

Equity and Diversity at Lane School: Anti Bias Picture Books Curriculum

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November 29, 2016

Equity and Diversity Committee Background

- Fall 2013: Jon Sills announced the creation of a district-wide Equity and Diversity Committee for the purpose of helping Bedford create culturally-proficient classrooms and workplaces in “which all students and staff can learn from each other, feel safe to take intellectual risks, and derive the benefits of a culturally diverse society.” (Jon Sills)
- Cultural proficiency is a district-wide goal (How do we nurture diverse identities in our community?)
- Monthly meetings that are open to anyone interested

Some Accomplishments of EDC

Three district-wide Professional Development Workshop days (full staff presentations in the morning, afternoon workshops).

- March, 2014: Kalise Wornum, M.Ed (KW Diversity, Co.) - focused on indicators of a culturally proficient teacher with a particular focus on how we talk about race. She also provided the faculty with conversational guidelines for difficult conversations
- January 2015: Facing History's Brian Fong and Freedom Rider Paul Breines Topic: Nurturing Diverse Identities in our Community
- March, 2016: Professor Allyson Livingstone - provided research on the importance of doing anti-bias work in the schools and community

District-wide Survey (spring, 2015): to ascertain and assess PD needs of all staff (outcome: staff requested continuing PD about how to have difficult conversations and to address issues of cultural proficiency through existing curriculum)

Anti-Bias Lessons through Children's Literature

- Brian Fong and Facing History provided consultation and support during the 2014-2015 school year to schools
 - At Davis and Lane, Brian Fong conducted workshops to introduce many age-appropriate picture books that addressed issues of diversity
 - Teachers discussed possible ways to utilize these texts in the elementary grades
 - Both Davis and Lane decided to approach the anti-bias curriculum through children's literature
- Summer 2015 : Davis School chose books for Davis Classrooms
- 2015-2016: Lane School EDC members facilitated process to bring anti-bias curriculum through children's literature to Grades 3-5

The Lane School Anti-Bias Picture Book Project

- Four per grade level
- One dedicated to ELL students
- Addressing categories found in the Teaching Tolerance Anti-Bias Framework
 - **Four Domains:** Diversity, Justice, Identity, Action
 - **Identity Groups:** Race and Ethnicity, Gender, Class, Immigration, Religion, Ability, Community, and Place

Anti-bias Framework:

“a set of anchor standards and age-appropriate learning outcomes divided into four domains—identity, diversity, justice and action (IDJA). The standards provide a common language and organizational structure.” (Teaching Tolerance, 2014)

Understanding the Anti-bias Domains

Identity

Students will understand the multiple facets of their identities, know where those traits come from, and feel comfortable being themselves in a diversity of settings.

Diversity

Students will recognize the diversity of people in the world, be able to identify differences and commonalities, express interest in the lived experiences of others and develop genuine connections with others.

Justice

Students will be aware of bias and injustice, both individual and systemic, will understand the short and long-term impact of injustice, and will know about those who have fought for more fairness and justice in our world.

Action

Students will feel confident that they can make a difference in society and will commit to taking action against bias and injustice even when it is not popular or easy.

Choosing the Books

Gathered books from:

- Brian Fong's presentation
- Tova Margolis and Liana Heldman's (BHS Faculty) class on gender diversity
- Public Libraries

Developed a protocol:

- Evaluated each book in terms of anti-bias domain and identity group
- Ensured that all identity groups were represented
- Developed essential questions that could be paired with each text

Read at least 80 books:

- Used protocol to narrow it down to 13 books.

Anti Bias Books, Lane School 2016-2017

	Identity	Diversity	Justice	Action
Grade 3	<u>The Keeping Quilt</u> by Patricia Polacco	<u>Sona and the Wedding Game</u> by Kashmira Sheth	<u>Each Kindness</u> by Jacqueline Woodson	<u>Brother Eagle, Sister Sky</u> Words by Chief Seattle
Grade 4	<u>My Name is Sangoel</u> by Karin Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed	<u>Looking after Louis</u> by Lesley Ely	<u>Four Feet, Two Sandals</u> by Karin Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed	<u>Let's Talk About Race</u> by Julius Lester
Grade 5	<u>Red- A Crayon's Story</u> by Michael Hall	<u>King for a Day</u> by Rukhsana Khan	<u>Side by Side Lado a Lado</u> by Monica Brown	<u>We Shall Overcome: The Story of a Song</u> by Debbie Levy

Professional Development Day (March 11, 2016)

Morning: District-Wide professional development by Salem State professor Allyson Livingstone, PhD, LICSW, who presented a research-based foundation to underscore the importance of working to address issues of anti-bias.

Afternoon at Lane: Led by Lane School EDC committee members

The Task: To develop a lesson plan for each book

- Introduced the Teaching Tolerance Anti-Bias Frameworks, domains, identity groups, and the Perspectives for a Diverse America curriculum to the faculty
- Shared the template for creating the lessons
- Assigned staff to small grade-level teams to write the lesson plan
- Convened full grade levels to share work of the teams and solicit feedback.

Rob Ackerman set the tone for the day: “Our students deserve this.”

Accomplishments of the day

- Faculty was energized by the morning speaker
- Lane staff members were highly engaged in the task for the afternoon
- A lesson plan was written for each of the thirteen books that were chosen by the Lane EDC
- Lane teachers took ownership of the project and were proud of the results
- All lesson plans were shared and ultimately posted on a Google Drive account providing easy access for teachers
- Rob Ackerman approved ordering all books for 2016-2017
- The expectation was set that every class in each grade would incorporate the four books into their curriculum starting in the 2016-2017

3rd Grade Lesson Example: Brother Eagle, Sister Sky

Domain: Action

Essential Questions:

How can I encourage others to stand for justice?

How are progress and struggle different/similar across different groups?

What responsibilities do I have to myself, my community, my group, and other people?

Pre-reading:

Vocabulary work. Discussion: what is sacred to you? Demonstrate interconnection by creating a class web with yarn, then cutting one piece to demonstrate how if even one link is broken, the entire web suffers.

During reading:

Close reading strategies. Questioning using pre-set questions. Discussion.

Post-reading:

Create a thinking map for cause and effect. Select and carry out small projects to care for our school community. Without informing students, ask the custodian to not clean the classroom for a week. Allow students to notice, process, and react independently. Debrief at end of week.

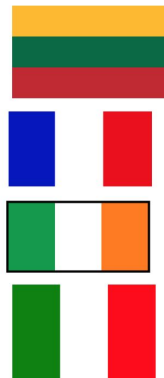
Examples of Student Work: 4th Grade

Domain: Action

Text: Let's Talk About Race



Flags of:
Lithuania, France,
Ireland, Italy.



My story by Shalom



Mom,dad,brother,grandfather,grandmother
are in my family



Paneer

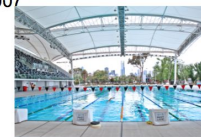


I am Asian

I was born on june 2nd,2007



I was born in Boston



swimming



My descendants are from India



reading



karate

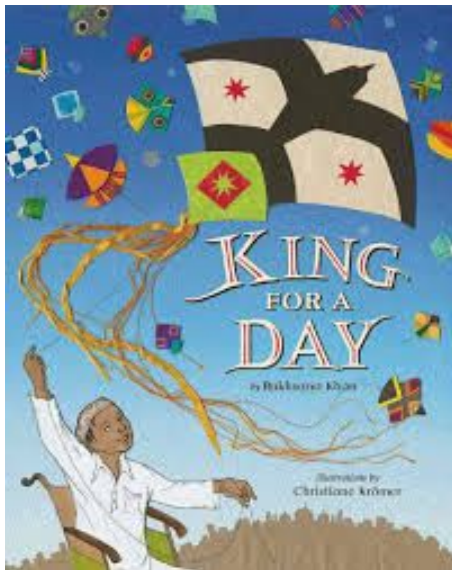


I am christian

Fifth Grade Student Questions

Domain: Diversity

Prereading question: This story takes place in Pakistan. What do you wonder about when you hear the word Pakistan?

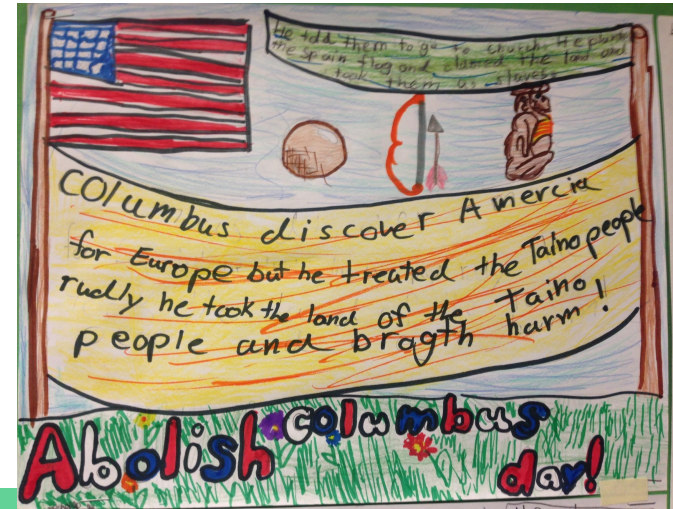
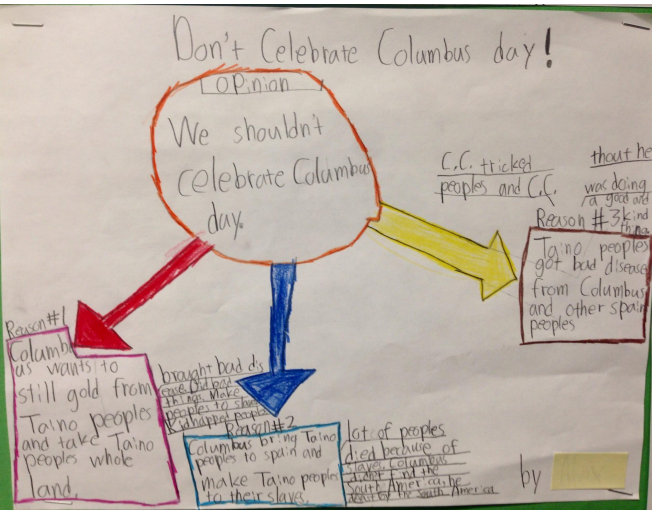


- Where is Pakistan?
- Does all of Pakistan have the same climate?
- What religions are in Pakistan?
- Is there terrorism in Pakistan?
- Why do some people from Pakistan and surrounding countries have a red dot on their forehead, but others don't?
- Why do some cultures cover their whole body?
- Why do some people only cover certain parts of their body?
- What is the name for the traditional clothing?
- Why do the roofs of the house have fences around them?
- Will Malik really be king if his kite wins?

This year: 2016-2017

All teachers have begun to integrate these books into their curriculum

As well as: Helping students apply the critical thinking skills learned and developed through the anti-bias picture book lessons to other topics across the curriculum (i.e. Columbus Day, diverse holidays, literature, and the Presidential election).



Columbus Day

- Teachers on Lane EDC developed three different lessons meant to encourage discussion, debate, and perspective taking.
- All classrooms required to teach on the subject

Slide 33 of a fourth grade student's independent project debating if Columbus Day should be abolished.

GOOD OR BAD?

The question of this power point is, should we celebrate Columbus Day? Our group says no because Columbus killed a lot of people afterward. We believe we should celebrate Indigenous People's Day instead. In Seattle, people have started doing this. Do you think we should celebrate Columbus Day?



The Presidential Election

- Teachers worked to foster inclusive and respectful environments for the election, both before and after the election.
- Students pledged to use civil discourse
- Students were encouraged to ask questions and speak with informed opinions



Student Reflections

4th graders reflect on their new understandings about Thanksgiving.

The lesson I learned from Thanksgiving is Think before you do.

The message of Thanksgiving is to get along with your family.

The lesson I learned from Thanksgiving is to get along with people.

Be Thankful always.

The lesson I learned from Thanksgiving is to be thankful for my family.

The message of Thanksgiving is to not go on somebody's land without asking.

The message of Thanksgiving is that people need to do.

The lesson I learned from Thanksgiving is that Thanksgiving is not just for food and thanks it's also to celebrate now and why we live where we do.

The message of Thanksgiving is get along and stay together.

The lesson I learned from Thanksgiving is Think before You act.

The Lesson I learned from Thanksgiving is that you should be thankful for what you have.

The message for Thanksgiving is:

To be thankful for all the food and water we get.

The message of Thanksgiving is to always find a way to make friends and share a day with them.

-Alma

The message of Thanksgiving is think before you act.

The lesson I learned from Thanksgiving is to respect other people.

The message of Thanksgiving is to always be thankful for your family and friends.

11-22-16

-Helen C

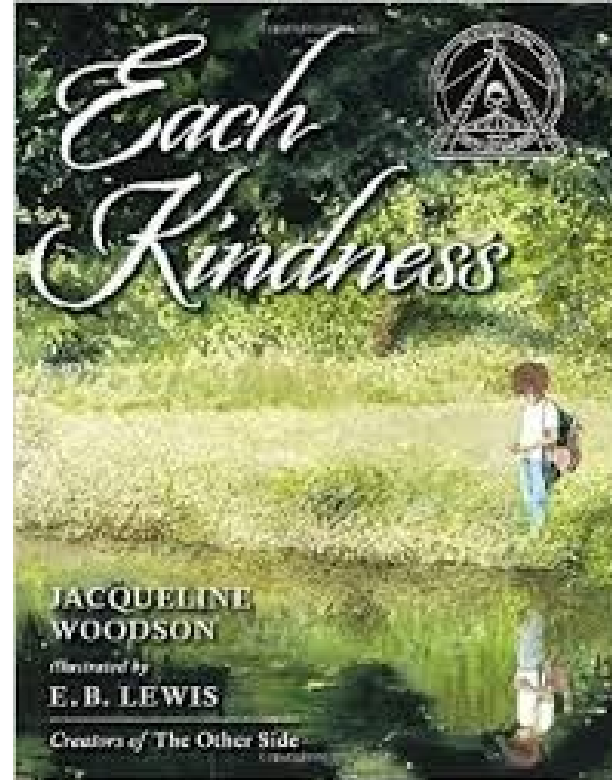
The lesson I learned was it is OK to say no to other people.

Victoria

The message of Thanksgiving is it is better to be friends than enemies.

Student Reflections

- Third graders reflecting on:
 - diversity
 - the election
 - the text Each Kindness



Next Steps

- Faculty will reconvene at the end of the year to debrief and discuss experiences teaching the anti-bias picture book lessons.
- Lane School EDC will continue to support and enhance community conversations among faculty in regards to issues of cultural proficiency in our daily interactions with students.
- We will continue to help students apply the critical thinking skills learned and developed through the anti-bias picture book lessons to other topics across the curriculum

