

# Exploring International and Intercultural Understanding through Global Literature

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# INTRODUCTION

This guide grew out of a project funded by a grant from the Longview Foundation for International Affairs to Worlds of Words at the University of Arizona. The grant funded Global Literacy Communities—25 pre-kindergarten to high school educator study groups from 19 U.S. states—that met for a period of one to three years. Their goal was to use global children’s and adolescent literature to develop international understanding among students and teachers. Each group received a grant to support their inquiry. Teachers met regularly in local study groups, worked with students in their classrooms, and shared their experiences with colleagues from other Global Literacy Communities via an online forum. The 25 groups are listed at the end of this guide.

The guide focuses on the nuts and bolts of how teachers, librarians, university professors, and community members interacted in study groups and explored global literature in classrooms. The communities wrote reports of their experiences, shared their work on the online forum, and wrote vignettes about their classrooms and study groups that were published in *WOW Stories*, an online journal. Our reflections on these data sources are guided by the following questions:

- ◆ What role does a study group play in professional learning about global literature?
- ◆ What are the different approaches study groups take for integrating global literature into the curriculum?
- ◆ What are the ways in which global children’s and adolescent literature influences international and intercultural understanding?

Brief examples of the work of the Global Literacy Communities appear throughout the guide with links to vignettes that provide more detailed descriptions of classroom experiences. The vignettes can also be found on the Worlds of Words website. <http://wowlit.org/on-line-publications/stories/>

We want to thank members of the Global Literacy Communities and the parents of their students for giving permission for their work to be published.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	2
---------------------------	---

## **RATIONALE**

◆ Why International and Intercultural Understanding? .....	4
◆ Why Stories? Why Global Literature?.....	5
◆ Why Study Groups?.....	8

## **FORMING A STUDY GROUP**

◆ Finding a Group.....	11
◆ Deciding on a Type of Study Group.....	12
◆ Considering Collaborative and Cooperative Approaches .....	13
◆ Creating Study Group Structures.....	15

## **ENGAGING IN GLOBAL INQUIRY THROUGH LITERATURE**

◆ Plan Special Events .....	18
◆ Develop Home/School Partnerships .....	21
◆ Add Global Literature into an Existing Curriculum.....	25
◆ Engage in Literature Discussion and Response.....	27
◆ Plan a New Classroom Unit.....	33
◆ Plan a Cross-Curricular Unit.....	36
◆ Gather and Evaluate Resources.....	39
◆ Transform the Curriculum to Support Global Thinking.....	42

<b>INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING</b> .....	44
--	----

<b>SHARING INQUIRY PROJECTS</b> .....	45
---------------------------------------	----

## **RESOURCES**

◆ Websites, Awards, and Publishers.....	46
◆ Recommended Professional Readings .....	47

<b>CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENT LITERATURE CITED</b> .....	49
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<b>GLOBAL LITERACY COMMUNITY GROUPS</b> .....	51
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# WHY INTERNATIONAL AND INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING?

Many people do not realize how global their lives have become. The boundaries of our lives have changed dramatically in recent years. We eat produce from New Zealand, Mexico and Chile. Local economies are impacted by the value of faraway currencies like yuan, yen, and euros. We travel the world for business and pleasure. Immigrants no longer congregate in port cities or along borders, but are an integral part of communities across the U.S.

The diversity of nationalities, languages, and cultures is also reflected in our schools. Students often speak multiple languages and represent a range of global cultures. The teachers in our Global Literacy Communities had students who spoke Greek, Nepali, Telugu, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Hindi, Yoruba, Tagalog, Hmong, Laotian, Swahili, Visaya, and Gujarati. In addition to enriching the linguistic resources, these students brought diverse life experiences and perspectives that widened the classroom conversations.

The world is no longer at our doorstep; it is woven into our daily lives. We have moved beyond just needing to tolerate disparate viewpoints and come to the point of needing to understand each other's perspectives. Understanding the values and beliefs of others has become critical for addressing local and global issues in ways that benefit everyone involved.

Each of us operates in multiple cultures that influence our personal identities. We come from families, neighborhoods, schools, geographic regions, ethnic backgrounds, and religious affiliations that inform our beliefs and actions. Our multiple cultural identities underscore the need to go beyond *international understanding* and strive for *intercultural understanding*.

Intercultural understanding involves dialogue at the cultural level. It extends beyond nationality and politics to include informed problem solving and social action activities that necessitate an appreciation of the full range of issues, including the values and beliefs of everyone involved. Intercultural understanding creates the potential to move from curiosity about a culture to a deeper understanding of others that allows us to live and work together as global citizens.

## What does intercultural understanding look like?

Intercultural understanding is not a destination point, but a continual process of growth.

Characteristics of a person who is growing in intercultural understanding include:

- ◆ Exhibits curiosity and basic knowledge about the world and global cultures.
- ◆ Expects complexity in viewpoints and intentionally seeks out multiple perspectives.
- ◆ Sees self as a product and participant of multiple cultures.
- ◆ Values cultural diversity as a resource.
- ◆ Is comfortable with ambiguity and not having one “right” answer.



# WHY STORIES? WHY GLOBAL LITERATURE?

## We naturally think in story

Stories are our most natural form of communication. They are told through words, song, dance, and even mathematical formulas. Telling stories is more than something we do—it is how we think. A story allows us to understand and organize our experiences. We construct narratives to interpret what is occurring around us. They create our views of the world and the lens through which we make meaning of our lives.

Stories also have the power to naturally engage us. We become more alert when a speaker tells a story rather than simply conveys information. We connect with stories much more than a list of facts.

## Global literature expands our worldview

Global literature expands our worldview so that stories become a *window* for readers to see and experience cultures outside their own personal contexts. They also function as a *mirror*, reflecting back human experiences and helping us understand ourselves and our lives better. Both roles are important for gaining intercultural understanding. As we read stories set in different cultural contexts, our understanding of diverse perspectives and ways of thinking is expanded. In the process, we come to realize that our perspectives grow out of our own experiences and identities. Global literature also encourages curiosity about the world and allows readers to live vicariously in a global culture.

As teachers encounter various cultures and cultural practices through global literature, the tensions between their own cultures and that of the characters becomes more evident. A new understanding of differences in beliefs, values and practices helps them become more culturally sensitive to students and more culturally broad in their teaching and curriculum.

## Global literature adapts to curricular needs

A benefit of using global literature is the ease with which it fits into the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Global children's literature supports complex reading and thinking, an important element in the CCSS, and provides demonstrations that support STEM inquiries. Using global literature does require effort to identify and locate relevant books that are culturally authentic, but many resources are available to support teachers who choose to do so (see Resources).

## Global literature is a stepping stone for learning to think critically

Global literature provides an avenue for readers to develop strategies for critical thinking, particularly

through considering multiple perspectives. It promotes deeper thinking and dialogue around social issues by supporting a critical stance that encourages dialogue and consideration of multiple beliefs, values, and issues. It can also be a counter–narrative that challenges deficit views of specific cultures, demonstrating the ingenuity and inventiveness around problem solving within those cultures.

## Engaging with global literature is a path to academic achievement

Interaction with global literature encourages student interest and engagement due to natural interest in story and curiosity about what is new and novel. This can lead to increased academic achievement as students spend more time reading and writing as well as developing comprehension and critical thinking strategies.

The Global Literacy Communities reported the following changes in academic achievement after reading and discussing global literature:

- ◆ Students engaged in richer writing around global texts. (ART)
- ◆ Struggling readers gained literacy skills through the process of designing a service project. (Tri-Cities)
- ◆ Students using trade books instead of textbooks made gains in reading fluency and comprehension because the books were more interesting. The redundancy of multiple pictorial and written texts supported increased comprehension of the material. (MLK)
- ◆ A high school on a mandated improvement plan doubled student scores on state tests after one year of intensive reading of global texts. (LSHS English Lions)

## Defining global, international, and multicultural literature

“Multicultural,” “international,” and “global” are often used to describe literature from various parts of the world, but the terms can mean quite different things. The following definitions clarify the way they are used in this guide and the scope of literature they delineate.

**Global literature** is an all-encompassing term that includes:

- ◆ Literature written by immigrants to the U.S. and set in their home countries (e.g., Peter Sis and Kashmira Sheth).
- ◆ Books written by authors who live and work across global cultures and regularly move between the U.S. and their home culture (e.g., Baba Wague Diakité and Cornelia Funke).
- ◆ Books set in global cultures but written by American authors using various research strategies that influence the cultural authenticity of their stories. These strategies include:
  - ◆ author’s use of family heritage combined with research and visits to the heritage country (e.g., Linda Sue Park).
  - ◆ books written by American authors who write collaboratively with someone from the global culture of the story (e.g., Laura Resau and Maria Virginia Farinango).
  - ◆ extensive time living in a particular global setting (e.g., Karen Lynn Williams).
  - ◆ travel and extensive research (e.g., Ted Lewin).
  - ◆ research without personal experience in the global setting (e.g., Gloria Whelan).

- ◆ **International literature** is a type of global literature written by authors in other countries and originally published in those countries. These books include:
  - ◆ books translated from their original languages into English, such as *Pippi Longstocking* by Astrid Lindgren.
  - ◆ English language books from other countries modified to fit an American audience, such as *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J. K. Rowling.
  - ◆ books written in languages other than English and published in the U.S. in the original language, such as *Le Petit Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

**Multicultural literature** refers to books about groups in the U.S. that have been marginalized, stereotyped, or underrepresented by mainstream society, including racial, ethnic, religious, and language minorities, as well as books depicting disability or LGBTQ experiences.

# WHY STUDY GROUPS?

A teacher study group is a voluntary community of educators who meet to challenge their thinking about educational theory and classroom practice. A study group provides a context for professional learning through dialogue and inquiry as educators negotiate a shared agenda that values their voices and tensions.

## Study groups create effective conditions for professional learning

- ◆ Teachers are positioned as knowledgeable professionals who can gain creativity, competence, and stature in a space that feels safe and free from public critique.
- ◆ Teachers have a place to learn through dialogue with each other. Reflecting on practice supports transformative understanding, which leads to changed practice.
- ◆ Teachers think collaboratively with others who share their interests and questions. This creates a shared purpose and commitment for change.
- ◆ Teachers develop a deeper understanding and commitment than they do with top-down instruction by experts.
- ◆ Teachers can flexibly move between theory and practice as they explore the implications of theory *for* practice and develop theory *out of* effective practice.

## Study groups support reflection and theorizing

Study groups create a climate for developing transformative understanding by providing time for teachers to think about theories based on their classroom inquiry and professional reading. Reading done by the Global Literacy Communities helped teachers recognize what was occurring in their group or classrooms. For example, some groups became aware of their focus on surface culture (i.e., the “Five F’s” of food, flags, festivals, famous people, and folklore) rather than deeper cultural beliefs and values. Professional reading also provided tools for evaluating cultural authenticity.

***“Most importantly, we learned that teachers learn best when involved in an experience where we share our personal steps in the process with one another to grow together.”***

*Madeira, Fran Wilson*

Study groups build the capacity of members to respond in innovative ways to classroom needs. Reflecting on theory and practice in conjunction with professional reading helps teachers develop a theoretical framework that is applicable to different learning situations

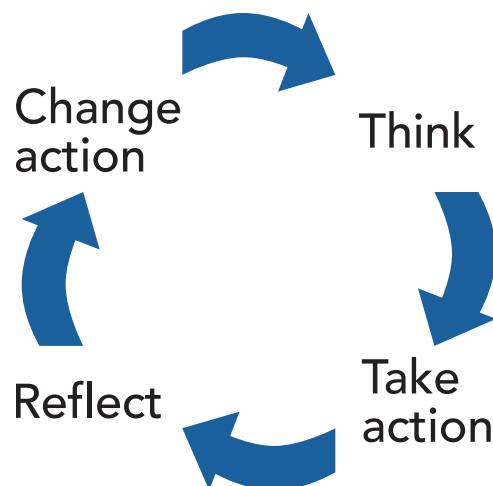


and content areas. They are able to understand what is happening at a theoretical level and develop new theories out of their experiences.

Study groups provide practice with in-depth inquiry. Teachers are able to engage in the recursive process of thinking, acting, reflecting, and then acting in new ways. They develop a better understanding of inquiry-based learning and a desire to teach their students through inquiry.

Meeting regularly provides time for growth through reflection. Groups meeting less than once a month, for short periods of time, or without dedicated sessions (i.e., sessions specifically devoted to global literature and intercultural understanding) find it difficult to make connections and successfully integrate theory and practice.

Study groups provide a place to develop intercultural understanding. In the process of discussing children's literature and classroom engagements, teachers gain a deeper understanding of world cultures. Growth occurs when groups wrestle with larger, more conceptual questions. The Global Literacy Communities that had the greatest insights were those that were willing to explore beliefs, values, and questions that surfaced from their conversations, including those that did not necessarily feel safe.



### Study groups support and provide access to resources

Professional and personal support are integral to the growth process. Respect for each person as an educator and agent of change is a critical component of effective study group dynamics. It also enhances teacher confidence in their professional knowledge and practice. Teachers experiencing stress in the

***“We had not anticipated how much we would gain as teachers from this endeavor. None of us would have read as widely or critically as we did without our commitment to the study group. Our discussions were engaged, lively, and intellectually satisfying.”***

*Vashon Island, Merna Hecht*

workplace are able to keep teaching in ways they know are best for their students.

Availability of resources is likewise necessary to the growth process. Access to resources supporting theoretical understanding (e.g., presence of university teacher-educator, availability of professional journals and books, etc.) provides a way for group members to

interpret what is happening within their study group and classrooms. Access to library collections of global and multicultural books allows teachers to select books that deepen classroom discussion.

***“The group broadened my perspective on teaching and learning. This occurred not only in terms of deepening my knowledge and understanding of global literature and the many and varied ways to use it across grade levels and curriculum, but also in terms of opening up the sense of isolation many teachers feel in general. The sense of urgency and worry associated with the adoption of the Common Core and the new teacher evaluation system was minimized for me with the exposure to other teachers, schools, and perspectives.”*** *Tri-Cities, Maggie Burns*

# FORMING A STUDY GROUP

## FINDING A GROUP

The initial step in forming a study group is to find colleagues with whom thinking and open dialogue are possible. Each group will be unique. The stimulus for forming a group can be a common interest or tension. It can also be the desire to think and grow together.

The organization of a group will vary; each will have a structure and way of operating that supports its particular goal. An optimal group size is 5–10 people, but it can be larger. If the session becomes a meeting instead of a discussion, the members may need to meet in small groups for discussion or divide into several study groups.



*Hobgood teachers browse books during their study group session.*

*The Tri-Cities group displays their work at the 2013 National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) annual convention.*



# DECIDING ON A TYPE OF STUDY GROUP

**School/University:** A study group can be a collaboration between classroom teachers and a teacher-educator from a nearby university.

- ◆ Some schools may already be engaged with a teacher-educator for professional development. The study group provides a way to continue growing together. (Garden Hills, MLK, ART)
- ◆ An already existing study group can decide to shift their focus to global children's literature. (Teacher Talk)
- ◆ A teacher-educator might approach a school or teachers from several schools to discuss working together on an inquiry. (Douglass, Tri-Cities, Eastern Oregon, Spokane, Willamette Valley, Orono, Stillwater)

Advantages of a school/university partnership are the teacher-educator's knowledge of theory and professional literature, familiarity with current trends, and easy access to articles and books. One caution is ensuring the university person is not seen as the expert. All members should be viewed as professionals who contribute important thinking to the group. (Tri-Cities)

**School-based:** Study groups can consist of teachers from a particular school or school district.

- ◆ School-based groups can be formed across a subject area, grade level, teaching position, or discipline. (LSHS English Lions, Madeira, Shaker Heights, Harlee, A to Z)
- ◆ Members can build on the common bond of working in the same school, district, grade level, or position.
- ◆ Professional reading is needed since members sharing a similar context will benefit from pushing their thinking in new directions.
- ◆ Dedicated study group meetings are needed to support discussions of broader conceptual and theoretical issues. Adding study group discussions to regular planning meetings can result in a loss of transformative growth and a focus on lesson planning.

**School(s)/Community:** Study groups can be hybrid groups, with members coming from a range of contexts, including public and private schools, public libraries, and community organizations.

- ◆ The diversity inherent in a hybrid group can generate rich discussion from multiple perspectives.
- ◆ Diversity of member context can create new professional collaborations that increase awareness and use of global literature. (Vashon Island, ACLIP, Saturday Book Group)
- ◆ Hybrid groups provide opportunities for networking and wider access to resources. Members of hybrid Global Literacy Communities included public and charter school teachers, university teacher-educators, public librarians, community members, leaders of local professional organizations, administrators, school/community liaisons, retired teachers, and parent volunteers.
- ◆ Hybrid study groups can be harder to schedule and maintain due to varying schedules and commitments of group members.

# CONSIDERING COLLABORATIVE AND COOPERATIVE APPROACHES

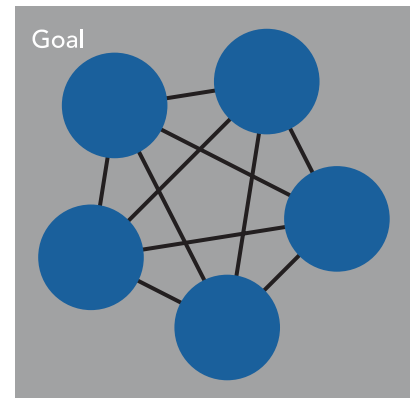
The Global Literacy Communities were voluntary—no one was required to be a part of a group. The groups decided on their inquiry. They also determined the strategies for tackling their question, which included whether they would work in a collaborative or cooperative manner.

- ◆ Collaborative groups think through ideas and tasks together with members participating fully and equally.
- ◆ Cooperative groups divide their work into different tasks. Group members each do their part, working together to accomplish a goal.

The goals of a group determine which approach is used. Some groups alternate between both approaches depending on what they are doing. If the goal is specific and task oriented, groups tend to use a cooperative approach. If the goal is more philosophical or open ended, a collaborative approach is often used.

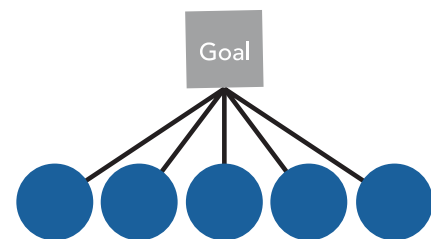
## Collaborative approach

- ◆ Group members think about a concept or issue together in order to create new understandings that will impact what they do in their classrooms.
- ◆ Members share the leadership and decide on the process, goals, agenda and content.
- ◆ Discussions are embedded in day-to-day practice because group members are actively thinking about teaching.






## Cooperative approach

- ◆ Cooperative work is focused on accomplishing a specific goal (e.g., creating a unit or planning an event). Each member has clearly defined tasks that contribute to the common goal.
- ◆ Cross-curricular projects are often cooperative. Each content-area teacher creates specific learning engagements for their area. Members collectively decide on a shared theme for the cross-curricular project. (Harlee, Shaker Heights, MLK)
- ◆ Groups can start in a cooperative manner with the agenda set by the leader but shift to a collaborative approach as teachers become confident in their professional knowledge and see themselves as capable of generating new insights.





## INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS

-  Groups can move between collaboration and cooperation depending on their goals. During their *first year*, the Teacher Talk members thought collaboratively about the nature of global literature by discussing novels and picture books to solidify their understandings. The *second year*, they built on their understandings to cooperatively create units with global books related to the CCSS.
-  The range in members can influence how the group works together. *Vashon Island* members held a wide range of religious views, so they chose to actively listen to each other in order to more effectively discuss a book and co-construct guidelines for the use of a book in schools.
-  The creation of a space that feels safe for asking questions, sharing thoughts, and discussing classroom successes and failures is essential for collaborative groups, especially when a tension arises. When a child made a stereotypical comment about Muslims and terrorists, difficult questions were raised in the *Aveson* study group and in teachers' conversations with students. As teachers explored Islam and the variety of Muslims around the world, they asked questions of each other without feeling censured. They were able to display their ignorance and collaboratively explore new insights.

# CREATING STUDY GROUP STRUCTURES

An important component of a successful study group is setting up the practical aspects of where, when, and how often the group will meet. Having structures in place ensures that meetings actually occur and are less likely to be cancelled.



## Place

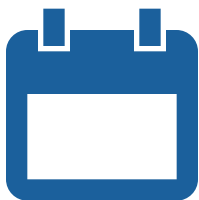
- ◆ A university or school classroom, library, or conference room is a valuable meeting place because of access to books for browsing and research.
- ◆ Some groups rotate meetings in classrooms to see each teacher's classroom context and have access to artifacts from classroom interactions.
- ◆ A home, restaurant, or coffee shop can serve as a meeting place that is more relaxed since it is outside of the workplace.

***"Going out for breakfast was our FAVORITE kind of meeting! Being away from school and schedule pressures to relax, share, plan, eat, and laugh was wonderful!"*** *ART, Prisca Martens*



## Time

- ◆ Most school/university and school(s)/community group meetings take place in special meetings outside of school hours.
- ◆ Groups meet on early release days, after school, evenings, or Saturdays.
- ◆ Some school-based groups use team meetings, lunch hours or prep periods to meet. Some discuss their work almost daily while others dedicate certain teaching team meetings to their inquiry.
- ◆ The Hobgood group had release time during a school day morning. Release time signaled the value of the group's work to the rest of the school community. Teachers did not lose personal time by meeting outside of school hours nor were they tired from a full day of teaching.



## Frequency

- ◆ Study groups meet once a week, bimonthly, or monthly.
- ◆ Meeting monthly is a good minimum, however, bimonthly meetings are optimal. Meeting every other week allows groups to maintain momentum and make strong progress in their understandings.
- ◆ Meeting less than once a month does not give members a consistent chance to read and think about practice. It keeps the focus on the task to be done, leaving less time for the development of new understandings.

***“We had been meeting after school and we realized that this time was not working for our group. The time was too rushed and teachers were too tired to think about this project. We arranged with the principal for teachers to have two hours of time during the morning of a school day to work on this project. Graduate students covered classes so that teachers could focus on our project.”*** *Hobgood, Jeanne Faine*

## Overall structure for group meeting

- ◆ The goals of the group determine the structure and activities within the group meetings and whether to work collaboratively or cooperatively. For example, groups might focus on discussing books (Vashon Island), engaging in active research (ART), or planning curriculum (MLK, LSHS English Lions).
- ◆ Groups can choose from a number of tasks they want to engage in for professional learning. These include:
  - ◆ reading professional articles or books (Aveson, Tri-Cities, Teacher Talk)
  - ◆ sharing experiences from classrooms (Spokane, ART, Tri-Cities, MLK)
  - ◆ planning classroom engagements (Harlee)
  - ◆ discussing student needs (Aveson)
  - ◆ browsing children’s books (Tri-Cities, Garden Hills, Spokane)
  - ◆ discussing books, sharing book reviews, and exploring potential challenges to books (Vashon Island, Aveson)
  - ◆ interacting with special guests (Orono, Garden Hills)
  - ◆ brainstorming ideas for additional funding, curricular ideas, and community connections (Vashon Island)
  - ◆ planning presentations and writing articles (Teacher Talk)

## Meeting routine

Listed below are two examples of schedules for a 90 minute meeting.

### Example 1

- ◆ 20 minutes – sharing from classrooms based on previous meeting
- ◆ 20 minutes – discuss professional reading
- ◆ 35 minutes – discuss implications for classroom practice and brainstorm ideas to try out in classrooms
- ◆ 15 minutes – set goals for the next meeting

### Example 2

- ◆ 15 minutes – sharing new books
- ◆ 30 minutes – literature discussion of a book
- ◆ 30 minutes – brainstorm ideas for using book in classrooms
- ◆ 15 minutes – plan for the next meeting





# ENGAGING IN GLOBAL INQUIRY THROUGH LITERATURE

The Global Literacy Communities engaged with global children's and adolescent literature in many different ways, structuring their inquiries according to their group goals and their strengths and interests as educators. These inquiries are grouped into broader categories to reflect the range of possible ways a study group might explore literature. Each type of inquiry is described with examples from the Global Literacy Communities, including new insights teachers gained along with tensions created by the inquiry.

Groups worked on their inquiries over an extended period of time and engaged in projects that fell within the categories listed below. Many groups worked in multiple categories.

- ◆ Plan special events
- ◆ Develop home/school partnerships
- ◆ Add global literature into an existing curriculum
- ◆ Engage in literature discussion and response
- ◆ Plan a new classroom unit
- ◆ Plan a cross-curricular unit
- ◆ Gather and evaluate resources
- ◆ Transform the curriculum to support global thinking

## PLAN SPECIAL EVENTS

Some Global Literacy Communities engaged in planning special events as part of their inquiries. These events brought educators together around a common goal that provided a public demonstration of their inquiry.

### Korean museum

After an in-depth study of contemporary Korean and Korean-American culture, third grade students from Albuquerque created a museum of what they discovered about Korea. (ACLIP)

The students had a reading corner where they could read books written in Hangul or listen to stories told in Korean. The teachers were surprised by how much books written in a non-English language engaged their students' attention.

The students benefited from interaction with a Korean educator who came to the classroom and talked about her culture. They also corresponded with Korean pen pals.



### Culture classes

A public library in Washington County, Alabama paired with two kindergarten classes to help them experience six global cultures through the use of books, activities, crafts, and food. Students were introduced to the cultural background of six holiday celebrations as an entry point to experiencing the various cultures. The library purchased several books about the holidays to give to each student with the goal of supporting literacy skills. (WCReaderLeaders)

In the photograph, children listen to a member of the Choctaw Fancy Dancers talk about celebrating a powwow. Authenticity was important to group members, so they made efforts to expose children to authentic artifacts and native speakers.



## Family reading night

An evening celebration in Chinle, Arizona, a Navajo community, was the culmination of a January–April focus on the world at the middle school. The unit began with the construction of a large papier mâché globe. Special education students compared their lives with children profiled in UNICEF books like *Children Just Like Me* (Kindersley, 1995). The unit ended with a special global focus during a monthly family reading night. Teachers invited families to travel the world through booths representing different countries. Booths were operated by teachers who had visited or lived in the country and included artifacts and foods.



## Food Fest

Many of the books discussed during the year had food as part of the story. So a classroom teacher from Eastern Oregon decided to have students try out some of the foods they had read about as a conclusion to their inquiry. Many of the students had not had the opportunity to taste tropical fruit like kiwis.





## World Water Day and World Math Day

Second-grade students at Maderia Elementary School joined with schools from around the world to participate in the United Nations World Water Day and the UNICEF supported World Math Day.

One teacher shared books on water resources such as *All the Water in the World* (Lyon, 2011), *One Well* (Strauss, 2007), *A Cool Drink of Water* (Kerley, 2002), and *Rain School* (Rumford, 2010). At the end of the celebration, students' reflections revealed a deeper, more intimate understanding of the connectivity of the world and its resources.



## INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS

-  Children need basic information about a culture to engage their interest. Without this, it is difficult for them to build knowledge and make connections.
-  Culturally authentic literature can stir children's empathy and understanding while enabling them to learn about unfamiliar people and cultural settings.
-  Eating unfamiliar food reduces the "weird" factor for students.
-  A sole focus on the Five F's (food, flags, festivals, famous people, and folklore) can reduce cultures to lists of facts. Increased intercultural understanding develops when the focus moves from facts to the values and beliefs of a culture.

## DEVELOP HOME/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Many educators value partnerships with families. The Global Literacy Communities created this kind of partnership in several ways. Some sent home literacy backpacks to encourage book discussions between parents and children. Others connected to families by drawing on their cultural expertise and creating sets of materials on cultures represented by students in the classroom.

### Literacy backpacks

Each backpack had 1–5 books and a journal inviting families to respond to the books.

- ◆ Hobgood teachers included books by international authors and illustrators. Families discussed the books and shared their own cultural knowledge and values.
- ◆ Spokane teachers created Family Story Book Bags with five books related to themes of concern to young children. These included books on food, games/play, family, heritage, and everyday life. The letter to the families encouraged them to use the journal to record their own related stories so children could learn about their cultures.
- ◆ Albuquerque students took Korean books home to share with families. The children had learned the Hangeul alphabet and the backpack contained Hangeul magnetic letters. (ACLIP)
- ◆ A Teacher Talk member created poetry backpacks for students, allowing families to enjoy a range of poetry books and activities centered around global themes.





***“The hope was for families to simply participate in book talks. However, the end results far exceeded our expectations, as students began to make powerful connections to writing that they were learning about in a daily Writer’s Workshop.”***

*Hobgood, Martin Ridgley*





## INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS

-  Families become involved by being cultural experts, presenting their heritage culture to classes, supplying authentic artifacts, and giving opinions on the cultural authenticity of books. (*ART*)
-  Literacy backpacks encourage parents to engage in global conversations with children. Insights generated at home differ from insights children gain at school. Conversations at school become richer because of the added perspectives. (*Hobgood*)
-  Families become excited about the global focus, whether on their heritage culture or another global culture. (*Spokane*)
-  Involving the parents communicates that their abilities and funds of knowledge are valued and recognized as pedagogically significant.

## Parents as Resources

The ART classrooms did an extensive study of India. Parents checked books for cultural authenticity, talked about life in India, and supplied authentic artifacts.

Teachers sent a survey home to families, asking about the immigrant history of the family, including when ancestors or family members arrived in the U.S. and why they chose to immigrate. Family origins were charted on a wall-size map, which helped students realize everyone's family originally came from somewhere else. The discussion about family stories helped students value each person and their perspectives.



***“We were touched when one little boy from Myanmar, seeing the books in the hands of his teacher said, ‘Wow! Books—MY country?’ The light in his eyes and the enthusiasm with which he grabbed the bag helped us realize that this small project was important in the lives of newcomers. But we also found that the project was important to the children who had been born here. They were able to better understand their classmates’ previous lives and relate to them in ways they never were able to before.”***




*Saturday Book Group, Carol Gilles*

## Immigrant Book Kits

The Saturday Book Group created country-themed book kits for classroom use. Countries were chosen based on the top five countries represented in the English Language Learner classes in two elementary schools. The book kits helped newcomers feel their culture was important, and students born in the U.S. began to value the cultural and linguistic knowledge of classmates.



## INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS

-  Creating home/school connections supports second language learners by valuing their cultural backgrounds and languages.
-  The chance to hear literature that supports and celebrates different languages and cultural practices is significant for students functioning in an unfamiliar language and culture and experiencing a shift in their identity.
-  Interacting with stories opens up dialogue with immigrant students and their families. Students become excited when they recognize something in a book from their country or cultural background.



# ADD GLOBAL LITERATURE INTO AN EXISTING CURRICULUM

A starting point for integrating global literature into classrooms is finding places to add these books into already existing units and literacy practices or link them to school priorities.

## Books to integrate in a literacy curriculum

A teacher in the Chinle Global Literacy Community integrated global books into language arts classes with Navajo middle school students, using the books to teach literacy and critical thinking. She developed cloze exercises that helped students identify cultural elements in the books and had students think about big questions related to the UN charter on children's rights. The following questions were considered:

- ◆ Why is it important to learn about other cultures?
- ◆ Why is it important to value your own culture?
- ◆ How would my life be different if I'd been born on a different continent?
- ◆ What does it mean to be a world citizen instead of just a citizen of one country or one community?
- ◆ How do cultures express what is important to them?
- ◆ Are all people on the planet treated equally?
- ◆ In what ways are we connected to people around the world?
- ◆ What are some of the big problems our world faces?
- ◆ How can people work together to solve world problems?



## Books to support school priorities




Teachers in Garden Hills were working on documentation to become an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB-PYP) school. As part of that program, the whole school worked on developing learner traits that contribute to academic success. Teachers discovered that global books facilitated their work on the learner profile.



*Knowledgeable, Risk-takers, Caring, Principled, Reflective, Communicators, Balanced, Inquirers, Open-minded, Thinkers*



## INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS

-  Teachers monitored for fidelity to a specific program were not able to introduce new curriculum. Adding or substituting global content to a curriculum already in use was an easier entry point. Those using this method quickly recognized what global literature could do for students.
-  Teachers with high teaching loads and few resource staff often have difficulty finding time to write curriculum. Adding global literature to what they are already doing is an easier first step.
-  Adding global books is a positive addition to a unit of study because students find them interesting and become more engaged with the subject area.

# ENGAGE IN LITERATURE DISCUSSION AND RESPONSE

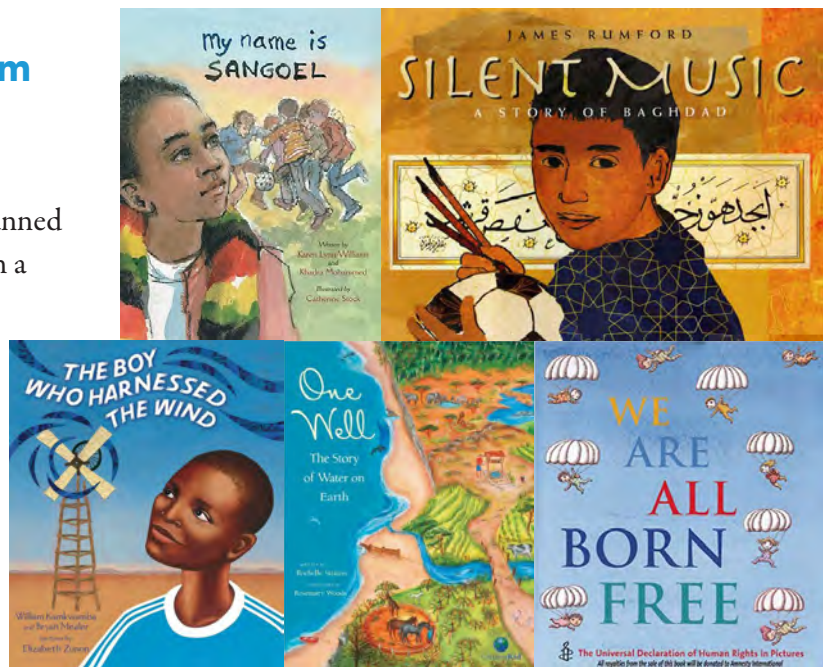
Global literature can foster rich discussion because the issues, settings, and situations depicted in the books challenge students to go beyond their current understandings. Teachers valuing discussion were intentional in seven areas: (1) they selected books that invite discussion, (2) they shifted from adding books to discussing books (3) they taught students how to talk with each other, (4) they reserved time for discussion, (5) they used response strategies to deepen discussion and dialogue, (6) they posted charts to support student thinking, and (7) they used narrative tools to encourage students to present their understanding.

## 1. Teachers selected books that invite discussion.

- ◆ Books that have a tension (e.g., they present unfamiliar issues) and invite thinking about multiple perspectives create opportunities for discussion. Reading *Biblioburro* (Winter, 2010) generated discussion for second graders as they wrestled with community literacy practices that differed from their own. (Madeira)
- ◆ Books that meet a specific need or purpose of a class inquiry provide a rich context for dialogue. A teacher who wanted students to move beyond stereotypes towards a deeper understanding of differences read aloud *Books for Oliver* (Larkin, 2007), a story set in Kenya. Her fifth grade students discussed differences between Oliver's school experience and their own, his valuing of education, the effects of poverty, and the ethics of having so much when others, like Oliver, have so little. (Tri-Cities)

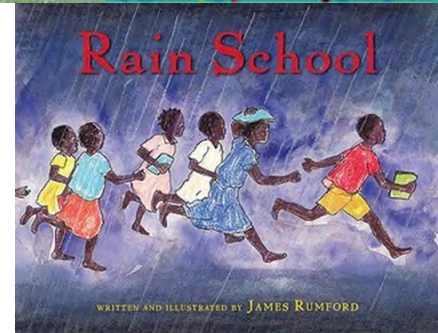
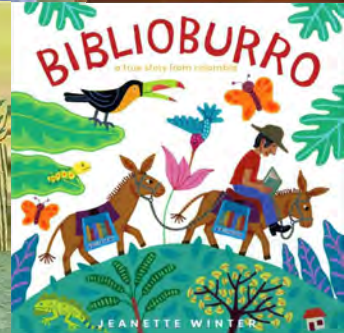
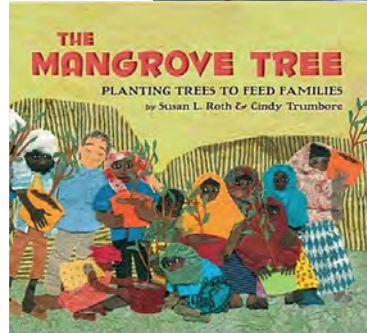
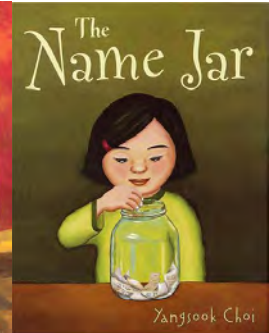
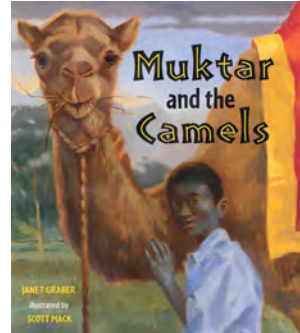
## 2. Teachers shifted from adding books to discussing books

Teachers in two schools initially planned on linking a particular country with a set of books each month. They soon realized what worked better was tying books to students' conversations and interests. Student questions led teachers to new book titles and topics they had never explored before. The conversations were rich, engaging, and connected to previous topics.



### 3. Teachers taught students how to talk with each other

- ◆ To highlight the importance of multiple perspectives, teachers taught students to listen carefully to each other, ask questions that build on others' ideas, and respectfully disagree.
- ◆ To signal respect for students' thinking, teachers acted as discussion facilitators rather than discussion leaders. This involved listening carefully and asking, "What are you thinking?" without evaluating students' contributions. This encouraged them to express their own views rather than repeat what they thought the teacher wanted to hear. (Tri-Cities)
- ◆ To help students learn to question, teachers taught them to challenge assumptions, look closely at relationships (especially those involving power), and reflect on how they can take action for social justice. (Tri-Cities)
- ◆ Teachers took the time to build community and trust so students felt safe seeking out views, norms, and situations different from their own. They could ask questions they genuinely wondered about, including those involving ethnicity, race, and religion.
- ◆ Teachers built on students' curiosity about each other's backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. Books such as *The Name Jar* (Choi, 2003) encouraged discussion about classroom community and the need to have empathy for their peers. (Madeira)



### 4. Teachers planned space and time for discussion

- ◆ Teachers realized one of the most important things they could do was engage students in meaningful discussions about books. The process of making connections, sharing, and reflecting was more important than producing a product or doing an activity.
- ◆ Teachers in the elementary grades kept the global picture books visible all year so they were referenced in

***“For it was in these moments, when we thoughtfully chose to silence our viewpoints, that deep, raw, and transforming discussions took place.”***

*Aveson, Jennifer Carey*

classroom discussions frequently. They were read multiple times, allowing the classroom community to think repeatedly about a concept or issue in the books. (Madeira, ART)

- ◆ Students were given time for discussion following whole class read-alouds. (Willamette Valley)
- ◆ Time was allotted for students to meet regularly in small groups to discuss a book. Each group read different books representing a variety of themes and cultures. (Douglass, Eastern Oregon)
- ◆ Students had time for independent reading and exploration, giving them a broader background of stories and experiences from which they could draw on in their discussions. (ACLIP, Madeira)

## **INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS WHILE ENGAGING IN DIALOGUE**

**While teachers decide which stories children hear, an important insight was that children could engage with topics teachers previously avoided.**

**Teachers shared control of the dialogue with students, engaging with questions students found significant to them. Teachers found the open aspect of the dialogue the most transformative although, at times, uncomfortable.**

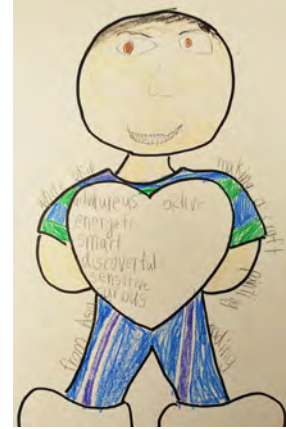
**Teachers were surprised by how engaged, thoughtful, and competent their students were in asking questions and wrestling with issues.**

**Self-perceptions of students changed as they began to see themselves as cultural and linguistic experts.**

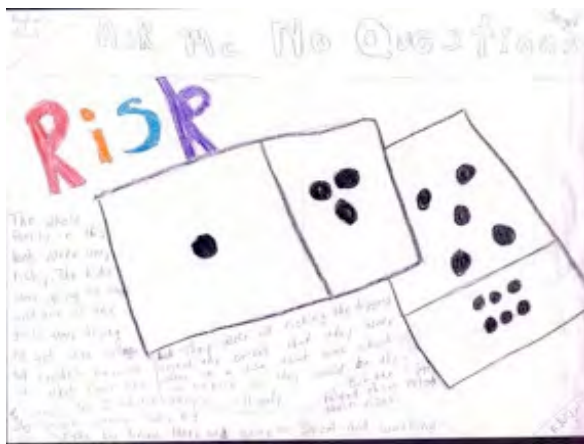
**A shift in paradigms needs dialogue in order to happen.**

## 5. Teachers used response strategies to deepen student thinking and dialogue.

- ◆ A response strategy is a structured yet open-ended engagement that invites students to respond to what they read and to share their connections and issues.
- ◆ Using various strategies, students respond to themes and issues in books through words and art. The discussion process allows them to examine their interpretations.
- ◆ Strategies include “Webbing,” “Graffiti Board,” “Sketch to Stretch,” “Cultural X-rays,” and “Save the Last Word for Me.” (Response Strategy)



*Cultural X-ray*



*Sketch to Stretch*

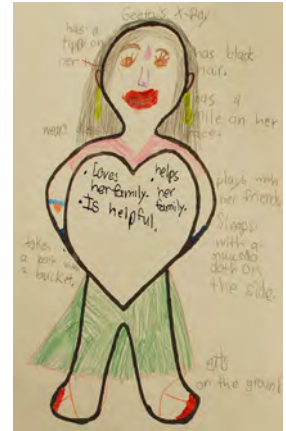
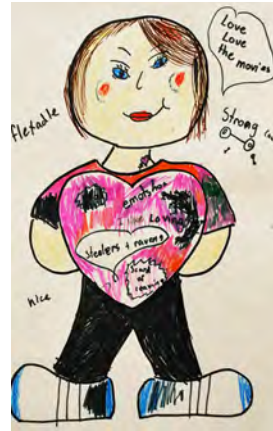


*Graffiti Board*

The ART group valued art as a sign system (i.e., a type of language) that can help students think critically and conceptually, make inferences, and pay attention to details. The pre-K, K, and first grade classroom teachers and art teacher worked together to build on art concepts that helped students “read pictures” in a book and respond to them by drawing their meaning in a sketchbook. In the example, a child is responding to *First Come the Zebra* (Barasch, 2005).

The ART teachers believed students need insight into their own cultural identities in order to understand the worlds depicted in global books. Students first created cultural X-rays of themselves before using the same strategy with book characters. In the example, values and beliefs of the student or story character are listed in the heart. More easily visible or discernable characteristics are listed outside the body.



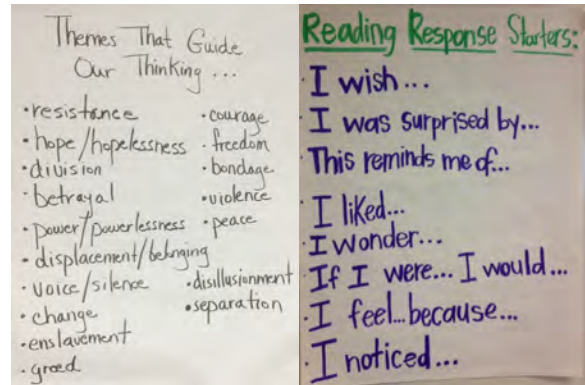


By drawing multiple cultural X-rays of book characters, students came to understand that people act out of their beliefs and values. They then decided what action they would like to take that would be consistent with their own values and beliefs.

Students read global literature to learn about a particular country in depth. They used a large piece of chart paper as a graffiti board to write down what they wanted to remember from their reading.

## 6. Teachers used classroom charts to support student response and thinking.

- ◆ The Douglass High School teachers posted a chart of possible themes that might appear in student readings, which was used to guide their thinking and enrich their discussions. Themes included: resistance, separation, hope, division, betrayal, power, displacement, voice, change, enslavement, greed, courage, freedom, bondage, violence, peace, and disillusionment.



- ◆ The Cunningham Colts third grade teachers posted charts with reading response starters to help students move beyond responses such as “I liked the book.” Starters included: “I wish . . .,” “I was surprised by . . .,” “This reminds me of . . .,” “I wonder . . .,” “I liked . . .,” “If I were . . . I would . . .,” “I noticed . . .,” and “I feel . . . because . . .”

## 7. Teachers used narrative tools to encourage students to present their understanding.

- ◆ Aveson teachers had students create persona dolls that represented a character from a book. The students used the doll to narrate the story and discuss issues from the book.

- ◆ The doll in the photograph represents the main character in *The Librarian of Basra: A True Tale from Iraq* (Winter, 2005). The doll was used to narrate the story of Alia and her efforts to save irreplaceable library books when Bagdad was bombed in 2003.



## INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS ON PERSPECTIVES

- 💡 Understanding and accepting differences was challenging for students who had grown up in a predominantly monocultural environment.
- 💡 Students discovered that ideas can be interpreted in different ways. They learned that what may seem exotic to them could be the norm for someone else and vice versa.
- 💡 Reading global literature and talking about issues raised in the books helped students become more purposeful, informed, aware, and open in their thinking.



## PLAN A NEW CLASSROOM UNIT

A natural way to begin using global literature is to plan a new unit that places global literature at the heart of the inquiry. While this takes time and requires space in the curriculum, teachers who did so became excited about thinking in new ways and translating their ideas into practice.

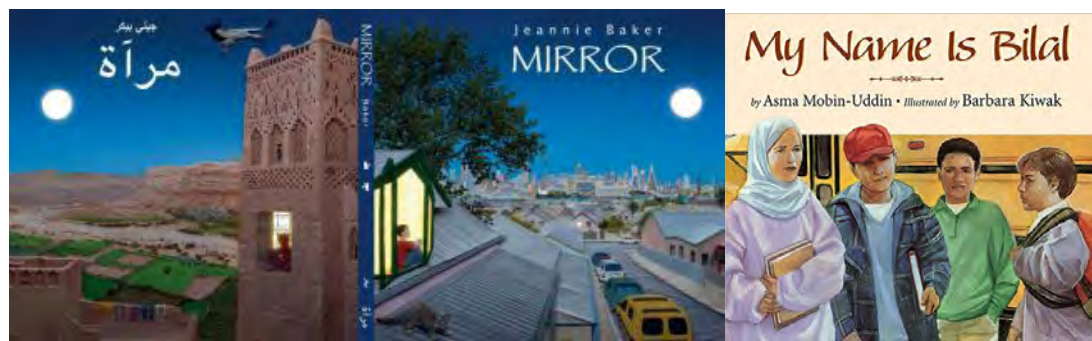
### Cross-grade partnerships

The A to Z Global Literacy Community developed a curricular experience that involved an intergenerational book club, pairing up middle school and first grade students. Teachers worked with students to build cultural background knowledge for both ages so they could comprehend the texts in more depth.



### Cross-cultural units

Stillwater teachers developed a unit on the Middle East, based on a text set of books featuring Muslim characters from Middle Eastern countries. They interacted with literature that served as a counter-narrative to media portrayals of Muslims.



### Cultural connection units

The Orono Maine group developed engagements around the “familiar in the far-away,” looking at practices and qualities that connect cultures. Third graders focused on childhood traditions practiced around the world (e.g. birthday celebrations and customs surrounding tooth loss), while Kindergarten

students interacted with books from the U.K., France, and Australia to look at universal feelings of worry.

## Cross-curricular explorations of critical issues

The Willamette Valley group of middle and high school teachers created units for their specific content areas and students. The four teachers were in four different schools so each unit was unique, but they all emphasized critically thinking about social issues.

- ◆ An eighth-grade earth science teacher created a unit on water with a global focus. She integrated literature into the curriculum to help students access science content (e.g., water cycle and global climate) and relate their perspectives on water usage to those of young people around the world. By connecting local and global cultures, she helped students recognize their common experience and appreciate the responsibility that comes from sharing the earth's resources.
- ◆ A language arts teacher created an exploration around *Words in the Dust* (Reedy, 2011), set in Afghanistan. Her sixth-grade struggling students were fascinated with the novel. Through the narrative they discussed global issues such as education, health, gender, war, civil unrest, culture, and poverty. Students gained a deeper understanding of Afghanistan, its people and customs, and Afghan perceptions of Americans.
- ◆ A ninth-grade language arts teacher used novels with adolescent narrators as a hook to capture student interest. The novels' settings had a wide geographic range (e.g., Germany, Poland, Burma, Sudan, and Afghanistan), and the books included both historical and contemporary stories.
- ◆ A sixth-grade English essentials teacher used global biographies with students who struggled with reading and writing. She selected books that included more illustrations, background content, and explanations of difficult concepts in order to help students relate to the story.





## INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS

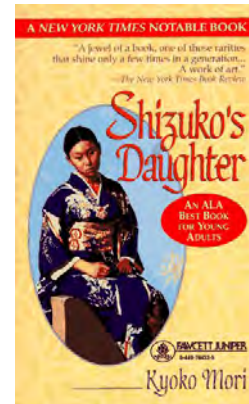
-  Teachers were surprised at how easily global literature could be adapted to curricular units. The books led to on-task behavior and sustained conversations.
-  The response of students to global literature encouraged teachers to select more global and multicultural titles to use the following year. They realized that while occasional use of global literature was effective in improving student self-concept and curiosity, embedding it in the curriculum throughout the year would lead to a more culturally sensitive and responsive education.
-  Because the goal is greater intercultural understanding, students will benefit most when intercultural insights are integrated into other curricular units and conversations throughout the day.

# PLAN A CROSS-CURRICULAR UNIT

Global cross-curricular units promote deeper thinking skills by encouraging students to make connections across disciplines. Teachers in middle schools, in particular, found this to be a good place for teachers in various content areas to work together in planning a unit around a particular culture, theme, or historical event.

## Cross-curricular unit based on a touchstone (anchor) text

Sixth-grade students at Harlee Middle School read *Shizuko's Daughter* (Mori, 1993), a contemporary novel set in Kobe, Japan. Prior to reading the novel, the science teacher conducted a unit on earthquakes and tsunamis, focusing on the 1995 earthquake in Kobe. In social studies, the students discussed the geography of Japan. As students read the novel in language arts, the math instructor dealt with distance and measurement by looking at the protagonist's travels between major cities in Japan.



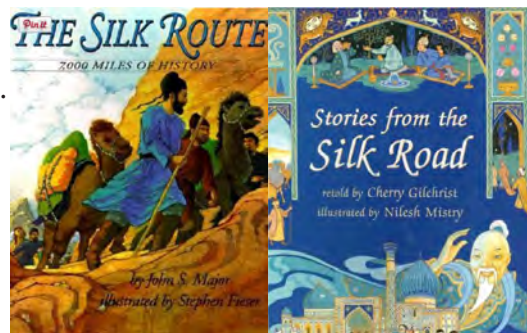
## Cross-curricular unit based on a particular culture

Students at MLK Middle School used textbooks and trade books to study Central America, the Caribbean, and ancient Aztec and Mayan civilizations across language arts, math, and social studies classes. Teachers gained several important insights:

- ◆ Students made more cross-curricular connections because teachers knew what was being covered in other classes and were able to highlight links and interconnections.
- ◆ Working across disciplines increased teacher excitement and student interest.
- ◆ The enhanced color and layout of trade books correlated with student interest. When conducting research on a foreign country, students chose trade books more often than textbooks (evidenced by their dog-eared corners). They were also inclined to read more than one book, which led to increased comprehension.

## Cross-curricular unit based in history and technology

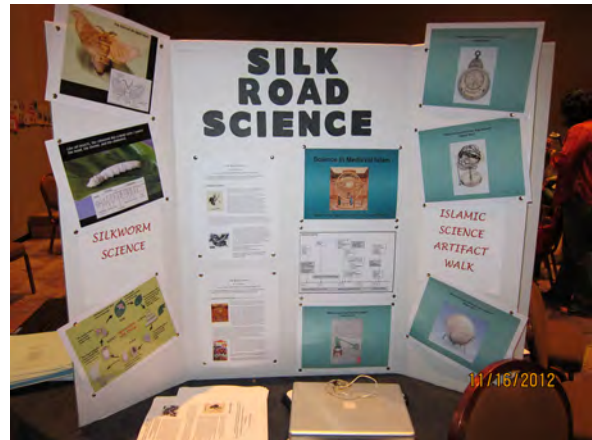
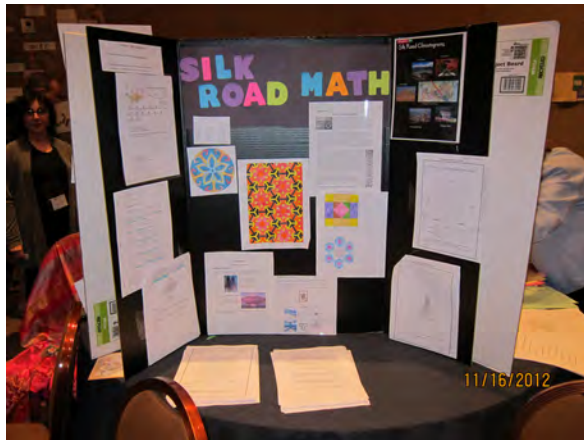
A teaching team at Shaker Heights Middle School used student interest in technology to create a Google Lit Trip that focused on the Silk Road and the cultures it intersected. Teachers used a historical narrative and a collection of folktales as touchstone texts (texts around which a unit is built) to provide information about the Silk Road and its travelers and create connections with the students.



Each content area class studied a different aspect of the route:

- ◆ In English, students wrote journal entries from various cultural perspectives.
- ◆ In math, students studied mathematical theorems used in different ancient cultures and measured distances between cities along the Silk Road using the Pythagorean theorem.
- ◆ In science, students studied live silk worms.
- ◆ In reading, students used folk tales as authentic non-westernized reflections of Silk Road cultures.
- ◆ In social studies, students created timelines displaying various historical events.

Creating a cross-curricular unit was an important learning opportunity for math and science teachers. Since this was the first time they had worked collaboratively, they found themselves thinking creatively in new ways.



## Cross-curricular unit to integrate literature and science

The Global Environment Group incorporated global literature into science and social studies curricula in third and fifth grade. They were already exploring cross-curricular connections to STEM enriched instruction and Common Core State Standards and decided to expand their work by developing a unit on environmental issues around the world. Their work led to the creation of a website highlighting

global children's literature dedicated to environmental issues.

The group's transdisciplinary units were built around ecosystems. Some students read about Gordon Sato's work planting mangrove trees in Eritrea, Wangari Maathai's reforestation efforts in Kenya, and sustainable gardening in Honduras and Canada. Other students read about the generation of alternative forms of energy in Iceland and Denmark. Students were impressed with the role teenage activists played in saving British Columbia's Great Bear Forest and were challenged to take environmental action themselves.



## INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS

- 💡 Access to Salisbury University's collection of books nominated for the Green Earth Book Award supported teachers' book selection efforts by enabling them to browse books and select ones that fit their students' needs and the focus of their inquiry.
- 💡 Books representing a range of perspectives were intentionally selected.
- 💡 The classroom engagements were enhanced by visits from authors and illustrators who had won a Green Earth Book Award.

## GATHER AND EVALUATE RESOURCES

Gathering authentic quality resources needed to support classroom inquiry can be time and labor intensive. Global Literacy Communities used different processes to locate, discuss, and evaluate books.

### Text set development

The Saturday Book Group wanted to support teachers in elementary schools with high English language learner populations by helping them learn about students' home cultures and develop culturally responsive instruction. Group members created text sets around the most prominent countries represented by the students (i.e., Somalia, Cuba, Russia, Myanmar, and the Pacific Islands). Text sets included fiction (e.g., folktales) and nonfiction (e.g., photographs and historical/geographical material) and a book that emphasized something well-known about the country. They also included suggested ways of using the texts. Members of the group were available to demonstrate engagements when requested.

### INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS



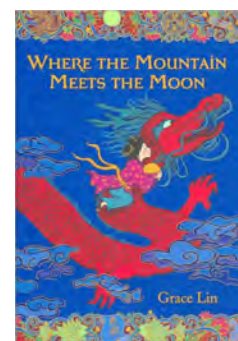
When looking at countries affected by war, books needed to represent the country and its people, not just the conflict.



The books led to sensitive topics, such as war in Myanmar and Somalia and political issues in Cuba. Teachers had to negotiate the tension of being sensitive to the cultures while not sanitizing the issues.

### Globalizing the Common Core

In response to the adoption of the CCSS in their state, the Teacher Talk group decided to expand the CCSS Text Exemplar (Appendix B) list to include multicultural and global perspectives. They paired global texts with those listed in Appendix B, selecting books that matched those on the list in text complexity, quality and Lexile measure. Several members used *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* (Lin, 2009) as an anchor text and created a third grade, cross-disciplinary unit aligned with CCSS.



## INSIGHTS AND TENSIONS

- 💡 When database searches did not identify books that were global and related to the specific topic of the inquiry, teachers used the collective knowledge of the group to locate resources.
- 💡 Some group members worked in schools that viewed the Text Exemplar list as a mandatory reading list, while other schools considered it a list of example texts intended to demonstrate complexity, quality and range.

### Community resource development around literature

The Vashon Island group was composed of members with diverse philosophies of education reflective of their community. Their goal was to build bridges between schools and community organizations involved in education through their positions as public school teachers, librarian, homeschool education liaison, charter school teacher-administrator, and university educator.

Group members reviewed and discussed three or more novels each month. Discussion topics included potential audience, curricular fit, need for contextual and research support, potential use as anchor text for classroom projects, and connections with community resources. The discussions expanded group members' ideas of the appropriateness of certain books and the ways they could be used in the classroom.



### Evaluating representations in literature

The Aveson group was composed of teachers with a high percentage of special needs students who needed differentiated and personalized instruction. Teachers were committed to engaging in conversations with a global perspective in order to help students develop empathy for others (i.e., empathy consciousness). They wanted their students to not just experience cognitive empathy but also compassionate empathy that moved them to action.

The group's book selection process spanned several months as they met to discuss titles from themed book lists and Language & Culture Book Kits on the Worlds of Words website. In evaluating



the books, they used guidelines of the Council on Interracial Books for Children and considered qualities such as the characters' lifestyle, characteristics of the book's heroes, effect of the characters on the reader's self-image, storyline, and illustrations. Teachers examined texts to see the extent to which the books supported (a) investigating the world, (b) recognizing perspectives, (c) communicating ideas, and (d) taking action—the four global competencies identified by the Asia Society.



# TRANSFORM THE CURRICULUM TO SUPPORT GLOBAL THINKING

Curriculum transformation goes beyond adding books or a new study unit. This transformation involves changing the curriculum so global perspectives and literature are interwoven into every unit across the school year.

## Globalizing the literature curriculum in high school

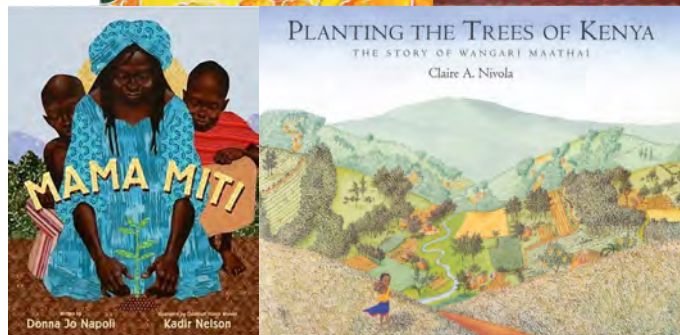
The English teachers at Lithia Springs High School incorporated global titles into all their English and literature classes. They also created a new course on global literature by combining British and World Literature courses. Teachers had students read a variety of global titles, both ancient classics (e.g., *Antigone* by Sophocles, *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu) and modern texts (e.g., *Night* by Ellie Wiesel, *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini). Teachers emphasized discussion and writing, which resulted in a dramatic improvement in student scores on end-of-year standardized tests. The teachers also noticed an increase in student tolerance of one another and a greater willingness to meet new students.

Teachers concluded that global literature is best taught when embedded within existing courses rather than added on as a separate course. One English teacher aligned her world literature selections with world history classes so students would make cross-curricular connections. While teaching literature, she created opportunities for further exploration of related languages and cultures.

## Culturally relevant literacy instruction

Garden Hills Elementary teachers wanted to make their literacy instruction more culturally relevant. They decided to use more authentic material by selecting books connected to students' life experiences and books that had an explicitly global perspective. Teachers incorporated global literature throughout the year, tying their book choices to the IB-PYP learner profile. They also chose to deepen global thinking by having students consider related aspects of the culture. For instance, students not only experienced food from global cultures but also considered how food differences relate to climate and availability.

Teachers prompted reflective thinking in students by including complexity in







# INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

The goal of this project was to integrate global literature into classrooms with the hope of helping teachers and students develop their own intercultural understanding. This goal was met to varying degrees as evident in the talk and actions that occurred in the study groups and classrooms.

**Teachers and students moved away from solely studying facts about a culture to understanding cultural beliefs and values.** While facts provide important information about a culture, they can lead to depicting a culture as exotic or strange. Without an understanding of beliefs and values underlying the actions and social practices of a cultural group, teachers and students may not understand those practices or connect on a human level with people from that culture. Two ways the Global Literacy Communities interacted with beliefs and values were through cultural X-rays and open-ended dialogues.

**Teachers and students developed empathy for people living within another culture.** Teachers discovered that a focus on facts also hides the passions and struggles that help create empathy for others. Books that engaged readers in stories around social issues introduced human struggles and supported a deeper level of dialogue and development of empathy.

**Teachers and students engaged with the complexity of global cultures.** Both teachers and students began to understand that cultures cannot be described in simple terms. They realized how diverse cultures are by exploring different aspects of the cultures (e.g., art, music, history, language, social issues, etc.). They also thought about multiple viewpoints and the diverse values represented in a country or group of people by thinking about and discussing the characters in the books they read.

**Teachers and students used dialogue to engage with culture at a conceptual level.** Digging down to beliefs and values—getting to the why beneath cultural practices—pushed students to engage in conceptual thinking that:

- ◆ helped students identify understandings useful in problem-solving that benefits everyone involved.
- ◆ had a factual foundation but moved beyond it.
- ◆ introduced tensions that gave students something to wrestle with.
- ◆ moved learners from local (familiar) to global (unfamiliar) contexts.
- ◆ needed time to develop.

# SHARING INQUIRY PROJECTS

For teachers, sharing new cultural and pedagogical understandings was an important part of integrating them into their thinking and practice. Hearing about others' projects was also a valuable learning tool for teachers who wanted to use global literature in their classrooms.

Global Literacy Communities presented their projects in a number of different ways.

- ◆ National and state conferences: Groups presented their work at national conferences (e.g., IRA, NCTE) or state and local literacy conferences.
- ◆ School districts: Groups presented their work to school boards, parent-teacher groups, and teaching teams, and in professional development workshops.
- ◆ Publications: Groups wrote about their classroom experience and submitted articles to journals and *WOW Stories*.
- ◆ Many teachers shared their insights informally in lunchrooms and hallways. Groups expanded as fellow teachers heard about what was happening with global literature and wanted to join the projects.



*Teacher Talk member Angela Buffalino-Morgan invites people to ask her about global literature and using global literature across the curriculum at the 2013 NCTE annual convention.*



*Stephanie Annunziata shares the Teacher Talk project with an NCTE audience member at the 2013 annual convention.*

# RESOURCES

## WEBSITES, AWARDS, AND PUBLISHERS

### Worlds of Words

<http://wowlit.org>: The goal of the site is to help educators find global literature and discover ways to use it in their classrooms. The resources on the site include:

- ◆ **Book database:** searchable by geographical region, theme, genre, and age. The database has advanced search capability.
- ◆ *WOW Review*: online journal of reviews of children's and adolescent literature that highlight cultural authenticity and discuss content, themes and concerns with the books.
- ◆ *WOW Stories*: online journal of stories from the classroom relating ways in which teachers have used literature to support classroom inquiries.
- ◆ *WOW Currents*: weekly blog on issues around global and multicultural literature.
- ◆ **Resources:** includes themed book lists and recommended books for specific global communities that are part of the WOW Language and Culture Book Kits (Grades 2–8) and Global Story Boxes (K–1).
- ◆ See the CREATE website for additional book lists and curricular experiences focused on young children. <http://createarizona.org/>

### Websites on global literature

- ◆ **Environmentalist:** Ernie Bond's bibliography of global book titles on environmental issues. <http://faculty.salisbury.edu/~elbond/environmentalist.html>
- ◆ **DAWCL:** database of award-winning literature from the U.S. and other English-speaking countries. [www.dawcl.com](http://www.dawcl.com)
- ◆ **Asia Society:** outline of four global competencies. [http://asiasociety.org/files/book\\_globalcompetence.pdf](http://asiasociety.org/files/book_globalcompetence.pdf) Additional resources and guides are available in other sections of the website. <http://asiasociety.org/education>
- ◆ **IBBY** (International Board on Books for Young People) is an organization focused on the use of literature to build international understanding. The website includes links to national sections of IBBY, book and author awards, World Congresses, and international projects. <http://www.ibby.org/>
- ◆ **USBBY** (U.S. national section of IBBY) selects an annual list of K–12 Outstanding International

Books (OIB). The site includes other book lists and resources. <http://www.usbby.org/>

- ◆ **Notable Books for a Global Society** is an annual award list of K–8 multicultural and global literature. <http://www.clrsig.org/nbgs.php#>

## Publishers who focus on global books

- ◆ U.S.: Lee & Low, Eerdmans, Kane/Miller, Enchanted Lion.
- ◆ Canada: Groundwood, Kids Can Press, Fitzhenry & Whiteside, Tundra, Annick Press.
- ◆ U.K., Australia and New Zealand: Gecko Press, Frances Lincoln, Allen & Unwin.

# RECOMMENDED PROFESSIONAL READINGS

## Articles

- ◆ Kathy Short has articles on an international curriculum (“Developing Intercultural Understanding through Global Children’s Literature” in Meyer & Whitmore, *Reclaiming Reading*, 2011), the inquiry process (“Inquiry as a Stance” in Davidson & Carber, *Taking the PYP Forward*, 2009), and students taking action (“Children Taking Action Within Global Inquires,” *The Dragon Lode*, 2011, 29(2), 50-59).
- ◆ Ernie Bond discusses global children’s literature in “Reading Outstanding International Children’s Books” *Journal of Children’s Literature* (Fall 2006).
- ◆ Council on Interracial Books for Children. (2004). *10 Quick Ways to Analyze Children’s Books for Racism and Sexism*. Available on various websites.
- ◆ Merry Merryfield has many global education articles from a social studies perspective, including “Why Aren’t Teachers Being Prepared to Teach for Diversity, Equity, and Global Interconnectedness?” *Teaching and Teacher Education* (2000), 16(4), 429–443.

## Books

- ◆ **An Introduction to Multicultural Education** (Pearson, 2013). James Banks discusses four approaches to multicultural education.
- ◆ **Black Ants and Buddhists: Thinking Critically and Teaching Differently in the Primary Grades** (Stenhouse, 2006). Mary Cowhey describes the global and social inquiries she engaged in with her students, basing the inquiries on student questions.
- ◆ **Breaking Boundaries with Global Literature** (IRA, 2007). Nancy Hadaway and

Marian McKenna edited this book which explores ways to engage students with global literature, with a focus on the Notable Books for a Global Society annual award lists.

- ◆ **Bridges to Understanding: Envisioning the World through Children's Books** (Scarecrow, 2011). Linda Pavonetti edited the 4th volume in the series and includes over 750 annotations of global literature. The 5th volume will be published in early 2016.
- ◆ **Creating Classrooms for Authors and Inquirers** (Heinemann, 1996). Kathy Short and Jerome Harste describe response strategies and literature circles.
- ◆ **For a Better World: Reading and Writing for Social Action** (Heinemann, 2001). Randy and Katherine Bomer offer ways of discussing and writing on social issues.
- ◆ **Negotiating Critical Literacies with Young Children** (Erlbaum, 2004). Vivian Vasquez describes inquiries around social justice issues with pre-school students.
- ◆ **Reading Globally, K–8: Connecting Students to the World through Literature** (Corwin, 2010). Barbara Lehman, Evelyn Freeman and Pat Scharer explore ways to use global literature to meet curriculum standards across different content areas.
- ◆ **Stories Matter: The Complexity of Cultural Authenticity in Children's Literature** (NCTE, 2003). Dana Fox and Kathy Short edited this book in which authors and scholars offer multiple perspectives on cultural authenticity of literature.
- ◆ **Social Studies for Social Justice** (Teachers College Press, 2007). Rahima C. Wade explores ways of engaging students in taking action through a social justice lens.
- ◆ **Teacher Study Groups** (NCTE, 1998). Kathy Short and colleagues provide practical advice and descriptions of benefits and obstacles to successful teacher study groups.
- ◆ **What If and Why?: Literacy Invitations for Multilingual Classrooms** (Heinemann, 2005). Katie Van Sluys describes invitations as a way to explore topics and concepts using a range of books and other texts (e.g. websites, newspapers, video clips, etc.)





## CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENT LITERATURE CITED

- Ada, A. F. (2002). *I love Saturdays y domingos*. New York, NY: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- Amnesty International (2008). *We are all born free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in pictures*. London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books.
- Applegate, K. (2007). *Home of the brave*. New York, NY: Feiwel and Friends.
- Asgedom, M. (2002). *Of beetles & angels: A boy's remarkable journey from a refugee camp to Harvard*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.
- Baker, J. (2010). *Mirror*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.
- Barasch, L. (2005). *First come the zebra*. New York, NY: Lee & Low Books.
- Choi, Y. (2001). *The name jar*. New York, NY: Knopf.
- Davila, C. (2011). *Luz sees the light*. Toronto, ON: Kids Can Press.
- Drummond, A. (2010). *Energy island: How one community harnessed the wind and changed their world*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Dubuc, M. (2010). *In front of my house*. Toronto, ON: Kids Can Press.
- Ellis, D. (2011). *No ordinary day*. Toronto, ON: Groundwood Books.
- Gilchrist, C. (1999). *Stories from the Silk Road*. New York, NY: Barefoot Books.
- Graber, J. (2009). *Muktar and the camels*. New York, NY: Henry Holt.
- Hollyer, B. (2008). *Our world of water: Children and water around the world*. New York, NY: Henry Holt.
- Hosseini, K. (2003). *The kite runner*. New York, NY: Riverhead Books.
- Johnson, J. C. (2010). *Seeds of change: Planting a path to peace*. New York, NY: Lee & Low Books.
- Kahn, R. (2010). *Big red lollipop*. New York, NY: Viking.
- Kamkwamba, W. & Mealer, B. (2012). *The boy who harnessed the wind*. New York, NY: Dial Books for Young Readers.
- Kerley, B. (2002). *A cool drink of water*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society.
- Kindersley, B. & Kindersley, A. (1995). *Children just like me*. New York, NY: Dorling Kindersley.
- Larkin, J. & Rambo, E. (2007). *Books for Oliver*. New York, NY: Mondo Publishing.
- Lin, G. (2009). *Where the mountain meets the moon*. New York, NY: Little, Brown.
- Lyon, G. E. & Tillotson, K. (2011). *All the water in the world*. New York, NY: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- Major, J. S. (1995). *The silk route: 7,000 miles of history*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Milway, K. S. (2010). *The good garden: How one family went from hunger to having enough*. Toronto, ON: Kids Can Press.
- Mobin-Uddin, A. (2005). *My name is Bilal*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press.
- Mori, K. (1993). *Shizuko's daughter*. New York, NY: Henry Holt.

- Napoli, D. J. (2010). *Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the trees of Kenya*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Nivola, C. A. (2008). *Planting the trees of Kenya: The story of Wangari Maathai*. New York, NY: Farrar Straus & Giroux.
- Nye, N. S. (1994). *Sitti's secrets*. New York, NY: Aladdin Paperbacks.
- Park, L. S. (2002). *When my name was Keoko*. New York: NY: Yearling.
- Perkins, M. (2010). *Bamboo people: A novel*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.
- Reedy, T. (2011). *Words in the dust*. New York, NY: Arthur A. Levine Books.
- Roth, S., & Trumbore, C. (2011). *The mangrove tree: Planting trees to feed families*. New York, NY: Lee & Low Books.
- Rumford, J. (2010). *Rain school*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Books for Children.
- Rumford, J. (2008). *Silent music: A story of Bagdad*. New York, NY: Roaring Book Press.
- Stewart, D. (1996). *Gift of the sun: A tale from South Africa*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Strauss, R. & Woods, R. (2007). *One well: The story of water on earth*. Toronto, ON: Kids Can Press.
- Tolman, M. & Tolman, R. (2010). *The tree house*. Honesdale, PA: Lemniscat.
- Vernon, C. (2011). *Nowhere else on earth: Standing tall for the Great Bear Rainforest*. Victoria, BC: Orca Book Publishers.
- Wiesel, E. (2006). *Night*. New York, NY: Hill and Wang.
- Williams, K. L. & Mohammed, K. (2007). *Four feet, two sandals*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers.
- Williams, K. L. & Mohammed, K. (2009). *My name is Sangoel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers.
- Williams, M. (2005). *Brothers in hope: The story of the lost boys of Sudan*. New York: NY: Lee & Low.
- Winter, J. (2005). *The librarian of Basra: A true story from Iraq*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt.
- Winter, J. (2008). *Wangari's trees of peace: A true story from Africa*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt.
- Winter, J. (2010). *Biblioburro: A true story from Colombia*. New York, NY: Beach Lane Books.
- Winter, J. (2009). *Peaceful heroes*. New York, NY: Arthur A. Levine Books.

# GLOBAL LITERACY COMMUNITY GROUPS

Group	Grade Level	Location
A to Z Literacy	1, 6–8	Chrystal Lake, IL
ACLIP–Albuquerque	3 & community organizations	Albuquerque, NM
ART	Pre–K, K, 1	Timonium, MD
Aveson	3–5	Altadena, CA
Chinle	6–8	Chinle, AZ
Cunningham Colts	3	Las Vegas, NV
Douglass	High School	Columbia, MO
Eastern Oregon	4, 5, 8	La Grande, OR
Garden Hills	Elementary	Champaign, IL
Global Environment	Elementary & Middle School	Salisbury, MD
Harlee	Middle School	Bradenton, FL
Hobgood	Elementary	Murfreesboro, TN
LSHS English Lions	High School	Lithia Springs, GA
Madeira	2	Cincinnati, OH
MLK	Middle School	Benton Harbor, MI
Orono	K, 3, University	Orono, ME
Teacher Talk	K–University	Long Island, NY
Tri-Cities	Elementary & Middle School	Albany, NY
Saturday Book Group	Elementary	Columbia, MO
Shaker Heights	Middle School	Shaker Heights, OH
Spokane	K, 1, 3, 5	Spokane, WA
Stillwater	1 & 3	Stillwater, OK
Vashon Island	Middle School & Community Organization	Vashon Island, WA
WC ReaderLeaders	K & Public Library	Washington County, AL
Willamette Valley	Middle & High School	Willamette Valley, OR