We are EdTrust

Analyzing Representational Balance in English Language Arts Curricula
Today’s Agenda

10 Minutes

THE FRAMEWORK
Tool for Representational Balance

10 Minutes

FINDINGS
WHO | HOW

15 Minutes

YOUR TURN

15 Minutes
Welcome!

Please think about a book that had a profound impact on you.
THE FRAMEWORK
Tool for Representational Balance
PEOPLE
Curriculum Analysis Key Questions: People

Are people of color multidimensional?

Do people of color have agency?

Are people of color positively influential?
GROUPS
Curriculum Analysis Key Questions: Groups

Are people of color immersed in groups and cultures?

Are multiple groups portrayed as equally valuable?

Are people, groups, and cultures of color represented without stereotypes?

Are groups and cultures presented positively or as having assets?
TOPICS
Curricula Analysis Findings: Topics

Are historical and social topics presented without sanitization?

Do historical and social topic presentations include the perspectives of people of color?

Is there a connection between historical and social topic presentations and the real experiences of students?
FINDINGS

WHO

HOW
Curricula Analysis Findings: Authors

AUTHORS

WHO
Curricula Analysis Findings: Authors

232 of 300
White creators are represented in 6.8 times as many books as Black creators.
Curricula Analysis Findings: People

WHO

White
Black
Non-Human
Curricula Analysis Findings: People

24% White
13% Black
12% Non-Human
7% Latino
6% Asian
3% Native American
2% Middle Eastern
1% Mixed Race

White people are featured in more books than 5 other groups combined.
HOW

Representation that mirrors the complexity of people, cultures, and topics
HOW

Nasreen's Secret School

A TRUE STORY FROM AFGHANISTAN

Topic Representation
Mirrors Complexity
Does not sanitize
Perspective and Connection
HOW PARTIAL
HOW

People Representation
Nears Complexity
Rich description
No change or decision-making
Culture Representation Marginalizes Immersion and Assets Saviorism and “Treasure from Trash”
Curricula Analysis Findings: People

PEOPLE

HOW
Curricula Analysis Findings: People

53% are given complex representation
3% are given partial representation
44% are given limited representation

124 out of 280 people centered in texts are people of color
Curricula Analysis Findings: People

Mia and her abuela learn from one another and grow together, resulting in a deep and loving bond.

Belle’s joy is richly described, but she is not shown to change or make decisions that affect others.

Tessie and Mamma joyously dance in the rain with neighbors, but there is little description of them as individuals or of their effect on others.
Curricula Analysis Findings: Groups

GROUPS
Curricula Analysis Findings: Groups

118 out of 300 texts include groups of color

31% depict a complex representation

15% depict a partial representation

54% depict a limited representation
Curricula Analysis Findings: Groups

The reader is a witness to the hopes and nurturing community around a family and their newborn baby through a Navajo tradition.

Values and cultural practices from Haida culture are positively described but without any connection to the people at the center of that culture.

A detailed description of the multigenerational practice of weaving is enriched by Spanish translation but situated in a “treasure from trash” storyline, where the value of weaving depends on the interests of White tourists.
Curricula Analysis Findings: Topics

TOPICS
Curricula Analysis Findings: Topics

137 out of 300 texts include historical or social topics

16% provide a complex representation

4% provide a partial representation

80% provide a limited representation

PLEASE DO NOT PHOTOGRAPH, SCREEN SHOT, OR POST DETAILS FROM SLIDES
Curricula Analysis Findings: Topics

The denial of education to girls and women is shown as an enactment of societal structure through government policies and violent enforcement.

Gabriela Mistral broke barriers as the first Nobel-Prize winning Latina woman, but those barriers remain hidden in this story.

Legal segregation is framed as an individual problem—as people thinking “black people and white people should not be friends,” which can be solved if we are kind to one another.
YOUR TURN
Tito's dream finally came true when he led his very own big band—the Tito Puente Orchestra. He wrote music and recorded more than one hundred albums! He made music with Celia Cruz, Santana, and La Lupe.

El sueño de Tito al fin se hizo realidad cuando logró dirigir su propia orquesta: la Orquesta de Tito Puente. ¡Tito escribió su propia música y grabó más de cien álbumes! Hizo música con Celia Cruz, Santana y La Lupe.

What about the text or image gives a sense of character dimension or agency?
Water is the first medicine, Nokomis told me.

What about the text or image gives a sense of character influence or topic perspective?
Besides their homes, the Cherokee people changed their appearance as they assimilated. Traditionally, the Cherokee wore animal skins, beaded belts, and moccasins on their feet. By the end of the 1700s, most had given these up for the pants, jackets, dresses, skirts, and shoes white people wore.

Cherokee society also changed greatly. The tribe formed a government modeled after the United States government and even had a constitution. The Cherokee practiced white religions and created schools, too.
QUESTIONS

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