Mrs. Nancy Brasel, Associate Instructor, UCF
Dr. Judith Levin, Lecturer, UCF
Our Interest in This Subject Stems From:

- Parramore Kidz Zone: Baby Institute
- Milk & Muffins
Recognized the Lack of Authentically Culturally Diverse Children’s Books

- Many of the parent participants were not aware that these books exist.
- Most of the time the books must be special ordered as they are not readily available at bookstores.
- Classrooms should present positive images of children and families of all ethnicities and abilities.
Clark Doll Experiment

1. Kenneth & Mamie Clark
2. 1940’s
3. Children shown black and white dolls and asked to choose.
4. Majority of children selected white doll as the nicer/better/prettier one.
5. Experiment has been replicated in 2006, 2009 & 2010.
Clark Doll Experiment Video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkpUyB2xgTM
Why Is This Important?

- Children aren’t explicitly taught stereotypes so how do they form these opinions?
- Children scan the environment, similar to using a radar.
- This social radar bounces off the environment and returns to the child providing information.
- If the only images in the environment are of white, blond, able-bodied individuals, the message received may be that individuals who look the same must be “desirable.”
- Children must see mirror images of themselves and their families in the environment.
Grandpa, Is Everything Black Bad?

By Sandy Lynne Holman
Illustrated by Lela Kometian
Authentic vs. Unauthentic Approaches

- Black History Month
- Tokenism
- Including books that mirror only the children in that classroom
- Inappropriate ethnic books.
Some Suggestions
Make sure you have books with main characters from many ethnicities, doing everyday things, such as starting school.
Books should include storylines about everyday family events – those things we do alike, (such as cooking with our parents and breaking out into spontaneous dance party)
Books about siblings and families are great

This is a book co-written by Holly Robinson Peete and her daughter Ryan Elizabeth Peete about Ryan’s brother Charlie who has autism.

These are books about brothers who are athletes.
Books about special relationships between parents and grandparents that span many cultures and portray aging appropriately.
Books that represent all types of families
It’s great to have biographies in your class library, in fact, the Common Core State Standards requires a classroom reading to be comprised of 50% fiction and 50% non-fiction selections. Make sure you don’t just add a book about Martin Luther King and consider you’ve met the requirement of cultural diversity. That would be considered tokenism, which is an unauthentic approach. You may want to highlight the books as heroes and sheroes.
Books that celebrate a culture and cultural traditions. Make sure these don’t make up your entire collection as this can result in stereotyping or pointing out our differences.
And finally, choose books that focus on what makes us more alike than different!
These books have taken quite awhile to acquire and have become much loved books in our libraries.

We have a bibliography of titles for you to take home so please help us in keeping our collections intact.
Now, it’s time for you to explore…

• Take a few minutes to look at some examples of authentically culturally diverse books.

• When we come back together, be ready to share an AHA! or give a brief book talk sharing one of the books you enjoyed.
What would you like to share?
Thank You!

We hope the material we shared today will assist you as you continue to promote authentically culturally diverse children’s literature.