Using an Anti-Bias Lens to Examine Children’s Books in Your Program

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Anti-Defamation League (ADL)
• Established in 1913
• Civil rights and human relations organization
• Combats anti-Semitism & all forms of bigotry
• www.adl.org
PREVENTS PREJUDICE EARLY!

- Anti-bias training, professional development & resources
- For early childhood educators, caregivers & family members
- www.adl.org/education/miller
- http://www.adl.org/question-corner

The Miller Early Childhood Initiative of ADL’s WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute

When Is the Right Time to Talk About Respecting Differences?

Chances Are... Right Now.

Explore
Learn
Read

Visit www.adl.org/education/miller

BOOKS & EARLY MESSAGES

photo credit: Sara Poehlman
BOOKS & EARLY MESSAGES

BOOKS AS "WINDOWS" & "MIRRORS"

"Mirror Books"

- Contain accurate reflections of the children, their lifestyles, their families & home community.
- Promote positive self-esteem.

photo credit: Claudia Rodriguez
***Window Books***

- Provide a glimpse into the diversity of the world
- Develop children’s comfort with and respect for unfamiliar people, places & lifestyles

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What % of those books do you think included people of color?

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**POLL #1**

Cooperative Children’s Book Center 2012 Survey

What % of the 3,600 children’s books surveyed by CCBC in 2012 included people of color?

- 75% - 100%
- 50% - 75%
- 25% - 50%
- 5% - 25%
- Less than 5%
The majority of the 113 teachers surveyed could NOT recall any titles of children’s books featuring Native Americans, Asian Pacific Americans & Latino/a Americans.


SOME VARIOUS FORMS OF DIVERSITY

Ability
Age
Body Size
Ethnicity
Family Structure
Gender
Race
Religion
Socio-Economic

POLL #2: Were you able to think of books for all the categories?

Ability
Age
Body Size
Ethnicity
Family Structure
Gender
Race
Religion
Socio-Economic
**Avoiding Stereotypes**

**Stereotypes** are oversimplified generalizations about a person or group of people without regard for individual differences.


A recent study of children books published between 1900 and 2000 found that gender stereotyping has not significantly decreased over time.

(Source: Dewitt, Amy. Sex Roles: Volume 69. 2013)
What Stereotypes Do You See?

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ACQUIRING BOOKS

• Public & School Libraries
• Children & Families Can Make Books
• Request Donations – Class Book “Wish List”
• Borrow or Trade Books with Teachers
• ADL’s Bibliography of Children’s Books
  www.adl.org/bibliography
• All Kinds Of…Todo Tipo De…Tout Kalite…

TIPS SUMMARY: Do the books...

1. Speak to all children & include
   • “mirror books,” reflecting the children, families & staff
   • “window books” promoting an understanding of our diverse society
   • equal representation of all

Photo credit: Claudia Rodriguez
2. Present multiple perspectives & include various forms of diversity such as:
   - Ability
   - Age
   - Body Size/Shape
   - Ethnicity
   - Family Structure
   - Gender
   - Race
   - Religion
   - Socio-Economic

3. Counter stereotypes &
   - Include accurate representations
   - Avoid “tokenism”
   - Contain “good” characters, including ones in leadership roles, from variety of backgrounds

4. Meet the criteria of good books in general
   - Compelling story
   - Age appropriate
   - Historical accuracy
   - Realistic Lifestyles
   - Believable characters
   - Variety of settings, conflicts, problem solving approaches & themes
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