

The theorists who we hear the most about in the early childhood field, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, John Dewey, and others, were primarily Europeans whose discoveries were based on white, middle-class children. This column invites you to discover some different theorists and influencers and to consider how their efforts can inform our effectiveness in supporting young children of diverse cultures, languages, abilities, and life circumstances.

The Best Way to Support the Development of Young Children

Are there different ideas about the best way to support sleeping, eating, playing, and learning? Watch this video, [Diversity: Contrasting Perspectives](#), to discover the answer. Consider watching the video with colleagues and then discussing the implications for your work. Has anyone made assumptions about “the best way” to support an aspect of development? And how might the expertise of diverse families and theorists support your thinking about independence, interdependence, and individuality.

What Does DAP Say About Learning from Diverse Theories and Theorists?

The 2020 position statement on developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) from the National Association for the Education of Young Children highlights that “*theories once assumed to be universal in developmental sciences . . . are now recognized to vary by culture and experience.*” (p.6) It encourages familiarity with “*a more representative selection of researchers and theorists . . . to develop new norms that will support equitably educating all children.*” (p. 37). Read more about core DAP considerations for supporting each and every child [here](#).

Black Skin, White Theorists: Remembering Hidden Black Early Childhood Scholars

This article highlights the importance of preparing culturally responsive early childhood educators who are able to draw from multiple theories and perspectives. In addition to providing connections to Black theorists and influencers, the article underscores the value of fluency in the theories of Black scholars in order to support young Black children. Read the article [here](#).

Meet Some Diverse Grassroots Leaders and Educators Who Have Made a Difference

The Struggle for Culturally Receptive Education website highlights the significant efforts by families, educators, students, and other leaders to make education reflective of and receptive/responsive to diversity in its many forms. Click [here](#) to access. Watch for a box at the top of the page that will allow you to view the site in English or Spanish.

A Theorist You MUST Know About

Rudine Sims Bishop is the talented Ohio faculty member who characterized several important components of the books young children read. She shared that children need books that are **mirrors** (e.g., reflective of characters and experiences that reflect young children) and books that are **windows** (e.g., opportunities to learn about and reflect upon the lives of others). And books that are **sliding glass doors** offer opportunities for children to journey into different places and experiences. Read about Rudine Sims Bishop [here](#). Watch a video about her and her work [here](#). Read an article by Dr. Bishop [here](#).

Guide to Theorists, Founders, and Influencers in Early Childhood Education

Click [here](#) for a resource that provides a deeper look into pivotal figures in early childhood education.

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