

What Are Books That Represent Diversity?

Guiding Question

How can using diverse books promote equity and inclusion?

Two-Minute Jumpstart

“Washing one’s hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral.” —*Paulo Freire (1921-1997), Brazilian educator and philosopher*

After reading the quote above, write your thoughts on the lines below.
Then, share your thinking with a partner or small group.

•

•

•

•

Take Note

1. Review pages 20–21 in *Conscious Classrooms: Using Diverse Texts for Inclusion, Equity, and Justice*. What stands out to you from the chart on page 21? Anything surprise you? Record your thoughts on the lines below.
2. What is your first memory of “seeing yourself” represented in books OR noticing that your culture or another culture was missing from classroom texts? How did it affect you?
3. As a teacher, what have you observed regarding the lack of diversity in classroom texts? How does it affect the students you teach?

4. Review pages 22–24 in *Conscious Classrooms*. According to the authors, why is it important to pay attention to the backgrounds of the author and/or illustrator of diverse texts? Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer on the lines below.

5. Review pages 25–27. In the first column of the chart below, list 3–5 texts that you would consider using in your classroom. In the second column, briefly describe what appeals to you about these texts OR note which class or students might particularly benefit from the text.

Potential Diverse Texts	
Title	Appeal or Application to Particular Class/Student(s)

6. What do you consider the most important criteria for selecting diverse texts? Record 2–3 ideas below.

Application and Reflection

Review pages 28–29 in *Conscious Classrooms*. On page 29, the authors cite several prompts from Dr. Gholdy Muhammad’s book, *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy* (2020). Take a moment to reflect on your own answers to these questions. Then, note 2–3 questions you might use with your students. How might reflecting on these questions benefit the students you teach?

- ---
- ---
- ---
- ---
- ---

Closing Discussion

Discuss with a partner or group your reaction to conducting a classroom library audit. Have you ever done something like that in the past? If so, what did you learn? If not, what do you imagine you might discover? If you don’t have a robust classroom library, what steps can you take to build one and what kinds of books will you collect?

Next Step

Read Chapter 2, “Why Use Diverse Texts?,” before starting the next book study session.