



DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS CENTRAL TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Learning and evaluation situations (LES) are part of an educational approach used to promote diversity and social justice. One of the aims of this approach is to value the differences among us in order to contribute to a more inclusive society. Another is to understand the mechanisms of oppression to better combat them.

This approach unfolds in three stages:

- A** Developing awareness
- B** Improving understanding
- C** Identifying courses of action

The concept of diversity refers to the idea that society is composed of individuals with different characteristics such as sex, race, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity, social class, age, disability or appearance. Each individual has several of these characteristics, and depending on the context, some will take on more or less importance in their own eyes or in the eyes of others. Not all differences operate on the same basis. For example, while a person's sexual orientation is not an identity category that can be contested, the existence of social class distinctions might be disputed. Regardless, both situations give rise to similar mechanisms of oppression.

“We should all know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value, no matter what their color.”

Maya Angelou—Poet, author, educator, actress, filmmaker and civil rights activist, 1928 – .

