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| Karen Woods | [HOW DO WE GET OUR SKIN COLOR?](https://youtu.be/gJV0hotOVew)  Karen Woods  K-5 Social Studies and Science Coordinator | Sharon Public Schools  Video URL: <https://youtu.be/gJV0hotOVew> |
| *I am teaching in a second grade class of students that is not my own. There are students at home participating in the lesson, in a hybrid model. You hear one student from home talk at one point, and I respond to her, and to everyone, after she speaks.*  *This would be one lesson from a series of lessons focusing on racial identity, respecting the diversity in our world, and the idea that as humans we have differences in our appearance and we have many things that bind us together as humans (feelings, emotions, strengths, weaknesses, etc.).* | |

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| Learn more about this video and Karen’s culturally responsive teaching (CRT) journey: | |
| **What are you proud of and excited to share from this video? Why do you think this is a strong example of culturally responsive teaching?** | *This video is an example of students engaging with relevant content that centers issues of equity, power, race, and identity. I see this as a part of the conversation about race and racial identity in a classroom.*  *The focus question and objective is clearly stated at the beginning of the lesson: How do we get our skin color? I think it is a good starting point to give students the scientific reasons of why we all have different skin colors.*  *I refer to the answer of this question while reading the book to bring students’ attention to it.*  *Using the “Notice/Wonder” routine allows us to enter this conversation and book where students are at. It allows them to look at a map and use both the knowledge they have gained in geography in 2nd grade, as well as data from the map, to make sense of the topic. This brings the student voice to the conversation to learn what background knowledge they have, as well as what questions they have about skin color. Some examples from the Notice and Wonder were: NOTICE: If you are born in a different country your skin color might be different from someone else; different continents/countries have different skin colors. WONDER: Why is the light more north and the dark more south?*  *Turn and talk is used for students to talk about what they have learned from the book about how we get our skin color.* |
| **What does culturally responsive teaching and/or anti-racist teaching mean to you?** | *My understanding of Culturally Responsive Teaching/Anti-Racist Teaching is constantly growing and evolving. I view CRT and ARAB teaching as a combination of teacher moves and practices that engage all students in higher level thinking while making learning relevant to the lives of students. These methods include a curriculum that teaches diverse perspectives, centers students’ identities, and includes content related to power and privilege to help students understand the world we live in, and how they can recognize the injustices and how to take action in our society.*  *To help frame the work I do in these areas I have been using the “Learning for Justice: Social Justice Framework” from Teaching Tolerance, now known as Learning for Justice. Through this lens I have looked at how our curriculum and teaching practices are aligned with the areas of identity, diversity, justice and action.* |
| **Describe your journey to becoming a more culturally responsive, anti-racist educator. What has helped you grow your CRT practice?** | *When I shifted from a first grade teacher to a social studies curriculum coordinator 5 years ago, I quickly realized I needed more training to support teachers in making our K-5 social studies curriculum Culturally Responsive. I began to take courses through the EdcoCollaborative - IDEAS courses. I started with courses on difficult conversations, and then took classes to better understand my own understanding of racial identity and the role race has played in society. My journey understanding race and my own racial identity has been an important step in growing my CRT practice.*  *I continued to find allies in my buildings, creating book clubs and study groups, and evaluating our curriculum. With teachers, we have been looking at the resources we use and identity whose voices and stories are missing from our curriculum. Using the book, Being the Change by Sara K. Ahmed, we began with more lessons on identity incorporated into every grade level. I continue this to try to lead the work to encourage and promote practices and curriculum that are Culturally Responsive.* |
| **What advice would you give to another educator who wants to develop their CRT skills?** | *The advice I would give is to keep learning in as many ways as you can about CRT and ARAB teaching, including developing your own understanding of privilege and bias. Self-awareness is a key step. Next, I would suggest finding colleagues in your district (or beyond) doing this work so you have partners to share ideas with. Finally, I would say you need to start doing this work with teachers. You aren’t going to feel like you know anything, so you have to just take risks and start doing the work and reflection on what goes well and what doesn’t. Students can help you with this reflection as well, giving you feedback and helping you adjust your practices.* |