Summit on the Research and Teaching of YA Literature

RISING UP:
SOCIALLY RELEVANT TEXTS
AND
IDENTITY

Cindi Koudelka Las Vegas, NV June 14, 2018

WHO ARE YOU?

List 10 words that describe your identity.

★ Why did you choose the words you did?

★ How do some of these identities work together or conflict?

COMPLETE YA SUMMIT SOCIAL JUSTICE BOOK LIST



PROBLEMS

 Adolescents are inundated with social media, reality TV, videos, and news stories that are often difficult to differentiate as credible, biased, or outright false.

 Education has focused on a banking system (Freire, 1970/2016).

PROBLEMS

 Mandates require teachers to focus on high-stakes testing and the incorporation of a deficit perspective that fails to honor a student's "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1992)

 Inequity and situated power silencing students' voices and critical thinking.

21ST CENTURY CHALLENGE

Instruction:
The Battle of Balance



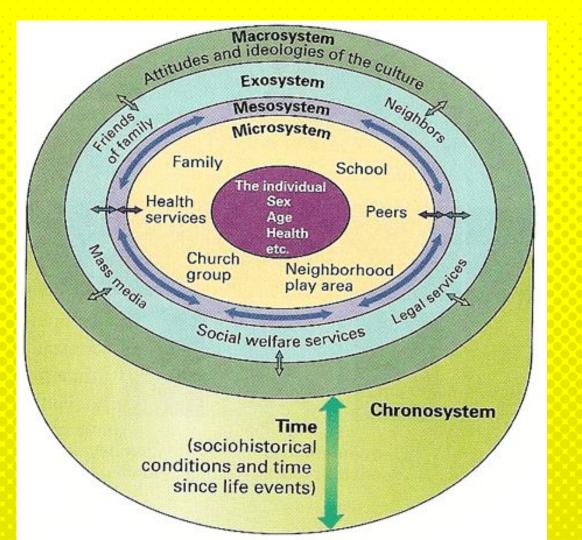
YAL:

Experimentation Explosion

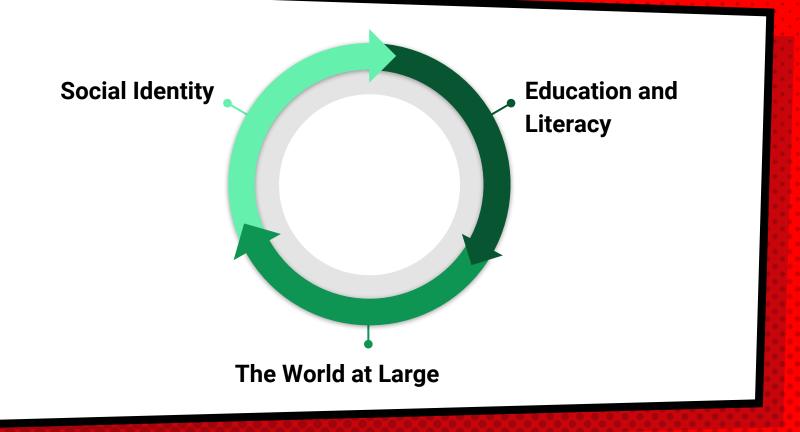
- point of view
- new organizational features
- digital technologies
- inclusive/controversial topics

(Koss & Teale, 2009)

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE



IDENTITY CYCLE

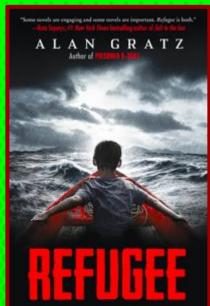


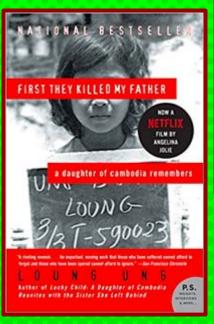
SOCIAL IDENTIFIES

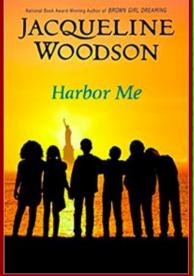
- ★ Flexibly self-Constructed through individual actions in everyday locations (Bean & Monti, 2003; Gee, 2006)
- ★ YAL provides a place for adolescents to explore identities in order to find a place in the world (Neilsen, 2006)
- ★ Experiment with their understanding of traditionally normed identities, explode stereotypes, make connections, and form parasocial relationships

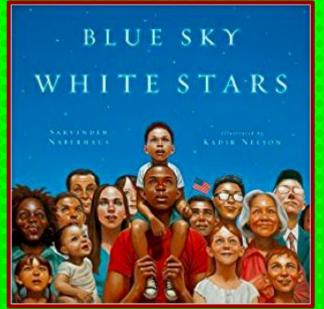
(Del Nero, 2017; Kokesh & Sternadori, 2015; Neilsen, 2006)

THE BOOKS: SOCIAL IDENTITY (IMMIGRANT/GLOBAL)

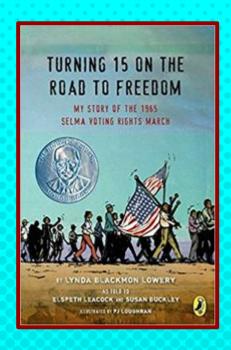






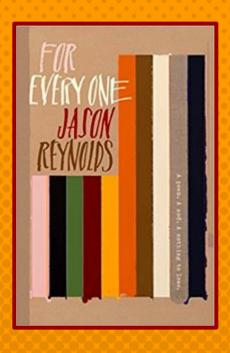


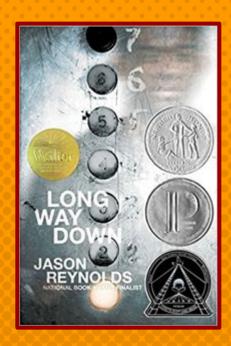
THE BOOKS: SOCIAL IDENTITY (CIVIL RIGHTS)

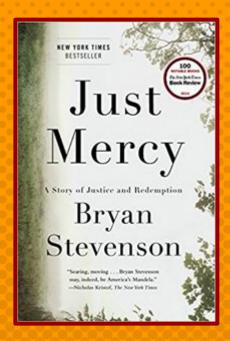




THE BOOKS: SOCIAL JUSTICE







WHO ARE YOU?

Delete 5 of the words that are less important to you.

★ What are you left with?

★ Why did you choose the words you did?

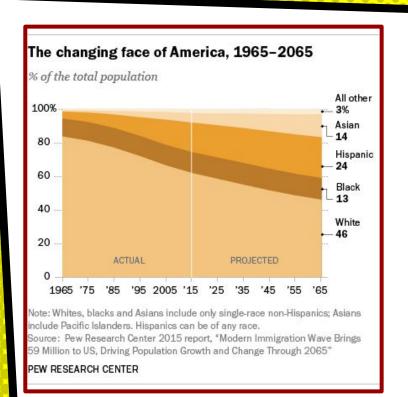
RICH DENTILES

★ Educators often take a deficit view and approach

- ★ Marginalized students will often use silence or non-verbal communications when faced with texts that position them negatively (Burke & Kao, 2013; Carter, 2007)
- ★ Justice-themed texts provide images of their communities and the associated possibilities they imagine for themselves (Tatum, 2006)

"When we segregate literature, we focus only on mirrors. Certainly, seeing yourself in books is necessary and crucial to the development of identity . . . but not allowing those same books to serve as windows into the lives of others will most certainly limit imagination and possibility."

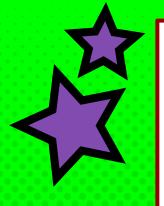
MULTICULTURALISM



By 2055, the U.S. will not have a single racial or ethnic majority.



(Rudine Simms Bishop)



Diversity in Children's Books 2015

Percentages of books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds. Based on the 2015 publishing statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison. ccbc education wisc edu/books/pcstats asp



0.9% American Indians/ First Nations 2.4% Latinx

3.3% Asian Pacifics/ Asian Pacific Americans

7.6% African/ African Americans

12.5%* Animals, Trucks, etc.

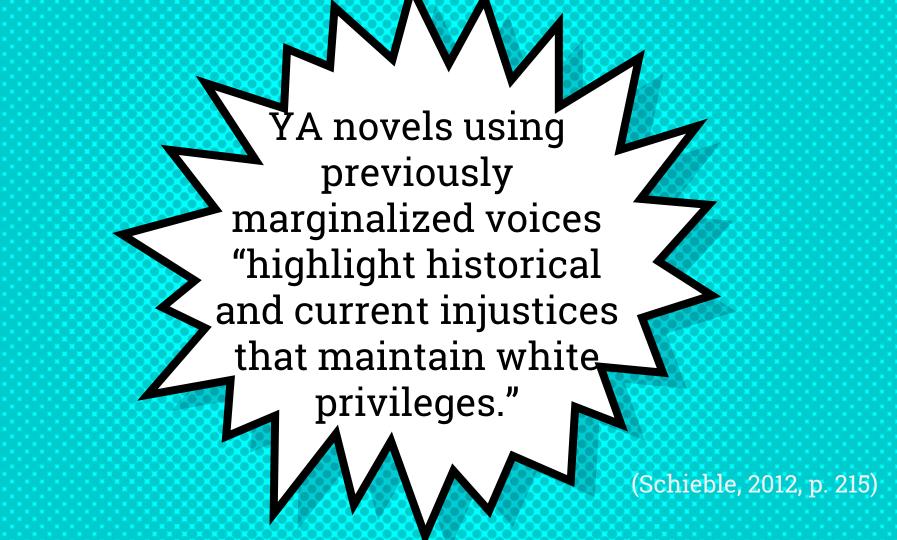
73.3% White



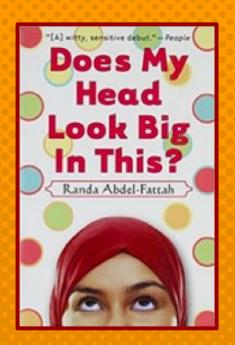


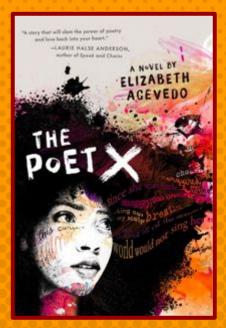
^{*} About a quarter of the total children's books published in 2015. were picture books, and about half of those depict non-human characters, tike animals & trucks

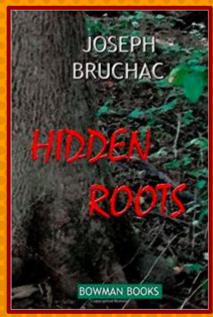
Blustration by David Huyck, in comultation with Sarah Park Dahlen & Molly Beth Griffin ** The remainder depict white characters. Reseased under a Creative Commons BY NC SA scenar Wass Arthreshedomining any Riconges Ray no say \$57

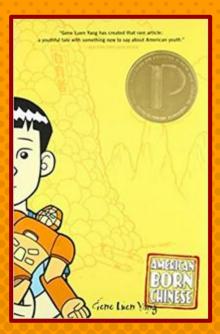


THE BOOKS: RACE RELATIONS AND MULTICULTURALISM



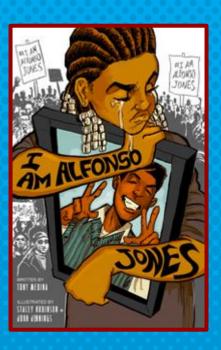


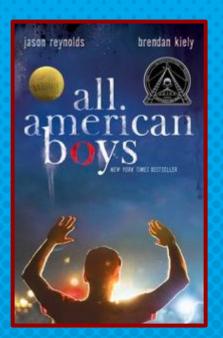


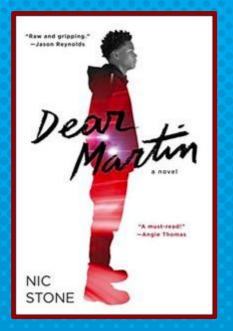


THE BOOKS: RACE RELATIONS AND MULTICULTURALISM

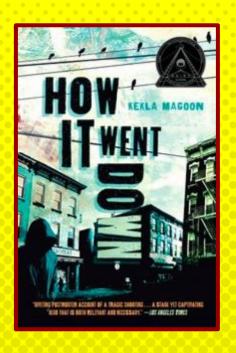


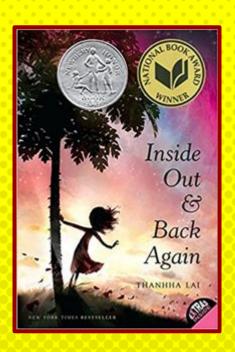


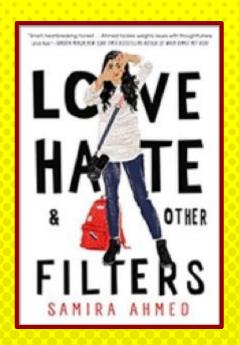




THE BOOKS: RACE RELATIONS AND MULTICULTURALISM





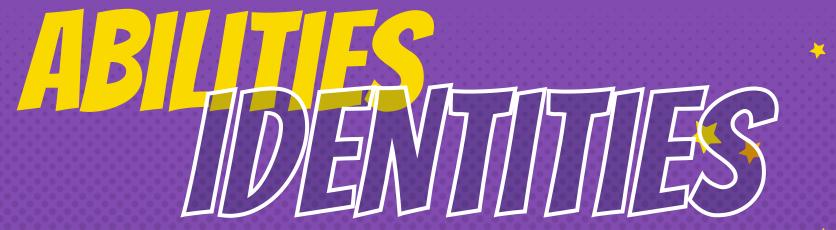


WHO ARE YOU?

Delete 2 of the remaining words.

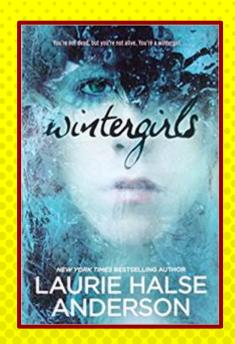
★ What are you left with?

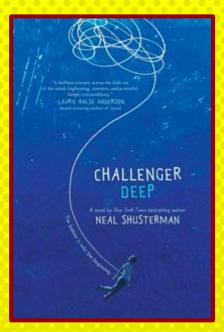
★ Why did you choose the words you did?

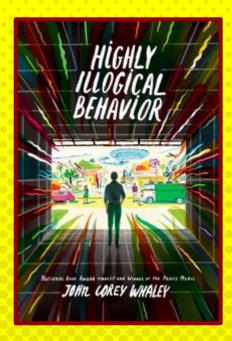


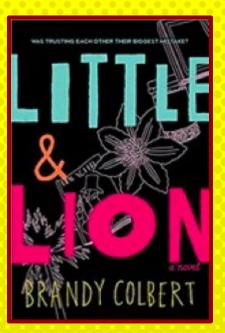
- ★ Schneider Award
- ★ Older work Same damaging tropes again and again
- ★ Often limited to certain disabilities or specific genres
- ★ Most disabled characters published in YA are white, cishet, and often male

THE BOOKS: ABILITIES





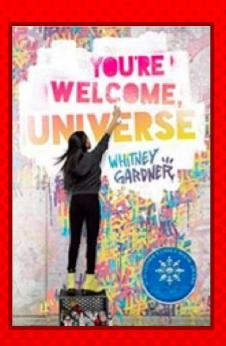




THE BOOKS: ABILITIES

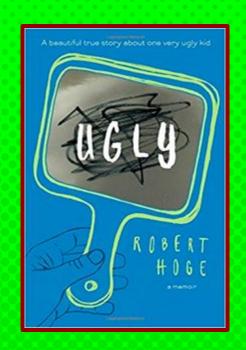


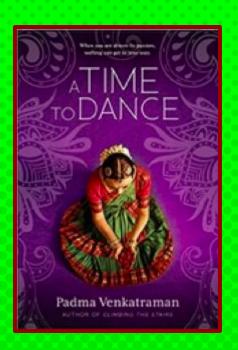




THE BOOKS: ABILITIES







WHO ARE YOU?

Delete 2 of the remaining words.

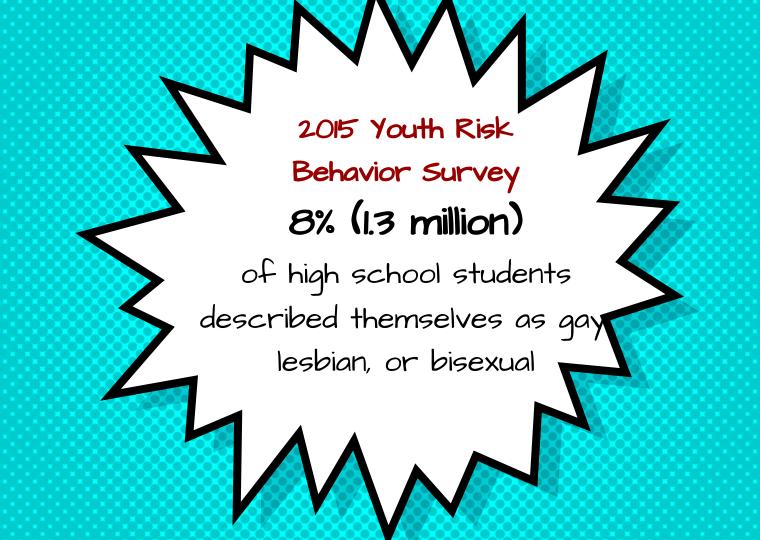
★ What is your final word?

★ Why was this the most important word in defining you?

Gender & Sexuality

- Underrepresentation of LGBTQ youth in literature and in core classroom readings delays the identity development of LGBTQ youth
- Youth supported by agencies and discussions surrounding texts gain stronger identities and are better able to assert agency in and out of schools

(Blackburn, 2004; Blackburn & Clark, 2011; Blackburn et al., 2015; Hazlett, Sweeney, & Reins, 2011; Rhodes 2010)



GENDER - BLURRING THE LINES

- > Stonewall Award
- Appeals to all genders
- Reaching younger readers
- > Recognized as quality literature

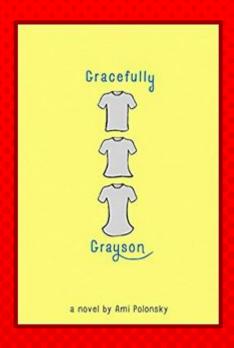
GENDER - BLURRING THE LINES

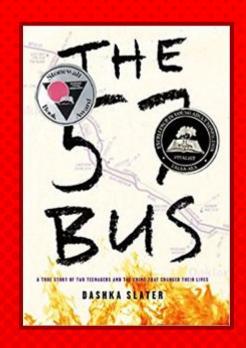
- Past depiction-isolated, alone, ashamed
 - Moved from 'coming out' stories in early
 - 2000's to general life issues today.
 - Moving from 'ghetto genre' to the mainstream

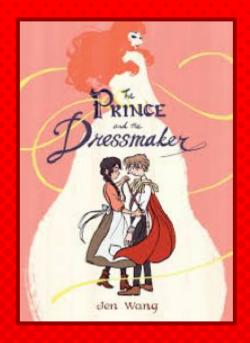
PUBLISHING GENDER AND SEXUALITY YAL

- Publication Rate Increased Averages
 - 1970's 1 book
 - 1980's 4 books
 - 1990's 7 books
 - 2000's 12 (just between 2000 2005)
- > Numbers
 - 59 books between 2000 2004
 - 230% increase from the 90's
 - 13 more books than 1965 1989

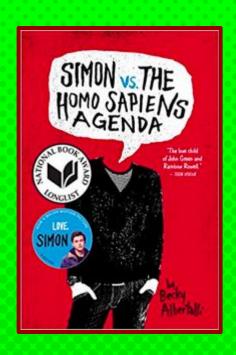
THE BOOKS: GENDER AND SEXUALITY

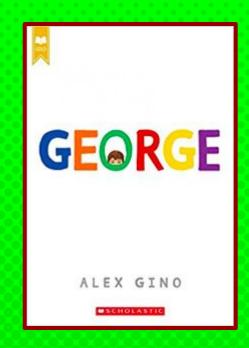


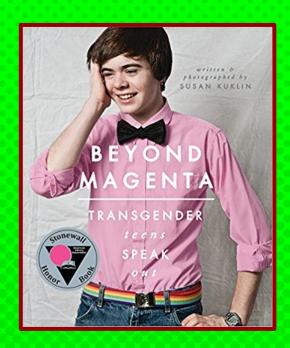




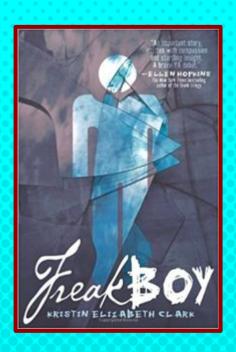
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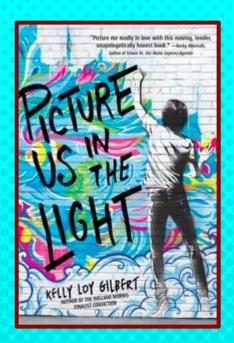




THE BOOKS: GENDER AND SEXUALITY







IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Include Diverse,

Multimodal

Texts to

Promote

Authentic

Identity

Formation

Incorporate

Student Choice

to Assure

Relevance to

Student Identity

Provide Direct

Instruction and

Open Ended

Classroom

Discourse to

Develop Critical

Literacy

STEPS FOR BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE LIBRARY

Does your collection include:

- ★ books with characters of color? LGBTQ? Differently-abled?
- ★ books with a <u>main</u> character of color? LGBTQ? Differently-abled?
- ★ books written or illustrated by a person of color? Of different nationalities, religions or sexual preference?

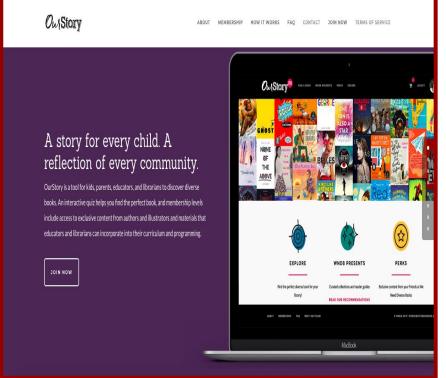
STEPS FOR BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE LIBRARY

Does your collection include:

- ★ books with a person of color on the cover? Do the characters on the book covers accurately reflect the characters in the book?
- ★ a mix of <u>"mirror" books and "window" books</u> for your students
- ★ books featuring diverse characters that are not primarily about race or prejudice?

STEPS FOR BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE LIBRARY

- ★ Think about the subject matter of your diverse books. Do all your books featuring black characters focus on slavery? Do all your books about Latino characters focus on immigration? Are all your LGBTQ books coming out stories?
- ★ Do any of your classic books contain hurtful racial or ethnic stereotypes, or images? If so, how will you address those stereotypes with students? Have you included another book that provides a more accurate depiction of the same culture?



Ourstory App from We Need Diverse Books



DIVERSE BOOKS



If you only read the books that everyone else is reading, you can only think what everyone else

is thinking.

- HARUKI MURAKAMI -





