Readings:

1. González gives a brief overview of immigration and Latinos in his chapter, “Immigrants Old and New: Closing Borders of the Mind”. He proposes three primary “forces” that may influence a Latino’s decision to come to the United States (p 192) and argues why Latino immigration will continue in this century (p 199-205). Given the current state of the struggling U.S. economy, do you think Latinos will continue to come to the U.S.? Have you seen a “slow down” in the rate of new immigrants in your community?

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2. What do you see as the greatest challenge facing your Latino students, whether they were born in the US or arrived as a child? What do you see as the greatest benefit of having a diverse classroom?

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3. Villegas and Lucas contend in their article “The Culturally Responsive Teacher” that successful teaching of diverse populations of students “…demands a new way of looking at teaching that is grounded in an understanding of the role of culture and language” (p 29). The authors propose a framework with six qualities or strategies necessary to work more effectively with increasingly diverse student populations. Do you agree with these six strategies? Which one or two would you be more able and willing to put into practice?
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4. Gonzáles explains the “external factors” that influence the degree in which Latin American and Caribbean immigrants integrate into daily life in the United States (p 191) and Villegas and Lucas recommend that educators should “know about their students’ lives” (p 30). Do any of these external factors, as discussed by Gonzáles, influence how your immigrant students are able to integrate into daily life at your school? And would learning about each student’s immigration history and background, as proposed by Villegas and Lucas, help you work more effectively with your immigrant students? If so, what practical steps can you take to understand more about the cultures and backgrounds of your immigrant students?
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