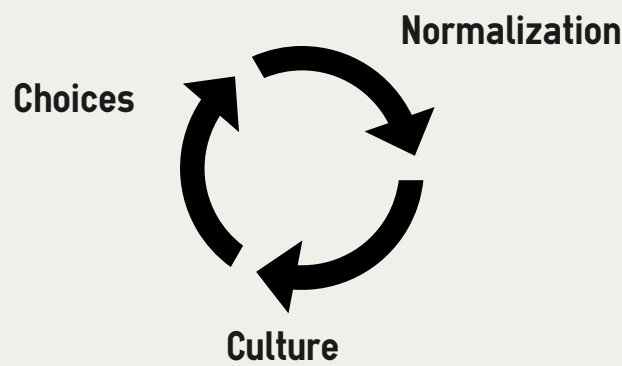


Using Picture Books to Talk About Diversity, Respect, and Empathy



"Normalization creates culture, and culture drives our choices, which leads to more normalization." –Seth Godin.

Choosing books that represent diversity leads to a change in culture or way of life. This change drives our choices in product selection, attitudes, behaviors, and thinking. These choices influence what we consider to be "normal." To normalize diversity means we live together, appreciating and celebrating our heritage and cultural differences respectfully.

"We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color." –Maya Angelou

Lessons and Activities

READING

Before reading:
Themed discussion: Intergenerational families – Ask how many students live with grandparents and great-grandparents. How do families help each other?

During reading:
How do Keiko and Mama help Oba? How does Oba help Keiko?

After reading:
Make connections to your life. Questions to ask grandparents:
What is your favorite childhood memory?
How are we alike?
What moment in history most affected you?
Who is/was your best friend?
Come up with three of your own questions.

WRITING

Where do story ideas come from?

How important is the setting to a story?

What happens if you use the same story problem and change the setting?
(Ex: Grandma is lost in the mall, camping, airport, in another country.)
What new problems are created?

Character study: What three characteristics does Keiko have? Oba? Mama?

CAREER

Explore the life of a cowherd, a weaver, a writer, an editor.

What do you want to be when you grow up? Research that career.

SOCIAL STUDIES / HISTORY / CULTURE

Making Connections to the world around you.

Draw or write:
Me, My home (or school), My town, My country, My continent, My planet, My universe

Draw or write:
Me, My family, My friends, My neighborhood, My country, My world.

Compare/Contrast Japanese traditions from the book with traditions from another culture. Make a Venn Diagram.

GEOGRAPHY

Find Japan on the map. Identify the Sendai and Hiratsuka regions.

On a map:
Students interview parents and grandparents and country of origin.
The class places push pins on a map to represent the countries.

ART

Students draw cows. Display drawings together as Hikoboshi's herd.
Make origami cows.

Weave strips of construction paper or fabric like Orihime.

Make a tanzaku or paper wish.

Support Titles

The Star Festival Hardcover – Picture Book, April 1, 2021
by Moni Ritchie Hadley (Author), Mizuho Fujisawa (Illustrator)

Bella's Recipe for Success Hardcover – Picture Book, July 13, 2021
by Ana Siqueira (Author), Geraldine Rodriguez (Illustrator)

Meena's Mindful Moment Hardcover – Picture Book, October 5, 2021
by Tina Athaide (Author), Asa Gilland (Illustrator)

Jet the Cat (Is Not a Cat) Paperback – Picture Book, June 1, 2021
by Phaea Crede (Author), Terry Runyan (Illustrator)

The Tide Hardcover – Picture Book, April 2, 2019
by Clare Helen Walsh (Author), Ashling Lindsay (Illustrator)

Mr. George Baker (Reading Rainbow Books) Paperback – Picture Book, June 12, 2007
by Amy Hest (Author), Jon J Muth (Illustrator)

A Different Pond (Fiction Picture Books) Hardcover – Picture Book, August 1, 2017
by Bao Phi (Author), Thi Bui (Illustrator)

Watercress Hardcover – Picture Book, March 30, 2021
by Andrea Wang (Author), Jason Chin (Illustrator)

Alma and How She Got Her Name Hardcover – Picture Book, April 10, 2018
by Juana Martinez-Neal (Author, Illustrator)

Last Stop on Market Street Hardcover – Picture Book, January 8, 2015
by Matt de la Peña (Author), Christian Robinson (Illustrator)

A Morning with Grandpa Hardcover – April 1, 2016
by Sylvia Liu (Author), Christina Forshay (Illustrator)

My Grandma and Me Hardcover – March 7, 2019
by Mina Javaherbin (Author)

Chicken Soup, Chicken Soup Paperback – Picture Book, August 1, 2016
by Pamela Mayer (Author), Deborah Melmon (Illustrator)

Sitti's Secrets (Aladdin Picture Books) Paperback – Picture Book, October 1, 1997
by Naomi Shihab Nye (Author), Nancy Carpenter (Illustrator)

Drawn Together Hardcover – Picture Book, June 5, 2018
by Minh Lê (Author), Dan Santat (Illustrator, Cover Art)

I Dream of Popo Hardcover – Picture Book, January 5, 2021
by Livia Blackburne (Author), Julia Kuo (Illustrator)