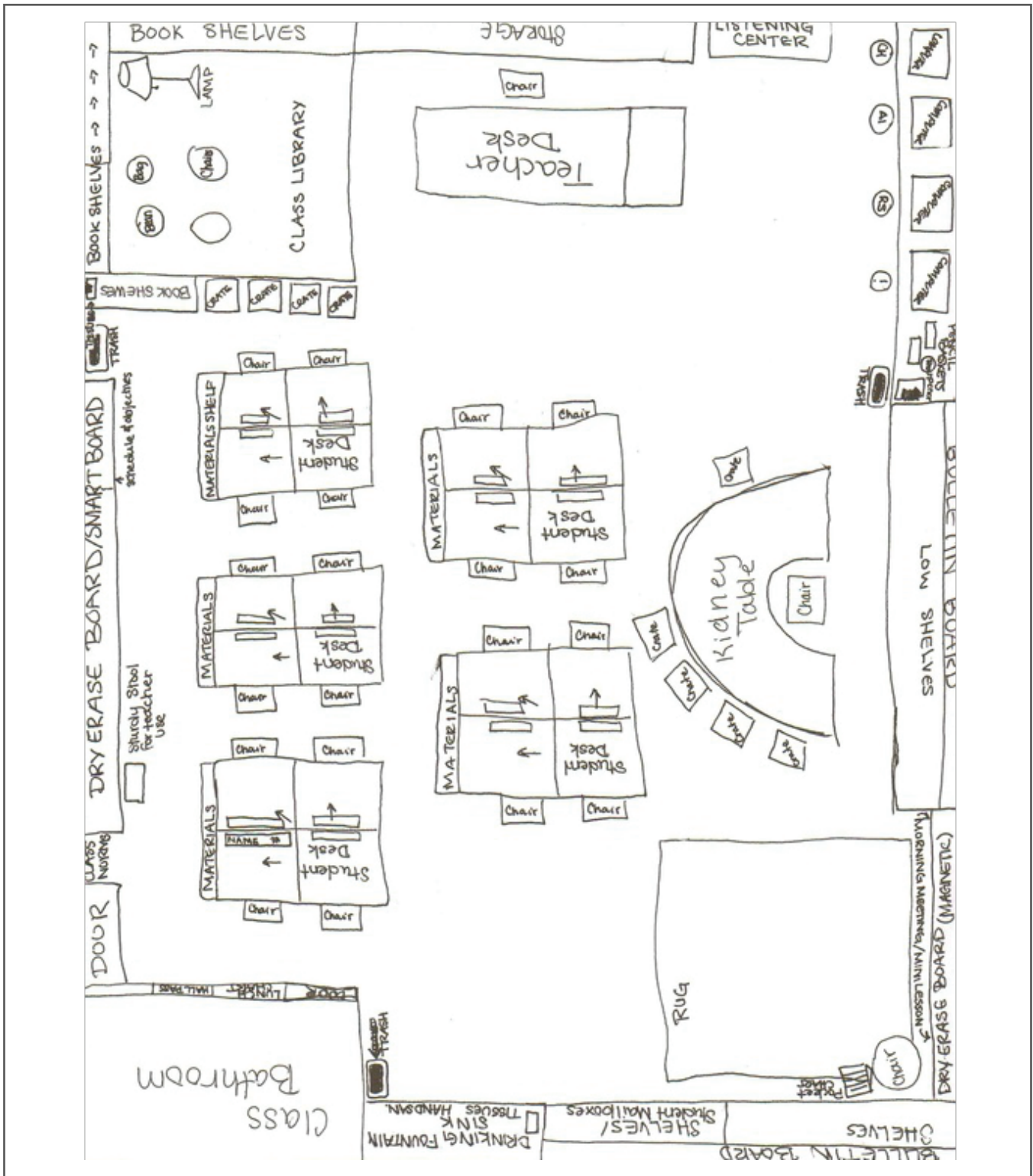




Strategy Tool: Cultural Relevance in Content

Assessment of the Classroom Setting - Example

1) Begin by creating a basic pencil sketch of your current classroom layout **without desks or moveable furniture**. You can do this in the box provided below.*



*Be sure to include doors, windows, immovable furniture and computers, restrooms, mounted pencil sharpeners, etc.



Strategy Tool: Cultural Relevance in Content

Assessment of the Classroom Setting - Example

2) Use the sketch (preferably while in your empty classroom) to determine the following components:

Room Space Usage <i>List the types of instructional activities for which space will be utilized (e.g., whole group instruction, small group work, centers, reading). For each type of instructional activity listed, describe the type of layout that you would prefer (e.g., how desks and furniture are arranged, location in room). Also think about the type of movement that the activity and layout of the room might permit.</i>		
Instructional Activity	Type of Layout	Type of Movement This Allows
1) Small group work	Student desks in clusters of 4 or on open floor space/rug (depending on activity)	Seated movements—use of gestures. Students can stand behind desks if it's not disruptive. Could allow for "Heads Together" seating (students on knees leaning in).
2) Small group with teacher	Kidney table with at least 5 chairs Maybe move near Smartboard?	Walking to table. Seated movements—use of gestures.
3) Whole group instruction (math, reading comprehension, morning meeting)	Rug near magnetic and dry erase boards Need teacher chair Need pocket chart	Walking to carpet. Whole group movement with coordinating gestures. Opportunities for turn and talk.
4) Math centers	Math board games (2s or 3s): rug Instruction with teacher: kidney table with 5 chairs Math computer games (1s and 2s): computers along west wall	Walking during transition. Not much movement during centers.
5) Independent work	Student desks in clusters of 4	Not much movement, only when students need to get materials. Could allow a student in each cluster to gather materials and another to put materials away.
6)		
7)		



Strategy Tool: Cultural Relevance in Content

Assessment of the Classroom Setting - Example

3) Based on your instructional activities, add to your classroom sketch the desk and furniture arrangement that would best meet your needs.

a. Do you have easy access to all parts of the room? Yes No

b. If not, how must you change the layout to gain access?

c. Do your students have the ability to move the way that the room is laid out? Yes No

d. If not, how can you change the layout to allow for more student movement and interaction?

I need to ensure that when students are all working at their desks, there is enough room for them and me to get to the sides of the room as needed without disrupting others.

4) Next, determine the instructional materials that are used **often** and must be accessible to students. Explain where these materials will be placed and how you will organize and/or label them.

Instructional Materials Accessibility	
Materials	Location/Organization/Labeling
Extra writing utensils, erasers, and paper	Location: On table next to computers (under pencil sharpener) Organization: Stackable plastic bins for paper and erasers, pencil cup for writing utensils
Math games	Location: On small shelves next to rug Organization: Each game will be in a plastic bag and will be labeled with the name of the game. Only games that students may choose that day will be on the shelf.
Free reading books	Location: Library area Organization: In addition to the shelved books, I will have 4 crates of books which will be separated into reading levels and labeled accordingly.
Math, spelling, and reading books	Location: All student textbooks will be located on small shelves at the end of each cluster of student desks. Organization: Each student will have their own plastic bin, labeled with their name, in which to keep books.



Strategy Tool: Cultural Relevance in Content

Assessment of the Classroom Setting - Example

5) Now take a look at the walls and other displays in the classroom.

a. What types of posters do you have hanging on the walls?

Words of encouragement, cute posters with animals, rules for writing, rules for reading, math processes

b. Who is depicted around your classroom displays?

- i. Are they prominent figures related to the content you teach?*
- ii. Are they all white males that have dominated the field of study?*
- iii. Do you have displays of people of color and women, white and of color, who have played important roles in the content?*
- iv. Who do you want your classroom walls and displays to show?*
- v. Do you display current student work from ALL students in your classroom?*

I don't have posters of many people in my room. I have a poster of Einstein and of RBG. I need to include more posters with people of color, men and women. I also need to update my student bulletin board with displayed work. Work is from the past unit and not current one. And I only have work from 13 students posted. Need to track if I am displaying work from all students at times.

6) Next, think about the roles or jobs that you have given to your students in the class.

a. Do you give opportunities for your students to take on roles and responsibilities in the classroom?

Yes No

b. If so, what roles are offered? Do *ALL* students have an equitable opportunity to take on the various roles and responsibilities?

There is a line leader, a materials gatherer, a lunch box collector, a homework checker and table captain. With only these jobs, I don't think everyone has a chance to do them all regularly.

c. If not, what roles and responsibilities could you offer to students? (*Consider asking your students what roles and responsibilities they might like to take on.*)

I could see about adding more roles and making sure to rotate them more often so more students have responsibilities each week.



Strategy Tool: Cultural Relevance in Content

Assessment of the Classroom Setting - Example

7) Finally, think about the seating arrangement in the classroom.

a. Which students sit together? Who decides where students will sit?

Seating is based on reading groups. Students don't get to choose their seats.

b. Do you ever change the seating arrangement to provide opportunities for students to sit near and engage with other classmates?

Yes No

c. If not, how could you change the seating arrangement to encourage students to interact with all members of the class at some point?

I could rearrange seats if I can't rearrange desks. Or I can make the desks into groups of 6 to allow for triads and partner work.

d. Do you keep some students in the same seat every day while moving other students around?

Yes No

e. If so, by still providing preferential seating for students who have an IEP that requires that, is there a way that you can equitably provide different seating opportunities for *ALL students*?

I keep Jon next to the door as he is often getting up to throw things away and this helps limit the distraction he might cause otherwise. Some of the quieter students I don't really move either. I can try to randomly assign seats so that students can sit near others and then work with different classmates. I can also create "clock" partners so that students can have the chance to work with 11 different assigned classmates.



Strategy Tool: Cultural Relevance in Content

Assessment of the Classroom Setting - Example

Item	What do I have?	What do I want to have?	Why is this important? How does this relate to my students?
Classroom Displays/Posters	<p>Cute posters of animals. Encouraging words. Einstein and Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Student work—not all students and not all current. Holidays are not represented.</p>	<p>I need some images of prominent people of color from the fields of study that we address. I want to rotate student work displayed so that it is current and so that ALL students have a chance to have something displayed at least once every 2 weeks. I would like to have holiday representations for ALL holidays when appropriate.</p>	<p>I want ALL of my students to be able to "see" themselves represented in my classroom. That includes in the images of those people that made a difference in their field of study as well as during various holidays throughout the year. I want my students to share with me some of their traditions so that I can use some of that to make my displays in the classroom.</p>
Clearly Assigned Jobs/Roles	<p>Line leader Materials gatherer Lunch box collector Homework checker Table captain</p> <p>We went over each job at the beginning of the year. I assign new jobs on the first day of the week and students keep the job for the entire week.</p>	<p>I need more opportunities for students to have jobs. There are only 5 per week right now. I can ask the students for ideas of different jobs and offer some suggestions as well. I could have a door holder, a messenger, and a board eraser for starters. If I can create a total of 10 jobs, then each student will have a job at least every other week.</p>	<p>Students will have a responsibility in the classroom and hopefully feel like a true "member" of our community. Students can also try out different jobs to see what they like the best and maybe what they don't like so much. Students can offer praise and recognition to each other for a job well done, and so can I.</p>
Seating	<p>There are 5 "tables" of 4 desks each. There is also a kidney table with 5 chairs in the back of the room and our carpet area in the corner. I keep some students in the same seats all the time.</p>	<p>I know how comfortable some students can get in the same spot, but I also know how novel it can feel to get a new seat and new view of the room. If I can't figure out a different way to arrange the desks that will still allow a good flow in the room, I can at least change seats for ALL of my students.</p>	<p>I want to easily provide opportunities for my students to work with others in the classroom. Although they may not all get along or be best friends, if they learn to work together, then the classroom will feel more welcoming to all. Maybe we'll have more time for some fun games if students start to like each other more.</p>