Perspectives for A Diverse Hawai‘i
A Formative Evaluation

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Executive Summary

**Background:** Teaching Tolerance, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, developed *Perspectives for A Diverse America* in response to demands for a comprehensive anti-bias curriculum. *Perspectives* focuses on literacy instruction, offering a web-based anthology of texts, strategies and tasks for K-12 teachers. It is aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The curriculum became available online in 2014.

**Purpose of the Evaluation:** This evaluation was initiated in response to Teaching Tolerance’s need to document curricular impact while mapping pathways for program improvement. Under the direction of Dr. Kate Shuster, Shuster Consulting, Inc. managed a formative evaluation of *Perspectives for a Diverse America* in Hawai’i. A five-phase study was designed to answer the following evaluation questions:

1. Did the scope and nature of the *Perspectives* curriculum meet teachers’ needs?
2. How do teachers use *Perspectives’* Common Core aligned texts and strategies?
3. What effects of using *Perspectives* did teachers see in their classrooms?

The evaluation used instruments developed and validated during the 2014 study of *Perspectives* in the continental US. As the primary purpose of the evaluation was to refine program materials and processes for ease of teacher use and classroom fit, all measures were teacher-facing.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Qualitative and quantitative data were collected at multiple points. A case study approach was used to capture the details and nuances of the ways that seven teachers used *Perspectives*.

**Findings:** Taken as a whole, these case studies show what *Perspectives* looks like in classrooms. They also show how the curriculum achieves effects like text-generated empathy, collaboration for collective action, reduced bias and improved literacy skills. This study has limitations. It reports the findings from a small, self-selected sample of tenacious teachers. The small sample size did not allow for meaningful reporting of quantitative measures. However, this does not mean that the findings can be easily dismissed. On the contrary, they serve as confirmatory evidence for the 2014 findings. Further, the case studies fill an important need for educators because they show what *Perspectives* looks like in diverse classrooms from start to finish. Although the studies dwell specifically on the needs of educators living in Hawai’i, they are anchored in the reflections of real and relatable teachers struggling with issues that will be familiar to teachers anywhere. *Perspectives* shows tremendous potential to meet the needs of teachers across Hawai’i and throughout the continental United States. Additional findings are discussed in relation to each evaluation question.
Did the scope and nature of the Perspectives curriculum meet teachers’ needs?

Every teacher in this study was able to find texts that were meaningful for their students. They reported being “surprised” and even “overwhelmed” by the diversity of texts on the Perspectives website. However, all teachers said that Perspectives could go further to better represent the history, culture and experiences of Hawai‘i and its diverse population.

How do teachers use Perspectives’ Common Core aligned texts and strategies?

The teachers in this study used Perspectives to engage their students, build literacy skills, develop classroom community and confront challenging issues - usually all in the same unit. Some teachers used Perspectives to meet the social and emotional needs they saw in their classrooms. Other teachers focused on building their students’ literacy skills. In all cases, teachers were able to apply the principles of anti-bias education while using literacy strategies aligned with the Common Core.

What effects of using Perspectives did teachers see in their classrooms?

In the 2014 evaluation of Perspectives, teachers reported substantial classroom effects in five major areas: literacy development, student engagement, empathy, classroom climate and student behavior. This study found similar reported outcomes. Every teacher used at least one strategy or task to assess their students’ academic skills and found them improved. All of the case studies tell stories of student engagement with texts and tasks, sometimes in ways that surprised even veteran teachers. Students connected to their classmates and current events, bringing what they had learned into the community. Coupled with the findings from the 2014 study, the case studies presented here show that Perspectives has great potential to meet the needs of teachers in Hawai‘i and beyond with meaningful texts, rigorous strategies and tasks that apply learning.
About *Perspectives for a Diverse America*

*Perspectives for A Diverse America* is a K-12 literacy-based anti-bias curriculum. It offers a free online anthology of hundreds of diverse texts that are meaningful to students, promote anti-bias education and are consistent with the Common Core's approach to text complexity. In addition, *Perspectives* allows teachers to select among hundreds of strategies and tasks aligned to grade level. These rigorous strategies and tasks promote social and emotional growth aligned with student-level outcomes for bias reduction.

*Perspectives* is an initiative of Teaching Tolerance, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). The SPLC is a nonprofit civil rights organization dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry, and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of society. Founded by civil rights lawyers Morris Dees and Joseph Levin Jr. in 1971, the SPLC is internationally known for tracking and exposing the activities of hate groups. Since 1991, Teaching Tolerance has produced and distributed free documentary films, books, lesson plans and other materials that promote tolerance and respect in schools. Teaching Tolerance is designed to promote an appreciation for diversity in schools by reducing prejudice, improving intergroup relations and supporting equity for children.

There is a continuing—if not growing—need to teach tolerance in classrooms as our society becomes increasingly divided along lines of race, religion, language, sexual orientation and ability. These fractures may not stop at the schoolhouse, but they can be healed there. Educators recognize the need to develop students’ social and emotional skills, and have long asked Teaching Tolerance for more comprehensive and systematic curricula that would match rigor to relevance.

In response to this demand, Teaching Tolerance created a comprehensive anti-bias curriculum that would meet the needs of diverse K-12 teachers. The result is a curriculum designed to bridge literacy and affective learning so that teachers do not have to choose between rigor and relevance. It is aligned to the widely adopted Common Core State Standards. *Perspectives* has three major components: an anti-bias framework, an anthology of texts and an integrated learning plan. Each component emerged as part of backwards mapping from a foundational framework that identifies measurable skills and outcomes. The curriculum is not scripted; teachers choose the materials they think best fit the needs of their classroom and use those as appropriate. The beta version of the *Perspectives* website became available to the general public beginning in fall 2013. After a pilot program and accompanying formative evaluation, the new *Perspectives* site became generally available in fall 2014 ([http://perspectives.tolerance.org](http://perspectives.tolerance.org)). The site now has more than 17,000 registered users who have created more than 9,000 integrated learning plans.

**Curriculum Components**

While the Common Core offers a highly detailed framework for literacy and math instruction, until the release of *Perspectives*, no similar framework existed for anti-bias education. State content standards, when they outline suggested content at all, do not offer standards for reducing prejudice, increasing the acceptance and appreciation of diversity,
or promoting social justice. A framework is essential for effective curricular design, implementation and evaluation. The principles of backwards design ask educators to begin with the outcomes they wish to see and create activities that will accomplish those outcomes. The Anti-Bias Framework is designed to support backwards design for social and emotional learning.

**The Anti-Bias Framework**

*Perspectives* draws from Derman-Sparks’s germinal work. In 1989, she outlined four primary goals of anti-bias education: identity, diversity, justice and action. Each of these goals is important for anti-bias education, but they must be engaged in combination to help students and society make lasting changes. In order to transform these goals into tangible classroom outcomes, *Perspectives*’ design is oriented around an original set of 20 anti-bias anchor standards, grouped by domain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Four Goals of Anti-Bias Education (Derman-Sparks, 1989)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Identity:</strong> Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity:</strong> Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity; accurate language for human differences; and deep, caring human connections.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Justice:</strong> Each child will increasingly recognize unfairness, have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action:</strong> Each child will demonstrate empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions.</td>
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The Anti-Bias Framework outlines a comprehensive skill set of achievable and measurable student outcomes. These outcomes inform all aspects of the *Perspectives* curriculum, as they provide a framework for text selection and the design of the learning plan.

**The Central Text Anthology**

The anthology of texts is at the heart of *Perspectives*. These texts are students’ initial contact point with the larger curriculum. They were chosen to fulfill the specifications of the CCSS as well as the anti-bias standards. Beginning with the anti-bias standards, researchers considered interdisciplinary themes such as individual and society, membership and solidarity, power and privilege, freedom and choice, rights and responsibilities, struggle and progress. They looked for different text types, considering literature, informational, visual and multimedia texts. Finally, they looked at voice and issue, including topics such as race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, immigration, religion, disability and bullying.
Texts were divided into grade bands and analyzed using quantitative and qualitative metrics to ensure that they meet the requirements of the Common Scale for Band Level Text Difficulty Ranges. This meant using text analyzer tools including Degrees of Reading Power, Lexile Framework, Source Rater and the Pearson Reading Maturity Metric. Qualitative measures to identify text complexity included meaning, text structure, language features and knowledge demands. Separate qualitative rubrics were used for informational and literary texts.

The Integrated Learning Plan

The Common Core’s ELA and Literacy anchor standards provide a coherent and organized set of goals that are mapped out across each grade level. These standards keep texts central to learning as they call for students to emphasize textual evidence when writing and speaking. The Perspectives instructional plan is aligned to the CCSS, creating a path for students to experience and examine texts. It relies on five major phases (K-2 classrooms have three) that include a mix of instructional strategies and assessment tasks. Within each phase, Perspectives offers ten strategies or tasks for teachers to choose from. The first four phases relate to CCSS strands. Each strategy or task is aligned to CCSS standards within that strand.

Phases of the Integrated Learning Plan and CCSS alignment

| Word Work (Language standards): | Students will increase their ability to comprehend and produce language by accessing and using key vocabulary from the central text in their own reading, writing, speaking and listening. |
| Close and Critical Reading (Reading standards): | Students will improve their reading comprehension skills by analyzing, interpreting, critiquing and making connections to the central text in ways that help them form their sense of self and their views of the world. |
| Community Inquiry (Speaking and Listening): | Students will develop their speaking and listening skills by engaging in meaningful conversation about the central text, relating the discussion back to the text and to the anti-bias standards. |
| Write to the Source (Writing standards): | Students will improve their writing skills by responding to ideas and claims found in the central text, using the text to support their own reflection and analysis. |
| Do Something: | Students will demonstrate their anti-bias awareness and proficiency through their everyday behavior or with coordinated social action. |

The phases of the learning plan are not necessarily designed to progress in a linear way. Depending on the text and the context, teachers might decide to circle back to differ-
ent strategies (for example, if they were using multiple texts) at different phases of the learning plan. For maximum effect, skipping stages is discouraged.

**Purpose and Description of the Evaluation**

This study has the advantage of building on a previous evaluation of *Perspectives* conducted at five sites on the continental US in the 2013-2014 school year (Shuster, 2014). The instruments and methods used for data collection are the same as those used in that study. This evaluation differs substantially because it uses a case study approach to add strength to what was already known through previous research. This method allows a deeper and more nuanced understanding of teachers' experiences with the *Perspectives* curriculum.

**Purpose of the Evaluation**

This study evaluated teacher use of and reactions to the texts, strategies and tasks included in *Perspectives for a Diverse America*. To design the study, Shuster Consulting, Inc. met extensively with Teaching Tolerance staff. These meetings generated goals for formative evaluation, including: (1) help the organization learn how teachers used *Perspectives* materials; (2) seek teacher feedback on *Perspectives* materials, including suggestions for improvement; (3) explore teacher perceptions of student reactions to *Perspectives* materials; and (4) examine how use of *Perspectives* increased teacher comfort with and interest in both the Common Core State Standards and anti-bias education. These were distilled into three major research questions:

1. Did the scope and nature of the *Perspectives* curriculum meet teachers’ needs?
2. How do teachers use *Perspectives*’ Common Core aligned texts and strategies?
3. What effects of using *Perspectives* did teachers see in their classrooms?

To answer these questions, Shuster Consulting, Inc. conducted a five-phase pilot program and evaluation in Hawai‘i during the 2014-2015 school year. The evaluation used instruments developed and validated during the 2014 study of *Perspectives* in the continental US. As the primary purpose of the evaluation was to refine program materials and processes for ease of teacher use and classroom fit, all measures were teacher-facing.

**Five-Phase Design**

The pilot and evaluation design involved developing and implementing a five-phase plan. The elements in each phase are summarized below.
• **Phase 1: Launching the Pilot and Evaluation.** The pilot and evaluation manager met with Teaching Tolerance staff in the summer of 2013 to ensure that the pilot and evaluation were consistent with Teaching Tolerance’s goals and that the scope of work, timelines and deliverables were mutually agreed upon.

• **Phase 2: Instrument Development.** All instruments were developed during the fall of 2013. The evaluation manager pursued Human Subjects approval with the Hawai‘i Department of Education (HIDOE), receiving approval in the fall of 2015.

• **Phase 3: Professional Development.** Professional development was offered in Hawai‘i twice: once in February 2014 for the original cohort, and again in January 2015 for the study cohort. The intake survey was administered at the 2015 training.

• **Phase 4: Pilot Phase.** Classroom piloting lasted through the spring 2015 semester. During this phase, teachers completed implementation logs as they used Perspectives components. Telephone interviews were conducted with teachers and selected experts. The exit survey and all implementation logs were closed at the end of May.

• **Phase 5: Assessment and Reporting.** In this phase, all interviews were transcribed and coded. Survey data was cleaned, merged and analyzed. The final report was delivered in June 2015.

This formative evaluation attempted to be as comprehensive as possible. It was designed to create a base of information that Teaching Tolerance staff could use for strategically adapting, modifying or revising Perspectives in subsequent years.

**History and Overview of the Hawai‘i Pilot Program**

Hawai‘i was one of the original seven sites recruited to pilot Perspectives during the 2013-2014 school year. The present study received initial Human Subjects approval from HIDOE in the winter of 2014. Teaching Tolerance staff trained 28 teachers that February.

The original teacher sample was generated through collaboration with HIDOE staff. Teachers were recruited from across the state to participate in the pilot and asked to apply through HIDOE’s professional development system (PDE3). Over 100 teachers applied. A committee composed of HIDOE content specialists in Language Arts and Social Studies and University of Hawai‘i (UH) faculty met to review applications, deciding to invite 30 teachers. In this respect, the sample was both self-selected and chosen by HIDOE staff to best represent the diversity of Hawai‘i in regards to geography, grade level, and subject area.

However, political intervention delayed the implementation of the Hawai‘i pilot program. On February 28, 2014, Hawai‘i State Representative Bob McDermott filed a complaint with the Hawai‘i State Ethics Commission against HIDOE. The complaint targeted the $250 stipends the study planned to pay participating teachers as a token compensation for participating in the study. Media coverage of the controversy made it clear that Representative McDermott was particularly concerned about the content of the Perspectives curriculum, as this Hawai‘i News Now story illustrates:
“[Perspectives] goes into forced acceptance, affirmation and celebration of behaviors that people of faith or creed or moral code find objectionable,” McDermott said. McDermott is upset that suggested reading lists for children in kindergarten through 2nd grade include a short story called “10,000 Dresses,” about a little boy who likes to wear dresses. There’s a second story about two gay penguins. “Why does a first grader need to know about two homosexual penguins? Please, tell me. Are we trying to indoctrinate, brainwash them?” McDermott asked. (Kerr, 2014)

In addition to the complaint, McDermott sent a cease and desist letter to Hawai‘i Superintendent Kathryn Matayoshi in March of 2014, and filed ethics complaints (subsequently dismissed) against SPLC leadership with the Alabama State Bar Disciplinary Commission. As HIDOE awaited rulings on these matters, the study was delayed. When Matayoshi approved the study in May 2014, it was decided that the Hawai‘i pilot would be postponed.

In the late fall of 2015, Shuster Consulting received confirmation from HIDOE that the study was approved to proceed if stipends for participating teachers were removed from the workplan. Dr. Amber Strong Makaiau, the Director of Curriculum and Research at the UH Uehiro Academy for Philosophy and Ethics in Education, agreed to coordinate the Hawai‘i site for the 2014-2015 school year. Makaiau worked to recruit teachers for the pilot, coordinating with Shuster Consulting on a revised and approachable timeline.

Pilot teachers were asked to use two Perspectives texts and to complete a full Integrated Learning Plan (ILP) in their classroom. They participated in interviews and completed implementation logs for each text, strategy and task they used from the Perspectives website. Finally, teachers were asked to complete a short exit survey. Teachers were assured that their responses would be treated with full confidentiality, and that their names would never be linked to their responses without express written permission.

On January 8, Makaiau and Dr. Patricia Halagao, a member of the Hawai‘i Board of Education and Associate Professor of Multicultural Education and Social Studies in the College of Education at UH Manoa, conducted a half-day workshop to orient 20 teachers who had agreed to participate in the January-May pilot program. Several had elected to participate in the 2014 study. Of 20 teachers, only seven completed the pilot program. The high attrition rate is likely because of the short notice given to teachers before the pilot’s onset as well as the timing. One of the lessons learned from the 2014 report was that spring is the most difficult time to try something new in any classroom, as teachers plan around spring break and testing.

**Instrument Overview**

All instruments used in the pilot were designed specifically for Perspectives and are identical to the instruments used in the 2014 study. They were submitted prior to testing and use to Teaching Tolerance staff, whose feedback was extremely helpful in ensuring that their goals for learning about program use would be met through the study. What follows is a brief description of each instrument and its use in the evaluation.
• **Teacher intake survey.** This short survey, administered at the January 2015 training, collected demographic information about study participants, including teacher gender, ethnicity and experience. It asked teachers to describe their prior experience with the Common Core and anti-bias education. Intake surveys were used to assign unique study identification numbers for participants. These numbers were used throughout the study to maintain confidentiality and link records together in the final data sets.

• **Text and implementation logs.** A total of nine logs were created. This included a log for feedback on texts and eight logs specific to grade band and phase. Because questions for grades 3-12 were identical except for the strategies available to teachers within their grade band, logs for grades 3-5 and 6-12 were virtually identical. The specific needs of early childhood and the compressed phase sequence of grades K-2 made those logs different. Logs contained a mix of binary items, Likert scale items and short answer items. In general, log items were divided into five areas of interest: reasons for choosing a curricular component, teacher feedback on the component’s instructional efficacy, perceived student reaction to the component, ease of fit and recommendations for future development.

• **Individual interview protocols.** Teacher interview protocols were designed for a 45-minute interview. They asked generally open-ended questions, focusing on five major areas: the need for *Perspectives*, ease of fit, the anti-bias framework, student reactions to the pilot materials and advice for program improvement.

• **Exit survey.** The exit survey asked teachers to reflect on several specific holistic areas of the pilot experience, including improved capacity with the Common Core, ease of fit and detailed questions about the ILP and its components.

All surveys and logs, with the exception of the paper intake survey, were built on SurveyMonkey and made available to teachers through a password-protected online site.

**Summary of Methods**

Data was collected from January 2015 through the end of May. Qualitative data was coded using NVivo through an iterative process seeking major themes related to the goals of the research and the components of *Perspectives* itself. Quantitative data was collected through confidential online surveys and exported to Excel for statistical analysis.

Quantitative data from implementation logs was cleaned prior to analysis to remove “ghost” survey responses (normally the result of failed teacher logins or mechanical errors). It was subsequently merged to create a master set of log responses with multiple responses per case identified by phase for ease of analysis. Descriptive statistics were analyzed using Excel, with similar cases grouped for analysis where appropriate. Because of the small sample size in this study, survey findings were not useful and are not reported.

Interviews were transcribed using Transcribe for Chrome and cross-checked for accuracy. All qualitative data was cleaned prior to analysis. This cleaning included removing
personally identifying information of teachers and students (and in some cases, site location, where it might allow identification of a particular teacher). In addition, data was cleaned to remove vocalized pauses and outside interruptions to improve the coherence of responses for more effective analysis. In some cases, sentence stems were added when a teacher was responding to a prompt (for example, a sentence beginning with “because” might be changed to “I would use this strategy again because”).

Although it reports some quotations relevant to the research questions, this report uses a case study method. Each case study is anonymized to protect the identity of participating teachers. The case studies were synthesized using interview transcripts and survey results. MakaiAu reviewed each case study to ensure that no information was presented that might reveal the identity of participating teachers. HIDOE approved the report.

The case study approach adds nuance and depth to the original report in a number of ways. First, it gives a “window” into individual classrooms to see what Perspectives looked like for participating teachers. The 2014 study reported results in the aggregate, even as it quoted from individual participants at length. Second, these case studies allow a longitudinal view. They show what an ILP looked like from start to finish in diverse classrooms, linking texts and instructional phases together in meaningful ways. Finally, the case studies hold up a “mirror” to the 2014 study, creating the possibility for disconfirming or validating those findings.

This is an appropriate role for case study analysis, as Flyvbjerg (2006) argues: “The advantage of the case study is that it can ‘close in’ on real-life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice” (19). Case study methods get us closer to participants and provide us with a window into their lived experiences. The strength of this particular study is that it helps to paint a picture of the ways that individual teachers engaged with Perspectives - a picture that the 2014 study’s broad strokes did not offer. This means that it is an invaluable resource for educators, school officials, parents, and community members interested in the curriculum.

This report contains substantial quotation from participants, often at length. It was challenging to decide which quotations to include, in part because teachers were so enthusiastic about their pilot experience. In general, quotations were included here if they were descriptive and directly related to the area of inquiry.

Although this study is a look at the ways a specific group of teachers used a curriculum during a single semester, it allows for reflection on the four anti-bias domains: identity, diversity, justice and action. The case studies here are grouped according to these domains, as they illustrate the ways that Perspectives can address critical issues that teachers and students face every day.
Why Hawai‘i?

One of the guiding ideas of Perspectives is that education should offer “mirrors” for students to examine themselves and their communities. It should also offer “windows” for students to see how others live and perceive the world. The Hawai‘i pilot creates a unique opportunity for both. People living outside of Hawai‘i need better windows into the history and culture of the islands’ communities. Research in multicultural education on the islands shows that students (and teachers) need “mirrors” to see themselves and develop their sense of identity and diversity (e.g., Makaiau, 2010; Halagao, 2006). The Perspectives pilot in Hawai‘i was designed to seek input from stakeholders there to expand its text library to create better windows and mirrors.

In the collective imagination of people living on the continental US, Hawai‘i is a vacation spot, an exotic land of beaches and volcanoes. The “Aloha State” is conceived of as a peaceful place that occupies a peculiar space in the national consciousness: it is both a part of the US and apart from it. Although US history textbooks touch on annexation and the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, these events are not generally part of the way that people on the continental US (or outside of Hawai‘i, for that matter) think or talk about the islands. Brislin (2003) reviewed popular culture representations of Hawai‘i and people living on the islands, including the 1937 movie Wings Over Honolulu; Bing Crosby’s Waikiki Wedding; Elvis’ repeated Hawai‘i-set films; television series including Hawaii 5-0 and Baywatch Hawaii; and the more recent Blue Crush. He identified four major stereotypes of Pacific Islanders in popular media:

- Pleasant but basically ignorant natives in subsistence social structures. Even after Western contact they cling to their picturesque but primitive customs and mores.
- Savage cannibals who inevitably are overcome by superior Western firepower.
- Shapely, sexy, uninhibited women ever-willing to take a roll in the taro with a Westerner.
- Self-inflated men who preen and strut but are easily fooled by superior Western intelligence – often played comically. (106)

As this report was being finalized, the film Aloha was released to withering criticism – the Media Action Network for Asian Americans called the film an “insult to the diverse culture and fabric of Hawai‘i.” It is long past time to clean the windows that show Hawai‘i and its inhabitants to the continental United States.

Stereotypes do not only affect the perceptions of people living in the continental US – they directly affect the experiences of residents of the islands themselves. As Reelitz (2103) writes:

[T]he identity of our community as a whole is formed similarly to the way individuals find their own identities: an interaction between what we see within and what others see from the outside. Inaccurate and trivialized depictions of Hawaiians, both histor-
ical and contemporary, still play a part in how Hawaiians see ourselves - and, as a result, form our identity as a community. (33)

From an educational perspective, Hawai‘i is unique. It is a single school district that covers eight major islands. Although most people travel between islands, each island has developed its own micro-culture and economy. This means that there is tremendous diversity between schools – some schools serve mostly recent immigrants from the Pacific Islands and Asia. Other schools serve predominantly native Hawaiians because of their proximity to Hawaiian homelands.

In Hawai‘i, economic and ethnic stratification often go hand in hand. Okamura (2008) found that “the stratification system in Hawai‘i is highly ‘racialized,’ and ethnic groups are subject to ‘differential racialization’ given that socioeconomic rewards and resources, such as employment, income, and education, are very unequally distributed among them” (55). His analysis shows that very different populations attend public schools than private schools. According to the 2014 HIDOE Superintendent’s Report, nearly 60% of students in the public schools have special needs (defined as students who are economically disadvantaged, having a disability, or being an English Language Learner: Office of the Superintendent, 2014, p. 5).

This does not mean that Hawai‘i is a hotbed of conflict; on the contrary, nearly all of the teachers interviewed in this study described intergroup relations at their schools as peaceful. Maya Soetoro-Ng, the Director of Community Outreach and Global Learning at the Matsunaga Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, explained that this is a manifestation of a very real element of local culture:

There is a sense of having achieved a certain measure of functioning positive peace and tranquility in Hawai‘i, that culture of Aloha. The desire to share with and know one another bridges cultures whether they be new or old here on the islands. There is also a strong movement for inclusion, representation, voice, social justice and equity coming from the Hawaiian community, the Kanaka Maoli, as well as the Micronesian community and others, which also means that there is need for a lot of advocacy, interest-based negotiation, and nonviolent communication. Many conversations here are laden with tension; it is very good that people are questioning status quo and engaging in meaningful dialogue, but we have to work to ensure that the conversations are both productive and respectful. Perspectives gives young people important practice in this. (personal communication, April 22, 2015)

Soetoro-Ng says that this environment means that teachers need better tools to teach using inquiry so that students can understand their own identities and meaningfully interact in the world around them.

Teachers also need tools aligned with standards and assessments. Hawai‘i adopted the CCSS in 2010, with full implementation in the 2013-2014 school year. The CCSS are now in some stage of implementation in 43 states, the District of Columbia, four territories
and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA). The standards are designed to guide teachers toward three major shifts in literacy instruction: building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction; reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text; and regular practice with complex text and academic language.

These shifts come in response to a growing body of research that demonstrates the importance of text complexity in reading achievement. The consequences of low literacy fall disproportionately on socioeconomically challenged students, whose exposure to texts falls well below their peers even before they come to school. As Appendix A to the CCSS notes, this “bodes ill for the ability of Americans to meet the demands placed upon them by citizenship in a democratic republic and the challenges of a highly competitive global marketplace of goods, services, and ideas” (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010).

Perspectives seeks to build on and aid implementation of the Common Core through an enriched approach. It supports the Hawai’i Department of Education and Board of Education’s goal to achieve “relevance” and its strategic plan for “its students to meet and exceed world-class academic standards, and do so in a way that reflects our island perspective... We will cultivate, advance, and draw from Hawai’i’s rich traditions and Native Hawaiian host culture” (Hawai’i Department of Education, 2012, p.3).

Embracing cultural relevance is an important first step for providing high-quality education for multicultural and indigenous populations. The next step is identifying high-quality curricula to achieve those aims. Researchers in multicultural education agree that to be effective, curriculum reform should move beyond “additive” or “contribution” approaches (Banks, 1999; Bigler, 1999). These approaches might include reading about Martin Luther King, Jr. around the time of his national holiday or including Native American perspectives when studying Thanksgiving. They do not require major changes to curricula or teaching approaches. They are also insufficient to meet the needs of multicultural classrooms. Moving beyond additions and contributions means transforming curricula and including elements of social action. Culture is not just an object to be encountered. It is a dynamic concept that informs the lateral relay of practices and phenomena that shape our lives.

Effective multicultural education transforms culture from a thing to be studied into a practice to be mapped (Jacob, 1995). As James Banks has argued, this means moving from “simple exposure to meaningful engagement and empowerment” (2006, p. 612). Many educators struggle to move beyond cultural contributions and additions. The 2014 study showed that Perspectives helps teachers get to transformation and social action - the elements that make multicultural pedagogy most effective.

As Hawai’i has recognized, multicultural societies require multicultural curricula. The case studies here show how Perspectives can address the needs of multicultural and indigenous populations. They also demonstrate how Perspectives encourages teachers to move beyond issues of identity and diversity to address issues of justice and collective action. Although each case study contains transformative and action elements, I have chosen to organize them along the four anti-bias domains to illustrate this important movement of the curriculum. Within each case, we can see elements of genuinely multicultural pedagogy emerging in the diverse classrooms of Hawai’i.
A Guide to the Case Studies

Case Study 1: Building Community in the Fourth Grade
Ms. W teaches fourth grade in an urban elementary school. Her classroom is extremely diverse, with many students who are bilingual or trilingual. Most of her students are Asian. Her case shows how identity can be the focus of a rigorous learning plan.

Case Study 2: Understanding Difference in Oahu
Ms. L teaches fifth grade. Her K-8 Oahu school serves a relatively disadvantaged student population. Most of the students in her inclusive classroom identify as Hawaiian and Pacific Islander. Her case shows how Perspectives can change student behavior.

Case Study 3: Cooperation and Community in a Rural School
Ms. A is a veteran part-Hawaiian teacher with more than 18 years of experience. Although her kindergarten students are diverse, most are of Filipino heritage. Her case study reminds us of the specific experiences of students in rural schools.

Case Study 4: Connecting to the Present on Oahu
Ms. U is a veteran social studies teacher at a large, relatively affluent high school serving a mixed population. She used Perspectives with her AP US history students and found that it helped them make meaningful connections to current events.

Case Study 5: Studying Women's Rights in Honolulu
Ms. F is a fourth year teacher teaching fourth grade in a very diverse urban school. Her case study shows how rigorous texts on challenging issues spur students to engage in self-directed learning.

Case Study 6: From Identity to Action in High School
Ms. R is an Asian-American high school social studies teacher at a relatively small high school. Most of her students are Hawaiian. She used Perspectives in multiple classes. Ms. R’s case shows how the progress from identity to action can empower students.

Case Study 7: Student-Directed Inquiry on the Big Island
Ms. S teaches eighth grade in a school with many students who are new arrivals to the islands. She feels a responsibility to help them acculturate. Ms. S allowed her students to access the Perspectives site and design their own learning plans. Her case shows the possibilities of student-directed learning.
Identity

“In Indonesian there is a phrase, ‘cuci mata.’ This means ‘to wash the eyes.’ This is the idea of changing perspectives and harnessing other perspectives to help ourselves to see ourselves more complexly and to understand our interconnectedness in the world. Perspectives gives us that ability to wash our eyes.”

– Maya Soetoro-Ng, Ph.D.

Identity can be a site of conflict and confusion in Hawai‘i. For an outsider, it can be difficult to navigate the very language used to describe ethnicity. Teachers and other experts interviewed for this study used terms and slang unfamiliar to the author, but very significant on the islands. Words like “haole” (white, or part-white), “hapa” (half), and “kanaka maoli” (indigenous Hawaiian) clustered together. All teachers said that in one way or another, their students were constantly confronted by the question: What does it mean to be a resident of Hawai‘i? Since this question has many dimensions, teachers said that they used the Central Text Library to identify texts that would be relevant and relatable for their students, helping them to find answers through guided inquiry.

A wide body of literature supports the use of culturally relevant texts to bolster student learning and engagement. Perspectives seeks to provide what Alfred Tatum has called “enabling texts.” Enabling texts build a bridge between students’ abilities and prior knowledge to more complex or foreign texts. The CCSS themselves do not mandate particular texts, but do list exemplars in Appendix B to illustrate what appropriate complexity looks like at each grade level. Unfortunately, the CCSS text exemplar list does not reflect the diverse nature of America’s students. For example, Jane Gangi (2010) found that of the 88 books recommended for elementary school students in Appendix B of the CCSS, 69 of had white authors. Only six books focused on the poor and working class.

Perspectives offers an enriched approach to the Common Core. Its rationale follows calls by Sleeter (2012) and Bigler (1999) to reconceptualize culturally responsive pedagogy as a paradigm for teaching and learning rather than a set of occasional tools. Perspectives draws on the work of Emily Style, who argues that texts frame the world for students, building on existing knowledge while providing glimpses into other worlds, cultures, times and spaces. These glimpses are essential to helping students understand themselves and others: “Education needs to enable the student to look through window frames in order to see the realities of others and into mirrors in order to see her/his own reality reflected. Knowledge of both types of framing is basic to a balanced education” (Style, 1996, p. 35).

Culturally relevant nonfiction and literary fiction texts have been shown to engage reluctant and struggling readers. Feger (2006) found that challenging and critical non-fiction texts combined with tailored teaching strategies tapped into students’ existing interests and improved students’ confidence. Multiple studies support the argument that culturally relevant content and instructional methods are essential to enfranchise historically disadvantaged students (e.g., Bransford, J.D., Brown, A.L., & Cocking, R.R., 2000; Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2003; Lee, 1995; Lipka, et al., 2005).
The 2014 evaluation of *Perspectives* in the continental US found that its complex and relevant texts strongly engaged students. Teachers in that study reported that their students were unusually motivated by the texts they read, making connections to themselves and the world around them while engaging in rigorous literacy practice. Understanding identity is crucial to this process, as fifth grade teacher Ms. L explained:

When I looked at the *Perspectives* website, I thought: “Wow, these are really interesting topics that my students need.” They need that instant grab of attention of something new and relevant, not “Marie-Anne rafting with her entire family,” something they don’t even know about. When I saw the four pillars of identity, diversity and action, I was really interested because I had just come to the conclusion that those were the areas my kids were lacking in the most. They didn’t even have an understanding of their own identity, and it was causing a lot of conflict within our school, within the classroom and the entire community.

Although each case study presented in this report deals with identity in some fashion, the story of *Perspectives* in Ms W’s classroom shows how identity can be the focus of a rigorous learning plan. Her essential question, “How can I live, work, and play with others when we have differences?” centers identity while moving into diversity and the possibilities of conflict and cooperation. The two texts she chose engage identity from different angles, enfranchising her diverse student body and leading them into rigorous and constructive discussions. The culminating “identity portraits” activity encouraged her students to talk about their own identity and learn about their classmates in new and interesting ways. Ms. W’s experience also shows the rigor of *Perspectives* as it is applied in an elementary school classroom. As she proceeded through the Integrated Learning Plan, her students engaged in the practices mandated by the Common Core while engaging in deep thinking about themselves and the world around them.
Case Study 1: Building Community in the Fourth Grade

About Ms. W
Ms. W teaches fourth grade in an urban elementary school. Her classroom is extremely diverse, with many students who are bilingual or trilingual. Most of her students are Asian, some locally born and others recent arrivals to Hawai‘i, both from the continental US and from other countries. This is Ms. W's first year teaching the fourth grade – she recently returned to teaching, having taken some time off. Previously, she taught kindergarten.

Because she was returning to teaching and teaching a new grade level, Ms. W was nervous about taking on a new project like Perspectives, but said that after training and looking at the site, she was motivated to participate because she found the content and approach to be worthwhile.

The Approach
Ms. W began her planning with the essential question: “How can I live, work, and play with others when we have differences?” She was immediately drawn to the poem “Peace Begins With You,” despite its deceptively simple vocabulary:

“It was so meaningful. We are delving into a very important aspect of education that is sorely neglected - getting to know who we are.”

Ms. W’s class spent more than three hours working directly with this text. Before Ms. W introduced the poem to her class, she selected words from the text that she wanted her students to examine. Students used a Frayer Word Web model, working in pairs to unpack the words. Then students made word strips for the classroom word wall, sharing their words with the rest of the class. The class discussed each word as it was presented, offering different examples and meanings of the words before they were put on the wall. Next, Ms. W read the poem out loud to her students as they followed along. Afterward, students worked in pairs with the text, re-reading and writing questions on sticky notes that were put on the word wall for the rest of the class to see. Ms. W used this as an opportunity for formative assessment so that she could get a sense of her students’ understanding and comfort with the words.
On another day, the class re-read the text together as shared reading. They examined the structure of the text, asking questions such as: “How and why did the author organize her poem the way she did?” and “What is the author’s purpose and message?” Although some students were more engaged than others, Ms. W said that as a whole, students made a strong connection to the text:

The idea that needs and wants can affect peace was a new perspective for many of the students. Standing up and saying no, starting a “revolution” was stirring. They immediately related this understanding to Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King and the marches, protests, and speeches. The author’s claim that peace begins in one’s own backyard also stirred them. What does this mean? Knowing oneself has piqued their interest and mine. I am so happy to actually be focusing, with the students, on this critical idea of knowing oneself. It is generally neglected in school. They had thoughtful things to say about what leads to conflict.

Next, Ms. W’s class read “Julia Moves to the United States.” This is a nonfiction text about author Julia Alvarez’s experience moving from the Dominican Republic when she was young. Ms. W said that her ELL students were particularly engaged with the text, sharing their experiences of coming to school in the United States and experiencing bullying because of their names and accents. She said that this brought her classroom closer together. “It reminded me of how little time we spend in school looking at these other worlds, people, and perspectives,” said Ms. W. “I plan to start reading texts from diverse perspectives at the beginning of the year and keep it going throughout the year.”

Moving into Phase Four, Ms. W chose the task “What is the Argument?” Her students worked in pairs to create sequence charts showing the conditions or actions that lead to peace. Then, students used their charts to write letters to President Obama stating the conditions necessary for peace to exist. Ms. W required students to include at least two direct quotes from the texts in their letter and provide explanations for the meaning of those quotes, using examples. Finally, she asked students to write about what actions they could take to reduce conflict and help peace grow in their community.

Ms. W used this task to assess her students’ writing and thinking skills, including clarity and precision of writing, organization of ideas, and incorporation of text into their own ideas. “The students were surprised, wary, excited and interested by this task,” she said. “They kept asking me if I was really going to send him the letters.” She told her students that she would send them if the letters were written with care. Ms. W did mail the letters, and said she would use this task again:

It’s clearly a text-based task, and because the content is meaningful, it feels authentic and relevant to have the students carefully go through all the steps that build to a writing assignment. Other evidence-based activities and assignments I’ve put them through were less compelling. Using other people’s ideas and words made
sense. Not all the students succeeded in blending or connecting their ideas fluidly with the texts, but it was a more successful task than others I’ve attempted this year.

For the final phase of her ILP, Ms. W chose the “Identity Portraits” task. Her students paired up with someone they had never worked with before and interviewed each other. Then they drew portraits containing symbols that represented their partner’s identity, beliefs, values or areas of interest. This task took about three hours, but Ms. W found it classroom time well spent:

The kids love to draw and paint and create things other than papers and math work. We haven’t done enough art-type work to satisfy the many in the class who are happy drawing, painting, singing, dancing, and making stuff. Also, it was a great way for students to get to know someone in the class that they don’t know well, haven’t interacted with a lot, and may have some differences with.

Ms. W used this as an opportunity for assessment. She was trying to see how her students interacted and communicated with each other. At the same time, Ms. W said that her students had fun with the projects, asking their partners lots of questions and talking about themselves openly.

The Results
Although Ms. W was apprehensive about adding something new to her curriculum while trying a new grade level, she was very happy with her experience using Perspectives. She said that the texts – especially “Julia” – created a safe space for students to discuss their own experiences with bullying that had never come up before. Ms. W says that Perspectives has improved her classroom community and climate. She only wished that she had started earlier:

I’d like to start earlier, because I think that piece of knowing who you are is just so critical, and we don’t do that in education. I feel like it brought the class together in a way. I felt like they did become more interested in each other and did understand each other in different ways or appreciate each other in new ways.

She plans to use Perspectives throughout the year next year. Although she was initially intimidated by the website interface, she found it very easy to use. Like other teachers in this study, Ms. W hopes to see more integration of Hawaiian, Asian and Polynesian identities in the Central Text Library. She also feels strongly about place-based education and incorporating place-based indigenous spirituality into the library. She singled out environmental activism as an area that would be especially meaningful to students on the islands as well as students on the continental US, and suggested that more could be done to improve Perspectives’ offerings in this area.
Diversity

“Multiculturalism looks us in the face every day. We see difference. We see people of different colors. We see people of different national origins. We hear a lot of different languages. Perspectives resonates with us because learning about differences and what unites us is in the fabric of our culture. Perspectives honors the work that we strive to do in Hawai‘i and gives us the resources to make it happen.” - Amber Makaiau, Ph.D.

As Perspectives’ Anti-Bias Framework moves into the domain of diversity, student-level outcomes deal with skills such as identifying differences and commonalities, expressing interest in the lived experiences of others, and developing genuine connections with other people. One of the core ideas of Perspectives is that texts can help to generate empathy with people who are different. This idea is rooted in current research in the field of social psychology.

In 1954, Gordon Allport argued that intergroup contact was one of the most effective ways to reduce tension between groups. Ideally, all students would be able to come into contact with members of other groups. But this is neither practical nor always desirable. Even very integrated schools may not have representation from all groups, and the reality is that “very integrated” schools themselves are increasingly in the minority. Even in situations where groups come into contact, tension can increase and biases become entrenched. Bullying is one obvious and common example of this phenomenon.

Fortunately, real contact is not necessary to build intergroup relationships, as research supporting extended contact has shown. Liebkind and McAlister (1999) define the extended contact hypothesis this way:

[K]nowledge that an ingroup member has a close relationship with an outgroup member leads to more positive intergroup attitudes. The ingroup friendship partner provides a positive model for more tolerant norms for interaction with the outgroup and the outgroup member provides a positive exemplar that disconfirms negative expectations and beliefs about the outgroup. (767)

Extended contact has found support in the simulated encounters that texts and media representations provide. As Paluck and Green (2009) found, “extended contact can reduce outgroup hostility, and narratives can communicate norms and inspire empathy and perspective taking” (356). Extended contact “can allow participants to experience contact while avoiding any anxiety or negative feeling arising from direct contact” (Cameron, et al, 1208).

Texts can diminish biases by presenting stereotype-disconfirming information, characters and stories (Yawkey, 1973). Unfortunately, students are likely to have stereotype-based expectancies that influence their information-seeking behavior. To counteract this tendency, Stephan (1999) says that students must encounter situations “in which stereo-
type disconfirmations are clear, occur frequently, are dispersed across a number of different members of the outgroup, and continue over time” (85).

Tools must accompany texts to overcome confirmation bias and build empathy. These include explicit and guided discussion of identities and bias (Aboud & Levy, 2008) as well as perspective-taking activities. Multiple controlled studies show that these activities can work to increase empathy with marginalized and stigmatized groups (e.g., Dovidio, et al, 2004; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Galinsky, Ku & Wang, 2005; Galinsky, et al, 2006; Vescio, Sechrist & Paolucci, 2003).

Teachers in the 2014 study validated the Perspectives approach for building empathy in their students. Across grade levels and subject areas, those teachers reported that the curriculum created a safe space for students to discuss classroom and community issues by referring to characters in texts rather than individuals. Teachers also found that texts offering “windows” into other cultures exposed students to new ideas and promoted awareness of historical and contemporary injustices.

The case studies presented here show two different ways teachers used Perspectives to build community among diverse students. Ms. L chose to focus on physical abilities to build tolerance and understanding in her inclusive classroom. She saw real and immediate changes in her students’ behavior and expressed beliefs - an example of extended contact in action. Walking through her experience with the ILP, it is clear that Ms. L’s students practiced rigorous and text-dependent activities, cumulating in an activity designed to persuade their peers to change behavior. Ms. A’s kindergarten class learned about cooperation while developing literacy skills. Her case study serves as a useful reminder that the experiences of students in rural schools can be very different from those of their peers.
Case Study 2: Understanding Difference in Oahu

Meet Ms. L
Ms. L is in her seventh year of teaching, although this was her first year of teaching fifth grade. She previously taught first and second grade at the same school, so she had previously taught many of the students in her current class. Most of the students in Ms. L’s inclusive classroom identify as Hawaiian and Pacific Islander. Her K-8 Oahu school serves a relatively disadvantaged student population, with many students living in troubled home environments, if they have homes at all.

When she joined the study, Ms. L said she hoped that Perspectives would help her students to develop a community that would show empathy, tolerance and compassion for people different from them. She expressed some concern at the outset about time – teaching in a new grade level with new curricula and tests, she was worried about being able to give the curriculum the attention she felt that it deserved. But she was motivated to use Perspectives because her students are often disconnected from the content she is required to present. Ms. L was looking for new strategies and texts to engage her class.

The Approach
Ms. L was excited to work with students that she had known when they were younger. However, when the year started, she was surprised to see that many had changed. As a first grade teacher, Ms. L had worked to help her students to develop qualities like respect, compassion, empathy and emotional understanding. “Very quickly,” she said, “I realized that these abilities had been basically depleted. I had a group of students who were disrespectful. They had no sense of identity, they had no sense of even how to work together intellectually in a safe community. And academically they were far behind where they needed to be in fifth grade.” She was especially shocked when, during a unit about interactions between European settlers and Native Americans on the continental US, her students began using racial slurs. “That slur described them,” said Ms. L.

When she attended the Perspectives training, Ms. L was attracted to the Anti-Bias Framework and the site’s materials. Because Ms. L teaches in an inclusive classroom, her students manifest different abilities. She noticed that many of her students were struggling with how to relate to differently abled students:

They were saying that it’s kind of weird or not cool to be friendly to, or helpful to those children with disabilities. One student has a physical disability. But the other students who have grown up in this community, they weren’t at the place where they were wanting to spend recesses with her, lunch with her like they did in the past.

“Tourists are sitting on the beach less than a mile away and they don’t even know there’s a school across the street where kids come to school without shoes.”
To create conversation around this issue, Ms. L chose the text “An Unlikely Friendship” for shared reading and analysis. This is a story of what happens when a new student in a wheelchair is introduced into a fourth grade classroom. She found that many of her students weren’t familiar with the term “disability,” let alone its meaning. She immediately saw results in her class:

Students were able to relate the text to a student in their own class who is also in a wheelchair. It gave them a different point of view and a few of the students realized that they may have treated our student differently because of how she looked. The next time that [the disabled student] was in our classroom for something, one of the kids went over and stood up for her and another student said: “No don’t do that, don’t you remember,” referring to the text that we used. It was such a cool moment where I realized that I was able to find a text that would be impactful for them in their everyday lives.

One of Ms. L’s challenges is differentiating instruction in her diverse classroom, where many students read below grade level. She found Perspectives just right to fit this need. “I felt like it was rigorous,” she said, “And I loved that you could differentiate aspects of the learning plan.” For Phase One, she used the “Meet New Vocabulary” strategy. Here, she differentiated by choosing words to match the needs and abilities of different students. Ms. L modeled the writing component for students with disabilities who needed help. She followed up with the strategy, reviewing vocabulary for several days and asking students to use words in a sentence to see if they understood the meaning. Ms. L especially liked that the graphic organizer included space to draw a picture resembling the word, but thought she might modify it in the future to have less writing but cover more words.

In Phase Two, Ms. L used the “Think Aloud” strategy. This was a formative assessment for her students, as Ms. L was able to see if students could provide reasons to support their opinions about the text. “Students loved the idea of forming opinions based on statements from the text,” she said. In Phase Three, the “Text Talk Time” strategy provided more time for discussion. This was challenging but productive for Ms. L’s students: “I loved hearing my students communicate and develop inquiry about this topic,” she said, “even though they had a hard time getting away from just giving reasons or examples and developing new thoughts.”

Ms. L wanted to do something a little different in Phase Four, so she chose the “Point of View” task with the goal of having students produce a comic strip. Her class worked to make cartoons presenting a part of the story from a different point of view. Again, this was a challenge for many of her students who did not understand the components of a comic strip. But Ms. L said that she would definitely do this again: “I loved this project! It was so fun and unusual.”
Phase Five was the most time-consuming for Ms. L. She chose the “Community Mural/Poster Campaign” task. She modified the task for her ELL students by giving them themes to choose from. The other students were free to identify their own themes. The task helped Ms. L to assess her students’ learning, as she was able to see if students understood different themes from the text and could represent them in art. The task didn’t quite turn out the way that Ms. L had planned. She’d hoped to have one coherent mural, but the products ended up being “mini-murals, with little informational pieces where the students were trying to persuade their peers to do the right thing.”

Still, Ms. L was happy with the result. The mural was placed outdoors for the whole school to see. “My students enjoyed it. I thought it was a really neat way for kids to show what they had learned. It was great for them to show their new thoughts through art.”

The Results
Ms. L found that Perspectives was a good fit for her class. She especially liked the ILP structure and how easy it was to use the website. Ms. L said that she would definitely use the curriculum again, but would probably break the phases up into smaller steps to meet the needs of her differentiated classroom. Reflecting on the experience, Ms. L said that next time she would start work on the “Do Something” phase earlier to give her students more time to finish and promote their campaign. She was pleased that action was part of the curriculum, because she feels strongly that it is an important part of instruction:

Kids have to change the world. Eventually they’re going to be our future, and if we’re not creating activists, we’re going to live in the same world we live in today and nothing will ever get better. They need to learn be activists so they can change for the better. We can lead them towards what’s even possible and what they could achieve. They have to be activists. There’s no sense in even going and learning if you’re not going to be active about it.

Like all teachers in the study, Ms. L hoped that the Perspectives text library would expand to include more resources about Hawaiian, Polynesian and Samoan cultures and history. She feels this need most keenly given the troubled community she serves:

I think if we could just help the community and their children to understand who they are and to be proud of who they are, this would help. We should give them literature about their identities and help them to know that they have many things to be proud of. They should be educated about their identity instead of believing society’s assumptions about them and lashing out.
Case Study 3: Cooperation and Community in a Rural School

Meet Ms. A
Ms. A is a veteran part-Hawaiian teacher with more than 18 years of experience. She currently teaches kindergarten in a small and very rural school. Although her students are diverse, most are of Filipino heritage. Over the last several decades, the economy of her community has changed from agricultural plantations to tourism and hospitality. Ms. A describes the community as “tight-knit,” with values that place family and intangibles above money.

Ms. A follows HIDOE policies closely. She became interested in Perspectives after an educational official at the state level shared the curriculum with her. She thought it was important to have her community represented in the study, so agreed to be among the original group of study participants.

The Approach
Like many kindergarten teachers in 2014 Perspectives pilot, Ms. A struggled to find texts suitable for her grade level. She said that the concepts in the texts were appropriate for her students, but that the presentation on the website didn’t work very well for her classroom or students. As a teacher at a small, relatively under-resourced school, Ms. A was not able to display stories on a smartboard. She made the decision to print out texts, but without a color printer the small, monochrome illustrations were not very meaningful for her students. She also said that there were not enough illustrations to engage her students, who are not yet ready to read themselves.

However, Ms. A did manage to find two texts that would be meaningful for her students and align with her essential question: “Why is it important to cooperate?” The first was Raspberries! She was able to find the physical storybook, which she preferred to the online presentation. Before reading the text aloud, Ms. A discussed the text’s Tier Two vocabulary words with her students. They also talked as a class about how they cooperate with their family at home, sharing with a partner and with the group. Reading the story created its own special set of challenges. There are no traffic lights in Ms. A’s community. Also, her students had never seen a raspberry. However, many students had experiences in communities with traffic lights, and they were able to share with the group. Ms. A was able to draw an analogy to strawberries. These small bumps aside, the class was able to grasp the core message (and vocabulary) of cooperation. “They liked the story,” said Ms. A. “They made many text to self connections, and I liked the story because cooperation is such an important skill in the classroom.”
The second text was “The Three Billy Goats Gracious,” a retelling of the classic fable. In addition to this text, Ms. A read a different version aloud to her students. “They made comparisons to the other versions of the story,” she said. “This was a good activity.”

In addition to time spent with the texts, Ms. A used “Student Journals” in Phase One as formative assessment. Students illustrated the main idea of the story and wrote about it. “In kindergarten illustrations tell much about what students understand about text,” said Ms. A. “Their writing provides further evidence of their comprehension.” Next, “Shared Reading” allowed students to go deeper. Students focused on locating parts of speech in the texts and the entire class practiced reading with expression. Ms. A said the strategy fits well into her daily balanced literacy program.

The Results
Although Ms. A was unable to fit Phase Three into her sequence, she says that she plans to use these tasks in the future, as she is very committed to incorporating activism into her classroom:

School is the perfect place to teach activism. That’s our responsibility. Think of the word "activism." Active. To be active, to not sit back and let other people do the thinking for you, and to say how we feel. School is the perfect place for that. What we’re teaching is that you need to think for yourself, to look at all the facts, and do something. I think that is our responsibility to encourage that behavior. They should fact find, they should look at their own culture, and they should think about their future. If that’s called activism, I think it’s a good thing. I like for kids to be vocal.

A sense of place is very important for Ms. A and her students. She sees it as inextricably tied to her community’s identity on the island. She worried that students will lose their sense of identity and culture as they leave to pursue schooling and careers. “Here somebody’s always going to look out for you. In many places, they don’t have that any more. Perspectives fits nicely here, because it makes kids think about what is important and what should be important.”
The Anti-Bias Framework recognizes that social and emotional skills must move beyond understanding identity and developing an appreciation for diversity. Student competencies in these first two domains are essential to identify biases and reduce prejudice, but prejudice reduction by itself is not enough to reduce discrimination. Diminishing surface tensions does not necessarily provoke a deep understanding of the causes of inequality and may even stymie inquiry and action. In other words, acknowledging diversity is not the same as understanding disparities (Hyland, 2005). Recognizing discrimination requires students to expand their sense of justice beyond the “rightness” or “wrongness” of interactions between individuals.

The student-level outcomes in the Framework reflect this need. For example, a students in the K-2 grade band should be able to agree with this statement: “I know some true stories about how people have been treated badly because of their group identities, and I don’t like it.” The last part of this sentence, “I don’t like it,” links justice to the previous anti-bias domains. One of the key psychological factors at work here is the experience of empathy with the mistreated. There are many well-established benefits to empathy, including pro-social attitudes and helping behavior. Parallel empathy occurs when a person experiences an emotional response after being exposed to injustice. The feeling that social arrangements are unjust can reduce prejudice and even help a student move beyond prejudice reduction toward an active awareness of social inequality (Stephan & Finlay, 1999).

The teachers in the 2014 study told many stories about times when their students became outraged, sad or motivated to work for change when they learned about historical or contemporary injustices through Perspectives texts. They also told stories of classrooms erupting in applause when justice was served. Extended contact theory predicts this kind of text-based empathy, similar to the experience Ms. W reported after reading “Julia Moves to the Unites States” with her students:

They all experienced what she [Julia] experienced, and it was really good when they actually said this, because discussions about this issue wouldn’t necessarily come up if we weren’t having this text as our focus. When we read the article, they were able to connect their experience to hers. It was really good.

One of the benefits of using texts to generate discussion and empathy is that teachers and students can avoid the putting someone in their class or community on the spot as an example of their identity group. In Ms. L’s fifth grade class, the text encouraged her students to empathize with their disabled classmate and remind others of the need for appropriate
behavior. In the case studies presented in this section, a veteran high school teacher and a relatively new elementary school teacher used texts to activate students’ sense of justice while creating awareness of historical and contemporary injustice.

Ms. U was able to fit Perspectives into her AP US History class during the study of the civil rights movement. Although her main objective was for students to gain historical knowledge about the movement through close textual analysis, she was surprised and happy to find her students making connections to present injustices, including police brutality. She said that social media exposed her students to many conflicting narratives about the emerging protests against police violence in the continental US, and that her students struggled to put these in their own lived context. As Ms. U’s students explored the history of activism and protest through songs and speeches, they gained a framework for understanding injustices in their own time.

In Ms. F’s fourth grade class, students were surprised to learn about the historical disenfranchisement of women:

They learned about Susan B. Anthony and Amelia Bloomer. Then after that, they were interested in learning about other aspects of the fight for equality and women’s rights. It was really cool to see them have these "Aha!" moments and to experience their shock about women’s situations just 100 years ago. I felt it was really fruitful and it definitely met my goals in exposing them to different perspectives and different perspectives that were held historically in our country.

The Community Newsletter that Ms. F’s students produced for their “Do Something” task showcased their work for the rest of the school. Each pair of students reported on some aspect of women’s rights, including the Declaration of Sentiments, Eleanor Roosevelt, the 19th Amendment, Title IX, Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the National Association of Colored Women. Each essay was accompanied by student reflection on one of the 16 Habits of Mind described by Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick in Learning and Leading with Habits of Mind. These included persistence, thinking interdependently, problem solving, cooperation and caring.
Case Study 4: Connecting to the Present on Oahu

Meet Ms. U
Ms. U is a veteran teacher in her 16th year. She is a social studies teacher at a large, relatively affluent high school serving a mixed population composed mostly of Asian, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students. Ms. U is well versed in the Common Core, but worries that the CCSS are overly focused on narrow technical skills and non-fiction. Ms. U teaches grades 9-12, including pre-Advanced Placement (AP) and AP social studies classes.

Social justice is very important to Ms. U, who tries to infuse it in all of her classes. She has used Teaching Tolerance materials for many years in her classroom. She was eager to participate in the Perspectives pilot because she expected it would reflect the high quality she had come to expect from Teaching Tolerance. Ms. U is also involved in politics at the school and state level.

The Approach
Ms. U integrated Perspectives into her AP US History class. She was particularly interested in helping her class to analyze the rhetoric of the civil rights movement using a variety of texts, including “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” “I Have a Dream,” textbook accounts, film clips and songs. Ms. U explained that the class revisited texts many times:

I wanted the students to analyze change over time within the movement in terms of goals, strategies, and support. I asked them to think about both goals and strategies in terms of language and how those goals and strategies were expressed in language. What we did then is we went back and we looked at those pieces and put them side-by-side and listened to the music again, and listened to the speeches, and read the speeches again.

Next, students discussed texts in small groups. They identified elements that stood out to them in four different pieces. Ultimately, Ms. U asked students to choose two songs from different moments in the civil rights movement. “I wanted them to look for continuity and connections between different types of expression,” she said. “The stuff they came up with was brilliant.” Ms. U was surprised by the amount of writing that students did in response to this activity. In particular, she was impressed by the way that students drew connections to the present and their own lives. “They really saw themselves in these young people from a different time,” she said.

“They started asking: ‘Is this even possible for our generation? Do we have this kind of power? Do we have this kind of responsibility? What issues are the most pressing for us? Is inequality still something that we should be paying attention to?’”
Ms. U said that this struck her as especially interesting because the civil rights movement and the experience of African-Americans is “generally pretty distant” from the largely Japanese-American culture of her students. She found that her students were able to connect America’s many recent incidents of police brutality and the accompanying protests to their study of the civil rights movement. This allowed students to talk about current events in Ms. U’s class in ways that they hadn’t considered before:

I think that it would be hard for them to imagine police brutality happening in our community. We talked about police brutality towards non-whites in general in Hawai’i. We’ve had some recent incidents of violence by off-duty military and/or police towards Hawaiians or young local men. They really started to see the connection between race and prejudice and this kind of violence a little bit in their own community.

Because of the tightly organized AP curriculum, Ms. U was not able to fit in a “Do Something” phase. She agreed with the idea of “Do Something,” but said that it would be difficult to find a foothold in mandated curricula similar to the one now present in her high school’s Language Arts courses.

The Results
Ms. U is herself very politically aware and active. She expressed considerable enthusiasm for Perspectives and thinks it has a substantial potential to make an impact in classrooms. However, she is worried that the current political environment will make it difficult for Perspectives to reach an audience with sufficient socio-economic diversity:

I can see this curriculum being embraced by administrators in a really strong school system or in schools with really high socio-economic status that don’t have to worry about No Child Left Behind. But if that happens, we’re missing the population that needs it the most: these kids who need to be supported in gaining awareness of the world around them.

To increase adoption in Hawai’i, Ms. U. suggested that Perspectives expand its text library to more specifically address the three major areas in the state’s Modern History of Hawai’i course: overthrow and annexation; World War II and internment; and contemporary Hawai’i. These texts would be relevant to modern history teachers working on the continental US as well, increasing awareness of Hawai’i there while providing materials relevant to culture and place on the islands. Ms. U also expressed enthusiasm for organizing texts along a timeline to ease adoption in social studies classes.
Case Study 5: Studying Women’s Rights in Honolulu

Meet Ms. F

Ms. F is in her fourth year of teaching. Her school is urban and extremely diverse, with many students who are Asian and second generation arrivals. Her fourth grade students speak a variety of languages, and Ms. F encourages them to read books in their home languages if they choose – in addition to English language texts. Ms. F describes her students as “very proud of their identities,” and says that her school’s climate is one that is very tolerant and open to its multicultural population.

Like several other teachers in this study, Ms. F already incorporated discussion and critical inquiry techniques in her classroom using the Philosophy for Children approach. As a relatively new teacher, Ms. F has been using the Common Core standards as long as she has been teaching, and said that she was very comfortable with those standards before this study. She signed up for the pilot program because she hoped to gather new techniques and strategies to bolster her existing commitment to anti-bias education.

The Approach

Ms. F began her ILP with the essential question “How have women’s rights changed over time?” She explained that she chose the question because it was personally very important to her and she hoped to raise her students’ awareness. Students read two texts: a biography of Susan B. Anthony and the short story “You Forgot Your Skirt, Amelia Bloomer.” Ms. F said the Anthony text was useful for her students: “It is a good introduction to the gender inequality that was present in US history, it is inspirational because it detailed how Susan B. Anthony overcame many hardships, it shows persistence towards a goal or cause, and it helped us practice the reading skills of summarizing and identifying the main idea.”

The Anthony text mentions that she started wearing bloomers. Ms. F’s students did not know what those were. She told them to “hang on to your curiosity” for the next text. Before reading the story together, Ms. F showed the class a picture of the typical woman’s dress in the 1800s. She explained the corset and “bird cage” that went under the dress. Then, Ms. F showed her students a picture of Amelia with her bloomers on. Her class was very engaged with the story:

One student asked if the author was trying to be funny or comical, which created the opportunity for a discussion on mood and tone. A lot of the kids were astonished at how the people reacted to Amelia Bloomer. Another student asked how men dressed in that time. The students giggled and laughed openly as the author referred to unfair and unequal practices towards women as ‘silly.’”

“Learning about social justice has changed who I am. It’s nice to have these texts and the platform that allows me to share that with my students.”
The class made Word Webs for each text, using the graphic organizers that Ms. F had pulled from the Perspectives site. The students enjoyed illustrating their vocabulary word and were eager to share with each other. Ms. F said that this was a challenging strategy that she would use again:

Creating word webs helped students to understand the text more and helped them to learn new vocabulary words on a deeper level. By not only defining a new word, but being asked to find synonyms, antonyms, and draw a picture, I feel that they really incorporated new words into their vocabulary.

Once the Word Webs were done, Ms. F’s class moved into the “Close and Critical Reading” phase of her ILP. The strategy Ms. F chose was “GIST.” GIST stands for Generating Interactions between Schemata and Text. Ms. F used GIST to summarize the text as a whole group. Before discussion, students talked to a partner about what they thought the “Who, What, When, Why and How” were of their assigned section of the text. Next, the whole class used the strategy together, as each team shared their findings out loud. Ms. F found this strategy effective. “It helps the students comprehend the information,” she said, “it is also a good structure for making generalizations about the text.” However, she said that the group discussion was very time consuming, taking a total of 90 minutes for both texts. Next time, she plans to ask students to turn in individual or paired summaries.

For the next phase, Ms. F. used the “Brain Share” activity. During Brain Share, small groups of students rotate through stations, discussing and recording concepts from central texts. She modified the activity slightly, allowing students to come up with questions rather than writing questions herself. This meant that discussions sometimes risked veering away from the text, as Ms. F described:

Some of the questions were not directly about the text, but were on topics related to the texts, such as “Did other countries have women's suffrage?” and “Why do people care how others dress?” I am glad that the text facilitated this curiosity and inquiry.

“Brain Share” was an opportunity for formative assessment. Paying attention to the Common Core’s Speaking and Listening Standards, Ms. F sat with each group and took notes on the students’ participation, listening skills and ability to share their ideas verbally.

As Ms. F moved into the final phases of her ILP, she continued to facilitate more student-directed learning. She chose “Questions That Came Up” for her writing task. She reported that some students struggled to come up with thoughtful questions, but more time and guidance allowed all students the space they needed to engage in genuine inquiry. Ms. F found that her students wrote “very thoughtful questions” to the characters and authors of the texts. This activity allowed her to assess student performance in reading and writing:
I really liked the prompt of having the students come up with the questions themselves because it encouraged them to think deeper about the tasks. It encouraged engagement and it gave them some freedom and choice of what they wanted to write about. I also could gauge how deeply they were understanding, interpreting, and critiquing the text by the questions they came up with.

After writing, it was time for Ms. F’s students to “Do Something.” She chose the “Community Newsletter” activity, estimating that it took about 225 minutes to complete. Ms. F judged this time well spent:

The newsletter was a great offshoot to our reading unit. While we were reading the texts, the students began asking other questions about women’s rights and women’s inequality, showing that they were ready to do some self-led research. I allowed the students to research a topic of their choice that was about the fight for women’s rights or women’s equality … They were motivated to do the research because their knowledge and hard work contributed to creating an article in the newsletter, which gave them voice and agency.

Students took two days to research topics that they chose including Lucy Stone, the Declaration of Sentiments and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. They drafted articles in one day, then met with partners to give and receive feedback. Afterward, the articles went to Ms. F for final editing. Students collaborated to lay the newsletter out in a template and shared it with the whole school.

The Results
Ms. F had a very positive experience using Perspectives. She reported that the texts for her grade level were very age appropriate and rigorous. Ms. F thought that the ILP sequence worked well for her students. She said that having discussion before writing meant that students were very comfortable with their topics:

They had thought deeply about it and they were really well-primed to write about it. Then after all of that work with each specific text, they were ready for the action piece because they were not worrying about other chapters that played into the fight for women’s suffrage. I really love the structure. I definitely plan on using it in the future.

Ms. F plans to continue using Perspectives as she moves into the fifth grade next year with her existing group of students.
Action

“Kids have to change the world. To do that they need to be thinkers. They need to navigate a world that’s so complex with all sort of things. You’ve got to teach them to think. If they can’t think critically about what’s presented in their lives, then we haven’t done anything for them. That’s what drew me to Perspectives.”

-Ms. L

The fifth phase of Perspectives’ Integrated Learning Plan is “Do Something.” In this phase, students demonstrate their awareness and learning from earlier phases through performance tasks that build civic engagement and critical literacy skills. Although not all teachers in this study completed this phase, all agreed that it is essential to effective education.

As students move from identity and diversity awareness through the justice and action domains of the anti-bias framework, they are building the skills necessary to be active and engaged citizens. Emerging research in social psychology suggests that this approach is essential to overcome the limits of prejudice reduction as a strategy for social change. While there is considerable support for the contact hypothesis, we now know that the positive effects of contact are largely one-sided. While effective for members of a dominant group, intergroup contact is generally ineffective for members of the nondominant group (Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). In social psychology, collective action is a term that refers to occasions when groups act together to accomplish goals. Many educators (including the teachers in this study and the 2014 evaluation) see collective action, in which students act together to accomplish a goal, as an important additional strategy to aid and empower members of nondominant groups.

Although it is common to view prejudice reduction and collective action as complementary aims, they may be more at odds than commonly understood. In the past, the prejudice reduction strategy has tended to have a different audience than the collective action strategy. Prejudice reduction has generally been focused on members of the advantaged group, while collective action research and strategy has targeted disadvantaged groups. In addition to having different targets, the strategies have contradictory psychological preconditions for success (Wright & Baray, 2012).

Commonality need not reify differences. Perspectives attempts to show that collective action can co-exist with prejudice reduction using appropriate strategies. These include: subtyping of allies and other friendly members of the other group; creating coalitions between groups; and open discussions about difference, disparate treatment and discrimination in intergroup interactions (Dovidio, et al, 2004; Saguy, et al., 2009). The teachers in this study, like their peers in the 2014 evaluation, reported all of these behaviors as students moved into the final parts of their ILP. When empathy and open communication are motivated by a sense of justice, students can work together on activities that confront stereotypes and their consequences. The case studies in this report show that teachers can use these activities for rich assessment, validating Perspectives’ core idea of marrying rigor and relevance.
The 2014 evaluation showed support for the *Perspectives* approach. Reflecting on their experiences with the “Do Something” culminating task, pilot teachers on the continental US found that students were very involved in applied learning through collective action. As those teachers worked to scaffold learning by moving beyond awareness of injustice to empowerment and action, they found that students were even more engaged in their own learning. This may be because students perceived that their actions were useful – a key factor in motivation (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000).

The case studies presented here show two very different approaches to using *Perspectives*. Ms. R implemented a rigorous approach using many texts with a unifying theme of “covering,” asking students to think deeply about the many ways that individuals conceal parts of their identity that differ from the assumptions of mainstream society. In addition to using *Perspectives* in her social studies classroom, Ms. R reorganized her Ethnic Studies course around the four Anti-Bias domains. Students in this class created and implemented a school-wide campaign to promote common courtesy.

Of all the teachers in this study, Ms. S took the most radical approach to using *Perspectives*. Each of her students logged on to the site and created their own ILP depending on their personal interests. Ms. S was impressed with the wide variety of ideas her class discussed: “It was really awesome to have these different types of themes come up like transgender issues, bullying and racism. It was amazing to see the conversations that stemmed from those texts.” Ms. S’s class repeated this process twice, performing a whole array of “Do Something” tasks, including PSAs, film festivals and political cartoons. They engaged as a group writing letters to political figures about the issues they had studied through *Perspectives*. For some teachers, this approach would seem to invite chaos in the classroom, but Ms. S shows that it is possible to use *Perspectives* to achieve extremely differentiated learning experiences while bolstering student proficiency in core academic tasks including vocabulary acquisition, structured inquiry and argumentative writing.
Case Study 6: From Identity to Action in High School

Meet Ms. R
Ms. R is an Asian-American high school social studies teacher at a relatively small high school. Most students at her school are part or native Hawaiian, with about half receiving free or reduced price lunches. Ms. R describes her school’s climate as “peaceful.” The school had some issues with intergroup relations more than a decade ago, and started an ethnic studies program. Ms. R teaches this class in addition to her regular history courses, and credits it with reducing intergroup tension at her school.

The Approach
The essential question Ms. R chose to pilot Perspectives in her social studies class was: “How do our various group identities as well as other’s viewpoints shape us as individuals?” Ms. R’s students read an excerpt from Kenji Yoshino’s book Covering. This text draws from the opening parts of the book to introduce the idea of “covering,” downplaying aspects of identity that might be different from mainstream society. This is a short but dense text with more than 30 Tier Two vocabulary words. Students “annolighted” (highlighting and annotating) the text as they read. Ms. R reported that this strategy allowed students with weaker vocabulary to jot down questions on the side or circle words whose meaning was unclear so that they could seek clarification. In addition, Ms. R used the Phase One strategy “Prior Knowledge and Personal Association Surveys.” This was an attempt to help students relate to the text. “Making it personal helps them to engage and work with the text,” said Ms. R. Covering would continue to be a crucial part of Ms. R’s ILP:

“At first, I was thinking, ‘Oh, do I actually want to try to put one more thing on my plate?’ But it actually fits nicely. It can fit anywhere, in anything that you do.”

Next, students engaged with multiple texts from the Central Text Library, including “10,000 Dresses,” “Hand Me Downs,” and a Storycorps piece called “I Tried to Hide My Stutter.” These helped students to engage the idea of covering from multiple perspectives. Ms. R said that although her students were very engaged with the texts, they expressed concern that there were not enough texts that reflected their Hawaiian, Polynesian and Asian identities. Ms. R chose to supplement with some videos and other materials with a more local flavor. She then did a jigsaw activity with the various readings, leading up to a writing task. Ms. R chose “The Pages of My Life,” using the following prompt:
How does society support or suppress our individual identities? After reading an excerpt from Covering, address the question by writing a short memoir about an experience or event in your own life that relates to a theme in the text. Write your memoir in first person, using narrative techniques such as dialogue, description and reflection to develop experiences, events or characters.

These memoirs were a jumping-off point for the final phase of Ms. R’s ILP. She chose to do a “Community Arts Showcase” with her students. Students were able to choose how they wanted to portray covering artistically. Her students composed poems, videos, haiku, photographs, collages and other works to illustrate covering in their lives or in the lives of others. This was showcased in the library for the rest of the school to see. Ms. R described her students’ reactions to the task:

I had students who didn’t take much interest in the class really motivated and excited at the project. Others felt it was a great way to showcase how they cover or how society sees them or treats them. Some kids thought: “I can’t do this, I’m not artistic,” but once they started doing it, I said, “Well, maybe you’re covering something.” Then they came up with some really great ideas. It was one of those incredible teaching experiences where I thought: “Oh, my gosh, I would love to do this again.” It was just so positive, and the kids were so positive about it.

Outside of her US History class, Ms. R used Perspectives in a different and unique way. She attended the original Hawai‘i training in 2014 and was inspired to redesign her Ethnic Studies course along the four core Anti-Bias Domains: Identity, Justice, Diversity and Action. “We use those themes to help with what we’re teaching,” she said. “Honestly, it was perfect for us, so we changed how we were doing things to incorporate those, then we revised the readings and everything else.” Ms. R said that the Framework helped her to make sense of her students’ needs:

For us, identity is important. We want our students to get deeper. What’s it mean? Who am I? What makes me unique? What makes me also tie into society? Because I think that’s what the kids forget. They always want to be so unique, but they’re also part of a bigger picture, and that bigger picture goes into diversity. We are diverse, and that’s fine, and we need to learn empathy, and we need to learn how to accept each other, because when we don’t do that, then we have to go to justice. We have to start looking at how we can change things to make things better.

Using the domains led Ms. R to incorporate an action element into her course. Based on their readings and collective brainstorming, her students came up with the idea to have a school-wide “common courtesy” campaign to improve their school climate and community.
Initially, their idea was to focus on respect. But Ms. R said that there are some particular cultural differences that influence the ways her students think about respect. She explained that for most of her students, respect is something to be earned – especially for adults. As the classroom discussion deepened, students all came to agree that common courtesy is something that everyone should give to everybody. “if they don’t respect you, you don’t need to respect them,” one of Ms. R’s students said, “but you should give them common courtesy.” From this shared insight, Ms. R’s students came up with their own plan. “A lot of it was me facilitating them,” she said, “because it was entirely student driven.”

The campaign took several forms in the school, including posters and fliers. Ms. R’s students made ribbons for others to wear signifying their support for common courtesy. One key element was daily reminders in the school bulletin. At first, Ms. R’s students were unsure of what to write, but this changed:

> They came up with some really awesome things, so I started putting reminders two to three times a week into the bulletin. Then the students started to see their work out there and they were very excited. They’d come back saying “We talked about this in my other class,” or “You used my quote!”

At the end of the school year, Ms. R’s students took time to reflect on the successes and limits of their campaign, writing reflection pieces as a culminating activity.

**The Results**

Ms. R is very excited about the possibilities *Perspectives* holds for students at her high school. Ms. R is particularly enthusiastic about the curriculum’s potential for new teachers:

> It’s nice that they really do set it up, and they say, “Okay, these are various things you can do at each stage,” so it’s not hard to do. It’s not hard to implement. You just have to take some of the time to look at what’s there and then to sort through it and figure out, “Okay, what will work best with my students?” Once you have it, it is so helpful, especially, I think, for new teachers. I think it’s a really great resource for new teachers. With everything that’s happening in the news, this just fits so nicely. You don’t even have to be teaching social studies or English. *Perspectives* can fit into any curriculum, when you think about it.

She has already shared the site and resources with other teachers, including other teachers who also teach the Ethnic Studies course.
Case Study 7: Student-Directed Inquiry on the Big Island

Meet Ms. S

Ms. S was born and raised in Hawai‘i. A twenty-year veteran teacher, she currently teaches eighth grade language arts and social studies on the Big Island. Unlike other teachers in this study, many of Ms. S’ students are new or recent arrivals to the islands. This is a new population for her – previously, she had worked at a school composed mostly of students whose families had lived in Hawai‘i for generations. Reflecting on her new students, she reported feeling a need to help them acculturate to their new home.

Many of Ms. S’ teaching techniques were already attuned to the Perspectives approach before the pilot program. In her intake survey, she wrote that she routinely infuses controversial topics into her classroom through literature, encouraging discussion so that students can “see both perspectives and come up with their own conclusions.” She reported signing up for the pilot program in part because she “felt this was something that would fulfill the lack of diverse literature within our school system.” Ms. S reported feeling comfortable with the Common Core standards before the study, although she said that using Perspectives increased her comfort with those standards.

The Approach

Ms. S took a unique approach to implementing Perspectives in her classroom. She decided from the beginning that it would be most effective if students used the website to design their own learning plans. Students chose their own texts based on a theme she provided, then developed their own learning plan. They went through this process twice during the 2014-2015 school year. Ms. S said that beginning with student choice allowed her to provide differentiated instruction in a class with extremely divergent reading levels, although she encouraged students to pick texts within their grade band if possible, so that they would be accessible to the rest of the class when it came time to present to the group.

In the third quarter, students developed their own essential questions from the theme of racism, choosing texts that interested them. Students then developed and presented their own learning plans based on the options available. Ms. S said that this approach worked well, but that she wished in retrospect that she had given students more of a detailed overview of the various strategies and tasks available in Perspectives so that students could make more informed choices.

In each of the two rounds, students were responsible for their own vocabulary learning and close reading strategies. When these phases were complete, Ms. S and her co-teacher

“I just loved it. I really enjoyed myself and I really liked the kids’ end products. I thought it was extremely valuable with what we were trying to do and what I would like to accomplish with my kids.”
organized the students into small groups for community inquiry. In these groups, students presented their texts to classmates, showing the strategies they had used and teaching the text to their fellow group members. These small groups were meant to prepare students to teach the class as a whole about their text. Ms. S explained the process this way:

I had them group up so everybody was doing the community inquiry like shared reading. They meet together and they really talk about it. What does this mean? How are you going to teach it? When they work with their small group they have a better idea of how they’re going to present the text.

After the small groups, all 34 of Ms. S’ students presented their texts to the whole class over the course of two days. She explained that the small group “workshopping” of this process encouraged students to be able to “analyze the texts to get to the main point” so that presentations could happen relatively quickly.

In the first round of ILPs, students chose their own writing task, with writing objects including essays, letters, short stories and plays. They also chose their own “Do Something” activity. These tasks were assigned as homework. As a culminating event, students presented their task for the whole class. Ms. S said that one of the most popular activities was “Writing Letters for Change,” an activity that she said students found challenging:

It encourages students to see both perspectives and write to a person who can make a difference in their lives. The challenge was to have students critically decide who was their targeted audience and what information should be added to persuade this person to side with them. A lot of them wrote to officials like the mayor. They sent them to the officials.

In the second round of ILPs, Ms. S used a “Community Arts Showcase” to highlight her students’ different projects. She noticed that because students had experimented with different culminating activities in the previous round, they were able to teach each other about what was involved with making a PSA or other tasks. She noted that there was a big shift from teacher-directed learning to student-directed learning in the second ILP.

**The Results**

Ms. S’ decision to have students choose the texts led to some surprising results. She said that many students chose topics that might have been controversial if she had introduced them: “It was awesome. With some of the topics, if I had brought them up, maybe there would have been controversy, but with the students bringing them up, it wasn’t controversial at all.” As students read texts that were relevant, they shared connections and ideas with the class. Ms. S said that many of her students learned about challenges faced by their classmates that had never come up before. Meanwhile, student-led inquiry took discussions in directions that were new and edgy for her classroom:
Sometimes as teachers, we think they’re not capable of handling some of these texts and videos and images, but a lot of the end products I saw from the Do Something phase were so profound. One of the girls drew a political cartoon with a gun and all these hateful words on the gun. I can’t remember exactly what she wrote as her caption, but basically the caption said something like, “When you say these words to people it’s the same effect as shooting someone down.”

The wide diversity of student tasks in Phase Five led to a whole array of products. Ms. S reported seeing “amazing” PSAs and a number of film festivals that her students curated. Some students engaged with a local organization working on reef preservation. “It’s nice to sit back and see them learning on their own,” she said. “I thought they did a really good job. I was totally impressed.”

Argumentative writing is particularly important to Ms. S. “That’s where I want my kids to go,” she said. “I want them to be able to argue on a topic and have supporting evidence from texts.” After working with Perspectives, Ms. S. pronounced it ideal for this teaching goal:

It’s perfect for that because a lot of the items are controversial and the kids can cite evidence from the text. I try to pull a couple of them for community inquiry and then have them compare. I’ll say: “Okay, but this text says this. Well, what about this one?” If they can do it verbally, the writing will come easier for them because they’ve heard other people’s perspectives as they’re having this community inquiry where they’re in the text together. In middle school they really like to talk. I figured if they’re going to talk, give them a purpose, really have them talk about a theme or a topic and then write about it. I love the setup of Perspectives. I think it’s perfect for what I’m trying to achieve in my classroom and where I’d like my students to go, especially with Common Core, and getting them to that argumentative writing stage.

Ms. S. plans to use student-directed ILPs in her classroom next year. She plans to teach about the different strategies up front so that students don’t get “bogged down” in the teacher-facing language on the Perspectives website. Already, Ms. S has shared Perspectives with other teachers in her building, and reports that there is considerable enthusiasm for the program in her department and others.
Conclusions

This report is the culmination of a two-year effort to pilot *Perspectives for a Diverse America* in Hawai‘i. *Perspectives* is a K-12 curriculum that facilitates instruction in high-quality literacy and anti-bias education. It represents a unique and enriched take on the Common Core. The *Perspectives* curriculum (and accompanying text anthology) attempts to build on the Common Core in at least three ways. First, it seeks to help students “find themselves” in texts and classroom experiences. Second, it hopes to open students’ eyes to experiences different from their own. Third, it encourages teachers to go beyond the Common Core toward applied learning and community action through its culminating “Do Something” phase.

The evaluation was initiated in response to Teaching Tolerance’s genuine interest in learning from teachers and creating pathways for program improvement. This is a formative evaluation and, as such, seeks to identify findings relevant to the evaluation questions and goals while remaining open to unique and interesting information from teachers or observations that would assist in improving *Perspectives*.

This report looks closely at the experiences of teachers implementing *Perspectives for a Diverse America* in diverse classrooms across Hawai‘i. While this study stands on its own to answer the evaluation questions in the specific context of Hawai‘i, it also amplifies and adds nuance to the prior evaluation of *Perspectives*. Although this study reports on a small sample, none of the findings reported here differ substantially from the findings in the 2014 report.

The case studies presented here provide windows into seven very different classrooms. They have much in common. All of the study teachers said that they found the *Perspectives* website easy to navigate and use. This comment by Ms. L was typical:

I really enjoyed it. I’d loved how organized the site was. I loved how you could go in and print all of your plan or just pieces of it. It was really easy to access the site, find my plan and alter it if I needed to. The strategies were very useful, and I liked how the curriculum showed you different ways you could implement them.

As a whole, the teachers were enthusiastic about the five phase design of the ILP. Ms. W said that it kept her organized throughout: “It was nice to have this sequence of tasks to follow. It’s a sequence that makes sense and works, so I’m definitely going to use it again.”
Even when the five phases took considerable classroom time to implement, the teachers in this study said that it was time well spent, as Ms. F explained:

Yes, we spent a lot of time with it but it was really, really valuable time. The students were really practicing reading skills that will transfer to ever more difficult texts. I really liked having discussions afterwards, because they were definitely comfortable with the texts. They were totally aware of what information was in the texts. They were ready to think about them and talk about their ideas with each other.

Both new and veteran teachers said that they appreciated the breadth and depth of the texts, strategies and tasks available on the Perspectives site.

**Answering the Evaluation Questions**

**Did the scope and nature of the Perspectives curriculum meet teachers’ needs?**

Every teacher in this study was able to find texts that were meaningful for their students. They reported being “surprised” and even “overwhelmed” by the diversity of texts on the Perspectives website. However, all teachers said that Perspectives could go further to better represent the history, culture and experiences of Hawai‘i and its diverse population. Most teachers said that they would like to see more texts relevant to Polynesian, Asian and Hawaiian cultural heritage, including texts that teach the history of Hawai‘i before, during and after colonization. Several teachers said that they found the selection of texts teaching about religion to be overly limited to Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths. They said that expanded coverage to indigenous spirituality and faiths more common in Asia would help them make additional connections with their students. Finally, all teachers noted that they appreciated the “Place” filter that the website offers to sort texts, but that they wanted to see more texts that dealt specifically with the importance of land - particularly to indigenous populations.

Although teachers said that an expanded text library would help their students to “see themselves” in texts, they were also concerned about dispelling myths and creating connections to populations on the continental US. Ms. S explained the value she saw in this approach:
I think it would be neat for other people to see what scenarios and experiences we go through on the islands. I think a lot of people think that we always go to the beach and everybody’s surfing all the time. But the experiences of what some people are going through here in Hawai‘i are very similar to what other Native Americans on the continental United States go through. It would be good for students to compare and contrast. I would really like to see more authors from Hawai‘i, because there’s a lot of things here that people could relate to in the continental United States like poverty, homelessness and family life.

Ms. U said that additional texts covering the history of Hawai‘i would be helpful mirrors for teachers on the continental US to make connections for their students:

A US history teacher could pick texts about Hawai‘i and ask: “How does this help us understand racial and gender tension, not just in Hawai‘i but also throughout the United States?” There’s a lot of really interesting material that students could look at that would help them broaden their perspective.

One of the recommendations in the 2014 evaluation was that Perspectives should expand its text library for K-2. Ms. A’s case shows that there is still work to be done in this area. She and other elementary teachers in this study said that it would be useful to have an expanded list of book recommendations, even if those books were not texts on the website. Finally, the high school teachers in this study said that a timeline of the texts in the Central Text Library would help them integrate Perspectives more effectively in chronologically organized secondary instructional plans.

How did teachers use Perspectives’ Common Core aligned texts and strategies?

The teachers in this study used Perspectives to engage their students, build literacy skills, develop classroom community, and confront challenging issues - usually all in the same unit. The case studies presented here show teachers hard at work teaching essential skills. All teachers used Perspectives to build student vocabulary and discussion skills. All teachers said that the strategies for the initial phases of their ILPs were closely aligned to the Common Core, represented effective and tested practices, and were strategies that they would use again.

Some teachers used Perspectives to meet the social and emotional needs they saw in their classrooms. Ms. W built her ILP with identity in mind. Ms. L wanted to help her students to become more empathetic. Ms. R hoped that Perspectives would help her students to know themselves while improving their school’s overall climate.

Other teachers hoped to build their students’ literacy skills. Ms. A’s implementation emphasized vocabulary and comprehension skills. Ms. U focused on the thinking, textual analysis, and writing skills she knew would be relevant to her students about to take the AP US History test. Ms. F linked her students’ study of women’s suffrage to exploring
habits of mind. Ms. S guided her students while they chose a learning plan that would challenge and interest them.

In all cases, teachers were able to apply the principles of anti-bias education while using Common Core-aligned literacy strategies. Every teacher in this study said that they had already shared Perspectives with at least one colleague, and each said they planned to share more widely.

What effects of using Perspectives did teachers see in their classrooms?

In the 2014 evaluation of Perspectives, teachers reported substantial classroom effects in five major areas: literacy development, student engagement, empathy, classroom climate and student behavior. This study found similar reported outcomes. Every teacher used at least one strategy or task to assess their students’ academic skills and found them improved. All case studies tell stories of student engagement with texts and tasks, sometimes in ways that surprised even veteran teachers like Ms. U. Students connected to their classmates and current events, bringing what they had learned into the community. Ms. W’s students grew closer together after discussing identity, diversity and peacemaking. Ms. L’s students demonstrated empathy toward their classmates. Ms. R’s students created a school-wide campaign for courteous behavior.

Coupled with the findings from the 2014 study, the case studies presented here show that Perspectives has great potential to meet the needs of teachers in Hawai‘i and beyond with meaningful texts, rigorous strategies and tasks that apply learning.

Conclusion

Taken as a whole, these case studies show both what Perspectives looks like in classrooms and how it achieves effects like text-generated empathy, collaboration for collective action, reduced bias and improved literacy skills. This study has important limitations. It reports the findings from a small, self-selected sample of tenacious teachers. The small sample size did not allow for meaningful reporting of quantitative measures. However, this does not mean that the findings here can be easily dismissed. On the contrary, they serve as confirmatory evidence for the 2014 findings. Further, the case studies fill an important need for educators because they show what Perspectives looks like in diverse classrooms from start to finish. Although they dwell specifically on the needs of educators living in Hawai‘i, the case studies are anchored in the reflections of real and relatable teachers struggling with issues that will be familiar to teachers anywhere in the United States. Perspectives shows tremendous potential to meet the needs of teachers across Hawai‘i and throughout the continental United States.
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