

David Smiddy of Clark County will present at a local workshop on “Latin American Awareness Inventory”

My idea is to lead workshop participants in a discussion of the cultural aspects of Latino culture as applied to instruction. I have found that culturally influenced behavior can either work for or against instruction and that a savvy instructor will figure out how to reverse the former and leverage on the latter! But awareness is the first step in devising a plan!

I have already used this at a recent Springfield City Schools meeting for teachers with LEP students and at trainings with Wittenberg students who want to become short-term tutors with us. The instrument has proven to generate discussion by pushing participants to take a stand on a statement (True or False) and then back up that opinion with supporting facts and experiences. The presenter functions to help participants integrate useful generalities with present day experiences by emphasizing the known facts and then giving personal examples.

Latin American Awareness Inventory

How accurate is your knowledge about the adult non-English speaking population of our country? Complete this self-test to find out. Read the statements, and then write T (true) or F (false) next to each. Can you explain why and how it impacts instruction?

- ___ 1. People develop many strategies to conceal poor speaking skills.
- ___ 2. Approximately one person in eight in the United States is of Hispanic origin, with about 66% from Mexico.
- ___ 3. The two main reasons people immigrate to the United States are to work and to learn English.
- ___ 4. In Latino countries, teachers are highly respected.
- ___ 5. Hispanic is an English word meaning "pertaining to ancient Spain."
- ___ 6. Many adults have low literacy skills in their own language.
- ___ 7. The United States receives more immigrants than any other country.
- ___ 8. Most Latinos come from a society where rigid rules of behavior have been prescribed for centuries.
- ___ 9. The ability to distinguish differences between sounds decreases greatly by the time a person is an adult.
- ___ 10. Culturally, Latinos use two last names and omitting one can mean illegitimacy.
- ___ 11. Latino adults never question the value of what they are learning.
- ___ 12. Pharmacists in Latin American countries are also trained to give injections and to prescribe medication.
- ___ 13. In Spanish, the clock also "runs" as it does in English.
- ___ 14. For the average adult ELL in the US, it takes two years to become comfortably fluent in a language.
- ___ 15. One out of every three US Latino students fails to complete high school.
- ___ 16. People generally can understand more than they can communicate.

Tutor Awareness Inventory

How accurate is your knowledge about the adult non-English speaking population of our country? Complete this self-test to find out. Read the statements, and then write T (true) or F (false) next to each. Can you explain why?

- ___ 1. People develop many strategies to conceal poor speaking skills.
True: A smile, a nod, avoidance, a family member, among other strategies.
- ___ 2. Approximately one person in eight is of Hispanic origin, with about 66% from Mexico.
True: according to the US Census of 2004.
- ___ 3. The two main reasons people immigrate to the United States are to work and to learn English.
False: the top two are work and to join family.
- ___ 4. In Latino countries, teachers are highly respected.
True: so allow your student to use the terms Miss and Sir or Don.
- ___ 5. Hispanic is an English word meaning "pertaining to ancient Spain."
True: Latino perhaps is a better term unless you can be more specific.
- ___ 6. Many adults have low literacy skills in their own language.
True: it is a good idea to screen for more information.
- ___ 7. The United States receives more immigrants than any other country.
False: the US receives only 1% of the world's immigrants so we're not alone!
- ___ 8. Most Latinos come from a society where rigid rules of behavior have been prescribed for centuries.
True: however, it is also in flux because of globalization and enculturation.
- ___ 9. The ability to distinguish differences between sounds decreases greatly by the time a person is an adult.
True: what you cannot hear, you will not be able to repeat.
- ___ 10. Culturally, Latinos use two last names and omitting one can mean illegitimacy.
True: the student has more than a habit to break in using only one last name.
- ___ 11. Latinos never question the value of what they are learning.
False: blatantly connect learning to real life and to higher goals like college.
- ___ 12. Pharmacists in Latin American countries are also trained to give injections and to prescribe medication.
True: doctors and practitioners hold more power in the US.
- ___ 13. In Spanish, the clock also "runs" as it does in English.
False: clocks "walk" in Spanish.
- ___ 14. For the average adult ELL in the US, it takes two years to become comfortably fluent in a language.
False: for most adults, it will take 7-9 years.
- ___ 15. One out of every three US Latino students fails to complete high school.
True: only 57 out of a hundred will do so.
- ___ 16. People generally can understand more than they can communicate.
True: the challenge is for students to demonstrate understanding.