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Notes on Teaching Multicultural Literature

Multicultural Literature

In the broadest sense, “multicultural literature” can refer to works that deal with issues of race, gender, class, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, and nationality. This workshop features literature by and about North American authors of color.

Pedagogy

Throughout the eight-part workshop, teachers draw on a range of pedagogical approaches and strategies. While these frequently overlap, workshops are organized in pairs, highlighting the featured approach.

Workshops 1 and 2: Engagement and Dialogue

In these workshops, students reflect on and share their personal responses to the literature. Teachers facilitate questions and conversations, challenging students to build on their initial reactions to develop a more complete understanding of the works, their social contexts, and the author’s craft.

Workshops 3 and 4: Research and Discovery

These workshops highlight an inquiry-based approach to teaching. Students take the lead in determining the projects they will take on, how and what they will investigate, and how they will present what they’ve learned.

Workshops 5 and 6: Historical and Cultural Context

These workshops emphasize exploration of historical and cultural context as a way to promote deeper understanding of the literature. They feature activities with strong interdisciplinary connections.

Workshops 7 and 8: Social Justice and Action

In these workshops, teachers use the literature to prompt students to examine issues of social justice. Related activities help students recognize the power of their voices and their roles as active citizens who can effect change.

Standards

Each workshop reflects the Standards for the English Language Arts as outlined by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the International Reading Association (IRA).

Visiting Authors and Community Members

Many of the programs feature visiting authors, experts, and/or community members. Inviting guests into the classroom is important in any curriculum, but it is especially powerful when teaching multicultural literature. To facilitate this, teachers may want to check with department chairs, librarians, or curriculum coordinators to find out about local writers-in-residence. Teachers can also check with local bookstores, public libraries, and universities to find out about readings by visiting authors. Another option to consider is sharing a writer’s travel costs with a nearby school. As an alternative, teachers might bring videos of author interviews—from this series or other sources—into the classroom.
Notes on
Teaching Multicultural Literature, cont’d.

The Expanding Canon: Teaching Multicultural Literature in High School

The Expanding Canon: Teaching Multicultural Literature in High School is a workshop that highlights literature and teaching strategies that may be of interest to middle grade teachers. Although mature themes or challenging vocabulary may make some of the featured works inappropriate for students in grades five through eight, a number of them are suitable for skilled readers. Many of the pedagogical strategies can be effective with younger students as well. For more information, please go to www.learner.org or call 1-800-LEARNER.
Workshop Reading List

Works on the following list are required readings, except where noted; for some workshop sessions, you will select from among the readings as indicated below.

Works marked with an * are sources for materials available online in the Readings (www.learner.org/channel/workshops/tml; go to “Support Materials”).

Workshop 1
Read at least three of the following texts:


Workshop 2


Workshop 3


Workshop 4
Read one of the following novels:


and:

Workshop Reading List, cont’d.

**Workshop 5**

**Workshop 6**


**Workshop 7**
Read:

and at least one of the following:


**Workshop 8**

Credits

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Producers
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Arash Hoda

Program Producer
Michelle Chen

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Beverly Ann Chin

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Linda Christensen
Jill Cowan
Nancy Hansen-Krening
Chambliss Keith
Bob Peterson
Katharine Samway
Beverly Slapin
Drew Ward
Jennifer Wilson
Bank Street School for Children, New York, N.Y.
Café Mestizo, Chicago, Ill.
El Museo del Barrio, New York, N.Y.
The Harbor School, Dorchester, Mass.
Hood Canal School District, Shelton, Wash.
Irima Ruiz School, Chicago, Ill.
Kunhardt Productions, Inc.
Manhattan Country School, New York, N.Y.
Melrose Elementary School, Oakland, Calif.
NYU Institute of African-American Affairs and Africana Studies Program
Oyate
The Parish of Trinity Church-St. Paul's Chapel
Paterson Free Public Library, Paterson, N.J.
Riverhead Books
Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, Calif.
Santiago High School, Corona, Calif.
The Skokomish Tribal Nation
St. Louis Public Library, St. Louis, Mo.
Teachers College, Columbia University
University of Alabama at Birmingham
U.S. General Services Administration
Washington Middle School, Vista, Calif.
Wydown Middle School, Clayton, Mo.

Executive Producer
Jill Peters

Director of Children’s and Educational Programming
Sandra Sheppard
## Credits, cont’d.

### Web Site Production Credits

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Beverly Ann Chin</td>
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<td>Lead Content Advisor</td>
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<td>Interactive and Broadband Unit</td>
<td>Anthony Chapman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director of Interactive and Broadband</td>
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<td>Producer</td>
<td>Brian Brunius</td>
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<td>Jill Peters</td>
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<td>Content Producer</td>
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<td>Sapna Mehta</td>
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<td>Consultant</td>
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<td>Copy Editors</td>
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<td>Logo Design</td>
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