

Diversity Curriculum Development Grant
Assessment and Report
Danielle E. Price

As the recipient of funding to prepare a course on multiethnic children's literature, I was grateful to have the time in the summer of 2019 to read and research the relevant literature and scholarship.

The extensive reading I did over the summer led me to the realization that my initial plan to teach a course on the whole of multiethnic literature was too broad. As a result, I have focused on African-American children's literature and have created a syllabus focused on this subject but pointing potentially to other multiethnic traditions. Thus, I must update my initial grant narrative as follows:

This course will focus on children's literature by and about African-Americans. In doing so, it will examine several genres of children's literature including picture books, novels, graphic novels, and memoirs, and it will analyze these texts using the paradigms developed by African-American theorists. The immediate goal of the course will be to provide students with a history of African-American children's literature, a justification for the reading and teaching of this literature, and the analytical tools to write and speak persuasively about this tradition.

The long-term goal of this new course is to contribute to a change in the market conditions for African-American children's literature. The children's book market is in large part determined by demands from teachers and librarians. The books that are published reflect the curricula of elementary schools. By providing JMU students—many of whom will go on to be teachers, librarians, editors, and publishers—with the analytical tools for engaging with books by and about African Americans, I can encourage them to choose these books for their future students, communities, and readers.

Re-evaluating, revising, and assessing the timeline:

2019

- June 1 to July 14: research on the history, themes, genres, and theories of multiethnic children's literature
 - *From this research, I decided to focus on African-American children's literature*
- July 15-July 25: generate list of primary and secondary readings for students
 - *This portion took longer: July 15-August 10; August 21-August 30*
 - *Completed*
- July 26-July 31: create syllabus and assignments; submit initial statement of completion
 - *This portion was started later and took longer: August 21-September 17*
 - *A draft syllabus has been completed; the types of assignments have been indicated*

2020

- January - April: teach course
 - *The date for teaching this course could be either Spring 2020 or Fall 2020*
 - *This course could be taught either as a lecture and discussion course, or as a seminar*
 - *After teaching this course, I will assess its efficacy based on student feedback*

Primary Texts

Alexander, Kwame. *The Crossover*. HMH, 2014.

Craft, Jerry. *New Kid*. HarperCollins, 2019.

Crews, Donald. *Bigmama's*. HarperCollins, 1991.

---. *Freight Train*. Greenwillow, 1979.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *Elijah of Buxton*. 2007. Scholastic, 2009.

---. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*. Yearling, 1997.

De La Pena, Matt and Christian Robinson. *Last Stop on Market Street*. Penguin, 2015.

Hughes, Langston. *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*. 1932. Knopf, 1996.

Keats, Ezra Jack. *The Snowy Day*. 1962. Puffin, 1976.

Moore, David Barclay. *The Stars Beneath Our Feet*. 2015. Knopf, 2017.

Lewis, John and Andrew Aydin *March: Book 1*. Top Shelf, 2013.

---. *March: Book 2*. Top Shelf, 2015.

---. *March: Book 3*. Top Shelf, 2016.

Magoon, Kekla. *How It Went Down*. Square Fish, 2015.

Myers, Christopher. *Black Cat*. Scholastic, 1999.

Okorafor, Nnedi. *Akata Witch*. 2011. Speak, 2017.

Raschka, Chris. *Charlie Parker Played Be Bop*. 1992. Scholastic, 1997.

Reynolds, Jason. *As Brave as You*. 2016. Atheneum, 2017.

---. *The Boy in the Black Suit* Atheneum, 2015.

Ringgold, Faith. *Tar Beach*. 1991. Dragonfly, 1996.

Russell-Brown, Katheryn and Frank Morrison. *Little Melba and Her Big Trombone*. Lee and Low, 2014.

Smith, Ronald L. *Hoodoo*. 2015. Clarion, 2017.

Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse. Directed by Bob Persichetti, Peter Ramsey, and Rodney Rothman, Sony Pictures, 2018.

Taylor, Mildred. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. 1976. Puffin, 2004.

Weatherford, Carole Boston and Sean Qualls. *Before John was a Jazz Giant: A Song of John Coltrane*. Henry Holt, 2008.

Weatherford, Carole Boston and R. Gregory Christie. *Freedom in Congo Square*. Little Bee Books, 2016.

Williams-Garcia, Rita. *One Crazy Summer*. 2010. Amistad, 2011.

---. *P.S. Be Eleven*. 2013. Amistad, 2015.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Brown Girl Dreaming*. 2014. Puffin, 2016.

Woodson, Jacqueline and E.B. Lewis. *Each Kindness*. Nancy Paulsen, 2012.

Woodson, Jacqueline and Rafael Lopez. *The Day you Begin*. Penguin, 2018.

Significant Secondary Texts

Alexander, Joy. "The Verse Novel: A New Genre." *Children's Literature in Education*, vol. 36, no. 3, September 2005, pp. 269-283.

Anatol, Giselle Liza. "Brown Girl Dreaming: A Ghost Story in the Postcolonial Gothic Tradition." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 1, Winter 2016, pp. 403-419.

Baker, Augusta. *The Black Experience in Children's Literature*. New York Public Library, 1971.

Bernstein, Robin. *Racial Innocence: Performing American Childhood and Race from Slavery to Civil Rights*. NYU P, 2011.

Bishop, Rudine Sims. *Free Within Ourselves: The Development of African-American Children's Literature*. Heinemann, 2007.

Bosmajian, Hamida. "Mildred Taylor's Story of Cassie Logan: A Search for Law and Justice in a Racist Society." *Children's Literature: Annual of The Modern Language Association Division on Children's Literature and The Children's Literature Association*, vol. 24, 1996, pp. 141-60.

- Davis-McElligatt, Joanna C. "Walk Together, Children': the Function and Interplay of Comics, History, and Memory in *Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story* and John Lewis's *March: Book One*." *Graphic Novels for Children and Young Adults*, edited by Michelle Ann Abate and Gwen Tarbox, UP of Mississippi, 2017, pp. 298-311.
- Hinton, KaaVonia. "Following Tradition: Young Adult Literature as Neo-slave Narrative." *Embracing, Evaluating, and Examining African American Children's and Young Adult Literature*, edited by Wanda M. Brooks and Jonda C. McNair, Scarecrow, 2008, pp. 50-65.
- Howard, Krystal. "Collage, Confession, and Crisis in Jacqueline Woodson's *Brown Girl Dreaming*." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 3, Fall 2017, pp. 326-44.
- . "Influence Poetry and Found Poetry: The Reflection of Creative Writing Pedagogy in the Verse Novel for Young Readers." *Lion and the Unicorn*, vol. 42, no. 2, Apr. 2018, pp. 218-237.
- Johnson, Dianne. *Telling Tales: The Pedagogy and Promise of African American Literature for Youth*. Greenwood, 1990.
- Martin, Michelle. *Brown Gold: Milestones of African-American Children's Picture Books*. Routledge, 2004.
- Price, Danielle. "Heterotopic Nightmares and Coming of Age in *Elijah of Buxton*: Mobility and Maturation." *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2016, pp. 202-226.
- Raynaud, Claudine. "Coming of Age in the African American Novel." *The Cambridge Companion to the African American Novel*, edited by Maryemma Graham, 2004, pp. 106-121.
- Smith, Katharine Capshaw. *Children's Literature of the Harlem Renaissance*. Indiana UP, 2006.
- . "From Bank Street to Harlem: A Conversation with Ellen Tarry." *The Lion and the Unicorn*, vol. 23, April 1999, pp. 271-285.
- Sweeney, Meghan. "Making Good Trouble: John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell's *March* Trilogy and the Lessons of the Civil Rights Movement." *Contending with Gun*

Violence in the English Language Classroom, edited by Shelly Shaffer et al, Routledge, 2019, pp. 88-96.

Thomas, Ebony Elizabeth. "African American Children's Literature: Liminal Terrains and Strategies for Selfhood." *Diversity in Youth Literature: Opening Doors through Reading*, edited by Jamie Campbell Naidoo and Sarah Park Dahlen, ALA, 2013, pp. 33-43.

---. *The Dark Fantastic: Race and the imagination from Harry Potter to the Hunger Games*. NYU P, 2019.