EQUIPPED:
An Introduction to the Book List for ALL
August 2020

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To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens.

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Goal Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ALL Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>EVERY Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>EVERY Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>EVERY School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>EVERY Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>EVERY School and District is Rated “C” or Higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION
Introduction: 5th-12th Grade Equipped Booklists

Fiction titles: 24
Nonfiction titles: 15

Fiction titles: 23
Nonfiction titles: 15

Fiction titles: 36
Nonfiction titles: 36

Fiction titles: 64
Nonfiction titles: 63
Mississippi strives to develop students that are not only college and career ready but also **CULTURALLY** ready.

This resource intends to **EQUIP** educators to make purposeful instructional decisions around the Mississippi College-and Career-Readiness Standards while promoting literacy that acknowledges a variety of text types.
To ensure this list truly represented various backgrounds, cultures, and beliefs, a diverse group was required in order to collaborate and create this project.

The group consisted of teachers, librarians, literacy coaches, and administrators.
This resource also provides students with texts that will serve as “MIRRORS, WINDOWS, AND SLIDING GLASS DOORS.”

**MIRRORS** refer to texts where students can see themselves, while **WINDOWS** apply to texts that allow students to look out into life experiences different from their own. **SLIDING GLASS DOORS** refer to texts that encourage students to walk through and move forward, acting to change the narrative.
METHODOLOGY
The books identified in this list were not chosen at random; to appear on this list, a title had to meet **SPECIFIC CRITERIA** as outlined by a rubric developed by a team composed of a librarian, literacy personnel, a college professor, and a high school English teacher.
The specific components of the rubric helped the team identify whether a chosen text contained:

• **Appropriate** grade-level complexity,
• A balance of **diverse** characters, cultures, perspectives, orientations, races, and ages, and
• **Relativity** to the Mississippi College-and Career-Readiness Standards
This panel then reviewed each text thoroughly, using a **SECOND RUBRIC** to rate each title on the following criteria:

- Publication date
- Availability in different languages or graphic novel format
- Award-winning text
- Contained and appropriately represented diversity
- Appropriate for the suggested grade
The team used **RESOURCES** such as Novelist, We Need Diverse Books, and Common Sense Media to help identify potential titles.

Most titles are also recipients of one or more **BOOK AWARDS**, including the Coretta Scott King Award, the Newbery and Caldecott awards, the Magnolia Book Awards, or the YALSA and ALA awards.
LEXILE VS. LITERACY
Students and books are assigned a score on the Lexile scale, in which **LOWER** scores reflect **EASIER** readability for books and **LOWER** reading ability for students.

However, the scores **DO NOT** reflect factors such as maturity of themes, content, and language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE LEVEL</th>
<th>PROFICIENT LEXILE LEVELS</th>
<th>ADVANCED LEXILE LEVELS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>700-1000</td>
<td>1001-1700+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>800-1050</td>
<td>1051-1700+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>850-1100</td>
<td>1101-1700+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>900-1150</td>
<td>1151-1700+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>1000-1200</td>
<td>1201-1700+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>1025-1250</td>
<td>1251-1700+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 11</td>
<td>1050-1300</td>
<td>1301-1700+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td>1050-1300</td>
<td>1301-1700+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lexile vs Literacy: *Fiction and Nonfiction*

Fiction and nonfiction books help students to **UNDERSTAND** the world around them and what they might be going through.

**INDEPENDENT** reading or student choice reading helps encourage children to enjoy reading on their own to **IMPROVE** comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency.
When students have an opportunity to **CHOOSE** fiction or nonfiction reading materials, students have ownership in their education and make reading a **PRIORITY**.
Benefits of student choice reading:

• **Engagement** increases
• **Stronger** reading skills are developed
• Students are more actively **involved** in learning
• Students are more **excited** to share what they learn
• Build skills for **future** learning
UNDERSTANDING
THE BOOKLIST
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Author (Publication Date)</th>
<th>Book Cover</th>
<th>Type of Text</th>
<th>Grade Level(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amina’s Voice</strong></td>
<td>By: Hena Khan (2018)</td>
<td></td>
<td>fiction</td>
<td>5th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Pakistani American Muslim</td>
<td>girl struggles to stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family’s vibrant culture while</td>
<td>true to her family’s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>simultaneously blending in at</td>
<td>vibrant culture while</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school after tragedy strikes</td>
<td>simultaneously blending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her community. 197 pgs</td>
<td>in at school after</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lexile Level</strong>: 800L</td>
<td>tragedy strikes her</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short Description</strong>:</td>
<td>community. 197 pgs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brendan Buckley’s Universe</td>
<td>and Everything in It</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By: Sundee T. Fraizer (2007)</td>
<td>Brendan, a biracial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a ten-year-old, applies his</td>
<td>ten-year-old, applies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>scientific problem-solving</td>
<td>his scientific problem-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability and newfound interest</td>
<td>solving ability and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>in rocks and minerals to</td>
<td>newfound interest in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>connect with his white</td>
<td>rocks and minerals to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grandfather, and to learn why</td>
<td>connect with his white</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he and Brendan’s mother are</td>
<td>grandfather, and to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>estranged. 198 pgs</td>
<td>learn why he and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lexile</strong>: 630L</td>
<td>Brendan’s mother are</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rubric Components</strong></td>
<td>estranged. 198 pgs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Understanding the Booklist: Terms

**BILINGUAL FORMAT:** a book that is available in multiple languages

**DIGITAL FORMAT:** a book that is available as an audio book or an ebook

**FICTION:** literature that describes imaginary events and people

**GRAPHIC NOVEL (GN):** a book written in comic-strip format

**LEXILE (L):** a measurement of the reading level of a text

**NONFICTION:** writing that is based on facts, real events or people, such as biography or history

**STEAM:** an approach to teaching that includes Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry
Esperanza Rising
By: Pam Muñoz Ryan (2016)
Thirteen-year-old Esperanza and her mother are forced to flee Mexico after her father’s sudden death. This fall from a life of privilege to a life of poverty in the 1930s showcases the transformation of this young teen.
262pgs

**LEXILE:** 750L

- Award Winner
- Social Studies
- Available in various languages
- CCRS
- Digital Format (e.g., ebook or audiobook)
Understanding the Booklist: *Themes and Pairings*

**MAIN THEME: Insights into the Immigration Experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANCHOR TEXT</th>
<th>FICTION PAIRINGS</th>
<th>NONFICTION PAIRINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inside Out &amp; Back Again</strong>&lt;br&gt;By: Thanhha Lai&lt;br&gt;LEXILE: 800L</td>
<td><strong>Esperanza Rising</strong>&lt;br&gt;By: Pam Muñoz Ryan&lt;br&gt;LEXILE: 750L</td>
<td><strong>Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees</strong>&lt;br&gt;By: Mary Beth Leatherdale&lt;br&gt;LEXILE: 890L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Front Desk</strong>&lt;br&gt;By: Kelly Yang&lt;br&gt;LEXILE: 640L</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>In the Year of The Boar and Jackie Robinson</strong>&lt;br&gt;By: Bette Bao Lord&lt;br&gt;LEXILE: 730L</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>176pgs I 1984</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESOURCES
CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE NOVEL STUDY CHECKLIST

The following checklist will ensure that the proposed novel studies reflect a more culturally responsive nature as well as lead to more student-centered learning. Teachers will use the form to include the elements of the unit/lesson plan that support the indicators.

SUMMARY

1 Incorporating culturally-responsive novels and supportive learning materials
   Elements of the Unit/Lesson Plan
   Building strong personal voice in various diverse characteristics through novel selection
   Building strong personal voice in various diverse characteristics through high-quality learning materials that support the novel study
   Valuing various diverse characteristics habitually through novel studies, rather than on special occasions

2 Developing student-centered learning by using a system of collaboration and communication
   Elements of the Unit/Lesson Plan
   Consistently combining individual and group efforts and accountability for task performance
   Creating classroom climates and opportunities for collaborative composing, revising, and editing tasks
   Using a system of peer response to encourage high-quality learning

READING ASSIGNMENT BOOK APPROVAL LETTER

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As part of the [school name] [class], each student is expected to read a novel related to [curriculum unit] from a list of pre-approved titles. They are responsible for reading the book and completing a series of assignments related to it for [time period], which includes [types of assignments/assessments].

☐ Teacher Assigned Book: The primary objective of this assignment is to allow students to choose and read books that interest them that connect to the curriculum unit. We want your student to feel as though he or she is reading material that is interesting to him or her but is also challenging. However, because each parent/guardian feels differently about what is appropriate for their own child, [school name] requires all students to have their book approved first by you. Please see the attached document for a brief summary of each novel.

☐ Student-Slected Book (from a list of pre-approved titles): The primary objective of this assignment is to allow students to exercise choice and read books that interest them while connecting to the curriculum unit. We want your student to feel as though he or she is reading material that is interesting to him or her but is also challenging. However, because each parent/guardian feels differently about what is appropriate for their own child, [school name] requires all students to have their book approved first by you. Please see the attached document for a brief summary of each novel.

When you are approving your student’s reading, please look it over to ensure that you feel the content of the novel is appropriate for your student. If you have objections, have your student choose another book; if the book was assigned, discuss the title with the teacher. Please have a discussion with your student about what types of books and topics you feel are appropriate and instruct them not to select books that contain topics or language that you would not want them to read. Once you have approved the book, please sign the attached book approval form.

If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact [teacher’s name] at [teacher’s contact information].
### EQUITY BOOK LIST EVALUATION

This evaluation tool will help teachers and librarians with their final selections for diversity, equity, and inclusion books for instruction and for student choice reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOOK TITLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUTHOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE LEVEL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THEME/TOPIC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Rate the book on its publication date.

- **Use the scale below:**
  1. 40 years or older
  2. 30-39 years old
  3. 20-29 years old
  4. 10-19 years old
  5. 10 years or newer

#### Rate the book based on the appropriateness of the Lexile Level.

- **Use the scale below:**
  1. Too easy/hard to read for grade level
  2. Below grade level
  3. At grade level
  4. Above grade level

#### Rate the book based on the additional factors.

- **Use the scale below:**
  1. One additional factor
  2. Two additional factors
  3. Three additional factors
  4. Four additional factors

### SCHOOL/CCLASSROOM LIBRARY COLLECTION DIVERSITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Use the following questions as a guide to analyze the library collection and determine where there are strengths and where there are gaps in diversity.

1. The school library contains multiple books that include...
   - Non-human, anthropomorphic main characters (e.g., talking animals, talking trees, talking vegetables, imaginary or science fiction creatures, etc.)
   - Main characters of color or different nationality/ethnicity
   - Main characters with different types of gender identity and gender expression
   - Main characters with disabilities

2. The school library contains numerous books that include...
   - Main characters of color or different nationality/ethnicity
   - Main characters with different types of gender identity and gender expression
   - Main characters with disabilities

3. The school library contains numerous books that...
   - Are written or illustrated by a person of color or of different nationality/ethnicity
   - Feature a person of color or different nationality/ethnicity on the cover
   - Feature contemporary diverse characters and storylines
   - Feature a range of family structures and family configurations
   - Are written or illustrated by a person of color or of different nationality/ethnicity on the cover
   - Feature contemporary diverse characters and storylines
Resources: Book Information and Support Materials

Lexile: Find a Book (Grades 5 – 12)
https://hub.lexile.com/find-a-book/search

Search for books based on Lexile codes, which provides information on the book’s intended usage, or find books that are easy to decode or have a lot of patterning to help beginning readers.

Novelist: MAGNOLIA (Grades 5 – 12)
https://magnolia.msstate.edu/

Resources: Virtual Reading Trackers

Reading is Fundamental Reading Tracker (Grades 5 – 6)
https://www.rif.org/literacy-central/literacy-tracker

Literacy Tracker Tool allows teachers to check in on students’ reading progress throughout the year and helps students find “just right” books to develop their skills.

Beanbright Reading Tracker (Grades 5 – 12)
https://www.beanbright.com/

Beanbright helps facilitate reading challenges and gain more data on students’ free-choice reading.
Resources: Educator and School Librarian Resources

**Lexile by Chapter Guides**  
(Grades 5 – 12)  
Books vary in text complexity, chapters within each book can vary as well. When teaching a book in class, Lexile by Chapter Guides can help better plan instruction.

**Lexile PowerV Vocabulary Tool**  
(Grades 5 – 12)  
More than 125,000 books in Find a Book include a vocabulary tool that identifies up to 10 challenging words that are important for students to know.
Visit https://mdek12.org/OEER/Equipped-Booklist to download lists and other resources.
Contact Information

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esimmons@mdek12.org | 601-359-2586