**Culturally Responsive Assessment**. Schools today are becoming increasingly diverse and *culturally* rich. ... The validity of the Full and Individual Assessment results is an issue of vital *importance*as these results are used to inform *important*decisions that impact a student's life.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Culture is a cumulative body of learned and shared behavior, values, customs, and beliefs common to a particular group or society. In essence, culture makes us who we are.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**How can an evaluation be culturally responsive?** An evaluation is culturally responsive if it fully takes into account the culture of the program that is being evaluated. In other words, the evaluation is based on an examination of impacts through lenses in which the culture of the participants is considered an important factor, thus rejecting the notion that assessments must be objective and culture free, if they are to be unbiased.

**Takeaways from the NSF:**

* Evaluation is based on an examination of impacts through lenses in which the culture of the participants is considered an important factor.
* Cultural responsiveness is gaining recognition as a critical feature of the evaluation process.
* There are no culture-free evaluators, educational tests, or societal laws.
* Multiethnic evaluation teams increase the chances of really hearing the voices of underrepresented students.
* Stakeholders play a critical role in all evaluations, especially culturally responsive ones.
* Culturally responsive progress evaluations examine connections through culturally sensitive lenses.
* It is critical that the questions of significant stakeholders have been heard and, where appropriate, addressed.
* Questions regarding what constitutes acceptable evidence should be discussed before conducting the evaluation.
* Previous use (of an instrument) does not guarantee cultural responsiveness.
* The need to train data collectors in evaluation studies is great.
* Too often the nonverbal behaviors are treated as “error variance” in the observation and ignored.
* Disaggregation of collected data is a procedure that warrants increased attention.
* Evaluation results should be viewed by audiences as not only useful, but truthful as well.

**Resources**

Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment (<CREA.education.illinois.edu>)

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1. <http://specialed.esc1.net/Page/22> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Frierson, et al (2002) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)