



MCTE 2025 Spring Conference

Presenter Notes

Session title: *Using Diverse Children’s Literature and YA Text-Sets on the Theme of “Nature and the Outdoors” in Elementary Schools*

Children’s and YA literature in classrooms acts as a mirror, window, and sliding glass door for our students (Rudine Sims-Bishop, 1982). The texts educators choose and how we frame those texts can invite or dissuade students’ authentic engagement with diversity. In this session, we will share our curated list of quality, children’s and young adult text-sets that offer diverse perspectives on the theme of “Nature and the Outdoors.” We will discuss how to select nature, sustainability, and climate-themed literature that is developmentally appropriate, offers diverse perspectives, and meaningfully addresses K-5 ELA/SS academic standards. We will share corresponding teaching resources for each text aligned with MN standards that invite students to explore their own and others’ relationships to nature, and provide time to plan an interactive read aloud for a selected text.

Presenter/s: Lisa Ortmann and Valerie Walker, Gustavus Adolphus College

Presenter notes:

(attach links to presentations or resources, insert text here)

[Link to session slides](#)

[Link to Diversity in Nature themed texts](#)

[IRA planning tool](#)