

ILA 2016

Using Diverse Books in Library and School Programs

B A Binns

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Purpose: As librarians serving the most diverse generation of children and teens in the United States ever in terms of socioeconomic backgrounds, gender identities, abilities, races, religions, ethnicities, and cultures, how do we better prepare them to deal with the world stage?

To accomplish this, we will discuss various programs designed for public and school libraries that help counteract the subliminal, but all too pervasive, messages children receive in the world today.

Learning outcomes – participants will:

- Gain an increased understanding of the importance of using diverse books
- Receive information about programs involving diverse books and other materials
- Have a chance to share their own techniques in using diverse books with students

We hope you will attend to learn about various program possibilities for your own library/school, and to share your own programming ideas and experiences!

Agenda:

Definitions & level-setting

The meaning of diversity and the importance of empathy

Why we all need both windows *and* mirrors (as well as sliding glass doors)

Rationale

Research shows that children as young as three begin absorbing the bias messages around them. Even without totally understanding them, they accept them as fact. As children get older, the messages can become further entrenched unless changed by trusted adults. Library and classroom programs can use literature to help teach children and adults to identify with others and empathize with those who are different from themselves. This empathy and understanding can lead to a better world and brighter future because:

“To succeed in today’s workplace, young people need **more** than basic reading and math skills. They need...**flexibility to adapt to change and interpersonal skills to succeed in multi-cultural cross-functional teams.**”

- Willard Marriott, Jr. Chairman and CEO, Marriott International, Inc.

Programming

Preschool to 2nd grade

- Let young readers observe themselves and others, and interact with those others with a focus on developing empathy
- Emphasize friendship between different races and backgrounds, with emphasis on kids playing and getting along together
- Counter-narratives to prevailing ideas about people from marginalized groups

3rd grade through Middle Grade

Programs that focus on many of the same things as presented to younger children, PLUS:

- Finding stories that elicit empathy and lead to discussion of real world issues
- Importance of book covers and first impressions
- Library audit for diversity
- Provide opportunities for participants to examine their conscious and unconscious assumptions about people of different races and other marginalized groups
- Book talks centered around unique narratives and challenging negative assumptions

7th grade through Adults

Additional programs to provide participants opportunities to read outside of their usual choices such as:

- Blind Date With A Book

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- Speed Dating using diverse books
- Social justice
- Classroom Activities that use a diverse book as either a lead in or a substitute for other books on the curriculum or reading list
- Library programs featuring #ownvoices

Picking the right diverse library materials

Selecting the right books – differentiating between *mere* representation and *good* representation

Dealing with questionable materials

Picking the right presenter

Finding volunteer presenters

Workshop participants discuss programs/techniques they use

Questions?

References

- **Book Lists and information on Multicultural literature**
 - Video of Rudine Sims Bishop, professor emeritus Ohio State University, discussing multicultural literature - <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLxDwKxHx1yLH9i0wFT21xxYSSMJ54KGi>
 - Tedx Talk on Windows and Mirrors - <http://tedxtalks.ted.com/video/The-Windows-and-Mirrors-of-Your>
 - Ten Tips for Selecting Multicultural Books from k12reader.com - <http://bit.ly/2dDyCqJ>
 - Kidlit example books from the Anti-defamation league - <http://bit.ly/1ODIsRP>
 - List of children's books that approach topics of bias, diversity and social justice - <http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/>
 - Books That Portray Characters With Disabilities: A Top 25 List for Children and Young Adults- <https://riyl.wikispaces.com/file/view/Booklist-Disabilities.pdf>
 - Book reviews on disability in Kidlit - <http://disabilityinkidlit.com/>
 - LGBT books - <http://www.leewind.org/>
 - Latinx in kidlit - <https://latinosinkidlit.com/>
 - Native American children's lit - <https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/>
- **Empathy**
 - Developing Empathy Through Children's Literature by Susan W. Cress and Daniel T. Holm - <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED427316.pdf>
 - List of books that teach empathy on Common Sense Media - <http://bit.ly/1DZIP6v>
 - National Writing Project - Creating Empathetic Connections to Literature by Lesley Roessing - <http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/2229>
- **How children develop bias**
 - Research by Harvard University psychologist suggesting prejudices may begin forming by age 3 - <http://bit.ly/2cw7wRm>
 - The biology of bias - <http://bit.ly/2cQZiUT>
- **Importance of Diversity**
 - Literary Hub article, There is no Secret to Writing About People Who do not Look Like You - <http://bit.ly/2doWMX4>
 - The Huffington Post article, Literature For a Better World - <http://huff.to/2d7b8la>
 - Ted Talk on the Danger of a Single Narrative - <http://bit.ly/1RCNuzV>
- **OwnVoices**
 - <http://readdiversebooks.com/tag/ownvoices/>
 - <https://campbele.wordpress.com/2016/09/04/september-releases-5/>
- **Programs**
 - Speed dating with a book – <http://bit.ly/2cz8dFz>
- **Social Justice**
 - Teaching Young Children about Bias, Diversity, and Social - <http://edut.to/1UbhEKN>
 - Using classrooms to talk about race - <http://bit.ly/2dpq7R3>
 - Social Justice - <http://www.wnyc.org/story/teaching-about-race-and-rights/>
- **Volunteer training**
 - Sit, Stay, Read organization that trains people to lead school/library programs – <http://sitstayread.org>

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Presenters:

B. A. Binns is an African-American author who writes to inspire all ages with “stories of real boys growing into real men...and the people who love them.” Her debut young adult novel [Pull](#) won the 2010 National Readers Choice Award, and was named to the YALSA 2012 list of Quick Picks For Reluctant Young Adult Readers. She is also the author of [Being God](#) (2012) and [Minority Of One](#) (2013), and numerous short stories for adults and children. Her Middle Grade debut, [Courage](#), will be released winter 2018 by Harper Collins.

B. A. Binns has Master of Science degrees from both Michigan State and DePaul Universities, and is the founder of AllTheColorsOfLove press. She is a member of RWA (Romance Writers Of America), SCBWI (Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators), The Chicago Writers Association, and the American Library Association. She is a regular contributor to the Romancing The Genres blog – <http://romancingthegenres.blogspot.com>

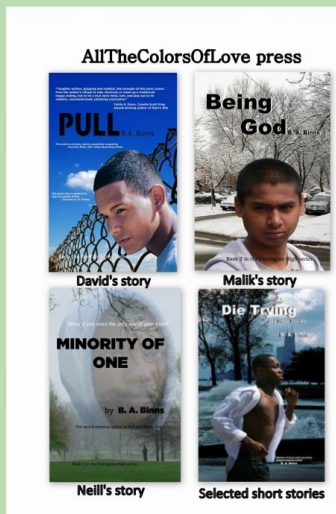
For more information on her presentations go to <http://www.scbwi.org/speakers/barbara-binns> or email: binns@babinns.com

School & Library workshops

- Creating Realistic Fiction
- Beginnings, Middles & Endings
- Adding The Spice Of Diversity To Your Writing



SKYPE and In-Person visits from Award Winning Author **B A Binns** Books



Adult Presentations

- Reaching Out To Reluctant Readers
- Enhancing Multi-Cultural Collections



For information on engaging the author for programs at your location check out: <http://www.scbwi.org/speakers/barbara-binns>

Email: binns@babinns.com

Using Diverse Books In Library and School Programs – October 2016

Nancy F. Goodfellow is a writer, advocate, and public speaker, but most importantly, a parent to a child with Down syndrome. For the past thirteen years, she has served the special needs community as a presenter for the National Association for Down Syndrome, speaking to thousands of medical professionals, students and teachers. She now focuses on speaking to elementary and middle school students about disability awareness and the importance of acceptance. Her presentations highlight the use of literature to teach children empathy, which led to her desire to write books for children. Her stories feature characters with disabilities and focus on the joys of befriending others, despite differences.

Nancy's presentations are especially unique because she is accompanied by a self-advocate, an amazing young woman with Down syndrome who tells students about living with a disability. Together, she and Nancy explain that "the more you know, the better you do." The presentation draws on well-known stories and familiar characters to help children see things differently. Discussions cover the use of hurtful words, bullying, the importance of respect for others, and how to see past both physical and 'hidden' differences. Nancy has currently spoken to over 4,500 students in various school districts, ranging from 2nd to 8th grade.

You can contact Nancy to schedule a presentation for your library or school by email at ngoodfellow2000@yahoo.com or by visiting her facebook page at [facebook.com/nancyfgoodfellowauthor](https://www.facebook.com/nancyfgoodfellowauthor).

A book list of suggested titles that feature characters with disabilities is available upon request.

Comments from past presentations

"Hearing from self-advocate was the best part... the kids were able to better understand what it is like for a person to have a disability and were able to see that she is just like them."
- 4th grade teacher


"...loved how you talked about how we can't always see a disability or difference on the outside."
- 4th grade teacher

"Wonderful program!!" – grade school principal

"I loved that students were able to have an open conversation about this topic in a safe, positive way."
- 5th grade teacher

"The presentation was informative, age-appropriate and heart-wrenching...
Wonderful job!
- 2nd grade teacher

"Students really enjoyed the presentation and were very grateful!" – 6th grade teacher



Yorkville Middle School
March 10, 14

Like Page

Thank you Michelle Anderson and Nancy Goodfellow for a great Disability Awareness presentation today!

"You guys were fabulous!"
- 3rd grade teacher

"Your candid answers and open attitude helped with perspective and was an invaluable resource."
- 3rd grade teacher