the Dragon Lode

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MANUSCRIPTS: *The Dragon Lode* features original articles and book reviews that explore the areas of research in Children's Literature, Literature for a Global Society, Children's Literature in the Classroom, Bridges to Content Knowledge, and Home-School Connections. Special Topics as announced in the Call for Manuscripts are included in each issue. Initial submissions should be in Microsoft Word and sent as an attachment to thedragonlode@gmail.com. The manuscripts must be typed, double-spaced throughout including quotations and references. Include only references cited in the text. Each page must have a running head and be numbered. Please use charts, pictures and graphs judiciously. On a separate page include full name(s) of author(s), addresses, e-mail, school affiliation, and brief biographical information for the notes on the contributors. We do not return manuscripts. Manuscripts submitted to *The Dragon Lode* are reviewed anonymously by the Manuscript Review Board or occasionally by guest reviewers. Upon submission, a decision is usually reached in twelve weeks. Articles published in *The Dragon Lode* are copyrighted and the property of the CL-R SIG.

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CALL FOR **MANUSCRIPTS**

Fall 2021 **ACCESS TO CHILDREN'S LITERATURE: WHAT, WHY, AND HOW?** *MANUSCRIPTS DUE JUNE 15, 2021*

As the world responded to the pandemic in 2020, 2021, and beyond, our considerations regarding access to children's literature changed. Teachers pivoted to provide remote and hybrid instruction, impacting their ability to read, share and discuss children's literature in traditional and familiar ways. How have teachers responded to this dilemma using innovative and creative methods? What are the challenges in providing access to children's literature in times of crisis, whether it be a pandemic or another challenging context? What are the tools and resources that teachers have found and used to keep students reading? How has this experience changed how we think about access to children's literature across cultural, socioeconomic, ability, or other borders? We invite articles exploring issues of accessing and sharing children's literature across a variety of challenging times and contexts.

Spring 2022 **OPEN THEME** *MANUSCRIPTS DUE DECEMBER 15, 2021*

We invite manuscripts that explore contemporary issues and questions, genre study, literary theory, and research related to children's literature and reading.

Fall 2022 **USING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE TO SUPPORT STUDENT NEEDS** *MANUSCRIPTS DUE JUNE 15, 2022*

Children's literature can be a critical tool to use throughout the day and throughout the curriculum. It can facilitate student learning while opening up a world of possibilities for supporting students in every way. What are the ways that teachers use children's literature to facilitate student learning while supporting students' needs? How can literature be a tool to further the goals teachers have for their students, grounded in courses of study and curriculum goals? How does children's literature help teachers develop students not only as learners, but also as empathetic members of a community? We invite articles exploring pedagogical applications of children's literature that support students across the curriculum and into their communities.

Spring 2023 **OPEN THEME** *MANUSCRIPTS DUE DECEMBER 15, 2022*

We invite manuscripts that explore contemporary issues and questions, genre study, literary theory, and research related to children's literature and reading.

GUIDELINES

EMAIL MANUSCRIPTS TO: THEDRAGONLODE@GMAIL.COM

Manuscripts must be submitted electronically and should be no longer than 20 double-spaced, typed pages. Use APA (7th edition) formatting. Author's name, affiliation, mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address should be on a separate cover page. Please be judicious in the use of tables, photographs and charts. Book covers, photographs, illustrations and figures should be sent as separate jpeg files. Any reference to the author that would enable the reviewer to know the author's identity should not appear in the manuscript. Book covers, photographs, illustrations and figures should be sent as separate jpeg files.

A LETTER **FROM THE EDITORS**

THIS ISSUE of *The Dragon Lode* includes a focus on the role of children's literature in developing strong readers, writers, and thinkers in K-12 contexts. The articles in this issue share innovative classroom practices focused on helping children respond to literature.

In "Teacher Actions in Early Literature Discussions: Through the Lens of Reader Response Scholarship," Sherry Sanden explores how preschoolers and their teachers constructed knowledge through participation in literature conversations. Through the lens of prominent scholars in reader response research (Rosenblatt, Langer, and Sipe), Sanden presents possibilities for literature discussions in early childhood settings. In, "Fostering Teachers' Awareness of Border-Crossing Issues: Socratic Seminars Using *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale*," Nancy Johnson, Miriam Martinez, and Nancy Koss discuss the outcomes of a Socratic seminar focused on a picturebook allegory about immigration. Their study demonstrates the power and potential of using border-crossing picturebooks, coupled with a collaborative discussion strategy, in elementary classrooms. Finally, Jongsun Wee presents a study of the motivations for reading in a sixth-grade South Korean classroom. This study points to the pervasive need for tools to help teachers motivate students to read, and the enduring importance of these tools across cultures. Together, these articles provide us with diverse models of utilizing children's literature in K-12 contexts.

We are so appreciative to all the authors that enriched and deepened our understanding for children's literature through their work. Janet Wong helps us "get moving" with her Poetry Column focused on poems that encourage a kinesthetic component while enjoying rhythm and rhyme. The Notable Books for a Global Society (NBGS) committee provides their important column featuring reviews of award winning book and classroom ideas for those books to use in our classrooms.

This collection of articles are a testament to the creativity and ingenuity of teachers in using children's literature in their classrooms. Thank you to our authors for their meaningful contributions to this issue. •

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ERRATUM—Volume 38, Number 2, 2020
Children's Book Reviews: Celebrating Poetry
Laura Apol, Patricia Bandré, Lesley Colabucci, Mary Napoli, Sylvia Vardell, and Janet Wong

Laura Apol is a faculty member in the College of Education at Michigan State University. She is the author of several collections of poetry, including *Crossing the Ladder of Sun*; *Requiem, Rwanda*; and, most recently, *Nothing but the Blood*. She is currently completing a collection with the working title, *Lullaby*, and has just been named the poet laureate for the city of Lansing, Michigan.

FOSTERING TEACHERS' AWARENESS OF BORDER-CROSSING ISSUES: Socratic Seminars Using *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale*

Nancy J. Johnson, Miriam Martinez, and Melanie D. Koss

ABSTRACT

Many classroom teachers in the United States come from white, middle-class backgrounds, while an increasing number of their students are Latinx immigrant children, some of whom are undocumented. Given the gap between the lives of the teachers and the students in their classrooms, we engaged preservice and in-service teachers in a Socratic seminar focused on Duncan Tonatiuh's picturebook *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale*, an animal allegory about undocumented individuals attempting to cross the border into another country and their resulting emotional turmoil. These teachers viewed the author/illustrator's TEDx Talk about his inspiration for, and crafting of, the text and illustrations in this book. Teachers also responded in writing to both the book and the video, and then came together to share insights and learn from one another. Outcomes revealed the teachers' new understandings related to the complexity of picturebooks. In addition, this strategy heightened their personal beliefs and experiences, opened their eyes to worlds beyond their own, revealed both the challenges and potential of new pedagogy, and heightened their appreciation of the power of collaborative meaning-making. These outcomes reflected the potential of picturebooks to address border-crossing issues and their role in better preparing teachers to address similar issues with children. The experience also offered teachers a new strategy for engaging children in similar powerful discussions connecting literature and social justice issues.

KEYWORDS

Social justice, Socratic seminar, border crossing issues

> *I appreciate how we were able to communicate freely about the immigration issue.… This book is such an incredible doorway in a world full of walls.*

PICTUREBOOKS HOLD rich potential to illuminate issues for children and help them address these issues in their lives (Evans, 2017). Too often, though, the lives of teachers are removed from the lives of the children they teach. To be successful in bringing books into the classroom that deal with children's lives and their worlds, teachers must understand the issues that children face and become familiar with picturebooks reflecting these concerns.

In the United States, most teachers come from white, middle-class backgrounds (U.S. Department of Education, 2016), yet the children in their classrooms increasingly come from different backgrounds (Hussar & Bailey, 2016). This includes a rapidly growing Latinx population, many of whom are recent immigrants, both documented and undocumented (Gándara, 2017). There is a distinct mismatch between the cultural, socioeconomic, and linguistic backgrounds of many teachers and the students they serve. If teachers are going to support their students in dealing with the issues they confront, teachers must understand the obstacles that impact their students' lives.

Bishop (1990) offers a metaphor for thinking about the relationship between readers and books. She explains:

> Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created or recreated by the author…. [A] window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us…[and] we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience. (p. ix)

Just as picturebooks can serve as windows to the world for children, they can also serve this purpose for teachers. This is especially important when teachers' lives differ greatly from those of their students. In addition, students' responses to a picturebook can provide teachers with an eye-opening window into their students' lives.

Just as picturebooks can serve as windows to the world for children, they can also serve this purpose for teachers. **This is especially important when teachers' lives differ greatly from those of their students.**

Nussbaum (1997) observed that literature helps readers develop "a capacity for sympathetic imagination that will enable us to comprehend the motives and choices of people different from ourselves, seeing them not as forbiddingly alien and other, but as sharing many problems and possibilities" (p. 85). Picturebooks can provide readers vicarious experiences that build empathy and challenge their thinking, emotions, and behaviors. This experience is amplified when readers come together to share their thinking about stories. When this happens, they are more likely to think critically about issues and gain insight into other's experiences (Johnson et al., 2016).

Given the conversations about immigration issues in our society, we wanted to engage and challenge the students in our university classes in these discussions in order to understand the complexity of border-crossing issues. As professors at three universities across the United States (one on the West Coast, one in the Southwest, and one in the Midwest), we teach children's literature courses, some undergraduate and some graduate, depending on the location. Many of our students are pre- or in-service teachers, and one of our shared goals is to encourage critical thinking and response to contemporary societal issues through children's literature. To achieve this goal, we engage students in a range of discussion strategies in our classrooms. One such strategy is Socratic seminar.

Both preservice teachers and in-service teachers in our classes (referred to collectively as "teachers" in the remainder of this article) participated in these discussions. We used a Socratic seminar strategy to engage the teachers in reading, reflecting upon, and discussing Duncan Tonatiuh's *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale* (2013). This picturebook is an animal allegory that addresses the experience of undocumented individuals attempting to cross the border into another country.

Because many teachers in our schools are white, and increasing numbers of the children in their classrooms are Latinx, this experience was designed with multiple goals in mind. First, we sought to challenge the teachers in our classes to become aware of the potential of picturebooks to ignite powerful conversations about contemporary sociopolitical events that may impact the lives of their students. Second, we wanted to engage these teachers in collaborative meaning-making, with the dual goal of helping them understand the types of experiences that many of their students (in particular immigrant children) may be living. And third, we aimed to involve these teachers with reflection and discussion strategies around picturebooks they could eventually use in their classrooms. Ultimately, we hoped this experience would help them develop a "questioning stance to work toward changing themselves and their worlds" (McDaniel, 2004, p. 476).

The Potential of Picturebooks

Many contemporary picturebooks explore social and political issues, making them appropriate for readers of all ages (Martinez, et al, 2009). They offer rich content that is developed through the interplay of words and illustrations. Often the illustrations extend and even carry the book's themes and issues. Illustrators of picturebooks consciously use style, color, line, texture, and composition to add layers of meaning to a book. All of these components played an

important role in our selection of *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale*.

We selected this picturebook not only because of its thoughtful crafting but also because it explored issues of border crossing. We knew it held potential as a response-rich text due to its complex layering as an allegory. Because allegories use symbolic rather than literal representation, they encourage critical thinking and provide opportunities for discussion. In an allegory, the literal meaning can entertain while the underlying meaning offers deeper insights, including social commentary, intended by the author.

On the surface, *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote* is an animal tale. Young rabbit Pancho leaves home in search of his father, who has crossed the border to find work. Pancho meets a coyote who offers to guide him across the border in exchange for sharing his food. Soon, it becomes evident the coyote is up to no good.

Inspired by the Mixteco art of 14th-century Mexico, Tonatiuh's illustrations create a rich cultural context. For example, he includes cultural icons such as papel picado, cooking on a comal, and musicians playing traditional instruments. He places readers in a particular physical context through the inclusion in illustrations of nopal and saguaro cacti. Most important, through the illustrations, Tonatiuh builds tension and reveals many dangers associated with border crossing, including jumping on moving trains, traversing rivers, paying the coyote with everything of value, crossing the border through a tunnel, and traveling in the heat of the desert. His intentional selection of animals to play particular roles adds another layer of meaning. For example, rattlesnakes portray border guards and the coyote appears as a human smuggler. Both text and illustration work together to portray this multilayered allegory.

Implementing the Socratic Seminar

A Socratic seminar is a student-led discussion strategy based on Socrates's belief in the power of asking questions, listening actively, and sharing different interpretations. These discussions support critical thinking, inquiry, and the construction of shared meanings (Koss & Williams, 2018; Woolever, 1987). The goal is not to seek a "right" answer or "correct" interpretation. The classroom teacher sets up the experience, but the participants carry the responsibility for the content and quality of the discussion. This strategy acknowledges the social nature of learning; we learn best when we work together.

In our classes, we began by reading aloud *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote* while the teachers listened and followed along, holding shared copies. We were intentional in our decision to read the story aloud as a way to demonstrate pacing that does not rush a story, and to model a strategy that ensures readers "receive" a text fully. By giving the teachers copies to follow along, we provided access to both words and illustrations.

After listening to the story, and prior to the discussion, the teachers were asked to read *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote* on their own, pausing to write notes about what caught their attention, what they wondered, or what stood out to them in relation to words and illustrations. Next, they were invited to write answers to the following prompts:

1. What were your initial thoughts after reading *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote*?
2. What two questions or comments do you have about the book?

Then the teachers were asked to view *Life on the Other Side / La vida en el otro lado*, a TEDx Talk by the picturebook's author and illustrator, Duncan Tonatiuh (TEDx, 2013). In this video, Tonatiuh shares his personal experiences living in both Mexico and the United States, presents his inspiration for creating *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote*, and offers insight into the artistic style for the illustrations. Following this, teachers wrote notes in response to the TEDx Talk and responded to the following questions:

1. How did your initial thoughts change after watching the TEDx Talk? Explain.
2. What two specific comments or questions do you have after viewing the TEDx Talk *and* reading the book?

The teachers then came together as a class to create discussion guidelines (e.g., be respectful, do not interrupt, value others' opinions) to emphasize the notion that a Socratic seminar is reader generated and reader run. Following this, they broke into small groups and used their written reflections, comments, and questions, along with copies of the book, to ignite conversation. At the conclusion of 15 minutes, each group created two open-ended questions to bring to the whole class for further discussion.

The whole-group discussion used the same reader-di-

rected philosophy that guided earlier small-group discussions. Teachers extended their own interpretations by sharing insights and experiences, asking questions, posing possible answers, and returning to the text to clarify and ask new questions. In this whole-class discussion, teachers continued to deepen their understanding of this picturebook and complicate what it *really* means.

In the final step in these Socratic seminars, the teachers wrote a post-seminar reflection in response to the following:

Reflect on your experience participating in the discussion.

1. What are you taking away from this experience?
2. What new insights did you learn about yourself and/or the book?
3. What else do you want to explore?

Discussion

The outcomes to this entire experience with *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote* and the Socratic seminar strategy were multiple. Teachers explored and discovered a variety of subjects:

- the complex nature of picturebooks,
- their personal beliefs and connections,
- worlds beyond their own,
- the power of collaborative meaning-making, and
- pedagogical potential and challenges.

The Complex Nature of Picturebooks

Over the years, many of our students have dismissed picturebooks as simplistic and targeted for young children. Yet picturebooks can be so much more. The multifaceted nature of this format relies on the interplay of pictures and text, intentional stylistic decisions, and the thoughtful use of book components ranging from title and endpapers all the way through to author and illustrator notes.

Awareness of this complexity arose in the teachers' discussions. As they wrote about and discussed P*ancho Rabbit and the Coyote*, multiple layers of Tonatiuh's craft emerged. For example, Alana (all names are pseudonyms) mentioned:

> The first thing that strikes me about this book is [that]…Tonatiuh's style is simple, yet captivating; no word is wasted. While the language is simple enough for young students to understand, there are many layers and themes packed into this book. In this way, it reminds me of an ancient fable.

In a similar response, TJ noted: "The author (to me) wanted to portray migration and immigration, but it was almost like a secret. You had to dig through the text, illustrations, and characters to make those inferences."

Some of the teachers in our study also recognized the particular contribution of the art. Becky wrote:

> Art is a powerful tool politically…. This is a brilliant way to build empathy in readers (young and old). How else could kids really begin to understand the troubles of immigrant families than with a thoughtful picturebook?

This appreciation of the art was also evident when teachers like Sara explained their interpretation of specific illustrations:

> One part of the book that stood out to me was the opening with the snakes as border guards and Pancho and Coyote in the tunnel. As we have discussed in many of our class sessions, the visual images are just (if not more) important in creating the meaning in this scene.… Pancho's fear as he crawls through the tunnel is visible through his expression. It made me think of my own nerves driving through an immigration checkpoint, despite the lack of any real threat it posed for me as a White U.S. citizen.

Upon reflecting on our teachers' comments, we realized they used different facets of Tonatiuh's craft as portals to deeper meanings. They went beyond the surface-level nature of a simple animal story to uncover the underlying sociopolitical themes of border crossing in this picturebook.

Personal Beliefs and Connections

The teachers in this project came from diverse backgrounds and different geographical areas of the United States. Some grew up close to the U.S.–Mexico border. Others grew up in rural farmlands with a conservative, white population. And still others came from cities far from the border.

Some teachers came to this project with deep personal knowledge about immigration linked to relatives and people they knew who struggled to come to the United States. In many instances, this background evoked deep empathy. Such was the case for Tara:

> This subject is really close to my heart. My grandmother came from Mexico in hopes for a better life here in America. I have seen her dream come to life and how she was able to give a much better life to her family.… This project was such an incredible way to open up the conversation about immigration.

Teachers like Yolanda, who grew up along the border, often brought personal knowledge to reading and discussing the picturebook:

> Being from the border city of Laredo, Texas, this story took on a deep and powerful connection for me. Throughout my childhood I always heard stories of *coyotes* (ruthless smugglers).… These *coyotes* are known as evil men and women whom desperate people pay unreasonable amounts of money in an attempt to allow the *coyotes* to take them across the US-Mexican border.… I often heard discussions of *la migra*, customs and immigration officials that were as common as police officers in my hometown. Many people ran scared of *la migra*, both citizens and non-citizens. Everyone knew at least one person that was working toward a better life, but always had to be looking over their shoulder. I grew to think of border patrol agents as dream stealers.

Yet, growing up along the border did not necessarily mean shared experiences. One teacher, Dave, grew up with parents who were border patrol agents on the U.S.–Mexico border. Dave's experiences and beliefs contrasted with Yolanda's and resulted in a complicated and conflicted response. Dave explained:

> During the TED talk, I found myself uneasy at Duncan Tonatiuh's depictions of the border patrol.… [He] explicitly draws them as aggressive and violent. This led me to further believe the rattlesnakes in the story are the border patrol. Why are they specifically antagonized? From what I see, they're just doing their jobs. As someone who grew up on the border, I see both sides of the story. Many of my friends were immigrants from Mexico and I knew of the hardships and struggles they faced. However, I also knew the work of my parents was to protect and guard the border, specifically from having drugs get across. I saw the awful things that were done to the people being deported, being separated from their families, but my problem with the book is how it's addressed. I am all for people coming to America legally, but coming under illegal terms is different.

We found that some teachers with limited personal knowledge of the U.S.–Mexico immigration experience defaulted to stereotypes. Their knowledge of immigration often came from what they heard and saw in the media and heard from family, friends, and community. One teacher revealed her own stereotypes by defining Mexican immigrants as "poor, [people who work] farming jobs, smugglers." Not surprisingly, these beliefs were challenged by other teachers, which led to spirited discussions.

Worlds Beyond Their Own

Many of the teachers valued the Socratic seminar because it extended their understanding of immigration issues. Alex noted: "As a participant in the Socratic seminar, I felt that many of my inquiries on the story have been clarified. [This] has broadened and opened my eyes to what is going on in the world, especially in regards to Mexican immigrants." In addition, this experience motivated some of the teachers to learn more. Crystal observed: "This entire project has shed such a light on immigration for me, by the book, TED talk, and the discussion. I am a lot more uneducated on the subject than I realized and now I am extremely inspired to learn more."

Some teachers recognized their lack of knowledge impacted their understanding of the issues raised in the picturebook. This was addressed by McKenzie, who responded: "The Socratic seminar has made me realize how uneducated I am about this topic.… I think what would have further engaged my Socratic experience is if I had more background knowledge about migration and immigration."

More than knowledge emerged from the conversations. Many teachers gained empathy. Following a peer's emotional response during the whole-group discussion, Maggie responded directly to her classmate the next day:

> It is a humbling feeling to be reminded of the dangerous paths so many within my culture have taken, all for the sake of a better life for their families. I can't even begin to imagine what it must

> be like to have no other choice but to leave your loved ones behind. It is ironic, really, many people put their children though the biggest emotional pain in their lives by leaving them back home, only to be able to provide some sort of happiness in some way. Thank you, Margarita, for sharing.

This sentiment was affirmed by others in the class.

Power of Collaborative Meaning-Making

Without exception, the teachers in our classes valued the opportunity to participate in the Socratic seminar. They recognized how it ensured that multiple voices were heard. Hailey observed that the Socratic seminar "helped me gain new perspectives from my group members and gave me a chance to process my own thoughts better." Others noted how the strategy gave them the opportunity to hear from others whose voices are not frequently heard. And, it allowed them to take ownership of the discussion, something they felt typically does not happen in instructor-led discussions. Jonathan voiced this perspective in his reflection:

> The experience we had was really interesting. I think that the set-up gave a chance for more voices to be heard. I think we get to know a bit of each other in a way that "normal" class discussions don't allow for. We start by talking about the reading, but naturally move into deeper conversations about stances about life issues, some sharing some intimate experiences or insights into their beliefs/value systems.

In some instances, participation in the Socratic seminar led to the recognition that when you disagree, it is important to listen closely to understand the experiences that shape different perspectives. Maria wrote:

> It was very eye-opening to hear how other people in class interpreted this same book and what they thought about the social issues surrounding it… especially Cindy's connection because the culture down here in Texas is somewhat new to her. It was interesting to hear her childhood background and how she connected it to what migrants crossing the border must be like. Her thoughts and ideas made me aware of the way people not from border states might think about this migrant worker issue. If I want to be an agent of change and bring light to the dangers our students may have experienced, I need to know how to speak about it to people that aren't as familiar with it as people living in border states who hear about it in the news and might not have close connections with migrants and their family members.

It became evident that opportunities to work collaboratively were incredibly powerful. Teachers were changed because of each other. They grew in their knowledge, empathy, and awareness of the importance of talking and listening to one another. Although it was not always easy, respect was always present.

It became evident that opportunities to work collaboratively were incredibly powerful. **Teachers were changed because of each other.** They grew in their knowledge, empathy, and awareness of the importance of talking and listening to one another.

Pedagogical Potential and Challenges

Upon reviewing what these teachers said about the possibilities of using *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote* in their classrooms, we recognized that two factors shaped their perspectives. The first was experience in classrooms working with children. The second was their own life experiences and connections to Latinx culture and the issues raised in this picturebook.

Since some of our students were in-service teachers and others were preservice teachers, we noted a difference in their comfort level and their confidence in bringing this picturebook into their classrooms. Various challenges were raised. Samantha, a preservice teacher, was honest in revealing how one's biases can impact pedagogical decision making:

> I knew right when I began watching the video what it was about. I know I could be called racist for my opinion. I believe that we have too many immigrants coming into America. We are a melting pot, but we are not a pit stop for everyone to live at. On the other hand, I know that I will have

> children in my classroom who have this background. I will have to overlook my beliefs and put their needs first.

Discussing *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote* using the Socratic seminar strategy was an introduction for this teacher. We hope this experience will inform pedagogical decisions that respect all of her students.

Other challenges became apparent in the teachers' reflections. These included fear of possible parental and administrative objections, current political tensions, fear of not being able to answer questions raised by students, and concerns about the book's appropriateness for young children. Erik, a preservice teacher, echoed this when he wrote: "One of the main things I brought up…was the age group this is targeting. Young children cannot begin to understand the content within this book. Immigration is too serious and harsh a topic for young children."

In contrast, many practicing teachers in this project, particularly those with experience working with children, saw the potential of bringing *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote* into their classrooms. Those with connections to issues raised in the story saw the value of this picturebook as an opener to discussing these difficult issues. Miguel seemed to embrace these possibilities:

> As a teacher in a bilingual and very culturally diverse classroom, I was excited to see the migrant experience portrayed for a young audience.… I know that the story reflects many of my students' personal experiences or histories. I often find myself at a loss when my students ask each other about the migrant experience or when they repeat what they hear on the news or from their parents. Some of my students ask questions like "why did you even come from Mexico?" or "why don't you just go back to where you came from?" My initial reaction is to confront these statements with my own experiences or opinions, but this text provides a great medium through which to start a great classroom dialogue about migration.

Miguel was clearly aware of the potential of *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote*. The Socratic seminar experience inspired him to design a unit around this picturebook for his second graders.

In Maria's case, we saw the potential realized when she adapted the Socratic seminar strategy using a different picturebook with her third graders:

> During our Socratic seminar, my principal conducted a walk-through observation…and was very impressed with the conversations my students were having about Thurgood Marshall and his role in civil rights issues. The conversations going on in the small groups of four students were steady, and I realized third graders have a lot to say about their experiences and social studies. I walked around taking notes and sprinkled in a few questions as needed to facilitate things to ponder and to converse about. When my students transitioned to one large group circle, the conversation was rich and I feel they gained deeper understanding about civil rights, made solid connections to their lives, and began thinking about additional social issues still needing to be addressed today. I look forward to continuing facilitating Socratic seminars with my students and encouraging them to become active agents of change in our society.

Implications

Teachers' participation in a Socratic seminar around *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote* developed new awareness of the issue of border crossing, empathy for individuals experiencing similar struggles, and appreciation for the levels of complexity of this issue. Some of these teachers started to change their minds from snapshot opinions to thoughtful consideration about an issue that is not black and white.

The Socratic seminar strategy is a process. Our experiences were successful because they included student-established guidelines for discussion; opportunities for students to pose their own questions; time to read and reread the text—including the visual text and the author's note—in its entirety; small-group and whole-class interactions; and numerous response opportunities, including a final reflection. The student-led nature of the discussions honored students' own knowledge and experiences. For some, it challenged their assumptions and values. For all, it extended their understandings of the world portrayed in the picturebook *and* the lives of some of their classmates.

Perhaps more than anything, the teachers who participated in these Socratic seminars recognized the potential

value of bringing picturebooks into their classes as vehicles to initiate powerful conversations about important social issues. For those working with older students, the experience demystified picturebooks and opened their eyes to the possibilities of partnering with this literary format to explore big topics like immigration and border crossings. For those working with younger children, the experience illuminated possibilities for engaging their students in discussions of important social issues, as noted by Miguel's and Maria's adaptations of the strategy in their classrooms.

Bishop (1990) reminded us that "literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us" (p. ix). This was evident in all three of our classrooms, regardless of where in the United States the students lived or whether they were preservice or in-service teachers. Socratic seminars using picturebooks not only foster readers' awareness of social issues (i.e., border crossing), they also honor the role of the reader and the importance of the text. •

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TEACHER ACTIONS IN EARLY LITERATURE DISCUSSIONS: Through the Lens of Reader Response Scholarship

Sherry Sanden

During morning free-play time in a Head Start classroom, three children sit with books on a large square of carpet. One girl with a bin of books under her chair, "just like Miss Colleen," mimics her teacher's read-aloud behavior by holding up the book to allow her classmates to view the pictures as she shares a story she appears to construct on the spot.

In Whitney's classroom, a whole-group read-aloud is a flurry of activity. As the teacher motions with her feet to show pedaling in the story, the children mimic her actions and the group quickly turns into a blur of whirling feet in the air. The children hold up their fingers to count the repeated text at the teacher's encouragement. Later, a boy wearing hearing aids blows a kiss as the teacher describes it in the book.

As their teacher, Nicole, encourages them to discuss the animals on one page of *The Mixed-Up Chameleon*, the children wiggle closer and closer to her chair. As each child takes a turn, they struggle to stay seated, their arms gesturing toward the illustrations as they talk. One child apparently can't help herself and darts quickly to touch the elephant when she mentions it.

AS THESE STORIES ILLUSTRATE, classroom talk focused on literature, especially talk that encourages active student involvement, creates numerous possibilities to advance students' literacy and literary understandings. As read-alouds are among the most recommended practices to support emerging literacy skills (e.g., National Early Literacy Panel, 2008), classroom reading events hold significant promise for early literacy learning. Literary scholars have similarly extolled the benefits of literature study on students' learning. Langer (2011), for example, described the importance of literature exploration on the development of thinking. She stated,

> All literature—the stories we read as well as those we tell—provides us with a way to imagine human potential. In its best sense, literature is both intellectually provocative and humanizing, allowing us to use various points of view to examine thoughts, beliefs, and actions. (p. 5)

Sipe (2008) agreed, urging the inclusion of literary studies with young children that moves far beyond "indoctrinating them into the world of school-based literacy" (p. 6). He explained that providing opportunities for children to actively engage with picture storybooks contributes "to their literacy learning, high-level cognitive abilities, and engagement with the imaginary world of stories so they may develop more nuanced perspectives on real life, as well as a critical stance toward the status quo" (p. 7).

Despite the theoretical support for and empirical evidence of benefits from literature conversations, such literary

interactions are sometimes lacking in early childhood (EC) classrooms or are enacted without purposeful consideration of the components that benefit young students (Teale, 2003). While there are many recommendations regarding the use of read-alouds with early learners, there remains a need for stronger examination of how preschoolers engage in literature discussions, what understandings they demonstrate, and how teachers can best utilize literature discussions to support text-level understandings and meaning-making capabilities essential for their student populations. Reader response scholarship may unlock possibilities for literature discussions to support early learners. For example, might literary theories provide a reasonable base from which to examine literature discussions in EC classrooms? How do teachers' book interactions with young learners link to this theoretical base? Can the rich tradition of reader response theories play a role in helping teachers support young children's relationships with books?

To examine these possibilities, I explored how preschoolers and their teachers constructed knowledge through participation in literature conversations. In this article, I focus attention on findings that address the following research question: How do preschool teachers enable their students' literary understandings and participation in classroom literature discussions? I will expound on these findings through the work of three literary scholars, Louise Rosenblatt, Judith Langer, and Lawrence Sipe, to better understand the possibilities of their conclusions for literature discussions with children in early learning settings. Viewed through the lens of reader response theorists, these findings will contribute to understanding the roles these teachers played in supporting their students' read-aloud interactions and consider the potential for preschool literature interactions to support literary growth in early childhood classrooms.

Children's literacy growth requires that classroom literature discussions be planned for and sensitive to the student populations with whom they are conducted.

Preschool Literature Discussions

Research has linked classroom text interactions to growth in numerous areas of early literacy learning. Dickinson (2001) found measurable benefits to children's language resulting from teacher–child book interactions. Other studies have demonstrated support for concepts such as print awareness (Justice et al., 2008) and vocabulary development (Blewitt et al., 2009), as well as support for growth with story elements and story comprehension (Wiseman, 2011) and for higher-level literacy learning and literary conversations (Vasquez, 2010).

Participation in today's society demands critical, interpretive literacy involvement (Coiro et al., 2008) that extends beyond a focus on surface-level abilities. Hoffman (2011) defined "higher level literacy practices as those focused on actively constructing meaning through analysis, interpretation, and critical thinking, resulting in interpretations of text, rather than comprehension of literal-level content explicitly in text" (p. 184). Research (e.g., Pantaleo, 2004; Sipe, 2008) demonstrates that classroom literature talk, especially in a format that encourages active student involvement, holds possibilities for advancing not only text-based skills but also students' literary participation and higher-level literacy understandings. For example, Pantaleo (2007) demonstrated how exploratory talk during interactive read-alouds prompted first graders to think collectively as they reflected on their own and others' ideas. Pantaleo stated that "the social and discursive practices established during the small group read-aloud sessions contributed to the students' language and literacy development" (p. 445).

Despite considerable evidence of benefits from interactive literature conversations, such purposeful interactions are sometimes lacking in EC classrooms (Dickinson, 2001; Teale, 2003). Martinez et al. (2003) pointed out that much literacy instruction focuses on children's "acquisition and understanding of the alphabetic nature of English" (p. 222) rather than on children's meaning-making from text. Galda et al. (2000) agreed, asserting that even in classrooms claiming to be literature-based, "there was little evidence that children's literature was being used for literary as well as literacy instruction" (p. 374).

Children's literacy growth requires that classroom literature discussions be planned for and sensitive to the student populations with whom they are conducted (Silverman & Crandall, 2010). While much evidence points to the value of the social environment to prompt student learning during literature discussions, many of these studies were conducted in Grade K–12 classrooms; there is a lack of

research focused on preschoolers' literature conversations, especially preschoolers in economically and culturally disenfranchised populations. There are many recommendations for read-alouds with preschoolers, but the need remains for a stronger examination of how early learners engage in literature discussions and how teachers can best utilize literature discussions to support both their text-level understandings and meaning-making capabilities.

Reader Response Scholarship

A branch of literary scholarship known as reader response theory views readers' understanding of stories as an integration between what is embedded in the text and what the reader brings to the experience. Theorists within this group reject the possibility of achieving a single, objective meaning from a text, since every reader brings different backgrounds, perspectives, and previous literacy and literary understandings. Rather, reader response scholars acknowledge the dual influence of information provided by the text and the power of the reader's cognition, psyche, and affect to prompt story understanding.

For this exploration, I rely on the perspectives of three reader response theorists, Louise Rosenblatt, Judith Langer, and Lawrence Sipe, because their work spans multiple decades and has contributed a broad range of understandings about the various ways that readers and texts interact in the process of making meaning. In addition, each of their bodies of work is particularly salient for exploring pedagogical possibilities for literary instruction. In the sections below, I provide a necessarily brief summary of their most noteworthy contributions, some of which overlap with the other scholars' ideas and some of which provide unique contributions to reader response theory. Later, I discuss how the actions of preschool teachers in this study align with specific theoretical tenets of the three scholars to examine possibilities for advantaging reader response theories in supporting the literary understanding of early learners.

Louise Rosenblatt

Rosenblatt, with work spanning the 20th century, has been cited as the most closely centrist of the reader response scholars (Sipe, 2008), balancing the influence of text and reader in the reading process. She readily acknowledged the significance of the text in guiding a reader's understanding, explaining that the text acts as a "stimulus that focuses the reader's attention" and "helps to regulate what shall be held in the forefront of the reader's attention" (Rosenblatt, 1994, p. 11). She granted equal value to the role of the reader in the meaning-making process, explaining that

> the reader brings to the text his past experience and present personality. Under the magnetism of the ordered symbols of the text, he marshals his resources and crystalizes out from the stuff of memory, thought, and feeling a new order, a new experience. (p. 12)

Rosenblatt applied the term "transaction" to the process of meaning-making that occurs with the interface of textual information and reader perspective, explaining that a reader only becomes so "by virtue of his activity in relationship to a text, which he organizes as a set of verbal symbols" and that a text only holds meaning "by virtue of its relationship with a reader who can thus interpret it and reach through it to the world of the work" (pp. 18–19). As Rosenblatt (1982) explained, it is the transactional quality of the reading experience that mandates that adults value what children make of text. She cautions us to not "brush this aside in our eagerness to do justice to the total text or to put that part into its proper perspective in the story. It is more important that we reinforce the child's discovery that texts can make possible such intense personal experience" (p. 272).

Another significant component of Rosenblatt's perspective is the idea of the reader's stance, or how a reader chooses to approach and engage with a text. The reader may adopt an efferent stance, choosing to read a book for what information can be taken away from it, which Rosenblatt (1982) stated requires children to "learn to focus on extracting the public meaning of the text" (p. 271). Alternately, an aesthetic stance prompts the reader to rely on "the personal, qualitative, kinesthetic, sensuous inner resonances of the words" (p. 272) to shape a story that is an integration of the author's intention and the reader's inner self. Rosenblatt lamented schools' primary concentration on an efferent stance in reading events since she believed that the aesthetic stance was more closely aligned with children's inherent internally focused tendencies. She expressed her conviction that both stances should be taught in our literature work with children, but as teachers, "our primary responsibility is to encourage, not get in the way of, the aesthetic stance" (p. 275).

Judith Langer

Langer's research over the last several decades has enriched understandings regarding the ways readers respond to literature and the implications for literary instruction. As with other reader response theorists, Langer attributed importance to both text and reader in the act of meaning-making, explaining that readers' orientations toward meaning are influenced by cultural and group affiliations, history, personal identities, and purposes for reading. She advocated for the use of literature not only for curricular learning but also to expand thinking capabilities outside the classroom.

Langer (2011) is known for her use of the term "envisionment" "to refer to the world of understanding a particular person has at a given point in time" (p. 10). In the context of literature, envisionment "refers to the understanding a student (or teacher) has about a text—whether it is being read, written, discussed, or tested" (p. 11). She explained that envisionment building is "an activity in sense-making, where meanings change and shift and grow as a mind creates its understandings of a work" (p. 15). Langer described five stances readers take as they build meaning in the act of reading, explained in Table 1. She observed that the concept of envisionment building is a particularly helpful way to understand students' developing text understandings and how to support them.

Lawrence Sipe

Sipe's work with children's responses to literature, from the end of the 20th century and into the 21st, impacted understanding about the literary capacities of young children and conditions that can support their active involvement. Throughout his work, Sipe (2008) demonstrated the value he placed on children's literary understanding, which he defined as "engaging in literary meaning-making, of passionately interpreting stories with increasing sophistication, cognitive power, and delight" (p. 3). Based on his observations of primary-age children during classroom picturebook read-alouds (2008), he formed a grounded theory that described five categories of young learners' literature responses, outlined in Table 2. Sipe pointed out that the literary understanding children expressed through these facets was socially and culturally situated in the context of classroom-based literature discussions with peers and adults.

Sipe was especially cognizant of the need for classroom environments that prompted young readers' rich involvement with literature. Thus, his findings also yielded five categories of adult talk, described in Table 3, that exemplified teacher interactions that supported children's literary understanding and appreciation during picturebook read-alouds. A long-range contribution of Sipe's work was his commitment to the pedagogical implications of literature experiences for early learners; he argued for "a particular kind of reading aloud that is interactive and involves both active teachers and active students…in the process of literary meaning making" (pp. 5–6).

Study Context

The current study relies on a social constructivist perspective that presumes the inherent value of social interaction for learning (McRobbie & Tobin, 1997). One powerful opportunity for social learning for EC students is the use of read-alouds to engage them in meaningful conversations about texts. Interactive classroom literature discussions have specifically demonstrated numerous possibilities to advance students' emergent literacy and literary understandings (e.g., Pantaleo, 2004; Sipe, 2008).

This IRB-approved study occurred across four months in four midwestern U.S. classrooms of 16 or 17 preschoolers each, chosen for their proximity and the teacher's willingness to participate. Nicole (all names are pseudonyms) worked in a rural public school, had been teaching preschool for five years, and was enrolled in a master's program. Each of the other teachers had been teaching for 15 years. Whitney taught in a university lab school, had a master's degree, and had previously taken classes in a doctoral program. Colleen and Aaida had bachelor's degrees and taught in Head Start classrooms.

In early meetings with each participant, I shared my background as a former early childhood educator and discussed my current work as a teacher educator at a local university; our common experiences allowed rapport to be established quickly with each participant. I explained that I wanted to know more about how they and their children engaged in classroom literature discussions, and throughout the study I focused on valuing their work with their students. I merely noted and did not alter their classroom decisions and book choices since my goal was to learn more about how literature discussions occurred in their classrooms. I requested that each teacher audio record one literature discussion per week and upload it to a Dropbox site. I had the recordings transcribed and returned to the teachers for their review. I

observed each classroom once per month for several hours, noting specifically the general classroom atmosphere, literacy learning opportunities, and read-aloud activities.

Each teacher and I met monthly after school for about an hour. Before our meetings, I examined the month's discussion transcripts to identify segments of data that provided evidence of students' interactions and of teachers' support for students' participation. I applied process coding to identify teachers' language, questioning, and instructional strategies and to categorize students' modes of engagement. I always began the monthly meeting by asking the teacher participant what she noticed in the transcripts, to keep the initial focus on teacher perceptions, before I used my own noticings to raise additional topics of discussion. Our conversations acted to member check my coding process, as teachers confirmed or clarified my ideas. Following our meetings, I applied pattern coding to form conclusions about how the social environment of the classroom influenced individual and collective knowledge construction.

Findings

To explore how preschool teachers' read-aloud interactions coincide with the conclusions of some prominent literary scholars, I will discuss patterns that emerged as a result of examining teacher participant actions across the classrooms that appeared to both initiate and respond to children's participation in literature discussions. Initial process coding yielded a list of teacher actions I consolidated into broader categories of roles teachers assumed during classroom literature conversations. These roles, in order of most common to least common occurrences, are described below, with representative data examples.

Teacher as Catalyst for Action

Data revealed that teachers assumed the role of a catalyst for action far more than any other role. By more than double, teachers' communications in literature discussions were aimed at encouraging children to do something active during read-alouds, such as prompting students toward story recall, critique, or prediction; asking clarifying questions; or initiating a follow-up activity. The most common type of teacher communication was questioning, often to ask students simple informational questions or to recall story events. Some examples of these included "How many sides does a square have?," "What are they making again?," and "What happened to the truck?" Sometimes these informational questions prompted children to move beyond simple recall, as in this exchange during a read-aloud of *Lady Bug Girl and the Bug Squad* (Davis, 2011):

> **Teacher**: What did Lulu want them to paint?
>
> **Boy**: Bugs.
>
> **Boy**: A ladybug.
>
> **Teacher**: They wanted, she wanted them to paint a bug squad picture, didn't she?
>
> **Girl**: She wanted to make, she wanted to make a…
>
> **Teacher**: Is that what they're doing though? Or are they doing what they want to do?
>
> **Girl**: No.
>
> **Boy**: Them going to do what them do.
>
> **Teacher**: Yep, they're going to do what they want to do.

In this instance, the teacher asked seemingly simple recall questions about the story, but the questions led one boy to better understand the motivations of the characters.

Other common teacher communications more directly encouraged the preschoolers to move beyond mere recall of story events, such as supporting students to make personal connections to the story, encouraging students to interpret story events and character states of mind, and prompting students to make predictions. In a reading of *Knuffle Bunny* (Willems, 2004), the teacher initiated the following exchange, directly activating the children's connection to the tantrum of the main character:

> **Teacher**: Does that ever happen to you? With your moms and dads?
>
> **Multiple children**: No.
>
> **Boy**: Yeah, cuz cuz my mom wouldn't let me have a toy.
>
> **Teacher**: Oh, so you threw a fit?
>
> **Boy**: Yeah.

Teachers' prompts for children to make predictions during a read-aloud included comments such as "Clothes in a basket, so where do you think they're going?" and "What will it be now? Make a prediction." The following example

is from a read-aloud of *If You Give a Pig a Pancake* (Numeroff, 1998):

> **Teacher**: So *If You Give a Pig a Pancake*; you're right, so there's at least a what in the story…
>
> **Boy**: Pancake!
>
> **Teacher**: A pig, and a…
>
> **Multiple children**: Pancake.

Other teacher prompts included encouragement to chime in by predicting the next word in the story or to participate in some sort of movement or auditory action. Across all four classrooms, it was evident that teachers encouraged children to play an active part in the read-aloud in a variety of ways rather than having them sit quietly as passive observers.

Teacher as Book Guide

In assuming a role as a book guide, teachers prompted students' attention to components of the book or story and its creators as sources of information for the discussion. Unsurprisingly, the most common component teachers referenced in picturebook read-alouds was illustrations, with comments that encouraged children to rely on the pictures for story understanding, such as, "Look at that little girl, what happened to the little girl?," "Look at the picture. Take a guess," and "What does she look, what is her face saying?"

The second most common story component teachers guided students to attend to was story vocabulary, either encouraging the children to provide a definition or directly explaining what the word meant. This happened when the word was a bit unusual or unfamiliar to the children, with an apparent goal to support story understanding since the teachers usually linked the definitions to the storyline or story context. One example occurred in Whitney's reading of *The Perfect Square* (Hall, 2011), with a student-provided definition:

> **Teacher**: W., can you tell us, what did that word "shattered" mean?
>
> **Boy**: Um, somebody dropped the square.
>
> **Teacher**: Uh-huh. And what happened to it?
>
> **Boy**: It broke to pieces.
>
> **Teacher**: Why, it broke into lots of pieces.

Another example was in Colleen's reading of *If You Give a Pig a Pancake*, when she needed to bolster the students' understanding of the word "homesick":

> **Teacher**: Do you guys know what "homesick" means?
>
> **Multiple children**: No.
>
> **Boy**: That means somebody is sick?
>
> **Teacher**: No, it doesn't mean somebody's sick. Does anybody know what "homesick" means?
>
> **Multiple children**: No.
>
> **Teacher**: It means you're kind of sad because you miss your family, maybe you're somewhere else like your grandma's house or your friend's house…
>
> **Boy**: I have my grandma's house!
>
> **Teacher**: And you miss your mom and dad and then you'll be homesick.

Other instances of the teacher assuming the role of book guide included pointing out characters, settings, authors and illustrators, and titles. On rare occasions the teacher drew attention to the text of the story, as in the following example during Whitney's reading of The Sandwich That Max Made (Vaughan, 1989):

> **Teacher**: Oh, look at this word right here.
>
> **Multiple children**: Yum.
>
> **Teacher**: How do you guys know that word says "yum"?
>
> **Girl**: Because it has…
>
> **Girl**: Because it starts with a M and a…
>
> **Boy**: Because it starts with a Y, Y, Y…
>
> **Boy**: Because he's gonna eat…
>
> **Teacher**: Because it has a Y and a M? Oh, good thinking.

In these examples, the teachers drew directly on components of the book or story as a source of support for children's literature understanding.

Teacher as Reading Coach

Some teachers' actions during literature discussions indicated a tendency to respond to and support children as readers,

including summarizing and confirming student responses, clarifying student confusion, and naming reading behaviors students enacted during the read-aloud. One of the most common responses in this category was for teachers to verbally follow up on a child's comment, often by restating it in the child's exact words or sometimes by extending it with a bit more clarification, such as, "Oh my goodness, there's lots of bubbles in that tub, isn't there? You're right" and "So, some of you were saying water and it is water. It's a river."

Teacher participants also acted to support students as readers by explicitly naming the reading behaviors children were using, such as asking questions, turning pages, noting vocabulary, and making predictions. One example of a teacher assuming the role of reading coach by naming the children's reading behaviors occurred when Whitney acknowledged a student's questioning from the previous day's read-aloud:

> **Teacher**: So, we were talking about the word "shattered" because it says, "On Thursday the square was shattered." And W. asked that great question. He heard a word he didn't know or understand and so he asked, "What does that mean?" We need to know and understand what we are reading and if we don't know, we need to ask some questions.

Pointing out the reading behaviors students were using seemed aimed at drawing attention to, affirming, and extending such actions during literature discussions.

Teacher as Informational Resource

Another role teachers served in supporting their students' participation in book discussions was as a resource for information. They did this by offering story previews; summarizing, clarifying, and restating story information; providing relevant outside information; and defining story vocabulary in support of story understanding. This last type overlapped with their role as a book guide, as ensuring students' access to vocabulary was a source of information about a story component. The most common type of teacher statement in this area was made to simplify text or to explain illustrations. Several times throughout one read-aloud, Colleen made statements such as, "This is the picture they took of her. She put the couch on top of the chairs" and "Oh, she's balancing on the cord" to point out aspects of the illustrations that were pertinent to the story. In these instances, the teacher acted as a support to make the story line or pictures more accessible for children's meaning-making.

Other times, teachers acted as informational resources by providing students with background information that supported story understanding. For example, when reading *Tops and Bottoms* (Stevens, 1995), Nicole explained, "So the top of the corn had the tassel and the bottom had the root. And the corn is in the middle," to help students understand how the hare kept fooling the bear. Colleen noted, "You know, sunflowers grow really tall, taller than me. They're huge," in helping students understand an illustration in *Lady Bug Girl and the Bug Squad*.

Teacher as Co-Reader

At times during literature discussions, the teachers assumed the role of co-reader, enacting, acknowledging, or describing their own reading behaviors during classroom read-alouds. Examples of these actions included teachers naming what they did to understand, making connections to the story, indicating curiosity, or offering a critique of the book. Some example statements included, "Right, so that's what my brain did too. My brain started thinking that same way: Hmm, I wonder if that person in the illustration now is Max?" and "Let's see. I am very curious about this." These actions appeared to offer the children opportunities to observe an experienced reader enacting common reading behaviors.

Teacher as Authority Figure

The least common role teachers assumed during read-alouds was that of authority figure, issuing evaluative comments, behavioral reminders, or morality lessons embedded in book discussions. For example, teachers would follow student declarations with evaluative statements such as, "So, now it is in seven pieces. That's a great observation." And they would provide behavioral oversight with comments such as, "I'm going to wait till all the eyes are on me" and "We're going to raise our hands so I can get—I can give everyone a chance, okay?" In spite of a perhaps common misperception, these preschool teachers were far less likely to assume the role of authority figure than they were to act in other capacities that supported students' literary involvement.

Discussion

Examining the roles these teachers assumed in classroom read-alouds provides a window into the ways their young students

were apprenticed into engagement with literature. It was obvious from the read-aloud interactions recorded in this study that the teachers valued their students' involvement and that the teachers enacted a variety of actions aimed at supporting their learners' engagement in literature conversations. These four teacher examples appear to fly in the face of previous scholarship (e.g., Dickinson, 2001; Teale, 2003) that found EC classrooms lacking interactive literature discussions. Of course, these teacher participants were aware that my study was purposely examining their "literature discussions," so the recorded read-alouds may not appropriately represent normal read-aloud events in these classrooms. Regardless, the data demonstrate that in the literature conversations that occurred, teachers acted in various roles that supported their students' active participation.

Sipe (2008) pointed out that the creative literary abilities of young learners are often undervalued and that many read-alouds in early learning environments don't support meaningful literary experiences. Sipe stated that "to get the substantive talk and thoughtful literary interpretation we desire, teachers have to be serious and knowledgeable about literature, and be able to foster the development of children's higher level literary interpretive skills" (p. 5). Viewing teachers' actions through the lens of prominent and widely respected literary scholarship, as I do below, provides an opportunity to consider how early read-alouds compare to some widely accepted beliefs about literature interactions. While these researchers may not have developed their theories with preschoolers in mind, such comparisons could provide insight into broader options for early literature discussions. Alternately, such comparisons might broaden our understanding of whether and how literary theories apply to younger groups of readers and what implications these theories hold for early literary instruction.

Integration of Reader and Text in the Preschool Classroom

A belief shared across reader response scholarship is that literature understanding represents an integration of text information and reader perspective. As Rosenblatt (1994) explained, the understanding that readers construct "happens during a coming-together, a compenetration, of a reader and a text" (p. 12). The link between text and reader is evident in Langer's stances, especially in the vantage points of "Being Outside and Stepping Into an Envisionment" and "Being Inside and Moving Through an Envisionment," with a clear focus on integrating textual information and readers' backgrounds and perspectives in pursuit of deeper understanding. Sipe's categories of "Analytical" and "Personal," especially, demonstrate children's use of the text and themselves to create meaning.

This dual focus on the books and on the children's interactions with them was readily apparent across all the read-aloud experiences in this study, with teacher communications aimed at bringing children's perspectives into the story experience while clearly linking to the books' words and pictures. In their role as catalysts for action, teachers often prompted children to integrate personal connections to their meaning-making, and as co-readers, they sometimes modeled connections of their own. As book guides, the teachers ensured that children's attention was focused on narrative, dialogue, illustrations, peritextual elements, and other book elements that supported their story understanding.

Though data demonstrated teachers' inclination to encourage students' personal connections to the books they were reading, the conversations were most often conducted at a somewhat surface level. Teachers supported and praised evidence that the children were connecting their own lives to the stories but usually failed to name those behaviors or to explore with children how their experiences, cultures, and understandings could yield a deeper understanding about story events or characters, as might be expected by these literary theories. Supporting the deeper connections required by Langer's stance of "Being Inside and Moving Through an Envisionment," for example, was rarely pursued. Similarly, data showed teachers referencing as sources of information the parts of the books they read aloud, but this was relegated mainly to naming components like title and author or pointing to aspects of illustrations. There was limited indication of teachers drawing students deeply into book components in ways that expanded students' knowledge of literary concepts in support of meaning-making.

Clearly, the reader response concept that "the finding of meaning involves both the author's text and what the reader brings to it" (Rosenblatt, 1994, p. 14) has been taken up by these teachers as relevant for their preschoolers' literature involvement. However, as noted below, it appears that enacting the concept more purposefully, seeking reader–text interactions that provide greater opportunities for engaging young learners' backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives in

more meaningful ways, was not evident in the teachers' actions. A follow-up question might be, Was the failure to more deeply engage these preschoolers a result of the children's age and ability levels or a consequence of the teachers' lack of proficiency regarding literary engagement?

Preschoolers' Literary Capacity

Young children are naturally inclined to draw on their background knowledge and experiences in their interactions with the world. Relying on these tendencies to support children's story understanding seems a natural extension, making reader response theory a potentially good fit for preschoolers' inherent self-focus (Rosenblatt, 1982). The modest attempts these children made to intersect with the read-alouds, drawing on surface features of their backgrounds and experiences, could very well be applauded as beginning efforts to interact with text in pursuit of meaning-making. In fact, Sipe (2008), in examining his own data from read-alouds with primary-age readers, pointed out that simple, surface-level connections might very well be a foundational step for these early learners, and that ongoing support could enable them to continue to develop more sophisticated abilities to engage with text. Researchers (e.g., Hoffman, 2011; Sipe, 2008) have demonstrated the capability of even the youngest readers to engage in symbolic and interpretive literature interactions, but these preschoolers rarely broadened their text connections beyond surface-level associations.

Teachers' Literary Support

In general, teachers in this study did not appear to take up the initial attempts by their students at "envisionment building" (Langer, 2011, p. 10) that would extend their early efforts to an "activity in sense-making, where meanings change and shift and grow as a mind creates its understandings of a work" (p. 15). One of Sipe's (2008) categories of adult talk, labeled "Extenders or Refiners" (p. 202), occurred as teachers used children's comments to further their thinking with "the many types of literary knowledge that the children could then utilize in their construction of meaning and interpretation" (p. 214). These teachers often encouraged students to draw connections between their lives and their stories, but it was often a singular event that did not prompt the children's initial connections to deeper considerations of meaning-making. They appeared very aware of the need to prompt students to utilize both the story contents and their background knowledge in pursuit of meaning-making, in conjunction with a reader response perspective, but they generally were not inclined to extend this connection to the response theorists might envision for older readers.

Possibilities for Reader Response in EC Classrooms

As with most early education experiences, teachers' knowledge and abilities primarily determine the potential of reading interactions. Many findings reveal the considerable importance of the background and beliefs of teachers for the quality of classroom learning experiences (e.g., Teale et al., 2010). Kindle (2011) pointed out the significance of this impact in the literacy classroom, noting that "individual teachers' understandings of what constitutes best practice have a profound effect on how a child within a classroom experiences a literacy event such as a read-aloud" (p. 175). With strong findings relating classroom talk and text interactions to numerous opportunities for early learning, it is essential to explore what is happening in classroom read-aloud events and to consider possibilities for enhancing early educators' enactment of classroom literature discussions.

In my individual conversations with these teachers about their classroom read-alouds, none cited literary theorists in explaining how or why they engage in the actions they do. Somewhere in their educational backgrounds, it is likely that concepts of reader response theory were referenced, either directly or indirectly, in pedagogical learning experiences, as all evidenced regular attempts to establish connections between their young readers and the stories they read. Based on their obvious commitment to their preschoolers' active engagement with read-alouds, I suspect these teachers would put into practice any stronger understanding they gained of the potential for reader response concepts to support their students' meaning-making. Practical and scholarly implications of this study include enacting and studying ways that preschool teachers might be made better aware of reader response scholarship and how it could look with young learners. The potential for read-alouds to prompt transactions between reader and text, as proposed by Rosenblatt (1994), *envisionments*, as described by Langer (2011), or "young children's marvelous abilities as literary critics," as suggested by Sipe (2008, p. 10), is sufficient warrant to continue to pursue how early educators can become better informed and enabled to draw on literary scholarship for their EC classroom literature experiences. •

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SOUTH KOREAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LITERACY EVENT FOSTERS STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO READ

Jongsun Wee

WHY SHOULD CHILDREN READ? This question must sound silly—we all know the importance of literature in children's lives from our own experiences. Children enjoy reading, expanding their imagination, and experiencing things they may otherwise never encounter, and children's literature supports their development of personal values (Huck et al., 2001). It also helps them become readers and writers: Children can strengthen their oral language, comprehension skills, and writing through reading a wide range of children's books (Krashen, 2004). Children's literature guides children to understand and express their difficult emotions, and it assures them that they are not the only ones who experience such feelings (DiCamillo, 2018). If children do not read, they miss out on these many benefits.

The importance of fostering students' motivation to read has been a subject of study for decades (e.g., Gambrell, 1996; Guthrie, 1996; Oldfather, 1993; Palmer et al., 1994), but teachers still face the fundamental problem of students' lack of motivation (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006). Therefore, educators need to continue to explore methods to help encourage students to read (Putman & Walker, 2010). This study sought to document how students are motivated to read by looking at a sixth-grade South Korean classroom during a two-week schoolwide literacy event. The findings of the study may reveal that decades-old methods to motivate students to read are still effective across time and in different cultures, even in the tech-savvy era in which social media appears to be more popular among children than books are.

Key Features for Students' Motivation in Reading

Studies about students' motivation in reading agree on the importance of fostering classroom culture (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006; Gambrell, 1996; Guthrie, 1996; Oldfather, 1993; Palmer et al., 1994). Among the key features for cultivating classroom culture, students' choice in reading is clearly a powerful one. Students are excited to read when they can choose books about their interests (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006). They may also obtain a sense of agency and personalize their learning to their interests and needs (Guthrie, 1996).

Another essential feature in motivating students to read is teacher modeling. This includes a wide variety of teachers' actions, such as silent reading when students read, sharing personal reading experiences, and modeling reading strategies explicitly (Gambrell, 1996; Guthrie, 1996). Access to books and appropriate reading-related incentives are also crucial features in fostering students' motivation to read (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006; Gambrell, 1996; Palmer et al., 1994). Along with children's exposure to books, having a person (e.g., a teacher, a family member) who encourages students to read can be an essential factor (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006). Rewards for reading can

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be both intrinsic (e.g., reading with friends, reading good books) and extrinsic (e.g., receiving stickers, bookmarks, books), and these rewards may boost students' interest in reading (Gambrell, 1996).

Teacher, Class, and School

Ms. Park (all names are pseudonyms) was willing to share what she and her students did during the two weeks of their school-wide literacy event, and the 24 sixth-grade students agreed to share their written responses for this study. Ms. Park has taught for more than 20 years in elementary schools. She strongly believes in the value of children's literature and always tries to find time to read children's books in her class. Ms. Park worked in several different elementary schools before she came to Treetop Elementary. In her previous schools, she intentionally brought multicultural literature often because she had students from other countries. She brings multicultural literature to Treetop as well, but she hasn't had any students from other countries in her class. Ms. Park was one of seven sixth-grade teachers at Treetop. Each class had about 25 students, and there were about 175 sixth graders in the school.

Ms. Park's students were homogenous in terms of their families' socioeconomic status (middle class), nationality (Korean), and race (Asian). A lot of students lived in newly built tall apartment buildings near the school. Some lived in the same apartment complex, and most students walked to school by themselves. Treetop is a public elementary school located in a metropolitan city on the west coast of South Korea. It was founded in 1981, and its buildings were renovated in the early 2000s. The subway station is located nearby, and numerous bus lines pass the school. The big public library, the city hall, and the city's department of education building are located close to the school. As the population of the area has grown, so too has the student population at Treetop. Currently, Treetop serves over 1,000 students from first-grade to sixth-grade.

Literacy Event at School

Over two weeks, Treetop Elementary held its annual school-wide literacy event, and students in all grades participated. The school scheduled the two weeks for the literacy event on the school calendar, and the teachers in each grade proposed activity ideas for students. During the weeks of the literacy event, students were asked to choose any books that they wanted to read. Then, depending on what grade students were in, they would do different activities. For example, primary-grade students made book posters or drew characters. Later, teachers displayed the students' drawings in the library and the hallway. Sixth-grade teachers decided to do a writing activity because it was in line with the writing curriculum.

Students' Self-Selection of Books

Allowing students to choose books to read turned out to be the best practice that inspired Ms. Park's students to read (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006; Gambrell, 1996; Guthrie, 1996; Miller, 2012; Oldfather, 1993; Palmer et al., 1994). Ms. Park said that when she assigned a book, several students always refused to read. But when she asked her students to choose whatever books they wanted to read, she did not hear a single refusal. Giving students a choice removed the option of not reading (Miller, 2012).

The selections made by students in Ms. Park's class showed how different children's interests were when choosing books. With the opportunity for self-selection, students were able to personalize their learning and explore a variety of topics, from Korean history to how to make friends (Guthrie, 1996). Most of them chose fiction; only two students chose nonfiction (see Figure 1). Among the different genres under fiction, students favored realistic fiction (n = 12). Fantasy was the next most chosen genre (n = 7), followed by Korean traditional literature (n = 3).

A wide variety of titles were selected. Out of 24 students, 20 chose unique titles, and only two titles were picked twice: *A Bowl of Udon* (*一杯のかけそば*; Ryohei, 2013) and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (Dahl, 2000). Most students selected children's books, but three chose young adult (YA) books: the Japanese best-selling novel *Want to Eat Your Pancreas* (*君の膵臓をたべたい*; Yoru, 2017); the American novel *The Fold*, written by Korean American author An Na (2011); and Albert Camus's *La Peste* (2001). Ms. Park shared that the student who chose *La Peste* had recently received *The Collection of World Classic Books for Children* as a gift from her mom.

It was interesting that a little more than half of the students (n = 14) chose books written by foreign authors (see Figure 2). Five of those authors are from the United States (An Na, Andrew Clements, Kate DiCamillo, Jeff Kinney, and Rebecca Stead) and two are from Japan (Ryohei Kuri

and Yoru Sumino); other countries represented include Australia (Andy Griffiths), England (Roald Dahl), France (Albert Camus), and the Netherlands (Annie Schmidt).

Considering the audience, YA books like *Want to Eat Your Pancreas* and *The Fold* were surprising choices. Due to the book level, YA novels would not be assigned to students to read in elementary school. But, as shown in the students' choices, some sixth graders may be ready for such novels, and the free choice enabled them to look for books beyond their grade level. The overall survey of students' choices gave Ms. Park insights into what genres of books her students liked and what topics they were interested in reading about.

Figure 1
GENRE OF THE BOOK

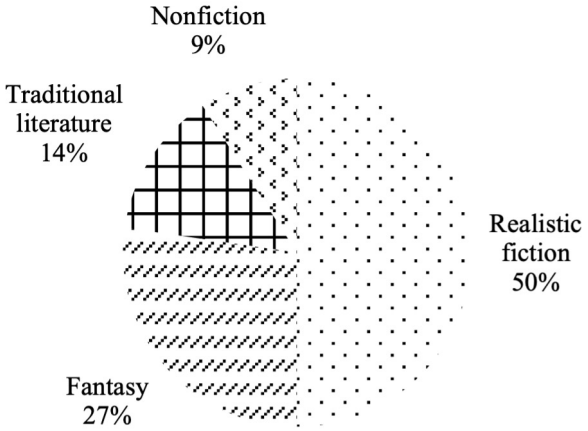
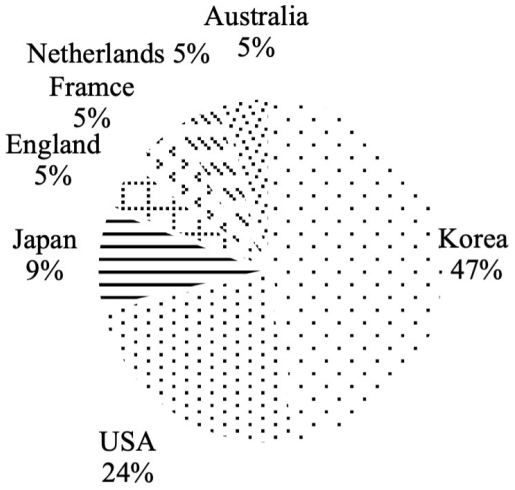


Figure 2
AUTHOR'S HOME COUNTRY



Teacher Modeling

Ms. Park said her modeling was not limited to having students see her reading; she also explicitly modeled how to respond to literature (Gambrell, 1996; Guthrie, 1996). Since the students were asked to write one or two pages of responses after reading their chosen books, Ms. Park took this opportunity to teach writing. In fact, by looking at the students' written responses, she could tell if they understood the writing lessons. Ms. Park said the topics in the students' written responses were ones she had explicitly suggested during the writing lessons (see Table 1; the student writing is translated from Korean). She could use these written responses as assessments because they demonstrated students' comprehension and writing skills.

Access to Books

Access to books was one of the key features in supporting students' motivation to read in Ms. Park's class (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006; Gambrell, 1996; Palmer et al., 1994). Ms. Park had a small collection of books for her students in the classroom, and the students had access to many more books at the school library. During the two weeks of the school-wide literacy event, Ms. Park was able to schedule more library time for her students to visit so that they could have multiple chances to select books and read. Because other classes were also making extra visits, the library was busier than usual. Ms. Park said that the students understood why the library was busy and that they shared the space with other students.

Ms. Park also added morning reading time in class. Even though students were only asked to read one book, Ms. Park believed that her students ended up reading several books during the two weeks as a result of their multiple visits to the library and the added morning reading time.

Appropriate Reading-Related Incentives

Once the writing process was completed, Ms. Park formed small groups and created time for the students to share what they wrote. As part of the celebration of the school-wide literacy event, the school planned to give awards for the three best-written responses per class. Ms. Park shared this news with the students and asked them to select the three winners themselves. That may sound competitive, but Ms. Park said that the students made decisions on whose written responses deserved to be awarded without any problem. It

Table 1
TOPICS IN STUDENTS' WRITTEN RESPONSES BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS

Topic	Example of Student Writing
The reason why I chose the book	*One day when I was reading at home I found the funny title on the bookshelf.*
About the author	*The author of this book, Kate DiCamillo, was born in Pennsylvania, and she spent her childhood in Florida.*
Synopsis of the story	*Of course, the story happens in Japan, and it has high school students as protagonists.*
How I felt about the story	*I was impressed with Madam Park because she put other people before her despite their maltreatment of her.*
Author's intention	*It seems that through the book, the author wanted to deliver the message that there should be no war, and we should not make any weapons or buy them.*
Connections to life	*Korean adolescents today care about their appearance. They put on make-up and get cosmetic surgery.*
Lesson I learned	*After reading this scene, I thought that it doesn't matter how hard it is or how poor you are, you should not give up and keep doing your best.*
Whom do I recommend the book to?	*I'd like to introduce this book to friends who have difficulty with comprehension and tell them it has a lot of pictures.*

gave the students a chance to talk about what a well-written literature response looked like.

The writing activity was intended to help students deepen their understanding of literature and give them meaningful writing practice. But, this purpose could also be served without giving awards to a select few students per class. After reflecting on how the school-wide literacy event had gone, the sixth-grade teachers thought that some students' self-esteem could be lowered if they did not get an award. The teachers agreed that the writing activity should be an enjoyable experience and not a writing competition. Consequently, they decided not to give awards the following year. In Ms. Park's class, reading and sharing their favorite books may have served as the incentives that motivated students to read, not the awards for the top three best-written responses (Gambrell, 1996).

Teacher's Comments

Ms. Park said that the school-wide literacy event did promote reading and made it fun for her students. She witnessed her students enjoying reading their choice of books and engaged in sharing their responses in class. Ms. Park added that reading was more exciting for her students during the two weeks of the literacy event because they were aware that the entire student body was reading books in school. She believed that seeing the products of reading activities in different areas of the school (e.g., libraries, hallways, and classrooms) certainly boosted the reading ambiance as well. For Ms. Park, the school-wide literacy event was a win-win situation because the students enjoyed reading and the writing activity satisfied the sixth-grade writing curriculum.

Final Thoughts

Children need to read, but we cannot force them to do so. If children are willing to pick up a book and enjoy reading, we can say that it is a great success. Individual students in Ms. Park's class had different interests and preferences in books. It can be inferred that this was one reason why the students enjoyed reading more when they could select a book by themselves rather than when they were assigned to read a specific book. The students all read different books, but their written responses showed

that they met the reading and writing standards listed in the curriculum, such as identifying a theme of the story, developing an independent reading attitude, and writing a response to literature.

This study witnessed that the decades-old methods to motivate students to read, such as self-selection, teacher modeling, and book access, can be implemented across time and cultures. These methods worked for Ms. Park's students in a South Korean elementary school—students who were used to reading posts on social media rather than reading children's books. Reading-related incentives such as awards seem to be unnecessary; instead, the students were rewarded by having agency in their learning and sharing their joy of reading. In schools like Ms. Park's Treetop Elementary, which uses textbooks for language arts, there is not much room for students to read their choice of books. Usually, students read excerpts from books that are included in the textbooks for instructional purposes; however, as shown in this study, a school can intentionally create an environment for students to have positive reading experiences. Certainly, Ms. Park endorsed the school-wide literacy event wholeheartedly. •

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THE POET'S CORNER
Let's Get Moving!

Janet Wong

IF YOU'RE LIKE ME, you grew up with the idea that sitting still for long periods of time was ideal behavior—something that good children did for at least eight hours a day, hunched over a school desk or doing homework at the kitchen table. Nowadays, most of us know that we need to give our eyes, necks, shoulders, wrists, arms, and backs regular and frequent breaks, especially when we're sitting in front of a computer screen.

Poetry provides an ideal way to incorporate movement into a school day because most children's poems are short. You can easily start or end your school day with a poem. You can read one out loud during snack time, while the children munch away, or have a few class volunteers read a poem out loud as everyone settles in after lunch. A poem can even give us an impromptu 30-second indoor recess at random times during the day, when you feel the energy in the room starting to dip; you don't even have to get up from your chair. Here's a poem that will give your students a break—while they soak up some rhyme, repetition, rhythm, alliteration, and wordplay.

Deskercise
by Juli Mayer

Raise your hands up in the air.
Twist your body in your chair.
Touch your nose and blink your eyes.
This is how we deskercise!

Move your feet and march in place.
Pose a sad, then happy face.
Flap your arms, it's time to fly.
This is how we deskercise!

Roll your head and finger snap.
Shrug your shoulders, clap, clap, clap.
Drum your fingers, look surprised.
This is how we deskercise!

Poems that invite movement and also reflect current events can be found among the hundred poems in *HOP TO IT: Poems to Get You Moving*, the latest anthology compiled by Sylvia Vardell and me. Many of the poems in this anthology were selected because they are particularly well suited to children's lives today. Consider, for instance, how "Ways to Say Hello" promotes touchless greetings:

Ways to Say Hello
by Janet Wong

Foot wave
air bump
jazz hands
heart thump
thumbs up

clap hello
chicken wing elbow
rabbit ears
fish face

I bring you greetings
from inner space

Poems Can Provide Curricular Connections

Many of you are using poems across the curriculum to introduce vocabulary and concepts. With this in mind, each of the poems in *HOP TO IT* is accompanied by five "bubbles" that present the following:

- suggestions for how to read the poem aloud with movements;
- a fun factoid, often with a science or social studies connection;
- a spot illustration;
- a poetry skill; and
- a recommended picturebook on the same topic.

The factoid presented with "Ways to Say Hello" says: "Rabbits have a complex language—ears forward, ears back, or one ear forward and one ear back can mean different things!" The poetry skill points out: "People talk about greetings from *outer* space, but maybe not greetings from *inner* space. Poets love wordplay!" Sharing this poem and its bubbles, you can help students stretch their muscles and their imaginations, while reinforcing the idea that language can be a source of joy.

Many poems in *HOP TO IT* can provide a bridge to a quick lesson in science or social studies, even without the factoid provided in the bubble. "What's Behind My Head?" by Kristy Dempsey, a poem that will resonate with many children now (though it would have baffled them in 2019), can spark a 15-second geography lesson.

What's Behind My Head?
by Kristy Dempsey

Today I'm in Tahiti,
lounging on the sand.
Tomorrow I'll be up on stage,
rocking with my band.
On Friday, back behind me
there'll be lions on my screen.
Next week, my background vid
will bounce me on a trampoline.
I've got a plan for every day—
my classmates think it's cool.
Each day I'm in a brand new place
when we have online school.

Find Poems on Your Bookshelves

Many of the poems on your bookshelves right now will allow you to easily incorporate some type of movement into your readings of them. The poems need not have anything to do with movement, sports, or dance; just find a word in the poem that inspires some sort of movement and perform it while you read the poem out loud a first time, and then invite students to join in on the motions during a second reading. Here is a recommended list of a handful of poems from some favorite poetry books:

- "Amplify" by Lindsay H. Metcalf (in *No Voice Too Small*; Metcalf et al., 2020): Read the poem aloud and have students use their hands to make a sparking motion when they hear the word "spark" and a rippling motion when they hear the words "ripple forward."
- "An Open Book" by Amy Ludwig VanDerwater (in *Read, Read, Read!*; VanDerwater, 2017): Each time you read the word "open," signal students to spread their arms wide.
- "Far, Far Away" (for Palestine) by Naomi Shihab Nye (in *I Remember: Poems and Pictures of Heritage*; Hopkins, 2019): Have volunteers take turns reading lines. Each time students hear the word "peace" (three times) or "peaceful" (once), have them pause and close their eyes.
- "Inuit Song," translated by Edward Field, after Nakasuk (in *National Geographic Book of Animal Poetry*; Lewis, 2012): Each time students hear the word "air," have them stretch their wings like a gull.
- "Passing" by Elizabeth Steinglass (in *Soccerverse: Poems About Soccer*; Steinglass, 2019): Have students run while you read the poem, until you get to the last line (when they'll wave and try to catch your attention).

Pandemic Poems and Social Justice

At the end of February 2020, Sylvia Vardell and I had received hundreds of movement poems—plenty for our anthology. Then we found ourselves mired in the pandemic, wondering whether we should expand the theme of the book. By the end of March, we decided to include poems about topics such as COVID-19, mask-wearing, staycations, keeping connected with friends, and Zoom—but soon after, social justice protests began to fill the news. So we expanded our theme once more to include poems about exercising your voice, standing up for what you believe in, marching, raising your arm in unity, and more. Here is one of those poems, "Everyday Use" by Zetta Elliott, which you can share with students in a video reading by the poet (the link is included in the references).

Everyday Use
by Zetta Elliott

our muscles
grow strong with
everyday use
strong arms can offer
a tender embrace
a heart that is brave
can soften with compassion
a clever mind can
find time to daydream
sharp eyes can see
both sides of a problem
and the fastest feet
can slow to march
the long road
to justice

Bit by Bit

As we jump into a new year of hopes and dreams, let's do what we can to help children dream, too. Read this poem out loud once, and then, before a second reading, invite students to choose a favorite activity from the poem and to chime in on those words.

Now's Your Chance
by Karen G. Jordan

Alone and bored? Friends can't play?
Now's your chance to break away
from what you were to who you'll be:
stronger, smarter, easily.
Create a task toward one good goal.
Complete it, repeat it. You're in control!
Grow new muscles. Write some skits.
Finish puzzles. Practice splits.
Learn to juggle. Bake a pie.
Knit a scarf. Give chess a try.
Coding, backbends, violin
are yours to master. You can win
a brand new you, bit by bit.
Small steps work, so stay with it!

Small steps; it's a long road. Poetry will help us get there. •

Janet Wong is the author of 34 books for children. Her most recent book (with Sylvia Vardell) is *HOP TO IT: Poems to Get You Moving*, where you can find many poems to inspire discussion. Email: janet@janetwong.com

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Hopkins, L. B. (2019). *I remember: Poems and pictures of heritage*. Lee & Low.

Jordan, K. G. (2020). Now's your chance. In *HOP to it: Poems to get you moving*. Pomelo Books.

Lewis, J. P. (2012). *National Geographic book of animal poetry*. National Geographic.

Mayer, J. (2020). Deskercise. In H*OP to it: Poems to get you moving*. Pomelo Books.

Metcalf, L. H., Dawson, K. V., & Bradley, J. (2020). *No voice too small: Fourteen young Americans making history*. Charlesbridge.

Reidy, D. (2020). FREEZE. In *HOP to it: Poems to get you moving*. Pomelo Books.

Steinglass, E. (2019). Soccerverse: *Poems about soccer*. WordSong/Highlights.

VanDerwater, A. L. (2017). *Read! Read! Read!* WordSong/Highlights.

Vardell, S., & Wong, J. (2020). *HOP to it: Poems to get you moving*. Pomelo Books.

Wong, J. (2020). Ways to say hello. In *HOP to it: Poems to get you moving*. Pomelo Books.

2020 NOTABLE BOOKS FOR A GLOBAL SOCIETY: Booklist for Grades PreK–12 to Foster Empathy and Social Emotional Learning

Edited by Fran Wilson

THE NOTABLE BOOKS for a Global Society (NBGS) Committee reviews and selects 25 of the best books published within the year that promote a greater understanding of and appreciation for the diverse people and cultures of the world. It's exciting to see an increase in the number of diverse books being published for children. This past year, committee members reviewed over 500 books for pre-K through Grade 12. The committee is pleased to announce this year's award-winning books that share the common theme of resilience.

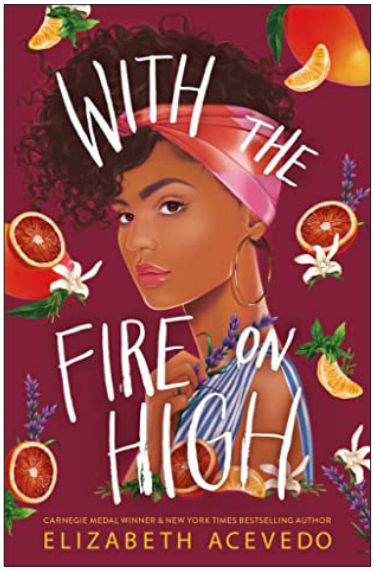
These stories tell of characters overcoming adversity, persevering to be accepted, and striving to achieve their goals. Readers are reminded of the impact of acts of kindness, the joy of expressing gratitude, and our need for a sense of belonging. We hope that educators will exercise their power and share these stories with children.

Reading diverse books has many benefits, but one of the greatest may be the promotion of social-emotional learning. In response to a growing trend to focus upon social-emotional learning in children, some states have developed state standards to ensure it is taught (International Literacy Association, 2020). Research indicates that nurturing children's emotional skills results in positive outcomes such as stronger relationships, higher self-esteem, and greater overall happiness (McCallum, 2020). One important characteristic of social-emotional development that can be cultivated in children is the ability to identify emotions in others. That skill can be developed through sharing books, reading to and with children, and talking about books with them.

Our collection of award-winning books can support this learning while encouraging empathy and promoting a greater understanding of the diverse people in our world (Wilson, 2019). After reading and discussing these books with chil-

dren, teachers can try out the activities in the teaching suggestions listed with each book. Related books are also listed for each featured book in the collection, providing an opportunity for children to delve further into a theme.

2020 Notable Books for a Global Society



Acevedo, Elizabeth. (2019). *With the Fire on High*. Harper Collins/Harper Teen. 400 pp. GR 7–9 and up. Contemporary fiction.

Afro-Latinx teen mom Emoni Santiago works hard to take care of her daughter, her abuela, and her high school studies. She recharges her soul by creating delicious dishes at home that combine rich flavors from her cultures. Although she considers it impractical, she can't resist her dream of becoming a chef when she graduates. The book is broken into three parts, each introduced by a mouth-watering recipe. Acevado provides readers with a multifaceted examination of teen parenting through Emoni's highs (a culinary study-abroad opportunity and romance) and lows (custody issues and the high school rumor mill). *Reviewed by Mary Ellen Oslick*

Teaching Suggestions

- Have students research food fusion (a form of cooking that combines contrasting culinary traditions or techniques into a single dish). They can either find recipes to try or create their own.
- Emoni's phone calls to her activist father in Puerto Rico bring up many sociopolitical issues. Have students examine either historical or current topics dealing with Puerto Rico (e.g., hurricanes, voting, citizenship, Jennifer Lopez's flag costume during the 2020 Super Bowl).
- Discuss Emoni's talent for time management. Have students track how they spend their days in detail and then share tips for better time management.

Related Books

Quintero, I. (2014). *Gabi, a girl in pieces*. Cinco Punto Press.

Sanchez, E. L. (2019). *I am not your perfect Mexican daughter*. Penguin Random House/Random House/Alfred A. Knopf.

Thomas, A. (2019). *On the come up*. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray.

Denise, Anika Aldamuy. (2019). *Planting Stories: The Life of Librarian and Storyteller Pura Belpré* (Paola Escobar, Illus.). HarperCollins/Harper. Unpaged. GR 1–5 and up. Biography.

When Pura Belpré became the first Puerto Rican librarian in the New York Public Library in 1921, she found no stories of her homeland or in her mother tongue. To change that, she shared folktales in English and Spanish that her abuela taught her and learned to create puppets that delighted children and their families. The city's growing Spanish-speaking community learned to feel at home in New York City libraries thanks to her bilingual story hours and traditional Latinx holiday celebrations. Many of her stories were published, and she

traveled across the city "planting her story seeds in the hearts and minds of children new to [New York City] who wish to remember *la lengua y los colores* of home." This portrait of Pura Belpré as a librarian, storyteller, and author is a reminder of the power of storytelling and bilingual literature. *Reviewed by Ann Digiacomo*

Teaching Suggestions

- The American Library Association (ALA) recognizes outstanding literature by Latinx authors and illustrators annually with the Pura Belpré Award. Have students view these books at the ALA's website: http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/belpremedal. Work with students as they collect several stories to share as a unique text set.
- Help students interview family members about stories from their childhoods. Who in their families comes from other places? Encourage linguistically diverse students and families to share stories using their first languages. Collect the stories and create a classroom album.
- Pura Belpré's books became the first mainstream Latinx storybooks published in the United States. Gather other bilingual texts and encourage students to explore new words and phrases in other languages. Ask students to consider how adding bilingual text affects a reader's experience or a story's tone.
- To learn more about Pura Belpré's career at the New York Public Library (NYPL) and her published children's books, visit this NYPL blog post: "Pura Belpré, in Her Own Words: NYPL Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month" (https://www.nypl.org/blog/2013/09/13/pura-belpre-hispanic-heritage-month).

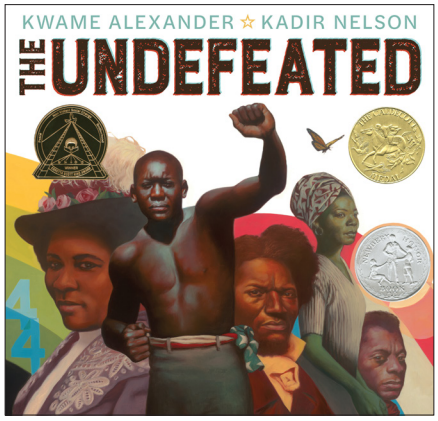
Related Books

Hohn, N. L. (2019). *A likkle Miss Lou: How Jamaican poet Louise Bennett Coverley found her voice* (E. Fernandes, Illus.). Owlkids Books.

Markel, M. (2017). *Balderdash! John Newbery and the boisterous birth of children's books* (N. Carpenter, Illus.). Chronicle Books.

Paul, M. (2019). *Little libraries, big heroes* (J. Parra, Illus.). Houghton Mifflin Harcourt/Clarion Books.

Pinborough, J. (2013). *Miss Moore thought otherwise: How Anne Carroll Moore created libraries for children* (D. Atwell, Illus.). Houghton Mifflin Harcourt/Houghton Mifflin.



Alexander, Kwame. (2019). *The Undefeated* (Kadir Nelson, Illus.). Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Unpaged. GR 2–5 and up. Poetry.

In this beautifully illustrated tribute to Black Americans, key figures are boldly and authentically represented on the pages as verses of an extended poem tell the history of African Americans through their pain and achievements. Famous quotes serve to inspire and give hope to the reader. The poem vividly depicts Black Americans who have risen to the top despite adversity such as slavery and racial injustice. The civil rights movement brought its own challenges and inequities yet also produced brave leaders. The poem leads into the current-day Black Lives Matter movement. The strong, courageous people depicted in this poem have overcome, with persistence and determination, the obstacles and adversities that stood in their way, to take their place in a country that is not so willing to accept them. *Reviewed by Osha Lynette Smith*

Teaching Suggestions

- Introduce students to historical individuals many may have not heard of before reading this book by reviewing the back matter, which includes information on the people and events depicted. Provide older students with a selection of biographies on characters referenced in the book, for a rich biography unit. Work with students to select a person from the book to research. Students can create multiple artifacts, such as a timeline of the person's life, an Instagram page, an advertisement for the book, or an interview with the person. Have students

present the projects to classmates, providing everyone with information on multiple people.

- Type the words to the poem and print them for each student. Discuss with students the meaning of the poem and of terms such as "Black Lives Matter" and other possibly unfamiliar phrases. Discuss the author's purpose and point of view with students.
- Provide younger students with enlarged portraits, pasted on oak tag, of people from the book, providing additional picturebooks and resources for each person selected. Have students work in small groups to add descriptive words and accomplishments to the portraits and display the collection of posters as inspiration for students.

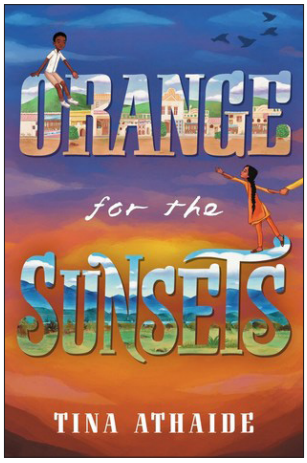
Related Books

Hegedus, B. (2019). *Rise! From caged bird to poet of the people, Maya Angelou* (T. Engel, Illus.). Lee & Low Books.

Lyons, K. S. (2019). *Sing a song: How "Lift every voice and sing" inspired generations* (K. Mallett, Illus.). Penguin Random House/Penguin/Nancy Paulsen Books.

Nyong'o, L. (2019). *Sulwe* (V. Harrison, Illus.). Simon & Schuster.

Wittenstein, B. (2019). *A place to land: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the speech that inspired a nation* (J. Pinkney, Illus.). Holiday House/Neal Porter Books.



Athaide, Tina. (2019). *Orange for the Sunsets*. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen Books. 328 pp. GR 4–8 and up. Historical fiction.

In this story of friendship, love, and hope, two children and best friends, Asha and Yesofu, have grown up and played together all their lives. In 1972, their friendship is threatened when Ugandan president Idi Amin announces that Indians living in Uganda have 90 days to leave the country. Asha, an Indian, and Yesofu, an African, are forced to realize how those differences matter in their changing culture and how their families are endangered. Overnight, people in Entebbe see only differences, not their shared experiences. Asha struggles to maintain the life that is being taken from her. She refuses to see Yesofu as anyone other than her friend. The story evolves into one of fear, goodbyes, secrets, betrayal, and death. Are Asha and Yesofu strong enough to relinquish their friendship and let each other go? *Reviewed by Osha Lynette Smith*

Teaching Suggestions

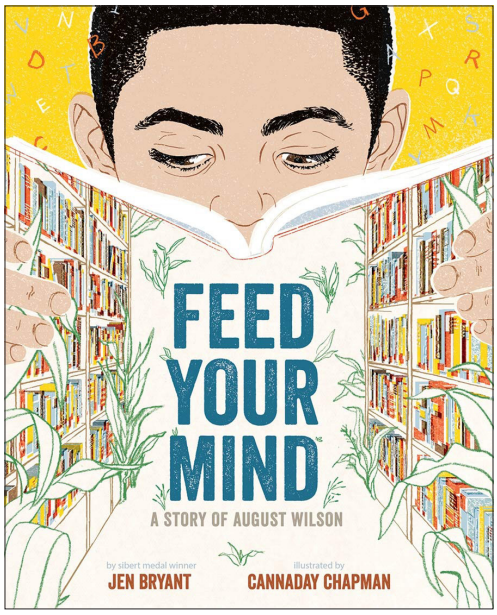
- Older students could research the 90 days leading up to the expulsion of the Indians from Uganda, decreed by Idi Amin. Students could put their research into a pictorial timeline. The book does include a timeline, but students' could include illustrations and additional research.
- Have students write a reflective response to one of the following questions: Describe how your life would change if you were given 90 days to leave your home. Where would you go? What would you want to bring along with you to make your new country feel like home? Explain why you would bring each item.
- Asha did not want to leave home and did things to delay her family's departure. Do you think Asha did the right thing? Explain your response. Why do you think Asha and Yesofu clung so tightly to their friendship, despite the hardships it caused? Explain.
- Generate a discussion regarding the similarities and differences between what happened in August of 1972 and what is happening in the United States today in relation to the "Dreamers" and undocumented youth. Have students conduct research and hold a Socratic seminar to discuss this issue.

Related Books

Kadohata, C. (2019). *A place to belong.* Simon & Schuster/Atheneum/A Caitlyn Dlouhy Book.

Venkatraman, P. (2019). *The bridge home.* Penguin Random House/Penguin/Nancy Paulsen Books.

Warga, J. (2019). *Other words for home.* HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray.



Bryant, Jen. (2019). *Feed Your Mind: A Story of August Wilson* (Cannaday Chapman, Illus.). Abrams/Abrams Books for Young Readers. Unpaged. GR 1–4 and up. Biography.

Raised by his mother, who read to him every night in the "Little Harlem" section of Pittsburgh, Frederick August Kittel Jr. developed a solid grounding in literature. An excellent student, Freddy attended Central Catholic High as the only Black ninth grader. But after enduring racial prejudice from students as well as teachers, he dropped out of school and found new life at the Carnegie Public Library. Reading widely, especially the work of Langston Hughes, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Ralph Ellison, and Richard Wright, inspired Freddy/August to write poetry and plays of his own. Much later, his plays were performed on Broadway, and he won the Pulitzer Prize. *Reviewed by Joyce Herbeck*

Teaching Suggestions

- This book, like August Wilson's plays, is in acts and scenes. Have students write the story of their life in acts and scenes. What are the big chunks of their lives that would be acts? How many scenes would be in each act? How many characters would be in each scene? Ask friends to play the parts, and act out the play for the class.
- One of Wilson's strategies to find ideas for his poems was to hang out in pool halls or street corners and listen to the conversations of others. He copied down the words and phrases and made up stories to go with them. Ask students to listen to others talking, copy down exact quotes, and then use these pieces of conversations to create a poem or a play.
- The book is written in poems. Each poem tells about a small time in Freddy/August's life. Have students work in small groups and choose a poem that is significant to them. They create a readers' theater of the poem by dividing it up into both individual readings and group readings. After practice, they tell why they chose this particular poem, and then they perform the poem for the class.

Related Books

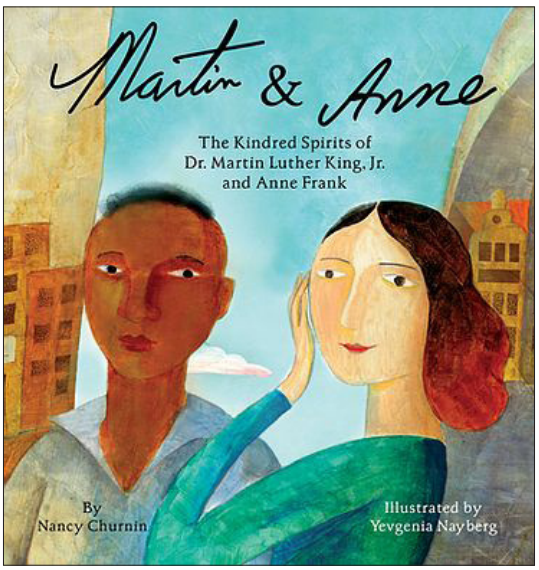
Barton, C. (2018). *What do you do with a voice like that? The story of extraordinary congresswoman Barbara Jordan* (E. Holmes, Illus.). Simon & Schuster/Beach Lane Books.

Becker, H. (2018). *Counting on Katherine* (D. Phumiruk, Illus.). Macmillan/Henry Holt/Christy Ottaviano Books.

Hegedus, B. (2019). *Rise! From caged bird to poet of the people, Maya Angelou* (T. Engel, Illus.). Lee & Low Books.

Hopkinson, D. (2019). *Carter reads the newspaper* (D. Tate, Illus.). Peachtree.

Kimmelman, L. (2018). *Write on, Irving Berlin!* (D. C. Gardner, Illus.). Sleeping Bear Press.



Churnin, Nancy. (2019). *Martin & Anne: The Kindred Spirits of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

***and Anne Frank* (Yevgenia Nayberg, Illus.). Creston Books. Unpaged. GR 3–5 and up. Biography.**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Anne Frank were born in the same year on opposite sides of the globe. Each of them experienced hatred and violence in their lives. In spite of this, they both shared common dreams for a kinder world in which everyone could live together in harmony. This beautifully illustrated text highlights the parallel lives of these two souls whose spoken and written words continue to inspire us today. *Reviewed by Fran Wilson*

Teaching Suggestions

- Read the book aloud with the purpose of comparing the lives of Anne Frank and the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. Then, while discussing their lives, make a Venn diagram with students that compares and contrasts their lives.
- Martin Luther King Jr. and Anne Frank were both filled with hope for humanity. Have students work collaboratively to research photos and quotes of Frank and King that illustrate this hope. Create a collage that integrates these quotes and photos along with students' own drawings to display and inspire others.
- King's spoken words from his speeches and Frank's written words from her diary continue to inspire people today. Discuss the power of the word and its ability to prompt reflection and even action.

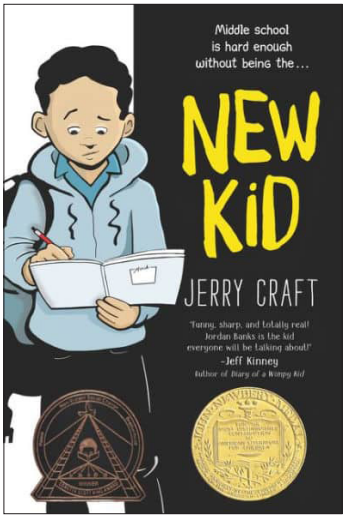
Related Texts

Gottesfeld, J. (2016). *The tree in the courtyard: Looking through Anne Frank's window* (P. McCarty, Illus.). Penguin Random House/Alfred K. Knopf.

Miller, D., & Rubin, S. (2019). *The cat who lived with Anne Frank* (E. Baddeley, Illus.). Penguin Random House/Philomel.

Pincus, M. (2019). *Miep and the most famous diary* (J. Solano, Illus.). Sleeping Bear Press.

Wittenstein, B. (2019). *A place to land: Martin Luther King Jr. and the speech that inspired a nation* (J. Pinkney, Illus.). Holiday House/Neal Porter Books.



Craft, Jerry. (2019). *New Kid*. Harper Collins/Harper. 256 pp. Gr 3–7 and up. Contemporary fiction graphic novel.

Jordan Banks wants to go to art school, but instead, his parents send him to a prestigious and exclusive middle school where things seem overwhelming. He uses his cartooning skills in this graphic novel to work out new issues. Can he make new friends and keep his old ones? Should he try to fit in or accept standing out as one of the few kids of color? These things are harder to figure out than choosing a meal at a Chinese restaurant: shrimp lo mein, pepper steak, or General Tso's chicken. In the end, he takes the advice of his grandfather: "You don't always have to choose, kiddo. Sometimes let yourself be happy." *Reviewed by Mary Ellen Oslick*

Teaching Suggestions

- Have students create a "cultural x-ray" following the Worlds of Words project (more information is at https://wowlit.org/Documents/LangandCultureKitDocs/22CriticallyReadingtheWorld.pdf). Students first explore their own cultural identities. Then, they consider the complexities and uniqueness of different cultural groups—both the surface levels of food, fashion, folklore, festivals, and famous people and the deeper levels of beliefs, values, and what matters. Finally, have students use this model to analyze how Craft created the complex character of Jordan.
- Have your class brainstorm ideas for two lists: how to welcome a new kid to your classroom and how to fit in as a new kid in your classroom.

Related Books

Alexander, K. (2019). *The crossover* (D. Anyabwile, Illus.). Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Telgemeier, R. (2016). *Ghosts*. Scholastic/Scholastic Kids/Graphix.

Williams, A. D. (2019). *Genesis begins again*. Simon & Schuster/Atheneum/A Caitlyn Dlouhy Book.

Engle, Margarita. (2019). *Dreams From Many Rivers: A Hispanic History of the United States Told in Poems* (Beatriz Gutierrez Hernandez, Illus.). Macmillan/Henry Holt/Godwin Books. 208 pp. GR 5–9 and up. Historical fiction.

A Hispanic history of the United States starts in Puerto Rico, not Jamestown. Engle's concise yet delicately detailed novel in verse, along with Hernandez's sympathetic illustrations, provides the Hispanic history that is missing from textbooks. Indigenous Taino voices, along with Hispanic and Latino historical figures (designated by a surname or title), bring this culture to life. Names that are not widely known (e.g., Eugene Calderon, Willie Velasquez, Frank del Olmo) are introduced as heroes of the Tuskegee Airmen, voter registration, and investigative reporting. Including the 2016 election, Hurricane Maria of 2017, new restrictions on Cuba, the end of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy in 2018, and school shootings, this history is well researched and current. *Reviewed by Joyce Herbeck*

Teaching Suggestions

- Engle cites several valuable sources for her research. One of these is the PBS series *Latino Americans*. Viewing selected parts of this in class would be a motivating experience before students select a topic for individual research.
- The book is divided into six parts: "Freedom (The Native People of Boriken: 1491)"; "Survivors (Conquest and Resistance: 1493–1812)"; "Independence for Some (Newly Independent Countries: 1822–1831)"; "Heroes (Fighting for Freedom: 1851–1898)"; "Yes, We Can! (Fighting for Justice and Inclusion: 1900–1999)"; and "For Our Lives (Current Times: 2001–2018)." Have students choose a period and prepare a readers' theater performance of one of the poems. Have students prepare background information about the person or event to present before the performance.
- With students, get to know this author through her YouTube video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUkVjGhpyJY). Find the poems in *Dreams From Many Rivers* that refer to Cuba. Visit Margarita Engle's website at www.margaritaengle.com.

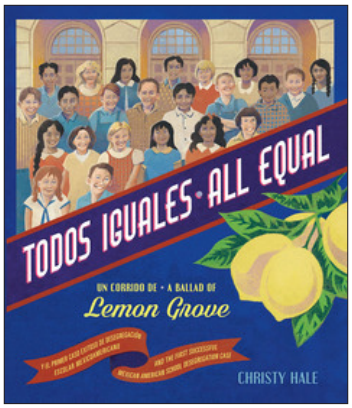
Related Books

Engle, M. (2006). *The poet slave of Cuba* (S. Qualls, Illus.). Macmillan/Henry Holt.

Hill, L. (2010). *Dave the potter: Artist, poet, slave* (B. Collier, Illus.). Little, Brown.

Ho, V., & Skrypuch, M. F. (2018). *Too young to escape: A Vietnamese girl waits to be reunited with her family.* Pajama Press.

Lai, T. (2013). *Inside out and back again*. HarperCollins.



Hale, Christy. (2019). *Todos Iguales / All Equal: Un Corrido de Lemon Grove / A Ballad of Lemon Grove*. Lee & Low Books/Children's Book Press. Unpaged. GR 2–8 and up. Nonfiction.

In 1930, a Mexican American community in Lemon Grove, California, sent their children to school along with Anglo American children, and the students studied together peacefully. Author and illustrator Christy Hale recounts how the local school board was unsettled by the multicultural learning and worked to segregate the children, building a separate, inferior school for Mexican American students. Disheartened by the school board's actions, the community decided to take a stand. This picturebook, with illustrations inspired by "vintage California citrus labels" and written in both Spanish and English, tells the story of Roberto Álvarez and his community's fight for equal education. *Reviewed by Meredith Zepf*

Teaching Suggestions

- Author and illustrator Christy Hale includes "Un corrido de Lemon Grove" in the front of the text and in the back matter list of corridos. Teach students about corridos using Hale's description and then recite or sing the corrido with students.
- After practicing and performing as a group, have student groups or partners write their own corridos. Students can create corridos about Lemon Grove, or about another subject matter they are studying.
- The back matter explains what life was like before and after the Lemon Grove court case. Have students use the book, and additional resources if desired, to create a flow chart of events from the account. Have students outline what happened before, during, and after the court case.
- There are many brave men and women who have fought for desegregation throughout American history. Assign students different court cases or historical figures to research and present to the class. Students can compare the court case and person they study to Lemon Grove and Roberto Álvarez.

Related Books

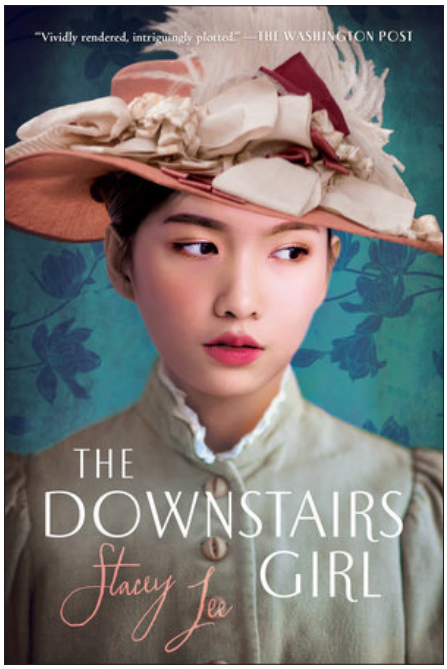
Dominquez, A. (2018). *How are you? ¿Como estas?* MacMillan/Henry Holt.

Lyons, K. S. (2019). *Sing a song: How "Lift every voice and sing" inspired generations* (K. Mallett, Illus.). Penguin Random House/Penguin.

Méndez, Y. S. (2019). *Where are you from?* (J. Kim, Illus.). HarperCollins/Harper.

Tonatiuh, D. (2014). *Separate is never equal.* Abrams Books.

Woodson, J. (2018). *The day you begin* (R. López, Illus.). Penguin Random House/Penguin/Nancy Paulsen Books.



Lee, Stacy. (2019). *The Downstairs Girl*. Penguin Random House/Penguin/G. P. Putnam's Sons. 375 pp. GR 6–8 and up. Historical fiction.

In 1890 Atlanta, as Reconstruction was eclipsed by Jim Crow segregation, 17-year-old Chinese American Jo Kuan is offered a position as personal maid to wealthy and spoiled Caroline Paine. Living with her guardian under the publishing house of a weekly newspaper and longing to be a writer, she takes the nom de plume "Miss Sweetie" and creates an advice column for the newspaper. Negotiating the racism, sexism, and classism of a changing city, and taking care of her sick guardian, Jo must keep her growing popularity as Miss Sweetie secret, while solving the mystery of her parentage. The back matter includes information on Chinese immigration in the 19th and 20th centuries. *Reviewed by Sandip Wilson*

Teaching Suggestions

- Read the book with students and ask them to decide on objects they think Jo would keep as treasures. Create a display of those objects with a card describing how the object represents something in Jo's life.

- Jo writes an advice column in the weekly newspaper. Read columns she has written that are at the beginning of different chapters. Read the chapter that inspired Jo to write the first column, about young women inviting men to events. Have students brainstorm social issues in their school. Model for students an advice column to help with those issues. Then have students work in pairs to write an advice column solving one of the issues.

- The book's chapters are scenes like plays within the bigger story. Read one of the chapters, such as the one where Jo takes a news article to the publisher at night and keeps her back to him so he doesn't see her and changes her voice so he doesn't recognize her. Write the chapter from the viewpoint of Jo. What is she thinking? Then write from the publisher's perspective. What is he thinking about this person who delivers the columns?

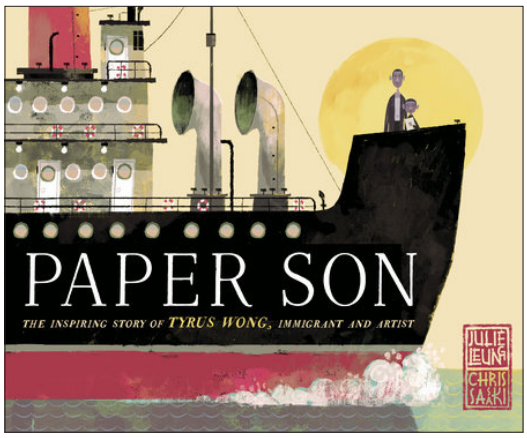
Related Books

Crowder, M. (2015). *Audacity*. Penguin Random House/Penguin/Philomel.

Freedman, R. (2014). *Angel Island: Gateway to Gold Mountain*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt/Clarion Books.

Hess, M. (2016). *War outside*. Little, Brown.

Kadohata, C. (2019). *A place to belong.* Simon & Schuster/Atheneum/A Caitlyn Dlouhy Book.



Leung, Julie. (2019). *Paper Son: The Inspiring Story of Tyrus Wong, Immigrant and Artist* (Chris Sasaki, Illus.). Penguin Random House/Random House/Schwartz & Wade Books. Unpaged. GR 2–8 and up. Biography.

Tyrus Wong boarded the SS *China* with his father, papers in hand, eager to begin a life in "Golden Mountain." Once a citizen of the United States, Wong worked tirelessly to create art that reflected both his homeland and Golden Mountain, despite the many obstacles that he faced. Hardly credited for his work, Wong did not allow his adversities to defeat him, and he continued to pursue his passion for art. This story is one of an immigrant whose determination and talent inspired generations of future artists. *Reviewed by Meredith Zepf*

Teaching Suggestions

- Wong worked to memorize an identity in order to pass immigration interrogations at Angel Island. Invite students to simulate the thoughts and feelings that Wong experienced during his journey to the United States. Assign students roles and partners. Give one student a role of a paper son or daughter and a reasonable amount of time to learn their personal facts. Give the other student a set of questions, allowing them to add similar questions if desired. Students will play the parts of interrogators and paper sons or daughters. After the activity, allow time for reflection.

- Wong was an artist, practicing his calligraphy and artistic styles on whatever he could, whenever he could. Give students newspapers, black watercolor paint, and brushes. Project Chinese characters and allow students to practice painting.

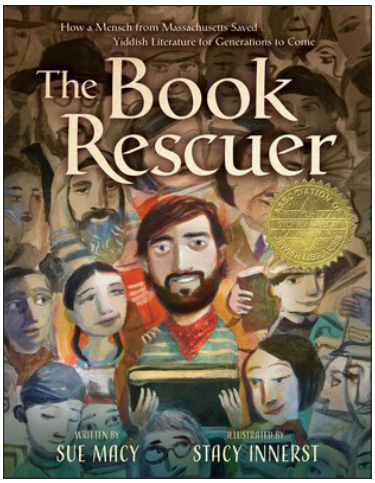
- Tyrus Wong's story is one of many; allow students to use related books and online sources to learn about other Americans whose stories, like Wong's, are not commonly known.

Related Books

Engle, M. (2019). *Dancing hands: How Teresa Carreño played the piano for President Lincoln* (R. Lopez, Illus.). Simon & Schuster/Atheneum.

Kimmelman, L. (2018). *Write on, Irving Berlin!* (D. C. Gardner, Illus.). Sleeping Bear Press.

Kuklin, S. (2019). *We are here to stay: Voices of undocumented young adults*. Candlewick Press.



Macy, Sue. (2019). *The Book Rescuer: How a Mensch From Massachusetts Saved Yiddish Literature for Generations to Come* (Stacy Innerst, Illus.). Simon & Schuster/A Paula Wiseman Book. 48 pp. GR 2–8 and up. Nonfiction.

Many children look up to the relatives that came before them, relishing in the stories that shaped their family's history. Aaron Lansky was no different. In this breathtaking picturebook, Lansky's passion for literature and preservation is recounted. His interest in the Yiddish language and his Jewish roots sparked his lifelong quest to save the world's Yiddish literature. With the help of people from all parts of the world, Aaron Lansky was able to save books that were quickly disappearing. His mission was much more than simply preserving books: He was also preserving the history and language of the Jewish culture. *Reviewed by Meredith Zepf*

Teaching Suggestions

- Lansky developed a deep passion for literature and the preservation of a language. Instruct students to think of a story or book that they wouldn't want to lose. Why is this text important to them? Why is it worth saving? How can they ensure the preservation of their favorite book?
- Lansky saved books that were a part of the Jewish culture. Help students understand the value of other cultures by checking out picturebooks in other languages or written by culturally diverse authors. Allow students to look at the texts through a gallery walk. What can they learn from the texts and authors? How are they different from the books and authors that they enjoy reading? How can different languages enhance the text? Lead students in a discussion about the importance of literature and its place in history.
- Aaron Lansky was fascinated with his Jewish heritage and culture. Assign students a heritage research project. Provide students with online resources to research their own history and culture. Students can create questions and interview members of their families to better understand their family history. Once research has been conducted, allow students to share what they have learned about themselves with the class.

Related Books

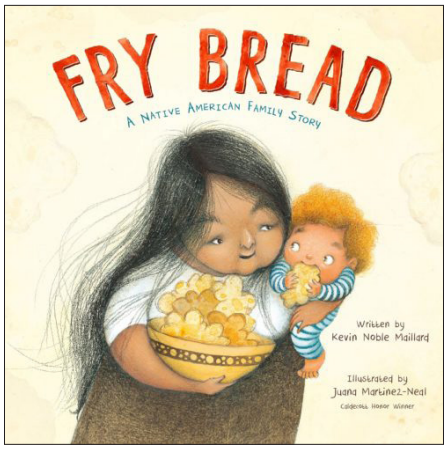
Denise, A. A. (2019). *Planting stories: The life of librarian and storyteller Pura Belpré* (P. Escobar, Illus.). HarperCollins/Harper.

Mora, P. (2018). *Bookjoy, wordjoy* (R. Colón, Illus.). Lee & Low Books.

Pincus, M. (2019). *Miep and the most famous diary: The woman who rescued Anne Frank's diary* (J. Solano, Illus.). Sleeping Bear Press.

Roth, S. L., & Abouraya, K. L. (2012). *Hands around the library: Protecting Egypt's treasured books.* Penguin Random House/Penguin/Dial Books.

Wilson, J. (2019). *Our future: How kids are taking action.* Second Story Press.



Maillard, Kevin Noble. (2019). F*ry Bread: A Native American Family Tradition*. Juana Martinez-Neal (Illus.). Roaring Brook Press. Unpaged. GR PK–4 and up. Contemporary fiction.

A grandmother cooks fry bread with young family members in this book with narrative told in verse. Maillard explains the meaning of this postcolonial food shared by North American Indian cultures as he highlights its historical and cultural significance. A member of the Seminole Nation, Mekusukey band, Maillard writes that "the story of fry bread is the story of American Indians: embracing community and culture in the face of opposition." The double-spread "Fry Bread Is Nation" includes the names of 573 Native American tribes, which are also repeated on the end sheets—a list that challenges common perceptions about the extinction of Indigenous people in North America. Martinez-Neal's illustrations, rendered in acrylics and pencil, highlight the diversity of Indigenous people in America. The eight pages of the author's note correspond to the bright illustrations, adding details about fry bread and its complex history. *Reviewed by Ann Digiacomo*

Teaching Suggestions

- Creating special food is an intergenerational affair in *Fry Bread*, *Amy Wu* and the *Perfect Boa*, and *Leila in Saffron*. Facilitate student discussion about food or meals cherished by their families. Ask them to describe specific cultural activities they participate in. Have students interview family members about the origins or history of these family treasures or events and share their findings with the class. Encourage linguistically diverse students and families to include words and phrases from their first language in the work.
- Maillard writes that fry bread is about history. An elder in the book tells children about a long walk from stolen land. In 1830, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act, which forced the relocation of thousands of Native Americans along what became known as the Trail of Tears. Share National Geographic's Indian Removal Act map (https://www.nationalgeographic.org/thisday/may28/indian-removal-act/), differentiating instruction and map work across grade levels.
- In the author's note, Maillard writes, "Native America is not a past history of vanished people and communities. *We are still here*." Before reading the book, ask students, "What do American Indians wear? Where do they live?" Discussion could move to a discussion of the diversity of modern American Indians.
- The Global Oneness Project offers free multicultural resources for secondary students. To build teachers' and high school students' background knowledge, review multiple resources (photo essays, films, articles, lesson plans) on Native American history at the Global Oneness Project website (https://www.globalonenessproject.org/library?f%5B%5D=field_edu_subject%3A1163&load=15).

Related Books

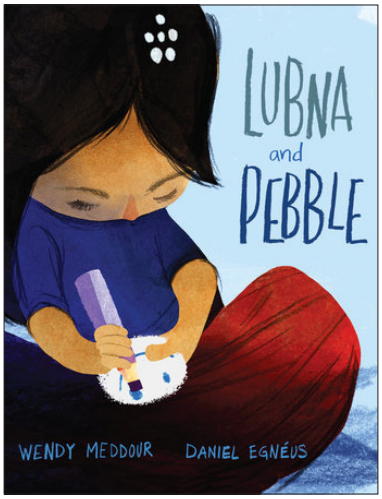
Guidroz, R. (2019). *Leila in saffron* (D. Mirtalipova, Illus.). Simon & Schuster/Salaam Reads.

Hopkins, L. B. (Ed.). (2019). *I remember: Poems and pictures of heritage* (P. Barragán, Illus.). Lee & Low Books.

Saeed, A. (2019). *Bilal cooks daal* (A. Syed, Illus.). Simon & Schuster/Salaam Reads.

Sorell, T. (2018). *We are grateful: Otsaliheliga* (F. Lessac, Illus.). Charlesbridge.

Zhang, K. (2019). *Amy Wu and the perfect bao* (C. Chua, Illus.). Simon & Schuster/Aladdin.



Meddour, Wendy. (2019). *Lubna and Pebble* (Daniel Egnéus, Illus.). Penguin Random House/Random House/Dial Books. Unpaged. GR K–4 and up. Contemporary fiction.

A shiny gray pebble found on a beach becomes Lubna's only treasure before arriving at a refugee camp, the World of Tents. The pebble, with a happy face drawn upon it, soon becomes Lubna's friend, listening to her stories of war and smiling at her when she feels scared. After Amir arrives at the camp and Lubna

learns that she is leaving for a new home, she makes a difficult choice to offer Amir comfort. This beautifully illustrated refugee story shows the power of kindness. *Reviewed by Fran Wilson*

Teaching Suggestions

- After reading the book aloud, ask children to share about their specially loved stuffed animals, blankets, or objects. How do these things help provide comfort? How is this the same for Lubna?
- Take students outdoors on a rock hunt. Set up a paint station to personalize the rocks, creating special rock friends. The Artists Helping Children website provides ideas for making things with stones (https://www.artistshelpingchildren.org/rockscraftspebblesstonescraftskids.html). Children may choose to give their painted rocks to another child as an act of kindness.
- Read one or more of the related texts on refugees to increase children's understanding of refugees and foster empathy for these children.

Related Books

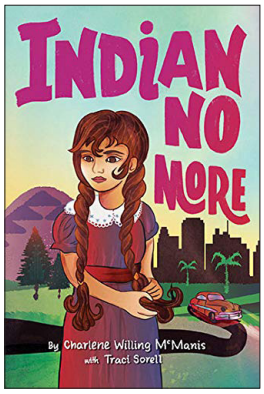
Davies, N. (2018). *The day war came* (R. Cobb, Illus.). Candlewick Press.

Del Rizzo, S. (2017). *My beautiful birds*. Pajama Press.

Gravel, E. (2019). *What is a refugee?* Penguin Random House/Random House/Schwartz & Wade.

McCarney, R. (2017). *Where will I live?* Second Story Press.

Ruurs, M. (2016). *Stepping stones: A refugee family's journey* (N. A. Badr, Illus.). Orca Books.



McManis, Charlene Willing, with Traci Sorell. *Indian No More*. Lee & Low Books/Tu Books. 209 pp. GR 3–5. Historical fiction.

This novel details the experiences of Regina Petit, an Umpqua Native American who grew up on the Grande Ronde reservation, 30 miles west of Salem, Oregon, where families have lived and shared cultural traditions for generations. In 1957, after the Federal government implements a law saying her tribe no longer exists, Regina and her family move to Los Angeles as part of the Federal Indian Relocation Program. Regina is in a new world as she experiences racism toward her and her friends. Her father believes that by working hard to establish a new identity, the family will be treated like other Americans. Drawing upon her life, McManis shows how Regina defines her identity while remaining true to herself in the civil rights era. The back matter includes a note from Traci Sorell providing context for the novel and an editor's note describing her experience with the book. *Reviewed by Anne Katz*

Teaching Suggestions

- Read Charlene Willing McManis's author's note and review photos from her childhood. Discuss with students how McManis's personal identity (Umpqua tribal heritage) influenced the development of the character of Regina. Discuss what students notice in the photographs and their role in the novel. Consider similarities between the journeys of the real Charlene Willing McManis and the fictional Regina Petit by exploring the website of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde (https://www.grandronde.org/). Have students divide into small groups to research this information in more depth and present what they learn to classmates.
- Charlene Willing McManis received a mentorship with award-winning poet and author Margarita Engle through the organization We Need Diverse Books in 2016. With students, study the We Need Diverse Books website (https://diversebooks.org/) and have them share what they learn.
- Have students invite family members to class to share old photographs or keepsakes and tell stories about them. Invite students to write a letter to a relative requesting an anecdote from the family chronicle that can be shared with the group.
- After exploring resources from the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian and Native Knowledge 360° (https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360), with new perspectives on Native American

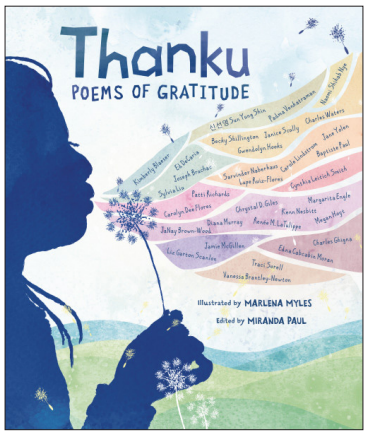
history, cultures, and contemporary lives, customize one of the lesson plans to share with students.

Related Books

Day, C. (2019). *I can make this promise.* HarperCollins/Quill Tree Books.

Hopkins, L. B. (Ed.). (2019). *I remember: Poems and pictures of heritage* (P. Barragán, Illus.). Lee & Low Books.

Maillard, K. N. (2019). *Fry bread: A Native American family story* (J. Martinez-Neal, Illus.). Roaring Brook Press.



Paul, Miranda (Ed.). (2019). *Thanku: Poems of Gratitude* (Marlena Myles, Illus.). Lerner/Milbrook Press. Unpaged. GR PK–4 and up. Poetry.

Paul's heartfelt anthology of 32 poems, all different in style and form, by 32 renowned authors, explores the concept of gratitude and ways of expressing it. The poems explore such diverse topics as scars, broken shoes, sunsets, falling leaves, and things we take for granted. Myles's computer-generated single- and double-page illustrations contextualize the poems. Color, value, and hues enhance their message and project their mood and tone. The back matter includes descriptions of the literary devices and poetic forms used by each poet, along with short biographical information. Students will revel in these poems, reading and rereading them, and be encouraged to write their own. While this book is about gratitude, it is also about generosity in spirit and mind. *Reviewed by Yvonne Sui-Runyan*

Teaching Suggestions

- Since *Thanku* contains 32 different kinds of poems, read each poem aloud to students during different read-aloud times. Be sure to display this book and make it available for students to peruse—which they will if it is accessible to them.
- To learn more about this book from Miranda Paul and Marlena Myles, go to Smith's official website: https://cynthialeitichsmith.com/2019/05/poetry-anthology-editor-illustrator-interview-miranda-paul-marlena-myles/. Discuss new learning students discover.
- Share back matter with students, reading and discussing how the parts add to the reading of the poem. This book is a stellar resource. Read Miranda Paul's "Editor's Note to Educators and Parents." Students like to be on the "inside" and learn about what authors communicate to educators and parents.
- Encourage students to write their own poems and stories of gratitude.

Related Books

Grimes, N. (2006). *Thanks a million* (C. A. Cabrera, Illus.). Scholastic.

McKissack, P. (2019). *What is given from the heart* (A. Harrison, Illus.). Penguin Random House/Random House/Schwartz & Wade.

Sorell, T. (2018). *We are grateful: Otsaliheliga* (F. Lessac, Illus.). Charlesbridge.

Swamp. C. J. (1997). *Giving thanks: A Native American good morning message* (E. Printup Jr., Illus.). Lee & Low Books.

Nagai, Mariko. (2019). *Under the Broken Sky*. Macmillan/Henry Holt/Christy Ottaviano Books. 293 pp. GR 6–8 and up. Historical fiction.

Written in free verse, this insightful novel tells the experiences of two Japanese orphans in Manchuria, near the border of the Soviet Union, at the end of World War II. During the war, 12-year-old Natsu, her father, and her younger sister actually get to live a quiet farm life. However, when tides turn and it becomes evident that Japan is losing the war, their father is recruited into the Japanese army. Natsu and her little sister must flee their home to seek refuge from war-torn cities. *Reviewed by Junko Sakoi*

Teaching Suggestions

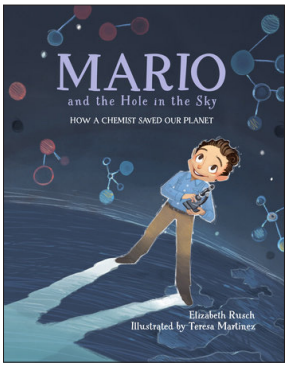
- Learn about the historical background of Japan's quest for empire from 1930 to 1945 from the BBC (http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/japan_quest_empire_01.shtml) and the U.S. Department of State (https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/mukden-incident).
- Select one character. Write a "Where I'm From" poem from that character's point of view to develop an in-depth understanding of the character's feelings, family relationships, circumstances, and perspectives.

Related Books

Kadohata, C. (2019). *A place to belong.* Simon & Schuster/Atheneum/A Caitlyn Dlouhy Book.

Meyer, M. (2015). *In Manchuria: Journeys across China's northeast frontier.* Bloomsbury.

Park, L. (2002). *When my name was Keoko.* Houghton Mifflin Harcourt/Clarion Books.



Rusch, Elizabeth. (2019). *Mario and the Hole in the Sky: How a Chemist Saved Our Planet* (Teresa Martinez, Illus.). Charlesbridge. Unpaged. GR 1–4 and up. Biography.

As a boy in Mexico City, fascinated with chemistry, Mario Molina examined everything from chilis in salsa to toothpaste under a microscope given to him on his eighth birthday. At boarding school in Switzerland, Molina continued his experiments, sometimes producing fireworks of multicolored sparks. Wondering whether chemicals that seemed harmless were safe, he studied chemistry in American and German universities. In 1973, while he was a teacher, he and fellow chemist Sherwood Rowland conducted research on chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and ozone and found that millions of products were destroying the ozone layer, which could lead to deadly solar radiation and destroy plant and animal life. Thanks to their work, nearly every country in the world agreed to stop making CFCs, promoting a complete healing of the ozone layer by 2070. Today Dr. Molina's concern is global warming. He believes that when countries work together, they can solve global problems: "We saved our planet once. We can do it again." *Reviewed by Ann Digiacomo*

Teaching Ideas

- Planet Aid (https://www.planetaid.org/blog/healing-the-ozone-layer) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the ozone layer. Students can read news on the ozone hole, view graphics and videos, and review ozone hole history.
- Visit NASA's Climate Kids (https://climatekids.nasa.gov) for kid-friendly weather and climate facts, videos, and games. Discuss descriptions of green careers.
- Invite students to write a letter to Elizabeth Rusch. In preparation, have students list and talk about questions they have for her about Molina's life, the ozone layer, or other environmental concerns.
- Invite students to create mini-campaigns to raise awareness of environmental concerns. These campaigns could include posters or flyers, presentations, and letters to school and government officials. Older students can brainstorm how to use social media platforms to best convey their message. They can create social media campaigns with Piktochart, Adobe Spark, or other applications and create infographics to convey information about global warming or other environmental concerns.

Related Books

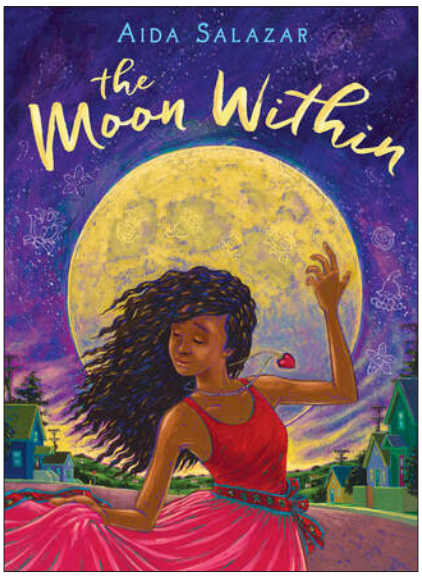
Becker, H. (2018). *Counting on Katherine: How Katherine Johnson saved Apollo 13* (D. Phumiruk, Illus.). Macmillan/Henry Holt/Christy Ottaviano Books.

Johnson, J. C. (2010). *Seeds of change: Planting a path to peace* (S. L. Sadler, Illus.). Lee & Low Books.

Gholz, S. (2019). *The boy who grew a forest* (K. Harren, Illus.). Sleeping Bear Press.

Wilson, J. (2019). *Our future: How kids are taking action* (J. Wilson, Illus.). Second Story Press.

Winter, J. (2019). *Our house is on fire: Greta Thunberg's call to save the planet* (J. Winter, Illus.). Simon & Schuster/Beach Lane Books.



Salazar, Aida. (2019). *The Moon Within*. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine Books. 240 pp. GR 3–7 and up. Contemporary fiction.

In Salazar's debut verse novel, Celi Rivera explores her coming-of-age struggles. As her body develops, she knows she is closer to the traditional Mexica "moon ceremony" her mother wants to give her to celebrate her first period. The idea of this rite of passage is humiliating to Celi and she wants to avoid it, but she also knows how much it means to her mother and their Latinx community. Additionally, Celi feels torn when her first crush makes harmful and hateful remarks about her gender-fluid best friend. In the end, Celi must make some tough choices about who she wants to be as a young lady and who she cares for. *Reviewed by Mary Ellen Oslick*

Teaching Suggestions

- Welcoming Schools (a project of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation; http://www.welcomingschools.org/) has easy-to-use lesson plans regarding how gender stereotyping impacts all children. All lesson plans are aligned with CCSS and span Grades K–8.
- Have students create a biopoem using a template from ReadWriteThink (http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson398/biopoem.pdf). Allow students to share and discuss differences and commonalities.
- Compare and contrast The Moon Within and another coming-of-age text, such as a film, television show, novel, or short story. What are the indicators of such texts?

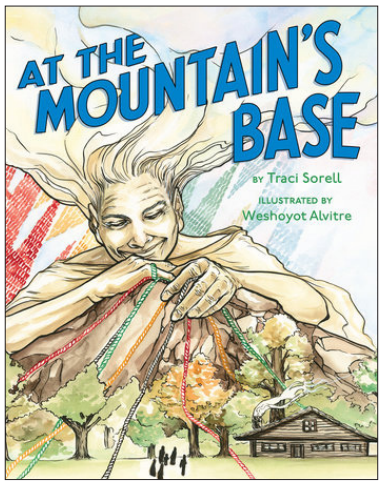
Related Books

Behar, Ruth. (2017). *Lucky broken girl.* Penguin Random House/Nancy Paulsen Books.

Gino, A. (2017). *George*. Scholastic.

Medina, M. (2018). *Merci Suarez changes gears*. Candlewick.

Thorn, T. (2019). *It feels good to be yourself.* (N. Grigni, Illus.). Macmillan/Henry Holt.



Sorell, Traci. (2019). *At the Mountain's Base* (Weshoyot Alvitre, Illus.). Penguin Random House/Penguin/Kokila. GR 2–6 and up. Historical fiction.

An American Indian woman serving as a pilot in the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) of World War

II occupies the thoughts and hopes of the women in her family, who miss her and pray for her safe return. Alvitre's illustrations, rendered in gouache, watercolor, and ink, depicting the warmth of the hearth and home of the women, are interwoven with dramatic aerial illustrations of the air force service pilot who faces personal dangers while serving as a WASP. The women at home weave threads spread across the pages to show the connections and love among the women—threads at times framing the figures and at other times forming fabric, and that are, in the end sheets, knotted together. The author's note describes one unsung Indian woman who carried out dangerous missions in World War II. *Reviewed by Sandip Wilson*

Teaching Suggestions

- Women who contributed to the U.S. efforts in World War II may be unfamiliar to students. Have students explore the list of WASPs on the website Wings Across America (http://www.wingsacrossamerica.us/2008/roster_08.htm). Have students discuss what they notice about the chart of women. They will find the name of the woman who is referenced in Sorell's book.
- Watch interviews of WASPs (also on Wings Across America: http://www.wingsacrossamerica.us/wings/) and have students discuss how the stories the pilots tell are different from or similar to the story of the pilot in Sorell's book. What do students notice about the women's experiences in comparison to those of the woman in the book?
- One of the women in the interviews says that "love has no boundaries and no frontiers." Have students discuss how that statement relates to the story of the book. Have students select other quotations of the women that they can relate to the book.

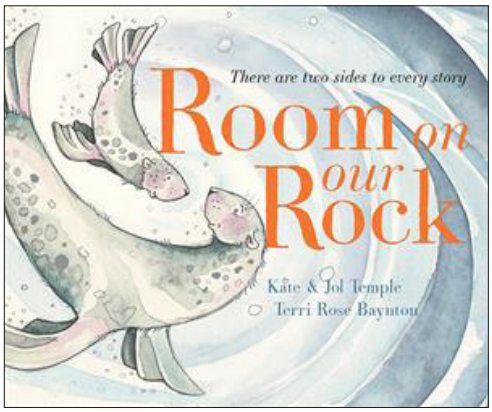
Related Books

Engle, M. (2018). *The flying girl: How Aída de Acosta learned to soar* (S. Palacios, Illus.). Simon & Schuster/Atheneum.

Maillard, K. N. (2019). *Fry bread: A Native American family story* (J. Martinez-Neal, Illus.). Roaring Brook.

Pearson, P. O'Connell. (2018). *Fly girls: The daring American women pilots who helped win WWII*. Simon & Schuster.

Sorell, T. (2018). *We are grateful: Otsaliheliga* (F. Lessac, Illus.). Charlesbridge.



Temple, Kate, & Temple, Jol. (2019). *Room on Our Rock: There Are Two Sides to Every Story* (Terri Rose Baynton, Illus.). EDC/Kane Miller. Unpaged. GR PK–2 and up. Fiction.

Room on Our Rock is about perspective in all aspects of life, with its story of sharing and having compassion for others. Reading from front to back shows the perspective of the seals, who won't share their rock. But reading the book from back to front shows the seals welcoming others and sharing their rock. The book shows the effects of words and gestures to include or exclude, reject or accept others in everyday life. It sheds light on the ways in which we interact with others and how our interactions create either peace and harmony or conflict and harm. Double-spread illustrations weave text and art into an integrated message. Boynton's use of color and her brushstrokes encapsulate the seals' mood and the seagulls' facial expressions and body language. The illustrations express the movement of ocean currents and waves. Young readers and adults have said, "Read it again!" *Reviewed by Yvonne Sui-Runyan*

Teaching Suggestions

- After reading this book aloud to the class at least twice, set it in a special place and invite students to read it alone or with others. Encourage students to notice the details in the two-page illustrations and how words and illustrations are both needed in this book.
- Because this book is about perspective, discuss what perspective is and how it influences our lives and interactions with other people. Share this book with an art teacher who can engage students in lessons about perspective to deepen their thinking about the meaning of perspective.

- To expand students' understanding of perspective, involve them in doing art and photography. Have them draw or photograph an object or scene from various perspectives. Have students add a timeline of events to mark milestones and discuss how these events impacted social mores and perspectives.
- Discuss the various ways humanity has advanced because of new perspectives in science, such as aeronautics, astronomy, and biology. Examine the roles of women in fields of science, and particularly in developing new perspectives in science; some examples of scientists are Ada Lovelace, Rosalind Franklin, Chien-Shiung Wu, and Jocelyn Bell.

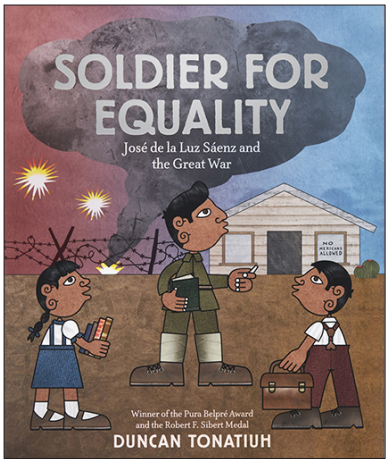
Related Books

Gunti. E. (2019). *A place to stay: A shelter story* (E. Meza, Illus.). Barefoot Books.

Miller, P. D. (2018). *Be kind* (J. Hill, Illus.). Macmillan/Roaring Brook Press.

Smith. T. E. (2019). *Here and there* (E. Daviddi, Illus.). Barefoot Books.

Woodson, J. (2001). *The other side* (E. B. Lewis, Illus.). Penguin Group/Putnam/G.P. Putnam's Sons.



Tonatiuh, Duncan. (2019). *Soldier for Equality: José de la Luz Saénz and the Great War.* Abrams/Abrams Books for Young Readers. Unpaged. GR 1–3 and up. Biography.

Tonatiuh chronicles the life of José de la Luz Saénz (known as "Luz"), a teacher, social justice activist, and literacy advocate. As a child in Texas, when Luz stood up for a peer who was bullied for his Mexican heritage, his father was not pleased with his fighting but encouraged him to be proud of his heritage. After becoming a teacher, Luz joined the army in 1914 out of a sense of duty to his country. In Europe, he studied French and was assigned to translating messages received in the Intelligence Office, where he also taught English to Mexican American soldiers. After the war, Luz continued teaching while working with Mexican American veterans and civil rights leaders in Texas to cofound the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), an organization that fights prejudice and promotes equality—now the oldest Latinx civil rights organization in the United States. The back matter includes timelines of Luz's involvement in the Great War and in LULAC, an author's note, and selected sources. *Reviewed by Anne Katz*

Teaching Suggestions

- Review the glossary of Spanish vocabulary and definitions before reading the book, and watch Duncan Tonatiuh discuss the book and his unique illustration style to explore the context for reading (https://kidlit.tv/2019/09/storymakers-with-duncan-tonatiuh-soldier-for-equality/). Tonatiuh says his books honor the past but are relevant to children now. Discuss with students their understanding of this statement.
- Luz stays true to his beliefs and cultural heritage in spite of adversity and discrimination. Discuss with students their understanding of Tonatiuh's statement that Luz knew "knowledge was a weapon that helped you defend yourself against those who were mean to you and ignored your rights." Have students implement one of the "Do Something" performance tasks from Teaching Tolerance (https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/student-tasks/do-something).
- *Soldier for Equality* is based in part on Luz's diary during World War I. Do a close reading of the United States' and Luz's involvement in World War I and the timeline of LULAC. Then, have small groups of students examine a section and compose a diary entry from Luz's point of view, an activity encouraging students to place themselves in Luz's shoes.
- Visit the LULAC website (https://lulac.org/) with students and discuss findings from the resources and national programs (https://lulac.org/programs/).

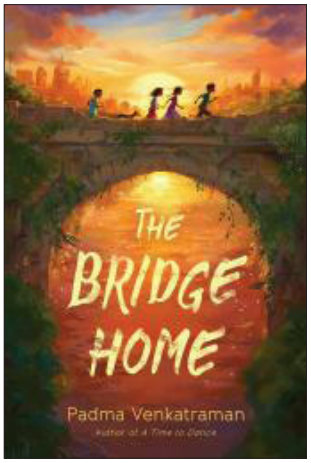
- Consider the points that Tonatiuh raises in an interview with *PBS News Hour* ("A Mexican-American Artist on Why More Brown Faces Are Needed in Children's Books," https://www.pbs.org/newshour/arts/mexican-american-artist-brown-faces-needed-childrens-books). Invite students to discuss whether they see themselves in the books that they read. View the interview with NBC ("Duncan Tonatiuh Wants Latino Children to See Themselves in Books," https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/duncan-tonatiuh-wants-latino-childrensee-themselves-books-n136901) and compare its points to the points made in the PBS program.

Related Books

Bryan, A. (2019). *Infinite hope: A Black artist's journey from World War II to peace*. Simon & Schuster/Atheneum/A Caitlyn Dlouhy Book.

Denise, A. A. (2019). *Planting stories: The life of librarian and storyteller Pura Belpré* (P. Escobar, Illus.). Harper Collins/Harper.

Engle, M. (2019). *Dancing hands: How Teresa Carreño played the piano for President Lincoln* (R. Lopez, Illus.). Simon & Schuster/Atheneum.



Venkatraman, Padma. (2019). *The Bridge Home*. Penguin Random House/Penguin/Nancy Paulsen Books. 194 pp. GR 5 and up. Realistic fiction.

After seeing her mother continually abused by her father, Viji becomes the object of her father's drunken anger one night. Before light the next morning, Viji packs her few belongings, and she and her sister, Rukku, join the thousands of India's homeless children who live in Chennai, India. Although Rukku is one year older than Viji, she "felt like a younger sister" (p. 3) and also looked younger because of her "wide eyes and snub nose" (p. 3). Viji protects Rukku and leads them to a safe place to sleep, where they meet two other homeless children, Arul and Muthu. The four bond and form a unique family to face challenges together, surviving in a city of millions of people, many of whom are homeless. *Reviewed by Joyce Herbeck*

Teaching Suggestions

- One of the daily challenges of the children is hunger. Venkatraman's detail in describing an orange that the children acquire is luscious. "I felt its weight, its perfect ripeness—not too soft, not too firm. I breathed in its citrus scent. I started to peel it, noticing things I'd never noticed before: how the leathery peel isn't colored the same all the way through, how the papery sections inside feel like leafy veins, how the pulp is shaped like raindrops. When, at last, I placed a section in my mouth, I could hear it burst as my teeth met the flesh, squeezing the juice out onto my tongue, tart at first and then sweet" (p. 45). We often take food for granted. Give each student an orange or other fruit and ask them to observe and write a description of its look, feel, smell, sound, and taste after they talk about their observations.
- The setting of the novel is Chennai, India. Have students locate India on a world map and find Chennai. Have them look at websites that describe the climate and population of the city. Visit the website "Ten Best Things to Do in Chennai" (https://theculturetrip.com/asia/india/articles/20-must-visit-attractions-in-chennai-india/) to view aspects of the setting. Ask students to imagine how they would survive on the streets of Chennai.
- Many words in languages indigenous to India are used in the story and are listed in a glossary in the front matter. Ask students to focus on common words such as "yes," "mother," "father," "house," and "greeting." Explore what these words are in other languages, such as French and Spanish. With partners, have students hold a brief conversation using these terms.

Related Books

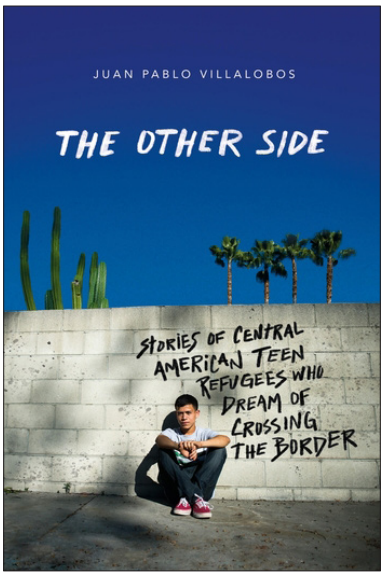
Gunti, E. (2019). *A place to stay: A shelter story* (E. Meza, Illus.). Barefoot Books.

Hiranandani, V. (2018). *The night diary.* Penguin Random House/Random House/Dial Books.

Johnson, T., & Fontanot de Rhoads, M. E. (2019). *Beast rider: A boy's journey across the border: A novel.* Abrams/Amulet Books.

Mills, D., & Alva, A. (2018). *La frontera: Elviaje con papa: My journey with papa* (C. Navarro, Illus.). Barefoot Books.

Morales, Y. (2018). *Dreamers.* Holiday House/Neal Porter Books.



Villalobos, Juan Pablo. (2019). *The Other Side: Stories of Central American Teen Refugees Who Dream of Crossing the Border* (Rosalind Harvey, Trans.). MacMillan/Farrar Straus Giroux. 140 pp. GR 6–10 and up. Nonfiction.

This collection of first-person narratives of children aged 10 to 17, the result of Villalobos's interviews in Los Angeles and New York, details harrowing and breathtaking accounts children experienced in their journeys from life-threatening conditions to safety, family, and new lives in the United States. The individual stories include details and dialogues that indicate the complexities of the young people's lives, as well as their visions for their future. Mariana says, "My dream has always been to study, to be someone important—not to be famous, but to get by" (p. 121). The back matter includes biographical material on the young people whose stories appear in the chapters, when they immigrated and where they are now, and a glossary of terms. *Reviewed by Sandip Wilson*

Teaching Suggestions

- Read the back matter with students before reading the book, introducing them to the author and his process in writing the book. Then, read one of the stories, discussing what students learn about the young people's journeys. Continue this reading, charting the different stories that are told. As they read the accounts, discuss with students the differences and commonalities among them and what they learn about the young people's lives.
- Have students interview their family members about any times they have had to leave their homes and travel to another place. Have students inquire about the migrations of grandparents and great-grandparents, finding out the reasons for their journey and what challenges they faced in travel, weather, and finding food, or if traveling by car, in finding fuel and repairing it. The details of families can show resourcefulness, courage, and an ability to face the unexpected. Have students compare the migrations of their families to those of a young person in the collection.
- In reading the chapters of the different narratives with students, include a focus on the experiences and hopes of the immigrants. Have small groups of readers select one of the chapters and practice a readers' theater presentation that includes a narrator and multiple individuals, including those in the narrative of the person's interview.
- With older readers, explore the website Center for Immigration Studies (https://cis.org/Report/Mexicos-Forgotten-Southern-Border) and examine the chart of immigrants over the last 20 years. Discuss with students what the statistics show and how the findings influence their current understanding of immigration to North America.

Related Books

Amado, E. (2019). *Manuelito: A graphic novel* (A. Urias, Illus.). Annick Press.

Argueta, J. (2019). *Caravan to the north: Misrael's long walk* (M. Monroy, Illus.). House of Anansi/Groundwood.

Kuklin, S. (2019). *We are here to stay: Voices of undocumented young adults.* Candlewick Press.

Johnson, T., & Fontanot de Rhoads, M. E. (2019). *Beast rider: A boy's journey across the border.* Abrams/Amulet Books.

Warga, Jasmine. (2019). *Other Words for Home.* HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray. 352 pp. GR 6–8 and up. Contemporary fiction.

This free-verse novel recounts the forced journey of Jude, a Muslim girl, from Syria to the United States. Jude loves her family, friends, and home, but she has to leave her father and brother behind to stay safe with her pregnant mother. In Cincinnati, Jude's perseverance and strength help her to overcome her struggles with a new language, culture, and identity labels such as "refugee" and "Middle Eastern." *Reviewed by Junko Sakoi*

Teaching Suggestions

- Examine information on the conflict in Syria from UNICEF (https://www.unicefusa.org/mission/emergencies/child-refugees-and-migrants/syria-crisis), Doctors Without Borders (https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/what-we-do), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (https://www.icrc.org/en/where-we-work/middle-east/syria) and have students discuss their findings.
- On a 3-foot-long narrow strip of paper, have each student write and sketch the essence of a selected chapter using colors, images, and words. Assemble the strips as rays on a large mural.
- Pair this novel with another novel, such as *Inside Out and Back Again*, and read sections intertextually to examine their portrayals of immigrant experiences. How are the characters' experiences different? How are they the same? Explore themes and patterns to identify other important differences and similarities between the stories.

Related Books

Diaz, A. (2018). *The crossroads.* Simon Schuster/Paula Wiseman Books.

Gratz, A. (2017). *Refugee*. Scholastic.

Lai, T. (2013). *Inside out and back again.* HarperCollins.

Nye, S. N. (2014). *Turtle of Oman*. Harper Collins/Greenwillow Books.

Senzai, H. N. (2009). *Shooting Kabul*. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman Books. •

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McCallum, E. (2020, January 8). Nurturing strong emotional skills in children: Why and how. American Psychological Association, Magination Press. https://www.maginationpressfamily.org/mindfulness-kids-teens/nurturing-strong-emotional-skills-in-children-why-and-how/

Wilson, M. (2019, February 28). A perfect match: The power of blending literacy and social and emotional learning. *Literacy Now*. https://literacyworldwide.org/blog/literacy-daily/2019/02/28/a-perfect-match-the-power-of-blending-literacy-and-social-and-emotional-learning

the Dragon Lode

The Children's Literature and Reading Special Interest Group invites interested members to apply to serve on the Notable Books for a Global Society Committee. The NBGS Committee solicits nominations for the award, reads and evaluates submissions, prepares annotated list of winners for publication in The Dragon Lode and other publications, presents the books during the annual IRA Convention, and conducts other activities to promote this award.

Call to Serve on the Notable Books for a Global Society Committee

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Membership in the Children's Literature and Reading SIG and the International Reading Association
- Interest in international and multicultural issues in children's literature

REQUIREMENTS

- Willingness to attend virtual and in-person committee meetings throughout the year
- Attendance for three years at both NBGS Committee meetings, held at IRA and NCTE annual conferences
- Willingness and ability to read and evaluate 300-400 books for children and young adults annually
- Ability and willingness to write annotations for publication in the The Dragon Lode and to present the annual NBGC book list at the Children's Literature and Reading SIG session at the IRA convention

The committee consist of ten members, including the Chair and the Co-Chair, who must attend all meetings of the committee as noted above and perform all duties as directed by the Chair. Three members are appointed annually in January by the President and the NBGS incoming Chair from among candidates who respond to this call.

As far as possible, the committee members shall be representative of the SIG membership in terms of gender, regions of residence, and professions positions (e.g. classroom teachers, teacher educators and librarians). Preference is given to applicants who have not served previously on the committee.

Interested applicants should submit letters of interest and curriculum vitae by post of email to:

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Join the ILA CL/R SIG

The Children's Literature and Reading Special Interest Group is a community of individuals who have an abiding interest in the development of literacy and in promoting high-quality literature. Our mission is to promote the educational use of children's books by focusing on recently published children's literature, supportive professional books, issues relative to children's literature, and current research findings. Membership typically includes Pre-K through 12 teachers, librarians, teacher candidates, administrators, university professors, authors and publishers.

Membership benefits include::

- Meeting and working with other literacy professionals who share an interest in literature for children and young adults.
- Opportunities for national-level involvement and leadership.
- Two issues a year of The Dragon Lode journal.

Membership is open to all members of the International Literacy Association. Student members must be enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree program.

- **One-year membership: $25.00 (U.S)**
- **One-year student membership: $10.00 (U.S.)**

To join, go to the CL/R SIG website :
http://www.clrsig.org/join-now.html