



# **Finding Joy in Teaching Students of Diverse Backgrounds: Culturally Responsive and Socially Just Practices in U.S. Classrooms**

*Sonia Nieto*

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*"While no check-list of attitudes, dispositions, behaviors, or actions can define what thriving teachers look like, the teachers interviewed here give us powerful examples of what it takes to face their profession with courage, their content with enthusiasm, and their students with love."*

-Sonia Nieto

One in four public school students in the U.S. now speaks a language other than English at home, and the number of emergent bilingual and immigrant children in our schools continues to grow daily. What does it mean to be a teacher today, when students are more diverse in language, culture, race, and social class than ever before? What does it take to thrive, when the demands of teaching have never been greater? Sonia Nieto found and interviewed 22 teachers of varying backgrounds and school settings who help answer the question of what effective, culturally responsive teaching looks like in the real world. Their stories of success, failure, frustration and hope will resonate with everyone who has struggled to meet the needs of diverse students in our current sociopolitical context.

Nieto explores the common themes that arose throughout the interviews, of teaching with a social justice perspective, the moral dimensions of teaching, advocating for students, and challenging the status quo. She raises a persuasive argument that teaching is an ethical endeavor, that we must honor students' identities and believe in their futures, and that ultimately teaching is an act of love. The stories of Nieto's passionate teachers will inspire and motivate you to find joy in teaching students of diverse backgrounds.

Read a sample chapter!

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