African American literature: Books to stoke dreams

Jane M. Gangi, Sacred Heart University
Aimee Ferguson

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Abstract
In addition to market forces, unconsciously damaging trends in many textbooks for teacher education have resulted in classroom trade book collections that represent children who are primarily white and middle class. While all children—whether from Argentina, Afghanistan, or Algeria—deserve to see themselves and their families in books, the focus of this article is on new publications that depict African Americans.

Teachers who are committed to learning all they can about multicultural literature and culturally and gender relevant pedagogy become agents of change.

Includes significant bibliography of Resources and list of Children's Literature That Picture Children of African Descent.

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American literature has its clichés—J.D. Salinger's hyped-to-death Catcher in the Rye, Hemingway's "muscular" prose, perennial reading-list mainstays like To Kill A Mockingbird—but at its best, it is an expression of national identity. It is by turns rugged, itinerant, haunted, and even holy. The following books have in common that the entirety of American history exists between their lines and their readers recognize that from their peculiarly American cadence comes a universality that has made them classics. While a full list of superb U.S. novels would be never-ending, these 10 are a sam African-American literature is the body of literature produced in the United States by writers of African descent. It begins with the works of...
such late 18th-century writers as Phillis Wheatley. Before the high point of slave narratives, African-American literature was dominated by autobiographical spiritual narratives. The genre known as slave narratives in the 19th century were accounts by people who had generally escaped from slavery, about their journeys to freedom and ways they claimed their