SHARED FOUNDATIONS

Include

JULIE STIVERS





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SHARED FOUNDATION II

Include



KEY COMMITMENT

Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to inclusiveness and respect for diversity in the learning community.

Contents

	Series Introduction / xi
	AASL Standards Integrated Framework: Include / xii
	Introduction: School Libraries as Driving Force for Equity and Inclusion / xv
PART I	
LEARNE	R COMPETENCIES 1
1	Think with the Learning for Justice Social Justice Standards Jennifer Sturge
2	Create by Slamming in the School Library Chiquita Toure
3	Share with Restorative Practices and Circ ² Julie Stivers
4	Grow with Loudness in the School Library Allie Jane Bruce
PART II	
school	LIBRARIAN COMPETENCIES 49
5	Think with Read Woke Cicely Lewis
6	Create with an Equitable Writer-in-Residence Model Liz Porter, Kathryn Cole, Julie Stivers, and Sandra Hughes-Hassell 59
7	Share with a Mental Wellness Curriculum Anita Cellucci
8	Grow with Project READY Kimberly Hirsh, Sandra Hughes-Hassell, and Casey H. Rawson

Acknowledgments / ix

vii

PART III

SCHOOL	LIBRARY A	LIGNMENTS 97
9		che #LibFive con, Jose Gomez, Jaida Morris, and Julie Stivers99
10		Be the Lighthouse
11		ngh LGBTQ+-Inclusive School Libraries Tobelli119
12		Northside Neighbors ole
PART IV		
ACROSS	INCLUDE	141
13	Include and Ness Shor	Disabilities tley143
14		vels and Inclusive Practice ra153
15		genous Literacies eese161
16		e Book Fair Model ers
		secting the Shared Foundations through Include / 179
Ap_{l}	pendixes	
	Appendix A	Annotated Bibliography of Foundational Scholars and Resources / 183
	Appendix B	Shelf Audits / 195
	Appendix C	Diversity in Publishing Infographic / 199
Res	cources and Wo	orks Cited / 203
Abc	out the Author	/ 209
Con	ntributors / 2	11
Ind	lex / 217	

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Series Introduction

The Shared Foundations series from the American Association of School

Librarians (AASL) examines the six Shared Foundations that anchor the comprehensive approach to teaching and learning in the *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*. The Shared Foundations—Inquire, Include, Collaborate, Curate, Explore, and Engage—represent the core concepts that all learners, school librarians, and school libraries develop and promote in their K-12 learning environment.

Each of the six books in this series is dedicated to the deep exploration of a single Shared Foundation. Although each of the Shared Foundations supports its own inherent priorities, it cannot be implemented in isolation. The writing process used by the authors created a series of books that, like the AASL Standards Frameworks, are unique and yet parallel each other. Common elements are found throughout the series:

- A balance between theoretical discussion, practical strategies, and implementation examples, promoting reflection and creativity
- Development of the Competencies and Alignments for the Learner, School Librarian, and School Library in all four Domains—Think, Create, Share, and Grow
- Differences in application and assessment across grades K-12, promoting a growth mindset and envisioning outcomes for all learners, whether student learners, school librarians, or other educators
- An emphasis on personalized learning experiences, project-based learning, and authenticity of learning and projects
- Challenges addressed, illustrating ways to implement the Shared Foundations in various environments and levels of support

Questions for the Reflective Practitioner conclude each chapter, allowing readers to consider the application of concepts specific to their own learning communities and stimulate nuanced professional conversations. For ease of reference, readers also will find the AASL Standards Integrated Framework for the relevant Shared Foundation included in this work.

AASL and its series authors hope that this immersive and dedicated examination of the Shared Foundations will help school library professionals deepen their understandings, broaden their perspectives, make connections for personal relevance, and innovate and reflect on their practice with a professional community.

For more information about the *National School Library Standards*, and to access the latest implementation assistance resources, visit standards.aasl.org.

Include

Domain	LEARNER DOMAINS AND COMPETENCIES	SCHOOL LIBRARIAN DOMAINS AND COMPETENCIES
A. Think	Learners contribute a balanced perspective when participating in a learning community by: 1. Articulating an awareness of the contributions of a range of learners. 2. Adopting a discerning stance toward points of view and opinions expressed in information resources and learning products. 3. Describing their understanding of cultural relevancy and placement within the global learning community.	School librarians direct learners to contribute a balanced perspective when participating in a learning community by: 1. Engaging learners to articulate an awareness of the contributions of a range of learners. 2. Guiding learners as they adopt a discerning stance toward points of view and opinions expressed in information resources and learning products. 3. Differentiating instruction to support learners' understanding of cultural relevancy and placement within the global learning community.
B. Create	Learners adjust their awareness of the global learning community by: 1. Interacting with learners who reflect a range of perspectives. 2. Evaluating a variety of perspectives during learning activities. 3. Representing diverse perspectives during learning activities.	School librarians establish opportunities for learners to adjust their awareness of the global learning community by: 1. Providing opportunities for learners to interact with others who reflect a range of perspectives. 2. Devising learning activities that require learners to evaluate a variety of perspectives. 3. Designing opportunities that help learners to illustrate diverse viewpoints.
C. Share	Learners exhibit empathy with and tolerance for diverse ideas by: 1. Engaging in informed conversation and active debate. 2. Contributing to discussions in which multiple viewpoints on a topic are expressed.	School librarians facilitate experiences in which learners exhibit empathy and tolerance for diverse ideas by: 1. Giving learners opportunities to engage in informed conversation and active debate. 2. Guiding learners to contribute to discussions in which multiple viewpoints on a topic are expressed.
D. Grow	Learners demonstrate empathy and equity in knowledge building within the global learning community by: 1. Seeking interactions with a range of learners. 2. Demonstrating interest in other perspectives during learning activities.	School librarians explicitly lead learners to demonstrate empathy and equity in knowledge building within the global learning community by: 1. Creating an atmosphere in which learners feel empowered and interactions are learner-initiated.

alastore.ala.org

3. Reflecting on their own place within

the global learning community.

2. Initiating opportunities that allow learners to

3. Showcasing learners' reflections on their place within the global learning community.

demonstrate interest in other perspectives.

KEY COMMITMENT

Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to inclusiveness and respect for diversity in the learning community.



SCHOOL LIBRARY DOMAINS AND ALIGNMENTS	The school library facilitates the Key Commitment to and Competencies of INCLUDE	Domain
 The school library supports balanced perspectiopportunities by: 1. Providing challenging and authentic opportunity broad range of learners. 2. Offering diverse learning experiences that allelearners. 3. Providing a comprehensive variety of resources. 	nities that address the needs of the ow for individual differences in	A. Think
 The school library represents all members and toommunity by: Establishing and maintaining a collection of rein formats that support the diverse developm needs of the range of learners and their committees. Organizing facilities to enhance the use of anotion resources and services for all learners. Featuring learning opportunities that include 	eading and information materials ental, cultural, social, and linguistic nunities. d ensure equitable access to informa-	B. Create
 The school library facilitates opportunities to example. Implementing solutions that address physical, intellectual barriers to equitable access to resemble. Promoting the use of high-quality and high-in reflect the diverse developmental, cultural, so and their communities. Constructing a learning environment that for viewpoints and ideas. 	social, cultural, linguistic, and ources and services. terest literature in formats that cial, and linguistic needs of all learners	C. Share
The school library builds empathy and equity w community by: 1. Ensuring that all learning needs are met throu located in a diverse collection of sufficient size supported by reliable hardware and software. 2. Enabling equitable access to learning opported and other resources necessary for learners' such as the school ing with administration, faculty, staff, learners.	gh access to information and ideas e for the learner population and unities, academic and social support, uccess. library's impact when communicat-	D. Grow

Introduction: School Libraries as Driving Force for Equity and Inclusion

The Shared Foundation Include is at the heart of an effective school library

practice. Not as a buzzword or feel-good mantra, but as the driving force—the muscle—that builds an inclusive school space and community. Its Key Commitment—"Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to inclusiveness and respect for diversity in the learning community"—further supports the idea of Include as a muscle powering the *National School Library Standards* and the AASL Standards Frameworks in our school libraries. School librarians can be bastions of equity, inclusion, and access because we are uniquely situated to interact with every learner. Decisions school librarians make or do not make—by default—have tremendous impact on our learners, their families, our colleagues, and our communities.

What Are the Goals for This Guide?

My goal every time I read a professional book is—simply put—to learn and become better for our learners. Thus, the overarching goal for this book is that we all become better and do better so that we can create anti-racist, inclusive spaces. To work toward that goal, this guide will

Show how the Include standards live in real school libraries. The programs, initiatives, activities, and lessons you'll read about in this guide are not exercises in theory. They are *real*. They've been born in actual school libraries with actual learners and highlight Competencies and Alignments from the Include framework.

Showcase a tapestry of school librarian voices. A strength of this book is that it is not written by one person. Instead, it's a chorus of school librarian stories

that represent a range of identities across the school library world. This tapestry of librarian expertise and experience benefits us for the very reasons that the Include Shared Foundation is so crucial for our school libraries and learners.

Serve as both inspiration and roadmap. Do I want these chapters to inspire readers to meet the Competencies and Alignments of Include by building inclusive school libraries and practices? Of course. Inspiration is meaningless, however, if it only lives in the pages of a guide. Inspiration translates to action when it partners with a roadmap. Each chapter concludes with action steps and takeaway ideas.

Help us relearn. To have a "commitment to inclusiveness and respect for diversity in the learning community" (AASL 2018, 76) is to commit to unlearning false narratives that are rooted in ignorance and bias. Our continued learning of anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-cishet supremacy ideologies must be based in our learners' humanity. We'll name white supremacy, institutionalized racism, and school inequities as we unpack ways in which to build inclusive school libraries that align with the AASL Standards.

Call out barriers. We cannot celebrate diversity and ignore the barriers—yes, in our own schools and libraries—that are harming our learners. To truly Include, we have to undo systems that disadvantage and exclude some learners. If we don't, we're reinforcing those systems—there is no neutral. The AASL Standards Framework for Include will help!

Stress an asset-driven perspective. A key thread running through all the Competencies and Alignments under Include is that diverse learner identities are strengths and assets that advance learning for all of us, not challenges to overcome or address.

Amplify learner voice. One of the guide's chapters is co-written by three eighth graders, and learner ideas, work, experiences, and wisdom are embedded throughout this guide. To truly Include means to include our learners at every stage of our school library practice and to make sure that we remember to provide our learners with the microphone!

What Myths Stand in the Way?

Two dangerous myths can poison Include. As school librarians, we need to expose and push back against these myths.

Myth 1. Include is the self-affirming foundation—the foundation that allows us to pat ourselves on the back in a spirit of "multiculturalism." Although this may be an access point, just stressing diversity or multiculturalism is not enough to build an inclusive practice. After all, we cannot talk about how to

Include if we do not also identify who historically has been—and continues to be—excluded from school spaces and school libraries. To commit ourselves to *include* means committing ourselves to identifying—and disrupting—who is being *excluded* and in what ways. Meeting the Competencies and Alignments of Include with fidelity will help us quell this myth.

Myth 2. Include can be driven primarily through curation. Are the Shared Foundations of Curate and Include natural partners? Of course. Yet Include also works beautifully with—and is a necessary partner to—Inquire, Collaborate, Explore, and Engage. Curating an inclusive collection is just one facet of Include. Dropping diverse books onto a school library shelf without any accompanying work is hollow and harmful. Meaningfully meeting the wide range of AASL Standards Competencies and Alignments under Include will expose this myth as false.

What Will We Discover Along the Way?

I'm in the arena with you.¹ I am a full-time, working middle school librarian who completely understands the joys and challenges that come with our positions. I want this guide to be casual, as though we are sitting down together at a table—all of us bringing experiences and perspectives and sharing ideas. That's not to say this guide is not research-based, equity-framed, and guided by our AASL Standards Framework. It is. But a stiff, dry book is not what I enjoy reading, and it's not what I can share with you in good conscience. I'm aiming for relaxed, professional, inspiring, conversational, engaging, and challenging—with our precious learners always at the forefront as we journey through the AASL Standards Frameworks and the Include Shared Foundation.

As we explore the **Think** Domain, we'll meet a school library district supervisor who is rewriting the school library curriculum to align with the Learning for Justice Social Justice Standards. We'll spend time with #ReadWoke (a powerful librarian-led reading initiative) and meet three learners who worked with their school librarian to create professional development centered on building inclusive school libraries.

Through the **Create** Domain, we'll learn from a school librarian who is developing engaging literacy programs, be introduced to an equitable writer-in-residence model, and journey with a school librarian who reopened a closed school library and reestablished a reading culture in her school.

The **Share** Domain will guide us as we explore restorative practices in a school library setting, gain strategies from a school librarian who developed a mental wellness curriculum, and discuss how to build LGBTQ+-inclusive school libraries.

Using the **Grow** Domain, we'll hear from sixth graders who critically examined book covers, unpack a new anti-racist professional curriculum for youth librarians,

and see how a summer library program transformed a school into a community space.

The Domains, Competencies, and Alignments under Include do not work in isolation and neither do school librarians. We'll explore **Across Include** and discuss how to build inclusive spaces for our disabled learners and their families, see how the four Domains can be combined with an inquiry framework to include comic books and manga, learn about Critical Indigenous Literacies, and examine an equitable model for school book fairs.

How to Use This Guide

The chapters in this guide are structured to parallel the Domains of the AASL Standards Frameworks and are presented within four parts—"Learner Competencies," "School Librarian Competencies," "School Library Alignments," and "Across Include." Each section will introduce not only the accompanying chapters but also ways in which the Competencies and Alignments are the key ingredients for the Include Shared Foundation.

Common elements are found in each chapter:

- An introduction explains how the program or initiative that anchors the chapter aligns with the Shared Foundation Include—either Competencies or Alignments—under the specific Domain.
- A school library program or model is presented by the librarian or librarians
 who lived it. These accounts have been written by an array of school librarians and school library professors doing powerful work with learners, families, and fellow librarians. I'm humbled by the amazing school librarians—
 and student learners—who contributed to this guide.
- A wrap-up details the ways in which the powerful work illuminated in the chapter connects to specific Competencies and Alignments under Include.
- "Questions for the Reflective Practitioner" connect to the *National School Library Standards*, the Include Shared Foundation, and the chapter's specific school library program or initiative.
- A "Moving Forward" section details action steps and takeaway ideas for each chapter. The school libraries and programs this guide will introduce are *big*. They represent incredible work and effort on the part of school librarians. But they are doable! To not overwhelm, I break down each chapter into quick yet meaningful steps that can be taken today—"What Can I Do Today?"—and tomorrow—"How Can I Build on It Tomorrow?" Then "Action Steps" are listed to scaffold suggestions for implementing the programs and ideas from the chapter.

Additionally, this guide incorporates a "Conclusion" connecting Include across and through the other five Shared Foundations in the *National School Library Standards*. Finally, a key element of Include is utilizing and leveraging resources from an inclusive array of scholars, authors, and educational partners. Appendix A provides an annotated bibliography of foundational scholars and resources for Include. I wanted this guide to be written by—and for—real, working school librarians. School librarians are unique in the library world and in the education world, and a strength of this guide is that its content is written by us, about us, and for us. It is, of course, also important for school librarians to access learning from across the education and library worlds, and Appendix A is crucial for continuing this learning. Scholars highlighted include Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings, Dr. Beverly Tatum, and Dr. Edith Campbell as well as classroom educators Tricia Ebarvia and Cornelius Minor. Resources spotlighted include

- Muslims in Story: Expanding Multicultural Understanding through Children's and Young Adult Literature (Manglik and Siddique 2019),
- LGBTQAI+ Books for Children and Teens: Providing a Window for All (Dorr and Deskins 2018),
- Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy (Muhammad 2020), and
- An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People (Dunbar-Ortiz, Mendoza, and Reese 2019).

Key Terms

We are almost ready to get started! An inclusive conversation helps everyone get on the same page. There are key terms that will be woven into our discussions unpacking the Competencies and Alignments under Include, and it's necessary that we have a shared understanding of what those terms mean.

BIPOC/BIYOC. BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and BIYOC stands for Black, Indigenous, Youth of Color. The umbrella term *people of color* has been criticized for erasing the unique experiences that Black and Indigenous people in the United States have had historically and that still impact their present realities—namely, the ongoing legacy of slavery that continues to impact Black Americans, and the legacy of Native colonization and genocide. Black Americans who have recently immigrated to the United States have a different relationship with our country's racial history, and the term *BIPOC* acknowledges the diversity of experience within the Black community. (*Note:* This definition is from Project READY, which is highlighted in chapter 8, "Grow with Project READY.")

#OwnVoices. This term refers to books written by authors who share a marginalized identity with their protagonist. Originated by Young Adult (YA) author and *Disability in Kidlit* reviewer Corinne Duyvis, the hashtag and concept center marginalized voices from across identities including race, language, LGBTQ+, mental health, disability, religion, and immigration status. #Own-Voices titles have another layer of credibility as being a part of a community gives the author knowledge and experiences that cannot be duplicated. The foregrounding of #OwnVoices literature is threaded throughout this guide as a way to build inclusive collections, support learners, and meet key Include Competencies. Please note that centering #OwnVoices literature is not a call for prying into authors' lives but is instead a way to celebrate what authors have freely shared. There is growing disagreement surrounding the use of the #OwnVoices marker. It is *always* best to use the identity descriptions that authors use for themselves and their characters.

Racism. Racism equals social and institutional power plus racial prejudice (Tatum 2017; Wellman 1977): racism = power + prejudice. There is a harmful idea that racism is driven by a small group of individuals who actively and loudly hate. Racism is bigger than individuals. It is about systems of advantage and oppression based on race and is widespread, deeply entrenched, and insidious in societal institutions—including education. Racism will not be eradicated by individuals treating each other with respect but by identifying structural inequities and disrupting systems.

Getting Started!

The AASL Standards remind us that "competence is not developed as an all-or-nothing phenomenon; gaining competence is both progressive and personalizable" (AASL 2018, 125). My hope is that this guide shares that sentiment—it represents learning through the Include Shared Foundation that is both progressive and personalizable. It is not all-or-nothing. We can all grow by learning about and through these Include-centered programs, initiatives, and frameworks.

I am ready to get started. You? The Shared Foundation of Include—and our learners—are waiting for us.

NOTE

 Brené Brown has a great quote about this concept! See B. Brown, "Why Your Critics Aren't the Ones Who Count" (keynote presentation at 99U Conference, 2013).
 Retrieved from https://99u.adobe.com/videos/20052/brene-brown-stop-focusing -on-your-critics.

Index

An italicized page number indicates an	AASL Standards Integrated Framework,
illustration or table.	intersections within, 141–142, 179–182
	ableism. See disabled learners
	ableist biases, countering, 51, 147-148
#LibFive, 99-109	abundance paradigm, 29
#MontbelloReads Campus Book Club, 115	Acevedo, Elizabeth, 26, 53, 114
#OwnVoices books	active listening, 24, 26, 29, 31, 34, 102, 108
and culturally sustaining literacy programs,	adaptable library space and furnishings, 143,
68,77	148, 150–151
defined, xx, 51, 164	ADHD, learners with, 149-150
importance of, 101, 137, 173-175	Adichie, Chimamanda, 39, 147
and LGBTQ+ representation, 122	Advancement Project, 32
and mental wellness program, 87	advocacy
and Native representation, 164–166, 169	for accurate teaching and learning about
and Read Woke, 56, 58	Native cultures, 161–169
and representation of disabled people, 145,	for comics, manga, and graphic novels in
148, 150	school library, 154–155, 157,
#TrueBookFAIRS, 171-177	158-160
504 plans, 149, 150	for focusing on mental health education,
	79-84
	for learner voice, 39-48, 59-78
A	for LGBTQ+ learners, 119–128
"A New Vision of School," 29	for literacy and reading culture, 25, 59,
A Novel Mind website, 151	111–118, 171–177
AASL Standards Framework for Learners, xii	for racial equity in schools, 93, 94, 96
AASL Standards Framework for School	for school library and programs, 21-23, 25
Librarians, xii	for writing opportunities for learners, 23.
AASL Standards Framework for School Libraries,	See also writing experiences for learners
xiii	affective domain of learning. See Share Domain
AASL Standards in action. See alignments	in Include Shared Foundation
for school libraries in Include Shared	African American people. See BIPOC learners
Foundation; competencies for learners;	Alexander, Michelle, 53
competencies for school librarians in	Ali, S. K., 53
Include Shared Foundation	Alice Bliss, 83

alignments for school libraries in Include Shared	Beaver Steals Fire: A Salish Coyote Story, 163
Foundation	Being Jazz: My Life as a (Transgender) Teen, 53
Create Domain, xiii, 97, 111, 116, 117, 150,	Belpré, Pura, 65
151, 156	Bersani, Hank, Jr., 147–148
Grow Domain, xiii, 98, 137, 138, 157–158, 176,	Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ Students, 127
177	Better Than Carrots or Sticks: Restorative
Share Domain, xiii, 97, 120, 126, 150, 157, 158, 159, 168, 171, 176	Practices for Positive Classroom Management, 32
Think Domain, xiii, 97, 99, 107, 108, 154	biases
Alim, H. Samy, 28, 68	affecting selection of learners for enrichment
All American Boys, 53	activities, 66
All Are Welcome, 9	discussing with learners, 39-48
Altobelli, Rachel, 119–128	faced by disabled learners, 145, 147, 149
American Federation of Teachers, 32	faced by LGBTQ+ learners, 123, 126-127
American Indian Stereotypes in the World of	faced by Native peoples, 162–163
Children, 166	working to counter and eliminate, 3-19
American Indians. See Native peoples	See also antibias curriculum
American Indians in Children's Literature	bibliotherapy, 84
website, 159, 166, 169	bilingualism, 72
American Library Association Emerging	Bintliff, Amy, 33
Leaders, 19, 120, 126	BIPOC authors. See #OwnVoices books
American Sign Language, 151	BIPOC characters in books, 39-48, 107, 114-115,
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 148	147
anti-ableist spaces and collections, 51-58	BIPOC community members
antibias curriculum, 3-19, 68	and school librarians' racial equity work,
anti-cishet-supremacy spaces and collections,	89-96
xv-xx, 51-58, 60, 119-128	collaborating with school librarians, 129-139
See also inclusive school libraries and	BIPOC defined, xix
practices	BIPOC learners
anti-racist curriculum, 68, 90, 105	connecting with, 101–105
anti-racist spaces and collections, xv-xx, 32,	participating in writer-in-residence programs,
51-58, 90-96	60-78
See also inclusive school libraries and	perspectives of represented during learning
practices	activities, 24
anti-sexist spaces and collections, xvi, 51–58	Bird in a Box, 41
See also inclusive school libraries and	bisexual learners. See LGBTQ+ learners
practices	Bishop, Rudine Sims, 57, 64, 164
anxiety, 31, 45, 84, 144, 149–150	BIYOC
art projects, 65, 69, 83, 84, 132, 133, 160	defined, xix, 196
As an Oak Tree Grows, 41–42	and inclusive school libraries, 61, 90, 92, 93 Black, Indigenous, People of Color. <i>See</i> BIPOC
Asian characters in books, 40, 147 asset-driven perspective, xvi, 28, 68, 97–98, 120	Black History Month, 36
Association for Mindfulness in Education, 87	Black Instoly Month, 30 Black Jack: The Ballad of Jack Johnson, 71
attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, learners	Black people. See BIPOC learners
with, 149–150	
auditory processing disorders, learners with,	Blue Ribbon Mentor-Advocate Program, 101–102 "Bolted Tombs," 60, 70
149–151	book clubs, 58, 67, 115, 116, 117, 154
author visits, 59–78, 100, 116, 118	book cover imagery and bias, 39–48
author voice. See #OwnVoices books	book fairs, 104-105, 171-177
autistic learners, 149–150, 155	book labels, 122–123
addition feature of 110 100, 100	book lists. See lists of resources; resource lists
	booktalks, 26, 28, 35–36, 40, 53, 87, 114, 116, 118,
В	175, 188
Bank Street College of Education, 40	braille, 151
Bank Street School, 39	Brick by Brick, 71
barriers to inclusive practice, xvi–xvii, 29, 93–94	Brown, Brené, xx
Barton, Chris, 133	Brown, Monica, 133

Bruce, Allie Jane, 39–48	to reflect diversity, 51–58, 101–104, 108,
Bruchac, Joseph, 163	116-117, 119-128, 137, 146-148, 151, 152,
bullying, 32, 81, 121	155-156, 164-168, 181
See also cyberbullying	and reflecting on what learners want to read,
Buzzeo, Toni, 133	5-6, 102-104, <i>106</i> , 121-122
	in sequential art formats, 156, 157-158
	collection reflection tool, 6
C	Columbus Day, 162
Calvert County Public Schools, 3-19	comics in inclusive practice, 153-160
Campbell, Beth, 30–31	coming out, 122, 124
Carrboro Elementary School, 61, 64, 65, 67, 72	Common Beliefs in the context of Include, 56,
Carter, Rachel, 30	59, 97, 107, 111, 119
cataloging that demonstrates sensitivity, 123,	community
128, 163, 169	appreciation for diversity, 8–10
CCBC, 147	involvement with school library, 129–139
Cellucci, Anita, 79–87	community circles in the school library, 32–36
Center for Adolescent Studies, 85	competencies for learners
Center for Children's Literature blog, 40	Collaborate Shared Foundation, 12, 15
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,	Curate Shared Foundation, 16
121	Engage Shared Foundation, 12, 14, 15, 16
Chains, 41	Explore Shared Foundation, 14, 16
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, 101	Include Shared Foundation
charity model of disability, 144	Create Domain, xii, 24, 25, 77, 150
Cherokee people, 163	Grow Domain, xii, 14, 15, 39, 46, 47, 125
"Children Are Not Colorblind: How Young	Share Domain, xii, 13, 14, 36, 37, 124
Children Learn Race," 48	Think Domain, xii, 3, 12, 13, 16, 17, 124,
Christianity, privileging, 163	168
Circ ² , 27–38	competencies for school librarians in Include
circles and discussions, 27, 29–31	Shared Foundation
Circulation Visits through Circles. See Circ ²	Create Domain, xii, 59, 77
cisgender, privileging of people, 121, 128, 146	Grow Domain, xii, 89, 94, 95, 150, 158, 176,
cishet. See anti-cishet-supremacy spaces and collections	177 Shara Damain nii 70, 85, 86
	Share Domain, xii, 79, 85, 86
Cisneros, Sandra, 26	Think Domain, xii, 56, 57
Clap When You Land, 26	Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, 163
closeted learners, 122	content-related discussions. See discussions,
cognitive domain of learning. See Think Domain	content related
Colasante, Tyler, 49	Cook, Sara, 123
Cole, Kathryn, 59-78, 129-139	Cooperative Children's Book Center, 147
Collaborate Shared Foundation	"Crafting and Conducting a Successful Socratic
competencies for learners, 12, 15	Seminar," 30–31
Key Commitment in context of Include, 11,	Create Domain
180	Curate Shared Foundation
collaboration	competencies for learners, 16
among educators, 4–16, 7–16, 22–23, 26,	Include Shared Foundation
29–30, 33–34, 36, 39–46, 58, 59–78, 65,	alignments for school libraries, xiii, 97,
79–85, 123–125, 132, 135, 149, 160	111, 116, 117, 150, 151, 156
among learners, 28–29, 68–69, 100–106	competencies for learners, xii, 16, 21–26,
with community members, 129-139, 180	143-152
with public librarians, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85,	competencies for school librarians, xii,
131–132, 132, 134	59-78, 77, 161-169
collection development	examples of Create activities for educa-
about LGBTQ+ people, 121–123	tors, xvii, 2, 21-26, 59-78, 111-118,
about Native peoples, 163–166	143–152, 153–160
about people with disabilities, 82-83, 85, 87	examples of Create activities for learners.
in context of larger effort for inclusion, xvii,	See art projects; writing experiences
xx, 17	for learners

creation stories, 163, 165, 169	attention to portrayal in books, 146-148
Crews, Donald, 9	barriers to learning, 148–150
Crews, Nina, 9	disability models, 144–145
critical indigenous literacies, 161-169	facing inequities, 1, 89, 111
See also Native peoples	perspectives of represented during learning
critical questions about literature, 40–44,	activities, 24
121-122, 146-148, 163-164	representing perspectives, 24, 57, 127
culturally sustaining pedagogy, 3-19, 26, 27-38,	seeing themselves in the collection,
28, 50, 62, 68–74, 95, 102–106, 116,	146-148
161-169, 175, 181-182	discussions
Curate Shared Foundation	about biases and stereotypes, 40-45
competencies for learners, 16	about collection development in the context
Key Commitment in context of Include,	of bias, 5-6
180–181	content-related, 34
curriculum and curriculum development	for content-related discussions, 34
to better understand culture and lives of	in context of mental wellness curriculum,
Native peoples, 164–166	82-83, 86
to connect with Social Justice Standards, 3–19	in context of racial equity work, 91
to encourage and improve writing, 59–78	in context of writer-in-residence programs,
to encourage critical thinking, 39–48	65-66, 68
to engage in thoughtful discussion, 27–38	planning, 34
to explore poetry and power of spoken word,	in professional development focused on
21-26	LGBTQ+ learners, 123
to foster and support mental wellness, 79–87	as Socratic Seminars, 28–31
to provide representation of and celebrate	See also book clubs
learners' lives, 99–109	Dismondy, Maria, 9
to support reading, literature, and	Disrupt Texts blog, 117
community, 8–10, 51–58, 111–118	diverse perspectives
to teach digital literacy, 10–16	fostering appreciation in learners, 3–19,
cyberbullying, 11, 13, 81	39-48, 51-58, 59-87, 119-128, 161-169
See also bullying	fostering expression of, 21–26
cyclical model of racial equity work, 91	school librarians modeling respect for, 27–38,
cyclical model of facial equity work, 31	143–152, 171–177
	DonorsChoose funding for book fair, 174–175
D	Dragonfly's Tale, 163
DACA, 52	Dumplin,' 53
"Danger of a Single Story," 39	Duyvis, Corinne, 164
See also single story	Dayvis, Commic, 104
de la Peña , Matt, 60–62, 66–69, 73, 76, 78	
Dear Martin, 53	E
Defending Intellectual Freedom: LGBTQ+	East Asian characters in books, 44
Materials in School Libraries toolkit, 120,	e-books, 113–114
123, 126, 127, 159	education debt, 1
Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, 52	Ehlers, Jill, 154
Defining LGBTQ Words for Children, 125	ELA. See English Language Arts
Developing Inclusive Leaders and Citizens, 19	empathy
developmental domain of learning. See Grow	defined, 49
Domain	demonstrated by learners, 36, 39, 47, 78, 86,
dialectical behavior therapy, 83, 84	94, 138, 180, 182
differentiating instruction, 56	fostering learners' development of, xii-xiii,
digital citizenship and literacy curriculum,	8–15, 40–46, 79–80, 147, 157
10-16	modeled by school librarians, 49
Disability in Kidlit website, 151	empowering learners. See learner voice
disability models, 144–145	Engage Shared Foundation
disabled learners	competencies for learners, 12, 14, 15, 16
accessibility of space and resources, 148–152	Key Commitment in context of Include, 11,
attention to language about, 145–146, 147	182

English Language Arts	graphic novels and nonfiction
classroom educators collaborating with school librarian, 22–23, 36, 65, 80, 82,	in curriculum, 30 in inclusive practice, 56, 114, 115, 153–160,
84, 85	180
Psychology in Literature unit, 82	not extra, 102–103, 107, 108–109
in social justice curriculum, 8–10	Green, John, 53
English learners, 1, 26, 59–78, 61, 72, 83, 90, 131,	Grow Domain
155, 156	Collaborate Shared Foundation
English variations, 28	competencies for learners, 12, 15
equitable writer-in-residence model, 59-78, 62	Engage Shared Foundation
See also learner voice	competencies for learners, 12, 14, 15
essential questions, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 126	Include Shared Foundation
ethical use of information and media, 11, 12, 14,	alignments for school libraries, xiii, 98,
15, 16, 182	129-139, 143-152, 157-158, 171-177
ethnic identity and expression, 40-45, 63-74, 95	competencies for learners, xii, 14, 15,
See also learner voice	39-48, 125
Explore Shared Foundation	competencies for school librarians, xii,
competencies for learners, 14, 16	89-96, 143-152, 158, 171-177
Key Commitment in context of Include, 8,	examples of activities for educators, xvii,
181-182	39-48, 89-96, 129-139, 143-152,
Evaluation Checklists for the Shared	153–160, 161–169, 171–177
Foundations, 79	growth mindset, 8, 84, 181
	See also Grow Domain
-	GSAs, 121, 122, 125
Frank a Historia and Consideration 20	Guerrero, Diane, 54
Facing History and Ourselves, 38	
facinghistory.org, 38	ш
Falcon, Cesar, 99–109	H
Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table, 134 Fisher, Douglas, 32	hair in the context of images on book covers, 43 Hale, Nathan, 30
Five Key Foundations for Building Inclusive	Hall, Deirdre Riordan, 53
Libraries, 102–109	Hanley, Mary Stone, 101
Food for Summer Program, 132	Harrington, Laura, 83
formative assessment, 33, 34, 37	Hate U Give, 53, 114
Franco-Quiroz, Erika, 101	"Helping Students Confront and Examine Their
free books for learners, 171–177	Own Biases Using the Images on the
Frey, Nancy, 32	Covers of Picture Books," 48
,,,,	Hirschfelder, A. et al., 166
	Hirsh, Kimberly, 89–96
G	Hispanic people. See Latinx learners
Gansworth, Eric, 166	history
garden project, 134	avoiding misrepresenting history of Native
Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network	peoples, 163, 165
(GLSEN), 119-120, 124	conducting circle discussions to assess
gay learners. See LGBTQ+ learners	history knowledge, 34
gender-related bias, 39, 41, 44, 158, 181 See also LGBTQ+ learners	discussing inaccuracies and missing stories, 41-42, 71
Genders and Sexualities Alliance Groups, 121,	discussing women's history, 65
122, 125	focusing on Black history all year, 36
Girard, M-E, 53	importance of educators understanding
Girl Mans Up, 53	history of institutional racism, 92
GLSEN, 119-120, 124	incorporating LGBTQ+ history in lessons, 127
Gomez, Jose, 99-109	missing, 153–154
Gorski, Paul, 94	reading about non-U.S. history, 68
Grandma Dorothy, 53–54	teaching difficult subjects, 19
Grandmont, Megan, 30–31	Hope Nation, 114
grants, 61, 80–82, 175	House on Mango Street, 26

Howell, Skye, 32 Hughes-Hassell, Sandra, 59–78, 89–96	in context of reading and exploring the power of stories, 51–58
8	in context of reopening a school library and
	rejuvenating a reading culture, 111–118
1	in context of restorative practices and
I Am America, 65	discussions, 27–38
"I Am" by Mekhai, 63	in context of teaching and learning about
"I Am" by Robin, 64	mental wellness, 79–87
I Am Malala, 53	in context of teaching and learning about
I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter, 53	social justice issues, 3–19
"I Call Him Padrino," 60	in context of transforming school library
•	
identity model of disability, 145 IEPs, 148, 149, 150	into year-round community resource, 129–139
If I Ever Get Out of Here, 166	in context of using graphic novels to support
imagery and bias, 39–48	learners, 153–160
In the Country We Love: My Family Divided, 54	in context of writing and sharing through an
Include Shared Foundation	equitable writer-in-residence program,
alignments for school libraries	59-78
Create Domain, xiii, 97, 111, 116, 117, 150, 151, 156	in context to teaching and learning about Native peoples, 161–169
Grow Domain, xiii, 98, 137, 138, 157-158,	foundations for building, 106
176, 177	importance of, xv-xvi
Share Domain, xiii, 97, 120, 126, 150, 157,	key terms, xix-xx, 51, 119, 162
158, 159, 168, 171, 176	sorting-free zone, 104-105, 124, 127, 171-177
Think Domain, xiii, 97, 99, 107, 108, 154	Indians. See Native peoples; South Asian
best practices, 27, 143, 153	characters in books
competencies for learners	indigenous literacies, 161-169
Create Domain, xii, 24, 25, 150	indigenous people. See BIPOC; Native peoples
Grow Domain, xii, 14, 15, 39, 46, 47, 125	Indigenous Peoples Day, 162
Share Domain, xii, 13, 14, 36, 37, 124	individualized education programs, 149, 150
Think Domain, xii, 3, 12, 13, 16, 17, 124,	information literacy curriculum, 10-16
168	Inquire Shared Foundation
competencies for school librarians	best practice in context of Include, 179
Create Domain, xii, 59, 77	Key Commitment in the context of Include,
Grow Domain, xii, 89, 94, 95, 150, 158, 176,	179-180
177	inquiry questions, 82, 86
Share Domain, xii, 79, 85, 86	Inside the Books: Readers and Libraries around
Think Domain, xii, 56, 57	the World, 133
Key Commitment, v, xiii, xv, 5, 8, 11, 39, 89, 90	Instagram, 114
inclusive book fair model, 171–177	institutionalized racism
inclusive school libraries and practices	disrupting, 89-96
barriers to, xvi-xvii	and Native peoples, 162–164
building equity knowledge for, 89-96	in schools, 66
in context of book fair focusing on access for	See also anti-racist curriculum; anti-racist
all learners, 171–177	spaces and collections; racial equity
in context of culturally sustaining creation of	work
poetry, 21–26	intellectual freedom, 119-120, 123, 126, 127, 158,
in context of discussing stereotypes, race, and	159
gender, 39–49	intersectionality of learners' identities, 8, 121,
in context of effectively serving disabled	127, 145
learners, 143–152	Iturbe, Antonio, 53
in context of effectively serving LGBTQ+	
learners, 119–128	
in context of identifying key foundations for	J
building inclusive libraries, 99-109	Jefferson Middle School, 123
in context of professional development for	Jennings, Jazz, 53
racial equity work, 89-96	Jingle Dancer, 164–166
racial equity work, 03-30	Juign Duiner, 107-100

Jonas, Ann, 9	learning trajectory
Jones, Guy W., 166	grades K-5 lessons, 8–11
joy, 5, 62, 72, 74, 76, 102-104, 122, 134, 177, 181	grades K-5 reading, literature, and
Juice Box Bully, 9	community, 8–10
	grades 4, 5, 7, 8 writing poetry, 63-78
	grades 5-12 digital literacy, 10-16
K	grade 6 critically examining book cover
K-5 curriculum, 8–10	images and literature, 39-45
Karas, G. Brian, 41	grades 6-8 lessons, 12-13
Kaufman, Suzanne, 9	grade 7 Socratic Seminar on GMOs, 30
Kelly, Sheila M., 9	grade 7 Socratic Seminar on World War I,
Key Commitment for Include Shared	30-31
Foundation, v, xiii, xv, 5, 8, 11, 39, 89, 90	grades 9-12 lessons, 14-16
Key Commitment in the context of Include	Lee & Low Books, 58
for Collaborate Shared Foundation, 11, 180	lesbian learners. See LGBTQ+ learners
for Curate Shared Foundation, 180–181	lesson examples
for Engage Shared Foundation, 11, 182	critically examining book cover images and
for Explore Shared Foundation, 8, 181–182	literature (grade 6), 39-45
for Inquire Shared Foundation, 179–180	digital literacy (grades 5-12), 10-16
key foundations for building school libraries,	reading, literature, and community (grades
106	K-5), 8-10
key terms used in book, xix-xx	Socratic Seminar on GMOs (grade 7), 30
Kiely, Brendan, 53	Socratic Seminar on World War I (grade 7),
Kootenai people, 163	30-31
Kowalski, Sue, 155	writing poetry (grades 4, 5, 7, 8), 63-78
Kumasi, Kafi, 101	See also writing experiences for learners
	Lessons from Turtle Island: Native Curriculum in
	Early Childhood Classrooms, 166
Labeling hooks shout I CPTO, poople 122, 122	Lewis, Cicely, 51–58 "I CRTO in Children's Crephic Nevels"
Labeling books about LGBTQ+ people, 122–123 Latinx characters in books, 147	"LGBTQ+ in Children's Graphic Novels" presentation, 158
Latinx characters in books, 147 Latinx learners, 67, 72, 73	LGBTQ+ learners
leader role of school librarians, 52–58	advocacy for, 121–122, 123
learner competencies. See competencies for	attention to language about, 123–125, 146
learners	barriers to learning, 126, 127
learner voice, 1-2, 16, 21-26, 31-33, 36, 50, 56,	perspectives of represented during learning
59-78, 63, 79-87, 80, 95, 99-109, 133, 137,	activities, 24
172–173, 179	at risk, 119–120, 121
learners	seeing themselves in the collection, 120-122
developing appreciation for diverse	LibFive, 99–109
perspectives, 7-10	Librarian of Auschwitz, 53, 55
exploring social justice issues, 3–19	Libraries, Literacy, and African American Youth
and feelings of well-being, 27	69
intersectionality of identities, 121, 127, 145	"Library as Domestic Metaphor," 26
participating in planning and decision	Lifshitz, Jess, 48
making, 84, 99-109, 100-106	Lilead Project, 4
reflected in book fairs, 170–174, 177	listening skills. See active listening
reflected in library collection, 5-6, 35, 60,	literacy initiatives. See reading
102–103, 107, 112, 114–117, 120–122,	literature curriculum, 8–10
146-148	Little House on the Prairie TV series, 42
viewing themselves as writers, 21–26, 63–76	Living, 67
See also BIPOC learners; disabled learners;	Locomotion, 40
empathy; Latinx learners; LGBTQ+	Long Way Down, 114
learners	Loudness in the Library curriculum, 39–48
Learning for Justice project, 2, 3–19, 47, 58,	Lynn, Lauren, 7–8
126-127	lyrics. See song lyrics
Learning the Landscape of Digital History, 19	

M	National Alliance on Mental Illness, 81, 82
Manassah, Tala, 29	National Congress of American Indians website,
manga	164
in inclusive practice, 102–103, 114, 115,	National Council for Behavioral Health, 83
153-160	National Education Association, 32
not extra, 107, 108-109	National Educators for Restorative Practices, 32
Mango, Abuela, and Me, 65	National Endowment for the Arts, 25
Martin, Jacqueline Briggs, 134	National Museum of the American Indian
Massachusetts Literary Education and	website, 164
Performance Collective, 82–83	National Native American Heritage Month, 162,
MassLEAP, 82–83	164-165
Matam, Pages, 26	National Paideia Center, 29
McCammon, Becky, 32	National School Climate Survey, 119–120
McGowan, Wyk, 23	National School Library Standards. See
Meadowcreek High School, 51-53	alignments for school libraries in Include
media literacy curriculum, 10–16	Shared Foundation; competencies
medical model of disability, 144	for learners; competencies for school
Medina, Meg, 53, 60–62, 64–65, 78	librarians in Include Shared Foundation
Mental Health First Aid, 83, 87	Native peoples
mental wellness curriculum and resources,	inaccurate portrayals in children's literature,
79-87, 151	163–165
MetroWest Adolescent Survey, 81	mistreatment of sacred stories, 163–164
Mexican Whiteboy, 67	portrayal of interactions with Europeans,
microaggressions, 45, 68	41-42
Middle Eastern characters in books, 44	recommended children's and YA books,
Mindful Schools, 87	167-168
mirrors and windows. See collection	selecting and discussing books by Native
development	authors, 165–166
modeling by learners, 30, 133	terminology and misconceptions, 161–163,
modeling by school librarians	166–167
#OwnVoices reading, 58	use of restorative practices, 31
discussion techniques, 27	NCTE Committee Against Racism and Bias in
engaging in a global society, 182	the Teaching of English, 32–33
inclusion and sharing, 37, 49, 149	neurodiverse learners, 149–150, 151
respect for diverse perspectives, 47	New Jim Crow, 53
Montbello schools, 113–115	Nic Stone, 53
MontbelloReads Campus Book Club, 115	Noah's Ark, 163
Moomaw, Sally, 166	Noblit, George W., 101
Morris, Jaida, 99–109	Noguera, Pedro, 102
Mount Vernon Middle School, 99–106	Nolan, Allia Zobel, 9
multiculturalism, xvi, xix, 51	nonbinary learners. See LGBTQ+ learners
multiple viewpoints. See diverse perspectives	norms for library space, 29, 38
Murphy, Julie, 53	Northside Elementary School, 61, 63, 65, 67, 71,
Muscogee Creek Nation, 165	74, 76, 130–134, 137–138
music, 22, 28, 71, 114, 135, 165, 166	Northside Neighbors Initiative, 130–134
"My Dad Who I Call Tony," 75	Northside Neighbors Summer Library Program,
Myer, Chloë Myers, 147–148	129–134, 137–138
myths and religions in context of cataloging,	Novel Mind website, 151
163	novels featuring Asian and white characters, 44
103	See also resource lists
N	novels featuring Black characters, 43, 103, 104 See also resource lists
Nambé Pueblo, 162	novels suggested for equitable writer-in-
	1
NAMI, 81, 82	residence program, 69 See also resource lists
Naruto series, 155	see also resource lists

0	Q
obsessive compulsive disorder, learners with,	QSAs, 121
149-150	queer learners. See LGBTQ+ learners
Old Dominion University, 4	Queer-Straight Alliance groups, 121
OwnVoices. See #OwnVoices books	questioning learners. See LGBTQ+ learners
	questions
	essential, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 126
P	for inquiry-based learning, 82
Paideia Seminar, 29	planning for discussions while demonstrating
Paris, Django, 28, 68	sensitivity, 34
Penfold, Alexandra, 9	for reflective practitioners, 18, 25, 37, 47, 57,
people of color. See BIPOC	78, 86, 95, 108, 117, 128, 138, 151, 159,
perspectives. See diverse perspectives	169, 177
Peter Pan, 42	questions, critical about literature, 121-122,
Piasek, Abe, 34	146-148, 163-164
picture books suggested for equitable writer-in- residence program, 69	
picture books to promote inclusiveness and	R
social justice, 10	race
Plains Indians, 164	in context of Reading Woke, 51-58
Poet X, 26, 53	discussing with learners, 41-47, 68
poetry	racial equity in school libraries. See inclusive
creating, 63–64, 71, 74, 76, 80, 87	school libraries and practices
creating and sharing, 21–26	racial equity work, 89–96
reading, 28, 82–84, 114, 136	racial identity and expression, 40-45, 63-74, 95,
Poetry Foundation, 25	101, 148
Poetry Out Loud website, 23, 25	See also learner voice
Porter, Liz, 59-78	racism
positive portrayal of diverse people, 62, 101, 102,	defined, xx
103, 121, 122, 147, 148	difficulty in discussing, 44-45
Power of Manga, Comics, and Graphic Novels	recognized by learners in literature, 39-44
though the Lens of the AASL Standards	rap, 22, 28
Framework for Learners, 154, 160	See also song lyrics
Pranis, Kay, 32	Rawson, Casey H., 89-96
professional development for school librarians	Read Woke, 51-58
about building inclusive libraries and	read-alouds, 9, 114, 116, 118, 132, 133, 136–137
practices, 100-106, 179-180	reading
about creating LGBTQ+ inclusive libraries,	books about diverse people, 51-58, 64-66,
122–127	120–122, 146–148, 157, 164–168
about developing inclusive collections, 5-6	building culture of reading, 51–58, 129–139,
about Native peoples, 166, 169	171–177, 181
about restorative practices, 32, 34	curriculum, 8–10
about social justice issues, 6, 17-19	encouraging recreational reading, 111–118,
about teen mental wellness, 81, 85, 87	171-177
about working toward racial equity, 90-96	See also resource lists
Project LIT Montbello, 114	Reading for Social Justice, 19
Project READY, 47, 50, 89–96, 105	Rearte, Abra, 34
pronoun use, 124	Reese, Debbie, 161-169
Psychology in Literature unit, 82, 86	reflection by librarians and other educators
psychomotor domain of learning. See Create	about imagery in the school library, 46
Domain	on teaching race-related lessons, 44–45
public librarians collaborating with school	See also questions, for reflective practitioners
librarians, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 131, 131–132,	reflective collection. <i>See</i> learners, reflected in
134	library collection
Pueblo people, 162, 163	religions and myths in context of cataloging, 163

resource lists	collaborating with public librarians, 80, 81,
books about presenting and teaching Native	82, 83, 85, 131–132, 134
content, 166	school libraries
books by Native American authors containing	need for qualified school librarian, 111
tribally specific content, 159, 167-168	reopening, 112–115
books for Read Woke, 53	as safe student-centered spaces, 28, 32-36
books suggested for high school book club, 115	scheduling as enabler or barrier, 12, 33, 35, 84, 115, 135, 138, 174
novels featuring Asian and white characters, 44	as third spaces, 97–98, 99, 112, 129
novels featuring Black characters, 43, 103, 104	year-round use, 129–139
novels suggested for equitable writer-in-	See also inclusive school libraries and
residence program, 69	practices
online resources about comics, graphic novels, and manga in education, 159–160	school library alignments. <i>See</i> alignments for school libraries in Include Shared Foundation
picture books to promote inclusiveness and	Schott Foundation, 32
social justice, 10	science lessons and projects, 30, 133
sources of info about books centering social	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,
justice issues, 57	148, 149, 150
sources of info about restorative practices, 32	self-censoring, 5, 126
See also professional development	self-efficacy assessment, 69
restorative justice, 31, 32, 33	self-esteem
restorative practices, 27-38	diminished by portrayals in media, 43
Restorative Practices: Fostering Healthy	having without diminishing others, 8, 11, 12,
Relationships and Promoting Positive	14, 15
Discipline in Schools, 32	See also ethnic identity and expression; racial
Rethinking Schools, 58	identity and expression
Reynolds, Jason, 23, 53, 114, 115	sequential art. See comics in inclusive practice;
Rivera, Juan, 153–160	graphic novels and nonfiction; manga
Rodanas, Kristina, 163	serial art. See comics in inclusive practice;
roles of school librarians	graphic novels and nonfiction; manga
information specialist, 153–160	Serving ELL Students and Families, 19
instructional partner, 3–19	sexism. See gender-related bias
leader, 52–58	Shades of People, 9
leader role, 3–19, 89–96, 99–109, 111–118, 129–139	Share Domain in Include Shared Foundation alignments for school libraries, xiii, 97,
program administrator role, 59-78, 143-152,	119–128, 150, 157, 159, 168, 171–177, 176
171–177 teacher, 3–19, 21–26, 27–38, 39–48, 51–58,	competencies for learners, xii, 13, 14, 27–38, 36, 37, 124
59-78, 79-87, 119-128, 143-152, 161-169	competencies for school librarians, 79-87, 85,
Ross, Gayle, 163	86, 161–169
Rotner, Shelley, 9	examples of Share activities for educators,
	xvii, 27-38, 79-87, 119-128, 143-152,
_	153–160, 161–169, 171–177
S	Shortley, Ness, 143–152
Safe Zone, 122, 128	sign language, 151
Saints and Misfits, 53	single story, 39, 46, 147
Sakamoto, Miki, 9	skin color as depicted on book covers, 40, 40–41
Salish people and Kootenai Tribes, 163	slamming, 21–26
Same Sun Here, 41	Smith, Charles R., Jr., 60–62, 64, 65, 71, 78
Sánchez, Erika, 53	Smith, Dominique Smith, 32
scarcity mentality, 29	Social Justice Standards, 3–19
school librarian competencies. See	social model of disability, 144–145
competencies for school librarians in	social-emotional learning, 34, 79, 86
Include Shared Foundation	Socratic Seminars, 27, 29–31, 32, 36–38
school librarians	"Sol Painting, Inc.," 70
accessibility of space and resources, 148-150	song lyrics, 28, 114, 166

See also rap	Think Domain
Sornson, Bob, 9	Curate Shared Foundation competencies for
sorting-free zone, 104–105, 124, 127, 171–177	learners, 16
See also stigma-free space	Engage Shared Foundation competencies for
South Asian characters in books, 44	learners, 12, 16
Southern Poverty Law Center, 3, 7	Explore Shared Foundation competencies for
Spanish language as primary, 61, 67, 72, 153–154	learners, 14, 16
Speak Up at School, 127	Include Shared Foundation
special education learners and services, 26, 83,	alignments for school libraries, xiii, 97,
84, 149, 155, 157	99–109, 107, 108, 154–155
See also disabled learners	competencies for learners, xii, 3, 12, 13, 16
Spier, Peter, 163	17, 124, 168
spoken word, 22–26, 28, 80, 87	competencies for school librarians, xii,
Spoken Word Club, 22	51-58
stakeholders	examples of Think activities for educators,
inviting to participate in school library	xvii, 3–19, 51–58, 99–109
programs, 131–136 participating in planning and decision	examples of Think activities for learners, 51–58, 99–109
making, 84, 99–109, 129–139	third spaces. <i>See</i> school libraries, as third space
Stay Woke, 52	Thomas, Angie, 53, 114
Steinfeld, Jamie, 39, 40, 41, 46	Tia Isa Wants a Car, 70
stereotypes	tolerance
conversations about, 39–48	in context of mental wellness curriculum,
of disabled people, 146, 148	79–87
of Native peoples, 162–163, 166	in context of restorative practices, 32, 36
recognition by learners, 13, 40–43, 46	curriculum to support development, 7–18
stigma-free space, 79, 82–83, 115	defined, 17
See also sorting-free zone	See also diverse perspectives
stimming, 150	"Toolkit for Restoring Justice," 32
stories	Torres, Julia E., 111-118
importance of, 33–34, 39, 53–55, 63–76, 163,	Toure, Chiquita, 21–26
165	transgender learners. See LGBTQ+ learners
misrepresenting cultures, 164	Trauma Basics for Youth Workers self-paced
misrepresenting disabled learners, 146-148	course, 87
misrepresenting history, 41–42, 162–163	trauma-sensitive practices, 34, 85, 87
Story of the Milky Way: A Cherokee Tale by	Treaties, Trenches, Mud, and Blood, 30
Joseph Bruchac and Gayle Ross, 163	tribal nations. See Native peoples
storytelling through sequential art. See comics	TrueBookFAIRS, 171–177
in inclusive practice; graphic novels and	trust, 52, 100, 114, 172
nonfiction; manga	Turtles All the Way Down, 53
structural racism. See institutionalized racism	Tuscarora Reservation, 166
Sturge, Jennifer, 3–19	
Sturm, Brian, 60	
Sugar, 53	U
summative assessment, 29, 37	Unforgettable, 26
summer library program, 129-139	University of North Carolina School of
Susan Steinfirst Artist-in-Residency Program, 60,	Information and Library Science, 60
61, 62, 67, 77	
systemic racism. See institutionalized racism	
	V
	Valenza, Joyce, 26
Т	Vasquez, Vivian Maria, 163
"Talking Circles: For Restorative Justice and	viewpoints. See diverse perspectives
Beyond," 33	voice and choice for learners. See learner voice
Teaching Hard History: American Slavery, 19	voice of authors. See #OwnVoices books
Teaching Tolerance. See Learning for Justice	
Thanksgiving, 164	

W	Winkler, Erin, 48
Wahi, Anshu, 39, 40, 41, 45, 46, 47	With the Fire on High, 26
Waiting for the Biblioburro, 133	Wixie, 9
Walker, Sandy, 5, 6	woke. See Read Woke
Wampanoag people, 164	"Write. Right. Rite." video series, 23
Warrior Words Writing Club, 22-24	writer-in-residence program, 59-78
Welcoming Schools website, 125	writing experiences for learners
welcoming space. See inclusive school libraries	about comic, manga, and graphic novels, 155
and practices	in context of exploring stereotypes and biases,
West, Genevieve, 54	42
What I Like About Me! 9	in context of mental wellness curriculum, 80,
White, Jotham, 101	83, 84, 85, 87
white authors, privileging of, 60	in context of restorative practices, 28-29, 33
white characters in books, 44	as element of inclusive school library, 100,
white educators	103
racial equity work, 89-96	in social justice curriculum, 9, 14
reflecting on their own identities' influence	in Spoken Word Club, 22-26
on their view of others, 92	in writer-in-residence program, 61-77
white learners, 45	
whiteness	
normative position in curriculum, 77	Υ
over-represented in children's literature, 43,	Yamazawa, George, 26
121, 146	Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass, 53
Whoosh! Lonnie Johnson's Supersoaking Stream	Yousafzai, Malala, 53, 65
of Inventions, 133	
"Why Your Critics Aren't the Ones Who Count,"	
XX	Z
Williams, Joan Frye, 26	zines, 64, 72, 73, 74