

The background of the cover features several stylized, light green leaf motifs scattered across the surface. The main title is centered and separated from the rest of the cover by a horizontal line.

MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE AND RESPONSE

Lynn Atkinson Smolen and Ruth A. Oswald,
Editors

 **Greenwood**
PUBLISHING GROUP

MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE AND RESPONSE

This page intentionally left blank

MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE AND RESPONSE

Affirming Diverse Voices

Lynn Atkinson Smolen and Ruth A. Oswald,
Editors



LIBRARIES UNLIMITED

AN IMPRINT OF ABC-CLIO, LLC
Santa Barbara, California • Denver, Colorado • Oxford, England

Copyright 2011 by Lynn Atkinson Smolen and Ruth A. Oswald

Chapter 8: Copyright 2011 by F. Isabel Campoy and Alma Flor Ada

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review or reproducibles, which may be copied for classroom and educational programs only, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Multicultural Literature and Response : Affirming Diverse Voices / Lynn Atkinson Smolen and Ruth A. Oswald, Editors.

p. cm.

Summary: "This compelling book emphasizes the critical role of quality multicultural literature and reader response in today's schools and libraries"—Provided by publisher.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-59884-474-0 (pbk. : acid-free paper) — ISBN 978-1-59884-475-7 (ebook)

1. American literature—Minority authors—Study and teaching. 2. Children's literature, American—Study and teaching. 3. Minorities in literature—Study and teaching—United States. 4. Cultural pluralism—Study and teaching. 5. Ethnic groups in literature—Study and teaching. 6. Ethnicity in literature—Study and teaching. 7. Children—Books and reading—United States. 8. Young adults—Books and reading—United States. 9. Multicultural education—United States. 10. Reader-response criticism—United States.

I. Smolen, Lynn Atkinson. II. Oswald, Ruth A.

PS153.M56M85 2011

810.9'8071—dc22

2010043808

ISBN: 978-1-59884-474-0

EISBN: 978-1-59884-475-7

15 14 13 12 11 1 2 3 4 5

This book is also available on the World Wide Web as an eBook.

Visit www.abc-clio.com for details.


Libraries Unlimited

An Imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC

ABC-CLIO, LLC

130 Cremona Drive, P.O. Box 1911

Santa Barbara, California 93116-1911

This book is printed on acid-free paper 

Manufactured in the United States of America

Lynn dedicates this book to her father, Kenneth Biddle Atkinson,
who inspired in her a love of language and literature
and a passion for writing.

Ruth dedicates this book to her daughter, Lori,
an amazing teacher and lover of literature.

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>Introduction</i>	xi
1. Introduction to Multicultural Literature <i>Ruth A. Oswald and Lynn Atkinson Smolen</i>	1
2. Integrating Multicultural Literature Into the Curriculum <i>Lynn Atkinson Smolen, Ruth A. Oswald and Sandra Jenkins</i>	17
3. Voices of Multicultural Authors <i>Darwin L. Henderson and Teresa Young</i>	59
4. The Power of Illustrations in Multicultural Picture Books: Unfolding Visual Literacy <i>Francis S. Broadway and Douglass M. Conkle</i>	67
5. Exploring African American Children's Literature <i>Claudette Shackelford McLinn, Yolanda A. Reed, John A. Casper, and Sarah King</i>	95
6. Taking a Critical Look at Native Americans in Children's Literature <i>Donna Sabis-Burns</i>	131
7. The Journey Continues: Exploring the Literature of Asian and Pacific Island Cultures <i>Avis M. Masuda and Michele M. Ebersole</i>	153

8.	Latino Literature for Children and Adolescents <i>F. Isabel Campoy and Alma Flor Ada</i>	195
9.	Stories from the Mountains: Appalachian Literature for Children and Adolescents <i>Carolyn S. Brodie</i>	231
10.	Representations not Representation: Exploring Middle East Children's Literature <i>Ruth McKoy Lowery</i>	267
11.	Supporting English Language Learners' Literacy Development with Culturally Relevant Books <i>Nancy L. Hadaway and Terrell A. Young</i>	285
12.	Do Tell! Multicultural Folk Stories in the Classroom and Library <i>Jacqueline K. Peck</i>	309
13.	Linking Audiovisuals with Multicultural Literature <i>Meghan Harper</i>	319
14.	Using Multicultural Mentor Texts to Teach Writing <i>Barbara Moss and Christine Kane</i>	357
15.	Reading Fluency and Multicultural Literature <i>Belinda Zimmerman, Timothy Rasinski, and Tracy Foreman</i>	371
16.	Promoting Multicultural Literature and Literacy: Awards, Conferences, Library Initiatives, and Outreach Programs <i>Barbara A. Ward</i>	403
	<i>Appendix A: A Selected List of Multicultural Authors and Illustrators</i>	423
	<i>Appendix B: Multicultural Book Awards</i>	427
	<i>Appendix C: Publishers and Distributors of Multicultural Literature</i>	431
	<i>Index</i>	437
	<i>About the Editors and Contributors</i>	449

Acknowledgments

We wish to acknowledge the wonderful authors who worked tirelessly to write the excellent chapters in this book. We greatly appreciate their expertise and efforts. We are particularly indebted to the multicultural authors who kindly allowed us to interview them and include excerpts from their interviews in this book. Hearing the voices of multicultural authors brings readers to a better understanding of their work and helps them gain an insider's view of the writing process. These authors include Joseph Bruchac, Doreen Rappaport, Angela Johnson, Pat Mora, Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, and Laurence Yep.

Finally, we thank our editor, Blanche Woolls, for her valuable feedback and ongoing support. We are also very grateful for the editing of the chapters in the book provided by John Casper, Sarah King, David Smolen, and Barbara Moline. Additionally, we thank Stella Muñoz Rodríguez for her careful editing and proofreading of the Spanish titles, names, songs, and poems. We also appreciate the assistance from the librarians at the Akron Summit County Public Library in gathering the books and other resources for chapters one and two.

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

“Multicultural literature is one of the most powerful components of a multicultural education curriculum, the underlying purpose of which is to help to make the society a more equitable one.”

—Bishop, 1993, p. 40

As editors, our goal for *Multicultural Literature and Response: Affirming Diverse Voices* is to encourage educators and teacher librarians to use the rich array of quality multicultural books to support multicultural teaching and learning. We believe that a book on this topic is timely considering the increasing diversity in our schools. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2010), 45 percent of the U.S. public school population enrolled in kindergarten through twelfth grade comes from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.

In this book, the distinguished group of contributing authors, many of whom have an insider perspective of the culture represented in the literature they describe, discuss multicultural literature and provide teachers and teacher librarians with concrete ways to integrate this literature into the curriculum. Our goal is to highlight the importance of multicultural literature as a vital way to make people aware of the need for social justice in our society and throughout the world. Our hope is to bring quality, authentic multicultural literature titles to the forefront and inform teachers and librarians of the wide range of genres and themes that are available in this literature. Authenticity means that ethnic and cultural groups are represented as they are today, not just as they were in the past, and that the distinctive characteristics of each group are represented, avoiding the merging of subcultural groups into one group (Yokota, 1993). We encourage librarians, educators, and parents to include this literature in their collections and response activities on a regular basis with *all* children and young adults.

In this book we introduce readers to quality multicultural literature in all genres throughout the curriculum and throughout the year, not as an add on or separate entity, but as an integral part of literature used to support teaching and learning. For example,

when children study poetry, poems by authors of color should be included as an important part of the collection. The same is true when they study fiction and nonfiction. Additionally, when children engage in author or illustrator studies, authors or illustrators of color need to be included in their study. The contributors to this book abide by Louise Rosenblatt's (1994) transactional theory of reader response by including a variety of ways to use these books in classrooms throughout the school day. We advocate using multicultural literature for artistic expression, dramatic expression, written expression, and discussion across the curriculum to support readers' efferent and aesthetic responses.

The editors and authors of this book fervently believe that multicultural literature should be included in the school curriculum and in library programs. They are strongly committed to addressing issues of social justice and believe that educators and librarians risk superficiality if they fail to discuss social issues and inequalities. This means guiding readers to go beyond identifying topic, plot, or main idea, and teaching them to be critical thinkers as they identify issues and themes that might not be stated directly in the text. This is often called inferring or reading between the lines, and it supports thoughtful literacy. It is important for all students to understand how various groups have been marginalized in comparison to the mainstream culture and to try to understand inequalities, discrimination, oppression, and social justice (Cai, 1998).

ORGANIZATION

As the editors of this book, we are honored to introduce our chapters and contributors, an impressive community of authors who have come together to discuss the richness of multicultural literature, and to present multiple paths of response to this literature and ways to affirm diverse voices so that this literature continues to be published and reaches the hands of *all* children.

Chapter 1—"Introduction to Multicultural Literature"—Ruth A. Oswald and Lynn Atkinson Smolen define multicultural literature and discuss why it is essential for our diverse society as well as for the progress of the multicultural education movement in our country. Interviews with two authors are featured as part of the discussion about authors of multicultural literature who write inside versus outside of their culture. Criteria for selection of multicultural literature is included as well as a discussion of culturally responsive teaching with examples of how teachers can include multicultural literature in their curriculum.

Chapter 2—"Integrating Multicultural Literature Into the Curriculum"—Lynn Atkinson Smolen, Ruth A. Oswald, and Sandra Jenkins elaborate on the rationale for integrating multicultural literature into the curriculum. Other topics presented in this chapter include different models for integrating multicultural literature into the curriculum, multicultural twin texts, text sets, and thematic units. These approaches are defined and examples of multicultural books are described. Detailed descriptions of response activities for many of the books are also included.

Chapter 3—"Voices of Multicultural Authors"—Darwin L. Henderson and Teresa Young present the voices of four prominent authors of multicultural children's and young adult literature: Pat Mora, Lawrence Yep, Virginia Hawk Sneve, and Angela Johnson based on personal interviews and information from their books. Through the eyes of these authors, readers gain insight into these authors' views of culture and authenticity and writing that is multicultural.

Chapter 4—“The Power of Illustrations in Multicultural Picture Books: Unfolding Visual Literacy”—Francis S. Broadway and Douglass M. Conkle discuss notable illustrators of multicultural books, various styles and media of picture book illustrators, and share some student work samples in response to multicultural books. They highlight and discuss in detail Eric Velasquez’s illustrations in *The Sweet Smell of Roses* (Johnson, 2005).

Chapter 5—“Exploring African American Children’s Literature”—Claudette S. McLinn, Yolanda A. Reed, John A. Casper, and Sarah King describe the rich heritage of African American children’s literature. They group the books under the following themes and genres: family and friends; identity and self-concept; poetry and rhymes; school and community; imagination; traditional literature; spirituality; historical perspectives; holidays and special days; and biographies and autobiographies. They describe many of the books and provide a variety of literature response activities for children and youth. In addition they include a historical timeline of the literature that stretches from 1746 to the present day.

Chapter 6—“Taking a Critical Look at Native Americans in Children’s Literature”—Donna Sabis-Burns discusses how Native Americans have been portrayed in a degrading manner in the past and points out stereotypes to be aware of when selecting books that depict Native Peoples. She discusses the American Indian Youth Literature Award and the criteria used by the award committee to select children’s literature that authentically and accurately portrays Native Americans. In her discussion of themes for Native American children’s literature, she emphasizes the importance of selecting literature that portrays a variety of tribal nations, books that portray Native Peoples’ contemporary life styles, and literature that highlights social justice themes. She includes a valuable table that provides examples of quality Native American books with examples of culturally sensitive (what to do) and culturally inappropriate (what not to do) response activities for the books.

Chapter 7—In “The Journey Continues: Exploring the Literature of Asian and Pacific Island Children,” Avis M. Masuda and Michele M. Ebersole begin their chapter by describing the cultural groups represented under the broad category of Asian Americans and the importance of Asian American literature. They discuss this literature for young children under the following themes: traditional literature; celebrations, ethnic food, and traditions; immigration stories; bridging cultures; adoption stories; surviving the internment camp; and immigration stories. They have grouped the Asian American literature for young adolescents under the following themes: identity; model minority stereotype; 1.5 generation; and traditions and culture as part of identity. In addition to describing the themes and the literature, they also include response engagements. In the second half of the chapter, Ebersole and Masuda discuss Pacific Island literature. They begin this section by describing the many cultural groups that make up the Pacific Island peoples and the historical development of the children’s literature of this region. They have grouped this literature for children into the following themes: regional literature, myths and legends explaining natural phenomena, and culture and language. They also discuss Pacific Island literature for youth, which mostly consists of novels. Throughout this section they discuss engagement activities for Pacific Island literature.

Chapter 8—“Latino Literature for Children and Adolescents”—F. Isabel Campoy and Alma Flor Ada begin by discussing Latinos in the United States and the distinctiveness amongst the many parallel groups such as Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Cubans. They then highlight the commonalities that all Latinos share: a mutual link

to their history, a similar view of the world, and a strong connection to the Spanish language. In this chapter, they provide an extensive overview of Latino children's literature. They discuss the historical development of this literature, emphasizing the contributions of José Martí, Pura Belpré, Ernesto Galarza, Piri Thomas, George Ancona, Hilda Perera, Rudolfo Anaya, Nicholasa Mohr, and Alma Flor Ada. They also discuss Latino children's books, categorizing them into the following themes: preserving the oral traditional folklore; transmitting history, cultural achievements and everyday life from Spain and Latin America; sharing personal memoirs; depicting Latino life and culture; celebrating Latino poetic voices; giving free rein to fantasy; and writing for the stage. For each of these themes they provide examples of response activities that emphasize reflection, critical thinking, and a social justice stance.

Chapter 9—"Stories from the Mountains: Appalachian Literature for Children and Adolescents"—Carolyn Brodie provides a brief history of Appalachia, a beautiful region of the United States, and a brief description of the people of this region who are proud of their land, heritage, and community. She discusses the rich literature of this region and groups the books under the themes of love of place, family and intergenerational stories, spirituality and religion, individualism, self-reliance and pride, and neighborliness and hospitality. She also discusses Appalachian books that have won the Caldecott and Newbery Awards and books representing the predominant genres of poetry and folklore. Additionally, she suggests response activities for the literature she describes.

Chapter 10—"Representations not Representation: Exploring Middle East Children's Literature"—In this chapter, Ruth McKoy Lowery discusses how Middle Easterners are misunderstood and often maligned as a result of horrific incidents such as the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the twin towers in New York City. She describes the demography of Middle Easterners and emphasizes their diversity, pointing out that many Middle Easterners are not Arab. She also gives a brief overview of Middle Easterners in the United States in the twenty-first century. She then discusses books about Middle Easterners using the following categories: immigrant experiences in the United States; American-born experiences; global experiences; immigrant experiences outside the United States; and Middle Eastern native experiences. She emphasizes the importance of including books about Middle Easterners in the classroom as a way of building cross-cultural understanding and includes examples of ways to integrate this literature into the curriculum with response activities in language arts and reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and art.

Chapter 11—"Supporting English Language Learners' Literacy Development with Culturally Relevant Books"—Nancy L. Hadaway and Terrell A. Young discuss how to use multicultural books as part of a culturally relevant pedagogy to support English language learners in the classroom. They include tables with lists of bilingual books, books about English language learners, and text-sets for English language learners. The books are accompanied with valuable information on the cultural background of the book and the suggested proficiency level and grade level for use.

Chapter 12—"Do Tell! Multicultural Folk Stories in the Classroom and Library"—Jacqueline K. Peck shares the importance of stories and storytelling to support an understanding of self and others. She presents principles of good storytelling as well as examples of appropriate multicultural literature to use for this form of expression. She also provides extension activities for storytelling and additional resources on this topic.

Chapter 13—“Linking Audiovisuals to Multicultural Literature”—Meghan Harper provides an update on quality audiovisuals to support the use of multicultural literature. She presents a rationale for using audiovisuals with multicultural literature, discusses in detail how to select quality audiovisuals, and provides a valuable list of multicultural books connected to audiovisuals.

Chapter 14—“Using Multicultural Mentor Texts to Teach Writing”—Barbara Moss collaborates with Christine Kane, a classroom teacher, to present a culturally relevant teaching protocol for using multicultural books as mentor texts to teach writing. They provide guidelines for selecting multicultural texts, a two-phase instructional sequence for teaching with multicultural mentor texts, and ways to use mentor texts for teaching grammar and text structures.

Chapter 15—“Reading Fluency and Multicultural Literature”—Belinda Zimmerman and Timothy Rasinski join Tracy Foreman, a classroom teacher, to present many instructional activities that incorporate multicultural literature to develop reading fluency. They include detailed descriptions of the fluency development lesson, the oral recitation lesson, book bits, audio assisted reading, and reader’s theater. A wonderful list of poems, songs, and readers theatre scripts in many languages is also included.

Chapter 16—“Promoting Multicultural Literature and Literacy: Awards, Conferences, Library Initiatives, and Outreach Programs”—Barbara A. Ward reports how multicultural literature is being promoted across the nation through ever-growing literature awards, conferences, library initiatives, and outreach programs that have multicultural literature as their main focus. Lists of the major awards for multicultural literature, conferences featuring multicultural literature as its main attraction, and useful Web sites that feature multicultural literature are included. These resources are excellent starting places for teachers who want to begin to incorporate multicultural literature in their classrooms and librarians who want to include these books in their library programs.

The appendices in this book provide readers with additional information about multicultural literature. These appendices are the following:

- Appendix A: A Selected List of Multicultural Authors and Illustrators
- Appendix B: Multicultural Book Awards
- Appendix C: Publishers and Distributors of Multicultural Literature

REFERENCES

- Bishop, R. S. (1993). Multicultural literature for children: Making informed choices. In V. J. Harris (Ed.), *Teaching multicultural literature in grades K–8*, (pp. 35–54). Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.
- Cai, M. (1998). Multiple definitions of multicultural literature: Is the debate really just “ivory tower” bickering? *The New Advocate*, 11(4), 311–324.
- Johnson, A. (2005). *A sweet smell of roses*, illustrated by E. Velasquez. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2010). The condition of education 2010. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/press/index.asp>.
- Rosenblatt, L. M. (1994). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work*. Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Yokota, J. (1993). Issues in selecting multicultural children’s literature. *Language Arts*, 70, 156–167.

This page intentionally left blank



Introduction to Multicultural Literature

Ruth A. Oswald and Lynn Atkinson Smolen

WHAT IS MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE?

Multicultural literature has been defined in a variety of ways depending on cultural specificity. Thousands of years ago, Confucius proposed the importance of honest language and correct naming. As cited in Freedman (2002), “Calling things by their right names makes it possible for us to speak truthfully about them” (p. 6). Whereas naming is important, this is not to imply that there is one right definition of multicultural literature. However, the way multicultural literature is defined reflects belief (stance) and impacts literature choices as well as how the literature will be used.

According to Harris and Hodges (1995), multicultural literature is “writing that reflects the customs, beliefs, and experiences of people of differing nationalities and races” (p. 158). Many definitions are more inclusive including religious groups, and others are even broader and include individuals with disabilities, gender issues, and sexual orientation. Cai (1998) argued that the controversy over definition simply has to do with how many and which cultures should be covered in multicultural literature and determining the parameters of the prefix “multi.”

Because purpose determines the definition of multicultural literature, it is important to note that this text is for teachers, teacher librarians, and educators to use as a resource to promote the multicultural education movement. As explained by Banks and Banks (2001):

multicultural education is an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, language, and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school.

(p. 1)

According to Cai (1998), multicultural literature is a critical component of this movement, a tool that can be used to reach its goal: diversity and equity in education (p. 318). This approach goes beyond merely introducing students to many cultures and developing an appreciation for underrepresented groups. The focus is on social equity, justice, removal of prejudice, praxis (reflection and action), and fostering a genuine respect and understanding of the experience and history of oppressed groups (Banks, 2004, p. 15). Nieto (1992) emphasized that multicultural education is for *all* students. Bishop (1997) built upon Nieto's affirmation and added that multicultural literature is also for *all* students and defined multicultural literature as "books that reflect the racial, ethnic, and social diversity that is characteristic of our pluralistic society and of the world" (p. 3). This definition aligns nicely with the purpose of this text.

WHY IS MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE ESSENTIAL FOR OUR MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY?

The United States is a multicultural nation that includes Whites, African Americans, American Indians and Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and Latinos (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Moreover, the population of the United States includes people from many different religious groups such as Christian, Jewish, and Islam within which each contains diversity. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2008), minority students make up 43 percent of the public school enrollment, 20 percent of school-age children speak a language other than English at home, and about 5 percent speak English with difficulty. Hispanic students now make up one in five public school students, but these students as well as other minority students are disproportionately clustered in high-poverty schools. Norton (2009) emphasized the increasing need for "cross-cultural understanding" with the demographic shifts that continually occur in the United States (p. 1).

Educators, teacher librarians, and researchers understand the important contribution that quality, multicultural literature can make in classrooms across our nation to enhance learning and understanding for all students. Cullinan (1989) used the metaphors of a mirror and a window to emphasize the potential that children's literature offers. We see our own experiences in literature (the mirror), and then an author "invites us to look through a (window), and we respond, to see the world through another's eyes" (p. 424). Gates and Mark (2006) reported that many have used the Cullinan mirror metaphor to emphasize the need for multicultural literature to assure that all children can see themselves in books and also see those who are outside of their cultural world in literature. All students need to see positive representations of themselves and their cultures in literature.

Through the window of literature, however, we are allowed to enter worlds not physically open to us—to view, to empathize, and to participate emotionally in ways that may ultimately change the way we see ourselves and the society in which we live. Only through repeated immersion into those other cultural experiences will we as a society begin to appreciate the struggles, the pain, and the horror that our sisters and brothers of other backgrounds have suffered. Only then will we begin truly to develop the respect needed to appreciate and honor our unique diversity as a country.

According to Banks (2004), it is important to move students beyond mere exposure to cultures outside of their own toward an appreciation and understanding of unique cultural experiences, culminating in social action that promotes decision-making on important social issues followed by advocacy and action to help solve these issues.

In order to provide educational equity for all students, it is critical that educators understand the theory of multicultural education and integrate the curriculum and materials to support these goals into practice. Gay (2001) noted the lag that exists between multicultural education theory and practice. When quality, multicultural literature is integrated into the curriculum, it enriches the classroom context for learning in important ways as it validates the culture of individual students and develops an understanding and respect for other cultures that can lead to social action.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE

The first consideration, when selecting multicultural literature, should be the purpose of the literature. Bishop's (1997) five functions of multicultural literature are helpful when determining purpose. Will the literature provide knowledge, offer varying perspectives, promote appreciation for diversity, scaffold critical inquiry, or provide enjoyment? Once purpose is established, it is important for educators to be acquainted with criteria to determine honesty, authenticity, and quality in multicultural literature. Temple, Martinez, and Yokota (2006) emphasized that with the increased number of multicultural books available, it is important to select quality books. They presented the following criteria for teachers and teacher librarians to apply:

- Do the author and illustrator present authentic perspectives? An insider's mind-set and point of view should be maintained to portray a cultural group authentically.
- Is the culture portrayed multidimensionally? Cultural groups should be presented multidimensionally to help readers realize the depth and breadth of experiences within cultures.
- Are cultural details naturally integrated? These details are necessary to make the story come alive but should not impede the flow of the story.
- Are details accurate and is the interpretation current? Details must be accurate and true to the situation in which they are presented. Inaccuracies may indicate careless research and presentation.
- Is language used authentically? The language and dialect spoken by characters should authentically portray the kinds of interactions that are typical of those characters, and terminology that refers to aspects of culture should be acceptable by contemporary standards.
- Is the collection balanced? It is important to present children with a balanced collection of multicultural books (pp. 109–112).

Bishop (1997) noted that “judging authenticity is neither an exact science nor an objective exercise. Teachers and teacher librarians can bring to the reading of a book only their own individual backgrounds and life experiences” (p. 16). As they put forth effort to learn about other people and their cultures and their literature, they are better equipped to make good decisions about individual books. If teachers and teacher librarians lack this background knowledge of the historical, cultural, or literary traditions of a group, they can turn to knowledgeable reviewers. It is also important for these educators to acquaint themselves with respected authors and illustrators of multicultural literature and to follow their work. The remaining chapters in this book will

acquaint readers with many of these esteemed authors and artists. Finally, as Bishop (1997) emphasized, it is important to remember:

reading literature, especially fiction, no matter what culture it reflects, ought to be an aesthetic experience. In our search for social significance and our desire for social change, we dare not forget that a well-written piece of literature is a work of art. It may be serious and cause readers to reflect or to become angry or to see something familiar in a new way; it may be informative and diminish ignorance; but it does so through readers' engagement with the literary work. In classrooms where multicultural literature is to have an effect, that experience is primary. Other goals can be achieved when readers are given the time and the opportunity, with a knowledgeable teacher as facilitator, to make thoughtful responses to their reading and to enrich their own readings by interacting with others whose responses may or may not be similar.

(p. 6)

AUTHENTICITY AND THE DEBATE

One of the issues related to authenticity in multicultural books that continues to be debated is the issue of authority regarding authorship of these books. Most multicultural books are written by someone from the culture itself, such as Virginia Hamilton writing about African Americans; but some multicultural books are written by someone outside the culture, such as Eve Bunting who has written about other groups besides her own cultural group. Can authors outside the culture create authentic literature about a culture other than their own? Bishop (1997) explained that this question is complex and is partly a political question that is therefore connected to issues of power, ownership, and definition. "Given the history of race relations in this country, people who see themselves as members of oppressed groups are not always willing to trust people whom they identify as members of the oppressing group to tell their stories, particularly in light of a history of stereotyping, distortions, and patronizing of such groups in literature" (p. 16).

Hancock (2008) agreed that scholars have debated the authenticity of multicultural literature written by authors inside and outside of the culture and reported that most agree that to achieve authenticity, "the author must either be of the culture or take on the perspective of other people living in the culture" (p. 213). Some authors such as Paul Goble who actually lived with the Plains Indians for more than a decade before authoring *Storm Maker's Tipi* have received genuine recognition for an outsider perspective. Bishop (1997) also acknowledged that "the farther a writer's background, knowledge, and experiences are from the culture of the person or people about whom he or she is writing, the greater the necessity for the author to fill in the cultural gaps, the greater the effort needed to do so, and the greater the risk of mistakes" (p. 17).

In an attempt to gather further information about the authenticity debate regarding insider versus outsider authorship of multicultural literature, the authors conducted personal interviews with two authors who are representative of each of these stances, Doreen Rappaport and Joseph Bruchac (D. Rappaport, personal communication, February 19, 2008; J. Bruchac, February 26, 2008). Doreen Rappaport, has written books about cultures that differ from her own, such as *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Martin King, Jr.*; *Freedom River*, the story of John Parker, an African-American businessman who bought his own freedom and then helped many others to obtain their freedom through the Underground Railroad; *The Flight of Red Bird: The Life of Zitkala-Sa*, the story of Gertrude Bonnin who was born to a Sioux mother and White father, left her

Why do you write? What is your purpose?

Rappaport: My purpose is to let kids know. I write what I write for a couple of reasons. One, because I think that there are some incredible stories that kids do not know. There is a lot of churning over of all the same stuff, all the time. In history and in books, there are just so many stories of ordinary people like all of us who do extraordinary things, and I want kids to learn about them. I also want them to understand that there is a process in life. One of the things I write about shows that there is not immediate gratification, and that you have to hold on in life if you want to get somewhere. The Civil Rights Movement and the Slavery Resistance and the Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust, and how women fought back all of these things were about people who stepped out of their role, and they took the chance of what that would mean in life. Some of them put their lives in personal danger; other people risked humiliation, so I want kids to see that there's a process, and I think history shows them that there's process. And I think it will also make them value themselves a lot more and their families.

You often write about people outside of your own culture; how did you develop those interests?

Well, my involvement in the Civil Rights Movement led me to Black History. And that kind of led me to re-looking at the whole history and the way I had been taught . . . because I was taught there were presidents, that's the kind of history I learned. During the Civil Rights Movement, I met these everyday people, these ordinary people, who were risking their lives for freedoms that you and I took for granted, and that made me realize that those stories had to be told. And that led me to think of the Women's Movement, and that led me to think about Hispanics, and that led me to think about people with disabilities . . . so it was a gradual process from the initial involvement in the Civil Rights Movement to a re-thinking of the teaching of the presentation of history.

Have some people questioned you regarding writing outside of your culture?

Never. It's amazing. I have to say it; I thought it would come, but it never came. Maybe it is because my research is meticulous, and people learned who I am. It is the only conclusion I can come to. There was a time in the late 60's, when African Americans were very upset by Whites telling their stories because we usurped so much, but I never had a problem.

What disadvantages do you think you have as an author writing outside of your culture?

I could never be a Black storyteller. I think there is something that comes from your own culture. Do you know Andrea Pinkney's work? Or Joe Bruchac's? They carry with them the whole essence of what it means to be African American or Native American, and I have to try to learn that. I have to try to immerse myself and feel the experience . . . The greatest compliment I have received is from the professor at Rutgers who said to me, "If I didn't know you weren't Chinese, Doreen, I would have thought you were." He said, "You told it." But I studied all the poetry and the images, from the way peach blossoms open and what were the important flowers that came out. I mean, these are details that are crucial to setting the scene. I think I have to work very hard . . . maybe it's why I don't write fiction with those subjects . . . I don't know; I might think it's a little too risky.

Are there any advantages to writing outside one's culture?

You learn a lot. You sure learn a lot. You make a lot of new friends. It broadens your world like crazy. I mean I've learned the most fabulous things. I've been privileged and honored. I went to Zitkala-sa, the reservation. I met her 82 year old niece. I was the only white person she talked to about Zitkala-sa's life . . . I met with South Dakota storytellers. You know, it's just great!

Figure 1.1.

Doreen Rappaport.

Indian culture to attend a boarding school at the age of eight and experienced a loss of her identity as she moved between the Indian and White cultures; and *The Long-Haired Girl: A Chinese Legend*, the retelling of a Chinese legend about a young Chinese girl who saves her village from the threat of drought. An excerpt from an interview with Doreen Rappaport (personal communication, February 19, 2008) is included in Figure 1.1.

Joseph Bruchac is a storyteller, and many of his writings are about the land of his heritage in the Adirondack Mountain foothills and his Abenaki ancestry, the part of his ethnic background “by which he has been most nourished” (http://www.josephbruchac.com/bruchac_biography.html, accessed on September 25, 2010). Joseph has authored more than 70 books for adults and children, including *The First Strawberries*, *Tell Me a Tale*, *Skeleton Man*, *Dawn Land*, *Squanto’s Journey*, and *Sacajawea*. He has received numerous honors including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Native Writers Circle of the Americas in 1999. An excerpt from an interview with Joseph Bruchac (personal communication, February 26, 2008) is included in Figure 1.2.

Why do you write; what is your purpose?

Writing is something which I always felt impelled to do, since my earliest years of becoming literate, and I believe that the idea of self-expression and letting that voice speak that is within you is a very big part of it. I think it is true of someone who is an artist of any kind, whether you are doing visual art or if you are writing stories.

As an author who writes inside of your culture, how do you feel about the issue about authenticity when authors write outside of their culture?

Well, it’s a complicated thing. My culture, quite frankly, is a mixture of European-American, contemporary American Indian, Northeastern Adirondack. I mean, I can’t say I’m fully native in any part of my culture, you know what I mean? It’s a complicated thing. So to write authentically about Abenaki history, I have to do a great deal of research. I’m not a nineteenth or eighteenth century Abenaki Indian. So I have to do a great deal of research to represent it accurately. Recently I wrote a novel about Geronimo. I surely am not a Chiricahua Indian. You know, and to do that required an equal amount of research, and not just book research. . . travel, speaking directly with Chiricahua people, and having people review what I’ve written who are within the culture. In the case of that book, I gave the entire manuscript to a friend of mine who is a direct descendent of one of Geronimo’s closest cousins who was with him in the whole period of the Apache captivity. And when he called me back, and said, “Hey, Joe, I finished reading that novel, and I want to say something about it.” I kind of went, “Oh, what’s he going to say?” He said, “Joe, this sucker’s good!”

And you were relieved?

I was relieved, but you know, I would never dream of trying to publish something that was so specifically about other people, other places, other languages, other cultures without going through that kind of vetting process, without spending a long time. My novel about the Navaho Code Talkers; it took me a decade to get to the point where I felt I could begin to write that novel. I was interested in the subject twenty years before I ever wrote the book. So, having said that, let me back up. It does not matter if you are in or outside of a culture. What matters is what you do to get inside that culture as a writer. Which means, you don’t have to have a blood quantum but you do have to have the ability to listen and to learn. . . I would never say that anyone would have to be Abenaki to write about the Abenakis well, but I would say that they would have to work a little harder to get rid of some of the weight of assumption that has already been placed on their shoulders. . .

(Continued)

What advantages do you think you have as an American Indian writer when writing about American Indian cultures?

I think I have no advantages at all, because I think I start at the same place everyone else does. I just make use of my mind and my opportunity to listen and to read. I think that's the only thing I have . . . that predilection to listen and to read, because there is nothing genetic about it at all. If I have any advantages, I seem to have been given the gift from the Creator of self-expression, and the way to say things in a way that is memorable. I consider that a gift, and I try to do everything I can to nurture that gift and to honor it.

What do you wish for, in terms of your legacy as an author of multicultural literature?

A few good readers.

Figure 1.2.

Joseph Bruchac.

Both Doreen Rappaport and Joseph Bruchac believe that an author can write about a culture outside their own with authenticity if they do careful research and have personal experiences within the culture they write about. Furthermore, Bruchac underscores the importance of having people who are from the culture and authorities on the time period and particular context check the accuracy and authenticity of the writing. Minfong Ho (2002) also made the point that an author's empathy is extremely important when writing about a particular culture. She states,

All things being equal, if the writer is of the same skin color and speaks the same language as the people she writes about, then of course she's more likely to portray them with more sensitivity than someone who is completely different. Yet I feel that none of those factors—race, sex, class, even language—matters as much as experience and empathy. If someone has lived and worked so closely within another community that she has assimilated their experiences, then I think she can come to feel what they feel. After all, empathy, like that leap of imagination, can bring someone over to 'the other side.' And if the someone is a writer, then building a suspension bridge back is the only natural thing to do to help bring others across.

(p. 97)

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

It is widely recognized that the cultural gap between children, teachers, and other educators in public schools is great and increasing; and the diversity in our public PK-12 schools continues to increase significantly. The National Center for Education Statistics (2008) reported:

The percentage of racial/ethnic minority students enrolled in the nation's public schools increased from 22 percent in 1972 to 31 percent in 1986 to 43 percent in 2006. This increase in minority enrollment largely reflects the growth in the percentage of students who were Hispanic. In 2006, Hispanic students represented 20 percent of public school enrollment, up from 6 percent in 1972 and 11 percent in 1986.

(p. iv of *The Condition of Education 2008*)

According to Futrell, Gomez and Bedden's (2003) discussion of teaching in the "new America," statistical projections have indicated that the percentage of students of color will increase, reaching 51 percent by 2050. In addition, approximately 25 percent of children live in poverty. In their call for the preparation of culturally responsive teachers, Villegas and Lucas (2002) reported that more than one in seven children between the ages of five and 17 spoke a language other than English at home, and more than one-third of these children had limited proficiency in English.

According to Sleeter and Grant in 2003, over 90 percent of teachers were White; and this percentage was increasing. Sleeter (2001) reported that the research in this area was limited and that predominantly White institutions have generally not responded to this cultural gap between teachers and students in public schools. She recommended that preservice programs either address the issue by recruiting more teacher candidates from culturally diverse communities or by trying to develop the multicultural knowledge base of predominantly White cohorts of teacher candidates.

Varian (2008) investigated the beliefs and practice of six educators who had been identified as using "culturally responsive teaching" in their classrooms. This study clarified what these educators believed to be important in their "culturally aware" classrooms. In addition, the study explored how personal and professional experiences shaped the teachers' beliefs that impacted their practice, with the hope that the insights generated by these educators will provide greater understanding of how a culturally relevant pedagogy can enhance the school experiences of children whose diverse sociocultural backgrounds come together in a multicultural classroom setting. Varian found a strong connection between beliefs and practices. She found that the instructional practices of these teachers were constructivist in approach. Moreover, they were strategies consistent with good instruction for all student populations. These teachers had a strong interest in learning about their students' home culture. They also carefully incorporated those cultures into classroom life in a variety of ways. Finally, the teachers sought to empower the students encouraging them to become responsible for their learning and preparing them not only academically but for the world beyond school.

These teachers' beliefs were greatly influenced by their parents who were all socially active in their communities and who placed a high regard on education. They were also influenced by their own firsthand experiences of immersion in new cultural experiences, either for travel, study, or service. In addition, witnessing or learning about social injustice had deeply affected these teachers' awareness of diversity. The findings from this study support the need for the inclusion of firsthand experiences for teacher candidates in diverse classroom settings with teachers who practice culturally responsible pedagogy. In addition, practicing teachers and teacher librarians need ongoing professional development on the topic of culturally responsive teaching, including effective mentoring programs to allow teachers to observe excellent educators who practice this pedagogy. An emphasis on research to explore how more teachers and teacher librarians can become culturally responsive educators in their classrooms is important for all students.

In spite of many initiatives, there continues to be a significant achievement gap between culturally diverse students and White students. For example, on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) mathematics and reading assessments, the test scores of African Americans and Hispanics have been consistently and notably lower than those of White students. Research has shown that culturally and linguistically

diverse children, who often flounder in school, are inadequately prepared for higher education and seek unskilled employment (Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2004). In spite of this disturbing scenario, there is reason for hope. Many schools are looking for ways to successfully educate all of their students, and many researchers are focusing on the identification of instructional strategies that are effective for educating students from diverse backgrounds.

Banks (2004) reported that “for multicultural education to be implemented successfully, institutional changes must be made in the curriculum; the teaching materials; teaching and learning styles; the attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors of teachers and administrators; and the goals, norms and culture of the school” (p. 4). Culturally relevant teaching is part of multicultural education and refers to the way teachers interact with students and the way they teach. Ladson-Billings (1994) explained that culturally responsive teaching is a pedagogy that acknowledges the importance of the inclusion of students’ cultural references in all aspects of learning. It is a model of teaching that focuses on academic achievement, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 2001). In her study of teachers who were successful educators of African-American children, Ladson-Billings (1994) identified the following tenets of culturally relevant teaching:

- students whose educational, economic, social, political, and cultural futures are most tenuous are helped to become intellectual leaders in the classroom;
- students are apprenticed in a learning community rather than taught in an isolated and unrelated way; students’ real-life experiences are legitimized as they become part of the official curriculum;
- teachers and students participate in a broad conception of literacy that incorporates both literature and oratory;
- teachers and students engage in a collective struggle against the status quo; and
- teachers are cognizant of themselves as political beings (pp. 117, 118).

The body of research on how people learn and more specifically, how language and culture may influence learning is growing. Rosenblatt’s (1994) transactional view of reading has important implications for culturally responsive instruction. She noted that what readers experience and take away from a reading experience is shaped by their cultural and social experiences as well as the stance or approach to the particular text. The implication of Rosenblatt’s theory is that teachers need to allow for multiple interpretations of text because each reader brings prior knowledge based on personal experience to the response to particular texts.

Bell’s research (2003) supported instruction for culturally diverse students that is more student-centered with the teacher taking a facilitative role. Sleeter and Grant (2003) reported that culturally relevant instruction relies on effective communication between the teacher and students. They stated, “The important point is that academic learning can be greatly enhanced when teachers learn the cultural style of the child well enough to connect effectively with the child within the child’s zone of proximal development” (p. 50).

McLaughlin and McLeod (1996) reported on promising instructional approaches connected to culturally relevant pedagogy. One of the most promising instructional approaches to stimulating learning is cooperative learning that benefits culturally diverse students because it requires them to negotiate roles using linguistic and social

strategies. Exemplary schools also sought to build on, rather than replace, their students' native languages using students' primary languages either as a means of developing literacy skills, as a tool for delivering content, or both. A thematic approach to curriculum offers several benefits to students with limited background knowledge. This approach focuses on a topic in depth, over an extended period of time, from multiple perspectives and gives these students an opportunity to acquire the necessary background knowledge (Peregoy & Boyle, 2005).

Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992) focused on bridging the differences between home and school cultures and assisted Arizona teachers in making these connections. This approach was based on the belief that cultures possess "funds of knowledge" that teachers can access to make academic material more relevant to students. Teachers visited students' homes in an attempt to understand their cultural backgrounds as well as gather material for their curriculum. This approach was confirmed by Ladson-Billings (1995a) when she declared that culturally competent teachers utilized students' culture as a vehicle for learning. She noted that school was often perceived by African American students as a place where they could not be themselves.

The importance of teachers' passion for teaching children from diverse cultures and also their high expectations for student achievement is well documented in the literature (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Reeves (2004) reported the findings from research conducted on the Norfolk Public School system, a complex urban system. In spite of dismal achievement scores, teachers and administrators in Norfolk believed their students could improve achievement. This school system demonstrated that the relationship between poverty and student achievement could be negligible. They reduced the achievement gap between White and African American students at three grade levels with the African American group continuing to improve.

In her discussion of culturally responsive instruction and new literacies, Au (2001) stated, "cultural responsiveness in literacy instruction can bring students of diverse backgrounds to high levels of literacy by promoting engagement through activities that reflect the values, knowledge, and structures of interaction that students bring from the home" (p. 1). Au believed that if these students were to compete with their mainstream peers, their instruction must take them beyond the basics to higher level thinking with text. She was concerned that there was a pattern of mandated programs in low-income schools. These programs generally focused on lower-level skills and gave students of diverse backgrounds little opportunity to develop higher-level thinking about text. Au supported literature-based instruction that included quality multicultural literature because it built upon the strengths that students brought from their home cultures and fostered higher-level thinking.

Lewison, Leland, and Harste (2008) considered personal and cultural resources as an entry into critical literacy. They believed that educators' goal should be to "make the classroom community feel comfortable to all students, especially newcomers" (p. 25). The curriculum should honor students' experiences and first languages, putting students at the center of the curriculum. Lewison et al. point out that it is important that students' issues move from personal to social because meaning has social and cultural dimensions. "By moving from the personal to the social, students are able to explore how historical practices, power relationships, and cultural systems of meaning all are at play in daily life" (p. 32). Multicultural literature plays an important part in this critical literacy curriculum because these texts invite conversations about justice, equity, and honoring diversity.

HOW CAN TEACHERS INCLUDE MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE IN THEIR CLASSROOM?

The first step toward the integration of multicultural literature into the curriculum is to include a rich collection of this literature within the classroom library. Socioeconomic factors can lead to inequities in students' access to books outside of the classroom, so it is critical that schools offer quality literature representative of many cultures and on a variety of reading levels to all students. This is often a financial challenge for classroom teachers since most school districts do not have a budget that includes support for building and maintaining classroom libraries. However, many teachers persevere to overcome this obstacle with diligent efforts to build their libraries through grant writing, soliciting support from parent-teacher organizations, purchasing used books at garage sales, and discards from library sales.

Teachers and teacher librarians can work together to add appropriate books to the school's library. These books can be rotated to classrooms to support a multicultural experience. Books may also be borrowed from public libraries for temporary use. When all else fails, teachers may save bonus points from student book clubs to obtain free books, and yes, spend money from their personal income to add quality literature to their classroom libraries.

It is important for teachers and teacher librarians to understand the importance of including multicultural literature that is authentic, respectful, and culturally accurate in their classrooms and libraries. Students need access to books in which they can see themselves and not just their physical appearance, but in which they can see their culture and language as well. During Ruth Oswald's years as an elementary classroom teacher, this concept became clear to her as she observed a young, African-American reader claim the book, *Honey, I Love* by Eloise Greenfield as she carried the book around the classroom showing it to classmates, repeating the poems, and then tucking it into her desk. This example supports the Cullinan (1989) mirror metaphor used to emphasize the need for multicultural literature to assure that students can see themselves in books. Ruth began to look in earnest for multicultural picture books with illustrations and language that represented her student population as well as the full spectrum of cultures.

Ruth also came to realize that she needed books in her classroom library that represented cultures that were not familiar to her students, which supports the Cullinan (1989) window metaphor used to emphasize the need for multicultural literature to assure that students have opportunities to experience cultures that are different from their own. After moving into higher education, Ruth was teaching a graduate children's literature course and many of her students were practicing teachers. During the study of multicultural literature, one teacher shared that because there was not much diversity in her classroom, she did not believe she had to worry about including multicultural literature in her classroom library or instruction. It is critical to the education of all of our children for teachers to understand that diversity should be embraced and that we all benefit when we value our own culture as well as differing cultures. This mindset is critical to foster the understanding of social justice and to overcome xenophobia, the fear or hatred of foreign cultures or people. The use of multicultural literature is one of the most powerful ways for teachers to honor students' culture and to encourage cross-cultural understanding.

In Donna Lanyi's fifth/sixth multi-age classroom, the topic of oppression came up in a book discussion while reading *Miles' Song* by Alice McGill, about a 12-year-old

slave boy who wants to learn to read. The students were talking about the concept of oppression but did not have a name for it. They mentioned purposefully holding others back, keeping them down, not letting others get better in life. Through their discussion, Donna mentioned that there was a word for this concept—oppression. The children loved learning new words they thought others might not know and ran with it. Interestingly, the word continued to be a theme in many of the books groups read that year such as *Stones in Water* by Donna Jo Napoli and *The Boys of St. Petri* by Bjarne Reuter and Anthea Bell, books about the German occupation in World War II, and *Year of Impossible Goodbyes* by Sook Nyul Choi about the Russian occupation of Korea. As they read and discussed these books, these young readers became very adept at recognizing the concept and using the word oppression/oppressed. Donna and her students never looked up the definition; they came to understand the word more fully through the theme in literature and their discussions. This is a wonderful example of student-centered curriculum as discussed by Lewison et al. (2008). Donna based curriculum on what was important to her students and not on preplanned lessons; she was prepared to face uncertainties as to what happened in the classroom. As explained by Lewison et al., teachers like Donna are conscious of the theories that guide actions in the classroom, and the curriculum does not happen by accident. These teachers believe that “. . . all students are capable and bring a wide range of experiential, cultural, and linguistic resources to the classroom,” and they find “. . . ways to regularly use these resources and give them a place of prominence in what counts in our classrooms” (p. 28).

Multicultural literature was always an important feature in Linda Collins’ work as an English as a second language (ESL) teacher and supervisor in a large urban district. In the classroom, students were always excited to see their own faces, traditions, and points of view expressed in their readings. They made many associations and enthusiastically shared personal connections that related to the literature. Through reading and discussing literature that represented diverse cultures, her ESL students found common ground that connected them to one another as well. Seeing themselves and their experiences represented in books gave each one of them a sense of pride and underscored for them the importance of their own life events and increased their interest in their class work. It also allowed different students to provide a voice of authority and insightful expertise on topics regarding their particular backgrounds.

Later, as a district supervisor working with ESL and bilingual staff, Linda Collins organized workshops for teachers and instructional assistants to reinforce with them the importance of using multicultural literature as well as ways to incorporate it into regular instruction. Seeing the response of diverse staff members to multicultural literature and the events represented in the books validated the earlier reactions Linda had observed from her students. The staff members also embraced the opportunities to share life experiences and connect on a deeper level with the texts and one another. They came to realize the importance of seeking out multicultural literature and incorporating it into their work with students.

Joanna Newton’s teaching career began when she served as a Peace Corps volunteer as a teacher of English as a foreign language in a village school in Armenia. By the end of her service, she learned that language is more than just a means of communication; language is the single most important vehicle one can use to affect change. Joanna carries this lesson with her today as she works with a culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse group of second-grade students. The theme in her class that guides their work is, “Words are powerful!” Joanna exposes her students to powerful words

in all forms, from read alouds of multicultural children's literature to responses to the poetry of Langston Hughes, to the examination of speeches such as Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" that have changed the course of history. Joanna's students are constantly on the lookout for powerful words as they read, write, or speak to others. When they find these powerful words, they share them with each other and put them on the "Wow Words" word wall. Once a word is on this word wall, students are challenged to use it in their writing or speech. Joanna reports that, at any given time, her students might be "ecstatic" or "perplexed" or "distressed."

As part of the weekly word study in Joanna's second-grade classroom, students are encouraged to understand English vocabulary by examining the Latin and Greek roots from which it came. When her Spanish speakers realize that their language fits into English, they come alive with the excitement that words can bring. Suddenly their personal vocabularies expand from just that of simple sight words. Joanna's students know that words are powerful and that their words matter (personal communication, August 17, 2009).

These are just a few examples of how culturally competent teachers include multicultural literature in the curriculum. Bishop (1997) identified five functions of multicultural literature; it can

1. provide knowledge or information,
2. change how students view the world by offering varying perspectives,
3. promote or develop an appreciation for diversity,
4. give rise to critical inquiry, and provide enjoyment and illuminate human experience (pp. 4, 5).

As children engage in reading multicultural literature, participate in critical discussions about these texts, work cooperatively in small groups, and share information with others through writing and discussion, the chances are increased that their thinking will move beyond the basics toward critical levels of understanding. All children deserve culturally responsive instruction through authentic multicultural literature.

REFERENCES

- Au, K. H. (2001, July/August). Culturally responsive instruction as a dimension of new literacies. *Reading Online*, 5(1), http://www.readingonline.org/newliteracies/lit_index.asp?HREF=au/index.html.
- Banks, J. A. (2004). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice. In J. A. Banks & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 3–29). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Banks, J. A., & Banks, C. A. M. (Eds.). (2001). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bell, L. (2003). Strategies that close the literacy gap. *Educational Leadership*, 60(4), 32–34.
- Bishop, R. S. (1997). Selecting literature for a multicultural curriculum. In V. J. Harris (Ed.), *Using multiethnic literature in the K–8 classroom* (pp. 1–19). Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.
- Cai, M. (1998). Multiple definitions of multicultural literature: Is the debate really just "ivory tower" bickering? *The New Advocate*, 11(4), 311–324.

- Cochran-Smith, M., Davis, D., & Fries, K. (2004). Multicultural teacher education: Research, practice, and policy. In J. A. Banks (Ed.), *Handbook of research in multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 931–936). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Cullinan, B. (1989). *Literature and the child*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Freedman, R. (2002). *Confucius: The golden rule*. New York, NY: Arthur A. Levine Books.
- Futrell, M. H., Gomez, J., & Bedden, D. (2003). Teaching the children of a new America: The challenge of diversity. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 84(5), 381–383.
- Gates, P. S. & Mark, D. H. (2006). *Cultural journeys*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc.
- Gay, G. (2001). Curriculum theory and multicultural education. In J. A. Banks & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (pp. 25–43). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Gay, G. (2002). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research and practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hancock, M. R. (2008). *A celebration of literature and response* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Harris, T. L., & Hodges, R. E. (Eds.). (1995). *The literacy dictionary*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Ho, M. (2002). Ask the author: Minfong Ho. In C. Temple, M. Martinez, J. Yokota, & A. Naylor (Eds.), *Children's books in children's hands: An introduction to their literature* (2nd ed., p. 97). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995a). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory into Practice*, 34(3), 159–165.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995b). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32, 465–491.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lewis, M., Leland, C., & Harste, J. C. (2008). *Creating critical classrooms*. New York, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- McLaughlin, B., & McLeod, B. (1996). *Educating all our students: Improving education for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds*. Final Report of the National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning. Vol. 1, University of California, Santa Cruz.
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, 31(2), 132–141.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2008). *The condition of education 2008*, <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/press/index.asp>.
- Nieto, S. (1992). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education*. New York, NY: Longman.
- Norton, D. E. (2009). *Multicultural children's literature: Through the eyes of many children* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Peregoy, S. F., & Boyle, O. F. (2005). *Reading, writing, and learning in ESL: A resource book for K–12 teachers* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Reeves, D. B. (2004). *Accountability for learning: How teachers and school leaders can take charge*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Rosenblatt, L. M. (1994). The transactional theory of reading and writing. In R. B. Ruddell, M. R. Ruddell, & H. Singer (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (4th ed., pp. 1057–1092). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

- Sleeter, C. E. (2001). Preparing teachers for culturally diverse schools: Research and the overwhelming presence of whiteness. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 52(2), 94–106.
- Sleeter, C. E., & Grant, C. A. (2003). *Making choices for multicultural education: Five approaches to race, class, and gender* (4th ed.). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Temple, C., Martinez, M., & Yokota, J. (2006). *Children's books in children's hands* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- U.S. Census Bureau (2000). <http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html>.
- Varian, N. A. (2008). *Beliefs and instructional practices of culturally relevant educators: A qualitative study*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Akron, Ohio.
- Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2002). Preparing culturally responsive teachers. Rethinking the curriculum. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(1), 20–32.

MULTICULTURAL BOOKS

- Bruchac, J. (1995). *Dawn land*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing.
- Bruchac, J. (1997). *Tell me a tale: A book about storytelling*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Children's Books.
- Bruchac, J. (1998). *The first strawberries*, illustrated by A. Vojtech. New York, NY: Puffin.
- Bruchac, J. (2003). *Skeleton man*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Bruchac, J. (2007). *Squanto's journey*, illustrated by G. Shed. New York, NY: Voyager Books.
- Bruchac, J. (2008). *Sacajawea*. New York, NY: Sandpiper.
- Choi, S. N. (1993). *Year of impossible goodbyes*. New York, NY: Yearling.
- Goble, P. (2001). *Storm maker's tipi*. New York, NY: Anthem.
- Greenfield, E. (2002). *Honey, I love*, illustrated by J. S. Gilchrist. New York, NY: Amistad.
- McGill, A. (2000). *Miles' song*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Books for Children.
- Napoli, D. J. (1999). *Stones in water*. New York, NY: Puffin.
- Rappaport, D. (1995). *The long-haired girl: A Chinese legend*. New York, NY: Dial.
- Rappaport, D. (1999). *The flight of Red Bird: The life of Zitkala-Sa*. New York, NY: Puffin.
- Rappaport, D. (2000). *Freedom river*, illustrated by B. Collier. New York, NY: Hyperion Books.
- Rappaport, D. (2001). *Martin's big words: The life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, illustrated by B. Collier. New York, NY: Jump at the Sun.
- Reuter, B. (1996). *The boys from St. Petri* (A. Bell, Trans.). New York, NY: Puffin.

This page intentionally left blank

Integrating Multicultural Literature Into the Curriculum

Lynn Atkinson Smolen, Ruth A. Oswald, and Sandra Jenkins

INTRODUCTION

Multicultural literature has been described by experts on literature as both a window and a mirror (Gates & Mark, 2006). It is a window on the world, opening up views for readers to learn about the world, its geography, history and cultures. It is a mirror reflecting the traditions, values, and beliefs of diverse readers. When readers read about characters that look like them and reflect their way of life, their self-identity is affirmed, and they get the message that their way of life is valued (Norton, 2009).

In the increasingly diverse U.S. society, multicultural literature should be an essential part of the fabric of the learning environment (Banks, 2004). However, multicultural literature is often relegated to the back shelf of libraries, book stores, and classrooms. It should not be treated as an after-thought or an add-on in the curriculum. It should not just be brought out on Martin Luther King's Day or Cinco de Mayo. It should be an integral part of the curriculum, representing all Americans. However, teachers and teacher librarians need guidance not only in how to select multicultural literature but also in how to use it in their daily lessons, linking it to key skills, concepts, and standards.

A number of literacy experts have suggested ways for integrating multicultural literature into the curriculum. Norton (1990) suggested that teachers use a five-phase model for studying multicultural literature by exploring the following genres in each phase:

- phase one: traditional literature;
- phase two: traditional tales from one area;
- phase three: autobiographies, biographies, and historical nonfiction;
- phase four: historical fiction; and
- phase five: contemporary fiction, biography, and poetry.

Norton (1990) pointed out that by starting with traditional literature students gain insight into the values of a particular culture. Historical fiction, biography, and informational literature provide readers with essential background information on a particular culture to help them understand themes and important issues in contemporary fiction, biography and poetry.

Rasinski and Padak (1990) suggested that teachers use Banks' levels of multicultural education, starting with level one and building toward levels three and four:

- level one, the contributions approach, focuses on heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements;
- level two, the additive approach, focuses on content, concepts, themes, and perspectives which are added to the curriculum without changing its structure;
- level three, the transformation approach, alters the structure of the curriculum to enable students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspective of diverse ethnic and cultural groups; and
- level four, encourages students to make decisions on important social issues and take action to help solve them (Banks, 2004, p. 15).

The value of using Banks' levels is that students get a more in-depth understanding of the culture they are reading about, avoiding the superficiality of only reading about heroes, celebrations, food and festivals. Furthermore, they develop important background knowledge on different cultures, which helps them interpret characters' actions, settings, and events in multicultural books.

Another way to integrate multicultural literature into the curriculum is by using twin texts, text sets, and thematic units as suggested by Hancock (2008). Depending on the situation, teachers and teacher librarians can start with twin texts (two books that are matched in theme or topic), incorporating these into a broader unit of study; and then once they feel comfortable with this, they can have students read books in a text set (six–eight books that are matched in theme or topic), focusing on a particular theme over a short period of time. As teachers and teacher librarians become even more comfortable with multicultural literature, they can collaborate to develop thematic units that integrate multicultural literature into several different subject areas and tie the thematic unit to content standards. When teachers work closely with teacher librarians, it is possible to expand this approach across grade levels.

No matter how teachers and teacher librarians integrate multicultural literature into the curriculum, it is critical that they use guided discussions (Vacca & Vacca, 2008) with the books. With this approach, teachers guide students to have a greater understanding of the cultures they are reading about so that they do not misinterpret what they read. Allington and Johnston (2002) found that in high-achieving classrooms, students spent significant amounts of time engaged in purposeful talk about their reading and learning.

In this chapter we discuss ways for teachers and teacher librarians to use multicultural literature in twin texts, text sets, and thematic units within the curriculum as suggested by Hancock (2008). We provide examples of each of these and suggest response activities for the books. According to Harvey and Goudvis (2007), comprehension strategy lessons should move from close to home to more global issues or cultures and places further removed from most students' lives. Having students read books that are related in some way provides them with opportunities to make text to text and text to world connections. Harvey and Goudvis stated

Readers naturally make connections between books and their own lives. Once they have heard a wealth of stories and narratives, they begin to connect themes, characters, and issues from one book to another. When children understand how to connect the texts they read to their lives, they begin to make connections to the larger world. This nudges them into thinking about bigger, more expansive issues beyond their universe of home, school, and neighborhood.

(p. 92)

Moreover, these connections can be broadened by Internet projects (Castek, Bevans-Mangelson, & Goldstone, 2006). This approach benefits students because they develop literacy and technology skills at the same time. This chapter recommends Internet sites that can be used with some of the twin texts, text sets, and thematic units. Examples are discussed for different grade-level clusters.

MULTICULTURAL TWIN TEXTS

Table 2.1 shows examples of multicultural twin texts. The books have been matched based on thematic connections between the books. There are examples of twin texts that match poetry with an informational book, a picture book with an informational book, and a historical fiction book with biography.

Table 2.1.
Multicultural Twin Texts

Book 1	Book 2	Recommended Grade	Genre and Culture
<i>My Dadima Wears a Sari</i> , K. Sheth (2007)	<i>I is for India</i> , P. Das (1997)	Primary	Picture book and non-fiction; Indian-American
<i>My Colors, My World/Mis colores, mi mundo</i> , M. Gonzalez (2007)	<i>The Desert in My Mother/El desierto es mi madre</i> , P. Mora (1994)	Primary	Picture book and poetry, bilingual
<i>Esperanza Rising</i> , P. Ryan (2000)	<i>Harvest</i> by G. Ancona (2001)	Intermediate	Fiction and non-fiction (photo essay) Mexican-American
<i>This School is Not White</i> , D. Rappaport (2005)	<i>Through My Eyes</i> , R. Bridges (1999)	Intermediate	Picture book and biography African American
<i>The Bus Ride</i> , W. Miller (1998)	<i>Dear Mrs. Parks: A Dialogue with Today's Youth</i> , R. Parks (1997)	Intermediate	Picture book and informational book African-American
<i>The Forbidden Schoolhouse: The True and Dramatic Story of Prudence Crandall & Her Students</i> , S. Jurmain (2005)	<i>Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies and Little Misses of Color</i> , E. Alexander & M. Nelson (2007)	Intermediate	Nonfiction and Poetry African-American

(continued)

Table 2.1. (continued)

Book 1	Book 2	Recommended Grade	Genre and Culture
<i>Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of WWII</i> , J. Bruchac (2005)	<i>Quiet Hero The Ira Hayes Story</i> , S.D. Nelson (2006)	Middle	Fiction and biography American Indian
<i>Blues Journey</i> , W. Myers (2007)	<i>Jazz ABZ</i> , W. Marsalis (2005)	Middle	Poetry and biography African-American
<i>Salsa Stories</i> , L. Delacre (2000)	<i>Red Hot Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Being Young and Latino in the United States</i> , L. Carlson (2005)	Middle	Short story and poetry Latino American
<i>Sweetgrass Basket</i> , M. Carvell (2005)	<i>Rattlesnake Mesa Stories From a Native American Childhood</i> , E. Weber (2004)	Middle	Fiction and biography American Indian
<i>Fire From the Rock</i> , S. Draper (2007)	<i>Remember: The Journey to School Integration</i> , T. Morrison (2004)	Middle	Fiction and non-fiction African American

The following are some examples of these twin texts and response activities to use with them.

I Have a Dream by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1997), a picture book illustrated by 14 outstanding multicultural artists, is an exquisite book that can be used to familiarize intermediate and middle school students with the eloquent language and powerful message in Dr. King's famous speech delivered in Washington, D.C., in 1963. In the back of the book, the artists reflect upon the message in the portion of the speech they illustrated. After reading the speech once through, students can turn to one of the sections of the speech and write a response regarding what they think and feel about the message. They can then turn to the back of the book and compare their reflection to that of the artist. They could also write about the effectiveness of different artists' interpretations of the portions of the speech they illustrated and what aspect of the speech appears to have inspired the illustration. These artists have used different styles and mediums in their illustrations. Students might paint or draw their interpretation of a portion of the King speech, experimenting with one of the mediums. They could also discuss the different styles used by the artists. Information on illustration style is found in a *Book Links* article by Hancock (September, 2007). Teachers can share this information with students on different styles of illustration.

Pairing this book with *Remember the Bridge: Poems of a People* by Carol Boston Weatherford (2002) powerfully provides students with background knowledge for why Dr. King gave his speech in 1963. On each page spread, Weatherford's poems on the struggles and accomplishments of African Americans are paired with a historical

black and white photo. Students can read “I Am the Bridge,” which is accompanied by a photo of the crowd at the Washington, D.C. march, and write a response on what they think the bridge symbolizes and how Dr. King’s speech might be interpreted as the bridge for his people. They might also discuss what they think the connection is between Dr. King’s anguish over explaining discrimination to his young daughter in the poem, “Martin’s Letter,” to the words in his speech:

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, one day, right there in Alabama, little black boys and little black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

(p. 27)

Weatherford gathered the photos for her book from prints and photographs in “libraries, museums, historical societies and state archives” (Weatherford, 2002, p. 52). She not only used photos to illustrate poems she had written but also wrote poems in response to some of the photos she found. Students could search for historical photos on the Internet (for example, see the digital library at <http://www.lib.umich.edu>, accessed on October 02, 2010) and might then write poems in response to one or more of the photos they have selected.

In the picture book, *When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson*, Pam Muñoz Ryan (2002) portrays key episodes from the life of acclaimed African American contralto, Marian Anderson, who became a powerful symbol to her oppressed people during the early 1900s. After reading this picture book orally to students, ask them to complete a K-W-L (Ogle, 1986) chart, listing questions they would like answered. They could then look for answers to their questions in Russell Freedman’s (2004) biography, *The Voice That Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights*, which provides readers with an in-depth and insightful account of this great vocalist’s life and musical career in the context of African Americans’ struggle for civil rights. They could also find information on this vocalist at the Penn Library Web site, <http://www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/rbm/anderson/>, accessed on October 02, 2010 in which they can view a video clip of Marian Anderson singing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial as well as other video clips of her performances and interviews.

Both Freedman (2004) and Ryan (2002) include in their books words from spirituals that Marian Anderson sang highlighting the challenges she faced with social injustice and her moral strength and courage in the face of prejudice and discrimination. Students could listen to some of these spirituals, which are available on recordings and listed in the discography in the back of both books. They might write reflections on how they think spirituals echoed the challenges faced by Anderson during her lifetime.

A key episode in Anderson’s life was when she returned to America after being celebrated in the opera houses of Europe only to be denied the right to perform at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., because of a whites-only policy. Students could research segregation and the history of Jim Crow at http://www.nps.gov/malu/forteachers/jim_crow_laws.htm, accessed on October 02, 2010, and write about their personal feelings about this social practice.

In response to the description in the books of Marian Anderson’s life, students could create a biopoem following Hancock’s (2008) suggested format, which provides an

interesting way to respond to the personality, values, and experiences of a biographical subject. The following is an example:

Marian

Courageous, dedicated, remarkably gifted contralto singer,
 Daughter of John and Anna, sister of Ethel May and Alyse.
 Who loved her church, music, and her family.
 Who experienced prejudice, segregation, and feelings of humiliation.
 Who aspired to be a great opera singer and perform at the Metropolitan Opera House.
 Who became a symbol to her people.
 Who sang on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial when denied the right to perform at
 Constitution Hall.
 Native of South Philadelphia,

Anderson

For a more extensive writing activity, students could craft a biographical sketch on Marian Anderson or another African American involved in the struggle for human rights. The outstanding authors, Patricia and Fredrick McKissack, provide students with guidance on how to write biographies at <http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/biograph/index.htm>. At this site, they show students how they converted their first draft on Frederick Douglass to a final draft. They also guide students step by step through the writing process and provide a place on the Web site where students can publish their biography electronically.

After listening to or reading *When Marian Sang* and discussing the historical background of the era of Jim Crow, the students could perform a reader's theater production of the book. A reader's theater script is available at http://www.pammunozryan.com/rt/when_marian_sang_rt.pdf, accessed on October 02, 2010. Students could intersperse their performance by singing the Negro spirituals in the book or playing excerpts from "Marian Anderson Spirituals" available at <http://www.amazon.com/Spirituals/dp/B00000GV4D>, accessed on October 02, 2010.

Langston's Train Ride, a beautifully illustrated picture book by Robert Burleigh (2004), tells how Langston Hughes was inspired to write "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," while watching the sun shimmering on the Mississippi River during a train ride to Mexico to visit his father. The poem is included towards the end of the book, and an afterword provides a short biography of the poet. An excellent pair for this book is *Langston Hughes*, a picture book of Hughes' poems edited by Rampersad and Roessel (2006) and illustrated by the acclaimed artist Benny Andrews. In this book there are a variety of poems that Hughes wrote, including "Words like Freedom" in which he expresses his strong feelings about social justice and freedom. Students could research the social injustices African Americans have experienced and then write a poem about their feelings regarding social justice and freedom. A good Web site to find information on the history of African Americans is at <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/aaworld/history/index.html>, accessed on October 02, 2010. Rampersad and Roessel's (2006) book includes the poem "The Weary Blues," one of the first poems where Hughes began to experiment with including musical motifs from the blues, jazz and spirituals. Students should read this poem aloud to get a feeling of its beat and rhythm. They could then listen to blues, jazz and spirituals to see if they detect the same rhythm and beat as in this poem. A good Web site for this is http://www.pbs.org/jazz/beat/discography_artist_armstrong.htm, accessed on October 02, 2010. Here students can

listen to examples of jazz over different historical periods. Students could also read this poem chorally, with some students reading the longer lines and others the repetitive parts.

Weedflower by Cynthia Kadohata (2006) is a historical fiction novel for the middle school level about Sumiko, a 12-year-old Japanese American girl who is sent with her family to an internment camp on a Mohave Indian reservation in Arizona after the Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor. In the camp, Sumiko struggles with despair but manages to make some friends, including a Mohave boy. She learns from him that the camp is on land taken from the Mohave reservation and finds that the tribe's plight is similar to that of the incarcerated Japanese Americans. This book can be paired with *The Children of Topaz* by Tunnell and Chilcoat (1996), an informational book about a Japanese-American internment camp with primary sources such as photos, samples of children's writing, and other materials. Students could create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting the plight of the Japanese Americans during World War II with the Mojave and other Native American tribes, whose land was taken away from them. Using this graphic organizer as a starting place, students could write a report comparing and contrasting the plight of the Japanese Americans with that of the Mojave. In addition, after reading *Weedflower*, students might write a diary entry, assuming the character of Sumiko, and write about how they feel about being taken from their home and living in an internment camp.

MULTICULTURAL TEXT SETS

Text sets are collections of books that have been grouped around a particular theme or themes. The grouping of books encourages students to make intertext connections. An informational book can provide background knowledge for a fiction book on the same topic and vice versa. Following the reading of an informational book, students can read a book of poetry on the same topic and make aesthetic connections to the information learned in the nonfiction book. Often text sets consist of six to eight books that represent a variety of genres and are on varying readability levels. Table 2.2 shows examples of multicultural text sets that teachers can use in primary, intermediate, and middle school classrooms.

Text Sets for the Primary Grades

Children's Relationships with Grandparents and Others

Children benefit from strong bonds with a grandparent, a great uncle, or an unrelated older adult. These intergenerational relationships teach them important lessons about life and help them realize the value of having a strong, loving connection with someone special who has gained wisdom and perspective on life. Additionally, children broaden their world view, acquire an historical perspective, and learn about their family's cultural heritage. They also gain special knowledge or skills such as a craft, a recipe, or family stories from these older people. The books in this text set invite students to read about special relationships children enjoy with older adults and learn why intergenerational connections are important.

Grandpa's Face, a picture book by Eloise Greenfield (1988), is a story about the warm bonds between a young, African American girl and her grandfather. Tamika, who loves the warmth of her Grandpa's face, is one day frightened by the ugly scowl he makes in

Table 2.2.
Multicultural Text Sets

Intergenerational Relationships	Heritage	Great Athletes	Social Justice	Self-identity	Harlem Renaissance
<i>Grandpa's Face</i> , E. Greenfield (1988)	<i>Keepers</i> , J. Watts (1997)	<i>Promises to Keep</i> , S. Robinson (2004)	<i>Sweetgrass Basket</i> , M. Carvell (2005)	<i>Becoming Naomi Leon</i> , P. Ryan- Muñoz (2004)	<i>Jazz</i> , W. Myers (2006)
<i>Mrs. Katz and Tush</i> , P. Polacco (1992)	<i>Show Way</i> , J. Woodson (2005)	<i>We Are The Ship</i> , K. Nelson (2007)	<i>Out of Bounds</i> , B. Naidoo (2003)	<i>The Skin I'm In</i> , S. Flake (2007)	<i>Jazz ABZ</i> , W. Marsalis (2005)
<i>Grandfather Counts</i> , A. Cheng (2003)	<i>Dia's Story Cloth</i> , D. Cha (1996)	<i>Beisbol!</i> , J. Winter (2001)	<i>The Breadwinner</i> , D. Ellis (2001)	<i>A Different Beat</i> C. Boyd (1996)	<i>The Sound That Jazz Makes</i> , C. Weatherford (2000)
<i>Indian Shoes</i> , C. Leitch (2002)	<i>The Keeping Quilt</i> , P. Polacco (1988)	<i>Louis Sockalexis</i> , B. Wise (2007)	<i>Freedom Walkers:</i> R. Freedman (2006)	<i>Thief of Hearts</i> , L. Yep (1995)	<i>Jazz on a Saturday Night</i> , L. Dillon & D. Dillon (2007)
<i>Abuela</i> , A. Dorros (1991)	<i>Circle Unbroken</i> , M. Raven (2004)	<i>Champions on the Bench</i> , C. Weather- ford (2006)	<i>Revolution is Not a Dinner Party</i> , Y. Compenstine (2007)	<i>Bud, Not Buddy</i> , C. Curtis (2005)	<i>Duke Ellington</i> , A. Pinkney (1997)
<i>Fox Song</i> , J. Bruchac (1993)	<i>Dumpling Soup</i> , J. Rattigan (1993)	<i>Hoop Kings</i> , C. Smith (2004)	<i>Tasting the Sky</i> , I. Barakat (2007)	<i>A Step from Heaven</i> , A. Na (2001)	<i>Ella Fitzgerald</i> , A. Pinkney (2002)

<i>The Key Collection</i> , A. Cheng (2003)	<i>Bee-Bim Bop!</i> L. Park (2007)	<i>Sixteen Years in Six- teen Seconds</i> , P. Yoo (2005)	<i>Peaceful Protest: The Life of Nelson Mandela</i> , Y. McDo- nough (2002)	<i>Jimi & Me</i> , J. Adoff (2007)	<i>Langston's Train Ride</i> , R. Burleigh (2004)
<i>Grandma Lai Goon Remembers</i> , A. Morris (2002)	<i>Sienna's Scrapbook Our African American Heritage Trip</i> , T. Parker (2005)	<i>Wilma Unlimited</i> , K. Krull (1996)	<i>César: ¡Sí, se puede!/Yes, we can!</i> , C. T. Bernier-Grande (2004)	<i>Who Am I Without Him?</i> , S. Flake (2004)	<i>Langston Hughes (Poetry for Young People)</i> , A. Rampersad & D. Roessel (Eds.) (2006)
<i>Lots of Grandparents</i> , S. Rotner & S. Kelly (2001)	<i>The Empanadas that Abuela Made</i> , D. Bertrand (2003)	<i>Float Like a Butter- fly</i> , N. Shange (2002)			<i>Shimmy Shimmy like My Sister Kate</i> , N. Giovanni (1996)
<i>Momma, Where Are You From?</i> , M. Bradby (2000)	<i>Mim's Christmas Jam</i> , A. Pinkney (2001)	<i>Just Like Josh Gib- son</i> , A. Johnson (2004)			<i>The Entrance Place of Wonders</i> , D. Muse (2005)
	<i>Blue Bowl Down</i> , C. Millen (2004)	<i>Joe Louis America's Fighter</i> , D. Adler (2005)			<i>Ellington Was Not a Street</i> , N. Shange (2004)

the mirror while practicing a part for a play. Her fears are quieted when Grandpa takes her on one of their talk-walks in the park and reassures her that he loves her and would never use that mean expression with her. Greenfield's prose is beautiful, especially when describing Grandpa's expressive face. Floyd Cooper's realistic illustrations, with their warm earth tones, emphasize the tenderness of this story.

Patricia Polacco's (1992) picture book, *Mrs. Katz and Tush*, tells a warm, loving story about the friendship between a lonely, elderly Jewish woman and a young African American boy. The relationship begins when Larnel asks Mrs. Katz if she would like to adopt a tailless cat. She enthusiastically agrees to do this if he will help her care for it. During Larnel's visits, Mrs. Katz reminisces about her home in Poland and the life she spent with her late husband, Myron. The two of them celebrate Passover and other special occasions over the years until finally a kaddish is said when Mrs. Katz passes away. The exuberant, colorful illustrations emphasize the joy and love expressed in this story for the primary grades.

Grandfather Counts, a picture book by Andrea Cheng (2003), tells about the warm bonds that develop between a young girl and her Chinese grandfather, who comes from China to visit the family in the U.S. At first, Helen and Gong Gong, her grandfather, are not able to talk to each other because of the language barrier. However, gradually, they learn to communicate with gestures and teach each other some basic words in English and Chinese. This text for the primary grades is accompanied by bright and colorful illustrations.

Cynthia Leitich's (2002), *Indian Shoes*, is a collection of short stories for the intermediate grades about Ray, a young Seminole-Cherokee boy, and his Grandpa Half-moon. Having lost his parents when he was little, Ray is raised by his grandfather in Chicago and rural Oklahoma. Ray and his Grandpa enjoy each other's company and become involved in various humorous events. In one episode, Ray has to wear his grandfather's pants as the ring bearer at a wedding when they discover that his pants are missing. Each short chapter could be read as a separate read aloud.

Abuela by Arthur Dorros (1991) is a fanciful story about a small Latina child who goes on an adventurous tour of New York City with her grandmother, her *abuela*. They fly in the sky, somersaulting through the clouds, visiting different places. Elisa Kleven's sparkling illustrations add to the delight of this picture book for young readers. The text is sprinkled with Spanish words and phrases which are explained in context. There is also a Spanish/English glossary in the back.

In *Fox Song* by Joseph Bruchac (1993), Jamie, a young Abenaki Indian girl, feels the morning sun on her face but does not want to get up for fear she will lose the image of her beloved grandmother in her mind. Having recently lost Grama Bowan, Jamie remembers the precious times she spent with her, learning about the Abenaki world view: gathering berries, stripping birch bark from trees to make baskets, sipping maple syrup, and watching for animal tracks in the snow. She finally gets out of bed, walks through the woods to a tree where her Grama Bowan used to sit, and sings the fox song she taught her. Suddenly, a red fox appears at Jamie's side to listen to the song, helping her realize she will never be alone, as her Grama Bowan used to say. The oil paintings in this picture book for the primary grades beautifully convey the tenderness of this story.

Andrea Cheng (2003) tells about the warm, reassuring relationship between 10-year-old Jimmy and his Chinese grandmother and explores connections across cultures and generations in *The Key Collection*, a short novel for more advanced readers. Jimmy enjoys Ni Ni's company, her delicious Jiao zi (dumplings), her wonderful stories, and

her fascinating objects, such as the key collection, that relate to her homeland in China. He does not want Ni Ni to move to California to live with her daughter. However, after time passes, he learns there are ways to bridge the distance between them and to make new friends.

In the photo essay, *Grandma Lai Goon Remembers: A Chinese-American Family Story* by Ann Morris (2002), we learn about the activities that Grandma Lai Goon enjoys with her grandchildren, including showing them an old family album from China, teaching them how to write Chinese characters, and showing them how to make Chinese dolls. Directions for making the dolls, playing the pebble game, and making the buns are included in this book for the primary grades. Using the same format, Ann Morris has written other books featuring grandmothers from different ethnic groups. Each book also includes activities that children can do with their grandmothers.

Lots of Grandparents (Rotner & Kelly, 2001) introduces photos of grandparents with different abilities and from diverse ethnic backgrounds, engaging with their grandchildren in a variety of activities. The photos in this book for the primary grades are accompanied by a very simple text.

Response Activities

The books in this text set are excellent for inspiring discussion about children's loving relationships with their grandparents and other older adults. They could discuss questions such as: What special activities do they engage in with their grandparents? What crafts, recipes, games, or stories have they learned from their grandparents?

Using Ann Morris' (2002) photo essay, *Grandma Lai Goon Remembers*, or another book in her series as a model, children could write their own book on a grandparent or other special senior citizen with whom they are close. They could interview this person, record the facts about his or her life, and compose these details into a book. They might also collect photos, old recipes, directions for making a craft, and a family story to include. Additionally, they could draw a family tree to show the person's relationship in the family lineage.

Using Marie Bradby's (2000) picture book, *Momma, Where are You From?* as a model, students could write a "where I'm from" poem, taking on the persona of their grandmother, grandfather, or another older adult. This pattern poem uses sensory images to convey the nostalgia and memories from a person's life. Table 2.3 shows a pattern framework (adapted from www.swva.net/fred1st/wif.htm, accessed on October 02, 2010) for the poem that students could use. Bradby's book is reminiscent of George Ella Lyon's poem, "Where I'm From," which can be found on her Web site: <http://www.georgeellalyon.com/where.html>, accessed on October 02, 2010. This Web site also includes an audio clip of George Ella Lyon reading her poem as well as suggestions for ways teachers can use this poem's format for other activities.

Heritage: Making Connections Across Time

Family stories, heirlooms, customs and traditions are all important symbols of a person's cultural heritage. Books with themes of cultural heritage can help readers make connections across time and recognize the value of learning about their own heritage. Included in this text set are books that explore traditions such as storytelling, celebrations, crafts, and recipes.

Table 2.3.**Pattern Framework for Poetry**

I am from _____(everyday item), from _____(item important in life) and _____.

I am from the _____(description of town. adjective, adjective, sensory detail).

I am from the _____(flower or something that has a distinctive smell), the _____(flower or something that has a distinctive smell).

I am from _____(family custom) and _____(family characteristic), from _____(family member's name) and _____(another family member's name) and _____(family name).

I am from the _____(description of family habit or activity) and _____(another family habit or activity). From _____(something you heard as a child) and _____(something else you were told as a child).

I'm from _____(symbol of your religion or beliefs) and from _____(further description of your religion or beliefs).

I'm from _____(place of birth and family heritage or culture), _____(two types of food or dishes that represent your family). From the _____(short family anecdote) and _____(another short family anecdote).

I am from _____(trunk, box or other place where family pictures and other memorabilia are kept) and _____(description of the value of these items).

In *Keepers* by Jeri Watts (1997), Kenyon enjoys his grandmother's stories and wants to be selected as "the keeper" of these stories, however, Grandmother tells him that only girls can be keepers. He proves that he can also be "the keeper" by writing these stories in a book and presenting the book to Grandmother on her birthday. This picture book for the primary grades, accompanied with Felicia Marshall's full page acrylic illustrations, provides a glimpse into African-American family life in a small community.

Story quilts have been used by different cultural groups to pass down history and heritage from one generation to the next. To gain a deeper meaning from story quilts, an individual must be familiar with the art form and particular culture. Jacqueline Woodson (2005) provides a wonderful example of story quilts in *Show Way*, a Newbery Honor book. Passed down from generation to generation in the African-American community, show ways help family members learn about the struggles past generations endured such as slavery, the depression era, and the fight for civil rights. This picture book for primary and intermediate readers is complemented with multimedia arranged in splendid quilt patterns.

Readers learn about the role of story quilts in the Hmong culture in *Dia's Story Cloth* (Cha, 1996), a nonfiction book for the intermediate grades. The illustrations feature hand-embroidered craftsmanship that tells the story of a family's escape from their war-torn homeland in Laos to America. A detailed history of the Hmong people and their journey to freedom is included in the back of the book.

Patricia Polacco's (1988) *The Keeping Quilt* tells the story of a cherished quilt that is passed down from one generation to the next in a Jewish family. The quilt, created from scraps by Anna's Russian immigrant mother, reminds the family of their Russian homeland. It has served functions such as a picnic ground cover, a baby blanket, and a *chup-pah* (canopy) at a wedding, as well as a symbol of family values and beliefs. Polacco highlights the quilt in each illustration as the only splash of color in the black and white drawings in this picture book for young readers.

Besides quilts, many other crafts have served to connect generations across time. Margot Theis Raven's (2004) *Circle Unbroken: The Story of a Basket and its People* explains the importance of sweetgrass basket-making to the Gullah. As her grandson listens, Grandma tells the story of how her great grandfather became a basket weaver in Africa and then brought this craft to America as a slave. Each generation since has learned the art of basket weaving. As community members weave, they reflect upon their people's past. This picture book does an excellent job of introducing primary through intermediate readers to the rich heritage of the Gullah people who live off the coast of the Carolinas.

Traditional dress is an important part of heritage. In India, wearing a sari is a celebrated coming-of-age event in a young girl's life. In *Mama's Saris* (Makhijani, 2007), the reader meets seven-year-old Marisa who is eager to wear one of her mother's saris for her birthday. After searching through a collection of saris, mother and daughter find the perfect sari for Marissa's birthday party. Marissa prepares for her upcoming party adorned in the traditional sari and Hindu accessories. The vibrant acrylic colors in the illustrations capture the excitement of this young girl's celebration of feeling grown-up in this picture book for the primary grades.

Family celebrations are another important aspect of heritage. These events always include food and often have singing and dancing. In *Dumpling Soup* by Rattigan (1993), seven-year old Marisa and her multiethnic family make preparations for the New Year celebrations in their home in Hawaii. Marisa helps to prepare the *mandoo* (dumplings) for the traditional holiday soup, but her dumplings are not big and plump like those of the adults and she is nervous about how her family will react. All turns out well when her grandfather shows his approval, and the family asks for seconds. Hsu-Flanders' full-page watercolor illustrations convey the lushness of the tropical Hawaiian landscape and the warmth and love in this family.

Bee-Bim Bop! by Linda Sue Park (2007) introduces young readers to Korean culture through their food. In this book, a young girl helps her mother prepare bee-bim bop, a traditional Korean rice dish with meat and vegetables. Told in rhyme, many of the verses include the steps and ingredients for this delicious dish. Park includes a recipe and a note with information about this traditional dish. Watercolor illustrations by Ho Baek Lee are cartoon-like and provide a whimsical feel to the rhythm of the text.

Diane Gonzales Bertrand's (2003) *The Empanadas that Abuela Made/Las empanadas que hacía la abuela*, a bilingual cumulative story, introduces readers to grandmother's recipe for making empanadas, a traditional Latin American dish. The process of making empanadas from cooking pumpkin, to making and rolling the dough, to baking them in the oven is told using a repetitive, rhythmic text that is very appropriate for beginning readers. The pen and ink glossy illustrations show the family working together to create this delicious dish. A recipe in Spanish and English is included in the back of the book.

Mim's Christmas Jam by Andrea Davis Pinkney (2001) takes place during the Christmas season in 1915 and tells the story of an African-American family who miss their "pap" who is in New York City building the subway system. Mim insists that she and the children make a batch of "belly-hum jam" and send it to pap. Pap's supervisors have just announced that there will be no break for the holiday. However, with one taste of Mim's jam the supervisors acquiesce and allow the workers to have a day off. Brian Pinkney's scratchboard illustrations are a wonderful complement to this delightful picture book for the primary grades.

In *Sienna's Scrapbook: Our African American Heritage Trip* Toni Trent Parker (2005) creates a book that is a combination of diary, scrapbook, and travel guide. As they travel from Hartford, Connecticut to Winston-Salem, North Carolina to attend a family reunion, Sienna gains new knowledge and appreciation of her African American-American heritage from visits to historical sites along the way. Illustrator Janell Genovese uses a variety of media including doodles, photographs, and historic memorabilia to illustrate Sienna's family vacation in this book for the intermediate through middle school grades.

Response Activities

Kenyon's grandmother in *Keepers* is a keeper, a female member of the family who "holds on to the past until she can pass it on to the next" (Watts, 1997, unpagged). Students can become keepers, like Kenyon, and locate a family photo, interview family members to gather background information, and write a narrative to accompany the picture. They could then present their photo and story to the class. Another option would be to create a me-box, a decorated shoebox containing three items of family or cultural significance.

Using *Show Way* (Woodson, 2005), *The Keeping Quilt* (Polacco, 1988), or *Dia's Story Cloth* (Cha, 1996) as a model, students can gather photographs, crop them with photo editing software, and create artifacts similar to story quilts. The students can then write a description of the framed artwork.

Based on great grandfather's experience of weaving a grass basket coiled tight enough to hold water as a rite of passage, in *The Circle Unbroken* (Raven, 2004), students can write in reflective journals on the rites of passages or challenges they have experienced. In *Mama's Saris* (Makhijani, 2007), Marisa is given permission to wear a sari despite her young age. Students can reflect in journals about a time when they were allowed to do something new such as walk to school by themselves or go to a friend's sleepover.

After reading about foods from different cultures, students can create shape poems inspired by information on this topic. A shape poem is a poem that describes an object and is written in the shape of the object. More information can be found on shape poems at http://www.readwritethink.org/student_mat/student_material.asp?id=44, accessed on October 02, 2010.

Mim's Christmas Jam (Pinkney, 2001) tells a story related to a favorite family recipe. Students can create a class recipe book in which each person contributes a favorite family recipe. After the book is complete, students can host a food festival and invite families to bring dishes. A contest can be held to choose the favorite dish.

Text Sets for Intermediate Grades

Great Athletes

Great athletes inspire a sense of wonder and awe at their prowess and amazing physical accomplishments. They train with one goal in mind: to be the best. In the past, there have been many American athletes who had to overcome obstacles to succeed, including racism and discrimination. Despite these hurdles, many athletes of color persevered and pursued their dream to be a champion. When they succeeded, they opened