

# GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Curious Teachers,  
Critical Classrooms



Edited by Brigid Golden

# Contents

Letter from the Editor	i	Chapter 29: Intercultural Education	123
List of Abbreviations	iv	Chapter 30: Events in Schools	127
<b>Part I</b>	<b>1</b>	Chapter 31: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms	132
Chapter 1: Global Citizenship Education	2	Chapter 32: Exploring Traveller History and Culture	136
Chapter 2: Critical Thinking Skills	7	Chapter 33: Activism in Schools	139
Chapter 3: Anti-Racism and Interculturalism	12	Chapter 34: Working Within a National Curriculum	142
Chapter 4: Action	19	Chapter 35: The Arts	146
<b>Part II</b>	<b>23</b>	Chapter 36: Thematic Teaching and Integration	149
Chapter 5: Snapshot of Inequality	24	Chapter 37: Designing Age-Appropriate Lessons	151
Chapter 6: Structural Inequality	30	Chapter 38: GCE in the Early Years	154
Chapter 7: Human Rights	39	Chapter 39: Working within School Structures	157
Chapter 8: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	42	Chapter 40: The Hidden Curriculum	159
Chapter 9: Beyond Charity: A Justice and Solidarity Lens	49	Chapter 41: Common Approaches to Teaching GCE	161
Chapter 10: Citizenship	54	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>170</b>
Chapter 11: Migration	57	Appendix 1: Using Images and Videos in the Classroom	171
Chapter 12: Irish Travellers	62	Appendix 2: Discussion Examples	174
Chapter 13: Gender	67	Appendix 3: Reflective Activities	184
Chapter 14: Sustainability	73	Appendix 4: Exploring Culture in the Classroom	185
Chapter 15: Climate Justice	80	Appendix 5: Narratives from Traveller Women	187
Chapter 16: Trade Justice	83	Appendix 6: Ideas and Approaches for Action in the Classroom	191
Chapter 17: Conflict	90	Appendix 7: Framework for Action	194
<b>Part III</b>	<b>93</b>	Glossary	196
Chapter 18: Interactive Methodologies	94	List of Links	204
Chapter 19: Images, Videos, and Messages	96	List of Embedded Video Links	210
Chapter 20: Using Discussion	99	Resources Directory	211
Chapter 21: Creating Resources	101	Reference List	213
Chapter 22: Using Class Novels	105	Author Details	222
Chapter 23: Picturebooks	108		
Chapter 24: Using Games	111		
Chapter 25: Reflection	114		
Chapter 26: Teaching Controversial Issues	115		
Chapter 27: Democratic Classrooms	117		
Chapter 28: Creating Inclusive Classrooms	120		

# Chapter 3:

# Anti-Racism and Interculturalism

Niamh McGuirk



Anti-racism and interculturalism are cornerstones of GCE. In order to engage in effective GCE, it is necessary to first have a solid understanding of the key concepts and the significant historical and contemporary events that have shaped our understanding of those concepts.

## What is 'race'?

Contemporary understandings about 'race' and racism stem from 20th century scholarship. Both historically and currently, there is a mistaken tendency to associate 'race' and difference with genetic and/ or biological distinctions between people. This is inaccurate and has been repeatedly discredited (Back and Solomos, 2009, Garner, 2010, Law, 2010, Quraishi and Philburn, 2015). Various historical events have contributed to the idea that different 'races' exist, and to the false notion that some 'races' are superior or inferior to others. Some historical events in particular have been linked with pushing the myth of the supposed superiority of the white 'race'. These events mostly took place between the 16th and 19th centuries and include Christian missionary work, British and European colonisation and exploitation of other nations, the Atlantic slave trade, enslaved labour, and the scholarship of some Enlightenment thinkers.

This false notion of a superior white 'race' strengthened in the early 1900s with the emergence of genomics, racial science and eugenics. The power dynamics characteristic of the historical establishment of trade routes, colonialism, imperialism, slavery, and the internal civilisation of European countries played a part in the racialisation of people and resulted in racialised hierarchies. Racialisation can be understood as "the social processes through which people become defined as a group with reference to either their biological or cultural characteristics, or both, and these are then reproduced and compounded by individuals and institutions" (Quraishi and Philburn, 2015, p.13). Some racialisation processes have also been (and continue to be) used with proactive, positive goals, such as to rally groups to resist and reject



inequalities or to foster group solidarity or to achieve positive change eg the Black Lives Matter movements and the campaigns to achieve official recognition of Traveller ethnicity at State level in 2017.

The concept 'race' is currently understood as a social and political construct. Previously it was understood, incorrectly, in biological terms. In other words, although we know that people do not belong to different 'races', the term 'race' is still commonly used, often with an acknowledgement of its associated social and political characteristics. 'Race' plays a role in shaping how we see ourselves and others, and the process of racialisation influences the status and power that is attributed to people in society. While the concept of there being different 'races' is not real, racism, most definitely, is real. **Racism forms part of many people's daily realities; people suffer discrimination, marginalisation and inequality as a result of how society constructs the concept of 'race' and people's racialised identities.** However, using the term 'race' to describe differences among people has become less usual and more problematic; in its place, the term 'ethnicity' is now more commonplace.



## What is ethnicity?

Ethnicity can refer to how social groups can potentially be understood based on five distinct criteria, namely *a place of common origin, a common language/ dialect, religious affiliation, a common culture (norms/ traditions), and a shared history*. Ethnic identity is not fixed and can be both individual and relational. People's identities are fluid and ever-changing and our experience(s) of our own and of others' racial and ethnic identity/ies are subjective. Therefore, it is important to be mindful of our language because assigning group characteristics to individuals can have the potential to 'other', and using the word 'ethnicity' can be just as complex as using the term 'race'. When focusing on challenging inequality/ies, we have to take into account both types of racism, those that stem from supposed biological differences and those that stem from perceived cultural differences.

## What is culture?

Culture is another concept that is tricky to define. It can comprise material, social and subjective aspects that might be visible or invisible to self and others. 'Cultural identity' can include material or overt artefacts which might be commonly used by members of a group (eg food, mode of dress, goods etc). It can include the social institutions of a group (eg language, religion, laws etc) and it can include subjective aspects such as values, norms, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours and practices. As people are members of different social groups (eg gender, age, educational institution, religious, nation, sports etc), they occupy different spaces and move within and between groups. Therefore, people can belong to and identify with a range of cultures at the same time. Interpretations and associations are subjective and are linked with people's lives and experiences. Culture(s) is/ are internally diverse, dynamic and changeable and is/ are linked to social, political, economic and historical contexts. Like 'race' and ethnicity, due to systemic patterns of advantage/ disadvantage and power differentials, cultural affiliation can imply inherent inequalities and disadvantage for some. For others, however, cultural affiliation can assign social, political and economic advantages and privilege.

## What is racism?

The idea that people belong to different 'races' has become discredited, and public displays of different forms of racism have become increasingly socially unacceptable. Nonetheless, we know that incidences of racism are still commonplace. Racism exists in all aspects of society and therefore there is a need to recognise and understand the realities of people's lived experiences. Racism manifests in many ways including interpersonal racism, institutional racism, and racism without 'race'.



## Interpersonal racism and microaggressions

Racism can be direct, in the form of comments, physical abuse or damage to property, or it can be indirect, manifested through ignorance, racist ‘banter’ or racial distancing for example. Interpersonal racism can manifest as personal prejudice expressed in blatantly racist comments and actions. A person may not be aware that their personal prejudice can manifest as subtle racial microaggressions. These are defined as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults” towards members of minoritised groups (Sue et al., 2007, p.271). Microaggressions include words and acts that are putdowns, that reinforce stereotypes and that can have an ‘othering’ effect. Usually, they are carried out by people who do not intend to cause harm or hurt. Experiences of microaggressions are commonplace for members of minoritised groups and they can cause psychological, emotional and physical harm.

## Institutional racism

Institutional racism is associated with the attitudes, culture, policies and procedures of public and private institutions that often unintentionally lead to discrimination or an inequality of outcomes for people from minoritised ethnic groups. It is important to consider people’s experiences of institutional racism alongside all other types of racism. Due to intersectionality, people from minoritised groups also experience gendered and socio-economic discrimination. Intersectionality recognises that forms of discrimination experienced on the basis of someone’s ‘race’, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, religion, and ability/ disability are linked with each other and are interconnected.

## Racism without ‘race’

Concepts of ‘race’ and racism are constantly changing; understandings of ‘race’ and experiences with racism are not fixed or static phenomena. It is important to take historical and contemporary political and societal contexts into account. The different and multiple forms of racism that exist and which people experience are context-dependent, influenced by political, historical and societal factors, and are brought about by, and also serve to, reinforce unequal power relations.

There is a range of more nuanced forms of racism that are commonplace:

**‘New’ racism** This happens in a range of ways. Also known as cultural racism, it can happen without any reference to ‘race’; the focus is rather on cultural difference(s) and on a supposed concern about a perceived negative impact on the values or on the perceived ‘national



identity' of a society's majority population. New racism suggests that 'culture' can be reduced to a set of describable shared features or aspects (eg food, music, mode of dress, values, and customs). In the case of new racism, the perceived 'culture' of the majority group is often considered superior, or alternatively, the 'culture' of minoritised groups is considered incompatible with the culture of the majority ethnic group.

**Colour-blind racism** In an attempt to treat everybody equally, a person or an organisation that adopts a 'colour-blind' approach tends to disregard 'racial' or ethnic differences between people. Individuals and organisations who claim not to see colour argue that 'race' is no longer important. They believe that as a society we are 'post-racial', or in other words, that we have moved away from somebody's 'race' or ethnicity being an issue, and they believe that racism and discrimination are no longer driving forces of inequality. Colour-blind approaches can create spaces where racial and ethnic identities are not named or acknowledged and therefore they go unaffirmed and unvalued. When discussions about different identities are not considered important, stereotypes can go unchecked, and discrimination and racism can be left unseen and unchallenged.

**Religious racism** Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia (also known as anti-Muslim racism) are forms of religious racism. Religious racism can be defined as "the institutional and symbolic expulsion of religious individuals and groups from full participatory citizenship in society based on a rationale of cultural difference" (Meister, 2011, p.37). Islamophobia is one of the most commonly recorded forms of racism in Ireland.

Some of the other most common forms of racism in Ireland include anti-Traveller racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Roma racism, and anti-Migrant racism. For further information on these forms of racism and for details on how to respond to and report racism in Ireland see the  [Responding to Racism Guide](#) from the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) (2019). To minimise racism, redress inequalities and to promote positive and democratic attitudes, teachers require a range of skills.

## Anti-racism and intercultural skills

Teachers are well-placed to support children to develop anti-racist perspectives and skills and to develop intercultural competence. In order to do so, they first need to develop these skills themselves. Then, in the classroom, the key skills can be fostered through teacher-modelling, and through both formal and informal lessons and discussions.

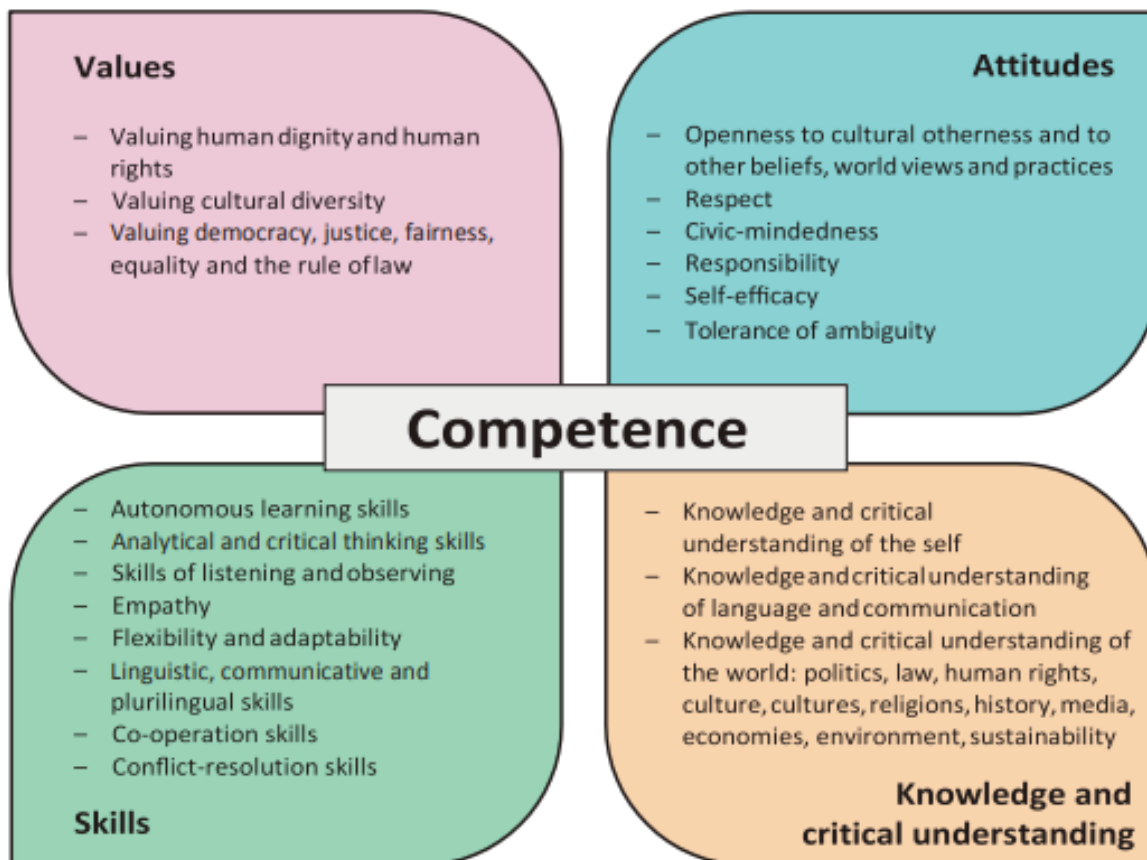


Figure 3: Competences for democratic culture (Council of Europe, 2016)

## Reflection

For teachers, anti-racism and interculturalism involves a journey of critical reflection about their own sense of personal, social, racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, and national identity/ies and about how these notions affect our views of others and how we teach. We can begin to better understand and respect those with identities and culture(s) that we perceive to be different to our own. Reflection on the self and on societal inequalities can support an awareness and understanding of biases, prejudices, stereotypes, discrimination and racism, and a questioning of the status quo.

## Multiperspectivity

Multiperspectivity is “the ability to decentre from one’s own perspective and to take other people’s perspectives into consideration in addition to one’s own” (Barrett, 2013, p.20). In the process of supporting children to develop their own perspectives they will inevitably encounter the perspectives of others. As such, developing our own skills of multiperspectivity can help us to foster the children’s capacity to recognise, understand and respect multiple perspectives as a key skill required in a democratic society.





## Communication

Intercultural dialogue and communication involves verbal and non-verbal skills. Alongside needing the linguistic/ plurilingual skills to talk to someone, we need to be able to recognise that there are many different verbal and non-verbal communicative conventions in all languages. These conventions differ within and across languages. Language is a cultural practice and is linked to information, meanings, values and identities. At times, communication breakdowns or clashes may occur, and conflict-resolution requires skills of listening, and of expressing/ summarising different viewpoints in order to move forward.

## Empathy

While it is important to try to step into another's shoes and empathise, due to our own personal contexts and identities it is not possible to truly understand what others think, believe, feel or experience. This is important for white Irish teachers to remember when advocating an empathetic approach when engaging in GCE. Often empathy is put forward as a way to address racism and intercultural misunderstandings/ conflict. However, it is necessary to differentiate between 'passive' and 'active' empathy (Boler, 1999). Passive empathy allows us to empathise with a 'distant other' while removing any implication of any potential involvement in or responsibility for another person's experience(s) of inequality or racism. Active empathy acknowledges systemic and structural inequalities and involves or results in some form of action that will address inequity and racisms. In an attempt to address racism or intercultural misunderstandings/ conflict, practices that recognise societal inequalities and foster active empathy are more effective.

## Action

While it is important to have a knowledge and understanding of racism and inequalities, it is equally – if not – more – important to feel capable of doing something to make a change for the better. Teacher actions can include fostering positive attitudes about self and others through representation and recognition of all racial, ethnic and cultural identities in the hidden and formal curriculum. Actions also include recognising and challenging prejudices, stereotypes, discrimination and all types of racism and structural inequalities.