**Multicultural Picture Books**

Ann Joranger

CED 575

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**African American**

Amazing Grace Written by Mary Horrman Illustrated by Caroline Birch

Grace is an African American girl with spunk who loves books and acting them out. When she decides she wants to play the part of Peter Pan in a school play she stands up for herself and puts in the effort to achieve her goal, even when peers say it is unrealistic.

Flower Garden by Eve Bunting Illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt

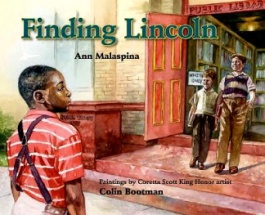


This book depicts how a young African American girl and her father buy the supplies then plant and create a beautiful window box of flowers that the whole neighborhood can enjoy. Particularly appealing to children will be the fact that the flower garden is a surprise birthday present for mom. The beautiful illustrations show an urban neighborhood where people of many skin tones shop, work, and live together.

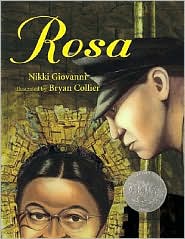
Goin’ Someplace Special Written by Patricia McKissack Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

This story is based on the author’s childhood growing up in Nashville, Tennessee in the 1950’s (be sure to read the author’s note at the end of the book.) The story tells of the injustices that African Americans faced on a daily basis due to segregation, but it also shows how inner strength can help you achieve a goal. And, It conveys a wonderful message about the importance of libraries in a fair society.

Finding Lincoln by Ann Malaspina illustrated by Colin Bootman



This book depicts segregation in the 1950’s in Alabama. In order to complete a homework assignment Louis needs to find information about Abraham Lincoln. Louis bravely tries to use the public library but is taunted and made to leave. His only other resource, a makeshift library in his churches basement, only contains a handful of books. Luckily, Louis encounters a librarian who is willing to take a risk to help him.

[](http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/imageviewer.asp?ean=9780312376024&imId=13685863)Rosa by Nikki Giovanni illustrations by Bryan Collier

This book helps readers to better understand the famous civil rights bus boycott. Readers get to view Rosa Parks as a real person; tired after a days work, planning dinner for her family, and thinking ahead to the upcoming holidays. It also shows how she, and many others, were willing to endure personal hardships to change unjust laws. This is a Caldecott Honor book.

**Hawaiian**

Luka’s Quilt, Written and illustrated by Georgia Guback

This story about a girl and her grandmother takes place in Hawaii and it incorporates traditional Hawaiian celebrations and customs. It also is a wonderful story to show that while family members can disagree about how things should be done, they can also work out the differences.

**Asian American**

Fortune Cookie Fortunes By Grace Lin

In this story an Asian American girl and her family finish a meal with fortune cookies and share the messages that they find. By observing her family members over the next few days the girl comes to see that there is some truth in all of the fortunes. At the end of this book there is interesting background information about how fortune cookies are an Asian American custom which have roots in Chinese culture.

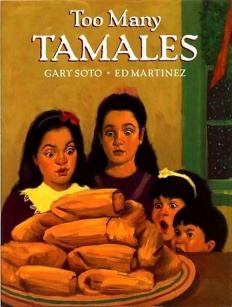
Apple Pie 4th of July By Jant S. Wong illustrated by Margaret chodos-Irvine

In this story a girl is helping her parents in their family owned Chinese take-out restaurant. It is the Fourth of July, and the girl is frustrated because she doesn’t think that her immigrant parents understand that American’s won’t want Chinese food on the 4th of July. But business unexpectedly picks up, showing that in America many customs can be part of a holiday. The pictures depict a multicultural neighborhood.

Lon PoPo: a Red Riding Hood Story From China By Ed Young

This Chinese version of Little Red Riding Hood, in which three young sisters outwit a crafty wolf, is thought to be from an oral story that was handed down over a thousand years. Ed Young studied ancient Chinese panel art and used watercolors and pastels to create the illustrations that earned him the Caldecott Medal in 1990.

**Mexican American**

Too Many Tamales Written by Gary Sots Illustrated by Ed Martinez

In this book a Mexican American family enjoys the tradition of making tamales at Christmastime. Trouble arises when Maria thinks she has lost her mother’s special ring in the masa (tamale dough.) This is a family story that will bring to mind holiday traditions for all readers.

\*a video of this book can be found on Discovery Education

From Here to There  By Margery Cuyler illustrated by Yu Cha Pak

This simply stated book has bright family centered illustrations that key into a girl named Maria and her Mexican American family. The illustrations move out from Maria’s home to show how she is a citizen of Texas, our country, our world, and beyond. It would be a good book to introduce early map concepts.

A Day’s Work  By Eve Bunting

Francisco’s grandfather is newly arrived in California from Mexico. Early in the morning Francisco accompanies his grandfather to interpret for him as he tries to find a day’s work. In his zeal to help his grandfather Francisco lies and tells a contractor that his grandfather is a good gardener. By his grandfather’s actions Francisco ends up learning that honesty is a work ethic that is understood in all languages.

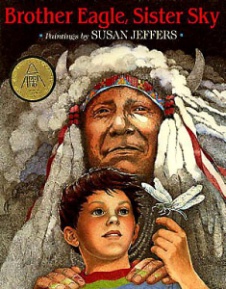
**Native American**

Giving Thanks: A Native American good Morning Message

By Chief Jake Swamp Illustrated by Erwin Printup, Jr.

This book tells the words of a traditional Mohawk Native American morning message. Readers of all backgrounds will be able to relate to the poetic, prayer-like form of the writing which reminds us all to be thankful for the wonderful gifts that nature gives us. The illustrations are bold and stunning. This is a great title to use at Thanksgiving, for Earth Day, or really anytime.

\*\*A video of this book, narrated by the author using both English and his native language, can be found on Discovery Education.

Brother Eagle, Sister Sky : A message from Chief Seattle paintings by Susan Jeffers

The text of this book is a translation of a speech that Chief Seattle of the Northwest Nations gave at a meeting with federal Commissioners of Indian Affairs. In the 1850’s the United States government wanted to buy the land that Chief Seattle’s people inhabited. The chief addressed the gathering eloquently in his native tongue, his message spoke of the need to preserve the land and the natural world that supports all of us. Notes at both the beginning and end of this book add historical context to the powerful, beautifully illustrated message.

Dreamcatcher By Audrey Osofsky Illustrated by Ed Young

This is a heartwarming family story that tells of an Ojibway sister who shows her love for her infant sibling by making a dreamcatcher and hanging it above the little one’s head to ensure happy dreams. Tribal life goes on in the background showing children playing and relatives interacting in a way that children from all backgrounds can relate to.

(This book is not available on Follett but can be found on amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com.)

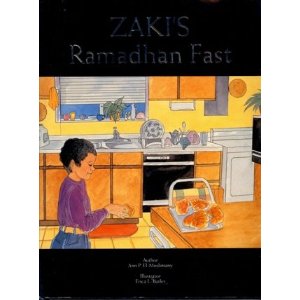
The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses by Paul Goble

This book tells a legend about the strong, admiring bond that Plains Indians feel for wild horses. A young girl from the village loves the horses so much that eventually she chooses to live with them, but in a way that honors her family. Paul Goble won the Caldecott Medal for the bright, striking illustrations in this book.

**Muslim American**

One Green Apple By Eve bunting illustrated by Ted Lewin

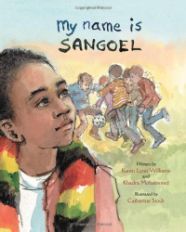
It is Farah’s second day in an American school; her Muslim family has just come to this country. She does not know the language, and is unsure of the customs, but starts to feel more comfortable as she, and the other students, all start to realize they are alike in some ways.

[](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/images/1884187080/ref=dp_image_0?ie=UTF8&n=283155&s=books)Zaki’ Ramadhan Fast By Ann P. El-Moslimany Illustrated by Erica L. Butler

This book depicts an American Muslim household that is racially mixed (mom is African American, dad is from India.) It is the first time that young Zaki will try to fast for a day during Ramadhan. It is hard for him to get through a day of playing and activity without eating from sunup to sundown, but Zaki is proud of his accomplishment when he does. Information about Ramadhan is included at the back of the book.

(Available through Amazon, not Follett.)

**Sudanese American**

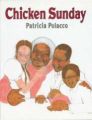
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My Name is Sangoel

By Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed illustrated by Catherine Stock

Sangoel and his mother and sister are refugees from Sudan who have come to America. Things are strange but they learn to adapt, especially Sangoel who comes up with a clever way to make sure that his new school mates know how to say his Sudanese name. An author’s note at the back of the book gives age appropriate information about refugee situations in the world.

**Jewish American**

Chicken Sunday Written and illustrated by Patricia Polacco

This story is a memoir that honors Polacco’s childhood friends in Oakland, California.

Neighbors of both Jewish and African American backgrounds are the main characters in this heartwarming book. It is a particularly good read aloud for spring or Easter time.

The Trees of the Dancing Goats Written and illustrated by Patricia Polacco.

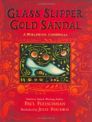
This autobiographical story takes place in in December in Michigan when Polacco’s family lived on a farm. It incorporates the celebrations of both Christmas and Hanukkah in a way that shows that kindness and caring are shared by people of all faiths.

Firetalking

By Patricia Polacco

In this autobiography Patricia Polacco discusses how story telling in front of the fireplace was a tradition in her family; her Ukrainian grandmother called it “firetalking.” Her Jewish and Irish heritage and the experiences she had growing up in multicultural neighborhoods were the inspiration for many of her picture books.

**Multicultural**

Glass Slipper Gold Sandal: A World Wide Cinderella Written by Paul Fleishman Illustrated by Julie Paschkis

This book retells the Cinderella story but in a way that intertwines how this story has been told in many countries including Iran, Laos, Ireland, Zimbabwe, Mexico and Russia. Rich colorful illustrations enhance the multicultural aspect of the book.