner based interactions to support acquisition of academic vocabulary.
4. What are some benefits of heterogeneous partnering of children based on their linguistic and academic skills?
5. Think about a science or mathematics activity that you implemented with young children. How could you incorporate the use of an interactive word wall to promote acquisition of academic vocabulary and high-frequency words?

CHAPTER 11

“Don’t Let My Son Dress Up as a Girl!”: An Ethical Dilemma

1. Do you believe Meredith would be justified in refusing to honor the father's request if her attempts to finesse this dilemma are not effective? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever encountered a situation in which a member of a child's family asked you to modify classroom activities that you believed to be beneficial? Under what circumstances might you be willing to exclude one child from a classroom activity at the family's request?
3. Imagine that you must inform a child's family member or a colleague of a resolution to a dilemma that goes against that person's wishes. Think of several ways you could diplomatically communicate your decision that would help preserve your relationship.

CHAPTER 12

Research to Practice: New Research on Helping Young Children Develop Positive Racial Identities

1. How can I better understand the daily realities of the children I serve?
2. How can I build on the assets that children already possess?
3. How can I honor, validate, and enhance children's racial identities?

CHAPTER 13

**Building a More Inclusive Sandbox:
Inviting New Collaborators to Support
Children, Families, and Early Learning**

1. Think of the early childhood programs and services in your local community, city, or county. Who are the key players and organizations? What are the important initiatives? What are some interesting projects or programs that are “under the radar”? The answers to these questions make up your local early childhood system.
2. What are your local early childhood system’s shared goals for young children and their families? Are these goals articulated? Are they widely understood among all members of the system?
3. Do leaders at your program or initiative reflect the racial/ethnic/linguistic diversity of the young children and families you serve? If not, how might you recruit new allies from diverse populations and engage them in design, governance, and decision making?
4. Think about what skills are needed to achieve shared goals and who will need to be recruited to join the effort. For example, if the system lacks good data, how could you recruit an individual or organization with the skills needed to help gather and report currently available data?
5. Is the story of your program or initiative widely known throughout the community? If not, think about the following:
 - a. Who needs to hear your story? Make a list of key audiences and stakeholder groups.
 - b. How can you tell your story? Make another list of possible communication vehicles, including local press and earned media, social media, audio/video platforms, and good old-fashioned word of mouth.