

1. The Many Faces of Cinderella
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6. ABSTRACT

As the world continues to become smaller, the necessity for cultural sensitivity and international understanding increases exponentially. We risk mis-educating our students if we allow their personal cultural attitudes to be their sole reference point for what is normal and acceptable (Bishop, 1997). It is incumbent upon effective teachers to provide opportunities for children to increase their knowledge and awareness of other cultures. Using the ancient tale of Cinderella is one way to accomplish this goal.

Some estimate that there are more than 3000 versions of Cinderella appearing in nearly every world culture for the past nearly 2000 years. The first version of which we are aware is from China and features a young girl named Yeh-Shen. Other characters telling the same tale from all around the world abound making the story of Cinderella an excellent tool for bridging the gap between varying cultures.

This presentation will explore Mexico, the Algonquin Indians of Canada, the mid-east, and the African country of Zimbabwe. A summary of each story combined with suggested uses will be provided.

Additionally, visitors will be provided the opportunity to participate in a pilot instrument being developed with the goal

of providing meaningful insight into teachers' cultural and racial knowledge, experiences, skills, and attitudes. The purpose of this instrument is to enable teachers to sensitize themselves to their own biases and potential prejudices in order to address them and develop more objectivity and neutrality before embarking upon the ominous task of influencing and guiding students towards more compassionate and tolerant understanding of cultural diversity.