



Considerations in Selecting Books for Young Children that Build Equity and Inclusion

Considerations for Characters	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1. Look at the characters who are diverse. Are they treated like strong, active, and capable individuals? Are they able to make a contribution? Are they portrayed and treated as if they are lacking? Are diverse characters placed on a pedestal? Does their inclusion reflect tokenism?				
2. Watch how the characters treat each other. Do characters model views or actions that you would like children to emulate?				
3. Consider how families are portrayed. Are families of diverse cultures, compositions, and configurations portrayed authentically and respectfully? How are siblings depicted? Are siblings shown as being allies?				
4. Consider the insights children will gain from the book. Are there one or more characters with whom a young reader who is diverse can readily identify in positive and constructive ways? Do the words and images provide <u>mirrors</u> (i.e., an accurate reflection that values diverse children, their families, and their communities)? Do the words and images provide <u>windows and/or sliding doors</u> (i.e., opportunities to learn about or partake in someone else's experience)?				
5. Consider the potential impact of the book. Will it help to expand a child's world view? Will it build knowledge of other cultures and lifeways? Will it provide accurate insights that build opportunities for inclusion?				
Considerations for the Story, Theme & Setting	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
6. Think about the narrative. How are problems resolved? Does the storyline <u>encourage</u> conversations about differences? Does the storyline facilitate normalizing conversations? Does the storyline help change stereotypes or change the narrative? Does the theme allow the characters to go beyond "hero-ism"? Are children able to relate to the story irrespective of the character's ability?				
7. Watch the vocabulary. Is person-first language used (e.g., a child with a disability rather than a disabled child)? Is current and preferred terminology used?				

Considerations for the Story, Theme & Setting (continued)	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
8. Look for the values conveyed through the book. Does the narrative emphasize equity, fairness, and inclusion?				
9. Look at the places in the book. Are the ways in which homes, communities, and other settings portrayed and depicted authentically and respectfully? Does the context support or refute stereotypes?				
10. Consider the insights children will gain from the book. Are there one or more characters with whom diverse young children can readily identify in positive and constructive ways? Do the words and images provide <u>mirrors</u> (i.e., an accurate reflection that values diverse children, their families, and their communities?) Do the words and images provide <u>windows and/or sliding doors</u> (i.e., opportunities to learn about or partake in someone else's experience)?				
11. Consider the potential impact of the book. Will it help to expand a child's world view? Will it build knowledge of other cultures and lifeways? Will it provide accurate insights that build opportunities for inclusion?				
12. Consider the setting. Do the stories promote understanding of our diverse society? Does the book speak to ALL children?				
Considerations for the Illustrations	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
13. Consider the age-appropriateness of the illustration style. Are the illustrations colorful and engaging to hold young children's attention?				
14. Consider how the illustrations portray different people. Are diverse populations represented well?				
15. Look at the illustrator's experience and background with the communities represented. Are the illustrations and the information they communicate accurate and respectful?				
16. Do the illustrations represent diversity within cultural groups? Are the illustrations mindful of cultural differences within groups? Do the images capture diversity from the real world?				
17. Are characters realistically and genuinely portrayed?				
18. Do the illustrations avoid reinforcing societal stereotypes?				

This checklist was adapted by Camille Catlett and Shivani Pandit from Catlett & George (2005), Rudine Sims Bishop (1990), Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task Force (1989), and Barnes, Berrigan, & Biklen (1978).