Windows and Mirrors: Multicultural Texts in the Classroom

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What is Multicultural Literature?
Multicultural Children’s Literature

“Multicultural children’s literature is literature that is not of the mainstream in the United States. Rather, it is about groups who have been previously underrepresented and often marginalized by society as a whole, especially in depictions in children’s literature in the United States”… “Multicultural children’s literature is about the sociocultural experiences of previously underrepresented groups. It validates these groups’ experiences, including those occurring because of differences in language, race, gender, class, ethnicity, identity, and sexual orientation” (5).

History

The Office – Diversity Day Training
History
1965 – Council on Interracial Books for Children (CIBC)
The Diversity Gap in Children's Books

18 Years • 1994–2012

Percentage of Children's Books by and/or about People of Color

37% of the US population are People of Color
10% of children's books in the past 18 years contain multicultural content.

Despite the best efforts of Lee & Low Books and other publishers and imprints that focus on multicultural themes, the number of books that contain diversity has not grown.

Minority % of US Population

2012 116.2M 37%
2060 241.3M 57%

Did you know?
The US is projected to become a majority-“Minority” Nation in 2043.

ABOUT EVERYONE, FOR EVERYONE
for more conversations on diversity, visit blog.leeandlow.com

North Carolina

North Carolina population share (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>-7.0%</td>
<td>-0.5%</td>
<td>+78.7%</td>
<td>+57.1%</td>
<td>+23.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Bureau

Top 5 diverse counties in NC (non-white percentages from 2010)

- Warren: 62.2%
- Northampton: 62.0%
- Hertford: 65.3%
- Bertie: 65.6%

Source: Mitchell Silver, AICP, Chief Planning and Development Officer in the City of Raleigh, North Carolina; SAS, North Carolina Trends Report

North Carolina

New growth in Durham and Raleigh is predominately from people of color

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change since 2000</th>
<th>Durham County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All residents</td>
<td>+44,282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White residents</td>
<td>+5,335 (12.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents of color</td>
<td>+38,947 (87.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wake County (Raleigh)</th>
<th>Increase in residents of color since 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All residents</td>
<td>+273,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White residents</td>
<td>+121,446 (44.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents of color</td>
<td>+151,801 (55.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census 2010 and American Community Survey, 2009

The Importance of Multicultural Literature

- It allows students to see themselves in their texts.
- It allows everyone to learn about people all over the world.
- It encourages respect and empathy of all peoples.
- It expands understanding of history and geography.
- It provides daily discussion on diversity and current events.
- It promotes self-esteem and self acceptance.
- It helps create a school of global learners and leaders.

Seven Ways to Evaluate Multicultural Literature
1. Determine the author’s perspective and expertise.
2. Watch out for stereotyping of characters or cultures.
3. Assess illustrations for authenticity and accuracy.
4. Check that cultural details are current and correct.
5. Analyze storyline and characters for tokenism or typecasting.
6. Look for multidimensionality and interconnections between characters.
"BIG CHIEF!" take'um You for VALENTINE!
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Strategies
CCSS.Math.Content.4.MD.A.2 Use the four operations to solve word problems involving distances, intervals of time, liquid volumes, masses of objects, and money, including problems involving simple fractions or decimals, and problems that require expressing measurements given in a larger unit in terms of a smaller unit. Represent measurement quantities using diagrams such as number line diagrams that feature a measurement scale.
World View Currency Kit

- Bills and coins from over 35 different countries
- Four books on currency around the world
- Available at worldview.unc.edu
Modeling links classroom mathematics and statistics to everyday life, work, and decision-making. Modeling is the process of choosing and using appropriate mathematics and statistics to analyze empirical situations, to understand them better, and to improve decisions. Quantities and their relationships in physical, economic, public policy, social, and everyday situations can be modeled using mathematical and statistical methods.
Estimating how much water and food is needed for emergency relief in a devastated city of 3 million people, and how it might be distributed.

http://www.npr.org/2010/12/28/129880022/-create-dangerously-the-heart-and-healing-of-haiti
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
UNC African Studies Center: Learning Boxes

- Class set of 30 African-themed novels
- Background on the novel’s setting and theme
- Student reading guide and discussion questions
- Activities and maps
- Photos and links to other resources
- FREE!
Common Core - High School - History/Social Studies

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.6** Evaluate authors’ differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors’ claims, reasoning, and evidence.


• **K.L.1** Compare characteristics of animals that make them alike and different from other animals and nonliving things.
NC Essential Standards - High School - Environmental Science

EEn.2.4 Evaluate how humans use water.

http://www.papertigers.org/reviews/USA/papertigers/WaterStoriesFromAroundTheWorld.html

http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/author/teichenseher/
Resources
50 Multicultural Books Every Child Should Read

Award Winners and Recommended Diverse Children’s Books

Book Awards
Google Lit Trips

Welcome to Google Lit Trips!

Because Literary Reading Brings Wisdom

The Yellow Balloon by Charlotte Dematons

Student Created!
UNC Carolina Navigators: Culture Kits
UNC African Studies Center: Learning Boxes

- Class set of 30 African-themed novels
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Multicultural Experiential Exercises
World View Global WebFriends

World View Global WebFriends Destinations 2012-2013

- Europe
  - Czech Republic
  - England
  - France
  - Germany
  - Ireland
  - Italy
  - The Netherlands
  - Spain

- Asia
  - China
  - Hong Kong
  - India

- Latin America/South America
  - Costa Rica
  - Brazil
  - Chile

- Africa
  - Uganda
  - South Africa
  - Morocco
  - Namibia
Multicultural literature can be a mirror and a window.