STANDING ON COMMON GROUND: Building Cultural & Academic Literacy
Responsive Academic Literacy Webinar: Standing on Common Ground, Building Cultural Literacy

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Agenda

• What is culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and learning?
• What does it mean to validate and affirm in general and what does it mean in cultural literacy?
• Challenges with access to cultural literacy
• Appropriate text selections for developing cultural literacy
• Classroom example
What *Exactly* Is Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning (CLR)?

CLR:

“The validation and affirmation of the home (indigenous) culture and home language for the purposes of building and bridging the student to success in the culture of academia and mainstream society.”


CLR is going where the students are culturally and linguistically for the purpose of bringing them where they need to be academically. CLR is the opposite of the sink-or-swim approach to teaching and learning, or traditional schooling.
Four Focus Words

V
Validate
Making legitimate that which the institution (academia) and mainstream have made illegitimate

A
Affirm
Making positive that which the institution (academia) and mainstream media have made negative

B
Build
Making the connections between the home culture/language and the school culture/language through instructional strategy and activity

B
Bridge
Giving opportunities for situational appropriateness or utilizing appropriate cultural or linguistic behavior
Three Objectives In Order To Infuse

Objective 1
Supplement core texts around themes, standards, or learning objectives with culturally responsive books, articles, stories, and references.

Objective 2
Support students’ reading development with read-alouds frequently, effectively, and responsively

Objective 3
Saturate instruction with effective (research-supported) literacy strategies
Theoretical Premises
or What You Must Believe

Premise One
Focus on making connections and matters relevant for students through culture

Premise Two
Focus on infusing different ways to engage the students in text

Premise Three
Focus on content area literacy and not just the responsibility of the reading teacher
How do you currently.....

• Select the texts that your students read?
• Engage students with the texts that they read?
• Use literacy strategies that are effective?
Why Select Responsive Texts?

Students need:

- to see themselves reflected as part of humanity & have their cultural identity affirmed and validated
- to have negative messages about themselves and people like them balanced with authentic representations of their life experience
- not to be exposed to misrepresentations of others and not miseducated into a false sense of superiority
- to read more than Langston Hughes, Gary Soto, and Gwendolyn Brooks.
- educators to supplement the limited, institutional hegemonic selections in textbooks
- educators to know what texts are actually responsive.
So what’s the problem?

- Abysmal number of culturally responsive texts to select from
- Deciphering what is authentically culturally responsive and what is not can be a challenge and further limits the number of text to choose from
- Inconsistent use of responsive strategies (as compared to traditional strategies) with culturally responsive texts once they are selected
## A Numbers Game

**Children’s Books by and about People of Color Published in the United States**

*Source: Statistics Gathered by the Cooperative Children’s Book Center, SOE, UofW-Madison*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Books Received by CCBC</th>
<th>African Americans</th>
<th>American Indians</th>
<th>Asian/Pacific Islanders</th>
<th>Latinos</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>By</td>
<td>By</td>
<td>About</td>
<td>By</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3600</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>119</td>
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<td>3400</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Create a number fact using the information above
Examples of Number Facts

- 3600 books were received by the CCBC in 2012 compared to 3000 in 2008
- For five years straight, there have been more children’s books published about people of color than by people of color
- Going back to 2008, there has not been more than 12 children’s books published by Native Americans
3 Types of Texts
(Among the limited number to choose from in the first place)

1. Culturally Specific Texts
Illuminates the authentic experience of growing up as a member of a particular cultural group as opposed to racial (and not just ethnic). Illustrations and language depict culture in an authentic manner.

2. Culturally Generic Texts
Features minority characters, but contain few specific details to culturally define them authentically. Usually based around universal and mainstream defined themes.

3. Culturally Neutral Texts
Features “people of color” but have little or nothing to with culture and many times simply have “dipped” a traditional character in a dipped the color in the name of diversity or mulitculturalism.
Which Type Is It?

DIRECTIONS

See the following covers of well known titles

Determine if they are specific, generic, or neutral.
Rainbow Fairies
House on Mango Street
The Snowy Day

EZRA JACK KEATS

THE SNOWY DAY
Tips for Selecting and Supplementing

- Decipher the types of culturally responsive texts
- Think broadly for making connections between your core (mainstream) texts and culturally responsive selections
- Think in terms of all the cultures, don’t just lock into race.
  - Youth  - Sexuality
  - Socioeconomic  - Religion
  - Gender  - National
  - Geographical
Responsive Reads

A book for every reader....

Don't Miss a Summer in Oakland with Delphine and her Sisters!
By Rita Williams-Garcia
Grades 5-8/ Lexile Level 780L

Eleven-year-old Delphine has it together. Even though her mother, Cecile, abandoned her and her younger sisters, Venetta and Fern, seven years ago. Even though her father and Big Ma will send them from Brooklyn to Oakland, California, to stay with Cecile for the summer. And even though Delphine will have to take care of her sisters, as usual, and learn the truth about the missing pieces of the past.

When the girls arrive in Oakland in the summer of 1968, Cecile wants nothing to do with them. She makes them eat Chinese takeout dinners, forbids them to enter her kitchen, and never explains the strange visitors with Afros and black berets who knock on her door. Rather than spend time with them, Cecile sends Delphine, Venetta, and Fern to a summer camp sponsored by a revolutionary group, the Black Panthers, where the girls get a radical new education.

Set during one of the most tumultuous years in recent American history, one crazy summer is the heartbreaking, funny tale of three girls in search of the mother who abandoned them—an unforgettable story told by a distinguished author of books for children and teens, Rita Williams-Garcia.
Selecting Responsive Texts Review

Why do we need culturally responsive texts for underserved students?

When should we infuse it?

What should we consider when looking for responsive text selections?

What problems/obstacles have you had/do you anticipate in finding supplemental texts?
CLAS CULTURE AND LANGUAGE ACADEMY OF SUCCESS
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