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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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