Multicultural Children’s Books

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William Paterson University
Multicultural Children’s Books
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A sampling of multicultural resources for grades PreK-12 that help children understand different cultures or develop a sense of pride in their own culture.

**Picture Books**

(Grades PreK-2). (Africa).  
Toby and his friends all have baby animals. They count the number of eggs and young that they have and Toby has fifty chickens.  
**Call Number: PJ Ala**

(Australia, Morocco).  
Two boys and their families, one living in Australia and the other in Morocco, have a fun day of shopping. Two wordless stories: one reads from left to right and the other from right to left.  
**Call Number: PJ Bak**

Whenever Nima meets someone on her long walk to the market village in Nepal, she brings her hands together with her fingers almost touching her chin, bows her head slightly, and says "Namaste," which means "the light in me meets the light in you."  
**Call Number: PJ Coh**

(Grades PreK-2). (Kenya).  
Chirchir wants to help her family with their daily chores, but each of their tasks proves too challenging for her.  
**Call Number: PJ Cun**

(Grades PreK -3). (Cuba).  
Based on a true incident, a Cuban boy and his family try their best not to let the rebel soldiers keep them from traveling to Santiago to celebrate Christmas with their relatives.  
**Call Number: PJ Fig**
Text and photographs introduce young children to their neighbors around the world.
**Call Number:** [SmallBook] PJ Glo

Yoshio sets out to hear the sound ma, the Japanese word for silence, amid the hustle and bustle of the city.
**Call Number:** PJ Gol

New York City’s first Puerto Rican librarian, Pura Belpré, introduces the public library to immigrants and hosts the neighborhood’s first Three Kings’ Day fiesta.
**Call Number:** PJ Gon

Long-Long helps his grandfather sell cabbages to buy what they need for Spring Festival.
**Call Number:** PJ Gow

Malaika fears she will not be able to dance in the parade without a costume and comes up with an idea to use scrap fabric to create a patchwork rainbow peacock outfit.
**Call Number:** PJ Hoh

Alemitu lives in a poor village in Ethiopia where food and water is scarce. Her mother leaves her at an orphanage to give her a chance at a better life.
**Call Number:** PJ Ier

A group of young friends play soccer but must outwit the bullies who want their ball.
**Call Number:** PJ Jav
An Australian family spends three months touring the continent in an old camper.
**Call Number: PJ Les**

Two girls work hard all day to help support their family. Yasmin seeks a way to attend school and learn to read so that she can have a better life.
**Call Number: PJ Mal**

An Israeli family raises olives and uses some of the oil to light their Hanukkah menorah.
**Call Number: PJ Ofa**

Lateef lives in a village in western Nigeria where he works hard so he can rent a bicycle and ride with the other boys.
**Call Number: PJ Ola**

The children arrive on the first day of school and build a mud structure for their classroom for nine months until the rainy season comes and washes it away.
**Call Number: PJ Rum**

Berbardi’s mute grandfather makes him a wonderful music box and then helps him realize his dream of owning a soccer ball and going to school.
**Call Number: PJ Stu**

Children discover a world of shapes all around them, many of the featured objects are Latino in origin, and a short glossary explains cultural significance of objects.
**Call Number: PJTho**
Two cousins, one in Mexico and one in New York City, write to each other and learn that even though their daily lives differ, at heart the boys are very similar.
**Call Number: PJ Ton**

Welcome to the family! It’s just like yours but there’s something just a little bit different about this family.
**Call Number: PJ Wel**

Two young Afghani girls living in a refugee camp in Pakistan share a precious pair of sandals brought by relief workers.
**Call Number: PJ Wil**

A homeless boy joins the other street children in Haiti and together they build a home and a radio station where they care for themselves and others.
**Call Number: PJ You**

**Juvenile Fiction**

Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.
**Call Number: J Ale**

Portrays a gritty game of street basketball being played around the world, from New York to Australia to China and then back again in New York.
**Call Number: J Coy**

When Leo outgrows his bicycle, it finds a new home with Alisetta, who uses it to access her family’s sorghum field and the market.

**Call Number: J Isa**


Sold to be the eighth wife of a merchant, Raja tries to escape her fate by telling stories of Farhad the thief, his companion Nitish the white tiger, and their travels across India to retrieve a famous jewel.

**Call Number: J Mic**


A brother and sister face the increasingly oppressive occupation of Korea by Japan during World War II, which threatens to suppress Korean culture entirely.

**Call Number: J Par**


A fictionalized biography of the Nobel Prize-winning Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, who grew up a painfully shy child who became one of the most widely-read poets in the world.

**Call Number: J Rya**

**Folklore**


Seven folktales from around the world express the belief that the Earth and all living things are sacred, and that it is up to each of us to care for our part of the planet.

**Call Number: j398.2 Cas**


Igal Shidad searches the drought-stricken land looking for a better home for his family, asking Allah for guidance. He eventually discovers that his prayers have been answered.

**Call Number: j398.2 Dup**
Young travelers make their way through the Andes Mountains of Peru to the city of Cusco for the Inti Raymi Festival.
**Call Number:** j394.26 Kre

Collection of poems and nursery rhymes, in original languages, from around the world. English translations are provided.
**Call Number:** j808.81 Wri

**Informational Texts**

Uses the framework of the alphabet to present information about plants and animals of the cloud forest on the western slopes of the Ecuadorian Andes.
**Call Number:** j599.76 Del

The children in this book talk about how the choices other people have made have affected their lives.
**Call Number:** j956.04 Ell

Introduces young readers to common phrases such as "good morning", "thank you", and "please" in different languages.
**Call Number:** j395.4 Eva

**Call Number:** j784.206 Hoo (also available in Spanish)
Depicts people around the world collecting, chilling, and drinking water.
**Call Number: j363.6 Ker**

Discover the different ways children around the world get to school.
**Call Number: j372.9172 McC**

Three Arab-American girls learn about their family and cultural history from their grandmother, who grew up in Cairo, Egypt.
**Call Number: j305.89 Mor**

Wangari Maathai came back to her homeland after college to find the streams dry, the people malnourished, and the trees gone. She found a way to bring back the trees and restore the gardens needed to feed the hungry.
**Call Number: jB Maathai**

Explores the cultural and environmental aspects of traditional Balinese rice farming, a model of sustainable food production.
**Call Number: j633.18 Rey**

Smith, D. J. (2005). *If the world were a village: A book about the world’s people.* Toronto, ON: Kids Can Press. (Grades 3-7). (Global).
Imagine the world as a village of just 100 people, each of whom represent some 62 million people. By learning about the villagers we can learn about our neighbors.
**Call Number: j304.6 Smi**

Luis dreams up a way to share his books with villages. He starts with two burros and travels to a remote village to share stories and loan books to the eager children.
**Call Number: j020.92 Win**