Multicultural Book Set:

1st grade and STEP picture books

Resource adapted from Valerie-Bang Jensen's graduate class Teaching Nonfiction in the Elementary Classroom, St. Michael's College

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Title and Author(s)	Genre	Overview	Special Characteristics or Connections	Themes	How you can use it Within the Text= WTT, Beyond the Text= BTT, About the Text= ATT	Countries, languages and/or cultures
The Big Umbrella By Amy June Bates	Fiction	There is a red umbrella by the door. It is big. It is so big that when it starts to rain there is room for <i>everyone</i> underneath. In fact, there will always be enough room for everyone.	Sparse text- big ideas. Beautiful illustrations paired with humor	Social Issues and Inclusion Prejudice and Racism Emigration and Immigration	Infer: (BTT) What do you think was the author's purpose (or message) in telling this story? How can there always be "room under the umbrella?"	
What if By Samantha Berger Art by Mike Curato	Fiction	This is a story about a young girl of color with purple hair, who is determined to express herself through art. Readers can see into her fantasy life, both literally and figuratively.	Rhyming text with stunning mixed media illustrations Colorful foldout Tier 2 Vocabulary (action) words: sculpt, ignite, chisel	Self-expression and creativity Resilience	Ask students: How do you express yourself -and your creativity? (drawing, singing, cooking, playing an instrument, etc.).	Girl of color
I Am Enough By Grace Byers Art by Keturah Bobo	Realistic fiction	Lyrical text about loving who you are, respecting others, and being kind to one another.	Beautifully illustrated featuring girls in "powerful stances" Rhyming text	Self-acceptance Acceptance of differences Kindness	Introduce/explore similes. They are written throughout the book. "Like the trees, I'm here to grow." "Like the heart, I'm here to love."	Girl of color
Joseph's Big Ride By Terry Farish Art by Ken Daley	Realistic fiction	Joseph only wanted one thing- to ride a bike. He used to help an older boy fix his bike at the refugee camp. Then, he and his move to America. He befriends a girl who will need help fixing her bike.	Vibrant paintings humorous text	Friendship Inclusion Immigration and Refugees	Have you ever really wanted to do something and had to wait a long time to do it? Tell how you connect to Joseph and his story.	Kakuma, Kenya Refugee camps

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Write to Me By Cynthia Grady	Non-fiction Biography	Excerpts from archived letters are used to tell the story of Japanese American children who corresponded with their librarian while imprisoned in World War II internment camps.	End pages contain actual photos of life at an internment camp. Author's note about real life of librarian Clara Breed. Beautiful artwork	Social activism WWII Xenophobia and Racism	Letter writing Biography Letters as a text structure (within a text) Infer:(BTT) What are the messages in the text that the author wants us to see?	Japanese- Americans (during WWII)
Chandra's Magic Light: A Story in Nepal By Theresa Neine and Judith Gueyfier	Realistic fiction	Chandra and her sister see a demonstration of a "magic light," a solar-powered lantern. They are determined to buy one, knowing it will help their little brother's cough. It could also stop their using (of) kerosene lamps, or tukis.	Back matter contains information and facts about Nepal. Instructions on How to make a Pizza Box Solar Oven Dense text	Sustainable technology Solar energy Problem-solving Air pollution (from kerosene lamps)	Could pair it with <i>Iqbal and his Ingenious Idea</i> . Both books are about indoor air pollution. How are the challenges both of these families face the same- and different?	Nepal
Drawn Together By Minh Le Art by Dan Santat	Fiction Fantasy	When a young boy visits his grandfather, they are unable to communicate because they don't speak the same language. But as they sit down together to draw, something magical happens.	Strong storytelling with few words "Luminous illustrations" Reads like a graphic novel Sparse text	Family Communication Storytelling	Storytelling using the visual arts Thinking About the Text: Analyzing: Why do you think the author chose the title Drawn Together?	Vietnamese Americans 1st and 2nd generation immigrants
Free as a Bird: The Story of Malala By Lina Maslo	Non- Fiction Biography	Malala's father told her she could do anything she wanted. Girls were not allowed to go to school in Pakistan and yet her dad secretly brought her to his school. Even after the enemy tried to end her life, she continued to soar.	Colorful instructions painted with acrylic. Back Matter has Author's Note, a Timeline of her life so far, an explanation of Malalai of Maiwand, and other books, films, etc.	Education (equal access to) Human Rights Perseverance	What is Malala's message to the world? Thinking within the Text: Summarizing: What are the important parts of Malala's life?	Pakistan Young Muslim woman

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Fatima and the Clementine Thieves By Mireille Messier Art by Gabrielle Grimard	Fiction	Fatima helps her grandfather in their family's clementine orchard. On the night before they bring their harvest to the market, the orchard is ransacked. Who could be doing this? Once they find out, how can they stop them?	Beautiful watercolor illustrations Reads like a folktale and based on an African proverb.	Problem-solving Kindness (to animals)	"You may be small, but what you have done is very big," her grandfather says. This theme contrasting small versus big is found a few times in the book. What are a few examples from the book of when small things create/cause big change?	Africa (Morocco?)
Someone New Someone New By Anne S. O'Brien	Realistic fiction	When three children are confronted with new classmates whose ethnic backgrounds differ from their own, they try to overcome their own reactions, and welcome them.	Back Matter contains A Note from the Author in which she describes her own experience of moving to South Korea as a child. She also talks about intergroup anxiety and strategies to overcome it.	Kindness Social acceptance Ethnicity	RP: Community Building Circle	Guatemala Korea Somalia
The Field By Baptiste Paul Pictures by Jacqueline Alcántara	Realistic fiction	Based on the author's experiences growing up in Saint Lucia, and playing soccer in "the Field." There are Creole words and phrases weaved into the text, adding more fun.	Illustrations are colorful and dynamic Sparse text Back Matter contains Author's Note and a glossary of Creole words and phrases from the book	Overcoming adversity Soccer/sports	Thinking About the Text: Analyzing: How do the pictures in this book help you understand the story?	Caribbean Creole
MELA ELEPHANT BOW Phumiruk Illustrated by Ziyue Chen	Fiction Folktale	Mela sets out to explore beyond her village but soon finds herself in trouble when her boat is swept away. She encounters three animals to whom she offers a gift, if they show her the way home. Right when she's about to give up, a kind elephant shows her the way.	End pages contain Author's Note about Thailand	Kindness	What is the lesson the author wants us to learn in the story? Thinking Within the Text: Summarizing: Talk about the order of events in the story.	Thailand

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The Word Collector By Peter Reynolds	Realistic	A boy named Jerome is a collector of words- words he hears, sees, and reads. One day, his collection of words gets all mixed up. He discovers that he can string together different kinds of words to make powerful statements and poetry. He then shares his word collection with others- hoping that they too will be inspired.	Beautiful illustrations with simple text, that carries lots of meaning The "text type and display" are hand-lettered by the author.	Collecting words! Sharing Kindness Individuality Imagination	Like Jerome, students can collect different kinds of words. They can then organize them like he did: dreamy, science, sad, action, poetic, etc Either individually, or in a small group, students can string their words together, to make poetry or powerful statements. Other ideas can be found on the website: http://www.theclas sroombookshelf.co m/2018/03/the-word-collector/	Boy of color
Festival of Colors By Surishtha Sehgal and Kabir Sehgal	Realistic fiction	The Indian Festival of Colors is explained through the adventures of two young children named Chintoo and Mintoo. They gather flowers of many different colors and then make them into powders, before tossing them in the air.	Vibrant illustrations Illustrations capture the colors and the fun of the festival A Note from the Author explains Holi	Religion Family traditions Community	Holi is celebrated in springtime, when new colors appear in nature. It honors new beginnings. Are there any other holidays that celebrate new beginnings, or the new colors of spring?	India Holi Festival of Colors