Diversifying Texts, Diversifying Reading: K-12 Critical Multicultural Practices

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Agenda

0 Redefining Culture
0 Critical Multicultural Practice
0 Metaphors of Mirrors and Windows
0 What to Read and How to Read
0 Your Experiences in Teaching Multicultural Literature
0 Revisiting the Metaphors
DIVERSITY
How do you define culture?
Redefining Culture

Dynamic
Multiple (diversity within diversity)
Shaped by historical, sociopolitical, economic, and geographical conditions
Permeable
It’s learned, not biological
Power relations are at its center
Critical Multicultural Practice
(Botelho et al., 2014; Cope & Kalantzis, 2013; Robinson, in preparation)

0 invite students to use their first languages, multiple dialects of English, and literacies as resources for learning

0 consider literacy practices as tools for students to understand themselves and actively participate in the world

0 invite students to respond to texts critically, emotionally, and intellectually
enable students to construct knowledge and create multiple texts through dialogue and critical inquiry

facilitate text production through available materials and practices that contribute to students’ critical literacies

teach democratic practice from a position of LOVE
"Girl Before a Mirror" by Pablo Picasso
"Ancient Window" by Neal Parks
What to Read and How to Read

[Image of book covers]
What to Read

0 Who is represented, underrepresented, misrepresented, and invisible?

0 One book alone cannot represent a cultural experience

0 Use a variety of texts (e.g., books, magazines, films, photographs, newspaper articles, films, etc.), reflecting multiple cultural experiences
Classroom Photos - Book boxes arranged by authors with photos; books about a variety of family dynamics; and, picture books about a variety of cultures, ethnic groups, and experiences (e.g., immigration, validation of identity, supporting the community, refugees, female education, and equal rights).

Humanizing the Space, and Validating Each Child
Humanizing the Space, and Validating each child

“You don’t have enough books about same-sex parent families.”

“I know my son is in the right place, you have books about people who look like him.”
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Getting to Know Each Other - A foundation to build on.

#1. Providing an array of text resources (books, magazines, pictures, posters) that are representative of the children
#2. Children bringing in photos of their families the poster project and sharing about their families. Writing diaries and learning about themselves. Sharing personal narratives. Success comes with diversity, and the variety of literary genres that all engage reading for children’s work.

You’ve been my friend for 5 years your like a brother to me my best friend forever

you are kind, caring, a good friend, responsible, trust worthy, bright, fast, quick to smile, quick to laugh.
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Texts – Just Right Books? “Can I read that, too?”
Are you going to tell the child “no”?
Texts Used to Support Critical Discussions in Curriculum Units – Authentic Voices, Authentic Experiences, “Culturally Specific”

https://newsela.com/articles/#/rule/latest

The Boston Globe

HIAWATHA AND THE PEACEMAKER

Squanto’s Journey

Our Parents Are Soldiers
Pairings & Text Sets

0 Classic and multicultural text

Romeo and Juliet
William Shakespeare

Ronit & Jamil
Pamela L. Laskin
Multicultural fiction text and nonfiction text

Their Eyes Were Watching God

Dust Tracks on a Road

FIRE!! The Zora Neale Hurston Story
Cultural Theme Focus
0 Multiple Perspectives
0 Genres

- Animal Farm by George Orwell
- The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
Historical or current event and multicultural text

FOR WHOM THE DOGS SPY
Haiti: From the Duvalier Dictatorships to the Earthquake, Four Presidents, and Beyond
RAYMOND A. JOSEPH
Former Ambassador of Haiti to the United States

The Dew Breaker
EDWIDGE DAGNICA
Author of Breath, Eyes, Memory
How to Read

0 Consider all texts are cultural products.

0 Analyze explicit and implicit social messages embedded in texts and images.

0 Examine how power is exercised among the characters (e.g., colluding, resisting and/or taking action).

0 Become conscious of how texts construct the reader and the world of the reader.
What are some of the ways you have taught this book? *What worked? What didn’t work?*

How have you diversified students’ experience with this text?

What questions emerged for you in the teaching of this book?
Contextualizing the Text

- Author background information
- Sources of inspiration for author
- Geographical region(s)/time period(s) represented in text
- Cultural theme(s) represented in story
- Awards and other recognitions
Connecting Text to Family, Community & Current Events/People

■ How might readers connect this story to their own family?
■ How might they use this story to think about their community?
■ What are some connections to and disconnections from current and/or historical events and people do the themes represent?
Critical Multicultural Analysis
(Botelho & Rudman, 2009)

Graphic by Lahri Bond, 2004
“Hairs” by Sandra Cisneros
Book Chapter from *The House on Mango Street*
Compare with Dual Language Picture Book by Sandra Cisneros

Hairs / Pelitos
A story in English and Spanish from The House on Mango Street

illustrated by Tirty Yárbez
Construct a Vignette: characteristics of family members’ eyes

0 Compare and Contrast: your family’s eyes

0 Show us the similarities and differences to enable the reader to experience the story through actions, words, thoughts, senses, and feelings

0 Use figurative language like simile to render these characteristics

0 Text Production Opportunities: picture book, photo essay, video, multimedia, visual arts and text, dance and song, etc.
Children can understand and use text to make meaning of the world in which they live.

The Newspaper Project - #1

**Something To Fight For**

By

Greensboro, NC 1927- Johnny Pompeii, Jr. goes for a walk in Greensboro, North Carolina to the supermarket, to buy some food. Once he gets there, he looks at his list of things to get. Johnny hunted and found the first thing on the list. He grabs the food and pulled out a pencil, and started to cross off the first thing on the list. In the middle of crossing it off, a white person shoves Johnny to the ground. "Excuse me, but why did you just shove me to the ground?" Johnny asked. "Cause I can." Said the white person. Johnny asked for his food back. The white person refused to give back the food. "Why not?" Johnny asked. "Because I'm white, and your black, so I'm better than you." Said the white person. "NOT TRUE!" Johnny screamed. "Oh ya, well then I'll get you arrested, how do you feel now?!" The white person had an evil smirk on their face. Suddenly two police officers appeared on the scene. "You are under arrest." The police officers shouted. "For what?" Johnny asked frightened. "Because you were arguing to a white person" The police guards said, boldly. "What's wrong with that?" Johnny asked, offended. Then, one of the officers pulled out shiny, silver handcuffs. Quick as a flash, the police officers put Johnny in handcuffs, and locked the handcuffs. Johnny is now in jail.

I was allowed to visit Johnny in jail, and in the interview, I asked "So Johnny, what do you think about that experience?" "Well, I think that we need to stop all this separation, and just consider that we are all equal. Just for everyone to realize, that no one is better than anyone else." Johnny spoke boldly, but very sad. "Johnny, excellent description, and for all of you out there, I just hope that you all know that this segregation, and loss of equal rights, is something, to fight for."
Four women refused to give up their seats!!!

By Amherst, MA. Before Rosa Parks, 3 other women refused to give up their seats: their names were...

Irene Morgan on a Greyhound bus in Virginia in 1944. In 1955, Claudette Colvin, a 15-year-old high school student in Montgomery, Alabama, and 18-year-old Louise Smith and Mrs. Rosa Parks. All arrested!!! Now, all these women knew about all the unfair laws and they knew they had to do something about it. And this all happened in Montgomery, Alabama!!! Even I didn’t know about Irene Morgan, Claudette Colvin, and Mrs. Louise Smith until a few weeks ago. All those women in their community and the world needed it to be peaceful, rights, and nice. Before The four women who did what they did, it was just miserable for black people, and they knew they needed to do something about it so they did it. Wouldn’t it be how it is today if it weren’t for these brave women? And these days, Black and Whites are let’s get married and be the same class and do lots of stuff together, and that’s how it ended up with those for young women helping us to be one big family and that’s how I hope it will turn out.
The Newspaper Project - #3

What's Happenin'?!?
By:

People in Amherst protest against Trump

AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS: If you drove down North Pleasant street you will see people standing with signs, protesting against our president. Her many people it is easy to see why. Many cities have been changed by this man. Protector says, "We have to do something!"

The protesting is not only in Amherst; some other towns that are doing this are Northampton and Hadley. The anniversary of the 2007 women's march was on Saturday the 21.

Trump has shown hate of women in ways that would be a crime to write down.

Sights such as Grab your Wallet tell us how we can do something if we work as a country. How you know what's happenin'?

What's going on
by reporter

Today at 5:30 pm, Rosa Parks refused to get up from her seat to let a white man into her seat. But she was not the only one. Lots of women refused to give up their seats. Such as Irene Morgan on a Greyhound bus in Virginia and Claudette Colvin, a 15-year-old high school student in Montgomery, Alabama. 16-year-old Mary Louise Smith. Buses are not fair for blacks. They have to sit in the back and if a white person wanted to sit there, he or she had to give up their seat.

People are not riding the buses until the laws change. Here is what some people have to say about the buses.

A man says: "What's the problem?"

Another says: "The buses are just a symbol of the issues."

Askole thinks: "I think that it's wrong just because of their skin color they can't sit in the front of the bus. Everybody says that it does not matter. I do too."

We Will Not Be Silenced
Some students chose to write about current events.

We used the drama to act out interviews of people on the scene, before writing about them. Children improvised possible scenarios.

Drama as Critical Engagement
Interviewing to include students’ interests and questions.

If you like horses you belong here.”
“My favorite part is it’s really close to the ocean.”
“If you like school come here.”
“I like all the pretty views.”
“Love the food.”
“I like Fenway Park because the red sox play there.”
“All the different kinds of people.”
“You get to make a lot of friends.”
“There is a lot of wildlife.”
“There is a lot of farms.”

What do you like Massachusetts?
Responding to text emotionally, intellectually, and critically.

Peatown is a great place to go if you are gay.

Massachusetts has a首付 of people of color.

Massachusetts Brochure Project

Children drawing on their cultural experiences and understandings while validating their community and families in their work.
Reading Journals

0 Reading Journals
   0 Thinking strategies
   0 Reading like a writer
   0 Expand on annotation practices

0 Dialogue Journals
   0 Write to peer or teacher

0 Double-Entry Journals
   0 Two-column entry

0 Research Notebooks
   0 Keep notes on inquiry
In what ways have you integrated multicultural literature in your work?

What questions and/or dilemmas have emerged for you in the teaching of these texts?

How have you engaged children with multicultural literature critically?
Close Reading: Possibilities & Problems
(Shannon, 2013)

0 Possibilities
  0 Supports deep comprehension by explicitly locating the textual evidence under consideration
  0 Slows the reader down in order to continuously engage with the author
  0 Promotes academic discursive practices
  0 Teaches students to read like writers
  0 Builds awareness of audience

0 Problems
  0 Can leave out the reader – embodied and diverse engagement with texts
  0 Can discourage critical analysis and dialogue – bounded by the evidence in the text
Text Complexity Reconsidered
(Moore, Zancanella & Avila, 2014)

0 Assumption in the CCSS:
   0 If students read harder books, they will become better readers.

0 Assumption in critical multicultural practice:
   0 “High level of literacy is the product of working with texts of all kinds in complex and authentic contexts.”
“Girl Before a Mirror” by Pablo Picasso
Five College Doors to the World Project
http://doors2world.umass.edu
References


