FAMILY BOOK BAGS:
A SCHOOL-WIDE DIVERSE LITERATURE PROJECT

LEVEL: K – 5 with family

GOALS
- To engage students and parents/guardians and provide them with opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate the diverse backgrounds of the families in the school community and the community at large.
- To provide common language and concepts for families that relate to racial, cultural and family diversity.
- To support teachers in their effort to implement multicultural educational practice.

OBJECTIVES
- Students will take turns bringing home diversity book bags.
- Students will read stories, share recipes and play games with their families.
- Students will share their family experiences with their classmates.

OVERVIEW
Grade-level book bags are created to be sent home with each child on a rotating basis throughout the school year. Each book bag includes books that can be read with family members. The book bags represent different aspects of diversity found in the school community and community at large, including racial, ability, cultural and family structure.

When deciding what books to include in the book bags consider both what diversity there is in the school and what is missing. The book bags can be used both to help children and families understand others in their school community and to help them understand the diversity beyond their school.

This project was developed and organized by an elementary school diversity committee made up of teachers, librarians and parents. The librarians, along with teachers, selected the contents of the bags.

MATERIALS
Durable reusable bags with three to four books per bag, letter home to parents/guardians, an evaluation form for parents/guardians. Optional: Index cards and a pouch for recipes.

THE PROCESS
- Bags are created by grade level. See ideas below for books by grade level.
- Introduce the book bag project in a newsletter home to families or on a back-to-school night.
- Send the books home to all children on a rotating basis or have families sign up to have the bags sent home during a specific week.
- Plan to send the book bags home with a child on a Thursday and ask them to be returned to school on a Tuesday. Along with the materials and activities in the bag include a letter to the families and an evaluation form.
- When the book bags are returned, the child has an opportunity to share their experiences.
**Family Book Bags: Ideas for a Selection of Books**

**Kindergarten Bag**
*One* by Kathryn Otoshi
*The Color of Us* by Karin Katz
*The Family Book* by Todd Parr
*Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman
*Red: A Crayon’s Story* by Michael Hall
*A Mother for Choco* by Keiko Kasza
*I Love Saturdays y Domingos* by Alma Flor Ada
*And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell

**First-Grade Bag**
*The Great Big Book of Families* by Mary Hoffman
*Jacob’s New Dress* by Sarah and Ian Hoffman
*Different Just Like Me* by Lori Mitchell
*Donovan’s Big Day* by Lesléa Newman
*Goodbye, 382 Shin Dang Dong* by Frances Park and Ginger Park
*My Brother Charlie* by Holly Robinson Peete
*Marisol McDonald Doesn’t Match/ Marisol McDonald No Combina* by Monica Brown

**Second-Grade Bag**
*How My Family Lives in America* by Susan Kuklin
*The Other Side* by Jacqueline Woodson
*I Am Jazz* by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings
*A Chair for My Mother* by Vera Williams
*Pinky and Rex* by James Howe

**Third-Grade Bag**
*Ian’s Walk: A Story About Autism* by Laurie Lears
*Brown Honey in Broomwheat Tea* by Joyce Carol Thomas
*In Our Mothers’ House* by Patricia Polacco
*Each Kindness* by Jacqueline Woodson
*The Adventures of Tulip, Birthday Wish Fairy* by S. Bear Bergman
*My Diary from Here to There/Mi Diario de Aquí hasta Alla* by Amada Irma Pérez
*While You Are Away* by Eileen Spinelli

**Fourth-Grade Bag**
*Who Belongs Here?* by Margy Burns Knight
*The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi
*Families* by Susan Kuklin
*The Christmas Menorahs* by Janice Cohn
*Benjamin and the Word / Benjamin y La Palabra* by Daniel Olivas

**Fifth-Grade Bag**
*Muskrat Will Be Swimming* by Cheryl Savageau
*America Street: A Multicultural Anthology of Stories* by Anne Mazer (editor)
*If the World Were a Village* by David J. Smith
*Unbreakable Code* by Sara Hoagland Hunter
*Baseball Saved Us* by Ken Mochizuki
*My Name Is Bilal* by Asma Mobin-Uddin

Developed by Estabrook Elementary School Anti-Bias Committee and the Hastings Elementary School Diversity Committee, Lexington, MA. Book recommendations updated 2016 by Welcoming Schools.