A contemporary of Havighurst, Jerome Bruner of Harvard, has also postulated a series of developmental steps or stages that he believes children encounter as they mature. These involve action, imagery, and symbolism. Bruner’s cognitive views have stressed student inquiry and the breaking down of larger tasks into components.

Benjamin Bloom, author of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives and distinguished service professor at the University of Chicago, has attempted to identify and weigh the factors that control learning. He believes that one can predict learning outcomes by assessing three factors: (1) the cognitive entry behaviors of a student (the extent to which the pupil has mastered prerequisite skills), (2) the affective entry characteristics (the student’s interest in learning the material), and (3) the quality of instruction (the degree to which the instruction offered is appropriate for the learner). Bloom’s research is reflected in models of direct instruction, particularly mastery learning, in which teachers carefully explain, illustrate, and demonstrate skills and provide practice, reinforcement, corrective feedback, and remediation.

When you become a teacher, you will be expected to provide multicultural education for your students, regardless of the age level or subjects you teach. Most teachers today face the dilemma of wanting to provide their students with a high-quality multicultural program, but being frustrated with the lack of time and support for doing so.

As you will learn, racial and ethnic prejudice and injustice have been present throughout U.S. educational history. Unfortunately, there is still considerable racial and ethnic strife in the United States today, and much of this strife has filtered into the halls of education. Debates rage about how schools should meet the educational demands of a complex multicultural society. As a teacher, you will be expected to join in this debate and help search for answers.

James Banks, a leading researcher in multicultural education at the University of Washington, feels past efforts have been too superficial. He asserts that “additive approaches” treat multicultural material as “an appendage to the main story of the development of the nation and to the core curriculum.” Instead, multicultural education should integrate multicultural perspectives throughout the curriculum, on an equal footing with white European perspectives.

Despite the lack of time and adequate school district encouragement and support, there are many things that a determined and creative teacher can do to integrate multicultural education throughout the curriculum. Teachers can also encourage the school district to develop and support comprehensive programs for multicultural education and then participate in developing these plans.

Questions for Reflection
1. What are the historical antecedents that have contributed to the lack of racial and ethnic understanding in U.S. society?
2. Should education programs seek to eliminate cultural differences among individuals or to preserve and perhaps celebrate them?
3. What can you do in your classroom to improve multicultural education?
4. What additional information would you like about multicultural education, and where might you find such information?

Professional Dilemma

Can a Knowledge of History Help to Improve Multicultural Education?

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To answer these questions on-line and e-mail your answers to your professor, go to Chapter 8 of the companion website (www.ablongman.com/johnson14e) and click on Professional Dilemma.