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Equity Audit:

Self-Assessing Your Classroom Library

Use the following guide to evaluate your library’s strengths, needs, and patterns, as well as to inform your next steps. Take a sample of your library collection, maybe a theme bin like ‘fairy tales,’ an author collection, or another text set. To what extent does your library collection reflect the following criteria?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| My collection portrays women and female identified characters in the following ways | | 1  None or  Almost  None | 2  Some | 3  Many or  Most | 4  All |
| 1. | Their achievements are based on their own intelligence, initiative, and efforts. As strong, confident leaders and problem solvers |  |  |  | **🗸** |
| 2. | Their achievements are based on their appearance, sex appeal, or relationships with males | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 3. | As needing to be rescued or saved by someone else. As fearful. |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 4. | As having aspirations limited to love, marriage, and raising children |  | **🗸** |  |  |

SECTION 1: Inclusive Representation

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| My collection contains books that include positive and affirming representations of | | 1  None or  Almost None | 2  Some | 3  Many or  Most | 4  All |
| 1. | main characters who are White |  |  | **🗸** |  |
| 2. | main characters of color |  |  | **🗸** |  |
| 3. | main characters of color with very dark skin |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 4. | main characters who are bilingual or multilingual |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 5. | main characters who are immigrants, migrants, or refugees |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 6. | main characters who are LGBTQIA+ | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 7. | main characters with physical or cognitive disabilities |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 8. | main characters who practice diverse religions or traditions |  |  | **🗸** |  |

SECTION 2: Female and Women Identified Characters

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 5. | As having healthy relationships and friendships with one another |  |  | **🗸** |  |
| 6. | As loud, obnoxious, bossy, or overbearing |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 7. | Older or unmarried females are portrayed in a negative manner and assumed to be bitter, unfulfilled, crazy, or boring | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 8. | Their physical appearance is overemphasized by the author or illustrator |  | **🗸** |  |  |

SECTION 3: People of Color

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| In my collection, people of color are depicted as | | 1  None or  Almost  None | 2  Some | 3  Many or  Most | 4  All |
| 1. | Heroes, main characters, protagonists, positive historical figures |  |  | **🗸** |  |
| 2. | Villains, criminals, prisoners, antagonists |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 3. | Ancillary, insignificant characters in supporting roles | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 4. | Slaves or survivors of slavery or oppression; or victims who are suffering and in need of saving |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 5. | Characters in books that are specific to holidays or a specific heritage month; Characters in books specifically ABOUT cultural or racial diversity |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 6. | Characters in books that are NOT ABOUT cultural or racial diversity and instead are presented as normal people doing regular things |  |  | **🗸** |  |

SECTION 4: Families

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| My collection includes families who are | | 1  None or  Almost  None | 2  Some | 3  Many or  Most | 4  All |
| 1. | Nuclear |  |  | **🗸** |  |
| 2. | Multigenerational/extended (grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles) |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 3. | Blended (remarried, step families) |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 4. | Single-Parent or unmarried |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 5. | Multiracial |  |  | **🗸** |  |
| 6. | Adoptive, non-biological | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 7. | Temporary (foster parents, state custody, group homes) | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 8. | Legal Guardians, Caregivers other than parents | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 9. | LGBTQ+ |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 10. | Otherwise “non-traditional” | **🗸** |  |  |  |

SECTION 5: STORYLINES

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The storylines or emphases of the books in my collection are | | 1  None or  Almost  None | 2  Some | 3  Many or  Most | 4  All |
| 1. | Focused on the deficit or problems related to holding a certain identity (ex. race, disability, social class, gender) |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 2. | About dominant characters rescuing, saving, fixing, or being the benefactors to their less privileged counterparts |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 3. | About the conditions facing oppressed people as a result of systemic or societal inequity |  |  | **🗸** |  |
| 4. | About the conditions facing oppressed people as a result of their own laziness, fault, or innate deficit | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 5. | Advocating for the passive or unquestioned acceptance of inequity | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 6. | Advocating for social justice and equity |  |  |  | **🗸** |

SECTION 6: Stereotypes

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| My collection includes books that depict harmful stereotypes about | | 1  None or  Almost  None | 2  Some | 3  Many or  Most | 4  All |
| 1. | White people | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 2. | People of Color | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 3. | LGBTQ+ people | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 4. | People based on their gender (female, male, another gender) | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 5. | People with physical or cognitive disabilities | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 6. | People based on their religious beliefs | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 7. | Immigrants, migrants, and refugees |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 8. | People whose first language is not English |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 9. | People experiencing poverty or homelessness |  | **🗸** |  |  |
| 10. | People based on their age | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 11. | People based on their body type | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 12. | People based on their occupation/career | **🗸** |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| My collection includes books that present | | 1  None or  Almost  None | 2  Some | 3  Many or  Most | 4  All |
| 1. | Misrepresented or inaccurate information about a group of people (i.e. ​are Indigenous or First Nations people from one group shown wearing the hair styles, clothing, or jewelry of another tribe?) | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 2. | Over-generalizations about a group of people (i.e. ​lumping all Asians together ignoring differences in ethnicity, nationality, immigration history, language, culture, or historical conflict) | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 3. | Oversimplified or tokenized depictions of a cultural group or other identity group (i.e. mascots, costumes) |  |  | **🗸** |  |
| 4. | Quaint, cutesy, or exoticized depictions of people | **🗸** |  |  |  |
| 5. | A genuine, authentically credible perspective and insight into the lives and experiences of characters in books due to the author/illustrator’s own identity, experience, research, or role in a specific community |  |  |  | **🗸** |
| 6. | Relevant, up to date information, language, and perspectives published within the last 20 years |  |  |  | **🗸** |

SECTION 7: Authenticity

**Findings:**

* Many of the collections in the classroom library depict inclusive representation in terms of race and color
* The limited books with main characters as LGBTQIA+
* Most of the main characters in the collections have diverse traditions and religion
* Healthy relationship among the female and women identified characters in the books
* Fair and equitable representation for people of color characters
* Most of the books in library have characters from nuclear and multiracial families
* All the storylines in the books advocate for social justice and equity
* The books are credible, authentic, relevant, and up to date

**Action Steps:**

* Ensure inclusive representation of the main characters in terms of age, gender, race, language, and sexual orientation
* Having more books that fairly and equitably represent female and women characters
* Avoid having books that depict people of color as different from other
* Ensure that all the books advocate for social justice and equity
* Ensure that the collection does not include books that depict harmful stereotype on characters in terms of gender, sex, age, race, and language

**Resources:**

[Lee and Low Books](https://www.leeandlow.com/)

[We Need Diverse Books](https://diversebooks.org/)[Social Justice Books](https://socialjusticebooks.org/)[Teaching Tolerance Classroom Resources](https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources)

[Rethinking Schools](https://www.rethinkingschools.org/articles/resources-648193c4-945b-4864-ad54-ef03ca7949b1)

[Child Peace books for Anti-Bias Education](http://www.childpeacebooks.org/cpb/Protect/antiBias.php)

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