



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
Aqui 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.*