Access to Multicultural Children’s Literature During COVID-19

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Amid a pandemic, access to multicultural literature encourages students from low-socioeconomic families to read and connect to their community.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, students, families, and educators have faced unprecedented challenges, which disproportionately impacted racially and ethnically diverse, low-income communities due to long-standing health system and socioeconomic inequities (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). Against the backdrop of the pandemic, the ongoing stream of violent deaths of African Americans due to police brutality and systemic racism caused heightened anger and fear, along with a surge in civil rights protests, nationally and across the world. As educators, we recognized that children in our surrounding community experienced these challenges while in lockdown, were no longer in school, and were disconnected from peers and teachers. Classroom libraries were not available, and community libraries and childcare programs were closed. Our concerns also centered around students falling behind academically, reading less, and having limited access to books through school and in their homes and communities (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2013; Lindsay, 2013).

Multiple variables impact children becoming successful readers; two of the most significant are access to books and poverty (Green, Nadelson, & Miller, 2020). Children living in poverty have less access to books and other print materials in their homes, community centers, and libraries as compared with children not living in poverty (Allington, Guice, Baker, Michelson, & Li, 1995; Neuman & Moland, 2019; Pribesh, Gavigan, & Dickinson, 2011). Inequities in book access and poverty critically intersect with racial/ethnic inequities because of historically high poverty rates among children of color (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2020). Researchers have suggested that students from low-income backgrounds need better access to books, as well as time to read and practice literacy skills during out-of-school summer months, to reduce reading loss and help close the poverty gap in literacy (Heyns, 1978; Neuman & Knapczyk, 2020).

There is not a body of research on the impact of a pandemic on students’ literacy achievement, as this is uncharted territory. Nonetheless, we expect that the negative impact will be evident based on summer reading loss research (Kim & Quinn, 2013). Although students have been engaged in virtual school, the potential for summer reading loss during out-of-school time is heightened even more by the fact that many schools shortened the spring 2020 semester, delayed the fall opening, or both. This was compounded with issues of limited student access in low-income communities to technology, learning materials, and adult supervision for home-based learning.

We believe that it is even more imperative during these unprecedented times for students have access to books and opportunities to read them. We selected multicultural texts because we believe that students’ access to quality books that reflect their current lives, backgrounds, literacies, and multiplicity of cultures is a basic human right, crucial to literacy development and social justice aims (Shin et al., 2020). In addition, “multicultural picture books provide opportunities for children from diverse racial backgrounds to have their personal and collective experiences, histories, and knowledge bases related

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to race affirmed and celebrated” (Husband, 2019, p. 1069).

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we formed a partnership with the Children’s After-School Recreation Center (CARC; pseudonym), an organization that serves primarily African American children and families from low-socioeconomic areas, to create multicultural literacy opportunities for students during after-school hours and the summer. We are building a robust literacy program at CARC that includes a variety of components. For example, CARC staff will read books aloud to children, volunteers or teachers will facilitate literature circles and book clubs, and a curated library of books will be available for student use at the center. The selected books are engaging, culturally relevant, and developmentally appropriate and promote social and emotional growth.

Considering the pandemic and social justice crises, we wanted to ensure that students had access to quality multicultural books that positively affirm their cultural identities, sense of belonging, and connection to CARC. Therefore, we designed and implemented an emergency-funded component of our program when schools faced the challenge of quickly shifting to at-home, virtual instruction. In this article, we explain the motivation and rationale for this book access initiative, summarize specific areas of research that informed its design and implementation, describe our process for selecting quality multicultural children’s literature, and provide a strategy for how to facilitate comprehension and motivational support for home-based reading. We also offer a list of recommended literature and discuss implications of this project.

The Gap Comparison

We built this initiative on the foundational understanding that students need books at home to maintain and improve reading achievement during out-of-school periods, such as summer months. At state and national levels, there are significant and enduring reading achievement gaps between students of Color and White peers and between students from low- and middle/high-socioeconomic backgrounds (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). Well-documented research on the summer slide has suggested that income-related achievement gaps in reading become larger during out-of-school summer months due to loss in reading skills among students of Color and those living in poverty (e.g., Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay, & Greathouse, 1996; Kim & Quinn, 2013; Kim & White, 2008). Additional research has described family income as a powerful predictor of the number of age-appropriate children's books available in homes and communities (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2013; Neuman & Moland, 2019).

In a seminal study on summer reading and its effects on schooling, Heyns (1978) proposed reducing summer reading loss and highlighted the need for students from low-income backgrounds to have better access to books, as well as more opportunities to read and practice literacy skills. Decades later, in a meta-analysis of findings from 11,503 studies on children’s access to print and outcomes, Lindsay (2013) confirmed the intuitive belief held by many educators: Providing books and magazines to children—either by lending the materials to them or by giving them the materials to keep—improves their attitudes toward reading, the amount of reading that they do, their acquisition of basic literacy skills, and their reading performance. (p. 34)

Based on this body of research, Kim and colleagues (Kim, 2006; Kim & White, 2008; White & Kim, 2008) conducted multiple studies with the aim of developing an effective method, scaffolded voluntary reading, to enhance summer reading. Their experimental research strongly supported the premise that voluntary reading over the summer can enhance students’ reading achievement and reduce reading loss.

Despite the well-documented need and research demonstrating the positive impact of efforts to increase book access and voluntary reading for students in low-income areas during out-of-school time, we have yet to see widespread mobilization of programs and resources toward these goals since Heyns’s (1978) initial call for action over four decades ago (Neuman

**PAUSE AND PONDER**

- Do your students have access to quality, multicultural texts in and outside of school?
- How do you support students’ access to multicultural literature outside of school?
- Are your students able to access books and bring them home for extended periods of time?
- How do you offer literacy support for your students and their families at home?
We present our own research as a framework for supporting students who were home-bound without access to school- or community-based sources of quality literature, once schooling abruptly shifted to virtual delivery of instruction.

Access to Quality Multicultural Literature

It is essential to provide students with literature that is age appropriate and relevant to their lives and interests to increase achievement and motivation to read (White, Kim, Kingston, & Foster, 2014). Researchers and educators have noted the staggering lack of diversity in children's literature for decades, even though we understand the significance of multicultural literature in students' reading motivation, engagement, and success (Crisp et al., 2016). Students make strong connections to multicultural literature, and multicultural literature provides a space for students to develop awareness, empathy, and cross-cultural understandings (Gunn, 2016).

Multicultural literature should resonate with students' backgrounds and identities and offer cultural relevancy to their lives. "When children read books that are interesting and meaningful to them, they can find support for the process of defining themselves as individuals and understanding their developing roles within their families and communities" (Hefflin & Barksdale-Ladd, 2001, p. 810). Books as mirrors, in which students see themselves, affirm their identity and their importance in school; books as windows, in which students see others, offer opportunities to learn about others' similarities and differences from ones represented in students' community (Bennett, Gunn, Gayle-Evans, Barrera, & Leung, 2018; Bishop, 1990, 1992; Gunn, Bennett, & van Beynen, 2020; Gunn, Brice, & Peterson, 2014; Ward & Warren, 2020).

Positioning literacy within a social justice education perspective, it is crucial that teachers and communities embrace multicultural literature as a conduit to discuss and raise awareness about racism and to develop cross-cultural understandings. "Multicultural literature allows children to establish a greater understanding of themselves and others through the examination of lives, realities, and experience of people portrayed in the texts" (Bennett et al., 2018, p. 245). These understandings form the basic underpinnings for taking action to address inequities and effect societal change.

Multicultural literature offers a rich context for families and teachers to engage in meaningful conversations with students about issues surrounding diversity, as well as social challenges in their own lives and the lives of others. In turn, these conversations can facilitate students' critical understandings about the world and their experiences, while promoting literacy skill development, empowered thinking, and possibilities for social action.

Method

Background

As literacy experts at a Southeastern U.S. university, we developed a relationship with the director of CARC at a community outreach meeting. This center serves 150 children, ages 5–15, who come from low-income homes. Approximately 96% of the children are African American, and 4% are White. When area schools and CARC closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we immediately discussed with the director different ways to support children who normally attend the center's after-school program, as many had limited access to technology and books at home.

After receiving emergency funding from a local organization, we collaboratively designed an initiative to provide children and families with access to quality multicultural books delivered directly to their homes; books that were age and instructionally appropriate. Our understandings of the previously summarized areas of research on reading achievement gaps, summer reading loss, book access interventions, and selection of quality multicultural texts guided our design and implementation of this initiative. The CARC book access initiative included several elements: (a) selection of book sets composed of quality multicultural fiction and nonfiction literature, appropriate for children's backgrounds, and age/grade levels (we did not have reading level data available for the children); (b) development of book response postcards to encourage comprehension and a sense of connectedness with center staff; (c) delivery of books to children's homes; and (d) follow-up phone communication with families encouraging them to converse with their children about the books and return completed response postcards. These elements are described further in the following sections.

Book Selection Criteria and Analysis

Due to emergency COVID-19 funding and the urgency of need, we wanted to distribute books as
soon as possible while children were homebound. Consequently, our ability to include children and families directly in the book selection process was limited, as compared with our ongoing literacy collaboration with CARC children and families. We selected books for this initiative through a multi-phase process. In the first phase, we engaged in planning discussions with each other, as well as with the center director and staff to gain understandings of the CARC children, and established the following criteria to select book sets of five titles per child:

- High-quality diverse/multicultural literature (Bennett, Gunn, van Beynen, & Morton, in press; Bishop, 1992; Hefflin & Barksdale-Ladd, 2001; Thomas, 2016)
- Text complexity and content appropriate for children's grade levels and backgrounds (Florida Department of Education, 2019; Pearson & Hiebert, 2014)
- Key features reflecting the following:
  - Children's diverse multicultural identities, recognizing that 96% of CARC children are African American
  - Focus on socioemotional learning
  - Mix of genres, including one or two nonfiction book choices, with at least one focused on the COVID-19-relevant topic of germs (not a multicultural book choice)
  - Engaging content, language style, humor, and visual appeal
  - Comprehensible content and complexity with minimal/no teacher support needed
  - A balance of main characters' genders
  - Book topics likely to spark family conversations

Further considerations for book selection included researchers’ familiarity and experience with texts within actual teaching contexts, as well as cost and availability of titles for timely order and delivery of books to children.

During the second book selection phase, we researched information on potential titles across various sources, including children's literature award lists (e.g., Caldecott Medal, Newbery Medal, Coretta Scott King Book Award, Pura Belpré Award, Tomás Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award, Ezra Jack Keats Award), as well as reviews and recommendations from multicultural literature and literacy educator websites. Based on this research, we identified an initial pool of 35 book titles that included a variety of picture books and chapter books.

During the third phase, we collated and analyzed criteria data for each title and across titles using a comprehensive spreadsheet. We analyzed quantitative and qualitative dimensions of text complexity for each book (Florida Department of Education, 2019; MetaMetrics, n.d.; Pearson & Hiebert, 2014) and organized book titles according to increasing complexity to separate them into five grade-level bands: K, 1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8. Some book titles crossed grade-level bands and were included as choices for more than one grade-level book set.

In the fourth phase, we conducted further rounds of analysis by closely examining hard copies of books for quality features (Bishop, 1992; Hefflin & Barksdale-Ladd, 2001) and evaluating criteria data across book titles. We eliminated several titles and agreed on the final 19 book choices, with five titles selected for each grade-level set (five titles appeared in more than one grade-level set). Final selections were based on criteria data; balance of book genre/focus and key features within each set; and cost, sources, and availability of book titles for timely ordering and delivery of books to children. Because we did not have specific reading assessment data on individual children, we used their ages and grade levels to determine the book set each child received. Finally, we confirmed our final selections with the CARC director and staff. We include titles and summaries of the final selected books for each grade level in Table 1.

### Postcard and Parent Interview

Along with the distribution of the texts, we designed a response postcard to promote comprehension and motivation to read with minimal training or teacher support. The front side of the postcard (see Figure 1) encouraged children to respond to each book and promoted family discussions of the books. On the back side, the postcard contained questions adapted from White and Kim's (2008) study. We intended these prepaid postcards to serve as one way to evaluate the impact of the book access initiative.

### Book Delivery

Once we received the ordered books, we paperclipped response postcards to every book and placed
### Table 1
Multicultural and Nonfiction Book Sets Selected for Students in Grade Bands Across Grades K–8

| Cover Description | Summary | Recognition |
|-------------------|---------|-------------|
| Book set for kindergarten | Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Peña (2015), illustrated by Christian Robinson. *Summary:* A young boy rides a bus with his grandmother, who responds to his questions about what they do not have (e.g., a car, an iPod), by engaging him in observations and conversations focused on the richness of daily routines and relationships within their urban community. *Recognition:* Caldecott Medal, and Coretta Scott King Book Award, Newbery Honor |
| Niño Wrestles the World by Yuyi Morales (2013) | *Summary:* English and Spanish are exuberantly interwoven to relate the story of a young boy who embraces a superhero persona as he wrestles in play to defeat imaginary monsters and sibling foes. *Recognition:* Pura Belpré Illustrator Award |
| Something Beautiful by Sharon Dennis Wyeth (1998), illustrated by Chris K. Soenpiet. *Summary:* A little girl decides to look beyond negative aspects of her neighborhood (e.g., trash, graffiti) to find "something beautiful" in the simple pleasures, friendships, and family of her urban world. *Recognition:* Notable Social Studies Trade Book for Young People (National Council for the Social Studies) and Notable Book for a Global Society (International Reading Association) |
| Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon by Patty Lovell (2001), illustrated by David Catrow. *Summary:* When a bully confronts spunky Molly Lou Mellon at her new school, she follows her grandmother's advice: Stand tall, be proud of who you are, and believe in your own self-worth. *Recognition:* State book awards and a recommended title on education websites focused on anti-bullying, character traits, and development of a growth mind-set |
| Germs! Germs! Germs! by Bobbi Katz (1996), illustrated by Steve Björkman. *Summary:* Through rhyming text, noted children's author/poet Bobbi Katz presents basic concepts of germs, their growth inside and outside the body, and instructions on how to prevent the spread of germs to stay healthy. |
Table 1
Multicultural and Nonfiction Book Sets Selected for Students in Grade Bands Across Grades K–8 (continued)

| Cover | Description |
|-------|-------------|
| **Book set for grades 1 and 2** | |
| Last Stop on Market Street (Refer to the book set for kindergarten.) | |
| Germs! Germs! Germs!* (Refer to the book set for kindergarten.) | |
| **Tar Beach** by Faith Ringgold (1991)  
*Summary:* Vibrant artwork and storytelling invite readers to join a young girl’s dream flight above the “tar beaches” of building rooftops to admire the glittering city and Harlem cultural landscape below.  
*Recognition:* Winner of the Coretta Scott King Award for Illustration; Caldecott Honor. | |
| **Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood** by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell (2016), illustrated by Rafael López  
*Summary:* Based on a true story, young Mira joins a local muralist to transform the grayness of their neighborhood with diverse paint strokes of color, joyful imagination, and vibrant community spirit.  
*Recognition:* Tomás Rivera Mexican American Children’s Book Award and Notable Children’s Book (Association for Library Service to Children) | |
| **Cyril and Pat** by Emily Gravett (2019)  
*Summary:* In this allegorical tale, Cyril the Squirrel and Pat the Rat become fast friends during fun-filled adventures in an urban park. Bombarded by negative perspectives of other animals toward rats, the two learn to resist prejudice and bullying through the strength of their diverse and unique friendship.  
*Recognition:* (U.K.) BookTrust Storytime Prize | |
| **Book set for grades 3 and 4** | |
| **Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut** by Derrick Barnes (2017), illustrated by Gordon C. James  
*Summary:* This rhythmic and vibrantly illustrated picture book celebrates the uplifting experience of a boy’s trip to the local barbershop. He relishes the royal treatment and bolstered self-esteem bestowed by his fresh cut and creatively imagines life stories of the Black men who share in barbershop rituals and camaraderie.  
*Recognition:* Caldecott Honor, Newbery Honor, Coretta Scott King Book and Illustrator awards, and Ezra Keats New Writer and Illustrator awards | |
| **Each Kindness** by Jacqueline Woodson (2012), illustrated by E.B. Lewis  
*Summary:* Chloe and her friends repeatedly reject the friendship of Maya, a new girl in class, but realize too late the impact of their actions. Chloe regrets lost opportunities for new friendship after her teacher’s lesson on how each small act of kindness can potentially change the world for the better.  
*Recognition:* Jane Addams Children’s Book Award and Coretta Scott King Honor Book | |
### Table 1
Multicultural and Nonfiction Book Sets Selected for Students in Grade Bands Across Grades K–8 (continued)

| Cover | Description |
|-------|-------------|
| ![El Deafo](image) | *El Deafo* by Cece Bell (2014)  
*Summary:* In this graphic novel memoir, the author recounts the trials and tribulations of going to school and trying to make friends when deaf and wearing a large, awkward-looking hearing aid strapped to her chest. By harnessing the power of her hearing aid, she imagines herself as the superhero “El Deafo the Hearer of All,” finally finding friendship and her own place in the world.  
*Recognition:* Eisner Award and Newbery Honor Book |
| ![The Season of Styx Malone](image) | *The Season of Styx Malone* by Kekla Magoon (2018)  
*Summary:* This is the funny and emotional story of two brothers who join in the adventurous schemes of cool 16-year-old Styx Malone, a new neighbor living in a foster home nearby. When a series of outlandish trading-up transactions escalate out of control, the boys learn the challenges of risk taking and trust, as well as the importance of honesty and belonging.  
*Recognition:* Coretta Scott King Honor Book |
| ![Germs Make Me Sick!](image) | *Germs Make Me Sick!* by Melvin Berger (2015), illustrated by Marylin Hafner  
*Summary:* This straightforward, approachable text by a noted nonfiction author provides information about germs, how they cause sickness, and guidelines for basic hygiene and living a healthy life.  
*Recognition:* This children’s science trade book series was awarded the AAAS/Subaru SB&F Prize for Excellence in Science Books. |
| **Book set for grades 5 and 6** |  
*The Season of Styx Malone* (Refer to the book set for grades 3 and 4.)  
*One Crazy Summer* by Rita Williams-Garcia (2010)  
*Summary:* Eleven-year-old Delphine and her younger sisters travel from their grandmother’s Brooklyn, New York, home to spend one crazy summer with their mother, who left them seven years ago to pursue a life of political activism in California in the 1960s. With resilience and humor, the girls overcome challenges of being thrust into the midst of a day camp run by the Black Panthers while forging new emotional connections with their estranged mother.  
*Recognition:* Scott O’Dell Award for Historical Fiction, Coretta Scott King Book Award, Newbery Honor Book, and a finalist for the National Book Award for Young People’s Literature  
*New Kid* by Jerry Craft (2019)  
*Summary:* In this graphic novel, a seventh-grade boy longs to draw cartoons and attend art school, but his parents enroll him in a prestigious, academically oriented private school where he is one of only a few students of Color. He must navigate between the contrasting cultures and friendships of his less affluent neighborhood and the upscale world of his new private school, while trying to stay true to his own identity.  
*Recognition:* Newbery Medal and Coretta Scott King Author Award |

(continued)
five texts (the grade-level book set) in a plastic bag for each of the 78 children, based on age, grade level, and instructional appropriateness. Each bag also included crayons, healthy snacks, pens, and paper. Two police resource officers/mentors regularly assigned to CARC maintain strong, positive relationships with the children; these officers joined the CARC director to deliver a book bag to each child (see Figure 2). Regrettably, we had a low return rate of response postcards, so the CARC office administrator, a member of the community, called each family to encourage them to return completed postcards.
and engage in conversations with their children about the books.

**Affirmation and Increased Access**

Because we only received 12 completed response postcards from the children, we evaluated the impact of our book access initiative through researchers’ notes, the director’s feedback, and analysis of written responses to the phone calls to all families placed by the CARC office administrator. Review of postcard responses revealed that only one child had read to a parent. All responding children reported use of at least one comprehension strategy, if not all of them.

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**Figure 1**

Postcard to Facilitate Comprehension and Motivational Support

(1) What’s the title of the book you read?
(2) Did you finish reading this book?
(3) How many times did you read this book?
(4) What did you do to better understand this book? (check all that apply)
   - I re-read parts of this book.
   - I made predictions about this book.
   - I asked questions about this book.
   - I summarized parts of this book.
   - I made connections (text-to-text, text-to-self).
(5) After you read the book, tell someone in your family what the book was about. Pick a part of the book to read aloud two times. Ask him or her how you improved the second time you read the section. (check all that apply)
   a. Did I read more smoothly? b. Did I know more words? c. Did I read with more expression?

Additional comments:

***If you want, please draw a picture

Note. A postcard was inserted in each book. The color figure can be viewed in the online version of this article at http://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com.
Our project positively impacted children and families in the community, and parents and children appreciated and enjoyed the books. Parents articulated, “They [children] love getting new books” and “really like[d] the book selection” and “variety of books.” Parents stated that their children could “relate to the books” and that the books “helped [them] with [their] reading” and “gave them something to do constructive.” One parent also suggested how important it was “knowing someone is excited about my child reading.” Another family connected with and contributed back to the community by donating their copy of *Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut* by Derrick Barnes to the local barbershop for other children to read while they received haircuts.

The director and office administrator described how CARC parents and children appreciated the books, noting not only how they matched children's grade levels, but also how book illustrations resembled the children. The director commented specifically on children's reactions to the books; she witnessed a young girl's affirmation of identity when she held up *Something Beautiful* by Sharon Dennis Wyeth to her mother and exclaimed how pretty the girl on the cover was: “She looks like me!” The office administrator, also a community member, hugged one multicultural book and exclaimed, “I never had any books like this to read when I was growing up!”

The police resource officers also expressed curiosity and interest in the diverse choice of books as they delivered book sets. When the CARC after-school program reopened in the fall, several children commented that they had read all the books given to them and asked if they would be able to take home more books from the center library during the school year.

**Conclusion and Implications**

Through collaboration between a community organization and an educational institution, we increased access to books for children of Color living in a low-socioeconomic community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Increased access to books can contribute to students' reading and academic achievement (Green et al., 2020). Moreover, access to multicultural books offered children in this initiative a sense of connectedness to community and, importantly, affirmation of racial/cultural identity during heightened global health and civil rights crises. The selected books in Table 1 serve as suggestions for quality literature that is age and instructionally appropriate, as well as culturally diverse.

Positive responses to books and increased access were important project outcomes, but the families needed more amid the pandemic and emotional turmoil brought on by systemic racism in our country. We recognized that CARC families and children needed support in several ways, such as navigating virtual school, time management, and strategies for reading together. In particular, it was not evident from the data if families engaged in conversations about the books. Meaningful conversations about multicultural literature help children make sense of and develop understandings about themselves and their world, while promoting literacy development and empowered thinking (Bennett et al., 2018; Gunn et al., 2020). As we move forward, we will collaborate more directly with families and children on literacy programming to provide additional literacy support that better meets their needs.

As COVID-19, poverty, and systemic inequities continue to influence society and education in a myriad of ways, educators must recognize their responsibility to collaborate with other stakeholders in schools and the community to actively address social and educational inequities. Toward this aim, it is imperative that stakeholders ensure that classroom, school, and community libraries...
**TAKE ACTION!**

1. Consider the students/families in your school community. What books will provide opportunities for children to have windows and mirrors and engage in critical social justice conversations? Make a recommended book list.

2. Collaborate with literacy stakeholders in your school and community to investigate students’ out-of-school access to books and technology within their homes and community.

3. Make a list of action steps that you and other literacy partners can take to improve equitable access to quality texts and technological tools for all students.

Offer students access to high-quality multicultural literature. It is the right of all children to have equitable access to books that reflect their own lives, represent multiplicity of cultures, and promote literacy, as well as critical understandings as tools for social justice and change (Crisp et al., 2016; Shin et al., 2020).

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MORE TO EXPLORE
- The Cooperative Children’s Book Center (https://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/), School of Education, University of Wisconsin–Madison, compiles statistics and resources about books by and about people of Color and from the First/Five Nations, as well as other aspects of diversity and representation in children’s and young adult literature. Resources include book lists, bibliographies, and a searchable database of recommended titles.
- Social Justice Books (https://socialjusticebooks.org/), a Teaching for Change project, offers tools to identify and promote high-quality multicultural and social justice children’s books. Resources include articles, curated book lists, book reviews, and Louise Derman-Sparks’s Guide for Selecting Anti-Bias Children’s Books.
- Diverse BookFinder (https://diversebookfinder.org/) is a collection of thousands of children’s picture books featuring Black and Indigenous people and people of Color (BIPOC), published and distributed in the United States since 2002. The website offers a searchable database, a powerful search tool to analyze picture book collections, and other resources with the goal of assisting literacy stakeholders in expanding diversity in young children’s literature and promoting deeper conversations for change.
- End Book Deserts (https://www.endbookdeserts.com/) is an awareness/advocacy online platform that offers podcasts, a blog, and other resources with the aim of addressing literacy inequities by building book oases in high-poverty communities.