

EMPOWERING STUDENTS THROUGH MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE IN ELA CURRICULA

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

Focus on incorporating multicultural literature into the ELA curriculum. This means selecting texts from diverse backgrounds that reflect students' identities and expose them to the lived experiences of others.

Aligning with Criterion 4 of the Teacher/Principal Evaluation Program (TPEP): providing a clear, intentional focus on content.

RATIONALE

As a Latina ELA teacher, I deeply understand the importance of students seeing themselves reflected in the curriculum and being exposed to diverse perspectives. I rarely saw my identity reflected in school, which made it difficult for me to connect on a personal level.

Now as an educator, I want my students to feel seen. By incorporating multicultural literature, I hope to foster critical thinking, empathy, and identity development while making learning relevant and rigorous. It will also help me build a classroom where diversity is celebrated, empathy is cultivated, and students are prepared to contribute to a more compassionate and just society.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How does multicultural literature impact student engagement and empathy?
- What challenges do teachers face when using these texts?
- What best practices align multicultural texts with standards and engagements?
- What happens when students see themselves reflected in literature?

BARRIERS/CHALLENGES

- **Educators** feel unequipped to teach topics like race or disability
- **Eurocentric Curriculum** leaves out marginalized voices
- Schools often **can't** afford new texts
- **Censorship** - target diverse stories (Pottier, 2023)

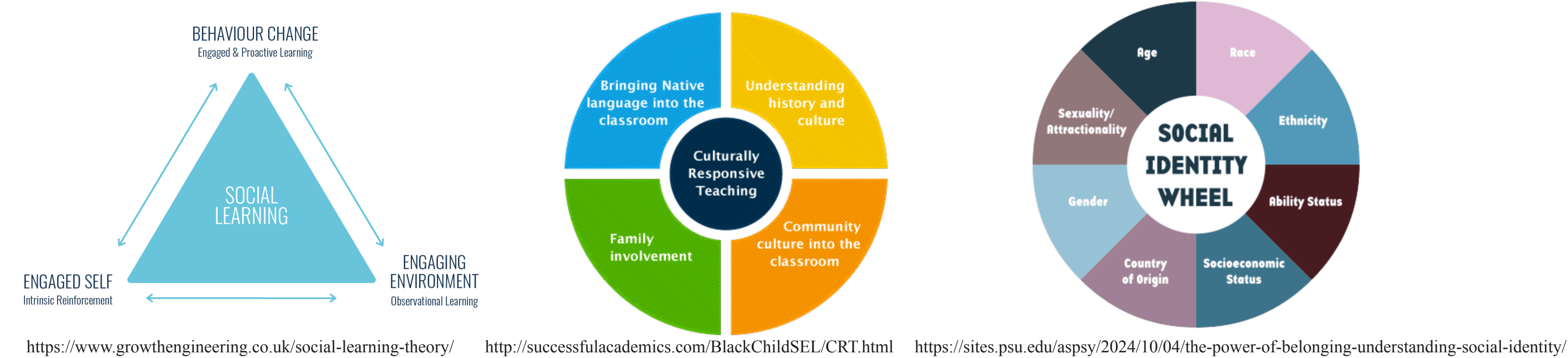


← QR CODE TO RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

RESEARCH

- Multicultural texts validate students' identities, fosters understanding of different perspectives, and bridges gaps between cultural experiences.
- Students feel a stronger sense of belonging when they see their experiences reflected in literature (Dong, 2005).
- Wheeler and Hill, along with Okoye-Johnson, found that early exposure to diverse identities through multicultural education fosters inclusivity and reduces biases
- Personally, literature helped me understand disabilities, cultures, and social issues my family couldn't explain.
- Monoyiou and Symeonidou highlight the importance of realistic portrayals for belonging and acceptance.
- Many programs lack focus on social justice, leaving teachers unprepared (Gorski, 2009).
- Book bans and restrictive policies remain major barriers to inclusive education (Pottier, 2023).
- Hughes-Hassell and Barkley emphasize systemic inequities in publishing and education.
- Teacher education must include critical reflection and cultural responsiveness.
- Pairing diverse literature with reflection helps teachers build empathy (Gibson, 2012).
- Professional development in CRT also supports effective teaching (Bennett et al., 2018).
- Linking students' cultural backgrounds to learning enhances both academic and personal growth (Gorski, 2009).
- Incorporating multicultural literature is a transformative practice that promotes engagement, empathy, and representation.

THEORIES



TOOLS



FUTURE APPLICATIONS

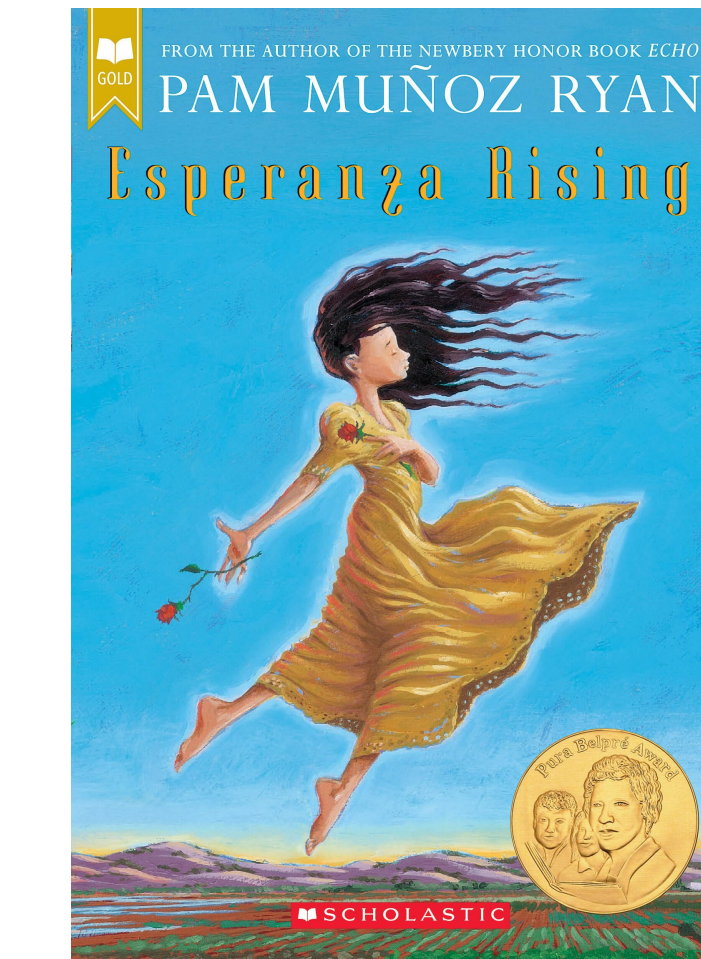
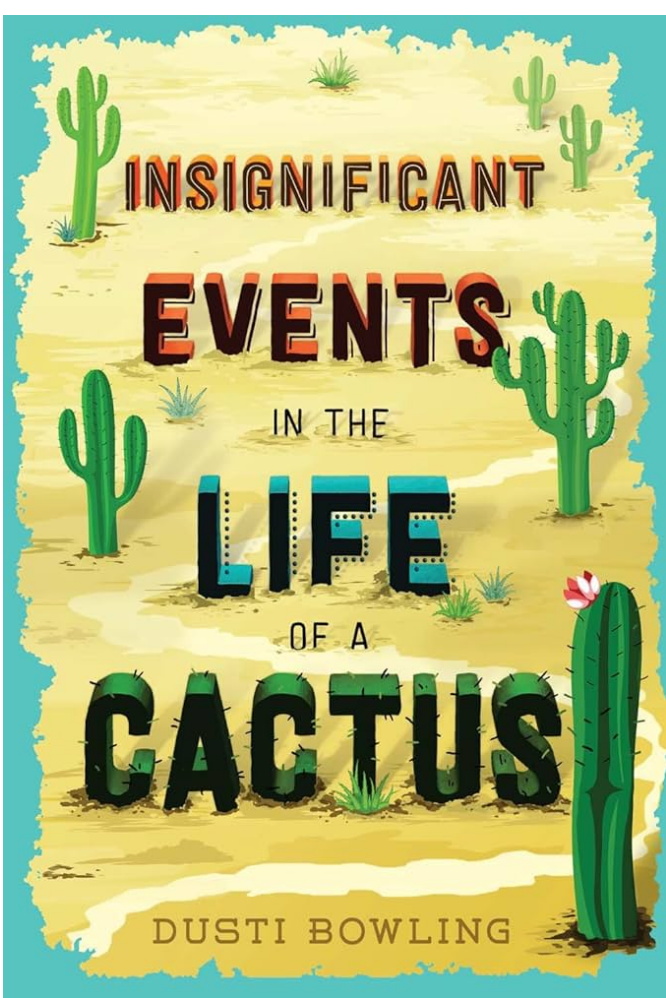
- Intentionally curate a culturally responsive curriculum by selecting authors and texts that reflect the diverse racial, cultural, and social identities of my students.
- Host parent and student book talks to create inclusive opportunities for families to engage with classroom texts, build community, and encourage meaningful dialogue.
- Utilize journals, classroom discussions, and creative projects as formative and summative assessments allowing students to demonstrate their understanding in varied and meaningful ways.
- Seek out grants, collaborate with local organizations, and explore secondhand resources to access and expand a diverse classroom library.
- Design lessons that invite students to interpret and analyze multicultural texts, encouraging them to examine perspectives across cultures, challenge stereotypes, and connect literature to real-world issues and their own lived experiences.

GRADE 6-8



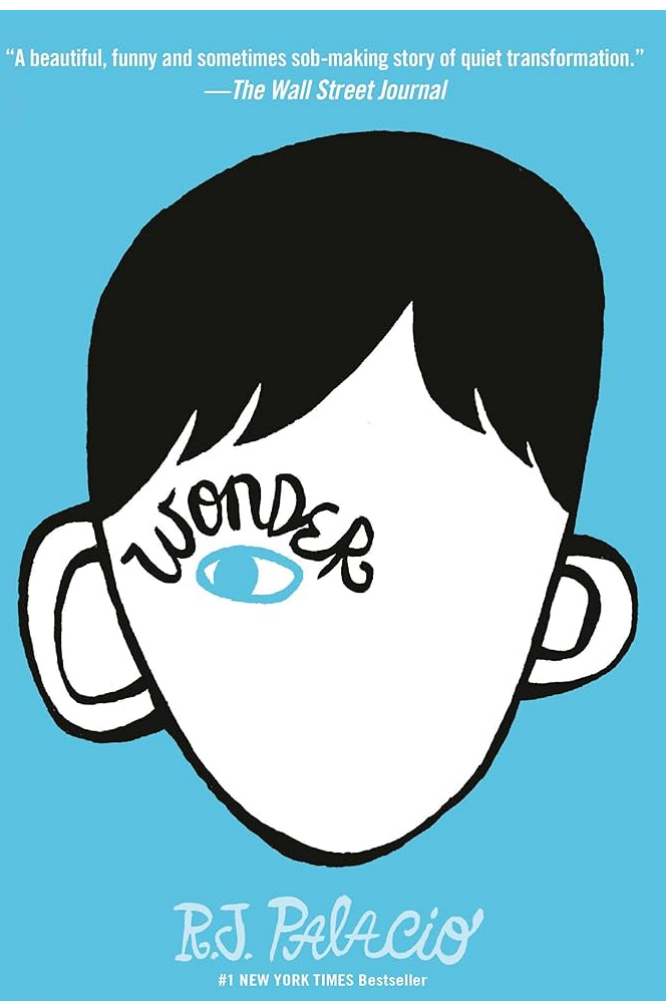
← Explores identity and assimilation

Representation of physical disability and self advocacy →

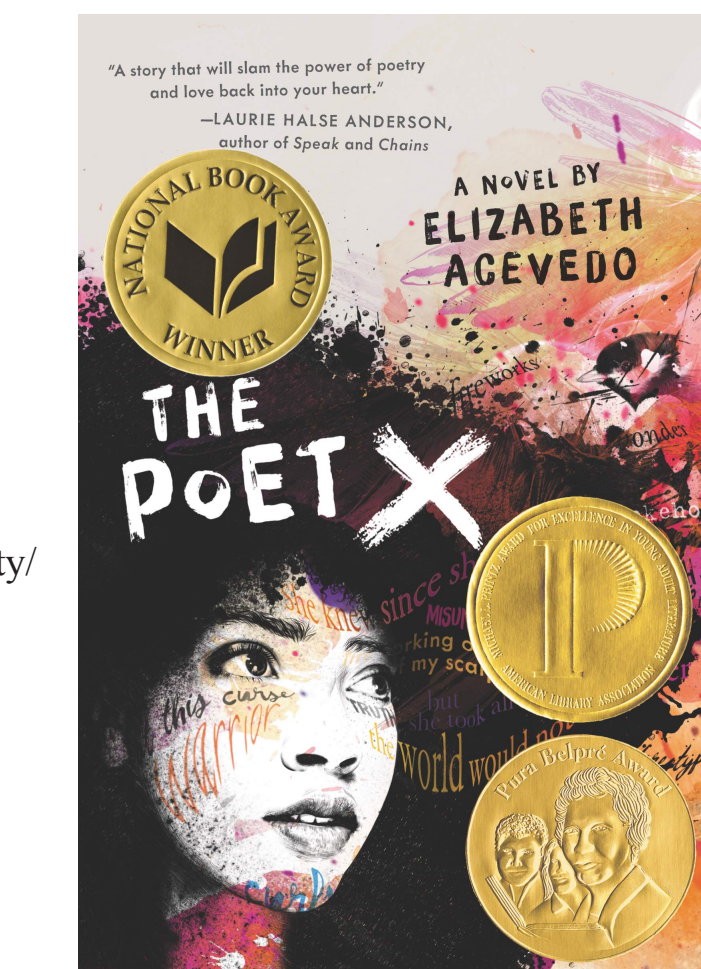


← Immigration, resilience, and socioeconomic inequality

Empathy, kindness, and navigating life with a facial difference →



GRADE 9-10

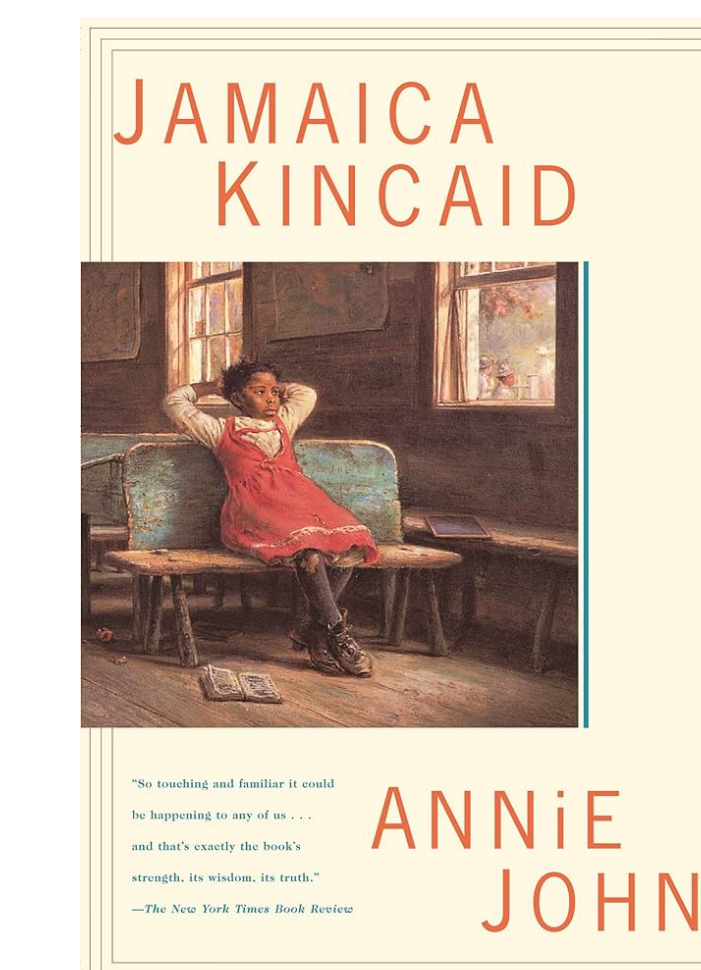


← Afro-Latinx identity and self-expression through slam poetry

Explores Chinese American identity and stereotypes →

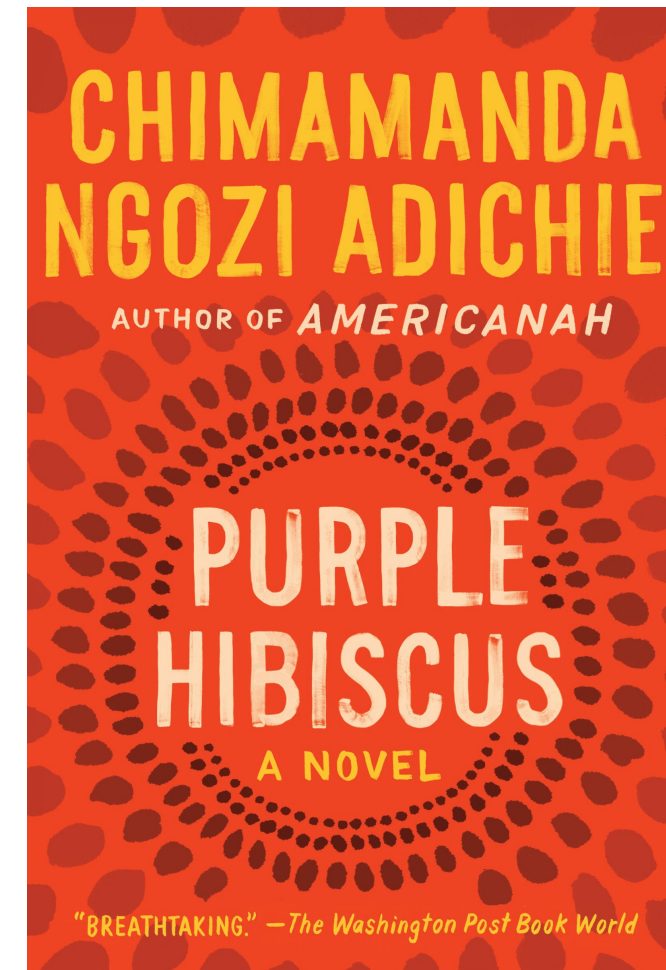


GRADE 11-12



← Coming of age, mother-daughter relationships, and postcolonial identity

Coming of age, postcolonial Nigeria, family, religion, political unrest, and the struggle for personal freedom →



RACIAL/ETHNIC REPRESENTATION

