



Understanding Diversity Through Novels and Picture Books

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Understanding Diversity Through Novels and Picture Books goes beyond the usual multicultural lists and looks at the wide expanse of the diversity of cultures and lifestyles impacting children's lives in America today and identifies good books to have in library collections for them to read. Included are annotated titles with discussion questions from all of the identified cultures and subcultures and annotated teacher/librarian resources, print- and Web-based, as well as an excellent list of topical annotated journal articles. Grades 4-8.

Knowles and Smith examine current research on diversity and multiculturalism. They move away from the traditional aspects of multicultural education (food, fashion, folktales, festivals, and famous people) to a focus on novels and pictures books, and realistic fiction to show children with diversity issues that there are others in similar positions. The issue of authenticity (whether the author of the book should be of that culture or merely familiar with the culture) is discussed. Topics include: Ethnicities (Asian, Latino/Hispanic, African/Black, Native American, White/European, Bi/Multiracial), Exceptionalities, Ageism, Socioeconomic Status, Sexual Orientation, Gender, and Religion. The authors provide this valuable resource for libraries, schools, and communities that wish to utilize literature to help diverse students walk in the shoes of others and to match books to children and young adults to heighten understanding and acceptance. Grades 4-8.

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