

# Black Literature, Girlhood and Community Engagement

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Charlotte Community Scholar:  
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1) What does existing curriculum look like in terms of diversity?

- 2016 - 22% children's books diverse
- NC Curriculum: 91 pages, 5 mentions of "diverse" texts

2) What is the significance of diversity in literature and curriculum?

- Academic performance/ motivation
- Identity
- Empathy

3) What are some of the main themes evident in diverse literature?

- Hope
- Slavery and Racism
- Civil Rights
- Literacy/Storytelling
- Family

SRET Fellow Effuah Sam

## Research Questions:

1. *How can I use these texts to aid in students telling their own stories?*
2. *Would I use this literature in my classroom? Why or Why Not?*
3. *What theatre curriculum is currently available to CMS middle/high school students and how diverse is it?*

**Introduction:** Working with underrepresented populations, within Title I, and with students experiencing trauma the skills and experiences within SRET will aid me in my exploration of texts and literature adaptable for staging and theatrical performances. **Methods:** The methodology utilized was exploration based, consulting my private library of literary texts for the Theatre Arts classroom, online research, assessing current student need, and discussion with SRET team members.

**Results:** As expected, there are a limited number of scripts and/or playwrights that reference black girlhood, trauma, and community engagement exclusively. A list was generated for possibilities within the theatre arts classroom at the middle school and/or high school level.

**Conclusion:** Identifying a list of literature for study that is culturally relevant will increase engagement and allow for personal experience, affected student voice, overall satisfaction in the learning process, and it represents important stories to be told.

SRET Fellow Tiffany Craig

## Research Questions:

- 1) **What diverse texts (student leisure reads, curriculum and teacher read-alouds) do I have available in my classroom?**
- 2) **How do I create curriculum that will cultivate my students abilities to identify & appreciate themselves while continuing to embrace other cultures?**
- 3) **Where can I locate contemporary & relevant texts to engage my students?**

**Introduction:** As a Special Education Teacher working with low-income, African-American students, I see the urgency of intentionally teaching identity for the sake of my students developing positive self-esteem. **Methodology:** I utilized exploratory-based methods of the C.M. Online Library, my classroom resources, insightful discussions with my SRET team, online research, observations of community & societal occurrences and personal experiences with students. **Results:** Resources depicting black girlhood was limited, especially literature that shares modern day experiences. I compiled a list of resources that can be used within elementary classrooms to address identity and gender themes with African-American students. **Conclusion:** The search for literature that depicts a 21st century view of black girlhood continues to be a journey as such literature is a scarce commodity.