Equity and Anti-Bias in School Library Practice

The following outline offers suggested activities for presenting a multi-phase professional learning workshop on the topic of Equity and Anti-Bias in School Library Practice. We encourage you to adapt the materials, outline, and activities to meet the needs of your school or district's librarians. If you do lead a workshop on this topic, we'd love to hear about it and any additional suggestions you have to make the content meaningful for school librarians. Drop us a line at webinarSLC@abc-clio.com.

Outline

Part I: Prework - Introduction to Equity and Anti-Bias
Part II: Synchronous Session - Working toward Culturally Responsive Libraries
Part III: Self-Study - Next Steps of the Culturally Responsive Library Walk
Part IV: Synchronous Session - Cultural Responsiveness in Action at Your Library
Part V: Continued Application - Exploring Enabling Texts

Introduction to Equity and Anti-Bias in School Library Practice

Objectives:

- We will self-reflect and work toward building cultural competencies in order to provide culturally responsive library services.
- We will work to identify strengths, to discover areas that need improvement, and to develop a path to achieve a culturally responsive library program.

Time: About 90 minutes, self-guided

Materials:

- Resource List, including SLC course videos and the articles, "Thinking about Anti-Bias Education," and "Serving Black Youth Author Interview," and Educational Opportunity Quiz
- Lee & Low Books "Classroom Library Questionnaire" (https://www.leeandlow.com/uploads/loaded_document/408/Classroom-Library-Questionnaire_FINAL.pdf)
- Project READY "Culturally Responsive Library Walk" handout (https://schoollibraryconnection.com/assets/mediaserver/slc/2077/2077543.pdf)

For the facilitator: This set of readings, brief videos, and short exercises should be completed by each participant before the first group session. During this work, the librarians will engage in self-reflection on context for practices which center equity, anti-bias, and social justice. In total, the prework readings and writing exercises should take about 90 minutes to complete. Please note that the introduction for school librarians here repeats some of the context provided for facilitators.

Introduction to the Self-Study

From suggesting resources, to facilitating discussions, to nurturing rapport in the learning community, school librarians hold a unique and vital role as educators who must strive to practice and lead in culturally responsive teaching, particularly in literacy. As described by Dr. Sandra Hughes-Hassell and Casey Rawson, high quality literacy

instruction for Black children and teens is a professional mandate for librarians and an issue of social justice. This professional development experience builds upon their course, Services for Black Youth, which reflects the authors' "asset-based approach that seeks to create positive change by identifying and building on the knowledge, skills and lived experiences of Black youth and their families."

This training incorporates the authors' notion that, "most of the theories we discuss . . . are applicable to students of all races, and many are also relevant to students who are marginalized in other ways (for example, LGBTQ students or English Language Learner (ELL) students). One thread that ties all of the ideas and theories [together] is the idea that librarians should center the youth they serve in every aspect of their practice. This means getting to know them, viewing their differences as assets instead of deficits, and seeking to engage and sustain their home and peer cultures in the library. These practices aren't only helpful to Black youth, but to all youth. We do want to point out, though, that we are not advocating for a one-size-fits-all approach. While the same general theories may help librarians serve youth from a wide variety of backgrounds, how those theories get applied on the ground can and should vary with the particular children and teens being served" (2017).

The following activities will help you to prepare for the first synchronous session with your colleagues.

1. View two videos: "Introduction" (1:26) and Lesson 2, "Literacy Education: A Social Justice Issue" (6:43) and read the related article, "Serving Black Youth Author Interview." Although the data mentioned in the segment is not the most current, the underlying themes are still relevant. The Educational Opportunity Quiz mentioned in the second video can also be found under the Activity tab within the online workshop.
2. Critical self-reflection is an initial step in the process of building cultural competence and deepening understanding of equity. This reflection might encompass topics of privilege, bias, and the lens(es) through which school librarians view the world and their students. Describing this work further, "it is important that teachers engage the myriad ways students experience relative race, class, gender, sexuality, citizenship, and ability privilege; recognize our unearned advantages; feel our emotional sensitivity; and sit with this discomfort. Even if we identify with one or more marginalized groups, this does not absolve us from the work of critical self-reflection" (Schieble, Vetter, and Martin 2020). To provide structure and framing for this reflection, consider and respond in writing to the four prompts in the article, "Thinking about Anti-Bias Education," by Anita Cellucci.
3. Next, view the Lesson 4 video, "Racial Identity Development" (5:38). We will view Lesson 3 at another time. The Lesson 4 video offers theoretical context for an audit of the school library, conducted in the form of a "library walk." You might be familiar with a diversity audit of a library collection; the Culturally Responsive Library Walk extends this assessment into other aspects of the people, spaces, and programs within the school library.
4. Finally, consider the collection as one aspect of the current status of the inclusiveness and culturally responsiveness of the school library. Review and complete the "Classroom Library Questionnaire" from Lee & Low Books (https://www.leeandlow.com/uploads/loaded_document/408/Classroom-Library-Questionnaire_FINAL.pdf), thinking of the school library collection (instead of a classroom, as the questions denote) and using the library catalog to inform your answers. Then read over the "Culturally Responsive Library Walk" handout (https://schoollibraryconnection.com/assets/mediaserver/slc/2077/2077543.pdf), focusing for now on the section entitled, Focus Area: Library Resources. Complete a draft response for the Observations/Wonderings column, to be shared and developed further during the group session.

Working toward Culturally Responsive Libraries

Objectives:

- We will discuss the context and need for analyzing and improving library services and instruction for racialized youth.
- We will practice strategies for delivering effective and intentional services for racialized youth.
  We will self-reflect and work toward building cultural competencies in order to provide culturally responsive library services.
- We will work to identify strengths, to discover areas that need improvement, and to develop a path to achieve a culturally responsive library program.

- We will discuss equity in school libraries and library programs.

Time: 60–90 minutes

Materials:

- Presentation template (Google Slides)
- Notes, reflections, and checklists completed during the Prework (print or digital)
- Resource List, including SLC course video lessons and the article "Thinking about Anti-Bias Education"
- Lee & Low Books "Classroom Library Questionnaire" (https://www.leeandlow.com/uploads/loaded_document/408/Classroom-Library-Questionnaire_FINAL.pdf)
- Project READY "Culturally Responsive Library Walk" handout (https://schoollibraryconnection.com/assets/mediaserver/slc/2077/2077543.pdf)
- Discussion protocol instructions (included below the associated activity)

In-Person Session Outline:

1.	Icebreaker: Yes, And	*10 minutes*
2.	Today's Agenda and Review of Prework: Thinking about Anti-Bias Education	*25 minutes*
3.	New Content: Discussion Protocol as Culturally Responsive or Relevant Pedagogy	*20-25 minutes*
4.	New Content: Continuing the Library Walk	*20-25 minutes*
5.	Conclusion: "Soft Landing" and Looking Forward	*10 minutes*

Icebreaker

The icebreaker serves to welcome participants into the session and warm up for the complex topics for today, which can be difficult to discuss. Today's ice breaker is inspired by the improv exercise, "Yes, And," in which comics or actors sustain the dialogue or action by building upon what their scene partners say. Here, "Yes, And" is a framework for exploring interests, potential, and ideas about how school librarians and libraries can serve racialized youth.

> **Instructions: Yes, And**
>
> Divide up into groups of two or three people. Ideally, try for groups of three people, which may help keep the dialogue going more easily than with pairs. Give the groups a sentence to start their conversations, such as a statement from your school's mission or vision statement or one of the lines suggested below. In the small groups, challenge participants to take the conversation from there and keep it going by adding "yes and... " with a new idea. You might encourage additions that align with the asset-based thinking exemplified in the videos and accompanying materials, or the potential of your school libraries to lead in anti-bias education and equity, or just general themes and topics of school libraries and what school librarians do and know.
>
> Here is an example. Start with the sentence, "We believe all children can learn." Then someone might say, "Yes, and we can help all readers find books that they can read and like to read." Then to that idea, the next person could add, "Yes, and I'm interested in learning more about graphic novels for middle grades," and then, "Yes, and did you see there is a companion book to *New Kid* by Jerry Craft?" and so on. Allow about 4–5 minutes for the conversation and then reconvene as a group.
>
> Example starter lines:
>
> - A librarian's superpower is getting to know students and earning their trust.
> - The library offers diverse materials, in many formats, at the time of students' needs.
> - Our school's teachers care about students.
> - School libraries can empower students (or empower learning).
> - When we relate assignments to students' lived experiences, they can be more successful.
> - Students come into the library with many questions.
> - School librarians can/should be leaders in anti-bias teaching.
> - The school library can/should offer family programs with their schedules and needs in mind.
> - I want/hope to make the school library a welcoming space for all learners.

- Our school library supports not only students, but their families and caregivers.

Conclude the icebreaker with some sharing out among the group. What were some positives of the experience? What was challenging? What questions did you think of along the way? What topics or new ideas were introduced?

Today's Agenda and Review of Prework

Begin the formal time together with any introductory remarks, a roadmap for the session, and a reflection on the concepts introduced in the Prework. You might begin by asking everyone to read over and talk about some of their reflections in the Thinking About Anti-Bias Exercise, based on Anita Cellucci's article of the same title. See the slides for the suggested prompts from the article, including the topics of classroom audits, brave and inclusive spaces, reflections on fairness and equity, and restorative justice.

A few points you might present are as follows, with excerpts from Cellucci's article and additional resources from SLC. You can also supplement with your own resources.

- Working toward anti-bias education is a process toward creating inclusive library spaces and learning experiences. "Anti-bias education is an approach to teaching and learning designed to increase understanding of differences and their value to a respectful and civil society and to actively challenge bias, stereotyping and all forms of discrimination in schools and communities. It incorporates inclusive curriculum that reflects diverse experiences and perspectives, instructional methods that advance all students' learning, and strategies to create and sustain safe, inclusive and respectful learning communities" (Anti-Defamation League, quoted in Cellucci 2019).
- Self-reflection is difficult and ongoing. "When someone asks us to consider traits that make up our personalities, and challenges who we are deep down, it is natural to double-down and defend ourselves. It is especially difficult when we consider the changes we have made along the way; one change, and then another, and another still are only part of the journey. Developing an anti-racist, anti-bias program is not easy" (Valentine 2021).
- Cellucci mentions learning about restorative justice as an action step toward anti-bias teaching. Restorative justice is "the purposeful attempt to disrupt cycles of injustice and inequality" (2017, 7). Read more about restorative justice and libraries in Maisha Winn's article, "Librarians as Paradigm Shifters for Justice" and the related handout, "Restorative Justice Explained."
- We have work to do in service of culturally responsive and relevant teaching, but it is with our students' success at stake that we take up the challenge. "Our identities, our assumptions, and our perspectives affect how we interact, communicate, and work with our students and teachers. Who we are also affects our instruction in our classrooms and libraries. We need to understand ourselves better, increase our cultural awareness, and understand the diversity within our schools and communities to improve our library media programs" (Harris 2020).

Address questions or invite discussion as time allows, and transition to the Prework Follow-Up Activity.

Prework Follow-Up Activity: Culturally Responsive Library Inventories

To start today's session, view the video, "Developing Cultural Competence" (5:12) from the course, Soft Skills for School Librarians.

One component of the skills introduced in the video is developing an inclusive library collection. Turn now to the Prework task of the Classroom Library Questionnaire by Lee & Low Books. Invite participants to revisit their questionnaires. Spend some time unpacking and discussing the results. Some prompts for discussion include:

- What did you notice?
- What findings were problematic? Why?
- What findings show strengths or positives about the collection?
- What were surprising findings?
- What did you expect to see or learn that the results confirmed?

Then transition into conversation about conclusions, questions, and action steps. What questions or concerns do school librarians have about their findings? What reasons can they think of for the results? What are areas or opportunities for improvement? What resources do they need to work toward improvement—information, support, budget, communication opportunities, etc.?

New Content: Discussion Protocol as Culturally Responsive or Relevant Pedagogy

"In the mid-1990s, researcher Gloria Ladson-Billings introduced the concept of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, or CRP—teaching that empowers students by valuing and incorporating elements of their cultures in the classroom. Since then, a variety of terms have been used to describe similar educational reform frameworks; for example, culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally compatible pedagogy, and culturally sustaining pedagogy" (Hughes-Hassell and Rawson, Lesson 3 video).

As described in the Lesson 3 video, culturally relevant pedagogy, or CRP, is validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering and transformative, and emancipatory. It is important to clarify that these characteristics are not meant to comprise a compact checklist. As with the practice of self-reflection, incorporating dimensions of CRP into instruction and school library spaces is a process that requires ongoing effort, willingness to learn, and a commitment to growth over time.

In thinking about implementing culturally responsive pedagogy, it is helpful to start with the goals for the learners in your school library and at your school. Consider what you desire for students to know and understand, not only about curricular content, but about their identities, their value and potential, and their roles in the school community and beyond. Also think about their views of libraries and information today, and the constructs and possibilities that you aim for them to take with them. Are they empowered by or limited by opportunities to seek information and build literacies? One key lever is students' access to the library and library resources, which are enabled or limited by many factors, including library policies. Jenna Kammer examines "Disciplinary Policies that Impact Library Access" in a 2020 SLC article. Key points of this article are presented in the slides.

Policy is a sound starting point, as policy determines how, when, and to what extent students can use, and hopefully influence, the library program. Opportunities for student feedback and involvement will be discussed in the second synchronous session. Beyond policy, there are numerous, further dimensions to examine and strengthen toward better inclusivity and cultural responsiveness of a library program. The activities in this section provide context to build your understanding and exercises to discuss and apply your learning.

Activity: Discussion Protocol as Culturally Responsive or Relevant Pedagogy

The authors describe the use of discussion protocol for inviting and elevating student participation. This activity introduces several different discussion protocols, of which participants will try one and report out. All groups will read the same short article, and then discuss it using their assigned protocol. Everyone will engage in some in-depth practice with one strategy and also hear about some other protocols.

1. Before the session, facilitators select an article for the groups to read during this activity. Suggestions can be found in items #12-13 in the Resource List.
2. As a group, view the Lesson 4 video, "Cultivating Voice and Agency" (5:31).
3. Form groups of four people. Distribute the selected article and a written description of each discussion protocol (see below).
4. Allow time for groups to read their articles and then discuss, according to their protocols. You might ask groups to assign roles, such as timekeeper, recorder, reporter, and question leader.
5. Reconvene as a large group and invite each group (or each group's reporter) to explain what their assigned protocol was and how the discussion went.
6. Wrap up by inviting reflections, observations, or suggestions for how these protocols might be used for discussions or lessons within the school library. Share additional resources for finding more discussion protocols and variations for large and small groups, peer feedback or sharing work, and writing or research brainstorming. What topics, books, or lessons might benefit from a discussion protocol? What teachers might be interested in learning or practicing these protocols?

Protocol Instructions

- Four A's https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/4_a_text_0.pdf
- Final Word (or Save the Last Word) https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/save_last_word_0.pdf
- Socratic Seminar https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/socratic-seminar
- Affinity Mapping https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/speaking-listening-techniques/
- Find more here, in these resources suggested by Hughes-Hassell and Rawson:
  - Starting the Conversation https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/17/05/starting-conversation
  - Teaching and Learning Lab Discussion Protocols https://www.gse.harvard.edu/sites/default/files//Protocols_Handout.pdf

New Content: Culturally Responsive Library Walk

The next activity considers the Library Resources section of the Culturally Responsive Library Walk and then extends the "Walk" into the other sections of the

document. Culturally relevant pedagogy can be represented in many ways in the school library, including in how librarians and staff interact with students and what they believe; the library space, including displays, collaborative and quiet spaces, access to the library, and how power or authority are conveyed; library resources; library programming, such as clubs, events, and self-guided programs; and instruction in the library, which encompasses 1:1 reference guidance, teaching classes solo or in collaboration with teachers, and readers advisory or coaching on digital tools, research, and information seeking.

As its instructions explain, "The Culturally Responsive Library Walk is designed to be a collaborative tool for administrators, librarians, and teachers to assess the library's responsiveness to the needs of the Black students who attend the school; it may also be used to assess responsiveness to the needs of other Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) students. The goal of the Culturally Responsive Library Walk is to identify strengths, to discover areas that need improvement, and to develop a path to achieve a culturally responsive library program. It is an observation and planning document that is informed by research on culturally responsive pedagogy and is based on the philosophy of creating a student-centered library program."

Ahead of the live session, facilitators will need to plan for the "walk," which may actually take the shape of multiple methods and occasions for observing and analyzing dimensions of the library. Decide if the group of librarians and any additional staff gathered "today" might work as the team conducting the walk in one library (to serve as a sample for discussion and practice), or if today's experience might serve as ground work for a walk to be planned for a later date in individual school libraries. Or you might decide to combine these steps, using one school library today to plan for additional analyses "back at school" later. Also decide on the number of groups and a sequence to follow. Depending on your available time and preferences, you might work through each of the five areas all together, rotate through the areas in small groups, or select certain areas for focus today.

Activity: Continuing the Library Walk

1. View the Lesson 3 video, "Culturally Relevant Pedagogy" (5:59).
2. As a group or in smaller breakouts, discuss the foundational questions of the walk, provided on pages 1–2 of the handout. Explain how the walk will be structured for today. Scan the prompts and questions and highlight any questions or areas of emphasis.
3. Conduct selected areas of the walk. Invite participants to complete the observations, wonderings, and ideas for action steps. The teacher and student interviews, along with further work on the action steps, will be part of the self-study segment that follows this session.
4. Debrief on today's steps of the walk and today's learning overall, aiming for a "soft landing," that is, sharing out what was done, what was learned, and some goals moving forward, while aiming to take care of the emotional side of the participants' experiences. If possible, provide additional resources and support within the school or district, such as counselors and leaders or deans of equity, diversion, and inclusion.

Looking Forward

Wrap up and look ahead to the self-study and second session. Provide a short preview of the second synchronous session and resources for reference during the upcoming self-study segment. Distribute and collect/provide link to submit session evaluation forms. Thank everyone for their thoughtful and active participation.

Next Steps of the Culturally Responsive Library Walk

Objective:

- We will work to identify strengths, to discover areas that need improvement, and to develop a path to achieve a culturally responsive library program.

Time: 2–4 hours, self-guided, over the course of 1–3 months

Materials:

- Project READY "Culturally Responsive Library Walk" handout (https://schoollibraryconnection.com/assets/mediaserver/slc/2077/2077543.pdf)
- Access to library space, print and digital resources, and online catalog
- Participation from teachers, students, and school leaders

This self-study period allows time to complete areas of the walk, to conduct student and teacher interviews, to gather and discuss area-specific and overall observations and wonderings with a school-based or librarian team, and to start planning action steps.

Self-Study Instructions

1. The starting point for the self-study will vary, depending on the format of the first synchronous session and how much of the walk was completed. If needed, begin by conducting and recording observations for remaining areas of the form. If you're starting the walk fresh with a school-based team, proceed through the five areas of the walk, recording observations, wonderings, and ideas for action steps.
2. With appropriate permissions and time for scheduling, plan and conduct the teacher and student interviews as described on pages 14 (teacher) and 15 (student) of the walk
3. With your team, discuss the findings of the walk, and in consultation with your library supervisor and school principal, identify priority areas for taking action. For purposes of this self-study, you might focus on a few items within each of the five areas, or perhaps several action steps within one area.
4. You might use one of the discussion protocols from earlier or a method you prefer for generating ideas among the team. From these ideas, use the chart on page 13 to list the focus area(s), along with desired outcomes and next steps.
5. Prepare to share your process and some of your ideas and action steps at the second synchronous session.

You might consult resources #16-19 in this Resource List to support your process of reflecting and planning action steps.

Cultural Responsiveness in Action at Your Library

Objectives:

- We will discuss the context and need for analyzing and improving library services and instruction for racialized youth.
- We will practice strategies for delivering effective and intentional services for racialized youth.
- We will work to identify strengths, to discover areas that need improvement, and to develop a path to achieve a culturally responsive library program.
- We will discuss qualities of enabling texts, view and read examples, apply criteria for enabling texts, and suggest enabling texts.

Time: 60–90 minutes

Materials:

- Resource List, including links to SLC course videos
- Presentation template (Google Slides)
- Participants' notes, reflections, and other evidence and planning documents from the library walks
- School, local, and state demographic data (as available) and U.S. Census data (https://data.census.gov/cedsci/)

- Samples of enabling texts
- Book chapter, Hughes-Hassell, Sandra, Casey H. Rawson, and Julie Stivers. "Chapter 5: Stories Matter." In, *Libraries, Literacy, and African American Youth: Research and Practice* (2017): 85-101.

Outline:

1.	Welcome and Icebreaker	*10 minutes*
2.	Reviewing the Self-Study	*15 minutes*
3.	New Content: Putting Characteristics into Action	*20 minutes*
4.	New Content: Enabling Texts	*25 minutes*
5.	Conclusion and Looking Forward	*10 minutes*

Welcome and Icebreaker

What Do We Have in Common?

Invite the participants to gather in groups of three or join breakouts in groups of three. Provide 3–4 minutes for the groups to find five distinctive things that the three of them have in common. The three things cannot be job related or obvious, e.g., they like to read.

For example, they might discover that all have two siblings, prefer mountains to oceans, or have fish as pets.

At the end of the time, have the groups share out to the large group. What did they find in common? Welcome everyone to the second synchronous session and go over the agenda and objectives for the day.

Reviewing the Self-Study

Activity: Small Group Shares

1. In small groups, invite participants to share the results and anticipated next steps of their library walks. Encourage the participants to describe their observations and resulting action steps, as well as their feelings, questions, or perspectives on the process. What feels exciting or perhaps uncomfortable? What are they looking forward to doing or seeing? What are they feeling anxious about?
2. Conclude this activity in small groups, having tablemates or breakout members use a "content reflection" protocol, as described here: "reflecting content is listening accurately to another person and reflecting the essence of the content of the communication to the other in your own words. In reflecting content, you focus on the content of what a speaker is saying to you, including thoughts, ideas, beliefs, facts, data, etc. In content reflection the focus is the thoughts and ideas of the other, the subject of a particular communication" (Katz and McNulty 1994, https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/uploadedfiles/parcc/cmc/reflective%20listening%20nk.pdf).

After everyone has had an opportunity to talk in their groups, transition to the first new content segment.

New Content: Putting Characteristics into Action

Conducting a Culturally Responsive Library Walk and applying the results is a process with numerous, intricate components and many moving parts, from personal reflection to communicating with stakeholders, to seeking permissions to adapt policies or rearrange a space. This next video and activity are intended to help you progress from theory and planning to action. Although this particular example highlights summer access to the library, similar processes of analyzing needs, gathering feedback, and including families could be used to develop or improve many aspects of library programs.

Activity: What Are Family and Practical Needs?

1. View the Lesson 8 video, "Putting Characteristics into Action" (5:56). Reflect together on your observations of the video.
2. Next, bring the conversation to the local level. Gather or revisit your school's or district's student and family demographics, including language(s)

spoken at home. Use school, local, and state data (as available) and U.S. Census data (https://data.census.gov/cedsci/) to compile current, accurate information.

3. Using the demographic data, the findings of the library walks, and the story of Kathryn Cole and the Northside library from the video, discuss (in small groups or as a large group) some logistical, infrastructural, and practical aspects of your students' academic and social-emotional needs. For example, if students have 1:1 access to devices, do they have reliable Internet and easy-to-access portals for library resources? What are opportunities to access books from the school or public library in the summer? What kinds of family programs might your school or library offer, and what scheduling considerations are important? What languages are used for library communications?
4. After discussing some of these needs, brainstorm possible steps that school librarians and libraries might pursue to address them. Pay particular attention to those students who may be underserved by existing programming. Make a list of potential school and community partners you could approach in your efforts.

New Content: Enabling Texts

In *Libraries, Literacy, and African American Youth: Research and Practice*, edited by Sandra Hughes-Hassell, Pauletta Brown Bracy, and Casey H. Rawson (2017), the authors cite Alfred Tatum's 2009 work describing enabling texts, which "connect readers with the world around them by honestly portraying characters, issues, problems, and environments that African American youth might encounter in the real world" (89). Among other qualities, enabling texts provide a healthy psyche, demonstrate resiliency, and recognize, honor, and nurture multiple identities. Enabling texts can serve as an important, empowering component of literacy instruction.

Part of the value of enabling texts is in the selection and acquisition of texts for the library collection, but perhaps the more critical aspect is getting books into readers' hands and engaging with them as they experience the books. This engagement might be embedded within more formal lessons, such as a collaboration with an ELA teacher, or less structured programs, such as book clubs or summer reading. The chapter "Stories Matter" offers examples of a "text mediation plan" and sample starter passages and framing questions, which aim to capture and hold readers' attention. We will examine and practice identifying sample starter passages in this activity.

Activity: Engaging with Enabling Texts

This exercise is the last interactive component of the second synchronous session and sets up the follow-up activities for the school librarians to plan and pursue this year, over the summer, or for another specified amount of time. It uses the video lesson on enabling texts as well as the "Stories Matter" chapter from *Libraries, Literacy, and African American Youth: Research and Practice.*

1. View the Lesson 6 video, "Enabling Texts" (5:03).
2. Invite the participants to read over the rubric for enabling texts, Figure 5.1 on page 88 and the descriptions of the criteria for enabling texts on p. 89–94.
3. The chapter provides examples of enabling texts. Building off of the example titles and criteria, what other enabling texts can participants think of? If your session is in person, you might gather some titles for librarians to view and discuss. As a group, talk about the criteria that the examples or suggestions represent. Keep in mind that there are many potential criteria to weigh, and that a book may not necessarily embody all the criteria.
4. To practice mediating readers' experiences, the last step of this exercise is to develop sample starter passages and framing questions for a book club. Use books from the participants' libraries, excerpts read aloud or shared among the group, or samples from the library collection where you are meeting. Starter passages are hooks to grab a reader's attention, and they might come from any section of the book. Framing questions are like essential questions for reading, provoking curiosity, thinking, and connections to issues in the world. For example, see the template in Figure 5.3, page 97.

Conclusion and Looking Forward

As time permits, view Lesson 9, "Getting Started in Your Library "(4:44) and the Closing video (0:42). Invite open reflection, questions, or closing remarks.

Wrap up the session with instructions on next steps. Thank everyone for their work and contributions and provide a session evaluation form.

Exploring Enabling Texts

Objectives:

- We will practice strategies for delivering effective and intentional services for racialized youth.
- We will discuss qualities of enabling texts, view and read examples, apply criteria for enabling texts, and suggest enabling texts.

Time: Varies

Materials:

- Access to library collection and/or ILL for book borrowing or professional development funds for purchases
- Book chapter, Hughes-Hassell, Sandra, Casey H. Rawson, and Julie Stivers. "Chapter 5: Stories Matter." In, *Libraries, Literacy, and African American Youth: Research and Practice* (2017): 85-101.

There are many ways to continue following up with the concepts covered in this workshop over the course of the year. Determine what works best for your community of librarians to help them actively apply and reflect on their own learning.

Suggested Follow-Up Activities

- Read Hughes-Hassell, Sandra, Casey H. Rawson, and Julie Stivers. "Chapter 5: Stories Matter" in *Libraries, Literacy, and African American Youth: Research and Practice* (2017): 85-101.
- Select enabling texts according to grade level bands to read and discuss. Create and share text mediation plans or book club framing questions.
- Invite librarians to identify and read enabling texts individually and prepare a booktalk, text mediation plans, or book club framing questions.
- Create Reflection Teams, where participants can check in with each other periodically throughout the year to share steps in their action plans.
- Ask participants to share a quarterly written reflection, journal or research log, or other feedback form with you
- Rotate posting about progress and new understandings to a district library blog or website.
- Provide additional resources for librarians to explore and discuss.

Suggested Resources from School Library Connection

Abilock, Debbie. "Adding Friction. A Teacher Asks, 'How Can I Bring a Social Justice Lens to Our Famous Person Report?'." School Library Connection, April 2020, schoollibraryconnection.com/Content/Article/2244096.
I wondered how we might shift students' from thinking they were assembling a timeline about a legend to focusing on the legacy of a "flawed" leader.

Craddock, Ida Mae. "A Charlottesville Tale: Students Taking Back Their Story." School Library Connection, September 2019, schoollibraryconnection.com/Content/Article/2211569.
Our school stands about two blocks from the site of the Unite the Right rally. While the protesters protested and the ralliers rallied, quietly the children of Charlottesville wondered where they fit in the story, whether or not they were safe in their own town, and, as the trauma faded, how they could change how their own stories are told.

Gardner, Laura, and Chaebong Nam. "Student Voice with the 10 Questions for Young Changemakers." School Library Connection, May 2020, schoollibraryconnection.com/Content/Article/2246864.

Harvard's Democratic Knowledge Project collaborated with librarians to help partner libraries learn about the Ten Questions for Young Changemakers framework, experiment on their own, and develop new learning modules and program resources to help other librarians implement the Ten Questions to cultivate civic learning.

Langella, Peter and Meg Boisseau Allison. "The Unspoken Quota: Using Radical Inclusion to Disrupt Institutional Whiteness." School Library Connection, September 2020, schoollibraryconnection.com/Content/Article/2252709.

The Unspoken Quota sees white is "normal" and color is the "other" or "extra," so we're fine with diversity being limited to a lesson or a month. We need to do better.

Langella, Peter and Meg Boisseau Allison. "Empathy and Equity in Library Programming." School Library Connection, April 2020, schoollibraryconnection.com/Content/Article/2241835.

If we can commit to understanding the intersectional identities of our students and how those identities interact with the history of power, privilege, and important social issues, then we librarians will have a much better chance of realizing the potential of our positioning to create knowledgeable citizen activists.

Long, Erika. "Radical Change Agents and Equity Warriors." School Library Connection, October 2020, schoollibraryconnection.com/Content/Article/2252092.

The proclamation "the libraries we work in are safe spaces" makes us feel warm and fuzzy inside. Yet, the question we should really be asking ourselves is, do our learners feel invited enough by the library to determine for themselves if the library is a safe place?

McLeod, Barbara E., Kim Sigle, and Kesha S. Valentine. "Management Matters. Losing Readers Is Worse than Losing Books." School Library Connection, July 2019, schoollibraryconnection.com/Content/Article/2214594.

Equity remains one of the most significant concepts when deciding how to develop library procedures and manage resources. In addition to our many hats, we are now called upon to be equity warriors. We hold the perfect position to welcome all students into a safe learning environment that supports them in their personal growth and academic development. It is our charge to provide equal access to books and other resources to support our students in their personal growth and academic development.

Torres, Julia. "*Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* Educator Guide." School Library Connection, March 2020, schoollibraryconnection.com/Content/LiteratureLesson/2243261?topicCenterId=2158552.

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You skillfully recounts a counter-narrative of the history we think we know and defines what it means (historically and today) to be a segregationist, assimilationist, or antiracist. To support student understanding of the complex histories of race and racism in America that *Stamped* lays out, consider these book pairings and classroom ideas.

Vardell, Sylvia M. "Book Connections & Intersections. Becoming an Anti-Racist Librarian." School Library Connection, October 2020, schoollibraryconnection.com/Content/Article/2256446.

Fortunately, there are many resources available for educating ourselves about what "anti-racist" means, particularly for uplifting Black voices. Here are a few that I have found very meaningful and helpful in recent months.

Winner, Matthew C. "Know Better. Do Better." School Library Connection, September 2019, schoollibraryconnection.com/Content/Article/2208184.

It took me several years in education before I really started to see the students I was teaching. I had always seen a class of learners in front me. I had always valued their uniqueness, their individual passions, their distinct voices in our classroom community. But it wasn't until midway into my ninth year, long after earning tenure and a master's degree and National Board Certification, that how I viewed my students became so profoundly changed. This article is my attempt at communicating in words that which has been working in my heart since I first saw my students with this new clarity.

MLA CITATION

Morris, Rebecca J. "Equity and Anti-Bias in School Library Practice." *School Library Connection*, September 2021, schoollibraryconnection.com/Home/Display/2264950?topicCenterId=2247904.

https://schoollibraryconnection.com/Home/Display/2264950?topicCenterId=2247904

Entry ID: 2264950

COPYRIGHT 2026 ABC-CLIO, LLC