NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND: THE CONVERGENCE OF MORAL INSTRUCTION AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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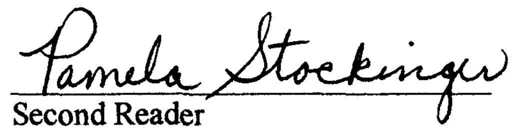
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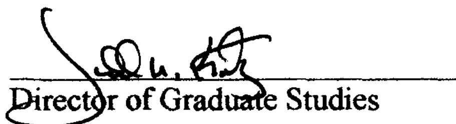
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CHAPTER ONE

EVOLUTION OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Children's literature has evolved throughout history with authors shaping their stories to the scrutiny of society and in spite of the society that created it. From its storytelling beginning and its fundamental roots firmly planted in folklore and fairy tales, children's literature is still cautioning, bemusing, and evoking nearly every emotion under the sun. Such powerful tools, stories intended for children have often been used to instill certain morals, religious values, and societal norms. The primary focus of this paper is to explore the potential effects brought about by the controversial educational reform act of 2001, No Child Left Behind, which details a Civic (or character) Education program and to argue that this federal requirement represents a unique opportunity beyond what its framers may have imagined. This piece of legislation not only affects the education community, it has the potential to and will very likely direct the works of authors of children's literature because it outlines specific traits that are part of becoming a good citizen. It thereby creates a need for works of children's literature that clearly feature themes of good character.

While many, I included, have reservations about the federal mandate of teaching character traits or morals to the children of the United States in our schools, I believe that No Child Left Behind (NCLB) creates a unique opportunity to expose children and their families to multicultural children's literature, in particular folk and fairy tales. Children's literature has been associated with moral lessons from its beginnings. This paper will demonstrate the presence of universal moral themes by surveying different retellings of

folk tales in contemporary writings. Although folk tales have often come under suspicion for their underlying or blatant didacticism and for promoting values we no longer wish to pass on to our children, the folk tale is a most vital part of and is reflective of all cultures. The relevance of the historical perspective folk tales provide to current day society is reason enough to include these timeless works in our libraries and curricula.

This paper examines, in particular, the history of moral instruction as seen through works of children's literature as related to the social climate of each period discussed. The history of children's literature, with an emphasis on the folk and fairy tale, confirms that moral instruction has always been tied to its history and use. After all,

> it is impossible to understand fully the children's literature of any period without closely examining the society that produced it. As Sheila Egoff writes, "Because children require direction from adults and because they are much more open to influence than adults, fiction intended for them has often been invested with very strong moral and social values ... along with heavy doses of information ... What children read is too important to its society's good or ill to be made a matter of purely aesthetic consideration." (Saltman 1)

Interestingly, our nation and its current political administration find themselves again concerned with the state of our youths' character, which explains the controversial mandate to teach values in the public sector. As this paper will show, moral instruction has historically been a leading purpose in children's literature. Whatever questions or concerns one may have regarding governmental involvement in character education, it appears that its inclusion in public school curriculum is now a requirement and can be

construed in a positive light as an opportunity to introduce students to a vast array of folk literature and fairy tales from around the world; these tales are ideal because of their strong moral content and focus on positive character traits. Equally important, fairy tales are also a wonderful way to introduce multicultural literature because many versions of various tales are found throughout diverse cultures thus spanning cultural and linguistic boundaries. Consequently, federally mandated character education is broadened to educate on how to be a good citizen of the world.

Thus, another aspect potentially affecting children's literature is multiculturalism. A field of study all its own, multiculturalism, or the celebration of many cultures, constitutes a vast category within children's literature. Numerous notable authors provide our nation's youth with characters of various descents. With the changing demographics in America and the rich and diverse groups represented in this country as part of the reading audience, the amount and quality of multicultural children's books have, as a result, greatly increased over the past couple of decades. A wealth of literature representing different groups of peoples across the country as well as those abroad is now available for children.

The accompanying listing of multicultural children's literature includes works about African American, Arab American, Asian American, European American, Hispanic American, Native American and Inuit cultures. While the focus is primarily on the use of folk literature and fairy tales to meet the criteria for character education and the forces with the potential to affect children's literature, the extended bibliography is included in order to illustrate the wealth and breadth of multicultural literature available for teachers seeking materials to use for character education and the classroom. While

many works represented are from very distinct cultures, unifying themes resonate throughout, many constituting important moral lessons. As these stories suggest, as different as cultures may seem from one another, we are all very similar in the most important ways.

History

As the history of character education or moral instruction found in folklore and children's literature illustrates, western cultures have undergone periods where creating literature to teach character traits or moral lessons is one of the storyteller's or author's primary goals. The idea of what constitutes a work of children's literature that exemplifies good morals or fine character attributes has changed only minimally over time. From John Locke's influence in the eighteenth century to President George W. Bush's administration's focus on character education in the "No Child Left Behind" legislation, children's literature has been promoted as a powerful tool in fulfilling society's wishes to shape its children's character. Presently, in the United States, the concern of the administration, and many other sectors of society, regarding the state of our youth's character leads to controversy over the teaching of values in public elementary schools. Now educators are using texts as didactic instruments as they coincide with character education lessons to fulfill the character education requirement in the NCLB Act. As this brief look at moral instruction in lore and text will illustrate, moral lessons are available in stories from across time.

Before the printing press and widespread printed children's literature, stories - commonly referred to as folk or fairy tales - were told throughout every culture.

> Fairy tales were first told by gifted tellers and were based on rituals intended to endow meaning to the daily lives of members of a tribe. As oral folk tales, they were intended to explain natural occurrences such as the change of the seasons and shifts in the weather or to celebrate the rites of harvesting, hunting, marriage, and conquest. The emphasis in most folk tales was on communal harmony. ... [T]here were tales of initiation, worship, warning, and indoctrination. (Zipes, Myth 10)

Storytellers across diverse cultures were entertaining and educating members of the community with wonder tales and parables of sorts. Tales in the oral tradition functioned as a tool to create tribal harmony.

> [I]t was not until the rise of literacy and the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century [when] the oral tradition of story telling underwent an immense revolution. The oral tales were taken over by a different social class, and the form, themes, production, and reception of the tales were transformed. This change did not happen overnight, but it did foster discrimination among writers and their audiences almost immediately so that distinct genres were recognized and approved for certain occasions within polite society or cultivated circles of readers. (Zipes, Myth 10-11)

This "polite society" to which Jack Zipes refers uses literature for its own devices, serving the purpose of socializing, informing, and training young readers to fit into the society as it exists. Books were published to meet the society's demand for works illustrative of good morals and character traits.

The first English printer, William Caxton, attempted to publish folk tales in the

written form precisely as they occurred in their original oral tradition. Such tales flourished with retellings by Charles Perrault in 1697 and then the Grimm brothers in the 1820s (Saltman 2). Although these tales were often cautionary and illustrated to the reader good triumphing over evil, they were primarily meant to be read for entertainment. The general public, mainly the middle and upper classes, gained access to these tales from Caxton's publishing of anthologies and collections. From the first printing in the fifteenth century, children's literature was imbued with a didactic tone that continued into the seventeenth century where texts with religious themes were touted with the rise of Puritanism. Because of strong Puritan sentiment, a change to society's way of thinking affected public opinion about what children should be reading. Children were taught with religious and didactic texts, causing genres outside of this realm to lose readership, including those subscribing to Puritanism.

The Puritans "felt that children were filled with sin ... [and] would grow to maturity in sin – unless something were done" (Saltman 2). Because of their view of the natural state of children, parents reared their sons and daughters with incredibly strong religious beliefs and educated them by using books that were embedded with religious ideals. A notable literary work from this era is John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and is a perfect illustration of what the Puritans meant by a "good godly book of religious training and moral admonination" (Saltman 2). Viewing Pilgrim's Progress as the "perfect Puritan text" is ironic since this work is commonly viewed as "an imaginative allegory written for adults... [Y]et children were reading it as a fairy tale full of marvels and adventures. Nonetheless, fairy and folk tales continued to remain under scrutiny and attack from the Puritan era into the 1700s" (Saltman 2). Given the Puritans' religious

fervor and their dedication to the ideal of being without sin, character education was found in the form of religious study. Folk or fairy tales were not considered to fit into the Puritan ideal of children's literature even though Pilgrim's Progress has been equated to a fairy tale. As popular as Bunyan's tale was, society found itself in a tide of change as the popularity of Puritanism declined.

"It was Mary Burges who, in 1800, recorded the decline of the Puritan's impact on children's literature. 'The pilgrim Christian,' she wrote, 'was the companion of our childhood, till the refinements of modern education banished him from our nurseries'" (Pickering, Jr. 1). The nurseries of this time were being stocked with tales retold by Charles Perrault in the late 1600s and then the Grimm's in the early 1800s. Maria Tatar points out in The Annotated Classic Fairy Tales (xv) that Perrault's Tales of Mother Goose (1697) contains folk tales to which the author attaches one or two morals even though they did not necessarily pertain to the story. She continues:

> [Perrault's changes] offered nothing more than an opportunity for random social commentary and digressions on character ... [t]he explicit behavioral directives added by Perrault and others also have a tendency to misfire when they are aimed at children. It did not take Rousseau to discover that when you observe children learning lessons from stories, 'you will see that when they are in a position to apply them, they almost always do so in a way opposite to the author's intention. (xv-xvi)

This commentary illustrates the effect the author's intention can have on his/her readers. As Maria Tatar notes, the intended effect is not always the actual effect or resulting behavior.

Rousseau's predecessor, John Locke, greatly influenced education and, consequently, children's literature, and his ideas became a factor in the decline of interest in Bunyan's Puritan guide. "As prosperity enlarged the idle classes in the eighteenth century, parents, nurtured on Locke's ideas, envisioned both secular and religious futures for children. As a result, books that fostered moral and worldly success became popular while godly books lost much of their appeal" (Pickering, Jr. 21). In Some Thoughts Concerning Education (1690), Locke suggested that children be led gently to learning rather than whipped into submission and made to learn by rote. At the same time, he deplored the use of fairy tales and stories from old ballads; he could recommend only Aesop's Fables and the beast epic "Reynard the Fox" as having any moral values (Saltman 3). This is not to say that parents of this era no longer felt their children required guidance; there was simply a shift of thought, one which often occurs with the research and findings of such powerful influences as John Locke.

"Another powerful influence on children's books came from the theories of Jean Jacques Rousseau, as set forth in Emilé (1762). The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were affected by Rousseau's beliefs that children were the hope of humanity, provided they were not contaminated by the world" (Saltman 3). One could argue that Rousseau's view is rather close to the Puritan perspective, meaning the world is a negative influence. On the other hand, Rousseau's viewpoint diverges from theirs because he viewed children in such a positive light, looking upon them favorably as being the hope of the future. In contrast, the Puritan view damned them.

Rousseau felt that children should learn from experience by way of their instincts and feelings. In fact, he suggested that children should not be given any books before

their twelfth birthday. He also suggested that an adult, with whom a child was closely associated, should act as a guide and give answers to any questions the child might have. The adult was merely to guide the child, not to make decisions for him or her. "Most eighteenth-century critics of children's literature were ill at ease with the imagination, and they attacked fairy tales for awakening the imagination without providing useful, moral lessons for the understanding. Because it drew upon religious traditions for its appeal to the imagination, allegory escaped general condemnation" (Pickering, Jr. 21). The function of the fairy tale for adults underwent a major shift – and this was clear in other countries as well – making them an appropriate means to maintain a dialogue about social and political issues within the bourgeois public sphere. The fairy tale for children remained suspect until the 1820s. Although various collections were published for children in the latter part of the eighteenth century and at the turn of the century -- along with individual chapbooks containing "Cinderella," "Jack the Giant Killer" --they were not regarded as primary reading material for children. Nor were they considered to be "healthy" for the development of children's minds. For the most part, church leaders and educators favored other genres of stories -- realistic, sentimental, and didactic -- which were intended to demonstrate what good manners and morals were. Even the Grimms, in particular Wilhelm in 1819, began to revise their collected tales, targeting them more for children than they had done in the beginning and "cleansing their narratives of erotic, cruel, or bawdy passages" (Zipes, Spells xxiii-xxiv). Before Wilhelm Grimm began to review fairy tales, another publisher, working from Rousseau's ideas, started to produce books with religious sentiment.

Started in 1789 by publisher Robert Raikes, the Sunday School Movement came

to being indirectly from Rousseau's educational theories. This movement was an attempt to educate children from the slums in hopes of curtailing their misdeeds and poor behavior. During this movement, books were published with the intent of leading children to God. Again, religious beliefs and moral goodness resounded throughout children's literature of this time period. Moral instruction, in the form of religious didacticism, once again prevailed and children's literature was chosen and used for this purpose. It was not until the Romantic Movement that there was a rather abrupt change in children's literature (Saltman 4). This is not to suggest that character or moral education no longer existed; rather, the concepts of children and childhood had changed.

"A striking trend away from children's books of moral and religious edification began under the influence of the Romantic Movement and the new Victorian Middle Class. The public concept of childhood was changing profoundly. If the Puritans discovered the child, then the Victorians discovered childhood. Children were no longer considered minor adults or tiny sinners to be saved from damnation; they were people, separate from adults, living their own lives and deserving of their own literature" (Saltman 4). "Significantly, it was from 1830 to 1900, during the rise of the middle classes, that the fairy tale came into its own for children. It was during the time – from 1835 onward to be precise – that Hans Christian Andersen, greatly influenced by the German Romantic writers and the Grimms, began publishing his tales, which became extremely popular throughout Europe and America. Andersen combined humor, Christian sentiments, and fantastic plots to form tales that at once amused and instructed both young and older readers" (Zipes, Spells xxiv). Anderson's appeal, despite the resistance to fairy tales from groups such as The Sunday School Movement, made way

for the publishing of many collections of folk tales for children and this mass publication marked the fairy or folk tale as "'approved'" literature for children" (Hallett and Karasek 19).

Daily life during the latter part of the nineteenth century brought alienation at work, and became more "rationalized" as institutions became more bureaucratic. According to Zipes, (Spells xxiv) this is when folk tales "flowered" across America and Europe. With little time for leisure activities, fairy tales provided a means of escape for adults and children. This is not to say that tales published around this time were without moral instruction. In fact, many tales of this time addressed moral virtues and were often found in sermons as well as collections and were written to guide young boys and adolescent males toward good moral values and lead them to powerful positions in society. Around the 1860s, authors of fairy tales began to take artistic license with the tales and "were using the fairy tale to subvert the formal structure of the canonized tales as well as the governing forces in their societies that restricted free expression of ideals" (Zipes, Spells xxv). These authors were using their own versions of the fairy tale to help reform the society that created the canonized version of the tale. A powerful example of this is Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland (1865). In part, the new era of fairy tale writers in the United States contributed to the genres, which originated from early oral traditions, institutionalization in America and Europe (Zipes, Spells xxv).

As the folk or fairy tale became a machine in and of itself, the genre expanded incorporating many facets of the arts. From ballets to musical works, according to Jack Zipes, the fairy tale underwent momentous changes in the early part of the twentieth century. Tales became vehicles for expression of political views and editorials on the

state of society. The most extreme and twisted evidence of this trend is reflected in children's literature produced by Nazi propagandists during the Third Reich (Spells xxvi) (which, incidentally, raises the issue of why some are so frightened by federally mandated character education built upon a federally mandated definition of character).

Zipes points out that incidence (Spells xxvii) of political debate in Germany continued in other countries through the 1940s and 1950s. However, authors in opposition to the Nazi ideology had their say and responded with tales of their own. Many authors of fairy tales used make-believe worlds as their stage to play out society's woes and warn against the consequences of present day happenings. For example, after World War I, J.R.R. Tolkien used The Hobbit to warn against the possibility of a second world war. While other authors of this time employed themes of power in their writings, others were more optimistic and wrote of a peaceful world. Saltman finds the writings of folk tales in the late 1950's to be diverse and possessing great depth in individuality and spirit as well as the form of the tale itself (6). From Tolkien's The Hobbit in 1937 to E.B. White's Charlotte's Web in 1952 to Scott O'Dell's Island of the Blue Dolphin in 1960, readers of fairy tales were exposed to very different works within a relatively short period of time. This time is known as the "second Golden Age."

The 1960s are forever marked as a time of social change because so many different things were happening in and affecting American culture. War, politics, art, industry, economics, and technology merged in a conflicted environment of unrest and peace. Children were considered miniature versions of adults and consequently came to bear the burden of societal woes and the moral responsibilities of greater society. Notable works from this period are Louise Fitzhugh's Harriet the Spy (1964) and

Maurice Sendak's Where the Wild Things Are (1963) (Saltman 7). While authors of this time were products of the society in which they were created, they realized that readers of their works were tainted by the same society and created works of children's literature with this in mind.

Although Walt Disney's first feature-length fairy tale film, Snow White was released in the 1930s, the prevalence of Disney's versions of classic fairy tales increased in the 1970s. Disney's versions of fairy tales, the physical portrayal of characters, and how these tales were marketed, came under criticism by many anthologists and literary critics such as Jack Zipes. In the anthology titled Spells of Enchantment, Zipes refers to the mass of youthful readers during the late 1960s and 1970s as being "Disneyized – that is, subjected to the saccharine, sexist and illusionary stereotypes of the Disney culture industry" (xxvii). The depiction of patriarchal society and treatment or portrayal of women and children in Disney's versions of tales have led contemporary writers of fairy tales to challenge the Disney version of tales by breaking free of the commercialized form and thereby challenging readers to stretch their perception of traditional roles and values.

Through widespread mass media outlets and mass marketing, the fairy tale began to assume a different form. In a mass media environment, society spends more time viewing tales than reading them. However, Zipes finds that there is a return to the "representative function of the fairy tale" in visual media (Spells xxviii). Various groups are portrayed as trying to gain control of society's interests and there are heroes within certain groups struggling to bring happiness to all society. Perhaps this is an era in which a new style of children's literature has emerged -- "referred to by John Rowe Townsend

as 'didacticism in modern dress.'' This is where modern life is looked at with the intent of commenting on society and correcting problems through influencing children's moral values (Saltman 7). Although there are sure to be many different factors motivating authors to pen children's stories, fairy tale or other, the fact is that there is such an array of books available that one may wonder how anyone could begin to categorize works in such an encompassing genre. Within the genre of children's literature, and more specifically the fairy or folk tale, one will find tales of wonder, adventure, escapism, satire, political commentary, caution, and moral instruction. How a text is labeled depends upon how the reader interprets its content. Fortunately or unfortunately, children are at the mercy of adults when first exposed to literature. They are often introduced to stories and nursery rhymes before they can sit upright. They are taught to read from books they did not select, texts selected rather by educators in many different capacities, who often have their books chosen for them. These books are purchased in mass quantities for schools and are intended to be used year after year. Depending upon the curriculum, teachers have to rely on methods that are efficient and enable them to cover more than one subject at a time. Reform-inspired change is currently affecting what books children across America are being exposed to.

From glimpsing the history of moral instruction as it is found in children's literature, it is apparent that the current administration's NCLB Act of 2001, especially regarding its emphasis on character education, is part of a historical pattern. Moral instruction has always been found within the genre of children's literature. However, with this landmark act and associated national, state, and local standards and incentives, teachers are being encouraged to use books that contain a didactic theme related to the

act's provision for civic or character education in elementary schools. Although children's authors have been influenced by movements in the past, one may argue that there has never been such a strong political force promoting the moral education of America's youth. But the reality is that it has created a niche for authors and publishers to meet the needs of elementary educators who are faced with teaching morals in the public schools. NCLB presents a unique opportunity for educators to use multicultural literature that meets the curricular requirements of a character education program. Introducing children to multicultural literature, in particular the folk and fairy tale, also teaches children to be good and knowledgeable citizens of the world, a world united by certain universal values.

Only time will tell how the character education curriculum specified by NCLB will affect the future of children's literature and the place of moral instruction in society. However, now is the time to take positive action and view the inclusion of teaching certain character traits as an opportunity to introduce young persons to multicultural literature through folk literature and fairy tales. And what better way to start a child's introduction to literature or enhance an older student's literary experience than by using fairy tales? Again, associating fairy tales with character education is problematic in the sense that many remain under careful scrutiny for their portrayal and treatment of women and children as well as the didactic nature of the various tales themselves. What is suggested and proven through this exploration of children's literature, and more specifically, folk and fairy tales, is that tales of old provide children and adults alike with insight into our heritage as our stories have evolved from the oral tale. And most importantly, stories from all cultures share universal themes exemplifying morals or

admirable character traits. There is no denying the virtue in discovering these tales of old that can still provide us with a moral lesson or two. The question that remains is this - whose definition of character to use and which traits to consider as exemplify good?

CHAPTER TWO

THE ROLE OF MORALS IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Moral or character instruction, as found or emphasized in oral tales and children's literature, has survived waves of disdain and criticism over the years. Although controversial in nature, moral instruction, as found in children's literature, represents society's nature and is so ingrained in our culture that one cannot deny its presence within this genre. Society, whether inadvertently or not, helps to shape children's literature. Children's literature is then reflective of how society defines good character, though often with subversive elements. From the earliest of cautionary tales to current texts illustrating good character traits, authors use books intended for children as didactic instruments. With such a plethora of children's texts available portraying good character traits or warning against bad or unwanted behavior, one should question what exactly is meant by the term "character." With the political push for character education in schools, it is also important to be aware of the definition of character accepted and promoted by the federal government. Awareness of the definition is vital because books are going to be chosen by, as well as written, published, and marketed to teachers responsible for character education.

Definition of character

According to the Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary Online, the word "character" is derived from Middle English as character, from the Latin character mark or distinctive quality, from the Greek "charaktEr" meaning to engrave or scratch. There are other derivations, but all convey the idea of making a mark.

There are several definitions for the word character, but perhaps the one best suited for the purpose of determining what the character in character education means is as follows:

> 2 a: one of the attributes or features that make up and distinguish an individual b (1) : a feature used to separate distinguishable things into categories; also : a group or kind so separated <advertising of a very primitive character> (2) : the detectable expression of the action of a gene or group of genes (3) : the aggregate of distinctive qualities characteristic of a breed, strain, or type <a wine of great character> c : the complex of mental and ethical traits marking and often individualizing a person, group, or nation d : main or essential nature especially as strongly marked and serving to distinguish <excess sewage gradually changed the character of the lake>. (n.pag.)

Perhaps a more appropriate term for this discussion is:

> 6: moral excellence and firmness <a man of sound character> (n.pag.).

An agreeable definition of character may be the positive essence of a person exhibited by upholding moral values and behaving in the same manner. With the escalating debate over character education and the current political administration's support and promotion of a character education program in public schools nationwide, it is essential to look at the government's definition of traits constituting the character education program. In addition to the provision for Character Education in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, The U.S. Department of Education published Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen in 2003. The foreword begins with a quote

from Martin Luther King, Jr. that reads, "Intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character, that is the goal of true education." Secretary of Education Rod Paige is also quoted as saying,

> . . .[W]e must not simply teach children how to count, we must teach them what counts." Further, this document states that children who grow up acquiring good, strong values do better in school and are generally happier. It warns that if children do not grow up with a strong value system, problems such as dropping out of school, teen pregnancy and drug [abuse] ensue. These [which are] strong statements help to develop the administration's stance on the inclusion of teaching morals in the public sector. (U.S., Helping 4)

After all, "the cornerstone of the "No Child Left Behind" act of 2001 is academic achievement and professional success built upon a foundation of moral strength and civic virtue (U.S., Helping 4).

So, how exactly does the current administration define character? In Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen, character is defined as a set of qualities, or values, that shape our thoughts, actions, reactions and feelings. People with strong character

* show compassion,
* are honest and fair,
* display self-discipline in setting and meeting goals,
* make good judgments,
* show respect to others,

* show courage in standing up for beliefs,

* have a strong sense of responsibility,

* are good citizens who are concerned for their community, and

* maintain self-respect. (8)

These traits are the foundation for what President George W. Bush finds necessary "as we work to preserve peace and freedom throughout the world, we are guided by a national character that respects human dignity and values every life" (U.S., Helping 7). Requiring that all of the aforementioned traits be somehow explicitly taught in our national curriculum places quite a heavy burden on educators. They literally are shouldering the weight of society's future. In this document, parents are encouraged to promote these qualities as well, but they are not subject to government mandates as are educators. What educators must do, as many already are doing, is incorporate character education into other areas of study. An area of study and a technique that has been proven to improve IQ scores, increase comprehension, and improve test scores in other curricular areas, is for teachers to read to children and have them read to themselves, to the teacher, and to each other. This emphasis on reading is recognized by the United States Department of Education and understood as common knowledge by educators across the nation. With such weight given to reading, which is emphasized by the U.S. Department of Education as well as all other professional education associations, it is reasonable to predict the use of books to teach character education.

Besides defining character generally, the Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen booklet also explains and defines character by individual traits. Interestingly, there is no inclusion of character traits nor their corresponding definition in

the NCLB act. The traits found in the Helping Your Child … booklet are those endorsed and supported by the United States Government, but the exclusion from the NCLB act is confusing and the interpretation of what constitutes good character is left open to interpretation. Although the definitions of character traits were are not found in NCLB, but rather in the Helping Your Child ... booklet, these traits, their definitions, as specified in this document, are helpful in determining the whole definition of character as promoted by the U.S. Department of Education and specified by President George W. Bush's administration.

The first trait discussed in Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen is "compassion," which is equated with empathy. Possessing this trait allows one to be tolerant of others and understand what another is feeling and in return be more understanding (9). As this booklet is geared primarily to parents, it encourages adults to model this behavior and create a dialogue to help children learn, practice, and understand what it means to have compassion for another living being (9). Although this trait specifically targets other people, compassion can be directed towards animals and the environment, which is a point that should be made in this document. One could assume the resulting characteristic of a child acting in a compassionate manner to be tolerance. Perhaps traits such as understanding, tolerance, and compassion are linked, as they may be seen as dependent upon one another.

The second trait discussed and defined is "honesty and fairness." Honesty refers to being truthful and caring about others and not lying to them for personal gain (10). Fairness is acting justly or basing decisions on fact rather than succumbing to prejudices. An aside states that lying is far different from make believe and adults are cautioned to

make sure children are aware of the difference. In the Helping Your Child ... booklet, it also points out that there is a difference between being truthful and being blatantly honest without regard for another's feelings. Insults, whether technically truthful, are not appropriate (10). These traits are hard to tackle if one is expected to teach children all of the intricacies of being honest without hurting others and when in order to be fair one must not abide by the rules. Is being fair always the just thing to do? Many questions arise from consideration of each of the traits discussed, but they must be asked in order to determine what exactly our nation's children are learning in character education.

Being able to state a goal and stick with a plan is how "self discipline" is defined. Acquiring and practicing this trait helps students monitor and regulate their behavior while giving them the steadfastness to fulfill long-term commitments. Exercising self-discipline also leads to patience while dealing with anger and envy along the way. The document warns that without self-discipline, one can "dive headlong into harmful situations" (11). This is a hard trait to teach very young children as they are concerned with their own immediate needs and learn through their own experience. Criticism of teaching this particular trait is that perhaps what is actually being taught is repression and may merely be another means of indoctrination. Those in opposition to teaching this trait, along with the teaching of morals in general, may fear such indoctrination of our nation's youth may inhibit the individual freedoms celebrated in a democracy. However, in support of the inclusion of this trait, one could argue that self-discipline or self-control is a vital characteristic for dealing with others for the protection of the individual as well as others concerned. In order to be self-disciplined, one must use good judgment.

Making distinctions between right and wrong helps children use good judgment in

any situation. Parents are urged to show by word and action to "think carefully and honestly about what should be done, carefully weighing how others will be affected by what we do ... Sometimes we get into trouble because we 'just didn't think.' We let our emotions lead us into actions we regret later" (12). As these character traits are introduced, they seem to build upon each other. Self-discipline requires the traits of honesty, courage, responsibility, and self-respect. It seems that using good judgment requires maturity and experience in order to make the right decision. And, the right decision may not be the decision that others would agree is the proper choice. How to decide on a right decision is where this particular trait is problematic. Thus, the U.S. Dept. of Education asks that parents remind their children there are different rules for different situations or places and they should adhere to the particular code to determine the right course of action for any given situation. The example for this is "... the rules for behaving in church are different from those for a football game" (12). It is interesting to note the inclusion of church in a government document as some people who attend a temple, synagogue or do not attend a house of worship may question and object to the inclusion of a reference to a church in a nation where separation of Church and State is a fundamental principle. On this note, "respect for others" is the next character trait discussed.

Based on the "Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," respect for others is a trait that "makes the world a decent and civilized place" (13). Speaking in a civilized manner, without insult or crude language, is one way that children can show they have respect for others. They should also treat all people fairly without regard to ethnicity, gender, sex, or race. Tolerance of others' beliefs and actions should

be shown as long as those actions or beliefs do not harm others. A way that parents can help their children learn self-respect is to give praise, avoid negative comments, and treat them with respect. Parents are also urged to "teach your child to respect the valued traditions of your heritage" (13). Talking about one's heritage and how to treat community members and elders is also encouraged. By respecting others, it is also important to have "self-respect." Without possessing this trait, it could be hard to act in a respectful way towards others. In a society where there are many different ethnic groups represented, children can learn to respect others by recognizing the similarities among cultures.

Self-respect allows one to take pride in appropriate behavior and successes earned through hard work. A person who has self-respect is unlikely to act in a selfish manner, lose self-discipline, or act dishonestly or cowardly. Honest criticism is encouraged to help a child grow while negative feedback is discouraged. The uniqueness of the individual and the development of one's talents lead to self-respect as they enable one to feel good about oneself. This trait is vital to a child's perception of self and how others are seen. This is a difficult trait to teach or model as each child's perception of self is so distinctly different. "Courage," which relies partly on self-respect, is also a characteristic that helps builds it.

Doing the right thing in spite of fear defines courage, according to the Helping Your Child ... booklet (14). Whether facing hard decisions under peer pressure or facing physical dangers, courage enables one to learn how to deal with and eventually overcome fears. Helping a child be courageous entails coaching, praising and teaching how to say the word "no." Peer pressure is difficult to deal with at any age. Especially for a child,

standing up to peers can be a frightening situation. A three-step process for a child to practice self-protection is: "1. Apply the trouble rule: Will this action break a law or rule?; 2. Make a good decision …; 3. Act fast to avoid trouble."(15).

"Responsibility" is something that generally increases with one's age. For children, this trait can be hard to understand. It means that one must be dependable, keep one's promises, and honor commitments (16). Taking charge of one's life in a positive manner is what responsibility is all about. And being a responsible person benefits the family unit as well as the community, making them stronger. Responsibility means having enough respect for one's self and others to be courageous and make the right choices for the greater good (16).

The final traits that help define good character as specified in Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen are "citizenship and patriotism." "Being a good citizen means caring about the good of society and participating actively to make things better … Research reveals that participating in community service programs and learning about the importance and value of serving others can be a powerful influence on positive character development … Patriotism is an important part of good citizenship. Patriotism is love of and loyalty to our country" (16-17). Respect for the flag, honoring democratic ideals, and obeying the country's laws are all a part of being a good, patriotic citizen. According to the aforementioned definitions, one would have to use his judgment to determine what the greater good of society is. Would protesting not be considered patriotic if an individual thought she was working towards the greater good of society? Teaching patriotism at this time in history is especially controversial due to the war in Iraq. Consider a teacher who stands against the war and the President's policies and

campaigns for troops to be removed from Iraq and the surrounding countries. Although this teacher should not make this stance known in the classroom, it is an interesting topic when considering whether an anti-war sentiment makes one a patriot or a traitor.

From the information contained in this document, many other questions come to mind. Are teachers bound to each of these traits? And do not teachers always model character through their classroom management, teaching style, and personal actions? This explicit requirement seems somehow different, though. In looking at the example of a teacher who is anti-war, how would she define a patriot? Surely she would think herself one because she feels strongly about matters her country is involved in. But, what if parents of the children in her class are not comfortable with the teaching of or, especially, her definition of these traits, or the government's definition? Are the children learning these traits given any room for their own interpretation? And finally, how is the teaching of these traits monitored, and perhaps more importantly, how are students who are taught these traits going to be assessed? To what measure can we hold a child to his or her knowledge of a specific trait, or are his or her behavior and actions measurable? Many other questions can be posed in regard to each of the character traits specified and defined in the United States' character education program. One thing remains clear, though, and that is that character education is a reality and the aforementioned traits are being taught to elementary school students across the nation. In Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen, it is stated that "children learn about strong character when parents and other adults in their daily lives … use literature to reinforce the values of strong character" (17). Whether or not it is appropriate for morals or character traits to be taught in the public sector, the reality is that they are being taught, and our nation's current

administration is offering assistance with programs associated with character education and suggestions as how to use literature to teach said traits:

> Literature can be a very powerful teaching tool. In fact, people in stories, poems, and plays can influence children almost as much as the real people who read with them. Therefore, reading to and with children, encouraging older children to read on their own and talking with children about the books they read are important ways to help children learn about and develop the values of strong character and good citizenship. (20)

As demonstrated earlier in this document, throughout history literature has been used as a didactic instrument. With the recent political involvement in the education of our nation's youth, character education has the potential to influence the educational community. NCLB and its character education mandate has the potential to change the way children's literature is viewed, presented, and published. This governmental publication lists guidelines or suggestions for how to choose books. Books that fall into the broad category of fiction and non fiction as well as poems, fables, plays and folk tales, are all listed. Modern stories are cited as well as classic books and texts representing other countries and cultures. There is a note of caution that reads

> Although the moral theme of a story, nonfiction book, play or poem may be very clear to us, it is not always so to children. Always talk with your child about what she is reading to see how well she understands its theme or message. Be patient and listen carefully to your child's ideas. If her ideas are too far off the mark, talk with her about how she arrived at them – perhaps she misunderstood a word or is missing some important piece of

> information. Reread parts of the story with her and talk about the message. (21)

To whom does the authority to determine the author's meaning or to question a child's interpretation of a tale belong? History, including Bush's mandate, would suggest the adult. Children may very well understand a story differently than an adult would, as children base their assumptions upon less experience and fewer suppositions. It is in the hands of the adult, then, to allow children the freedom to see what they see within a text and then construe the meaning of the story for themselves. This argument contradicts the mandate and history, or does it? Many of us believe that children construct their own meaning and are able to make their own judgments in regard to what is being presented to them. Perhaps in order to present children with books that are "age appropriate" and therefore harmless, the booklet provides, in order to help parents and educators select books to teach character education, a listing of books that help to support character education. Books are divided by ages 1-6 and 9 and up. Within the listing by age, books are designated with a corresponding trait. Books listed range from Dr. Seuss' Horton Hatches the Egg to several of the Grimm's fairy tales. Aside from the inclusion of multicultural works, some of the books listed are found in both Spanish and English. The inclusion of multicultural works and bilingual books, offered in Spanish and English as well as other languages, is especially helpful to educators, or other persons, who look for ways to make minority students feel welcome, teach children about different cultures, and help English as a second language (ESL) students learn the English language. These are benefits and additional opportunities offered through teaching of character education with Multicultural texts.

From the United States Department of Education's definitions of character traits and suggested readings for a character education program, the potential influence on publishers and authors of children's literature is evident. With such a strong push for character education -- not only in private homes, but in the public sector -- books fitting the needs of the educator who attempts to include another subject into the existing curriculum are welcome. Not only does children's literature have the potential to be influenced by the politics that support character education, the genre is also affected by an ever changing society and a trend toward multiculturalism. The influence of multiculturalism is also illustrated in a listing of resource books provided in the Helping Your Child ...booklet. The following section briefly examines several works that are identified as exemplifying one or more of each of the character traits listed and are written by persons, or are about characters of, ethnic descent.

Works discussed below are recommended by the government to exemplify certain traits outlined in the character education mandate within NCLB. I have chosen to discuss these books because they are multicultural, but primarily because I feel better selections could have been recommended. While each work has its own merit, in some cases I had trouble pairing the traits the government attached to each individual work. For this reason, I feel an explanation of each work and its paired trait is warranted.

Abuela

Arthur Dorros' Abuela (illustrated by Elisa Kleven) is suggested in the Helping Your Child booklet for beginning readers and is the story of a young girl (Rosalba) of Spanish descent and her adventure with her grandmother, or her Abuela. The traits

associated with this tale, according to the booklet, are responsibility and good judgment. In this tale, Rosalba and her Abuela go to the park where Rosalba imagines herself along with her grandmother being picked up by birds and then taking flight themselves. Spanish words are incorporated into the text nicely and the words and sentences are defined at the end of the story.

The tie to responsibility and good judgment is not overwhelming in the text nor are these traits explicitly mentioned. That good judgment is a clear implication of this book is its merit. Perhaps one would infer the presence of these concepts through the illustrations of the grandmother protectively sitting with her arm around her granddaughter on the bus or in the pair holding hands as they fly a child might infer responsibility. Perhaps responsibility could also be inferred through the mention of persons in Rosalba's family that the pair sees working as they take a flight over the city. For instance, "Maybe we'd see a cousin of Abuela's hooking boxes of fruit to a crane. We saw her cousin Daniel once, unloading and loading the ships" (Dorros 16). Abuela and Rosalba also land at the young girl's aunt and uncle's grocery store. The girl also says, "we could find the building where my father works" (Dorros 28). The mention of work could relay the importance of or the mere responsibility these family members carry through their work. Along with responsibility, good judgment might be inferred as there is neither mention of "judgment" in the tale nor any secondary reference to this trait. Possibly the only instance where one may infer the act of making a good judgment is where Rosalba is speaking of her grandmother and says, "She'd take me to the airport where the plane that first brought her here landed. 'Cuidado,' Abuela would tell me. We'd have to be careful as we went for a short ride" (Dorros 18). This note of caution is

the only instance where the grandmother cautions her granddaughter. And, is it not advantageous to include works of children's literature that do not preach a particular merit but rather allow for self-construction of meaning? This allowing for open interpretation is a sign of good literature.

Without a direct mention of responsibility or good judgment, one may find that it would be hard for young readers to infer these themes of good character without being instructed as to the presence of these concepts. Again, the inclusion of a work of children's literature that allows for the listener or reader to interpret themes of character is advantageous. At face value, Abuela is a beautifully illustrated story of a young girl's adventure with her grandmother and features some areas of New York City. The inclusion of Spanish phrases and words blends nicely into the narrative text and lend an authentic flair to the text. Perhaps a more notable theme, rather than the tie to responsibility and good judgment, is that of family and the intergenerational relationship between Rosalba and her Abuela. However, although they correspond to themes of good character, the common thread of family – which is found throughout countless tales – is not a specific area of the character traits listed by the United States government's booklet Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen, yet certainly it is an available lesson especially in regard to multicultural literature.

In contrast, another tale with similar characters, Abuela's Weave by Omar S. Castañeda, suggested for intermediate readers, illustrates more clearly, although it does not mention directly, the paired themes of courage and self-discipline. The fact that the works of children's literature suggested by the Helping Your Child booklet do not contain works that explicitly state the attached character trait should not be viewed as a

flaw. Whether a child will attach a trait to a particular story or not is virtually impossible to predict. Associating a character trait with a text is not as important as exposing children to quality multicultural children's literature. Even though Abuela's Weave more clearly illustrates themes of character, children are exposed to much more than a character lesson. They are exposed to a culture that is perhaps different from their own.

In Abuela's Weave, Esperanza and her grandmother are weaving tapestries to be sold at a market. The grandmother has a notable birthmark on her face and hides herself from the prospective buyers for fear they will be scared by her mark. Self-discipline can be construed from the following excerpt:

> "Well," the old woman said gruffly, "get busy because there are too few days left. You still have a lot of work to do and there will be many other people selling the same things you have." "Don't worry, Abuela, I'll be busy until we leave!" And she was. Esperanza and her grandmother worked from early Morning, even before the sun rose, to well past sunset, when the moon rose and the compound fire gave everything the rich smell of pine. (6-7)

Although not directly mentioned, the theme of self-discipline can more easily be identified in this tale than in Abuela. Through this story, Esperanza must find her way to the market place and set up shop without the help of her grandmother. Although her Abuela is trailing behind, young Esperanza must pretend, at her grandmother's wish, the two are strangers. When she arrives at the market,

> [t]he stalls were already filled ... Old men and women nearby
> shooed her away or ignored her when she asked for help. At last,

> all she could do was set her basket between the narrow slats of two stalls. (19-20)

From this depiction of a frustrated Esperanza, the young girl displays her wares even though "[s]he felt terribly alone" (20). The shoppers take notice of the wares and buy all that she has brought and a delighted Abuela takes off her cloak and beams at her granddaughter for all to see. Arguably, it takes courage to find one's way in unfamiliar territory and hold one's own. This suggested text appears to be a more reflective choice of its paired character traits than Abuela.

Mufaros's Beautiful Daughters

Based on a South African tale, the late John Steptoe's Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters is a thoughtful version of a cautionary tale on the downfalls of being prideful. In the suggested reading list from the Helping Your Child booklet, Steptoe's tale is categorized as a tale teaching compassion and respect. As in the previously mentioned tales, themes of character are not clearly stated, but can be inferred from the text. Even though themes of character are not explicitly stated, this folk tale, more specifically classified as a Cinderella tale, is a great example of multicultural folk literature and adds value beyond teaching character education by exposing children to a multicultural Cinderella tale.

Mufaro lives in a village in Africa and is the proud father of two beautiful daughters, Nyasha and Manyara. In the Shona language spoken in Zimbabwe, Mufaro means "happy man," Manyara means "ashamed," and Nyasha means "mercy." Mufaro must send his daughters before the king to be considered as a wife for his son, the prince

(this act of a father sending his daughter(s) to be considered by a prince is a common fairy tale motif). On their way to see the prince, both are met with three tests along the way (another common fairy tale motif).

> On the seat of the great chief's stool lay the little garden snake. Nyasha laughed with relief and joy. "My little friend!" she exclaimed. "It's such a pleasure to see you, but why are you here?" "I am the king," Nyoka replied. And there, before Nyasha's eyes, the garden snake changed shape. "I am the king. I am also the hungry boy with whom you shared a yam in the forest and the old woman to whom you made a gift of sunflower seeds. But you know me best as Nyoka. Because I have been all of these, I know you to be the Most Worthy and Most Beautiful Daughter in the Land. It would make me very happy if you would be my wife." (22)

In the end Nyasha is rewarded for her kindness and Manyara is punished for her pride and her mistreatment of others. Perhaps this tale implies a patriarchal society and portrays women as desiring to be saved or as submissive to a man. Yet this tale also fits with "pride" and can teach against having this negative trait. However, this is a tale of, one supposes, equally beautiful daughters who at the end of the tale are judged by their character through their treatment of others. Perhaps the greatest benefit of including this work to teach character education is that it introduces children to a multicultural tale, which tells, in a different way, the universal and well-known story of Cinderella.

Although compassion and respect are not directly stated in this contemporary retelling of an old African tale, they are evident in the actions of Nyasha. She has respect for her sister and does not act out when spoken poorly to. When Manyara says,

"'Someday, Nyasha, I will be a queen, and you will be a servant in my household,' Nyasha replied, "If that should come to pass ... I will be pleased to serve you'" (Steptoe 2). Perhaps out of respect or because she was compassionate, Nyasha refrained from returning insults. Respect is shown through Nyasha's caring of her garden and how she treats living things she comes into contact with. And, is it not compassionate to offer someone food who appears to be hungry but does not ask for food? Steptoe's retelling of this trickster/Cinderella tale represents a valued piece of multicultural literature. The value in this tale extends beyond its choice for the character traits it reinforces by giving the reader an opportunity to be exposed to a folk tale from a culture rich in folk lore.

Knots on a Counting Rope

Knots on a Counting Rope, a tale written by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault, is the story of a grandfather teaching his blind grandson about his life's story. The characters are Native North Americans but there is no real indication of a more specific association with a Nation of peoples. Under a crescent moon, a grandfather and grandson sit fireside as the pair recount the story of the young boy's life. There is indication that the grandfather is growing old and then through the story that it is the young boy's responsibility to learn his own story.

> Tell me the story again, Grandfather.
>
> Tell me who I am.
>
> > I have told you many times, Boy.
> >
> > You know the story by heart.
>
> But it sounds better when you tell it, Grandfather.

Then listen carefully.

This may be the last telling. (1)

As listed in the Helping Your Child booklet, Knots on a Counting Rope is included because it emphasizes courage and responsibility. Indeed courage is both mentioned and alluded to, as is responsibility. There is a sense from the beginning of the story that the boy is expected to know his own story. Each time the grandfather tells the tale, he ties a knot on a rope; when the last knot is tied, the boy will be ready to tell his own tale, and one may speculate, the grandfather will die.

Courage is alluded to in the following passage and the phrase "dark mountains" seems to be used as an obstacle to overcome or perhaps fear itself. An example of this is found in the passage listed below.

> And I grew strong, didn't I?
>
> > Yes, Boy-Strength-of-Blue-Horses,
> >
> > and each day
> >
> > you are growing stronger.
> >
> > You are learning to cross
> >
> > the dark mountains. (13)

Courage is spoken of directly as the story of the boy's life and the tale is nearing the end if the following passage. The passage is just after the boy finishes a horseback race at tribal day. Keep in mind the boy is blind.

> Tell me again what you told me then.
>
> I like to hear it over and over.
>
> > I said,

"Boy-Strength-of-Blue-Horses,

you have raced darkness and won!

You now can see with your heart,

feel a part of all that surrounds you.

Your courage lights the way." (24)

Whereas the tales discussed earlier do not mention their assigned trait explicitly, the author's inclusion of the actual trait in this tale leaves less room for speculation as to the appropriateness of assigning courage as a key value. Although responsibility is not directly mentioned, one could easily read this theme into the story. As mentioned previously, the boy is responsible for knowing and being able to tell his own story and it is obviously the responsibility of the grandfather to teach the boy this tale – whether this responsibility is self-imposed or not. Aside from the inclusion or association with character traits in this tale, there is worth in sharing or reading the tale because it embodies the universal theme of the cycle of life, illustrates a positive depiction of an intergenerational relationship and illustrates how even a young child can survive adversity. Facing adversity is also a main theme in the next story to be discussed that is associated with responsibility and self-discipline, themes which are often found throughout multicultural folk tales.

Crow Boy

In a village in Japan on the first day of school, a very small boy is found underneath the schoolhouse and his name is "Chibi" which means "tiny boy." Crow Boy is Taro Yashima's tale of young Chibi and how he overcomes adversity and ridicule and

wins over the admiration of his schoolmates. According to the Helping Your Child booklet, Yashima's work illustrates responsibility and self-discipline. Without mentioning these traits directly, one could easily infer that Chibi exhibits these qualities.

Chibi is afraid of his teacher and his classmates and is quite a loner. Chibi is ridiculed by his classmates and other children in his school; they thought that he was slow and stupid. It is here in the story that Yashima's depiction of Chibi illustrates self-discipline:

> But, slowpoke or not, day after day Chibi came trudging to school. He always carried the same lunch, a rice ball wrapped in a radish leaf. Even when it rained or stormed he still came trudging along, wrapped in a raincoat made from dried zebra grass. And so, day by day, five years went by, and we were in the sixth grade, the last class in school. (13-15)

Chibi's trek to and from school is later discovered to be a far off place. He left for school at dawn and returned home as the sun set. He never missed a day and was the only student in his class with perfect attendance. At a school gathering, Chibi's beloved teacher, Mr. Isobe shares with the school how far Chibi had to walk to reach his school house and that it was at his home far away that he learned to imitate the voices of crows. The students are ashamed of themselves for looking down upon him and "[e]ven grownups wiped their eyes, saying, 'Yes, yes, he is wonderful'" (29).

> After graduating, Chibi, who is now called "Crow Boy" would be seen in the town to sell charcoal made by his family and … [t]hen he would set off for his home on the far side of the mountain, stretching his growing shoulders proudly like a grown-up man. And from around the turn of the

mountain road would come a crow call – the happy one. (34)

Chibi or Crow Boy survived ridicule and many long trips to attend and graduate from school. In the end, with the help of a kind teacher, his abilities are recognized by others and he is then thought of as someone with value. Responsibility could be seen in his duty to attend school and sell and purchase items for his family. Self-discipline can be construed from his long journeys to and from school, despite foul weather, for six straight years. Aside from the character traits associated with this tale, Yashima's work has other value. This tale lends the reader a look into another country and possibly another culture. It also lends itself to sharing the similarities in daily routines and experiences young children face.

Whether or not the character traits associated with each of the aforementioned texts are inferred by the reader or listener is not as important as the opportunity the Helping Your Child booklet and the NCLB provide. Educators are given the opportunity to introduce students to quality multicultural works, in particular folk and fairy tales. Through these tales, students are exposed to different worlds and are allowed to share in adventures along with the characters in the stories. These tales also seem to share common themes of relationships, family, and overcoming adversities. It is fascinating how these multicultural tales are representative of different cultures and yet they seem to be transferable to other cultures with minor changes in name, station, and location.

CHAPTER THREE

FOLK AND FAIRY TALES IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The roots of most works of children's literature are found firmly planted in the folk and fairy tale oral tradition. These oral stories, and printed tales originating from the oral tradition, often contain moral lessons. It is no surprise then that the curricular sponsorship of the multicultural tales discussed in the previous chapter are in answer to the changing demographical landscape of American society along with the current political administration's concern for the education of those of our nation's youth categorized as a minority ethnicity in the "NCLB" act of 2001. Shifting demographics and societal interests in multiculturalism have made their way into many aspects of life, including literature, art and business. There is no question that those in the business of children's literature have taken notice of the changing demographics of America and are answering the call to publish works by minority authors or those of certain heritages and books about various cultures and important minority figures. At present, one can walk into a library or bookstore and find a wealth of texts concerning almost any situation or theme within the sub-genre of multicultural children's literature. A brief glimpse of multicultural texts, and in particular folk and fairy tales, is found in the annotated bibliography provided at the end of this paper. One may speculate that the depth and breadth of works within this category are partly due to the current administration's call for educational reform as discussed earlier. But the prevalence of such works is also in answer to the changing demographics in America and the resulting need to meet the

various educational requirements of all students, and more specifically, those designated as minority groups.

As American culture continues to diversify with changing demographics, cultural diversity will most likely resonate in children's literature, in particular folk and fairy tales. This ever-changing American cultural landscape supports the use of multicultural literature to meet the criteria of the character education mandate. I propose that educators could rely solely on works of multicultural literature, particularly folk and fairy tales to satisfy the requirements of character education curricula. Primarily, I came to this conclusion because of the presence of moral lessons founds in multicultural folk stories and fairy tales. However, after examining the results of the 2000 United States Census as discussed in Kenneth Prewitt's article, "Demography, Diversity and Democracy: the 2000 Census," I realized the increasing number of persons categorized as being of minority ethnicities is sure to be reflected in the classrooms of America. Many educators and other persons concerned with the education of our nation's youth, myself included, feel that it is important to teach with books that reflect the various cultures of those sitting in the classroom. For this reason, I have included information from Prewitt's article about the Census of 2000 in attempts to show how the United States is home to persons of an incredibly wide range of cultural heritage and ethnic backgrounds. I believe that by looking at how the population of America has changed and diversified it will be apparent that multicultural children's literature is needed in the classroom. I firmly believe children of various ethnicities should be taught through reading and listening to tales they are familiar with and that by doing so will enrich the literary experience of all children, no matter their cultural heritage or ethnic background. And in realizing the opportunity

created by the character education mandate, multicultural literature should be used to meet the requirements of this mandate as specified in NCLB.

Changing demographics

The national count from the census taken in 2000 was 281.4 million persons, which is an increase of 32.7 million from the 1990 census. Some changes in number between racial and ethnic groups were determined to be a result of the decreasing number of native born Americans reproducing and the increasing number of foreign-born births. In response to this occurrence, the United States government adjusted the immigration policy. Over the past thirty years the U.S. foreign born population increased at a phenomenal rate. Approximately 33 million people were added to the United States population in just the past 10 years (from article date) (Prewitt 194). The number of foreign-born persons represents, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 12 percent of the total population in the United States. In New York City, over half of the population is of foreign stock – immigrants and children of immigrants - at 54 percent. The Los Angeles metropolitan area's population for foreign born persons is at 62 percent, while Miami's number is 72 percent.

Portes suggests in his article "Immigration's Aftermath," that the influx of immigrants is brought about by the United States' need for inexpensive labor. He also claims that "immigrants provide an abundant, diligent, docile, vulnerable, and low-cost labor pool where native workers willing to toil at the same harsh jobs for minimum pay have all but disappeared" (9). The need for inexpensive labor is nothing new to the American economy nor is it for other countries around the world. From indentured

servitude to slavery to migrant labor, America has seen shifts in how human resources are found and used; Americans, too, have faced societal ills as a result of these shifts. As the nation grew and social dynamics changed, primarily with the Civil Rights movement, society struggled to redefine itself.

Parallel to a changing society's need to define itself, the need to classify more precisely the inhabitants of our nation became necessary. Identifiers of any visible trait are used to group people, and for that matter everything can be categorized and most likely is. The census of 1790 divided people into three categories or racial groups: free whites, slaves, and all other free persons – referring to Native Americans. Then, in 1820, another classification was needed – free colored persons. From this time through the Civil War, classifying people by race resulted in a concern for the shade of a person's skin; this is where the terms "mulatto," "quadroon," and "octoroon" surfaced. People of Asian descent were also coming to America around this time and it was not until 1890 that Chinese and Japanese persons were counted separately. The classification of "Mexican" appeared in 1930 and was deleted because, according to the Mexican government, Mexican is not a racial identifier, so persons of Mexican descent were counted as white. In 1920, Hindus were counted as a race, while Hindu is actually a religion. In 1960, Hawaiian and Part Hawaiian along with Aleut and Eskimo appear as racial categories. Hispanic origin finds itself on the census form of 1970 as an ethnic category, rather than race. From these ethnic and racial classifications, people of certain descents were not allowed to become United States citizens. "From 1790 until the Civil Rights movement, policy designed to protect the numerical and political supremacy of Americans of European ancestry used a classification system that assigned everyone to a

discrete racial group … This racial (and racist) story took an important turn in the 1960" (Prewitt 195). From the Civil Rights movement's intent to end the practice of racial groupings in governmental policy, discrimination, unfortunately is still a sad reality. Resulting from the Civil Rights movement, politics were concerned with "statistical proportionality" (Prewitt 195).

From this brief look at the demographic classification system of the United States census and significant historical events, one finds from the 2000 Census American society continuing to classify itself by race and ethnicity with the added option of assigning oneself to more than one group. A system that allows one the ability to assign oneself to more than one discreet category recognizes individuals as more complex, rather than assigning oneself to just one lineage or heritage. This recognition of or sensitivity to the ethnicity of persons living in this nation reinforces the presence of multiculturalism or a multicultural society and one's need to express one's identity as an individual and as a part of cultural or ethnic group as well as an American. With such diversity in American culture, it is a logical step to introduce children to multicultural folk tales that exemplify moral lessons and help create good global citizens to live in our increasingly multicultural society. But why is "multiculturalism" important as it relates to using folk and fairy tales to teach character education? I believe that multiculturalism is important because of the changing demographic landscape of America and because it has the potential to affect children's literature. More importantly, with America being a multicultural society, the use of multicultural children's literature, primarily the folk or fairy tale has the added benefit of teaching children about different cultures, which then leads to tolerance and being a good global citizen.

Multiculturalism

Although there are varied approaches to multicultural education and views of multiculturalism, for the purpose of this paper the following broad definition of multiculturalism will be used. Multiculturalism is essentially the acceptance, education, and recognition of individual persons and their respective culture/heritage/ethnicity/religion. Critics argue multiculturalism takes away from simply celebrating what it is to be an American by segmenting aspects of individual cultures and simultaneously diminishing the significance and unifying potential of Americanism or traditional American history and values. Multiculturalism also attempts to manage tensions and contradictions that have existed - and unfortunately continue to exist in modern times – and have invaded social institutions (McCarthy et al. 20). However, in its most honest sense, the purpose of multicultural education is to teach children tolerance, acceptance, and respect of other cultures and self-discovery through the learning of one's own history and culture. Interestingly, themes of character endorsed by the current political administration as outlined in Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen, which are commonly referred to among educators as components of a moral or character education program, are found throughout texts of many diverse cultures.

Perhaps what critics of multiculturalism are most concerned about is how multiculturalism has become embedded in the public education system from the elementary to collegiate level. It seems rather evident that multicultural education is a natural progression in the education of our country's youth. "Historically, most multicultural curricula in teacher education programs have focused on educating white

teachers about the cultural histories and knowledge of students of color as an indirect way of battling white racism" (McCarthy et al. 109). We can only hope the inclusion of multiculturalism in the classroom will lead to an environment that fosters respect and understanding of oneself as well as others. The trend toward a multicultural society is especially vital as our nation continually redefines itself by its inhabitants. An article from the May 2000 issue of the National Education Association's magazine offers glimpses of the present and future for multicultural education. "In a nation where, by the year 2020, some 40 percent of children sitting behind school desks will be students of color, serving tacos on Tuesdays just isn't enough anymore – if it ever was – to adequately recognize the diversity of our school communities"(Green, "Beyond" 8). What must happen, then, for the diversity in our school communities to be recognized? In attempts to recognize this diversity and then celebrate the uniqueness and sameness of cultural groups, we must break down the history dictated to us by those who were at liberty to do so and then attempt to reconstruct our world's history from a more objective point of view. This is a monumental task, but one that is ongoing in many fields of study.

As for our nation and our nation's youth, from a multicultural standpoint, they should be taught to recognize similarities while respecting differences among themselves and others. Recognizing the individual merits of each other as opposed to characteristics of a person's ethnicity or race is an idealistic possibility and cannot be guaranteed. Perhaps the goal of multiculturalism and multicultural education is for such a society to be created from our existing one. Where does one begin to create such a place? The current political administration is committed to adding character education into school's existing curricula. The administration is dedicated to the instruction of morals in public

schools in hopes of molding students into good citizens who are of solid moral character while providing programs that aim to assure that all schoolchildren, with a focus on those in minority groups, receive a good solid education which will lead to a successful life and good citizenship.

In realizing the full impact of multiculturalism and multicultural education, the "melting-pot" known as America has always been European centered (Jennings 9). This Eurocentric viewpoint or "whiteness" of America "impaired black assimilation by [their] unique experience" (Jennings 10). In line with this construct is the image portrayed by the media, as it "contributes to the construction of beliefs and attitudes about diversity" (Cortés 25). And from what our nation is exposed to through the media, parents further influence children by determining what they "consume, how they process, interpret, and internalize" (Cortés 25). There is no question that television and other forms of media cultivate perception. The most effective way to combat generalizations, stereotypes and misconceptions is by presenting objective and true representation of cultures, which can be extremely difficult if one is not familiar with the culture and heritage of a particular group of persons. Whether the intent is one of harm or the result is purely out of innocence, incorrect statements are often made.

Another challenge to overcome includes factors that contribute to conflicts among students as well as persons of different backgrounds. Such factors include: "changes due to the civil rights movement, diversity of immigrants to the United States, and an increased awareness of ethnic identity" (Romo 1). Such patterns of relationships between groups are essentially based on how groups have been treated historically by other groups and how individual groups were either included or excluded in American society (Romo

1). Groups will vie for superiority and "compete for attention and relative power and status of said group" (Romo 1). Although these conflicts are for the most part negative, conflicts can also create leadership roles for individuals who are then led to crusade for their group or for other groups that have not found a spokesperson for their own voice.

Some feel that yet another challenge of multicultural education is the lack of minority teachers. The belief behind this shortage is that "teachers are often more successful when their students have ethnic or racial backgrounds similar to their own" (Bunce 13). While there is a discrepancy in the ratio of minority students to Caucasian teachers, the solution is perhaps a "widespread commitment to bring a variety of minority teachers into the classroom" (Bunce 13). Carlos Santana, an award-winning musician, for instance, is campaigning for persons of Hispanic and African American descent, and other talented minorities to teach. This call to action is a joint effort with the California Teachers' Association and the National Education Association (Green, "Interview" 21). Mr. Santana, as well as others, feels that "teachers of color can be valuable role models and support systems for those kids because they've been there; they know what it feels like to be in their shoes." Santana continues by stating, "It's important that when that kid looks up from his or her desk, no matter what color, that kid sees someone who looks like them, someone who understands where they're coming from"(Green, "Interview" 21).

Multiculturalism, when properly integrated, challenges personal values, and promotes compassion, understanding, and tolerance. It also enriches us as we learn about the art and music of other groups of people. We are all connected in one way or another. By understanding similarities and differences we discover we are drawing ourselves closer together. Debate and discussion ensure that we realize how our personal values

affect our beliefs and vice versa. While there are obvious benefits to incorporating multicultural education into the nation's current curriculum, concerns are voiced from those that are not so eager for this trend in education to continue.

For example, if other cultures (e.g. non-western beliefs) are taught, will western beliefs be erased or be forced to take a back seat in our children's' education, in particular the traits associated with NCLB's character definitions? Those in opposition, such as Illinois College sociology professor J. Schmidt, think, "multicultural education undermines Judeo-Christian ethics" (Jennings 10). Schmidt cites Canada's failure to incorporate multiculturalism as an example of the United State's current state. He feels that the teaching of other cultures, e.g. non-western, will undermine American society. Some who share this opinion feel the inclusion of non-western beliefs may undermine traditional American Judeo-Christian beliefs. Although he makes this claim, he offers little evidence. Along with Professor Schmidt, legislators in California created Proposition 187, which repeals minority preferences for teachers hired in the state. Another opposing factor is that the incorporation of multicultural education takes away time from teaching children basic skills. Some educators feel that while multicultural education and other programs, such as character education, are important, with testing requirements, a plethora of standards to teach, and administrative tasks, it is impossible to fit everything required into the existing curriculum. With the pressure for teachers to make sure their students test high on standardized tests and get through a board mandated course of study, teachers are really pressed for time.

Educators, as well as other members of society, are faced with quite a heavy task taking into consideration their own beliefs and culture and the many varied individuals

they come into contact with – and they rarely have the schoolchildren more than one year. After the task of setting the stage for equality among the students, teachers must incorporate their understanding of each child's background in terms of beliefs and culturally learned behaviors. To learn more about students a teacher could utilize a personal interest inventory designed to determine likes, dislikes, and subtle cultural beliefs; this should be voluntary and in no way discriminate or single out a particular race, ethnicity, or religion. The information gained in this survey could aid teachers in bringing the class together in terms of similarities and help them as well as their students to respect the differences found. It is important to keep in mind that culture influences the criteria children use to evaluate themselves as well as their feelings of control (by gender and culture) and assertiveness (Trawick-Smith 315). Also, "ethnic groups that have suffered prejudice, community violence, and even slavery over many generations will adopt unique beliefs about children" (Trawick-Smith 458). Such beliefs cause parents of these groups to "toughen" their children while other parents of different groups rear their children to cooperate and count on members of their community (Trawick-Smith 456). With all of these factors in mind, the incorporation of learning about other cultures has already begun. The process of incorporation is not over, though. There are more barriers or challenges to meet along the route of understanding multiculturalism.

No matter what side of the fence one is on, multicultural education is inevitable. From the inclusion of special needs students into traditional classrooms to the increase in minority students, our classrooms, which are reflective of greater society, are becoming more diverse. In an effort to meet our children's needs, each and every teacher, whether in occupation or other capacity, needs to realize the importance of multiculturalism.

America is also part of a global society and as the world changes, American society will be reflective of the changes. To keep our nation's youth up to speed with the rest of the world, and for the sake of knowledge itself, we must expose them to other cultures. What better way can an educator accomplish this feat, as well as accommodate the character education mandate of NCLB, than by introducing students to quality multicultural children's literature? Equipped with knowledge of student cultures and interests, teachers can use multicultural texts to answer questions, start a dialogue, dispel myths, inform, and entertain. By doing so, and selecting books that are appropriate and objective, educators can ensure each child can travel across the globe, meet different people, learn words from different languages, and see how similar we all are. Carlos Santana says it best in an interview with Michelle Green when he said, "... there's no better place to learn about harmony than in the classroom. There's so much to learn on each person alone. Teachers can help change the world... What you learn from a teacher can change your life" ("Interview" 21). Teachers are charged with quite a noble task. They are responsible for the education and safety of children and to some degree shaping their sets of values. The views and knowledge students acquire will affect our world. While some may argue against the intent of teaching values presented in multicultural education and character education, the chance to expose children to a variety of authors, styles of writing, different cultures, and ancient folk tales cannot be ignored. Even critics of moral education or the use of children's works as didactic instruments would have difficulty arguing that giving children the opportunity to read and hear tales that have been passed down since antiquity is not an invaluable opportunity.

With an understanding of what educators across the nation are faced with as a

result of society's influence from changing demographics and the trend towards multiculturalism, those involved in the business of children's literature must meet the demand for quality texts. These books must be accurate and appealing and be appropriate for use in teaching not only about other cultures, but also about traits that are part of the government's character education program. The presence of minority authors and tales about cultures from around the globe continues to be exciting additions to the genre of children's literature.

Aside from the wonderful opportunities for emerging authors of various descents to create works about their respective cultures and personal experiences, the exposure to books in school for a child that may not have the opportunities to read or be read to otherwise is very exciting. Through the opportunities to step into other worlds, children (and adults for that matter) can be enriched beyond measure. Is there harm being done if an educator can meet curriculum requirements of incorporating multiculturalism and teaching character education by presenting quality children's literature, in particular fairy or folk tales?

I would argue, then, that there is no harm in introducing children to multicultural texts for the NCLB character education mandate and especially those in the category of the folk or fairy tale. Despite criticism of fairy tales as portraying women and children in submissive roles within a patriarchal society, fairy tales provide many positive qualities for those who become entranced by the contents of their pages. Aside from meeting the requirements of the character education mandate, multicultural children's literature offers numerous other benefits. From introducing children to a variety of cultures around the world along with different styles of writing and rich vocabulary to allowing them the

opportunity to use their imaginations, fairy and folk tales represent the culture and heritage of the diverse population of America. Aside from the cultural aspects, these tales also, according to such notable critics of tales as Bruno Bettelheim, allow children to work through conflicts in their unconscious. Perhaps Bettelheim said it best in his The Uses of Enchantment when he wrote,

> … nothing can be as enriching and satisfying to child and adult alike as the folk fairy tale … these tales were created long before it [mass society] came into being. But more can be learned from them about the inner problems of human beings, and of the right solutions to their predicaments in any society, than from any other type of story within a child's comprehension. Since the child at every moment of his life is exposed to the society in which he lives, he will certainly learn to cope with its conditions, provided his inner resources permit him to do so. (5)

Bettelheim's inclusion of "in any society" (5) in reference to how fairy tales aid children in coping with the condition of the society in which they reside suggests that all children face similar situations and development. This is a key component of the idea of multiculturalism in that through gaining knowledge of the differences among cultures, one may discover the gap between groups of peoples narrows dramatically. Folk and fairy tales provide a significant look into the similarities persons of all cultures share. Numerous Cinderella tales are told and retold all over the world. Even in an isolated tale from a specific culture, one can sympathize with the character because the traits and emotions depicted are universal, they are human, whether the main character is a person or other being.

Folk Tales Across Cultures

As emphasized by the history of children's literature, moral lessons are common themes in folk and fairy tales. The wealth of folk tales from around the world provides educators across America with a wonderful resource. Multicultural tales can be used to successfully meet the requirements of character education curricula. An added advantage is offering children insight into worlds like and unlike their own, which aids in preparing children to act as global citizens. In addition to sharing the common theme of moral lessons, folk tales across cultures can be found to be almost identical in story and characters. Introducing children to similar tales from various cultures helps them identify with the characters while learning about a culture different from their own. This is an additional benefit of using multicultural tales to teach character education; children are also learning about commonalities among cultures, leading them in the direction of being good global citizens. "A body of tales has been found to be not merely ancient but to be tradition in a variety of countries and cultures; and that versions of a story told in widely separated parts of the earth will sometimes not merely bear resemblance, but possess actual points of detail in common" (Opie 21).

In the above excerpt taken from The Classic Fairy Tales, Peter and Iona Opie call attention to the fact that different cultures include in their lore essentially the same tale. For instance, the Cinderella tale exists in various versions. Cinderella is a tale few American females or males, young or old, are not familiar with. Thanks to Walt Disney's cartoon depiction of Cinderella, an image of Cinderella is imbedded in the collective mind of American society. She has blonde hair, is young, has a beautifully trim figure, and possesses a kind and gentle character. It may be hard for one to replace this image of

that girl with one from a different culture. One may only be able to visualize a humming maiden talking to mice while a gown is quickly made for her to wear to a royal ball. The Cinderella figure Disney continues to introduce or even propagate is the reincarnation of many ancient literary figures existing in many different cultures.

"The earliest Cinderella type tale that has been found in Europe was published in Italy. This is the story of 'La Gatta Cenerentola' (The Hearth Cat), which Basile included in the Pentamerone (Day 1, tale 6), 1634" (Opie 156). In "The Hearth Cat," Zezolla kills her stepmother, and her father marries her governess. Zelolla finds herself in a lower station than that of her new stepmother and stepsisters. She is sent to work in the kitchen. Her father, who has been absent for a time, brings his biological daughter a tree seedling. The tree grows to full height in just a number of days and grants Zelolla the ability to come and go unrecognized. Our Cinderella figure attends a feast and other celebrations where she catches the eye of a king. When leaving a ball, she loses a slipper. The king orders all women to attend another ball and Zelolla is found to be the owner; she is crowned immediately by the king and we presume that she lives happily ever after. As Iona and Peter Opie point out in their The Classic Fairy Tales, the origin of the story of Cinderella in not known. However, "Arthur Waley has pointed out that the earliest datable version of the Cinderella story anywhere in the world occurs in a Chinese book written about 850" (156).

Ai-Ling Louie's Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China is said to precede Perrault's version by 1000 years. In this tale, Yeh-Shen, our beautiful and kind Cinderella character, faces an evil stepmother and stepsisters, as in the European version, as well as adversity before she weds a prince who saves her from an unhappy home situation and

introduces her to happily ever after. While cultural differences exist between this Chinese version and Perrault's, Yeh-Shen is surely recognizable as a Cinderella tale, without the inclusion of "A Cinderella Story" in the title– 860 A.D. (Opie 156).

In a retelling of Charles Perrault's Cinderella or The Little Glass Slipper, Marcia Brown's 1954 version depicts Cinderella as a young, blond-haired, blue-eyed young woman who is quite clearly more attractive than her two stepsisters. Although Cinderella's beauty is touted, it is made clear in the final passage that she "… was as good as she was beautiful" (29). Like many fairy tales, outward beauty is reflective of inward beauty and helps the reader identify the character as either good or evil. The theme of beauty is continued throughout versions from different cultures. Aside from Disney's version, which is based on that of Perrault's, there are Cinderella stories from across the globe. Although it may be difficult to those whose young lives have been inundated with Disney films, perhaps particularly to some Caucasian American children and adults, for Cinderella to look different than her animated self -- a beautiful, young, blond-haired princess -- reading similar tales from different cultures is certainly a worthwhile experience. Realizing that separate cultures hold similar tales in their oral and literary traditions is important in discovering the similarities among various societies. To just name a few, there are Chinese, Egyptian, Iraqi, and an Ojibwa (Native North American) versions and adaptations of Cinderella. Perhaps adaptation is not quite precise as some of these tales may have preceded Perrault's version. For instance, Ai-Ling Louie retells a Chinese Cinderella tale that so happens to have preceded Perrault's version by 1,000 years.

In Ai-Ling's Yeh-Shen, the story of a young girl who is mistreated by her

stepmother and sisters, the Cinderella character overcomes adversity with the help of magic, and marries a prince. This version, based on ancient Chinese manuscripts, is remarkably similar to that of Perrault. Perhaps Perrault was influenced by this tale when he wrote his version. As with traditional tales of long ago, it is difficult to know all of the circumstances in which they were written. The existence of Cinderella tales in different countries illustrates the presence of common themes among cultures; the following summaries of Cinderella tales support this occurrence.

Along with Yeh-Shen, there is another ancient tale originating from Iraq titled The Golden Sandal: A Middle Eastern Cinderella Story. The inclusion of Cinderella in the title is hardly needed to see the same story framework as the commonly known European version. However, the inclusion of Perrault's princess's name allows for easy identification for those not familiar with the Iraqi tale. Rebecca Hickox translates this tale of Maha who wishes for a mother and gets far more than she bargains for. Herein lies a difference from the European version in that Maha wishes her father would remarry. When she convinces her father to marry their neighbor, Maha has no idea of what she has done. Her stepmother and stepsisters mistreat her, placing the reader's sympathy with the Cinderella figure. Like other tales, Maha is granted aid by her fairy godmother, or in this instance, a red fish whose life she has spared. The fish helps Maha attend a ceremony where she loses a golden sandal in her haste to leave before her stepmother. While the fish helps Maha attend a ceremony, the fairy godmother figure also cautions her to leave before her stepmother does. This condition is similar to Perrault's version where Cinderella's fairy godmother warns her to leave the ball before midnight.

During the ceremony, a young man becomes enchanted by the mysterious and beautiful Maha. Maha, as Cinderella does, leaves behind a shoe – or in this tale a golden slipper. And like Cinderella's young prince, this young man is determined to find the owner of the sandal and his mother takes on the task of finding the young girl to whom the slipper belongs. Maha is found to be the rightful owner of the golden sandal and finds her prince, who in this version, is not actually a prince in title, but is worthy of Maha's eternal affection.

A different version, originating from Egypt is Shirley Climo's The Egyptian Cinderella. Set in circa 600 B.C., Climo tells the tale of a young Greek slave named Rhodopis who marries a Pharaoh named Amasis. Climo's version is a blend of fact as Rhodopis was actually a slave from Greece held in Egypt and she did indeed become the Queen of Amasis. A trio of servants, instead of stepsisters, treats Rhodopis poorly in this version. Our Egyptian Cinderella finds kindness in her master who gives her a lovely pair of slippers, which are taken from her by a falcon. The falcon delivers Rhodopis' beautiful slippers to the Pharaoh who sets out on a mission to find their owner. As with other versions, Rhodopis is found to be the owner of the beautiful shoe and is whisked away by her prince, or in this case her Pharaoh. Yet another version, although there are countless others, to be discussed is a Native North American version from the Ojibwa people.

Robert San Souci, who has penned many multicultural children's tales, writes of a Native American Cinderella figure in his book Sootface: An Ojibwa Cinderella Story. Sootface is a young woman who is mocked constantly by her sisters. Our Cinderella is made fun of because she often has soot on her face from the cooking fire and often gets

burned and her hair singed. Like Perrault's version, Sootface is the sister who does all of the work while her older siblings are lazy and not of good temperament. Sootface is shown to be kind and patient while her older sisters are put in a bad light. Again, there is the common theme of good, kindly Cinderella who is hard-working and the ugly, mean sisters. As with the versions previously discussed, Sootface is rewarded in the end and finds her prince. Sootface's prince happens to be a warrior who can make himself invisible. As legend has it, only a woman with a kind and gentle heart can see the handsome warrior and tell what his bow and arrow are made of. Many young women try to win the hand of the invisible warrior, including Sootface's sisters; they fail where the honest and good Cinderella character prevails. The warrior renames her "Dawn Light" at the end of the tale. Also at the conclusion of the tale, Dawn Light's inner beauty is revealed through a changed outward appearance; she finally appears as beautiful on the outside as are her inner qualities.

To further emphasize the presence of similar tales across other cultures, there are various tales of "Little Red Riding Hood." Tales of Little Red vary in their story lines, but all warn of what happens to children who do not heed the instructions of their mothers. Instead of just exemplifying good character traits, "Little Red" acts as a cautionary tale and speaks of the pitfalls of not following instructions. Out of European society, there are most notably "Little Red Cap" written by Jackob and Whilhelm Grimm and Charles Perrault's "Little Red-Cap." From China comes a version called "The Chinese Red Riding Hoods" by Isabella Chang, which features three sisters as a collective Little Red. Again, the existence of a similar tale occurring across diverse

cultures is exemplified. The stories of Little Red are rather different from those such as Cinderella.

> For what is unquestionably one of the classic folk-fairy tales, 'Little Red Riding Hood' is more surprising for what it lacks than for what it contains. There is no royalty, no enchantment, no romance – just a talking wolf with a big appetite. As Jack Zipes points out (speaking of European tales) … '"he direct forebears of Perrault's literary tale were not influenced by sun worship or Christian theology, but by the very material conditions of their existence and pagan superstition. Little children were attacked and killed by animals and grown ups in the woods and fields … There was a strong superstitious belief in werewolves and witches…" Consequently the warning tale became part of a stock oral repertoire of storytellers. (Hallett and Karasek 21)

Unlike Cinderella who lives in a magic kingdom, Little Red represents every child in the fifteenth – sixteenth centuries and was told as a warning about what could befall a child who was taken off guard. The old literary allusion to "a wolf in sheep's clothing" is a similar caution about what or who could lie beneath a gentle exterior. As with European versions, Chang's retelling from China holds true to the caution of what happens when little girls (children) do not heed their mother's caution and are faced with a harmful trickster. Whereas European tales, such as the Grimm's version, end with Little Red- Cap and her grandmother being cut out of the wolf's belly by a hunter, a contemporary retelling almost identical to Chang's tale ends with the young girls outsmarting the wolf and saving themselves rather than being rescued; some may say that

Ed Young's version grants the Little Red characters the ability to save themselves rather than the submissive Little Red who is hopeless on her own.

Ed Young's Lon Po Po's is a contemporary retelling of Chang's version. Lon means "wolf" and Po Po means "Grandmother." In both versions, a wolf disguises himself as a grandmother in hopes of eating the Little Red character. In Little Red Cap, the girl is eaten, but in versions of "Little Red Riding Hood," Little Red is saved either by the cunning of a woodsman or the real grandmother. In Lon Po Po, three sisters outsmart their canine visitor. Lon Po Po comes knocking on the door of three sisters who are told by their mother, before she leaves to visit her own mother (the girl's Po Po), not to open the door until she returns. The girls do not heed their mother's advice and open the door to the disguised wolf. After the children climb into bed with their Lon Po Po, the oldest begins to notice physical abnormalities and asks about these. Lon Po Po explains his claws and tails, but is not convincing. The wolf is tricked into going outside where the three girls hoist him into a basket and eventually let him fall to the ground where his heart gets broken. The cunning of the girls saves them from the wolf. When their mother returns, they tell her of their encounter with the wolf. The moral of the story, in many versions, is one of caution. By reading tales of "Little Red Riding Hood," one would come to learn that people are not always what they appear to be and that Mother's advice should be heeded.

Again, there are many instances of similar tales existing around the world and most illustrate a caution or exhibit morals. However, "[no] fairy-tale text is sacred. Every printed version is just another variation on a theme – the rewriting of a cultural story in a certain time and place for a specific audience" (Tatar, Off With 229). Tatar's

statement places a word of caution with regard to fairy tales. One must be careful of the chosen tale as the reader is at the mercy of the translator or re-teller of the tale. Since there is an abundance of tales from around the world readily available, as illustrated in the example of Cinderella tales and in the accompanying annotated bibliography, it may be hard to discern tales that are not properly reflective of their represented culture. A question results from Tatar's statement – are time-honored tales from all cultures safe in their original form or are they at the mercy of those who choose to retell and translate them? It is a sad notion that the original sacred stories told in times long ago from various cultures will not have their original words. However, the changing and evolution of tales through their retellings are reflective of changing societies and cultures. In order to see how tales are changing, as evident in how they are used and perceived, a glance at the roles they play in our lives from past to present day is necessary.

The Traditional Role of Tales

> With regard to the "origins" of the fairy tale for children, it is difficult to give an exact date, but it is more than likely that, given the shifts in the institution of the fairy tale itself, the fairy tale for children arose in the 1720s and 1730s ... Madame Le Prince de Beaumont's tale was highly unusual because it was one of the first fairy tales, if not the first, written expressly for children, and we must not forget that it was also first published within a book that has a governess tell different kinds of lessons and tales to a group of girls in her charge ... Clearly, there is a shift in the social function of the literary fairy tale as it began to be scripted for

> children: it was to instruct in an amusing way and was now received by children of the upper classes in the home where lessons were taught by private tutors or by governesses. Moreover, some of the fairy tales were evidently used in schools or in schooling the children of upper classes. That boys were to be treated differently than girls is apparent from the structure and contents of Madame de Beaumont's book, or in other words, Beauty and the Beast originated as a sex-specific tale intended to inculcate a sense of good manners in little girls. (Zipes, Myth 32-33)

As Zipes affirms, fairy tales were used as instructional and didactic tools at the inception of the written collection of tales. Throughout history, tales have retained their parable-like quality in that they often contain a lesson of good traits or caution against the absence of morals.

Tales, in their earliest oral forms, were used to caution and inform (as Bush's mandate is asking us to use stories today as well as entertain). Over time, in written form as well as in oral retellings, various religious groups have used certain tales to teach good morals or Christian principles to children and adults alike. Even when certain books were intended for adults, they often found themselves in the hands of children as evident in the Puritan Pilgrim's Progress, which was discussed in Chapter One. So, one may conclude that the traditional role of fairy tales, which is representative and reflective of children's literature, is twofold, to entertain and to inform, which includes caution and exemplification.

These tales appear to be so interwoven in the cultural heritage of all people that they are inherent to anyone's way of life.

> Myth and fairy tales seem to know something that we do not know. They also appear to hold our attention, to keep us in their sway, to enchant our lives. We keep returning to them for answers. We use them in diverse ways as private sacred myths or as public commercial advertisements to sell something.... Over the centuries we have transformed the ancient myths and folk tales and made them into the fabric of our lives. Consciously and unconsciously we weave the narratives of myth and folk tale into our daily existence. (Zipes, Myth 3-4)

Perhaps the role of the fairy tale in our society has not changed on a grand scale. Of course, there are changes as written works and retellings reflect the times in which they are told. Many versions of folk and fairy tales have become readily available to readers in the United States who hail from various cultures around the world. This availability of multicultural texts is evident through the accompanying annotated bibliography. From the wealth of tales available, a common thread is evident: good character traits are exemplified and rewarded as those possessing unwanted traits and exhibiting misdeeds are punished in some manner. And from the history of children's literature with focus on folk and fairy tales, American society, for one, has used tales as instructional tools in hopes of molding children into good adults in order to better society. Generally, fairy and folk tales have remained the same as their earlier versions aside from how they are packaged.

Contemporary Role of Tales

Folk tales have evolved from ancient oral tales of wonder to recorded tales appearing in numerous guises from printed retellings to animated movies such as those created by the Disney corporation. In criticism to Disney's retelling of tales, for example, Zipes writes " ...the commodified literary fairy tales and their filmic versions want to induce us to, if not seduce us into, thinking according to the traditional scripts of submission and domination, scripts that may appear to be our stories but have more to do with our taming and domestication than anything else" (Myth 47). Zipes goes on to write, " ... it would not be an exaggeration that Disney was a radical filmmaker who changed our way of viewing fairy tales, and that his revolutionary technical means capitalized on American innocence and utopianism to reinforce the social and political status quo" (Myth 47). The Walt Disney Corporation has in the past released numerous animated films and in more recent times included multicultural films such as Mulan. Disney's Mulan is the story of a young Chinese girl who takes her aged father's place in battle in efforts to save her family's name. The film "Mulan" is loosely based on a Chinese poem "Ode to Mulan" circa 5 A.D. Disney's inclusion of a Chinese tale could possibly be in response to the changing demographics of American society and its focus on multiculturalism.

In his speaking of the use of a "packaged" tale, or one that has been altered for commercialized and marketing purposes, Zipes affirms the use or role of "modern" versions of tales as being used for civilizing purposes. The trend of using or seeing tales as instruments of character education also extends to the political and consequently

public education system of our nation; the use of tales as a way of the domestication that Zipes spoke of is not held solely by one aspect of our society.

From Chapter Two's discussion of the current political administration's support and implementation of a character education program into the existing curricula of our nation's public schools, the use of tales as didactic instruments is again confirmed. Those in opposition to the use of children's books as tools for moral education may find comfort in a passage from Maria Tatar's Off With Their Heads in which she writes:

> Maurice Sendak once stated that, as a former child, he felt fully entitled and empowered to write children's stories. In a sense, these same credentials allow all of us to retell fairy tales to our children, even if we may never be able to get the cultural script quite right. Yet while there is a child in every adult, not every adult has the power to reach the child and to engage in empathetic identification with its former self. But as Rousseau reminds us, a child's natural gift for subversion, for moving against every author's intentions, can rescue even the most solemn or dim-witted rendition of a tale and turn it into an amusing diversion, especially when it comes at the expense of its adult authors. (20-21)

From the earliest oral tale to the latest retelling of a story from around the globe, tales have always entertained even if they failed to instill a sense of wonder or caution. Tatar's paraphrase of Sendak and Rousseau is rather interesting. Her statement lends hope in that her words are empowering to children. Whether a mother or teacher intends to use a tale for a specific purpose or whether a father cannot remember how the tale of Snow White concludes, children are resilient, crafty and have minds of their own. Even

if tales of old and new alike are to be used as didactic instruments, children are hopefully going to enjoy the experience of being read to even if their pleasure comes at the expense of their adult reader.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

I believe the character education mandate specified in the NCLB Act of 2001 presents a unique opportunity to introduce children to multicultural literature, in particular the folk and fairy tale. As the history of children's literature attests, folk and fairy tales have always been used to teach moral lessons. I do hold reservations about the government requiring the inclusion of a character education program in the national curriculum. However, as I have shown, the requirements of the mandate can be seen as an opportunity to use multicultural folk literature and fairy tales in the classroom. While there is no denying character education as part of the national curriculum, one may come to see the mandate in a positive light with the introduction of tales from around the world to our nation's youth.

From the history of children's literature, in particular the folk and fairy tale, it is evident that works within this revered genre of literature were affected by societal forces. Presently, there are political and social forces at work that are liable to influence how tales are presented, written, and employed. With the current political administration's NCLB Act and the push for the moral instruction of our nation's youth, how is children's literature going to be affected? Will tales of old, as well as new, reflect this political agenda? And, what role will the changing demographics of American society play? These questions are left to others to answer, but are posed to show the potential this mandate may have to affect children's literature.

President George W. Bush's platform on education resulted in the NCLB Act of

2001. This legislation's obvious intent is for all children in America to succeed academically. However, it also calls for the inclusion of moral or character education into the nation's existing educational curricula. Traits for this program are outlined in the booklet Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen as previously discussed. Moral education, although highly controversial, has existed in children's literature from its early beginnings. This new piece of legislation could bring another dimension to how children's books are viewed and used.

Morals and Society

President Bush is not the first United States President to be concerned with the state of the character of our nation's youth and will most likely not be the last. "Thomas Jefferson supported the idea that public education should instill moral principles. Ben Franklin's curriculum outline included the study of ethics. And, much later, other persons of leadership such as Harry Truman felt the fundamental purpose of education is to 'instill a moral code in the rising generation'" (Hall xvi). As we hold our nation's leaders responsible for their code of ethics and behaviors, many vote to elect or reelect a person to the office of President based upon their positions on the issues or their character. Can we as a nation, or any nation, for that matter, escape the assessment of people based on their character and behavior?

As can be learned from folk and fairy tales, a person is either shown as good or bad. Perhaps this is why society has a general tendency to label a person as he would appear in a fairy tale – good or bad, blameless or guilty. In speaking of tales contrasting with modern works, Bruno Bettelheim writes in his The Uses of Enchantment,

> Contrary to what takes place in many modern children's stories, in fairy tales evil is as omnipresent as virtue. In practically every fairy tale good and evil are given body in the form of some figures and their actions, as good and evil are omnipresent in life and the propensities for both are present in every man. It is this duality which poses the moral problem and requires the struggle to solve it. (8-9)

In light of Bettelheim's statement, one can presume that in growing up with folk and fairy tales, we are taught to identify persons as either being good or bad. He continues with a caution:

> [E]vil is not without its attractions – symbolized by the mighty giant or dragon, the power of the witch, the cunning queen in "Snow White" – and often it is temporarily the ascendancy. In many tales a usurper succeeds for a time in seizing the place which rightfully belongs to the hero – as the wicked sisters do in "Cinderella." It is not that the evildoer is punished at the story's end which makes immersing oneself in fairy stories an experience in moral education, although it is part of it. In fairy tales, as in life, punishment or fear of it is only a limited deterrent to crime. The conviction that crime does not pay is a much more effective deterrent, and that is why in fairy tales the bad person always loses out. It is not the fact that virtue wins out at the end which promotes morality, but that the hero is most attractive to the child who identifies with the hero in all his struggles. (9)

As Bettelheim reveals, it is not the identification with good or bad, but the appeal

of the hero that can inspire the eagerness to do good. Bettelheim supposes that children deal with issues hidden in their subconscious through either identifying with characters in tales or through the events that befall the evil characters allowing for the readers to reconcile underlying conflicts. These vicarious experiences allow children to regain a sense of harmony and live or deal with their situation. However, the identifying of persons as being either bad or good has been instilled as a process.

As tales have been used as didactic instruments, Bettelheim looks beyond, or perhaps to the moral content in order to find a therapeutic use for fairy tales, particularly for children. The use is necessary because "[t]he dominant culture wishes to pretend, particularly where the children are concerned, that the dark side of man does not exist, and professes a belief in an optimistic meliorism" (7-8). It is not an uncommon trait for humans to look optimistically at the state of society. This utopian view is exemplified in the common phrase ending many a bedtime tale, "and they lived happily ever after." Is the current political administration's call for the academic success and moral education of all children, in attempts to create good citizens, a realistic objective for our nation or merely a hope for a utopian society? The government's promotion of tales, which are found to teach children how to be good citizens, should not be ignored because we receive, in some way, instruction in our moral development. We need this instruction because we are, as history suggests, not without capacity for darkness and destructive behavior.

> William Bennett, former U.S. secretary of Education, acknowledges that even those who don't believe schools should inculcate a specific set of values are coming to believe schools have a responsibility to make

> students aware of the importance of discovering and developing their own set of values. Character education represents an effort to teach moral behavior in a time perceived to be morally rudderless. (Hall xxii-xxiii)

As Jack Zipes writes, " ... we need standards, order, morals. As Freud points out in Civilization and its Discontents, culture cannot exist without repression and sublimation, and it is within the civilizing process that we establish the rules by which we live by. We seek to make these rules stick and become eternal" (Myth 4). Because of the presence of morals found within many folk and fairy tales, the alignment of these works with moral instruction is likely. The probability of children's literature and character education converging exists because multicultural literature, in particular the folk and fairy tale, meets the requirements of the character education mandate as specified in NCLB. Also, the shifting and changing cultural landscape of America along with the nation's multicultural stance support my proposal to use multicultural children's literature, with a focus on folk and fairy tales, to meet the requirements of the character education mandate.

In answer to those who oppose the inclusion of moral instruction in the public sector and the current political administration's call for its inclusion, Susan Hall offers insight into the plight of the public school. In the past,

> schools began quietly to take on the public perception that values were variable and essentially private, and indeed may not be able to be taught at all. They retreated from directly trying to teach character education. This legacy of right and wrong being relative to time and place exists to this day. The assumption is that in a pluralistic society, no single set of values

> is common to all. No school wants the onus of being accused of "indoctrinating" student with "our" set of core values. (xxii)

Does the perspective of public schools, as described by Hall, release them from responsibility for inclusion of moral instruction in their institutions? Or, does this position merely bring sentiment to their predicament? With the government supporting and even mandating moral instruction, it seems the public education system finds itself in the middle of a political and social debate. Hall continues, "[d]emocracies have a special need for a morally educated citizenry, because this style of government is by the people themselves. The citizenry must care about the rights of the populace and assume responsibility for its welfare. Nationally syndicated columnist William Murchion said that morality is the heart of culture" (Hall xix). No matter whether one supports or denounces moral instruction, it is so ingrained in our culture it has spilled over from private interpretation to public debate in its inclusion in the educational curricula of our nation's youth.

Advantages of Using Tales in Character Education Programs

Fairy and folk tales of old will be used as didactic instruments. How they are perceived or the impact of their content is left open to debate. What can be ascertained from their inclusion in a character education program is that the children of our nation will be exposed to folk and fairy tales for their exemplification of good character traits as well as knowledge of right and wrong. These time-honored tales of wonder and caution from "Little Red Riding Hood" to "Cinderella" provide opportunities for children to use their imaginations as well as learn about their cultural heritage. As evident from the

discussion of the similarity of tales throughout cultures, various versions of tales can provide unique opportunities for young readers to become good global citizens as well.

Children learn about other cultures through the reading of folk tales. Every culture has its own unique collection of tales that exemplify what each respective culture holds sacred. In the comparison of European tales with those of other cultures, we find many similarities. Cinderella exists for many under different names and appearances. She is of Iraqi, French, Chinese, and Native American ancestry and more. While the Cinderella figure speaks a variety of different languages, her character and her story remain universal.

The inclusion of tales with moral scripts in a character education program is advantageous. The use of multicultural tales is appealing for reasons other than their moral content, the primary reason being that tales expose children to stories from cultures other than their own, allowing them the opportunity to see similarities between cultures and the qualities unique to a respective culture. Another reason is that children will be exposed to literature rich in cultural diversity and heritage. In the preface to their Folk and Fairy Tales, Hallett and Karasek write:

> … [O]ur experience in the classroom has convinced us that fairy tales have great pedagogical value for teachers and students of literature. The increasing multi-culturalism of our society has brought with it many riches; at the same time, however, it presents a problem for the teacher who must endeavor to find some common ground for students from diverse cultural, social, and intellectual backgrounds. In this context, we contend that the fairy tale offers a unique opportunity to introduce students

> to a literary form that is familiar and simple yet multi-dimensional. No student can claim to be wholly ignorant of fairy tales, but it is highly unlikely that he or she has ever gone beyond their surface simplicity to discover the surprisingly subtle complexities that lie beneath. (9-10)

Coinciding with the benefit of introducing children to different cultures, tales representative of a child's culture, other than of European-American descent, can provide comfort to a child of that respective descent. For example, a child from Japan may feel comforted by the reading and studying of Alan Say's Grandfather's Journey. This story is of a young boy who struggles with his love of his two homes, one being his homeland of Japan and the other his new home in America. Most likely, Bettelheim would argue then the use of such a book is therapeutic to children because they can work out their struggles through empathizing with the main character. Despite the psychoanalytic view, the introduction of such a text in a multicultural environment not only allows for children of Japanese descent to work through issues of loss in their subconscious, it provides something more for every child.

Tales allow the reader to learn about situations unique to the characters in a particular time and place. In the instance of Grandfather's Journey, one can see what it may feel like when one is torn between one's love of two countries. The explanation of such a situation allows children of all cultures to empathize with the character. From this new found perception, children can then transfer their understanding toward others who are in similar situations.

Diversity in Literature

Multicultural tales offer many advantages to readers, whether or not the reader is of the particular heritage reflected in the story at hand. As reflected in the accompanying annotated bibliography, tales and stories from numerous cultures are readily available. To say that there is a book available to illustrate any existing culture and situation may be an exaggeration. Nevertheless, it is a statement in which one may find some truth.

With regard to multiculturalism, books have the potential to be published to fit in the mold of this subgenre. As with any piece of literature, one must hope that the author has portrayed the characters and situation honestly and somewhat realistically. While a story can be entertaining or even considered good literature, minority groups can nevertheless be portrayed in a stereotypical light. For instance, groups such as Native Americans and African Americans have been portrayed in a stereotypical manner or falsely throughout children's literature. As multiculturalism has focused attention on the importance of representing all cultures accurately, critics of children's literature are causing authors and publishers to be held accountable. This accountability is also concerned with those who have published collections of folk tales. Because I believe multicultural children's literature, in particular the folk and fairy tale, should be used to meet the requirements of the character education mandate specified in the NCLB Act, I feel it necessary to discuss the importance of depicting a culture correctly. To illustrate the importance of doing so, I have selected the portrayal of Native Americans in children's literature. I have done so because Native American folk tales contain moral lessons and therefore can be used to meet the requirements of the mandate. I have also selected this cultural group because most Americans are aware of how Native Americans

have been portrayed in literature and other forms of media. Where another culture could be as illustrative, I found information regarding the depiction of Native Americans in children's literature to correspond to my concern for presenting works where persons are depicted accurately with regards to their cultural heritage.

"Many Native American folktales were gathered by anthropologists and ethnographers. Collections of the stories are fairly easy to obtain. These stories, however, were collected by individuals with little insight or respect for the spiritual needs or the privacy and protection of Native religions" (Reese and Caldwell-Wood 160). The intent of the collector or anthologist becomes irrelevant when a person's culture is misrepresented. It appears that multiculturalism, in part, brought about interest and a corresponding need for children's literature about Native American cultures; books were nonetheless published with inaccuracies and contained stereotypes such as an Indian in war paint carrying a tomahawk on the back of an Appaloosa. This is an extreme stereotypical picture that has permeated all forms of media and has resulted in an effort, again in part by multiculturalism, to re-educate society and correct inaccuracies regarding Native Americans as well as other groups.

One may question then whether a story about a Native American can be deemed good literature if the story or illustrations contain inaccuracies, intentional or not. Annie and the Old One by Miska Miles is a Newbery Honor Book and has won several other literary awards. While this work speaks of responsibility and the importance of hard work and family, this tale has come under criticism because the author is not Native American, nor is the illustrator, Peter Parnall. While this story is a heartfelt look at how a young Native American girl comes to grips with death and the impending loss of her

grandmother, critics object to certain aspects of the book. Concerning the dress, "contemporary children reared in traditional ways would not wear traditional clothing to school – the child would wear jeans and shirts." Critics Slapin and Seale also question the term "God's dog," which is used in the book to describe the coyote, who guards the hogan … "within the Navajo culture, coyotes cause feelings of unease – not comfort" (Reese and Caldwell-Wood 177). Another question raised by Debbie Reese and Naomi Caldwell-Wood is the authenticity of the illustrations as well as Annie acting in a dishonest manner, as being truthful in word and deed are extremely important to the Navajo people. Reese and Caldwell-Wood are arguing that a Navajo child in Annie's situation would not act in such a manner. So, while Annie and the Old One has received literary acclaim, from the perspective of a Navajo, Miles and Parnall fail to portray accurately how a young Navajo girl looks, behaves, and deals with the death of a loved one. In instances such as this, the author's credibility is questionable and this generates concern about the presentation of this text to children.

Perhaps the problem with finding accurate tales, say, of Native American peoples is the fact that "historically, Native people did not write down their stories. They told them to their children. Today, some of what they said can be found in written sources, some of it is only in the memory of the people" (Reese and Caldwell-Wood 162). In fact, a folk tale is a folk tale because of its origins in oral traditions. While many stories and folk tales have been recorded by authors who are not Native American, Native authors are now writing and publishing tales, thus providing readers with more authentic texts. These Native authors are, in general, taking their works to smaller publishing houses rather than conglomerates. Focusing on smaller houses is critical for them because it is

hard to get a book published by a large publisher. However, even if smaller houses publish a given work, it is often difficult for librarians and educators to obtain copies because of the constraints they face. These books may be hard to find or the house may not be able to fill an order as expeditiously as a larger publisher (Reese and Caldwell-Wood 164).

Still other concerns face this segment of children's literature, including the portrayal of women and children. From the suffrage movement to the Equal Rights Amendment battles, the place of women and children in literature is reflective of the society in which they reside. Not only are anthologists and literary critics concerned with the way women in general are viewed, but also with specific stereotypes of women from different cultures. Taking a look at Native American lore and literature again, authors of works featuring Native women often portray women in a negative light. "The image of Native American women generally takes on one of three forms: the hard-working beast of burden, the helpful squaw, or the Indian Princess ... [writes Beth] Brandt, a Mohawk writer, [who] continues ... suggest[ing] the 'pejorative stereotype developed because the white men who came here so little valued their own women, one of their first missions was to reduce ours to the same status – beast of burden, important for the production of sons, but little else: squaws'" (Reese and Caldwell-Wood 64-65).

The mere mention of an Indian Princess may bring one to envision Disney's Pocahontas. Jack Zipes, noted author, anthologist and literary critic, in his 1991 Spells of Enchantment coins the term "Disneyized" when he is discussing the history of the fairy tale after World War II. Zipes is referring to the process of marketing and believes readers have been "subjected to the saccharine sexist and illusionary stereotypes of the

Disney culture industry – and therefore they have felt free to explode the illusion that happy ends are possible in real worlds that are held together by the deceit of advertising and government" (xxvii).

Rather harsh words, but do they not apply? The Pocahontas whom Disney portrays is not one whose author is of the same ancestry. In fact, biographies of Pocahontas were written by non-Native people. The facts recorded are based on accounts from men, non-Native, who generally were writing from a non-Native perspective. Reese and Caldwell-Wood argue that the portrayal of Pocahontas was developed to benefit the colonists. This example of how a female Native American has been portrayed is one of many that critics, authors, anthropologists, feminists, and other persons concerned with the portrayal of women in children's literature cite in their criticisms (165).

From Disney's portrayal of a Native American princess, millions of children have a picture in their minds of a curvy, soft-spoken woman who has animal friends when they think of who Pocahontas is or what a Native American woman may look like. Other problems with the portrayal of Native Americans are even evident in a book about an African-American girl.

In Amazing Grace (Hoffman), Grace is shown playing different characters, including Hiawatha. This young Caribbean descendant is shown with "all the stereotypical attributes associated with a noble Indian chief. She wears a multicolored-feathered headdress. Her head is held high, her back is straight, her legs are crossed, and her facial expression is decidedly stoic" (Reese and Caldwell-Wood 161). The author does mention in a personal conversation with Hoffman, she thinks it wrong to "celebrate

one culture at the expense of another." Not only are there issues about the portrayal of Native Americans in books strictly about their culture, there are concerns about the portrayal of Native peoples in other multicultural books. This incident underscores the fact that authors writing on cultures outside their own must be extremely sensitive in their portrayals of those cultures.

One thing is certain – there will always be debate regarding the authenticity of books and who has the authority to write about cultures other than their own. With the presence of multiculturalism and a changing society, those concerned with children's literature will always have to question the source of the material, the intent of the author, and the appropriateness of how the text is presented. With concern for the depiction of all people, character traits come into play.

Tolerance, understanding, and traits concerned with honesty and respect all play a part when one looks at a literary work and determines whether the characters are accurately portrayed by word and illustration, what the message of the tale is, and how the work is presented. With a national trend in teaching character education in the public schools, breaking down stereotypes, portraying all people accurately, and providing texts that feature a wide range of cultures are timely concerns.

The Fate of Children's Literature

There is no denying that literature, namely children's literature and more specifically the folk tale, includes tales of wonder, caution, and moral lessons. A wealth of works, namely those which feature themes of character, is available with the increasing number of multicultural texts being published. While illustrating moral lessons

or simply entertaining, multicultural tales offer readers an opportunity to learn about cultures different from their own.

As society continues to evolve, the genre and industry of children's literature will bend and sway to the meet the demands set forth by political, societal and multicultural forces. The effects of an ever-changing society as reflected in children's literature will be most evident in how works are presented to children. The introduction of texts is most prevalent in the educational arena and provides a gauge for trends affecting children's literature. Certainly, tales of wonder and excitement will always be in demand and that is proven through the longevity of the folk tale. Since the earliest of oral tales, stories have survived centuries filled with countless types of change. Whether one agrees with the didactic nature found within some tales and stories, society has not been able to eliminate time-honored tales. To summarize, a quote from Jack Zipes' Myth as Fairy Tale Fairy Tale as Myth is again offered:

> Myths and fairy tales seem to know something that we do not know. They also appear to hold our attention; they keep us in their sway to enchant our lives. We keep returning to them for answers. We use them in diverse ways as private sacred myth or as public commercial advertisements to sell something. We refer to myths and fairy tales as lies by saying, "oh, that's just a fairy tale," or "that's just myth." But these lies are often the lies that govern our lives. (3)

And in answer to the criticism of the didactic nature of tales, Zipes continues "... we need standards, order, morals. As Freud pointed out in Civilization and Its Discontents, culture cannot exist without repression and sublimation, and it is within the

civilizing process that we establish the rules by which we live. We seek to make these rules stick and become eternal" (Zipes, Myth 4).

As recognized across different fields of study, the evolution of children's literature remains under scrutiny. From literary critics and anthropologists to the educator who more often than not chooses and presents these texts, society will always play a part in the creation of, distribution of, and means by which children's literature is used. Politics are at present playing a crucial role through the NCLB Act, which concerns itself with the accountability of our nation's educational system. This act specifically calls for using teaching methods that are proven effective. Reading is an undeniable way to increase intelligence scores, comprehension, and communication skills. Because of this act, attention is being paid to multiculturalism and character education. With these factors in mind, educators are asked to incorporate methods that will meet the criteria of this monumental act. Authors and publishers of children's literature are sure to answer the call to provide books with themes of character that also fit into the multicultural category. Out of society's need to regulate itself, children's books are more than likely always going to portray themes of right and wrong as well as caution and wonder. As is the case in most cultures, tales have been recorded from their original oral form, and these tales are being published from a wide range of cultural perspectives. As society is affected by multiculturalism and political forces, the resulting effect can be seen through the time honored genre of children's literature.

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Smolen, Lynn Atkinson, and Victoria Oritz-Castro. "Dissolving Borders and Broadening Perspectives Through Latino Traditional Literature." Reading Teacher 53.7. (2000). EBSCO, Jacksonville State U Lib. 17 March 2003.

Steptoe, John. Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: an African Tale. New York: Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard, 1987.

Tatar, Maria. Off With Their Heads!: Fairy Tales and the Culture of Childhood. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992.

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Tomlinson, Carl M. and Carol Lynch-Brown. Essentials of Children's Literature. 4th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002.

Trawick-Smith, J. Early Childhood Development: A Multicultural Perspective. Second Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill-Prentice Hall, 2000.

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Walker-Dalhouse, Doris. "Using African-American Literature to Increase Ethnic Understanding." The Reading Teacher 45.6 (1992): 416-422.

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Yashima, Taro. Crow Boy. New York: Viking, 1955.

Young, Ed, trans. Lon Po Po: a Red Riding Hood Story from China. New York: Philomel, 1989.

Zipes, Jack. Fairy Tale as Myth Myth as Fairy Tale. Lexington: The UP of Kentucky, 1993.

---, ed. Spells of Enchantment. New York: Viking, 1991.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

AFRICAN/ AFRICAN AMERICAN

Aardema, Verna. Illus. Diane and Leo Dillon. Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears: a West African tale. New York: Puffin Pied Piper, 1975.

- In this retelling of a West African folk tale, Aardema explains what a mosquito did many ages ago that left him voiceless. By annoying an iguana, the mosquito starts a chain of events that leads to a tragedy that keeps mother owl from waking the sun. All the animals of the jungle explain this to the lion king who punishes the mosquito so the sun will again rise. This book is a Caldecott Award recipient.

Adoff, Arnold. Illus. Emily Arnold McCully. Black is Brown is Tan. 2nd ed. New York: Harper Collins Juvenile, 1987.

- This is the first children's book to feature an interracial family. In this story, the family experiences fun, serenity, and plenty of love. Members of both sides of the extended family come to visit and both grandmothers tell stories to the children from long ago. The author of this book was married in 1960 and violated segregation laws of 28 states for his interracial marriage.

Allen, Debbie. Dancing in the Wings. New York: Scholastic, 2000.

- In this modern day version of the "Ugly Duckling" story, Sassy is a tall and awkward young girl who dreams of becoming a graceful ballerina. She does learn to believe in herself through the encouragement and support of her mother and an uncle. The story concludes with Sassy getting a part in a dance festival in

Washington D.C. Famous dancer/choreographer, Debbie Allen, is the author of this book.

Bridges, Ruby. Illus. Margo Lundell. Through My Eyes. New York: Scholastic, 1999.

- The author gives an account of her experiences as the first African American to attend an all white school in the deep South. She is escorted by U.S. Marshalls everyday because of the mob of angry people who threaten. Many parents pulled their children out of school in protest of Ruby's attendance. The account is very personal, honest and rather loving. This story also contains magazine and book quotes as well as photographs from Ms. Bridge's youth.

Coles, Robert. The Story of Ruby Bridges. New York: Scholastic Paperbacks, 1995.

- This is the tale of the first African American to attend a New Orleans elementary school after the court-ordered desegregation of 1960. Coles, a noted research psychiatrist, tells of how the federal marshals had to escort young Ruby to school every day through mobs of angry people. This story also includes quotations from Ruby's teacher and a few from Ruby herself. The story ends rather abruptly with Ruby's daily prayer asking God to forgive the protesters.

Davol, Marguerite Devol. Illus. Irene Fivas. Black, White, Just Right! 1st ed. New York: Concept, 1993.

- The narrator of this story is a daughter born of an interracial marriage. The girl describes her African American mother's face as "chestnut brown" and her father's face as "turn[ing] pink in the sun." She looks like them both; her parents say that she is just right. The differences between her parents' tastes in music, art, and food illustrate how all people are unique.

Fisher, D. Special Delivery. New York: McGraw-Hill School, 2000.

- Vanessa and Malik, two inner city siblings, offer to help an injured elderly neighbor. They soon begin to do chores for others in their neighborhood who are in need of assistance. The children feel good about helping others and making a difference in their community. A few weeks into their doing chores for their neighbors, a party is thrown for them by those they gave assistance to. The children reap intrinsic rewards but also receive monetary rewards at the end of the story.

Flournoy, Valerie. Ilus. Jerry Pinkney. The Patchwork Quilt. Middletown, CT: Weekly Reader, 1985.

- With fabric pieces donated from family members, Tonya helps her grandmother make a quilt. Teaching Tonya how to quilt, the grandmother also teaches her about the meaning of family and unity, of which quilts are symbols. Flourney received the Coretta Scott King Award in 1985 for this work.

Haley, Gail E. A Story A Story. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1970.

- In this origin tale, Gail Haley retells the African legend of where "spider stories" come from. A man barters with the sky god, Nyame, for ownership of stories because there were none on earth. Ananse, who is called Spiderman, builds a web to the sky god, finds the cost of the stories and returns to Earth to retrieve what the sky god demands. Ananse tricks a leopard, a hornet, and a fairy captures them, and then gives them to the sky god. This is a story of trickery or cunning and is an interesting look at where spider tales come from. Gail Haley won a Caldecott Medal for this book in 1971.

Hamilton, Virginia. Illus. Diane and Leo Dillon. Many Thousand Gone: African Americans from Slavery to Freedom. New York: Random, 2002.

- Brief vignettes of nearly three-dozen figures are featured in this book. Some prominent characters are a prince who is lured to a neighboring kingdom and sold into slavery, a mother who escapes over a river, inspired by a scene in Uncle Tom's Cabin, and Henry Box Brown, who was mailed to the North in a wooden box. These vignettes illustrate the struggles of slaves and the courage needed to survive in the midst of such troubling times. Along with the stories of African Americans, biographies of whites who helped slaves make their way to freedom are also included.

Hamilton, Virginia. Illus. Diane and Leo Dillon. The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales. New York: Knopf, 1985.

- Hamilton retells 24 African American folktales with a strong story teller's voice. She presents animal tales, supernatural tales and stories of slaves making their way to freedom. Hamilton provides a bibliography and comments for each tale as well as a glossary for some of the terms in Gullah dialect.

Haskins, Francine. I Remember "121." New York: Children's Book P, 1999.

- In this story, the author relives memories of her youth. She tells about such happenings as the birth of her baby brother and about her extended family visiting. The importance of family and how cherished childhood memories can be are themes resonating throughout this tale.

Hoffman, Mary. Illus Kevin Littlewood. The Color of Home. New York: Penguin Putnam Books for Young Children.

- Hassan has come to America from Somalia and finds himself very homesick. He thinks that everything looks grey compared to his home. He only knows a bit of English, which contributes to his horrible first day at school. Through art, he discovers that he can communicate in his new world. Hassan's teacher realizes that he needs to share his story and finds an interpreter so the class can learn about his homeland. He soon finds himself adjusting to his new life and starts to recognize colors of his surroundings as bright instead of gray.

Lasky, Kathryn. Illus. N. Bennett. Vision of Beauty: the Story of Sarah Breedlove Walker. Cambridge: Candlewick P, 2000.

- Sarah Breedlove Walker was the first child born free to a poor African American family in Louisiana. This is a tale based on her life and the struggles and successes she experienced. Mrs. Walker founded the Madame C.J. Walker Manufacturing Company which specialized in hair care products for African American women. This successful business enabled Mme. Walker to contribute to the community and gave her credibility as she spoke on political issues and race relations. This rags to riches story of a female African American in the early 1900s is as inspiring as is it heartwarming.

Mitchell, Margaree King. Uncle Jeb's Barbershop. New York: Simon, 1993.

- Margaree Mitchell tells the story of a man who struggles his entire life in order to make his dream come true. Jeb was an itinerant barber in the South before the Depression. He saves money for years to open his own barbershop, but uses instead to pay for a surgery his niece needs. Other setbacks keep Jeb from

realizing his dream, but he never gives up hope. At 79, Jeb finally opens his own shop.

Pittaluga, M. The Kente Tradition. New York: McGraw Hill School, 2000.

- Kente cloth was first made in Africa in the 17th century. At first, only members of royal families were allowed to wear Kente clothing. This story follows the use and style of this cloth. More recently, most men and women in Africa have begun to wear Kente clothing.

Polacco, Patricia. Pink and Say. New York: Philomel, 1994.

- Set during the Civil War, the author explores the relationship between an African American Union soldier, Pink, and a wounded white boy named Say. The two become friends in the midst of the war-torn South and end up captured by the Confederate Army. Although Pink is hanged by his captors, Say lives a long life and tells the story of his friend who met a tragic end.

Rosales, Melodye. 'Twas the Night B'fore Christmas. New York: Scholastic, 1996.

- Rosales tells a version of Clement Clark Moore's original poem "'Twas the Night Before Christmas" set at the beginning of the twentieth century. In this version, the poem is adapted and retold from the viewpoint of slaves. This particular version is set on a small farm in a rural North Carolina farm and features African American characters who are paid a visit by Saint Nick.

Steptoe, John. Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale. New York: Scholastic Paperback, 1986.

- Mufaro is the proud father of two beautiful daughters whose dispositions are opposite. One is selfish and has a temper while the other is kind and considerate

to man and beast alike. Upon hearing that the king is about to choose a wife, Mufaro sends his daughters to be considered for his queen. The two sisters make the journey separately and their fortune is determined by how they treat the people they face along their paths.

Walter, Mildred Pitts. Illus. Catherine Stock. Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World. New York: Knopf, 1986.

- Justin is a young African American boy who lives in the city with his mother and sisters. When he travels to Grandpa's ranch in Missouri to experience what "men's work" is, he is introduced to black cowboys. He learns to take pride in himself after learning about his family history. This is an interesting book to share when exploring the Western expansion of the country and the place of the African American within that movement.

ARAB/ ARAB AMERICAN

Axworthy, Ann. Anni's India Diary. Watertown, Mass: Whispering Coyote, 1992.

- In this story of a young girl's journey around India, the diary entries keep record of her experiences and the sights she has seen. She tells about her train trip and seeing the Taj Mahal as well as the people she meets and the way they live.

Ben-'Ezer, Ehud. Illus. Uri Shulevitz. Hosni the Dreamer: An Arabian Tale. New York: Carrar, Straus & Giroux, 1997.

- Set in the Arabian Desert, this is the tale of a simple Shepard and the events of a trip with a sheikh to a city. Hosni, along with other shepherds, is given some money to spend in the markets as he chooses. He spends his money on a piece of

advice, to the amusement of the other shepherds. The advice he purchases ends up saving his life and brings him to the woman to which he will marry.

Climo, Shirley. The Egyptian Cinderella. New York: Harper, 1989.

- Based on fact, this is an ancient and rarely heard version of the classic folktale. In this particular version, Rhodopis is a young slave girl who is brought from Egypt to Greece. The illustrations are very dramatic and lend to the uniqueness of the tale.

---. Illus. Robert Florczak. Persian Cinderella. New York: Harper, 1999.

- In this adaptation of the traditional Cinderella tale, Settarah has trouble with an anklet instead of the traditional glass slipper. The young woman's troubles start when her evil stepsisters plot against her marriage to a prince. In preparation for a celebration at the palace, the three sisters go to a bazaar to look for gowns. Settarah gives her money to a beggar for a blue jug instead of a gown. Inside the jug is a fairy who gives her a glorious gown. The stepsisters use the powers of the fairy and fasten enchanted hairpins in their sister's hair, which turn her into a turtledove. The prince's love remains constant and he is responsible for breaking the spell and returning her to her normal state.

Filipovic, Zlata. Zlata's Diary. New York: Viking, 1984.

- Actual diary entries recount the experiences of a young child growing up in Bosnia in the early 1900s. This is a captivating look at the encounters of Zlata and her reflections on her war torn city. Zlata's story ends on a bittersweet note when she is able to move to France with her family, leaving her war-torn home behind.

Ghazi, Suhaib Hamid. Illus. Omar Rayyan. Ramadan. USA: Holiday House , 1996.

- This informational text explains the Muslim celebration of Ramadan. From the experiences of Hakeem, who is an Arab American, the diet and daily activities of this revered celebration are shown. Readers also see how Hakeem reflects on his actions, gives to charity and celebrates his Muslim faith.

Halaby, Laila. West of the Jordan: A Novel. New York: Beacon P, 2003.

- Four young women from Palestine and Jordan have just graduated high school in an Arizona town. One of the friends returns to Jordan to look after an ailing grandmother. As she spends time in her home country, she must choose between her American ways and the traditions of her homeland. Meanwhile, back in America, two cousins attempt to assimilate to American culture while facing such obstacles as prejudice and their parents' expectations. This novel discusses the history and heritage of these young women while illustrating some of the challenges and problems facing young Arab American women.

Hall, Loretta & Hall, Bridget K. Arab American Biography. Detroit: UXL, 1999.

- This is a wonderful resource for highlighting important and influential Arab Americans. Persons included in the biography are Danny Thomas, Doug Flutie, F. Murray Abraham and Ralph Nadar. Others included are the first Arab American immigrant, poets, scientists, and other notable persons. This book lists persons alphabetically and contains insights into how their heritage has affected their lives. There is also a timeline and a list of persons discussed organized by their respective ethnicity.

Heide, Forence.P. Illus. by Gilland, J.H. The Day of Ahmed's Secret. New York: Lothrop, 1990.

- In this beautifully illustrated work, one can follow young Ahmed as he strolls through his hometown of Cairo. The sights and smells of the city come alive through lush watercolor illustrations and narrative prose. Ahmed is very proud of his community, himself, and his family. The secret that he holds until the end of the tale is that he can finally write his name.

Heide, Florence Parry. Sami and the Time of the Troubles. New York: Clarion, 1992.

- This story tells of a young boy and his family as they adapt to life amidst a civil war in Lebanon. Sami and his family are forced to live in a relative's basement while bombs are being dropped in the area. The family brings their treasures with them to the basement so they will not be destroyed. When it is safe, they return to the outside. Life is lived as normally as possible despite the ongoing war.

Hoyt-Goldsmith, Diane. Illus. Lawrence Migdal. Celebrating Ramadan. 1st ed. USA: Holiday House, 2001.

- An explanation of the Muslim celebration of Ramadan is given through the experiences of Ibraheem and his family. This account of the holy celebration shows how a contemporary American family practices and honors their ancient faith.

Johnson-Davies, Denys. Illus. Eda S. Ghali. Animal Tales for the Arab World: Tales From Egypt and the Arab World Series. Washington, DC: Amideast, 1995.

- This collection features fables written in the ancient storytelling tradition. Throughout these fables, lessons can be learned from the folly and wisdom of the

animal characters within the tales. Some of these stories are adapted for younger readers from One Thousand and One Nights and other sources.

Kimmel, Eric A. Illus. Leonard Everett Fisher. The Three Princes: A Tale from The Middle East. New York: Holiday house, 2000.

- Kimmel tells the tale of three princes who are trying to woo a beautiful and very wise princess. Two princes are well known and very rich while the other has few earthly possessions. The princes are all sent on a quest to find the greatest wonder and return it to the princes. Whoever finds the greatest wonder will win the hand of the princess.

Laird, Elizabeth. Kiss the Dust. New York: Puffin, 1994.

- Tara is a Kurdish girl who has to escape Northern Iraq with her family. The family travels from Iraq to Iran and end their journey in England. Tara faces new difficulties in this new town. The desire of the Kurdish people to have their own nation is a strong theme throughout this work. Primarily, this work is best suited for young adult readers due to the nature of the problems that Tara encounters.

Lasky, C. The Clever Jackal. New York: McGraw-Hill School, 2001.

- A caring Arab man releases a tiger from a cage only to have the tiger tell him that he is about to be eaten. When the man protests, the tiger instructs the man to ask three plants or animals if the tiger is being unfair. A buffalo and a tree tell the man he should have expected the tiger to eat him. The third opinion came from a jackal that goes to the tiger for a bit of clarification. The jackal tricks the tiger into getting back into the cage to demonstrate what had happened from the start. The jackal slams the cage door shut and pronounces that this is a fair ending, thus saving the man by this scheme.

Naff, Alixa. The Arab Americans (The Immigrant Experience). Boomall, PA: Chelsea House, 1998.

- The author of this book gives information from research from 1924 to date of publication. An accurate account of how Arab immigrants came to America and the work they performed is given. Detailed information on the types of jobs they did and the way of life they had is also described. The book also contrasts how life is now for Arab Americans compared to that in the early 1920s.

Nye, Naomi Shihab. Flag of Childhood: Poems from the Middle East. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 2002.

- This anthology includes poems from children of Egypt to Iraq and several other Arab countries. Topics range from experiences that all children encounter to more specific personal experiences that only an Arab child would face. This is a novel way to share how Arab and Arab American children live and feel. It can teach Americans about the true culture of these peoples and breakdown certain stereotypes attached to persons of Arab descent.

---. 19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East. New York: Harper Collins Juvenile, 2003.

- This is a compilation of over four dozen poems about the Middle East and being Arab American. Aside from a poem about the events of September 11, the poems focus on topics such as the author's family and travels to the Middle East.

---. Sitti's Secrets. Illus. N. Carpenter. New York: Four Winds P, 1994.

- Young Mona travels from America to the Palestinian West Bank to visit her grandmother. Despite the differences in culture and an enormous language barrier, she finds a way to bond with her grandmother. At first, Mona's father

translates for Sitti, and then the two are able to communicate on their own. Sitti shares her culture through tales of experience and even through the preparation of traditional foods. Mona returns to the United States with a new understanding of her heritage, her grandmother, and the situation in the Middle East. Mona drafts a letter telling the President about her grandmother and asks for his help in the peace process.

Stanley, Diane. Saladin. New York: Harper, 2002.

- Saladin was a man of Arab descent who ruled Jerusalem during the 12th century. After he witnessed the first Crusades, young Saladin grew up believing that the Middle East should be controlled by Muslims. From Saladin's rule forward, this story discusses historical events and their effect upon modern day Jerusalem.

ASIAN/ ASIAN AMERICAN

Balgassi, Haemi. Tae's Sonata. New York: Clarion, 2000.

- Thirteen-year old Tae is mortified when she is assigned a research project about South Korea, where she was born. Her partner in this project is a popular boy whom she feels very uncomfortable around. Along with her difficulty at school she is also experiencing rough times at home.

Berger, Barbara Helen. All the Way to Lhasa: a Tale from Tibet. New York: Philomel, 2002.

- All the Way to Lhasa is a retelling of a Tibetan parable told to the author by Lama Rinpoche. Lhasa, considered a sacred place to Tibetans, lies in the Himalayan Mountains. In the story a wise looking woman is sitting by the side of the road when two people come by her asking how far it is to Lhasa. One is hurried and is

told he will never make it. The other, a young boy, walks slowly but steadily. He is told that it is far, but that he will make it. Although the boy thinks of stopping, especially when he sees the hurried man and his horse fast asleep, he keeps a steady pace. The moral of the story is that by keeping sure and steady footsteps, one will reach one's destination.

Bishop, Claire Huchet. Illus. Kurt Wiese. Five Chinese Brothers. 2nd ed. New York: Scholastic, 1979.

- In the Chinese folktale, five brothers use their powers to rescue the eldest brother from being unfairly put to death for the accidental death of a selfish, naughty boy. Each brother uses his own extraordinary ability in attempts to save his brother.

Bridges, Shirin Yim. Illus. Sophie Blackall. Ruby's Wish. New York: Chronicle, 2002.

- Ruby comes from a very wealthy Chinese family and lives in a large house occupied by an enormous number of children. Ruby, who is always in red, stands out among her cousins. She also stands apart from the rest because of her unhappiness with how females are regarded in her family. She is determined to learn how to read and write in her spare time while spending the majority of her time learning how to be a good wife. At the end of the story, Ruby is surprised by her grandfather, the patriarch of her family.

Burgan, M. An Ancient Art. New York: McGraw-Hill School, 2000.

- David is a boy of Japanese descent who learns the art of calligraphy from his grandfather. On a rainy day, he shares this art with his best friend. The friends use pen and ink to trace Japanese letters and patterns. As they practice, David

teaches his friend about Japanese clothing and art and shares a haiku he has written.

Carlson, Lori M. American Eyes: New Asian American Short Stories for Young Adults. New York: Fawcett, 1996.

- This book is arranged in chapters of short stories, each featuring a different aspect of Asian life. A major thread throughout the tales is how an Asian child deals with life in America. Throughout these stories, the unique heritage and culture of Asian Americans is reinforced.

Cheng, Andrea. Illus. Ange Zhang. Grandfather Counts. New York: Lee and Low, 2000.

- Helen's grandfather comes to live with her family from their homeland. In this story, the two overcome language barriers and form a loving bond. The hardships felt by those who are new to America and are not fluent or know virtually no English are shown. Another theme in this work is the importance of respecting elders and that family members must help one another.

Choi, Sook Nyul. Year of Impossible Goodbyes. New York: Houghton, 1991.

- This is the story of a Korean family and their struggles during the Japanese occupation of their country. Sookan and her family face many perils due to the controlling Communist government. They eventually escape to South Korea, but must leave virtually all of there belongings behind.

Coerr, Eleanor. Mieko and the Fifth Treasure. New York: Dell, 1993.

- Set during World War II, this is the story of a young Japanese girl. She is a talented artist and, according to her art teacher, possesses a fifth treasure that makes her very special. When the atomic bomb is dropped on her city, her life is

forever changed. With her hand injured, she fears she will never paint again. With the help and support of family and a new friend, she realizes that she can paint if she truly wants to.

Hoyt-Goldsmith, Diane. Hoang Anh: A Vietnamese-American Boy. New York: Holiday House, 1992.

- Hoang Anh was born in a refugee camp in Malaysia but now lives with his family in California. Hoang Anh's parents both work and he attends public school where he is in a multicultural classroom. He is also educated by a Vietnamese refugee and scholar who acts as a cultural elder. This story includes folktales from Vietnam and offers a map and glossary.

Mosel, Ailene. Illus. Blair Lent. Tikki Tikki Tembo. 3rd ed. New York: Henry Hall, 1989.

- In this Chinese folktale, the legend of children given incredibly long names and consequent events is told. The eldest son is given a name that means "the most wonderful thing in the whole wide world." A younger brother is given the name Chang, which means "little or nothing." When Tikki (the eldest brother) falls into a well, it is Chang who runs for help and cannot get to the part of what has happened to his brother because his brother's name is so long. Due to this unfortunate event, parents stop giving their children such long names.

Namioka, Lensey. Illus. Kees Dekiefte. Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1992.

- Comparing traditional Chinese values to modern-day American values is the backdrop for the story of a family of Chinese immigrants who move to Seattle. All of the family members are musically inclined, especially the father, who is an acclaimed musician. While the father is having difficultly finding success in

America, his youngest son battles with the fact that he would much rather play baseball than learn to be a musician. Yang also struggles with the fact that he is not musically gifted as the rest of his family is as well as with the differences he finds between cultures.

O'Conner, Karen. Dan Thuy's New Life in America. St Paul: Lerner, 1992.

- This is a photo essay of a Vietnamese family who adjusts to a new life in San Diego. Dan, who is 13, lives with her parents, younger sister, and grandmother. Dan's family had to hide for a month in Cambodia then travel to Thailand where they end up in a refugee camp. The history of these camps is described while the story focuses on combining two cultures and the role of Asian women and their conflicting traditional role with the opportunities presented to them in America.

Pittaluga, M. Dragon Parade. New York: McGraw-Hill School, 2000.

- Dragon Parade explains the celebration of the Chinese New Year. The twelve signs under which people are born, foods, decorations, and customs are discussed. The last event in this story is the carrying of an enormous paper dragon by people in a parade.

Rattigan, Jama Kim. Dumpling Soup. New York: Little, 1993.

- The importance of family traditions and the blending of cultures are the backdrop of the story of a seven year old Hawaiian girl. Marissa's family is a blend of Japanese, Hawaiian, Chinese, Korean and Caucasian. Her family gets together every New Year, and, this year, young Marissa is going to make the dumplings for her grandmother's traditional soup. Through this tale, the richness of a young girl's heritage is impressed upon the reader as Marissa's family embraces and blends all of their ethnic traditions.

Say, Allen. Grandfather's Journey. Boston: Houghton, 1993.

- A Japanese boy tells the story of his grandfather, who is torn between two homes. He loves his homeland, but also has found a new home in America. The journey of his ancestor is told through the reflection of what Grandfather loves about both places. This struggle is a common one for immigrants trying to make a new life for themselves and their families while still holding their native lands close to their hearts.

Thong, Roseanne. Round as a Mooncake. San Francisco: Chronicle, 2000.

- This book uses pictures and words to illustrate items one would find in a Chinese household as well as homes of other cultures. Vocabulary is learned through teaching with shapes.

Wells, Rosemary. Illus. H.G. Wells. Yoko. New York: Hyperion, 1998.

- Yoko's mother sends her off to school with a willow-covered cooler filled with her favorite foods. When lunchtime come around the different foods of various children are shown, such as a peanut butter sandwich. All is well until someone notices Yoko's cooler has seaweed in it. Yoko's teacher turns things around when she plans a food day where international foods are featured and the children have to try some of everything.

Yagawa, Sumiko. Trans. Katherine Paterson. Illus. Suekichi Akaba The Crane Wife. York: Mulberry, 1987.

- In this Japanese folktale, a farmer is rewarded for rescuing an injured crane. The crane is transformed into a beautiful woman and asks the farmer to marry her. Yohei, the farmer, breaks his solemn promise to his crane wife who has, until breaking his promise, brought him wealth through weaving fabric.

Young, Ed. Lon Pon Po. New York: Paper Star, 1996.

- This is a Chinese version of Little Red Riding Hood. This tale follows the adventures of young girls who have an encounter with a horrible wolf. In the end, the girls use cunning and bravery to outsmart the terrible wolf, which contrasts with the traditional Red who is helpless and relies on a woodsman to save her.

Yashima, Taro. Crow Boy. New York: Puffin, 1976.

- Crow Boy is the tale of a small boy who is made an outcast by his class mates, that is until a new teacher, Mr. Isobe, comes to his school. Mr. Isobe talks to the young boy and encourages him. At the end of this tale, fellow classmates and parents learn how dedicated and talented "Crow Boy" is, and they feel ashamed for how they have mistreated him. This would be an excellent book to share about the difference between our perceptions of others and who they truly are. This book received a Caldecott Honor award.

EUROPEAN AMERICAN

Anholt, Laurence. Camille and the Sunflowers: A Story about Vincent Van Gogh. New York: Barrons Juveniles, 1994.

- Young Camille and her father meet a poor man one day. This stranger has come to town without knowing any one, possessing neither furniture nor money. Camille wants to help this man, so she and his father pay the stranger a visit and bring him sunflowers. This man turns out to be Vincent Van Gogh. The townspeople do not like Van Gogh because they do not feel that he has a reputable job. The townspeople chase the artist away, not realizing that one day he would become famous.

Anholt, Laurence. <u>Picasso and the Girl with the Ponytail: A Story about Pablo Picasso</u>. New York: Barrons Juveniles, 1998.

- Picasso befriends a shy girl in this charming tale that tells about the famous artist. Picasso uses all kinds of objects for his art projects, things most people would consider garbage. The artist is also depicted wearing house shoes throughout the story. At the end of this book, Picasso does a pencil illustration of the shy girl whom he has befriended.

Barry, L. <u>Pop Pop's First Fourth</u>. New York: McGraw-Hill School, 2000.

- Sam's grandfather, Pop Pop, tells him about his first Fourth of July in this country when he came from Ireland in 1937. This Irish immigrant shares with his grandson stories about the hard times he faced in Ireland and about his long journey to America. The grandfather also tells Sam about how he learned to play baseball at a Fourth of July picnic and the friends he met. Sam is introduced to these friends of his grandfather, who are Jewish and Polish immigrants.

Bartone, Elisa. <u>Peppe the Lamplighter</u>. Illus. T. Lewin. New York: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1993.

- Set in Little Italy in New York City, this is a tale, perhaps set during the Depression, of a young boy who is faced with many burdens but finds hope for the future. He is charged with helping support his sick father and six sisters and a relative in Italy. He tries to find a job but for some time is unsuccessful. Then, the street lamplighter asks Peppe to fill in for him while he travels back to Italy so that he will not lose his job. Peppe is proud of his new job, unlike his father who says he is ashamed of him. As Peppe lights each lamp, he makes a wish for all of his family and one for himself as well. When all of the lamps go out and his sister

is lost, his father encourages him to light the lamps to keep his sister safe. He does so, finds his sister, and renews his self-esteem and hope for a bright future. His father praises him for his accomplishment and tells him he is proud of him. This work received a Caldecott Medal.

DePaola, Tommy. Nana Upstairs & Nana Downstairs. New York: Puffin, 1978.

- The author recounts visiting his grandmother and great-grandmother when he was a child. Through this story, young Tommy faces grief when his great-grandmother passes away (Nana upstairs). His grandmother (Nana downstairs) later dies and he comes to realize that both his grandmother and great-grandmother are watching over him. This touching tale speaks of family love and dealing with loss.

Haviland, Virginia. Illus. Kim Howard. Favorite Fairy Tales in Russia. New York: Beech Tree, 1995.

- This book contains eight ancient stories including “Sir Buzz”, “The Alligator and The Jackal” and “The Banyan Deer.” These folktales speak of the rich cultural heritage from which they originated.

Keyes, M. Journey to America. New York: McGraw-Hill School, 2000.

- Marco and Lena are Italian immigrants who make the long and difficult journey to America. This story tells of their experiences aboard the ship where they dealt with cramped spaces, lack of food and terrible storms. However, they come to see that the opportunities awaiting them in America are worth the hard journey. They make friends with another couple and help take care of them when they become ill. After this month-long trek, they finally see the Statue of Liberty and are delighted to begin their new life as Americans.

Kroll, Steven. Mary McLean and the St. Patrick's Day Parade. New York: Scholastic, 1993.

- Folklore and realism are blended in the tale of Irish immigrants who live in Manhattan during the 1850s. A visiting leprechaun is an entertaining touch in this story of a little girl whose dreams really do come true.

Lasky, Kathryn. Dreams in the Golden Country: The Diary of Zipporah Felman, a Jewish Immigrant Girl. Dear America Series. New York: Scholastic, 1998.

- This is a fictionalized account of a twelve-year-old Jewish girl and her experiences at the end of the nineteenth century. Through good times and bad, Zipporah and her family hold on to their Jewish faith as they struggle with their new lives in America.

Levitin, Sonia. Silver Days. New York: Aladdin, 1992.

- Lisa's family immigrates to America from Germany before Hitler comes into power. Mr. Platt tries to make his way in New York City but is unsuccessful so he moves his family to Los Angeles where he makes his mark. This story is told from Lisa's point of view and shares her dreams and experiences in America.

Leodhas, Sorche Nic. Always Room for One More. New York: Holt, 1965.

- Leodhas' work is based on a Scottish folktale passed down to her by her grandfather. It is about a man named Lachie Machlan who always welcomes travelers into his crowded home. This is an example of graciousness and being helpful to others despite one's circumstances.

MacLachlan, Patricia. Caleb's Story. New York: Joanna Cotler, 2001.

- Set in the winter of 1918, this story is about immigrant children living in the Midwest. While a war rages in Europe, influenza is taking its toll on Caleb's

community. His sister moves into town, he is given the task of keeping a journal so that she will know everything that happens on the farm. A stranger comes, giving Caleb something to write about.

Marx, Trish. One Boy from Kosovo. New York: Harper Collins Juvenile, 2000.

- This is the story of a young boy and his experiences in a refugee camp for people of Kosovo. Edi winds up in the camp after he and his family flee their home because a friend of the family is killed by Serbian soldiers. In the late 1990's a civil war in former Yugoslavia forced millions of people, such as Edi and his family, to flee their native home.

Murphy, Jim. West to a Land of Plenty: The Diary of Teresa Angelino-Viscardi. New York: Scholastic, 1998.

- While traveling in 1883 with her Italian-American family, fourteen-year-old Teresa keeps a diary of her experiences as she and her family travel with other immigrant pioneers to establish a community in Idaho named Opportunity. Teresa's journey begins in 1883 when she boards a train ending three months later when she lands in America. This story spans four decades and chronicles the building of roads, homes, and a school in Opportunity. Teresa becomes a teacher, gets married and has children, all of whom attend college. The last entry of Teresa's diary is from one week before her death in which she reflects upon her life in America and how satisfied she has been.

Polacco, Patricia. Chicken Sunday. New York: Philomel, 1992.

- Young Patricia and her two friends want to buy a hat for one of the boy's grandmother, Eula Mae, who has acted as a grandmother to Patricia since her babushka passed away. When the children go to a hat shop, the owner, who is a

Holocaust survivor, mistakenly blames them for committing an act of violence. The children want to work for Mr. Kodinski in exchange for a hat, but are turned away. In the end, the children make traditional Pysanky eggs for the shop owner to sell in his store. This is a story that features characters of Russian, Jewish, and African American cultures.

---. Keeping Quilt. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 2001.

- In this charming tale, Polacco traces a family heirloom over four generations. Her great grandmother was a Russian Jewish immigrant. The "keeping quilt" contains a piece of her scarf along with bits and pieces of many other family members' garments. The quilt has been passed down from mother to daughter and has swaddled newborn babies, served as a Sabbath tablecloth, and remains a family treasure. This story relates the importance of family history and keeping traditions alive.

---. The Butterfly. New York: Philomel, 2000.

- Polacco tells the true story of her great aunt and aunt during World War II in France. At this time, France was occupied by Germany and there were Nazi soldiers everywhere. The author's aunt, Monique, is terrified by the soldiers who treat the townspeople and especially the Jews unconscionably. Monique and her friends wonder if the war will ever end and they will once again be free.

Robbins, Ruth. Ill. N. Sidjakov. Baboushka and the Three Kings. Berkeley, CA: Parnassus P, 1960.

- Baboushka and the Three Kings by Ruth Robbins is an adaptation of an old Russian folk tale. In this tale, Baboushka is visited by the three wise men who have lost sight of the star that leads to baby Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. The three

ask Baboushka to help them find the babe. She says that she has work to be done, but that the next morning, she will gladly help them. The men cannot wait, so they leave Baboushka to her work. Baboushka is overcome by happiness and decides to catch up with the kings the next morning. She packs some items to take to the babe as presents. She asks everyone she sees about the three kings, but no one has seen them. She never does find them or the babe, but she makes the journey every year handing out little items to children along the way. This is a combination of the story of the three wise men and of Santa Claus. Sidjakov won a Caldecott Medal for his illustrations.

Schneider, Mical. Annie Quinn to America. New York: Carolrhoda, 2001.

- This story tells of the hardships faced by the early Irish immigrants. They held jobs that no one wanted; they were ridiculed and stereotyped. This is the backdrop for Annie's story while the main focus is on a girl who comes to America, funded by the money saved by her mother, and the adverse conditions she faces. Before Annie's trip to America, she receives letters form her mother filled with details of the desperate life she leads. When Annie and her brother finally arrive, he takes off to join a gang. Despite the hardships with this story is filled, it does end with a sense of hope.

Spinelli, Jerry. Maniac Magee. Boston: Little, 1990.

- In a tale of acceptance of one's self and others, this novel follows the life of a young boy, Jeffrey Magee. Jeffrey leaves his arguing aunt and uncle, becomes homeless, and ends up in the racially divided community of Two Mills. In this town, he becomes known as "Maniac Magee." He is eventually adopted by an

African American family, the Beales, and finds peace with himself and learns to accept others.

HISPANIC/ HISPANIC AMERICAN

Alphin, Elaine Marie. Illus. Joan Sandin. A Bear for Miguel. New York: Harper, 1996.

- An El Salvadoran girl trades her beloved teddy bear for necessities for her family. This story illustrates the hardships that children often face in poor countries, while exemplifying the importance of having empathy with others.

Arnold, Sandra Martin. Alicia Alonso: First Lad of the Ballet. New York: Walker, 1993.

- This is the biography of a Cuban ballerina who founded her own ballet school and company. She performed with the Ballet Russe and continued to dance after she became blind. This story tells of her struggles and accomplishments as she becomes a prima ballerina.

Barry, L. He Always Did His Best: Roberto Clemente. New York: McGraw-Hill School, 2002.

- Pablo, a young Hispanic boy, loves to play baseball despite being treated poorly by some white boys. His grandfather sits down and tells Pablo the story of Roberto Clemente, who is the first major league baseball player from Puerto Rico. He also tells him about Sammy Sosa and Juan Gonzalez. The wisdom of the grandfather is shown through his using Robert Clemente to give Pablo pride in his heritage. Pablo is encouraged to give baseball another try and to do his best.

Bernhard, Emery. Illus. Durga Bernhard. Tree That Rains: the Flood Myth of the Hichol Indians of Mexico. New York: Holiday House, 2001.

- This flood myth is quite similar to the Biblical story of Noah's Ark. However, in this folktale, an Huichol man cuts down a fig tree one day and comes back the next to see that the tree has reappeared. Great Grandmother Earth makes the tree grow back and tells the man that she was responsible. The people forget the power of the gods and for this a flood will cover the earth. The man is told to build a boat that he is to stock with certain things and take his dog. After the flood waters recede, the earth is replanted and the man's dog turns into a woman.

Bernier-Grand, Carmen T. Illus. Ernesto Ramos Nieves. Juan Bobo: Four Folktales From Puerto Rico. New York: Harper, 1995.

- The author brings the culture of Puerto Rico to life in his collection of folktales. The town simpleton, Juan Bobo, is the protagonist of all tales and is quite colorful. While his antics such as trying to dress a pig in his mother's best dress are entertaining, the culture of a rural Puerto Rican town is shown.

Bickman, Connie. Children of Mexico: Through the Eyes of Children. Edina, MN: Abdo and Daughters, 1994.

- Through the eyes of children, readers are taken on a journey through Mexico. This non-fiction book is a good resource for the comparison of countries and cultures.

Bunting, Eve. Illus. Ronald Himler. A Day's Work. New York: Clarion, 1994.

- An elderly man moves from Mexico to live with his daughter and grandson in California. Francisco, the grandson, convinces a man to hire his grandfather as a gardener despite the fact that the grandfather is an experienced carpenter and does

not know English. This tale captures the love and respect between the grandfather and grandson and displays the strong sense of honesty and integrity valued by the grandfather. While the grandfather teaches young Francisco about values, he learns about the new world from his grandson.

Castillo, Ana. Illus. Susan Guevara. My Daughter the Dove , My Son the Eagle: An Aztec Chant. New York: Dutton, 2000.

- Castillo has divided this work into two sections – one for a daughter and one for a son. The milestones of growing up are traced, and the joy experienced by a parent during these times is depicted. Inspired by Aztec chants, Castillo brings an ancient art into a wonderfully contemporary piece.

Corpi, Lucha. Illus. Mira Reisbery. Where Fireflies Dance. New York: Children's Book, 2002.

- Corpi bases this book on memories of her early childhood in Mexico. Her use of bilingual text brings the reader into her childhood world. Most of the experiences she speaks of are about her family life and the relationship with her family.

Cumpi. Carlos. Latino Rainbow: Poems about Latino Americans. Chicago: Children's P, 1994.

- Carlos Cumpri includes 20 poems pertaining to the history of Latino or Hispanic Americans. This picture book details early colonies on the west coast (California), the relationship between the United States and Mexico, and outstanding achievements of some Hispanic Americans. The poems are colorful in language and lend a different approach to learning about Hispanic American culture.

Garza, Carmen Lomas. In My Family. New York: Children's Book P, 2000.

- The author shares stories of her childhood in Kingsville, Texas. Her pride in her Mexican American heritage is evident as she details everyday happenings and specials events in her family's history.

Gerson, Mary Joan. Illus Carla Golembe. People of the Corn: A Mayan Story. New York: Little, 1995.

- In this folktale, the creation of the Mayan people is retold. From the early beginnings to present day, Gerson illustrates how corn plays a vital role in the lives of the Mayan people. This folktale also demonstrates the rich cultural history of the Mayan people and the importance of appreciating one's origins.

Johnston, Tony. Illus. Favricio Vander Broek. Uncle Rain Cloud. Watertown, MA: Talewinds, 2001.

- Carlos thinks his Uncle Tio looks like a rain cloud. Tio has been angry since his family moved to Los Angeles, and he has to walk his nephew to school every day. Tio's English is limited, but he refuses to let Carlos help him. Tio is a different person in the evenings, though. He tells Carlos stories of Mexico and finds himself relaxed. Carlos enjoys this time with Tio and wishes that his uncle would behave this way all the time.

Joose, Barbara M. Illus. Giselle Potter. Ghost Wings. San Francisco: Chronicle, 2001.

- Monarch butterflies make an annual trip to Mexico without any scientific explanation for their journey. A little girl in Mexico believes that she knows the answer. Her grandmother, to whom she was very close, passed away one year when the butterflies left. Now each year, the butterflies return, and as she

believes, carry the souls of the deceased. This story is filled with cultural information about Mexico.

Madrigal, Antonio Hernandez. Illus. Tommie dePaola. Erandi's Braids. New York: Putnam, 2001.

- The author tells the story of a young Mexican girl and her act of selflessness as she approaches her birthday. Erandi cuts her hair and sells her long, beautiful braids in order to help raise money for her family. The fishing nets her family uses are filled with holes and must be repaired. Hair buyers come to Erandi's village and the young girl uses this opportunity to help her family.

Menard, Valerie. The Latin Holiday Book. New York: Marlow, 2000.

- This is a valuable resource providing information on the special traditions and celebrations of Hispanic Americans. Aside from holidays and annual traditions, the author also discusses in the religious and social history, customs, foods, and activities. Also provided are recipes and instructions on how to make authentic crafts related to various holidays.

Mohr, Nicholasa. Illus. Dena Wallenstein Neusner. Going Home. 2nd ed. New York: EP Dutton, 1987.

- Felita and her family, who are from Puerto Rico, live in New York. Her brother is planning to return to Puerto Rico and asks Felita to go with him. Having dealt with prejudice in New York and trying to blend both parts of her heritage, she agrees. After her summer in Puerto Rico, Felita is finally able to come to terms with her heritage which she once took for granted.

Tripp, Valerie. Illus. Jean-Paul Tibbles. Meet Josephina. Middleton, WI: Pleasant Company, 1997.

- This book is part of the American Girls collection. It contains information about Mexican immigrants in New Mexico in the 1800s as seen through the experiences of Josephina.

Politi, Leo. Song of the Swallows. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1948.

- Leo Politi chronicles a year in the life of a young boy living in a mission town in California. Juan is fascinated with swallows and feels that these young birds are dear friends. He often goes to the mission to see them and talks to an older gentleman, Julian, about them. In an effort to entice the swallows to nest near his home, young Juan builds a garden. Winter passes and then when spring comes, the swallows return. Juan is overjoyed when he finds a pair of his favorite birds nesting just outside his window. While this story is about a young Hispanic American boy, it also offers information about missions, birds, and the celebration of St. Joseph's Day.

Winter, Jonah. Illus. A. Juan. Frida. New York: Scholastic, 2002.

- Through a wonderfully illustrated book, Jonah Winter succinctly tells the story of artist Frida Kahlo. Kahlo, who was stricken with polio as a child, learned to cope with tragedy in her life through painting. Her father painted pictures for a living and taught his young daughter his craft. When Kahlo was involved in an accident later in life, her art again comes to her aid. This book is full of wondrous folk art creatures and animals and the text seems to blend effortlessly into the artwork. There is a more detailed biography of Frida Kahlo at the end of the story.

INUIT

Andrews, Jan. Illus. I. Wallace. Very last first time. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 2002.

- Inuits of Northern Canada have a yearly ritual each winter they look for mussels underneath the thick ice once the tides recede. This year a young girl will climb down underneath the ice by herself for the first time. She takes her lit candle with her and explores the underwater domain. When she realizes that the tide is approaching she panics and drops her candle. The light goes out but she is able to light another. She realizes that this is the last time that she will experience this great feat for the first time.

Brown, Tricia. Children of the Midnight Sun: Young Native Voices of Alaska. Anchorage: Northwest, 1998.

- The lives of eight Native American Alaskan youths are the basis for this informational text. The author profiles each child and provides information that children would be sure to want to know about these native Alaskans.

Bushey, Jeanne. A Sled Dog for Moshi. New York: Hyperion P, 1994.

- Moshi, a native of Baffin Island, Canada, and Jessica, who has just moved to the island from New York City, are the main characters in this tale. The story finds the pair caught out in a late-spring whiteout. They are saved by one of Moshi's father's sled dogs who leads them to a safe place. Moshi teaches Jessica how to survive the storm and comes to appreciate her father's hardworking sled dogs.

Dabcovich, Lydia. Polar Bear Son: an Inuit tale. New York: Clarion, 1997.

- An elderly Inuit woman adopts an orphan in this tale. Only there is a twist; the orphan just happens to be a polar bear cub. The bear cub takes care of his adopted

mother by bringing her food and other necessities. The bear's superior hunting and fishing abilities anger the villagers. The locals are so jealous of the bear that they threaten to kill this great hunter. Although the woman wants to keep her child, she knows that the bear must be sent away or be killed. Despite the risk, the woman and bear continue to meet outside of the village. The bear still brings her food.

DeArmond, Dale. The Seal Oil Lamp. San Francisco: The Sierra Club, 1988.

- In this Inuit folk tale, the story of a young blind boy is told. Being born blind, Alluga is destined to be left to die, according to his village's law. The villagers see persons with disabilities as burdens. So, when Alluga turns seven, he is left behind with a seal oil lamp. Instead of freezing to death, the young boy survives because the oil lamp miraculously burns all season. A mouse that he had once cared for brings him food and water. When the villagers return, they agree that he was meant to live and is taken back into the community. He grows up to prosper in his village and becomes a very successful whaler.

George, Jean Craighead. Julie of the Wolves. New York: Harper, 1972.

- In this classic tale of survival, George delves into the life of an Inuit girl. Through Julie's experiences, readers learn of the rich Inuit culture. The author also compares Julie's life and the culture of her people to those of contemporary American life.

Hill, Kirkpatrick. Toughboy and Sister. New York: Penguin, 1990.

- A brother and sister are left to their own devices in a Yukon River village. The two come to rely upon each other as they are faced with their own survival. Contemporary life of the Inuit people is explored through the tale of these siblings

and is contrasted to life in the city. The vast differences in terrain and lifestyle of Alaskan natives and residents are evident in this survival tale.

Hobbs, Will. Down the Yukon. New York: Harper, 2001.

- This story is set in frontier days and is the fictional account of a young man who lives with his brothers in a prospecting town. Jason intends to marry a young woman in his town, but does not have any money to start their life with. He signs up for a race from one end of Alaska to the other in hopes of winning a big cash prize.

Houston, James. Akavak, an Eskimo Journey. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968.

- Akavak helps his grandfather make his last trip to the land of his birth. The journey the two embark upon is harsh for even the strongest of hunters. The grandfather's mind has begun to wander and it is up to young Akavak to keep his grandfather headed in the right direction. Despite his father's warnings about veering off track, the two are forced into the mountains after a bear gets the last of their food.

Hoyt-Goldsmith, Diane. Illus. Lawrence Migdale. Artic Hunter. New York: Holiday House, 1992.

- This informational text describes a young Inuit boy's life. The differences and similarities among cultures is discussed. This comparison is exemplified through the traditions of the Inuit culture as shown through a boy's participation in cultural rituals.

Joosse, Barbara M. Illus. B. Lavallee. Mama, Do You Love Me? New York: Scholastic, 1992.

- Barbara M. Joosse introduces readers into the lives of Inuits in Mama Do You Love Me? Although this story is about a little girl trying to find out whether her mother would still love her if she did bad things, readers are expanding their vocabulary and learning about a different culture. For instance, Joosse writes, "I'll love you until the umiak flies … and the puffin howls at the moon." The pictures help the reader determine meaning. And, at the end of the book, the author gives a brief history of the Inuits and provides a glossary of terms with an expanded explanation.

Kusugak, Michael Arvaarluk. Illus. Vladyana Krykorka. Northern Lights: The Soccer Trails. Toronto: Annick P, 1993.

- A young girl loses her mother quickly to an unexpected illness and is forced to deal with her grief on her own. Her grandmother is able to help her as she tells the young girl a folktale. The tale she tells is of how those who have passed on play soccer and that is what causes the natural wonder of the Northern Lights.

Loya, Olga. Momentos Magicos: Latin American Folktales. Mexico: Bt. Bound, 2001.

- Latin American folktales are written in both English and Spanish in this book. As with folktales for all cultures, some are purely for entertainment while others focus on particular areas of Latino/Hispanic culture.

Murphy, Claire Rudolph. A Child's Alaska. Portland: Alaska Northwest, 1992.

- This informational book tells about Alaska and the Inuit people who live there. There are many details about the different areas of Alaska, the land forms,

wildlife, people and geographic areas. Photographs accompanying the text illustrate the beauty and wonder of Alaska.

Osinski, A. The Eskimo, the Inuit, and the Yupik people. Chicago: Regensteiner, 1985.

- This story about the Inuit culture describes their nomadic way of life. The Inuit peoples are dependent upon nature – the seasons and animals, focusing on maintaining food, shelter, and protection from the cold. This story also illustrates the need for summer and winter homes. Other aspects of this story are the deep respect for nature the Inuit people have and the rich tradition of storytelling and art. Although Inuits today enjoy modern conveniences, their heritage is still celebrated and preserved.

Petty, K. Eskimos. New York: Glouster P, 1987.

- This story describes the live of Inuits or Native Northern Americans. Descriptions of how igloos are built as well as the construction of kayaks and dog sleds are described. A strong sense of community and the importance of team work are strong themes evident in the book.

Paulsen, Gary. Dogsong. New York: Puffin, 1987.

- A tale of survival and adventure, Dogsong is the story of a young man who is faced with difficult events and unusual circumstances. After befriending the oldest resident of an Inuit settlement, a man drives a dogsled while everyone else uses snow mobiles. He finds his song along a trail that has him leave his elderly friend for dead in the snow and help a young woman deliver a baby in harsh conditions.

Roesch, E.P. Ashana. New York: Random, 1991.

- This tale is set in the early 19th century in what is present-day Alaska. Russian fur traders relied on Alaskan natives to provide transportation and also depended upon them for furs and hides. The main character, Ashana, is held as a slave by a fur trader and experiences many hardships during this time of turmoil in the Alaskan wilderness.

Steltzer, Ulli. Building an Igloo. New York: Holt, 1999.

- This informational text details the process of building an igloo. Although it is emphasized that Inuits no longer live in them, Igloos are still used during hunting expeditions. The process of building an igloo is explained through a father passing along this piece of Inuit tradition and skill to his son.

Yue, David. Illus. Charlotte Yue. The Igloo. 1st ed. New York: Houghton, 1998.

- Beginning with a brief history of groups of the Inuit people, this informational text explores their likely migration. Information on building an igloo and summer homes, different forms of transportation, and the ways of Inuit peoples are described. Details of family life as well as the cultural aspects of the Inuit people are explored. Aside from the explanation of the lifestyle of the Inuits, negative influences are also discussed such as miners, traders, and other entrepreneurs.

NATIVE AMERICAN

Cardigan, H. H. Potlatch for Kwiskwis. New York: McGraw-Hill School, 2000.

- This informational picture book tells a story from the perspective of a Native American child, Kwiskwis. Through this child's eyes, ceremonial customs and beliefs are explained. Aside from aspects of her daily life, interesting facts' from

tools to religion, are given. At the end of this story, young Kwiskwis is honored with a new name when she reaches ceremonial age.

Cornelissen, Cornelia. Soft Rain: A Story of the Cherokee Trail of Tears. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Books for Young Readers, 1999.

- The tragic events of the Trail of Tears are told through the experiences of a young Native American girl, Soft Rain. She is required to leave behind everyone in her family except her mother, who is forced to go along with her. Soldiers make the two carry what few possessions they have time to grab and travel westward as part of the relocation of all Cherokee people. This is an inspirational story of the inner strength and hope of those surviving the relocation of the Cherokee people on what is now known as the Trail of Tears.

De Paola, Tommy. The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush. New Mexico: Bt. Bound, 1999.

- This is a short story about a Native American child who is frustrated because he cannot do things others are able to do. He is too small to be a good hunter. He does enjoy painting, but the colors he has to use are dull. He dreams one night that his paintings become lively. He starts to use flowers to make colorful paints to use. Everyone loves his new paintings and he becomes very well respected in his community.

Goble, Paul. The Gift of the Sacred Dog. New York: Macmilan/McGraw-Hill, 1980.

- Goble attempts to explain how Native Americans came to rely on horses. In this tale, we learn that Native Americans called horses "dogs" because they had never seen such animals until Spanish settlers brought them to what is now the United

States. The Native Americans believed that horses were a blessing from the spirits, making their lives easier once the horses were tamed.

---. The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses. Scarsdale, NY: Bradbury P, 1978.

- The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses by Paul Goble is a Native American tale about a young girl that has a special relationship with horses. She understands them and can care for them like no other in her village. One day she is stirred from her sleep by a tremendous storm. The horses rear and start to run. She gets on the back of one and they carry her off to safety. She realizes that she is lost but is comforted when the leader of all wild horses invites her to live with them. A year passes before anyone from her tribe sees her. The stallion carries her out of their reach until at last he stumbles, allowing the hunters to reach her. She is taken back to her village where she is glad to see her parents. The stallion calls for her from afar. She is sad and becomes ill. Her family decides to let her live with the horses. There is a grand exchange of cloth and fineries given to the horses for a colt. Each year the girl returns with a colt for the tribe. The year she does not return, the villagers see a beautiful mare riding next to the stallion, the leader of all wild horses. She loved horses so much that she finally becomes one. Goble received a Caldecott Medal for this work.

Grossman, Virginia. Illus. S. Long. Ten Little Rabbits. San Francisco: Chronicle, 1998.

- In this wonderfully illustrated board book, Virginia Grossman portrays aspects of Native American culture in the guise of a counting book. Portraying rabbits as humans is a clever twist to the accurate portrayal of a particular group that neither detracts nor demeans Native American culture. It inadvertently places emphasis

on what is being counted, aspects of Native American culture. For example, at the end of the book where weavings are featured, each tribe is identified.

Irbinskas, Heather. Illus. Kenneth J. Spengler. How Jackrabbit Got His Very Long Ears. Flagstaff: Northland, 1994.

- The Great Spirit needed a helper to take the desert animals to their habitat. The Jackrabbit does not always pay attention to the Great Spirit and in the process hurts some of the animal's feelings. The Jackrabbit belittles the animals and tells them that they are not special. When it comes to the Great Spirit's attention that the rabbit has hurt the animal's feelings by his unkind words, he reassures the animals that they are indeed special. To compensate for his actions, the Great Spirit, realizing that the rabbit obviously cannot hear properly, increases the sizes of the Jackrabbit's ears to the length they are today.

Jeffers, Susan. Brother Eagle, Sister Sky. New York: Puffin, 1996.

- Jeffers details the loss of land Native Americans experienced when European immigrants began claiming land to homestead. When the United States government asked to buy some of the last remaining Native American land, Chief Seattle gave a famous speech at an assembly. This book recounts his moving speech and gives tremendous insight into the culture and beliefs of Native Americans.

Martin, Jr., Bill, Illus. John Archambault. Knots on a Counting Rope. New York: Holt and Company, 1987.

- A Native American tells his young grandson the story of his birth and the struggles he faced to survive. The fact that the boy is blind and able to things that were thought impossible is an inspiring part of this tale. The grandfather recounts

the boy's training horse and other remarkable events. The boy adds to his grandfather's tale and explains why he does certain things. Each knot on the rope allows the boy to remember the corresponding stories that his grandfather tells him.

Martin, Rafe. Illus. David Shannon. The Rough-Face Girl. 2nd ed. New York: GP Putnam, 1992.

- This folk tale is the Algonquin version of the Cinderella story and is a retelling of "Cupid and Psyche." Two domineering sisters are both to marry the rich and supposedly handsome Invisible Being. In order to marry him, one has to be able to see him. The only one who is able to do so is the younger of the two domineering sisters, Rough-Face Girl. The Invisible Being appears to the younger sister, reveals her hidden beauty and marries her. In this tale intricate details of the native garb and lodging of the Algonquin people are included.

McCain, Becky R. Illus. Stacey Schuett. Grandmother's Dreamcatcher. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman 1998.

- Kimmy spends a week with her Chippewa grandmother while her parents go house hunting in Chicago. The grandma lives in a cabin in the north woods. While Kimmy enjoys spending time with her grandmother, she thinks a week is a very long time to be away from her parents. One night, Kimmy wakes from a bad dream screaming. Her grandmother enlists her help in making a dream catcher and tells her young granddaughter of the legend of the first dreamcatcher. Directions and illustrations on how to make a dreamcatcher follow the story.

Medearis, Angela Shelf. Illus. Samuel Byrd. Dancing with the Indians. New York: Holiday House, 1991.

- Set in the early 1900's an African American family is invited to an annual Seminole pow wow. This tribe has rescued slaves and continues to have strong ties to African Americans. The family participates in the gathering by singing, dancing and listening to the stories of the Seminole people.

McDermott, Gerald. Arrow to the Sun. New York: Viking Penguin, 1974.

- Gerald McDermott's Arrow to the Sun, a Pueblo Indian tale, is a colorful work of geometric and Native American design. In this tale, the Lord of the Sun sends a spark of life to earth. It strikes a young woman who later has a child. This child is empty because he does not know his whole identity – he needs to know about his father. He asks a variety of people in the community until he at last meets the arrow maker. The arrow maker shoots the arrow (that the boy has now become part of) towards the sun. When the boy reaches the sun, he meets his father and is faced with a series of tests. He passes them all and then returns to earth. At the boy's return, the community holds a celebration. The illustrations are so rich and interesting that the text becomes the backdrop. McDermott received a Caldecott Medal for this work.

Lopez, Barry. Illus. Tom Pohrt. Crow and Weasel. New York: Sunburst, 1998.

- Crow and Weasel are two Native American boys of the Plains people. The two set out on a journey and return with many truths and greater wisdom.

O'Dell, Scott. Streams of the River: A Novel of Sacajawea. Boston: Houghton, 1987.

- O'Dell tells the story of Sacajawea, a Shoshone princess. She is captured by an opposing tribe after a horrible battle. She is then forced into slavery by the Minatree tribe. Even though life among this new tribe is better than that with her own, she longs to return to her people. Along their expedition, Lewis and Clark attempt to return Sacajawea to her tribe.

Rubins, Diane Teitel. Native American Projects, Games, and Activities for Grades K-3. Memphis: Troll, 1998.

- This reference book offers facts on the many different Native American tribes including daily life, houses, and foods specific to each tribe. Also included is a story about a child that lived in each tribe and details about his/her daily life.

San Souci, Robert D. Illus. Daniel San Souci. Sootface: An Ojibwa Cinderella Story. 2nd ed. New York: Bantam, 1997.

- In this rendition of the Cinderella tale, a young girl has lost her mother, has sisters that beat her, and a father that does not care for her. Her face is always smeared with soot and her hair is singed from cooking. She knows that one day she will escape. A mysterious invisible warrior announces through his sister that he will take a woman with a kind and honest heart as his wife. Only Sootface proves worthy. She is then renamed Dawn-Light by her husband.

Smith, Cynthia Leitch. Illus. Cornelius Van Wright. Jingle Dancer. 1st ed. New York: Morrow Junior, 2000.

- Set in modern times, this is the story of a Muscogee-Ojibwe girl who lives in a small town in Oklahoma. She draws on the strength from the women of her

family and her intertribal Native American community when she dances a dance handed down by generations in her family.

Steptoe, John. The Story of Jumping Mouse. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1984.

- This story is based on a Native American legend and features a courageous mouse as the main character. This mouse faces obstacles as it journeys to a far-off land. At the end of the tale, the mouse is transformed into an eagle that soars above the land.

Tapahonso, Luci. Illus. Anthony Chee Emerson. Songs of Shiprock Fair. Walnut, CA: Kiva, 1999.

- The Navajo Nation celebrates with an annual fair in the town of Shiprock, New Mexico. This particular fair is the oldest celebrated by the Navajo people. While the author tells of this event through the eyes of a fictional character, she speaks from experience as she is from Shiprock. Readers are taken through the events of the fair and get a glimpse of the culture and traditions of the Navajo people.