

"When those who have the power to name and to socially construct reality choose not to see you or hear you, whether you are dark-skinned, old, disabled, female, or speak with a different accent or dialect than theirs, when someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing."

Excerpt from Invisibility in Academe

--Adrienne Rich

# **Text Talk with our Students: Examining Intersections of Identities and Embracing Diversity**

*TK-5 “102” Parent Workshop*

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# Workshop Objectives

- To recognize and identify texts as platforms for conversations about student representation regardless of whether these texts *DO* or *DO NOT* directly address those identities.
- To examine familiar books through a new lens and figure out *HOW* to “mine” books for their hidden nuggets about student representation.

# Questions to Consider

- What are some of the barriers for students to see their identities and experiences reflected in the curriculum?
- Why do these barriers exist?
- What are the advantages to toppling these barriers?
- Is there a way to sidestep or pull a judo move on these “barriers?” How?

# Bullying & Intimidation Policy AR 5131(a) -

[bit.ly/bullying-policy-ar5131](http://bit.ly/bullying-policy-ar5131)



**Students**

AR 5131.2(a)

## **BULLYING**

### **Bullying and Intimidation (Student-to-Student, Adult-to-Student)**

This procedure applies to allegations of bullying and intimidation of students by students or adults.

The district believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The district, schools, and community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance.

The district will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the rights and safety of any student. Neither staff nor students shall intimidate, harass, or bully another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes: direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation or manipulation.

The district expects students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and visitors to promptly report

# Solutions For Changing the School Climate for All Students

- A. Supportive educators as reinforced by trainings
- B. Comprehensive, Enumerated Anti-Bullying Policy
- C. Curriculum that reflects the ACTUAL diversity of all student subgroups.
- D. Opportunities and spaces for students to find safety and promote empowerment amongst peers (ie MECHA, African-American Student Unions, Gender Sexuality Alliances)

# Speaking of Curriculum Inclusion. . .

# 3 Main Types of Texts in Discussing the Diversity of the Human Experience

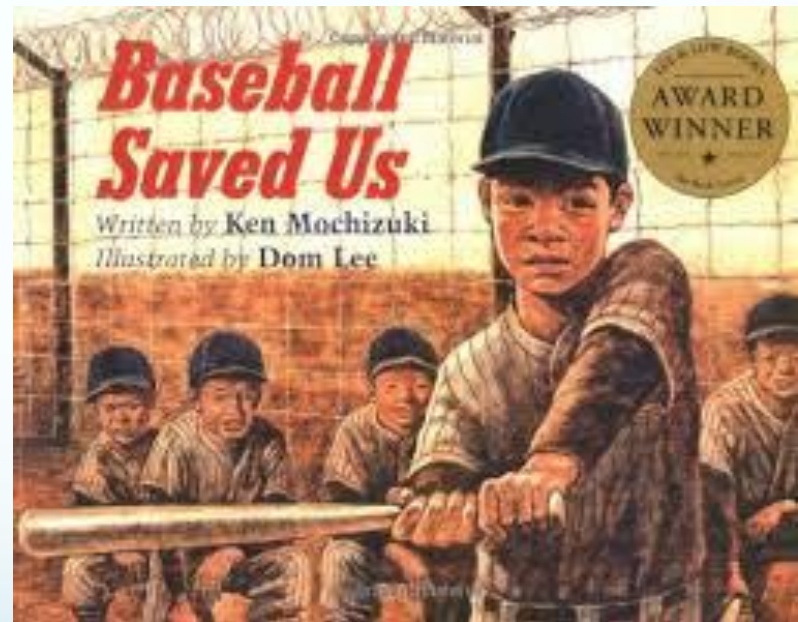
- Explicit / Prescriptive – Texts where the main characters or themes represent specific human subpopulations
- Incidental / Subtext – Texts where a theme or character from that subpopulation ***doesn't*** take center stage but is woven into the plot
- Everything Else – Everything else



# Explicit / Prescriptive Text Example

**Baseball Saved Us**

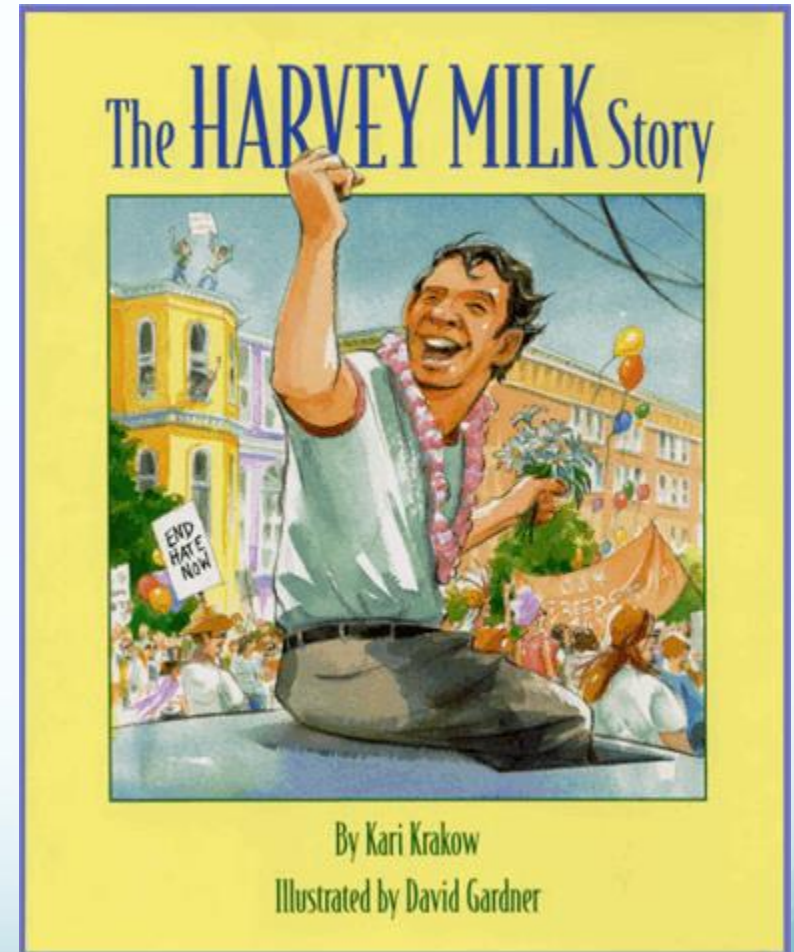
**-- Ken Mochizuki**



# Explicit / Prescriptive Text Example

**Harvey Milk**

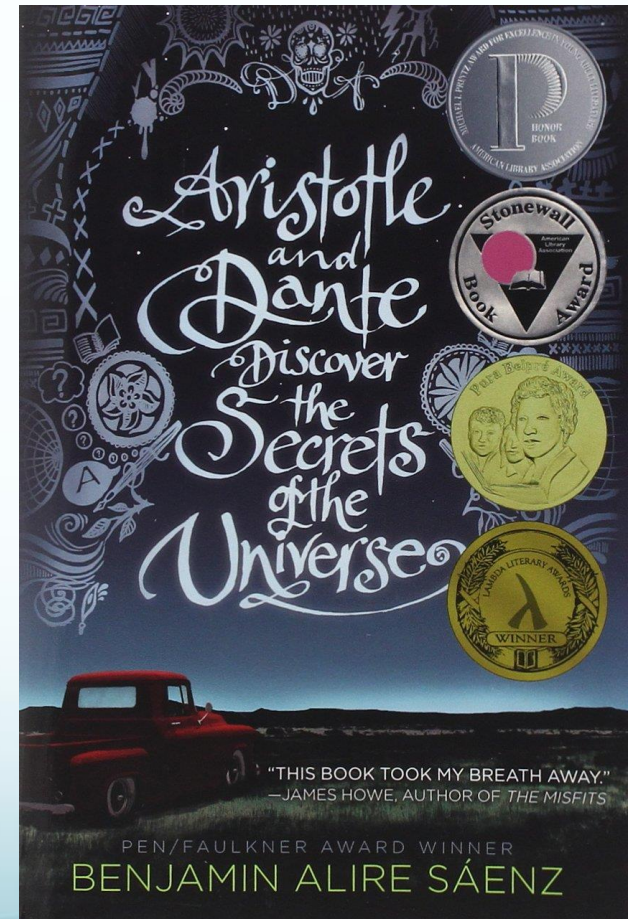
**-- Kari Krakow**



# Explicit / Prescriptive Text Example

**Aristotle and Dante  
Discover the Secrets  
of the Universe**

**-- Benjamin Saenz**



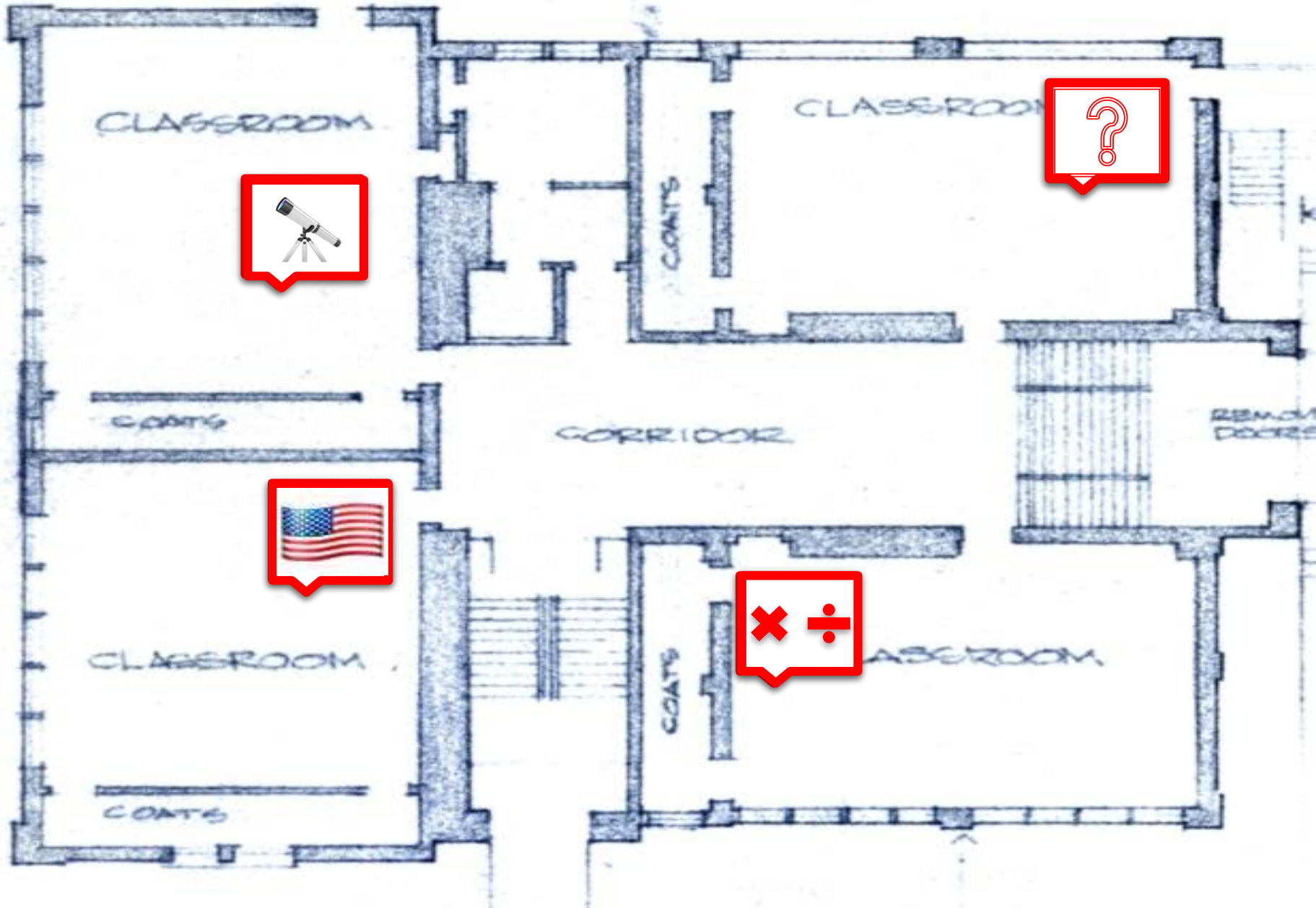
# Challenges Around Implementation

- Educators getting their hands on resources
- Educators being reluctant to take it on because they're not supported at the administrative level
- Educators not feeling confident about broaching the topic

# Ideal situation!



# The reality. . .





*Social Justice* = **Fairness**





Students BUY IN when the confluence of issues, identities, & concerns that are all related to the human experience is embedded into classroom routine. . .

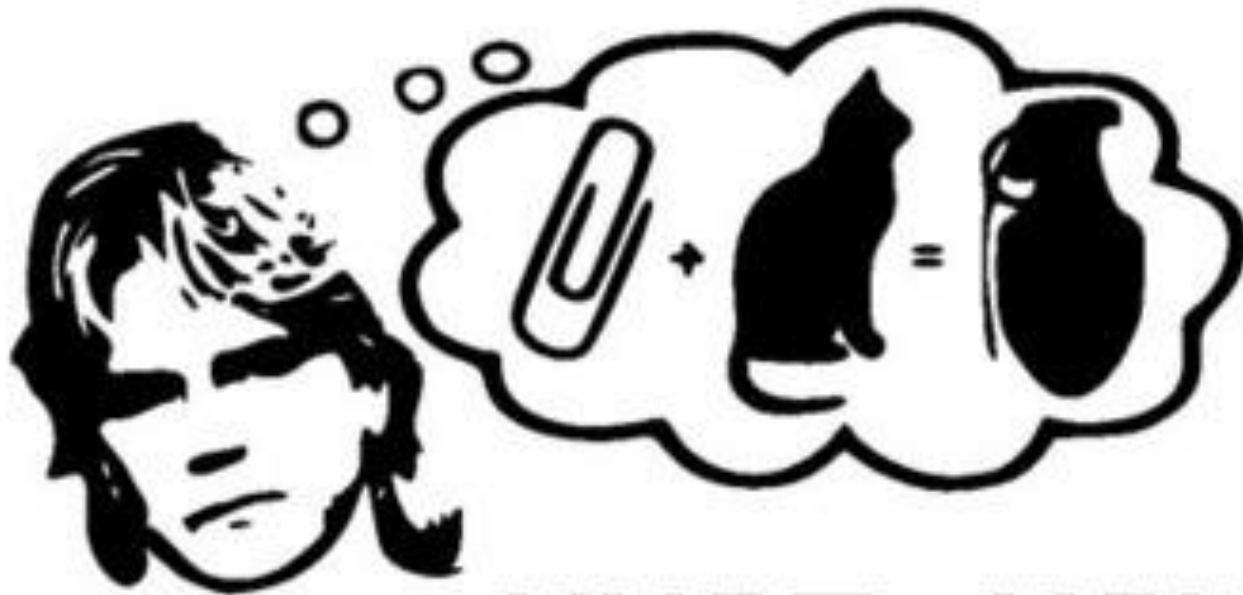


. . .and it doesn't have to be THEIR OWN experience all the time, but “intersectionality” helps them connect the dots.

**Not all texts are explicitly about specific populations or experiences, but we CAN craft our instruction so that all roads will lead the students there [true for more texts than you or I can imagine!!!].**



Educators need to be resourceful.



WHAT WOULD  
MacGyver DO?

# INCLUSIVE Pedagogy

Pivotal concepts:

Students need to see/hear themselves reflected in the curriculum. When they DO, they begin to recognize commonalities between their own experience and the experiences of classmates. This builds communities of care.

You feasibly COULD have discussions about equity and empowerment every day with virtually ANY TEXT.

Pivotal concept: A text is only as powerful as the classroom discussion that it prompts.

# Woven into the discussion of literature are the broad themes of:

- ★ bullying
- ★ empathy
- ★ family diversity
- ★ awareness of the plight of others
- ★ individualism / nonconformity
- ★ advocacy
- ★ the meaning of “ally” / solidarity
- ★ stereotyping and why it happens
- ★ rigidity of thought and how we can ALL reconsider
- ★ power/privilege
- ★ oppression
- ★ gender stereotypes/roles
- ★ discovering who we are
- ★ the value of each human being
- ★ missed opportunities
- ★ societal rules, laws, norms—the good and the bad

# From the Common Core Reading Standards for Literature

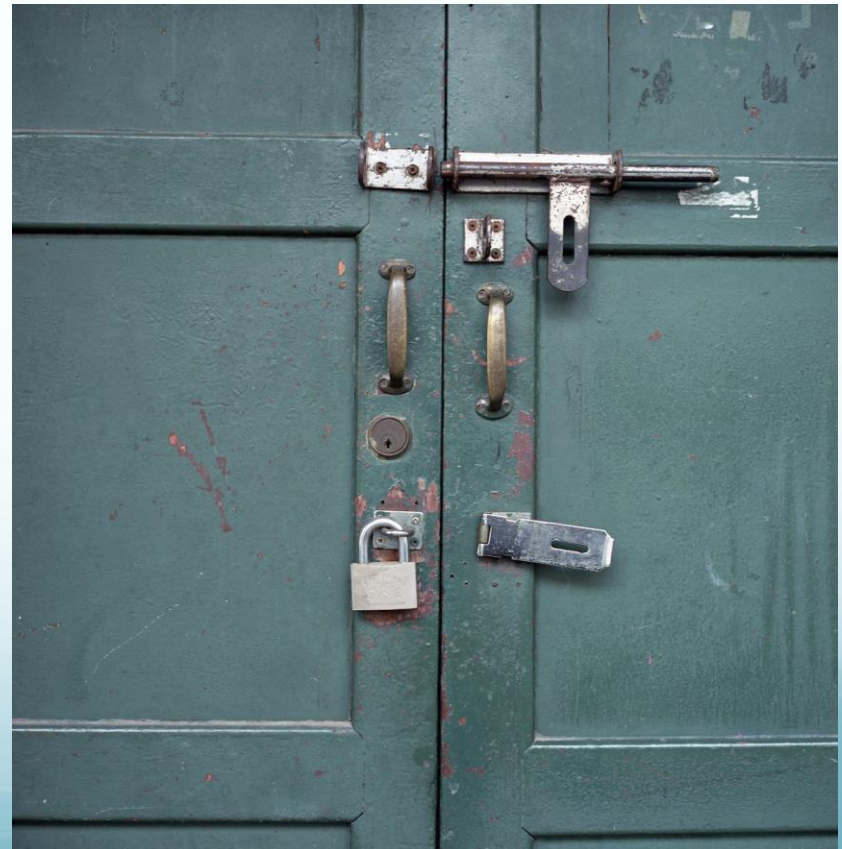
3.1 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.



**WE ALREADY DO THIS !!!!!!!**

**Educators need to be empowered and willing to explore these broad themes.**

The old  
“unlocked door”  
metaphor



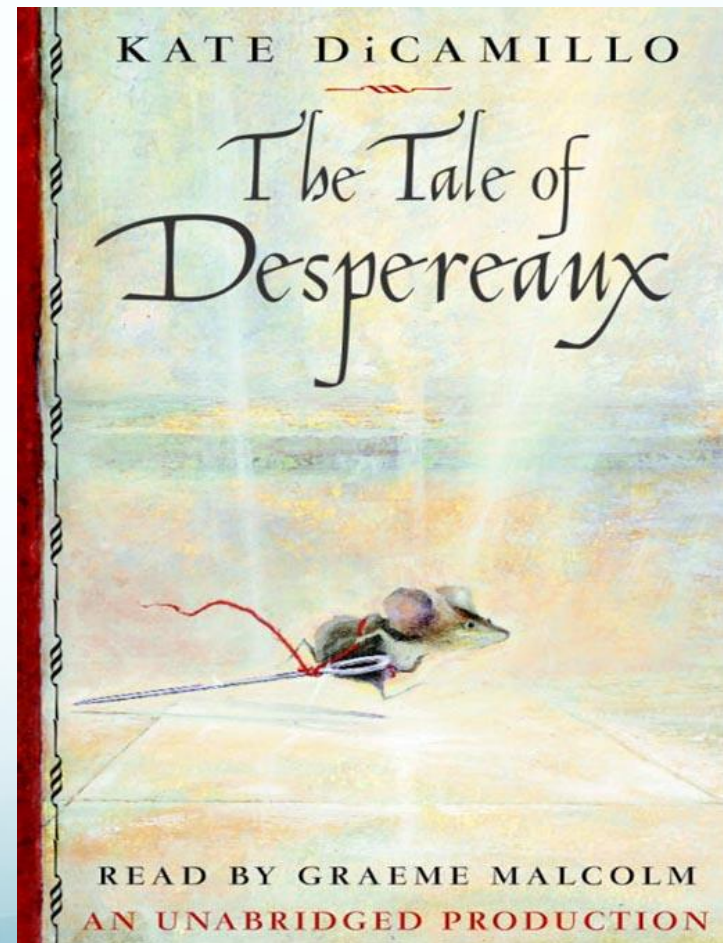
## The salient passage

*“Reader, I am pleased to tell you that the [princess] was a kind person, and perhaps more important, she was empathetic. Do you know what it means to be **empathetic**?”*

*I will tell you: It means that when you are being forcibly taken to a dungeon, when you have a large knife pointed at your back, when you are trying to be brave, you are able, still to think for a moment of the person who is holding that knife. . .*


*That, reader, is **empathy**.”*

## The Tale of Despereaux — Kate DiCamillo







# Empathy




Making an attempt to understand the situation of another person even if it is quite different from our own.



Do I have to be black to share in the sting of indignity of being treated as a second-class citizen?



Can we think of other groups or communities that understand that indignity?



Do we have to be a member of that group in order to empathize with their situation?

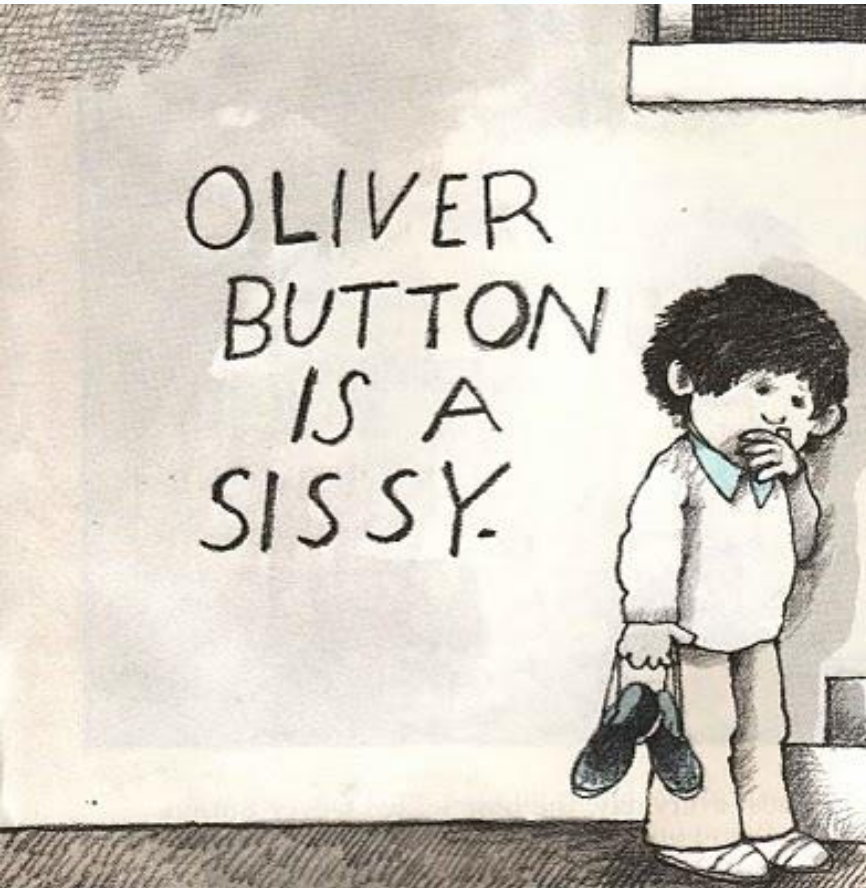
The salient passage

## Oliver Button is a Sissy — Tomie dePaola

*“But the boys, especially the older ones in the schoolyard teased Oliver Button.*

*‘What are those shiny shoes, sissy?’ they said.*

*. . . And they grabbed Oliver’s tap shoes and played catch with them, until one of the girls caught them. ”*



# Gender

What other things have we been told are ONLY for boys or ONLY for girls? Can we think of times when this isn't true?

What happens if a boy does something that's only for girls? What happens when a girl does something only for boys?

When does Oliver get told that he's OK just the way he is? When is he told that he's not OK?

Can you think of a time when YOU were told that you acted too much like a girl? Too much like a boy?

What are some things we can do to let students feel just fine for being who they are?

## The salient passage

*“At last Maddie sat up in bed. . .and really thought. This was the hardest thinking she had ever done. After a long, long time she reached an important conclusion.*

*She was never going to stand by and say nothing again.*

*If she ever heard anybody picking on someone because they were funny looking or because they had strange names, she'd speak up. Even if it meant losing Peggy's friendship.”*

## The Hundred Dresses — Eleanor Estes



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- ★ the meaning of “ally”
- ★ stereotyping and why it happens
- ★ rigidity of thought and how we can ALL reconsider
- ★ power/privilege
- ★ oppression
- ★ gender stereotypes/roles
- ★ discovering who we are
- ★ the value of each human being
- ★ societal rules, laws, norms—the good and the bad

**Remember the spaces that LGBTQIA youth identified as unsafe??**



# From the Common Core ELA-Literacy Standards

RL 9-10.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details.



**WE ALREADY DO THIS, TOO !!!!!!!**

## The salient passage (chapter 10)

“It was an accident,” said Piggy suddenly, “that’s what it was. An accident.” His voice shrilled again. “Coming in the dark—he hadn’t no business crawling like that out of the dark. He was batty. He asked for it.” He gesticulated wildly again. “It was an accident.”

...

“I’m frightened. Of us. I want to go home. Oh God, I want to go home.”

“It was an accident, said Piggy stubbornly, “and that’s that.” He touched Ralph’s bare shoulder and Ralph shuddered at the human contact.

“And look, Ralph”—Piggy glanced round quickly, then leaned close—“don’t let on we was in that dance. Not to Samneric.”

“But we were! All of us!”

Piggy shook his head.

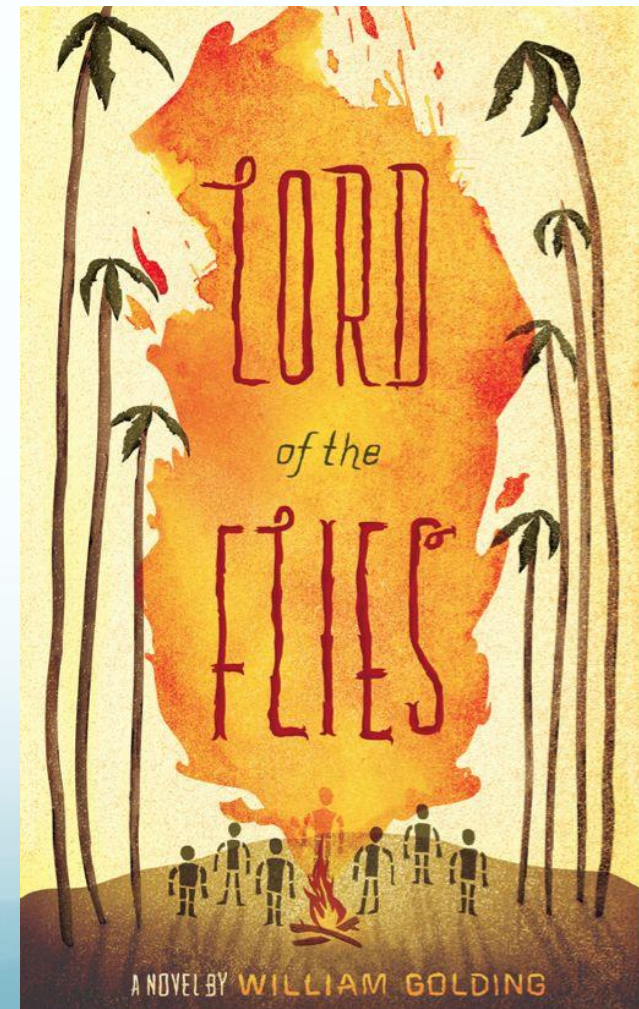
“Not us till last. They never noticed in the dark. Anyway you said I was only on the outside.”

“So was I.” muttered Ralph, “I was on the outside too.”

Piggy nodded eagerly.

“That’s right. We was on the outside. We never done nothing, we never seen nothing.”

## The Lord of the Flies — William Golding



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**Remember the spaces that LGBTQIA youth identified as unsafe??**





# Dissolution of laws and social order

Which rules are bent first? What is the justification? Which rules are the last to topple? Why?

When the social order begins to unravel, who is affected? Evidence? Why these characters and not others?

What parallels can be drawn between characters affected by dissolution of the social order in LOTF and people we know?

Are there commonalities amongst people affected most / least by the dissolution of social order in real life? What justifications do YOU hear that are similar to Piggy's denial of culpability in Simon's death?

What societal factors contribute to the "vulnerability" of various people? What are ways that people empower themselves or support others?

## The salient passage

Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original black box, they still remembered to use stones. The pile of stones the boys had made earlier was ready; there were stones on the ground with the blowing scraps of paper that had come out of the box. Delacroix selected a stone so large she had to pick it up with both hands and turned to Mrs. Dunbar.

"Come on," she said. "Hurry up."

Mrs. Dunbar had small stones in both hands, and she said, gasping for breath. "I can't run at all. You'll have to go ahead and I'll catch up with you."

The children had stones already. And someone gave little Davy Hutchinson a few pebbles. Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. "It isn't fair," she said. A stone hit her on the side of the head. Old Man Warner was saying, "Come on, come on, everyone." Steve Adams was in the front of the crowd of villagers, with Mrs. Graves beside him.


"It isn't fair, it isn't right," Mrs. Hutchinson screamed, and then they were upon her.

## The Lottery — Shirley Jackson




# Rigidity of thought and blind allegiance


For what will you compromise your morals?




Who decides which morals can be compromised?




What parallels can be drawn between characters in The Lottery blindly following and ourselves?



What commonalities do we see in the real world? What justifications do we hear for people blindly following others? Justifications for following what many perceive as “normal?”



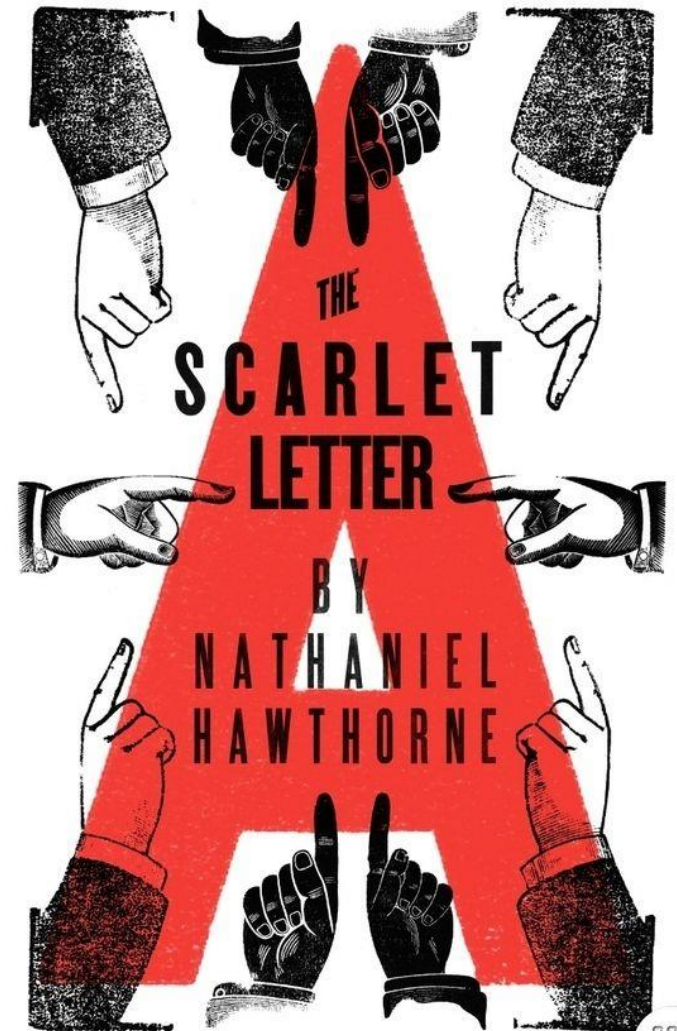
Why do we follow people with no need to evaluate their motives? How and when do we “check” our moral compass?



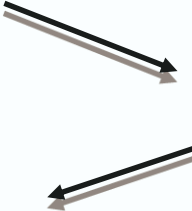
The salient passage 

“Be true! Be true!  
Be true! Show  
freely to the world,  
if not your worst,  
yet some trait  
whereby the worst  
may be inferred!”

## The Scarlet Letter — Nathaniel Hawthorne



# Discovering and Revealing WHO WE ARE



Why do characters struggle to reveal their truths in The Scarlet Letter? What factors play into that struggle?

What are the consequences of their silence?  
What are the benefits of their silence?



What makes it difficult for US and those close to us to reveal our own identities, our true selves to others? Fears, benefits, risks?



Can we think of other individuals, groups, or communities who may be afraid to reveal their identities or their truths in safety?



How can we support them? Why is it important to support them?

# The CHALLENGE!!!!

- Work in groups of 2-3 and brainstorm texts that clearly lend themselves to the discussion of the “broad themes.”
- What broad themes do these texts address? How would the classroom conversation go?
- Construct a chart that shows how your conversation leads to LGBTQIA.
- Prepare to share your chart with the big group.

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[goo.gl/5vAm2j](http://goo.gl/5vAm2j)

[goo.gl/UvTm9s](http://goo.gl/UvTm9s)



Comprehensive list

Prescriptive /  
Elementary only



# THE Booklist

[goo.gl/5vAm2j](http://goo.gl/5vAm2j)

## Books that Explore Broad Themes of Diversity and Inclusion

Most can be embedded within the RL (literature) standards that identify and describe characters, feelings, and mood.

compiled by Mick Rabin

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draft 8/29/18

FAIR Education Act Lesson Plans ----->

[bit.ly/FAIRlessonplans](http://bit.ly/FAIRlessonplans)

See the longer booklist here ----->

[goo.gl/5vAm2j](http://goo.gl/5vAm2j)

Making the Framework FAIR ----->

[bit.ly/MakingFrameworkFair](http://bit.ly/MakingFrameworkFair)

Handy guide for selecting anti-bias children's books ----->

<http://tiny.cc/g8apuy>

### Broad Topic Titles

### Author

Spanish?

### Passage page # (the "salient passage")

Broad topics

### grade rang

Does My Head Look Funny in This?	Abdel-Fatah, Randa			religion, diversity, empowerment, empathy	8-12
Yes! We are Latinos: Poems and Prose about the Latino Experience	Ada, Alma Flor; Campoy, F. Isabel			Latino, race, ethnicity, empowerment, diversity	4-8
They Poured Fire on Us from the Sky--The True Story of the Little Boy Who Wasn't Scared	Ajak, Benjamin			resilience, power/privilege, marginalization, empowerment	7-11
I'm NOT Just a Scribble	Alber, Diane			diversity, ability, empathy, empowerment	TK-3
Upside of Unrequited, The	Albertalli, Becky			LGBTQIA and body shape/size	9-11
Absolutely True Story of a Part Time Indian, The	Alexie, Sherman			race, trauma, alcoholism, resilience, poverty	7-10
Case for Loving: The Fight for Interracial Marriage	Alko, Selina			Race, policy, love is love	1-6

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# Thank you for a wonderful session!



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