

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK¹

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. The Culturally Responsive Library Walk steps are listed in order with the observation sheets attached.

Date: _____

1. FORM A TEAM: To be most effective, a team must conduct the culturally responsive library walk. Members might include the school administrator, librarian, teachers, parents, and/or students.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

2. COLLABORATIVE BELIEFS / VISION OF A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY PROGRAM: (Conversation among Team): What is the school community’s vision for a culturally responsive school library program?

¹ This tool was adapted by Sandra Hughes-Hassell, Amanda Hitson, and Casey Rawson from “The Library Learning Walk” developed by the New York City Department of Education, Office of Library Services, June 2004. Retrieved March 1, 2013 (<http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/LibraryServices/EducatorResources/ProgramPlanning/default.htm>).

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY PROGRAMS: Creating a culturally responsive library program that fulfills your beliefs and vision involves developing quality in the following areas (observation sheets are attached with fuller descriptions of each area):

- Librarian/Library staff beliefs and behaviors
- Library space
- Library resources
- Library programming
- Library instruction

4. FOCUS FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK:

The Walk will be more effective if it is focused around **one or two Focus Areas or questions**. For example: How well do the library resources meet the needs of our Black students? As a Library Team, decide the particular area(s) listed above that would most effectively move your school toward your vision of a culturally responsive library program.

- 1.
- 2.

5. OBSERVATIONS / QUESTIONS

For each focus area, look at the examples of indicators that you might observe. As a team, discuss the indicators until everyone has a clear picture of what you might observe, or what information you might gather, to give a clear picture of what is happening in that area of focus.

6. CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK

Once you have scheduled the Walk and assembled the team (including the librarian, principal, teachers, external educators, parents, students, or others), you will want to **pick the appropriate focus sheets** and make individual observations. For indicators that are not observable, you may need to talk with the librarian. You may choose to follow up the time in the library by going to a classroom or two to interview a few students and teachers (using the interview sheets on pages 14-15).

7. DEBRIEFING / LONG-TERM PLANNING

Once the Culturally Responsive Library Walk has been completed, reassemble the team to share each participant's Wonderings/Observations and then look at the observations in relation to Beliefs/Vision and research on culturally responsive pedagogy. Together, team members decide the library's Next Steps and outline a plan for continued development of the library program by filling out the **Long-Term Planning Sheet** on page 13.

FOCUS AREA: LIBRARIAN/LIBRARY STAFF BELIEFS AND BEHAVIORS

Objective	Characteristics	Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
Interact with Black youth as individuals, set high expectations, and develop agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Culturally competent ➤ Caring ➤ Affirming ➤ Committed ➤ Accountable ➤ Courageous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understands racial identity development and is engaged in personal racial identity development work ➤ Exhibits affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds, seeing resources for learning in all students rather than viewing their differences as problems to overcome ➤ Adapts classroom management strategies to match the cultural background of the students ➤ Enforces the school’s anti-bullying policy in the library ➤ Knows students’ names and how to pronounce them ➤ Is bilingual or knows a few key phrases in each of the languages represented in the school ➤ Respects the student’s home language and recognizes the value of code-switching ➤ Reads widely in literature pertaining to culturally responsive pedagogy ➤ Leads professional development for teachers and staff focused on 		

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK

		<p>culturally responsive pedagogy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduces teachers, staff, and students to resources that offer multiple cultural perspectives and viewpoints ➤ Belongs to a PLN focused on understanding and meeting the needs of diverse students ➤ Belongs to a professional association such as REFORMA or BCALA ➤ Serves on school / district diversity committees ➤ Attends school board meetings to advocate for the needs of Black students ➤ Has attended Safe Zone training ➤ Sponsors or co-sponsors the school's GSA ➤ Conducts action research on issues related to library services to black students ➤ Subscribes to publications such as <i>Teaching Tolerance</i> that provide up-to-date information on issues related to diversity and culturally responsive pedagogy ➤ Reads community newspapers (for example: <i>La Conexion</i> and <i>The Triangle Tribune</i>) ➤ Attends community events 		
--	--	---	--	--

FOCUS AREA: LIBRARY SPACE

Objective	Characteristics	Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<p>Provide a welcoming place that respects individuals and their cultures and allows Black students to express their learning and individuality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nurturing ➤ Respectful ➤ Responsive ➤ Comfortable ➤ Welcoming ➤ Flexible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Images in the library and used in marketing the library are representative of the range of diverse students served by the school ➤ Signage is in multiple languages and includes images that are culturally relevant ➤ Current and relevant bulletin boards display activities and events involving Black communities ➤ Student work is prominently displayed in the library ➤ The school’s anti-bullying policy is visible and enforced ➤ The library website reflects the language and cultural diversity present in the school ➤ The library website contains the work of Black students ➤ The website includes images of the range of diverse students served by the school ➤ Booklists found on the library website contain culturally relevant titles ➤ The library website changes in response to student feedback 		

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The library website connects Black students to resources related to their interests as well as academic topics ➤ The library website can be accessed using mobile devices, thus recognizing the access issues many Black youth face ➤ Self-checkout is available ➤ The library is open before and after school for student use ➤ The library is open to families and community members ➤ The space and the website is ADA compliant ➤ A variety of work spaces are available (individual, group, loud, quiet, etc.) ➤ Some space is set aside to allow food and beverages ➤ Comfortable seating is provided ➤ Furniture is movable so space can be changed to accommodate student needs ➤ Students have forums for making suggestions 		
--	--	---	--	--

FOCUS AREA: LIBRARY RESOURCES

Objective	Characteristics	Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<p>Nurture the resolve of Black youth, help them reconcile their different identities, and imagine their place in the world</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meaningful ➤ Relevant ➤ Legitimate ➤ Developmentally appropriate ➤ Enabling ➤ Provide Counterstories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collection development policy includes criteria for evaluating and selecting culturally relevant and enabling texts ➤ Black youth have input into collection development decisions ➤ Collection includes resources that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ have been evaluated based on language, pictures and stereotypes ➤ are written by members of Black communities ➤ offer multiple cultural perspectives and viewpoints ➤ represent the diversity within Black communities ➤ Technologies such as laptops, iPads, and eReaders are available for checkout ➤ Newspapers and magazines in the students’ home languages are available ➤ Culturally responsive award winning multicultural literature is purchased ➤ Resources are provided that allow students to express themselves— e.g. blogging platforms, video and audio 		

		<p>recording tools / software, word processing tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Culturally diverse community resources are utilized (e.g. civic leaders, business leaders, artists, writers, members of police/fire department, etc.) ➤ Members of the community and Black youth are asked to help check resources for authenticity ➤ Culturally relevant materials are included in book displays, on recommended reading lists, and in booktalks ➤ Library resources are available for checkout over school breaks and in the summer ➤ The website contains links to culturally relevant resources and information in the home languages of diverse students ➤ Library newsletters, program flyers, etc. are available in diverse students' home languages ➤ Text starters have been identified for a variety of texts ➤ Librarians mediate texts with students, helping them relate texts to their lives and interests 		
--	--	--	--	--

FOCUS AREA: LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

Objective	Characteristics	Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<p>Connect to the real world and support Black youths' action in their own communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Honors & promotes voice ➤ Develops agency ➤ Increases engagement ➤ Sets high expectations ➤ Provides authentic & relevant experiences ➤ Fosters community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Programming goes beyond the superficial aspects of culture (i.e. celebrating holidays or months such as African American History Month) ➤ Programs for youth are interactive, focus on topics of interest to them, and allow students to take action in their lives and communities ➤ Programs focus on cultivating voice (e.g., Spoken Word contests, video contests, etc.) ➤ Book groups include quality fiction and nonfiction that authentically depicts Black communities ➤ Book discussions revolve around essential questions that engage students in critically examining issues such as identity, racism, power, etc. ➤ Author visits include authors/illustrators from Black communities ➤ Students are allowed to work collaboratively ➤ Programs relate to the interests of Black students 		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The librarian, mentors, and other students provide support and feedback for students ➤ The purpose and value of participation in programs is explicitly explained ➤ Students are given opportunities to work in the library ➤ Programs are related to community issues— fundraising or volunteering for local organizations; changing school district policy, etc. ➤ Programs are developed collaboratively with parents and community members to build on the meaningfulness between home & school experience ➤ Family programs are held to introduce parents to library resources, literacy practices, Web 2.0 tools, etc. ➤ Family programs are scheduled with the transportation needs, child-care needs, and work schedules of parents in mind ➤ Evening meetings are held in the library to discuss issues that are important to the community 		
--	--	---	--	--

FOCUS AREA: LIBRARY INSTRUCTION

Objective	Characteristics	Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<p>Employ an inquiry-based model of instructional strategies and behaviors that builds on the strengths and interests of Black students and leads to improved academic achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sets high expectations ➤ Provides authentic & relevant experiences ➤ Builds on funds of knowledge ➤ Collaboratively developed with teachers ➤ Utilizes cooperative and interactive learning groups ➤ Employs ongoing and culturally responsive assessments ➤ Utilizes scaffolding techniques such as teacher demonstration and modeling of strategies ➤ Requires students to think critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Gathers data about Black students' home lives and builds on funds of knowledge that are identified ➤ Makes high expectations clear to Black students ➤ Uses multiple techniques to elicit prior knowledge ➤ Explains the purpose of assignments/tasks ➤ Provides students with clear guidelines in the form of instructions, examples, rubrics, etc. that let them know what they are expected to do ➤ Relates assignments/tasks to the students' lived experience ➤ Utilizes cooperative and collaborative groups ➤ Allows students to offer feedback and/or help others understand material and learn to use tools/resources ➤ Involves collaboration with teachers to plan instructional activities in person or via email/social media ➤ Co-teaches with members of the Black community ➤ Provides opportunities for students to interact with Black professionals such as 		

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK

		<p>scientists, doctors, lawyers, etc. either face-to-to face or via social media such as Skype or Twitter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides wait time for students from all backgrounds to foster increased class participation ➤ Uses culturally familiar speech and events ➤ Makes use of primary resources and manipulative materials ➤ Provides explicit instruction on using resources and offers group and one-on-one assistance both in and out of class to students who need additional help ➤ Utilizes a research model that builds on student interests and needs ➤ Utilizes culturally responsive images, examples, and texts in instruction ➤ Utilizes performance assessments that build on Black students’ strengths ➤ Asks students how they would like to be evaluated/assessed 		
--	--	---	--	--

Long-Term Planning

Focus Area(s)	Desired Outcomes	Next Steps

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK: Teacher Interviews

1. How familiar are you and your students with the resources available through the library?
2. How does the library program meet the curricular and everyday life information needs of your school's Black students?
3. How do you and the librarian plan and teach together to meet the needs of your school's Black students?

Name:	Date:
Name:	Date:
Name:	Date:

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK: Student Interviews

1. Why do you come to the library?
2. What do you like most about your library?
3. What do you not like about your library?
4. How does the library help you learn?
5. How does the library meet your everyday life information needs?
6. How does the library reflect your culture?

Name:	Date:
Name:	Date:
Name:	Date: