

# why is equity important in education

**why is equity important in education** is a fundamental question that addresses the core of creating fair and inclusive learning environments. Equity in education ensures that every student, regardless of their background, has access to the resources, opportunities, and support necessary to succeed academically and personally. This concept is vital for fostering social justice, reducing achievement gaps, and promoting lifelong learning. Understanding why equity matters helps educators, policymakers, and communities develop strategies that cater to diverse learners, including those from marginalized or underserved groups. This article will explore the significance of equity in education, its impact on student outcomes, and the steps needed to achieve equitable schooling systems. The discussion will include the relationship between equity and equality, barriers to educational equity, and best practices for implementing equitable policies.

- The Definition and Importance of Equity in Education
- Equity vs. Equality: Understanding the Differences
- Barriers to Achieving Equity in Education
- Impact of Equity on Student Achievement and Society
- Strategies to Promote Equity in Educational Settings

## The Definition and Importance of Equity in Education

Equity in education refers to the principle of fairness and justice in providing educational opportunities and resources tailored to the unique needs of each student. Unlike equality, which implies treating every student the same, equity recognizes that students come from diverse backgrounds and face different challenges that require differentiated support. This approach is crucial for closing achievement gaps and ensuring that all students can reach their full potential.

## Core Principles of Educational Equity

Educational equity is grounded in several key principles:

- **Inclusivity:** Creating learning environments that welcome and support students of all identities and abilities.

- **Access:** Ensuring all students have access to quality instruction, resources, and extracurricular activities.
- **Support:** Providing additional assistance to students who face barriers such as poverty, disability, or language differences.
- **Representation:** Incorporating diverse perspectives and culturally relevant pedagogy in curricula and school practices.

## Why Equity Matters in Educational Policy

Implementing equity-focused policies is essential for dismantling systemic disparities in education. Schools that prioritize equity help reduce dropout rates, improve academic performance, and promote social mobility among disadvantaged groups. Furthermore, equitable education fosters an environment where all students feel valued and empowered, which is vital for mental health and social development.

## Equity vs. Equality: Understanding the Differences

Understanding the distinction between equity and equality is fundamental to addressing why equity is important in education. While equality involves providing the same resources or opportunities to everyone, equity entails adjusting those resources according to individual student needs.

## Equality in Education

Equality focuses on uniform distribution of educational resources and treatment. For example, every student receives the same textbook or the same amount of instructional time, regardless of their background or abilities.

## Equity in Education

Equity recognizes that some students may require additional support to overcome obstacles such as economic hardship, learning disabilities, or language barriers. Providing tailored resources, such as specialized tutoring or assistive technologies, exemplifies equity in action.

## Why Equity is More Effective Than Equality

Equity produces better educational outcomes by addressing the root causes of

disparities. Without equity, equality can inadvertently perpetuate inequality by failing to meet the unique needs of marginalized students. Therefore, equity is a more just and practical approach to fostering academic success for all.

## **Barriers to Achieving Equity in Education**

Despite its importance, achieving equity in education faces numerous challenges. These barriers often stem from systemic issues, societal inequalities, and institutional practices.

### **Socioeconomic Disadvantages**

Students from low-income families frequently lack access to essential educational resources such as technology, extracurricular programs, and academic support. Economic hardship also contributes to higher stress levels and less stable home environments, which negatively affect learning.

### **Racial and Cultural Inequities**

Racial minorities may experience discrimination, lower expectations, and cultural disconnects within the education system. These factors contribute to lower academic performance and decreased engagement.

### **Disability and Special Education Needs**

Students with disabilities often face inadequate accommodations or limited access to inclusive educational settings, leading to disparities in achievement and social integration.

### **Language Barriers**

English language learners may struggle to access the curriculum fully without sufficient language support, hindering their academic progress.

### **Institutional and Policy-Related Obstacles**

Unequal funding models, biased disciplinary policies, and lack of culturally responsive teaching practices further entrench inequities in education systems.

# **Impact of Equity on Student Achievement and Society**

The implementation of equitable educational practices has far-reaching effects on both individual students and society at large. Equity plays a critical role in fostering academic success and promoting social cohesion.

## **Closing Achievement Gaps**

Equity-focused interventions help reduce disparities in test scores, graduation rates, and college enrollment between different demographic groups. This leads to more balanced educational outcomes and opportunities.

## **Enhancing Social Mobility**

By providing marginalized students with equitable resources and support, education becomes a pathway out of poverty and social disadvantage, contributing to economic growth and reduced inequality.

## **Building Inclusive Communities**

Equity in education promotes understanding and respect among diverse groups, encouraging empathy and reducing social tensions. Inclusive schools prepare students to thrive in multicultural societies.

## **Long-Term Economic Benefits**

Investing in equitable education yields returns through a more skilled workforce, higher employment rates, and lower social service costs, benefiting the broader economy.

## **Strategies to Promote Equity in Educational Settings**

Achieving equity requires intentional strategies at multiple levels, including classroom practices, school policies, and systemic reforms.

## **Data-Driven Decision Making**

Using disaggregated data to identify achievement gaps and target resources effectively is essential for advancing equity. Schools must regularly assess student outcomes and adjust interventions accordingly.

## **Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Incorporating students' cultural backgrounds into instruction and materials helps engage learners and validates their identities, fostering a supportive learning environment.

## **Providing Targeted Support Services**

Services such as tutoring, counseling, language assistance, and special education programs address specific student needs and reduce barriers to learning.

## **Professional Development for Educators**

Training teachers to recognize and address implicit biases, differentiate instruction, and implement inclusive practices enhances equity in classrooms.

## **Equitable Funding Models**

Allocating resources based on student needs rather than equal distribution ensures that schools serving disadvantaged populations receive adequate support.

## **Community and Family Engagement**

Involving families and communities in educational decision-making fosters collaboration and accountability, strengthening equity efforts.

1. Identify and address systemic inequities through policy reform.
2. Implement inclusive curricula that reflect diverse histories and perspectives.
3. Ensure access to technology and learning materials for all students.
4. Promote social-emotional learning to support holistic development.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

## **Why is equity important in education?**

Equity in education ensures that all students have access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed, regardless of their background or circumstances.

## **How does equity impact student outcomes?**

Equity helps close achievement gaps by providing tailored support, which leads to improved academic performance and better long-term opportunities for all students.

## **What is the difference between equity and equality in education?**

Equality means providing the same resources to all students, while equity involves distributing resources based on individual needs to achieve fair outcomes.

## **Why is equity essential for social justice in education?**

Equity addresses systemic barriers and discrimination, promoting fairness and inclusion, which are fundamental for social justice in education.

## **How does equity in education benefit society as a whole?**

Equitable education fosters a more skilled and diverse workforce, reduces social disparities, and promotes economic growth and social cohesion.

## **What role does equity play in supporting marginalized students?**

Equity ensures marginalized students receive additional resources and support to overcome obstacles, enabling them to achieve their full potential.

## **How can schools promote equity in education?**

Schools can promote equity by implementing inclusive curricula, providing targeted support, training staff on cultural competency, and addressing systemic biases.

## **What challenges exist in achieving equity in education?**

Challenges include unequal funding, implicit biases, socio-economic

disparities, and lack of access to quality resources and experienced teachers.

## **How does technology influence equity in education?**

Technology can enhance equity by providing access to educational materials and personalized learning, but disparities in access to technology can also widen gaps.

## **Why is measuring equity important in education systems?**

Measuring equity helps identify gaps and informs policies and practices to ensure all students receive the support they need to succeed.

## **Additional Resources**

### *1. Equity and Excellence in Education: Understanding the Importance of Fairness*

This book explores the fundamental reasons why equity is crucial in educational settings. It delves into how equitable practices ensure all students have access to quality learning opportunities regardless of their background. The author discusses systemic barriers and offers strategies for educators to promote fairness and inclusion.

### *2. Closing the Achievement Gap: The Role of Equity in Education*

Focusing on the persistent achievement gaps among different student groups, this book highlights the importance of equity in bridging these divides. It examines policies and teaching methods that support underrepresented and marginalized students. Readers will gain insights into creating supportive environments that foster academic success for all.

### *3. Equity Matters: Delivering on the Promise of Inclusive Education*

This book presents a comprehensive overview of inclusive education and its connection to equity. It emphasizes the moral and practical imperatives of providing equitable resources and support to diverse learners. Case studies illustrate successful equity-driven initiatives in various educational contexts.

### *4. Why Equity in Education is Essential for Social Justice*

Linking education to broader social justice issues, this book argues that equity in education is a critical step toward a fairer society. It discusses how inequities in schooling perpetuate social inequalities and offers pathways to transform educational systems. The author advocates for policy reforms and community engagement to achieve equity.

### *5. Equity in Education: Strategies for Addressing Disparities*

This practical guide provides educators and administrators with actionable strategies to promote equity within their schools. It covers topics such as

culturally responsive teaching, equitable resource allocation, and assessment fairness. The book is designed to help practitioners create learning environments where all students can thrive.

#### 6. *The Equity Imperative: Why Fairness Drives Student Success*

This book explores the direct impact of equitable educational practices on student achievement and well-being. It presents research evidence linking equity to improved outcomes and reduced dropout rates. The author also discusses leadership roles in fostering an equity-focused culture in schools.

#### 7. *Equity and Access: Creating Opportunities for Every Learner*

Addressing the challenges of access to education, this book highlights the importance of equity in ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed. It examines barriers such as socioeconomic status, language, and disability, offering solutions to overcome them. The text encourages systemic change to promote equal access.

#### 8. *Educational Equity: A Framework for Policy and Practice*

This book provides a detailed framework for understanding and implementing equity in education policy and practice. It outlines key principles and components of equitable education systems. The author combines theory with real-world examples to guide policymakers, educators, and stakeholders.

#### 9. *Transforming Schools Through Equity: Lessons from Research and Practice*

Drawing on the latest research, this book showcases how schools can transform their cultures and practices to become more equitable. It includes stories from educators who have successfully implemented equity initiatives. The book serves as both inspiration and a roadmap for those committed to educational equity.

## **Why Is Equity Important In Education**

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series of chapters on the pedagogy of citizenship education with discussions about curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment.

**why is equity important in education: Inclusive Education in China** Wangqian Fu, 2022-06-23 By adopting a comparative approach, this book investigates the philosophy, policy, practices, and challenges of inclusive education in the Chinese contexts, recognizing influences of Chinese culture, such as Confucianism, collectivism, and familism. In the 1980s, the Chinese government promoted a policy named “Learning in Regular Classroom” to ensure educational rights for children with disabilities, which subsequently turned into an inclusive education program in the western sense. Starting from this point, the policy and practice of inclusive education have developed tremendously. To facilitate reflection and future development, this is the latest and most comprehensive attempt at understanding the status quo of inclusive education in China from a variety of perspectives: from early childhood to higher education, from family to schools and communities, from peers to teachers and parents. It also analyzed the unique Chinese philosophy of inclusive education, adding to current debates with a Chinese lens. This book will appeal to academics, students, and practitioners in disciplines such as education, early childhood studies, sociology, social work, social policy, disability studies, and youth studies.

**why is equity important in education: Advancing Empathy and Equity in Early Childhood Education** Christine Mason, Randy Ross, Orinthia Harris, Jillayne Flanders, 2024-11-05 Antiracism and cultural competence, when incorporated into early childhood education, can powerfully impact young children’s social and emotional development. Authors Christine Mason, Randy Ross, Orinthia Harris, and Jillayne Flanders guide leaders in cultivating compassion and equity in their school communities. Explore reflective practices with questions and activities based on fifteen principles to address inequities affecting students, staff, and families. This book will help preK-3 leaders and childcare center directors: Cultivate antiracism and cultural competence with visioning, action planning, targeted professional development, and curricula that support equity and justice Address implicit bias, even in the midst of dissension among staff and families Develop an antiracist, culturally competent school climate Deepen their own knowledge and understanding of chapter content using reflection questions and activities Reduce inequities leading to the preschool-to-prison pipeline Contents: Foreword Introduction: Kind Minds and Big Hearts Part 1: Foundations Chapter 1: Bold Leadership—Necessary for Heart Centered, Antiracist Education Chapter 2: Historical Threads of Bias—Acknowledgment of What Must Change Chapter 3: Support for All Students—A Continuum From Multicultural to Antiracist Movements Chapter 4: My Heart to Yours—A Heart Centered Lens Chapter 5: One C to Another—The Five Cs of Heart Centered Learning Chapter 6: A Deep Dive—The HEART+ of the Matter Part 2: Practical Steps Leaders Can Take Chapter 7: HEART+—A Focus on Action Chapter 8: So Many Wrongs to Right—Antibias Education Chapter 9: Circles of Love—School Culture and Restorative Practices Chapter 10: A Mountain of Courage—Visioning and Action Planning Part 3: Antiracist Curriculum and Staff Support Chapter 11: A Light to Shine Together—Professional Development and Supports Chapter 12: Curricula for Young Children—The Building Blocks for Equity in Early Childhood Chapter 13: A Bar to Be Raised—Equity in Early Childhood Educator Standards Chapter 14: Early Childhood Staff Support—Equitable Professional Pathways Chapter 15: A Look at the Future—Leadership to Embrace Change Epilogue: Toward a More Just and Inclusive World Appendix A: Equity Activities for Early Childhood Leaders Appendix B: Discussion and Challenge Questions for Each Chapter References and Resources Index

**why is equity important in education: Addressing Equity Through Culturally Responsive Education & SEL** Maurice Elias , Larry Leverett, 2021-09-01 With an increasing emphasis on educational equity, it is more important than ever that teachers are prepared in developing inclusive classroom settings that are free from biases and embrace the diversity of learners and their lived experiences. This guide provides educators with strategies to incorporate social-emotional and character development (SEL) and culturally responsive education (CRE) within their classrooms so that students receive what they need to develop their full academic and social potential. In this

guide, you'll learn about the 5 CRE skill areas, the ways in which CRE and SEL are essential for educational equity, and how to integrate CRE and SEL in your classroom. The guide also includes helpful web resources for diverse and inclusive reading lists, as well as additional resources for implementing CRE and SEL in classroom settings.

**why is equity important in education:** *Anti-Racist Educational Leadership and Policy* Sarah Diem, Anjalé D. Welton, 2020-05-26 *Anti-Racist Educational Leadership and Policy* helps educational leaders better comprehend the racial implications and challenges of the current educational policy landscape. Each chapter unpacks a policy issue such as school choice, school closures, standardized testing, discipline, and school funding, and analyzes it through the racialized and market-driven lenses of the current leadership context. Full of real examples, this book equips aspiring school leaders with the skills to question how a policy addresses or fails to address racism, action-oriented strategies to develop anti-racist solutions, and the tools to encourage their school community to promote racial equity. This important book demystifies a complex policy context and prepares current and future teacher leaders, principals, and superintendents to lead their schools towards more equitable practice. 2021 Winner of the AESA Critics' Choice Book Award.

**why is equity important in education:** *Global Perspectives on STEM Education* Isha DeCoito, Xavier Fazio, Jane Gichuru, 2024-06-05 This book focuses on STEM education as it applies to global competencies, innovative curriculum and accompanying pedagogy. Through a thematic approach, the authors explore cross-cutting perspectives, with a focus on social, equitable, environmental, and scientific issues as they relate to STEM literacy. The research outlined in the book adopts an integrated STEM framework that assesses, analyzes and explicitly links all STEM disciplines. The book prepares and inspires both educators and students to participate in STEM on a global level. The research presented in the book highlights innovative and unique classroom practices in STEM education (e.g., STEM environmental projects, digital video games). The book links research on and in practice, and the intended audience include STEM educators, researchers, curriculum developers, and policymakers interested in innovative STEM education.

**why is equity important in education:** *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. Education Law*, 2021-06-22 The Oxford Handbook of U.S. Education Law includes more than three dozen chapters by leading education law and policy scholars. It presents a comprehensive description of the law that regulates public K-12 education today, and suggests legal and policy changes for the next decade. Chapters cover a wide variety of topics, including virtual schooling, civil rights, student privacy and safety, education federalism, school choice, and special education. The Handbook is an essential guide for anyone interested in the law and policy that shapes K-12 education in the United States.

**why is equity important in education:** *PISA Low-Performing Students Why They Fall Behind and How To Help Them Succeed* OECD, 2016-02-10 There is no country or economy participating in PISA 2012 that can claim that all of its 15-year-old students have achieved a baseline level of proficiency in mathematics, reading and science. Poor performance at school has long-term consequences, both for the individual and for society as a ...

**why is equity important in education:** *Overcoming Current Challenges in the P-12 Teaching Profession* Keough, Penelope D., 2019-11-29 Teachers are constantly faced with a plethora of challenges, but none has been more prevalent in the 21st century than educating a diverse collection of students. In the midst of the current challenges in teaching P-12 students, pre-service teachers may be under district contract but may not be prepared for teaching students with disabilities, the homeless, second language learners recently immigrated to the United States, or students who face emotional challenges or addiction. *Overcoming Current Challenges in the P-12 Teaching Profession* is an essential reference book that provides insight, strategies, and solutions to overcome current challenges experienced by P-12 teachers in general and special education. Featuring coverage on a broad range of topics such as global education, professional development, and responsive teaching, this book is ideally designed for educators, administrators, school psychologists, counselors, academicians, researchers, and students seeking current research on culturally responsive teaching.

**why is equity important in education:** *Creating Equitable Classrooms Through Action*

Research Cathy Caro-Bruce, 2007-08 Recognizing the importance of race, class, gender, culture, and ability, the authors provide a window into the difficulties that professional educators grapple with as they face the challenge of teaching all children. This text is both authentic and practical, and it demystifies the issues of equity that pervade today's classrooms.--Diane Yendol-Hoppey, Associate Professor University of Florida, Gainesville Action research of this caliber on the subject of equity is critically needed for all children to have access to the same level of rigor and high standards. This is a must-read for districts that really want to turn action research into action that affects student learning.--Terry Morganti-Fisher, Director of Professional Development Austin Independent School District, TX Utilize the power of action research to narrow the achievement gap! Despite the best intentions of reform efforts, educational inequity continues to exist in public schools. Creating Equitable Classrooms Through Action Research confronts this challenge head-on and shows educators how they can use action research to both raise student achievement and strengthen instructional leadership. Ideal for both a first-time action research endeavor or one already in progress, this practical guidebook helps practitioners formulate specific research questions, collect and analyze data, and communicate their findings. Educators will discover: Ten action research studies on narrowing the achievement gap Guidelines for implementing an action research project that supports culturally relevant instruction Authentic examples for discussion and reflection Invaluable for school district leaders, teachers, professional development schools, and preservice teachers, this resource for systemwide improvement efforts helps schools provide more equitable learning environments for all children.

**why is equity important in education: How to Achieve Educational Equity** Howard Fields, 3rd, 2021-04-09 As educators, we must be as specific as possible when using certain terms, especially when those terms and our knowledge of them hold the keys to so many students' success. Considered by many to be one of the most important concepts in education to understand and apply, educational equity is a term that we are all familiar with, but may also have a plethora of meanings, depending upon the context in which it is used. Educational equity can be a lot of things, but it is certainly not the popular and overutilized image that depicts kids watching a baseball game while standing on boxes. To frame it in this manner oversimplifies the complexities associated with educational equity. Educational equity must be more intentional than that and thus, should be defined as creating and/or eliminating policies, systems, and practices in schools that impact the experiences, outcomes, and access to resources for students from previously excluded groups. On April 9th, How to Achieve Educational Equity will provide educational experiences and actionable steps to help all those who have decided to embark on the educational equity journey. The author, Dr. Howard E. Fields III, possesses the reputability, knowledge, credentials, and writing prowess to adequately convey such an important topic that will certainly challenge our thinking and enhance learning outcomes for all students. As an Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Adjunct Professor, Co-founder of both Black Males in Education St. Louis (BMESTL) and EduOpenings.com, his perspective and focus on remaining student-centered, yet equity-focused, has made him an emerging sought out speaker. Dr. Fields' unapologetic leadership and authenticity played a role in being recognized as the 2020 National Elementary Distinguished Principal from Missouri and the 2017 International Networked Digital Library of Thesis and Dissertation innovative research award recipient. Given all of this, How to Achieve Educational Equity will certainly be a successful resource in the education and educational policy area for years to come. Early feedback from educational practitioners includes the following review: How to Achieve Educational Equity is truly a thought provoking and practical call to action that will benefit many educators for years to come, regardless of where they are in their understanding of equity. Dr. Fields has created a concrete framework equipped with multiple entry points into taking action towards achieving equity in schools. This book makes inequities - arguably the most insurmountable issue in education to date - feel possible to tackle through courage, collaboration, and accountability. Thank you, Dr. Fields, for your contribution to the field of education! - Dr. Shenita Mayes, Middle School Principal

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2023-08-29 This entire book revolves around my personal learnings, experiences, observations, inspiration, teachings, and thoughts in education.

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**why is equity important in education:** *In Pursuit of Equity in Education* W. Hutmacher, 2001-06-30 This book makes a compelling case for better international equity indicators in education. A conceptual framework for a system of comparable indicators is proposed and a spectrum of findings and perspectives presented. Topics include: the sociology of equality and equity in education; the application of theories of justice to educational equity, the trade-off between effectiveness and equity, heterogeneous versus homogeneous classrooms, and the influence of parental education.

**why is equity important in education: Compulsory Education Policy in China** Jian Li, Eryong Xue, 2021-01-13 This book explores the overall landscape of compulsory education policy development in China from multiple perspectives to uncover the stages, features, problems and suggestions in Chinese compulsory education system, locally, nationally and internationally. In addition, this book also presents specific historical educational policy shifts for policymakers and stakeholders to investigate the compulsory education strategy over the long term. Specifically, the Chinese compulsory education policy landscape involves investigating changes to the legal environment, management policies, as well as practices for teachers and curriculum and teaching materials. These discussions contribute to the readers' comprehensive and systematic understanding of compulsory education policy development in contemporary China.

**why is equity important in education: Why School Doesn't Work for Every Child** Matt Bromley, 2025-05-01 Every child, no matter their starting point or background and no matter their additional and different needs, should have an equitable chance of success at school. This first book in the Equity in Education series looks at how schools can foster a better sense of belonging and ensure they are truly inclusive of all learners, thus mitigating the effects of an increasingly unequal, fractured society. To ensure a child's birth does not also become their life's destiny, Matt Bromley shows how an inclusive school culture can be created through a process that is as simple as ABC: Attendance: raising the attendance and punctuality of disadvantaged learners Behaviours: helping students develop appropriate behaviours for learning so that they can conduct themselves positively and develop the skills needed to access an increasingly challenging curriculum Community: building a community around learners by putting family first and engaging with parents as partners in the process of educating their child Offering actionable guidance and strategies that can be used to support school development plans, the book sets out the practical ways schools can create a collaborative culture in which all staff understand the importance of inclusion as well as the part

they play in helping to achieve it. As such, it is essential reading for all teachers and school leaders who want to ensure that every child has an equitable chance of success at school and in later life.

**why is equity important in education:** *Issues in Education and Technology* Cream A. H. Wright, 2000 This book explores a range of issues in education and technology, and provides policy guidelines and strategies for those who have to make critical decisions about the use of technology in education systems and institutions.

**why is equity important in education:** *The Road To Equity* Kayren Gray, 2020-06-04 In *The Road To Equity: The Five C's to Construct an Equitable Classroom*, author, Kayren Gray identifies the issue and implements solutions to create inspiring results in your classroom. Utilize the road map to equitable outcomes through my interpretation of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as a reference point, moving through each level to reach self-actualization, or in our case, a more equitable classroom. Each chapter is a story and a stop along the road, with application and reflection to embark on your journey towards educational equity to close the gap and change the narrative. The detours in my own life were the driving forces that led to a desire and mission to ensure educational equity. There were more tolls and exits I had to prepare for, while I observed others using cruise control and others being fortunate enough to take the HOV lane. Those moments in life that set me back or directed me to an exit, in order to refuel, changed a little piece of me- sometimes for the better but sometimes for the worse. Those unexpected detours were my North Star, shaping my experiences to prepare me to deliver a message that hopes to inspire you to do what you can to close the gap. In fact, if we all do what we can, little or much, it's more than we would see accomplished, if we all did nothing at all, and that's why this is so important to me. K-12 Stakeholders will learn to: confront bias and understand barriers to learning; create opportunities to build relationships; collaborate through curriculum, lessons, and practices; commit to building confidence and a growth mindset; celebrate diversity and inclusion to achieve a more equitable classroom.

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