

Selecting High Quality Urban Children's Literature to Engage Beginning Readers

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Choosing texts: Assessing text quality

Selecting High Quality Children's Literature with Urban Settings and Themes

- 1. Overview of criteria**
- 2. Practice reviews**
- 3. Share strong and weak examples**
- 4. Critique of images and availability**

Brainstorm book titles or authors

(contemporary realistic fiction)

Picture Books	Short chapter/ Single	Short chapter/ Series

What prompted the project?

What's so important about familiar texts?

- Emergent literacy skills/oral language and literacy
 - Concepts about print
 - Linguistic Awareness
 - Relating speech to print
- Familiar schema for story comprehension
- Maintaining interest and motivation
- Seeing self, family, community represented and valued
- Authors and illustrators like me

Development of the rating scale

- Guidelines for high quality children's literature
 - Huck (1997)
 - Cullinan (1994)
 - Norton (2003)
 - Temple (1998)
 - Tomlinson (1996)
- Hefflin (2001)
- Boutte (2002)
- 10 Quick Ways to Avoid Racism and Sexism

Characteristics of high quality picture books with urban settings

General characteristics

Cover, character, plot, theme, language, illustrations

Urban-specific characteristics

Accuracy of characters

Familiar Context

Familiar Language

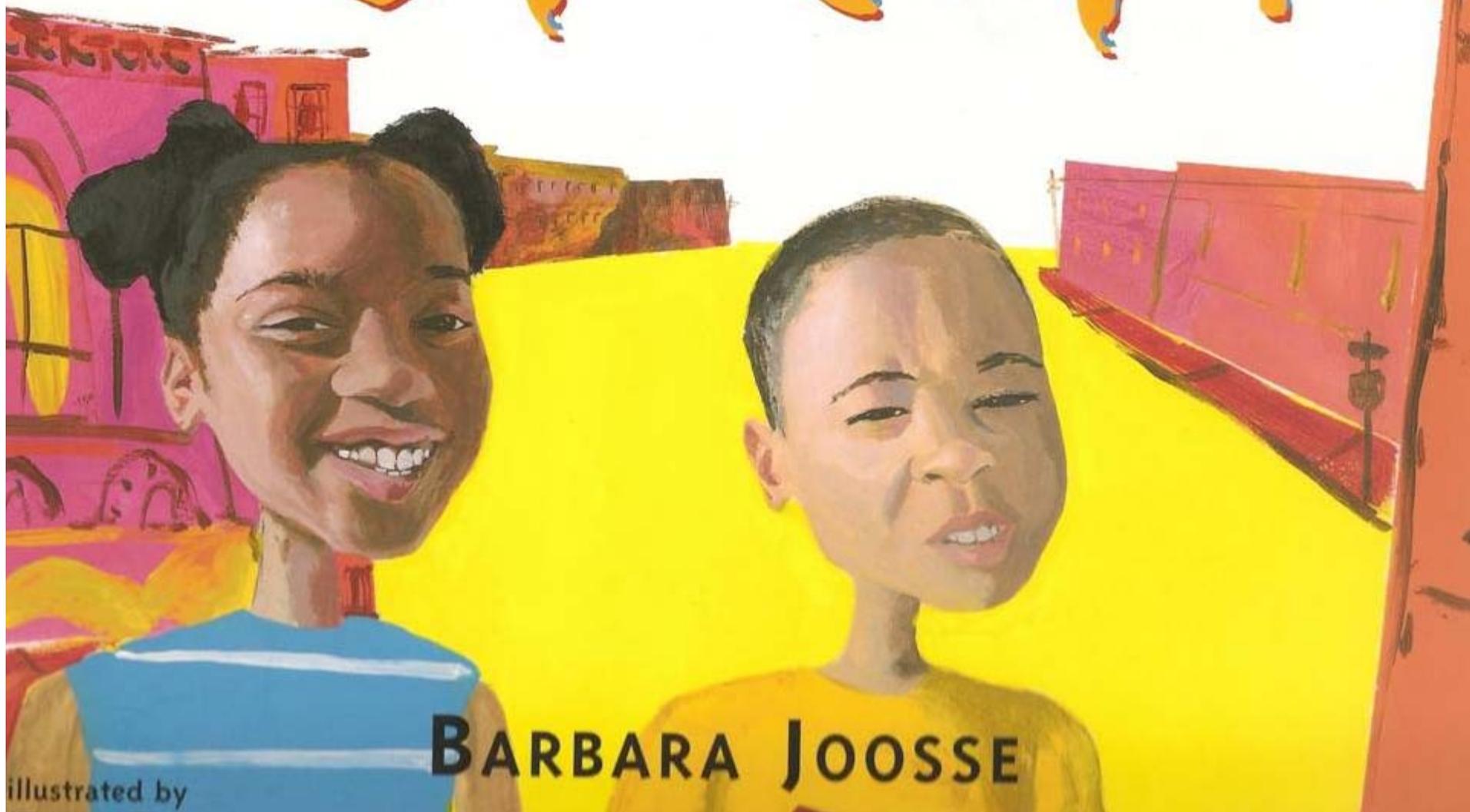
Authentic Urban Scenery

Diversity of Characterization

Diversity of Setting

(see handout for details)

Hot City.

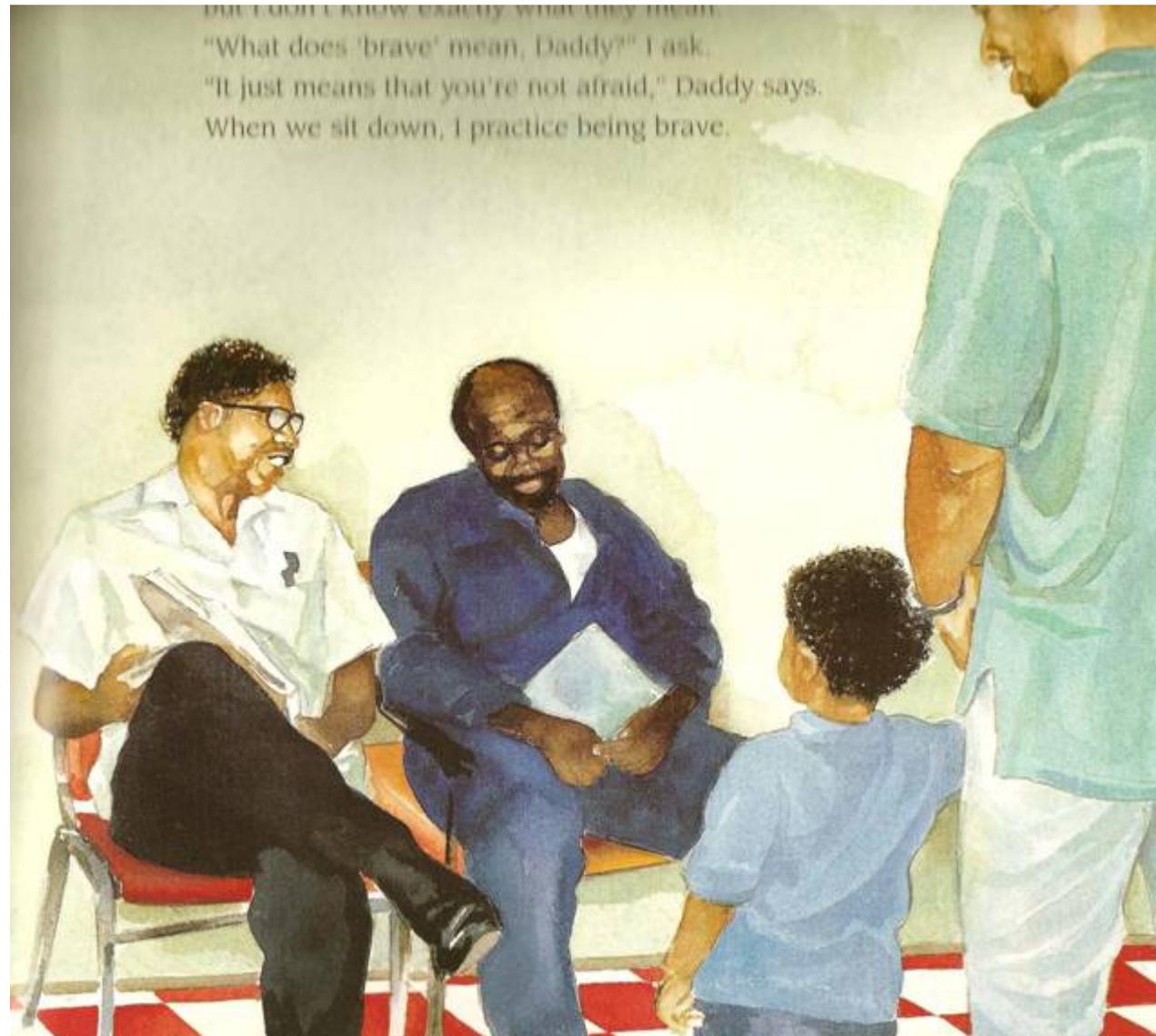


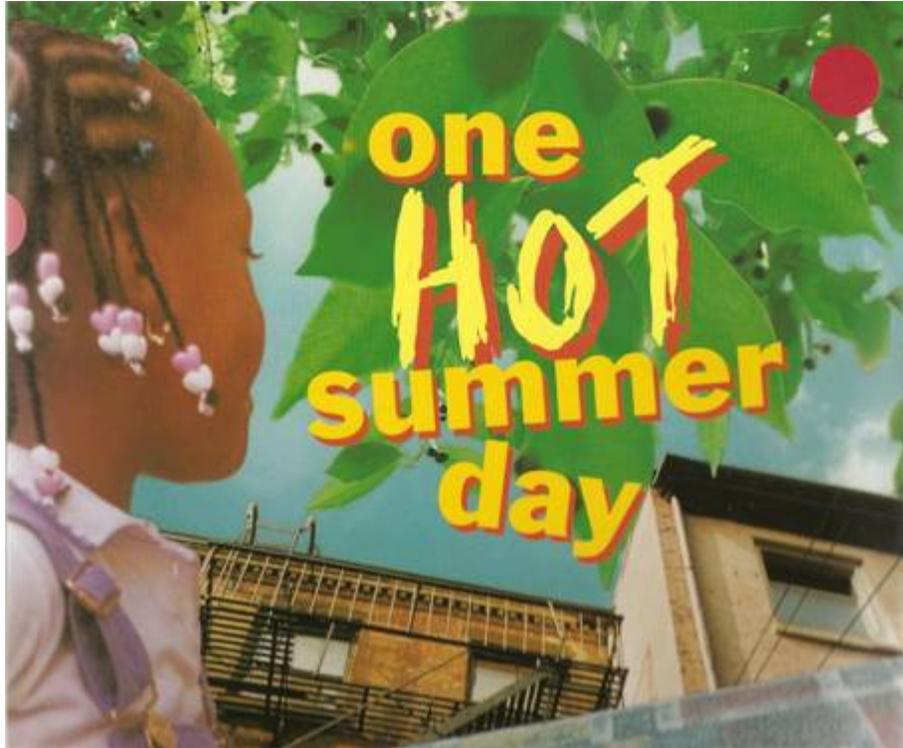
BARBARA JOOSSE

illustrated by

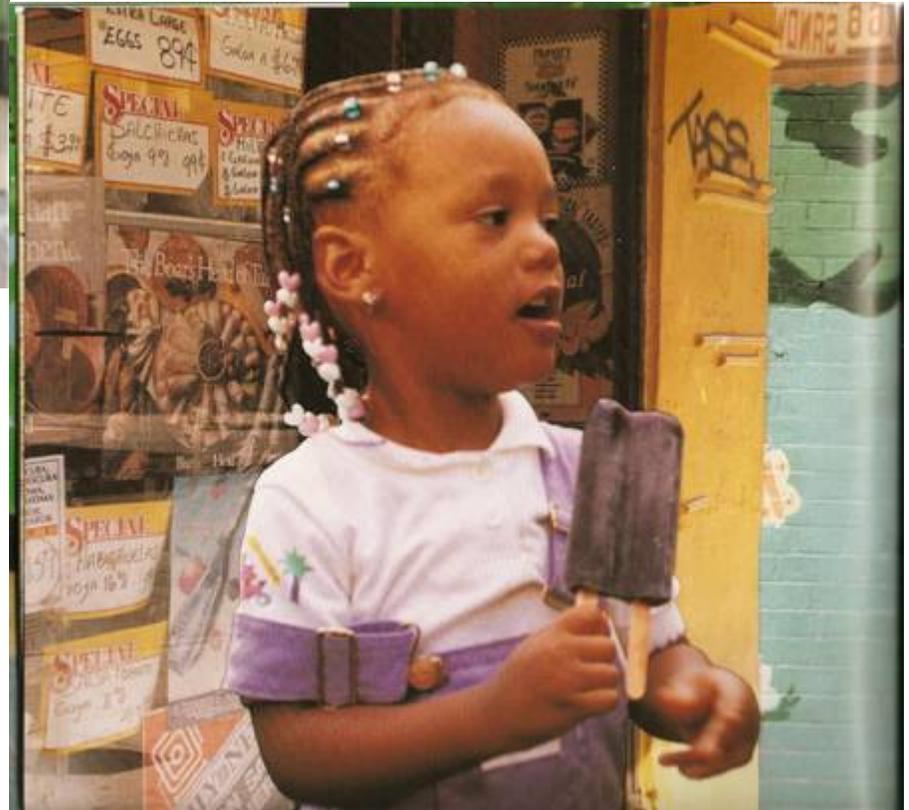


Accuracy of characters

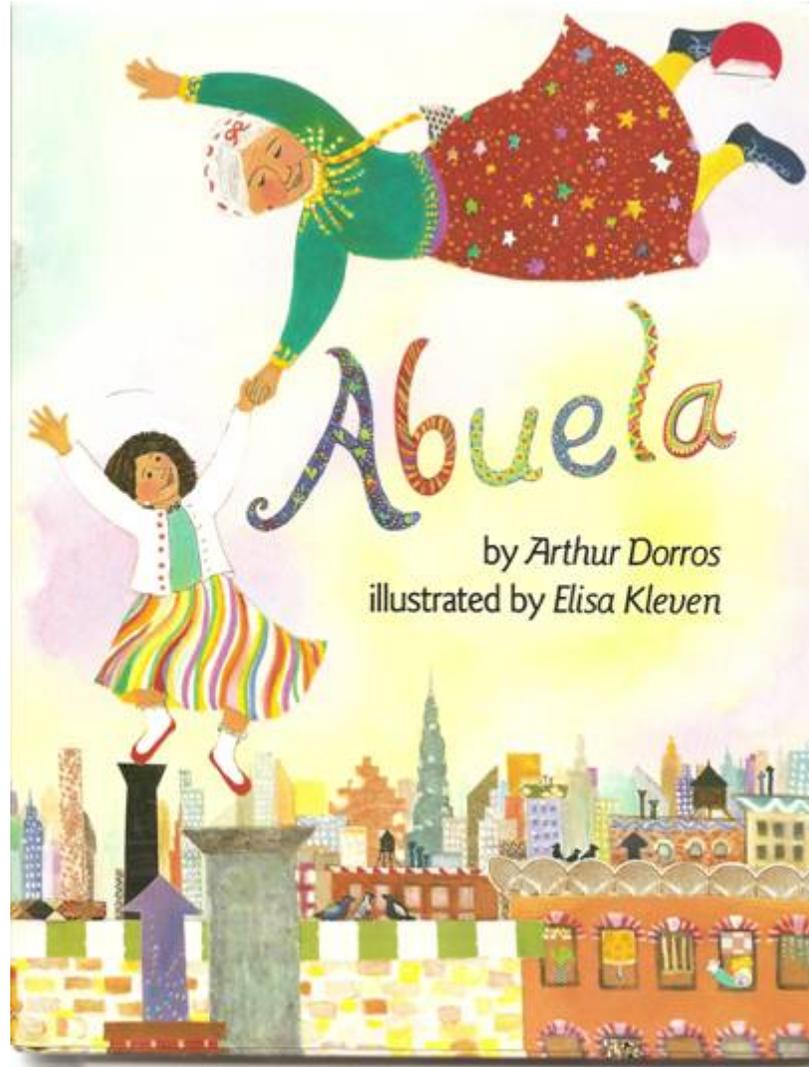


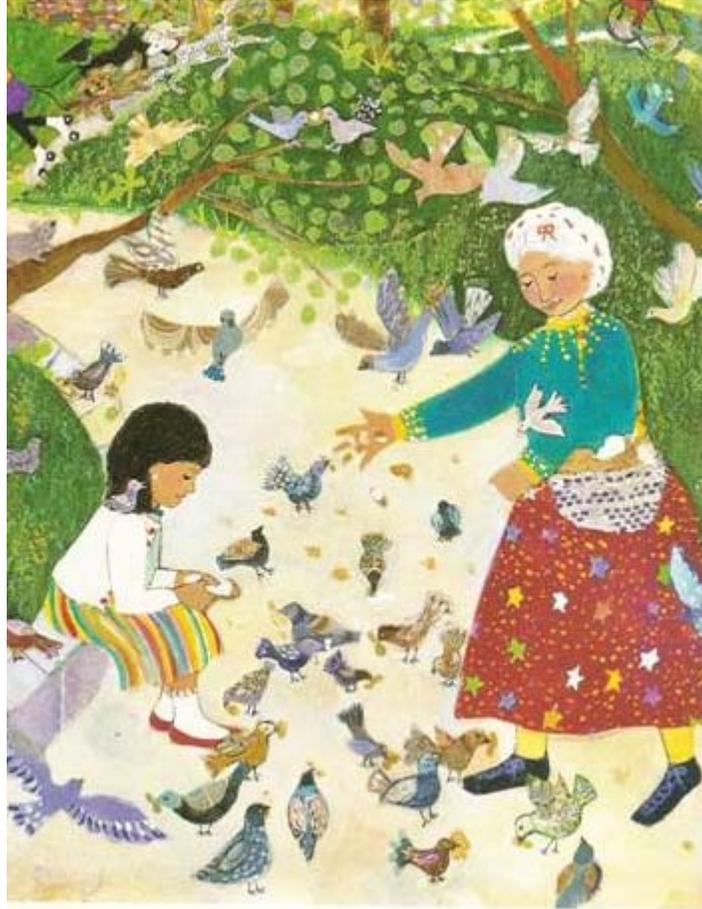


Familiar Context

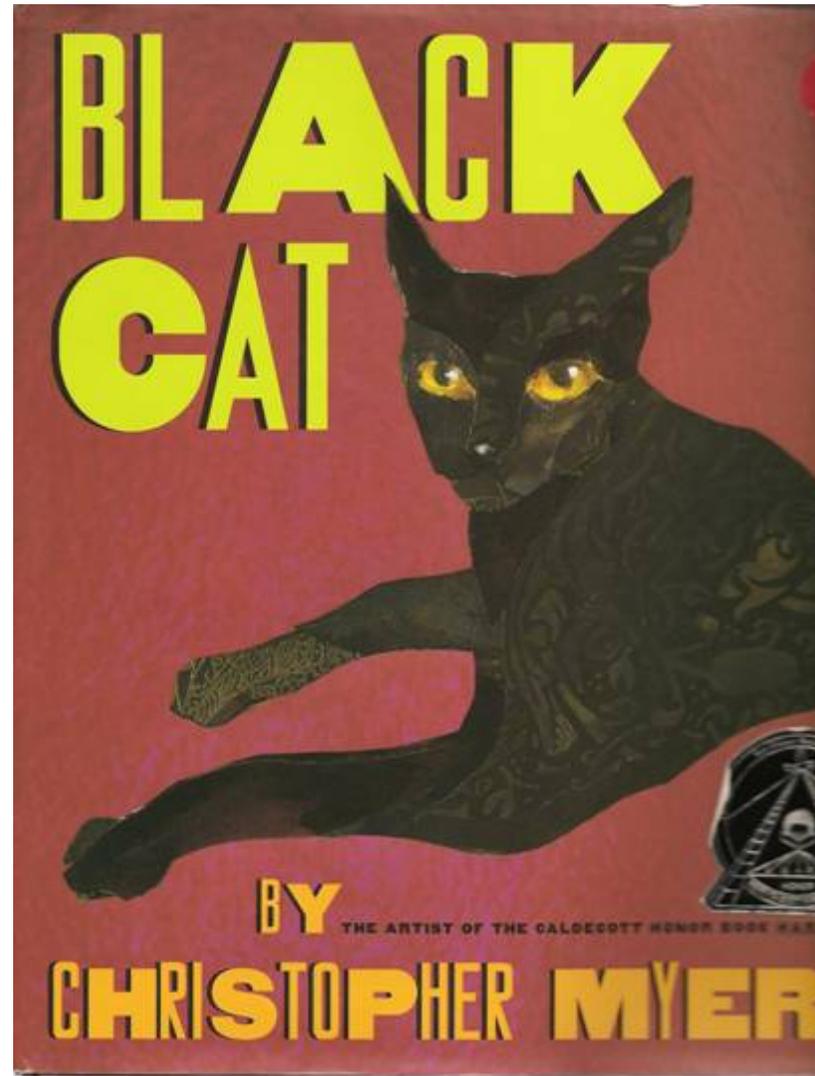


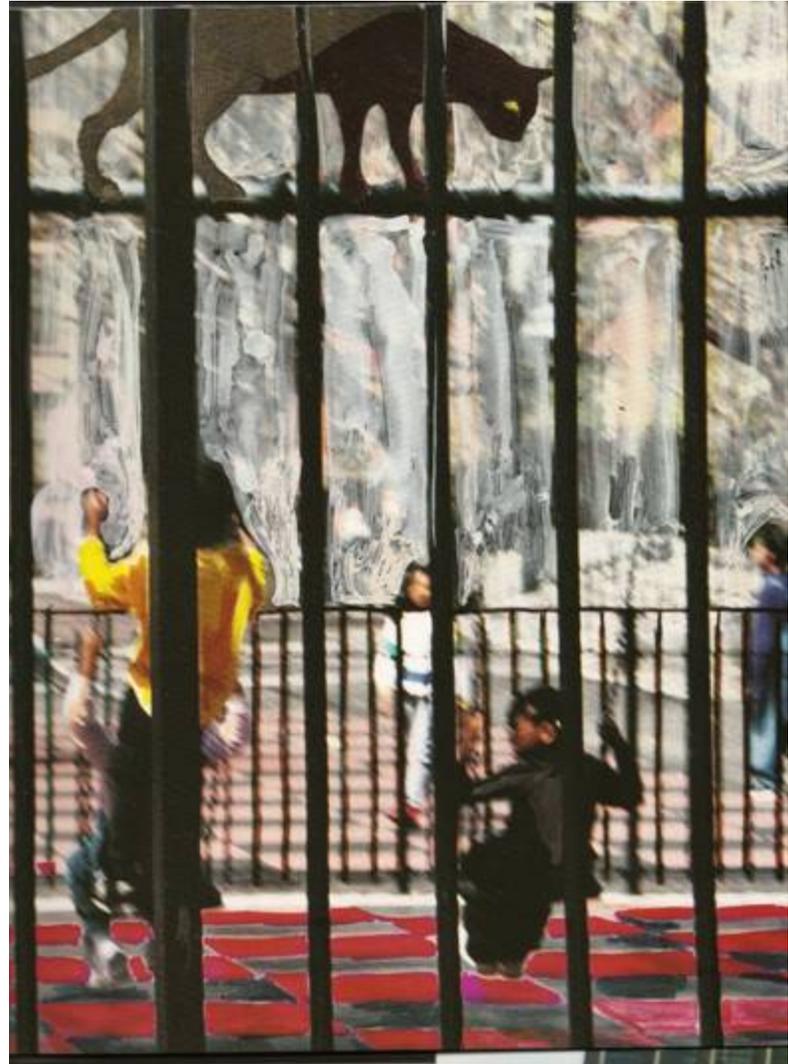
Familiar Language





Authentic Urban Scenery



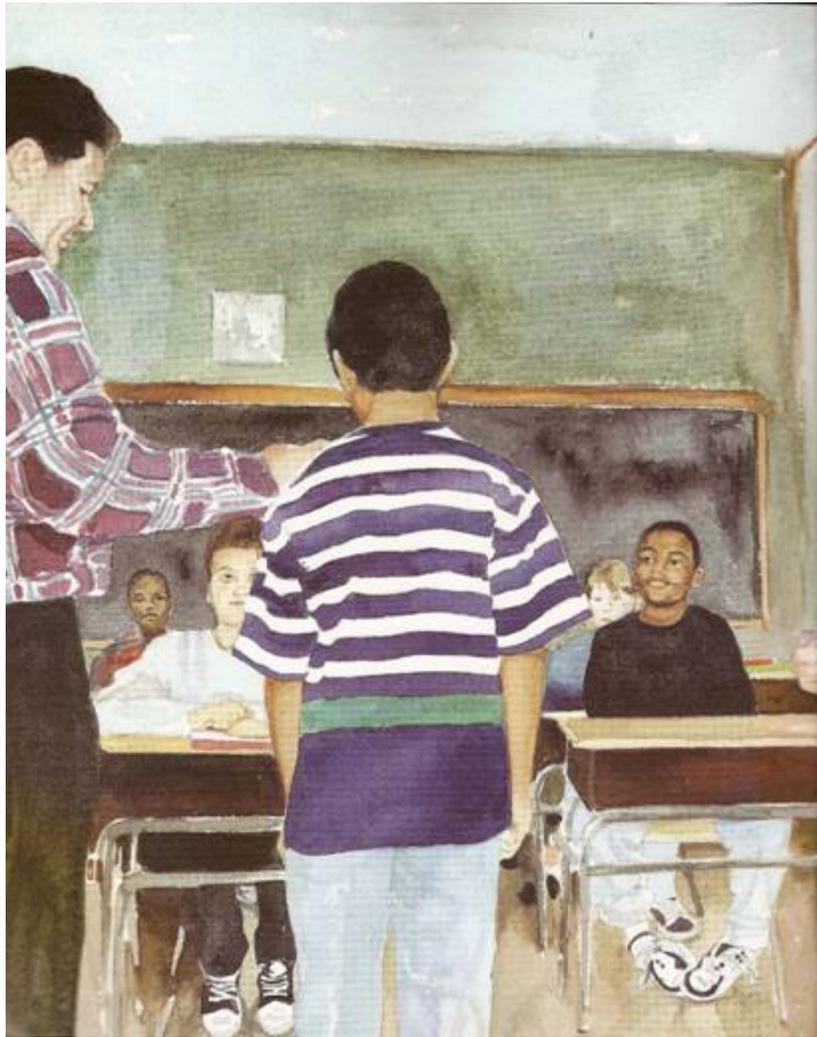


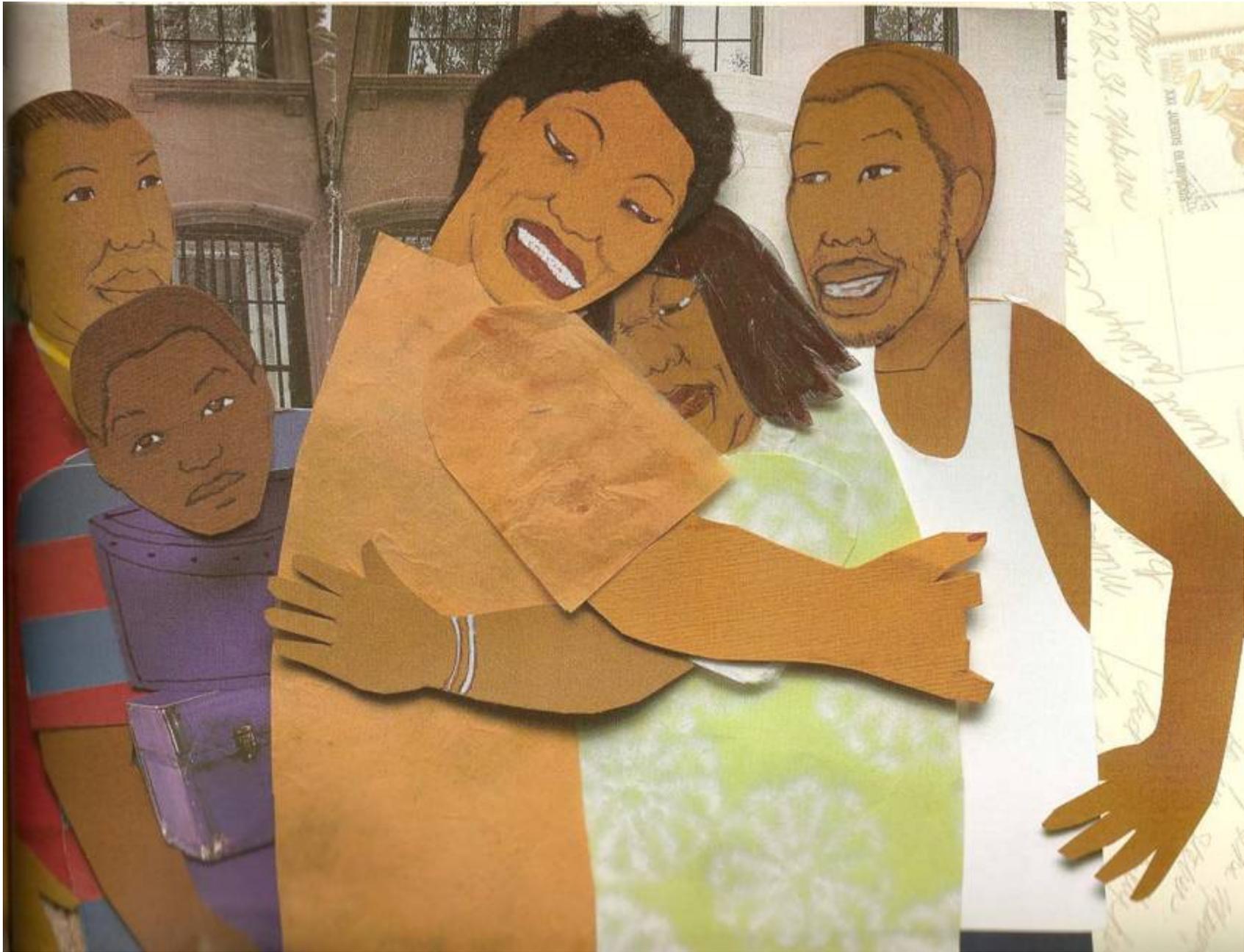
past the school,



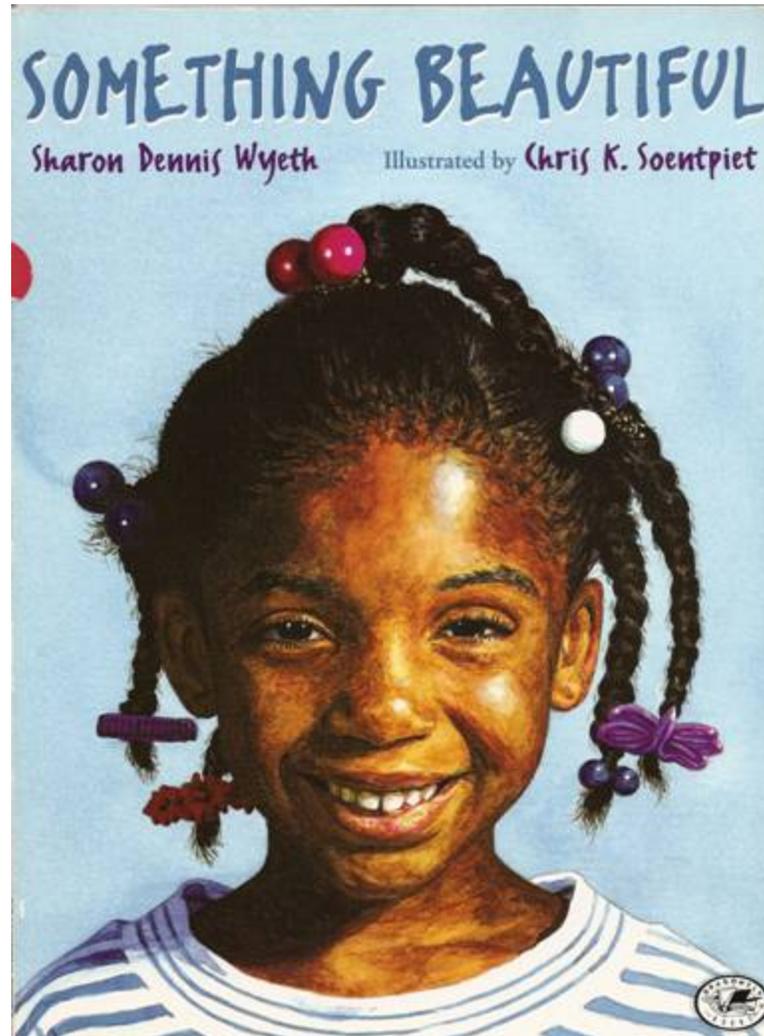
Then they left.

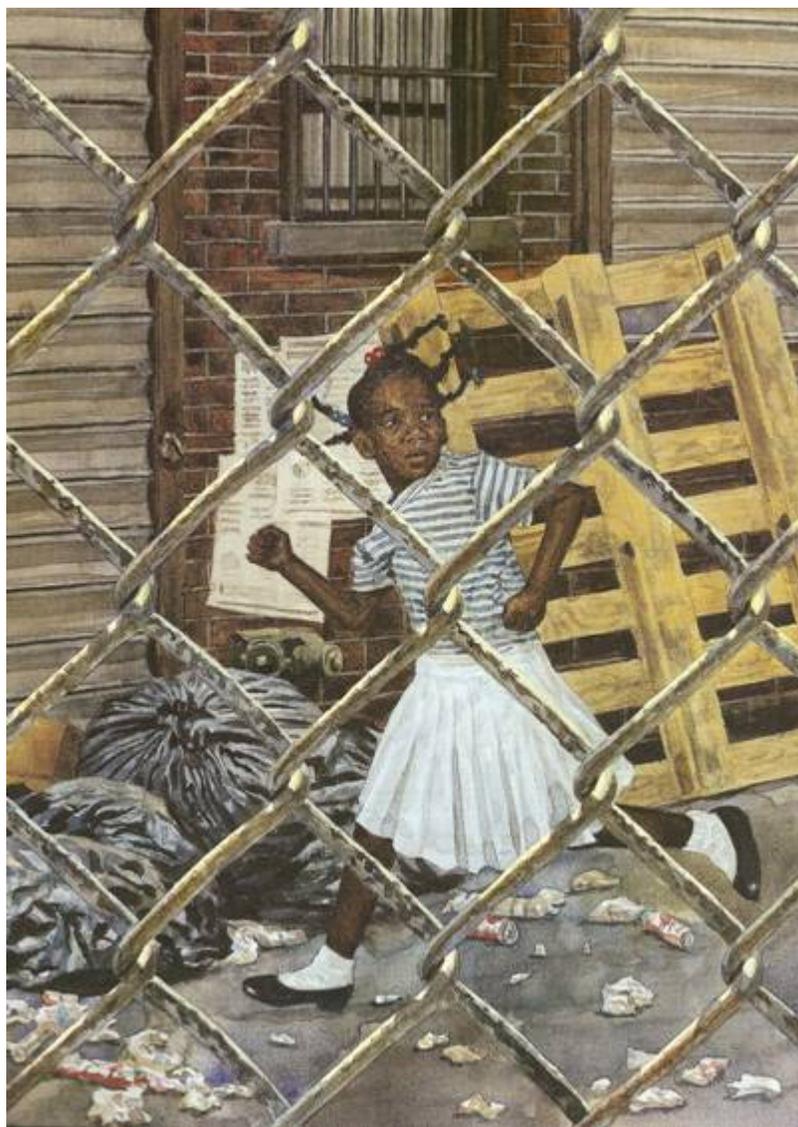
Diversity of Characterization

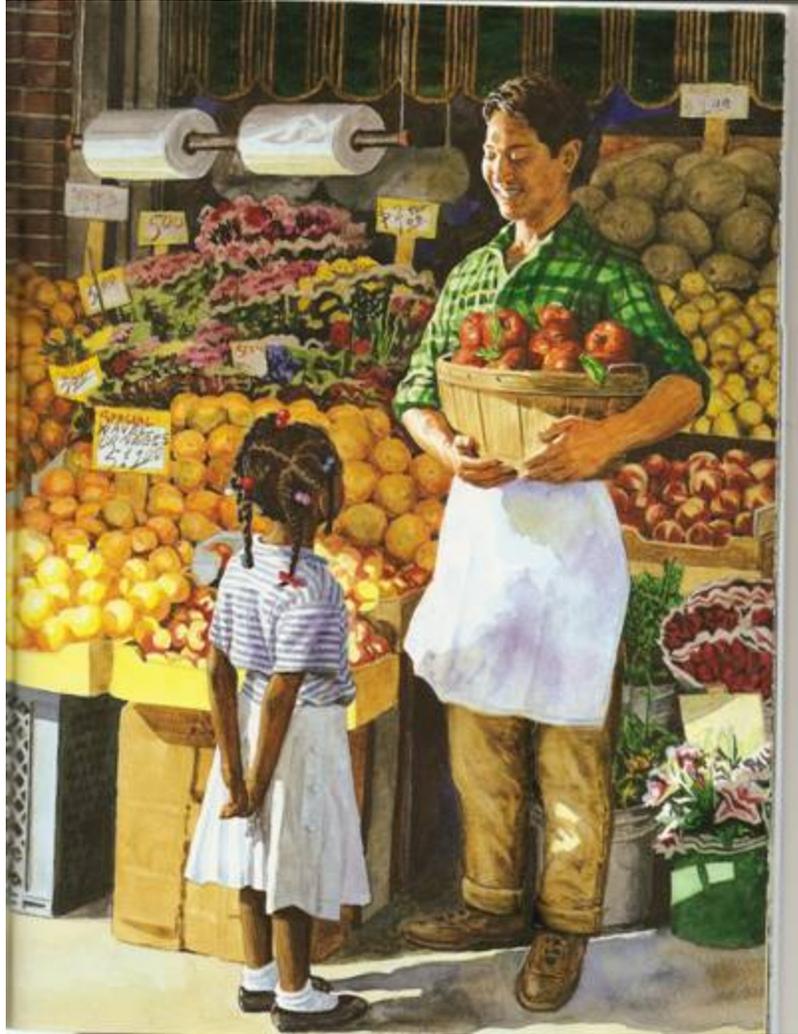
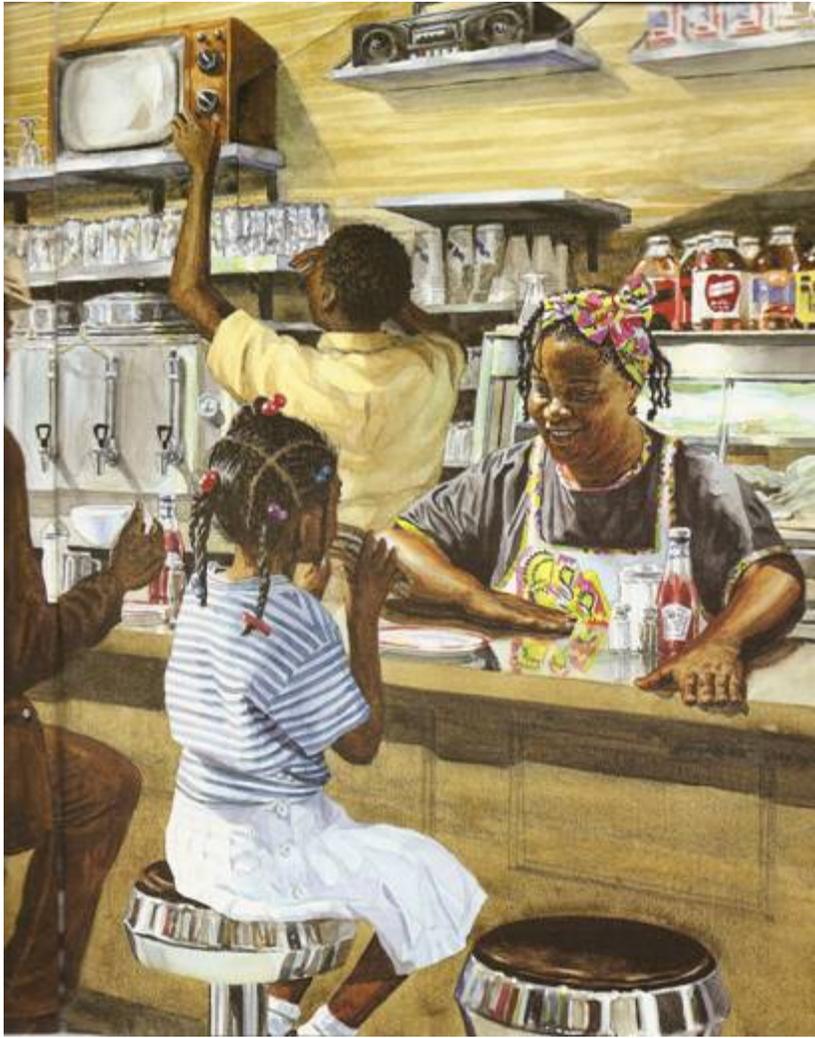




Diversity of Setting







Book Exploration

- Take time to review a range of books
 - Use general and urban characteristics of quality
1. Choose one excellent example to discuss
 2. Choose one not-as-great example (for contrast)

Sharing Selections

Discussing race, class, and equity in children's literature

- **Race – What do you notice?**

Images of people of color, range of diversity in books with urban settings

Presence of racial stereotype

- What do Latino “cities” look like?
- Where do we see Asian Americans?
- Where are Native Americans, biracial characters, others?

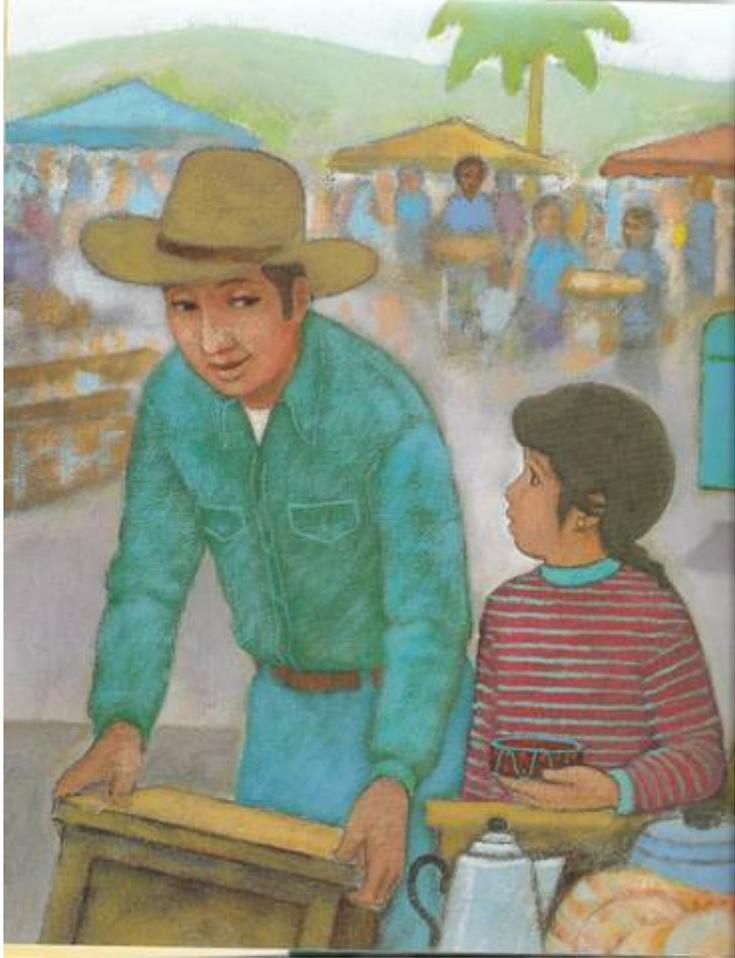
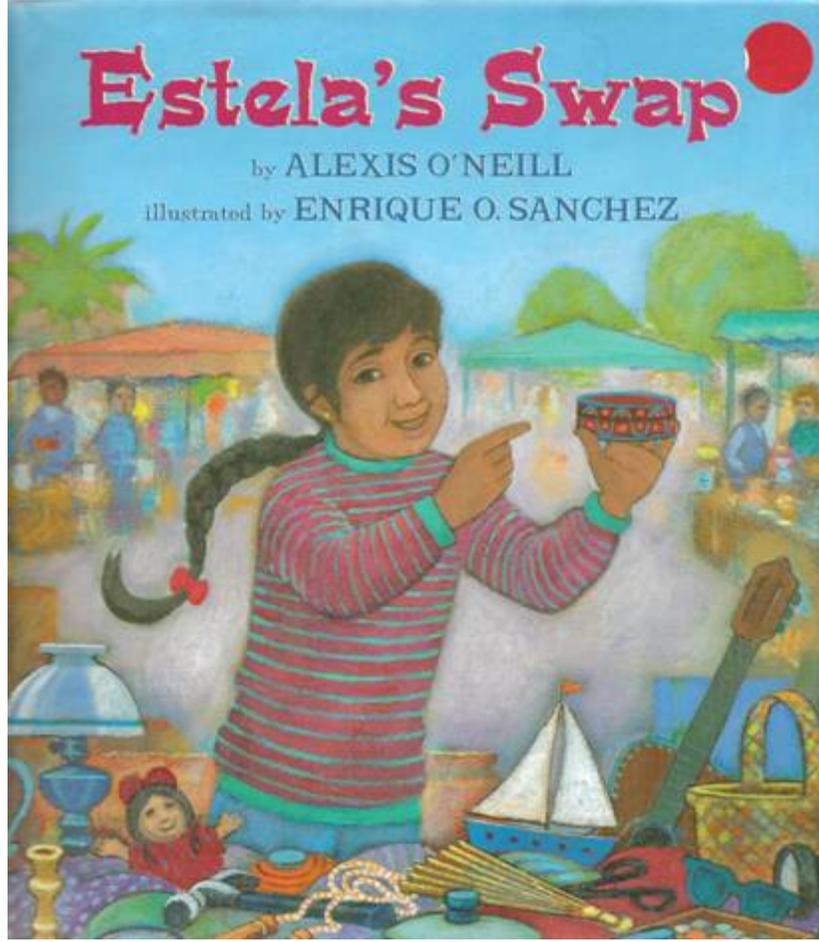
- **Class – What do you notice?**

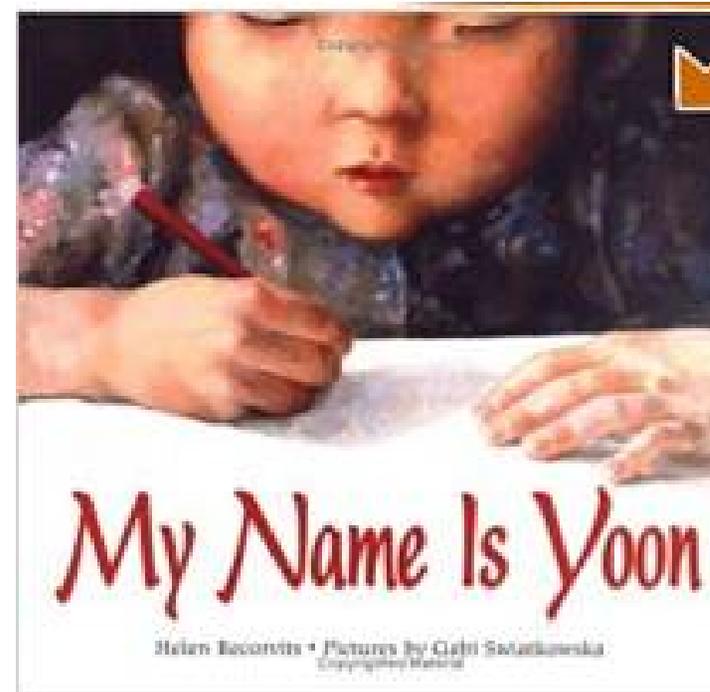
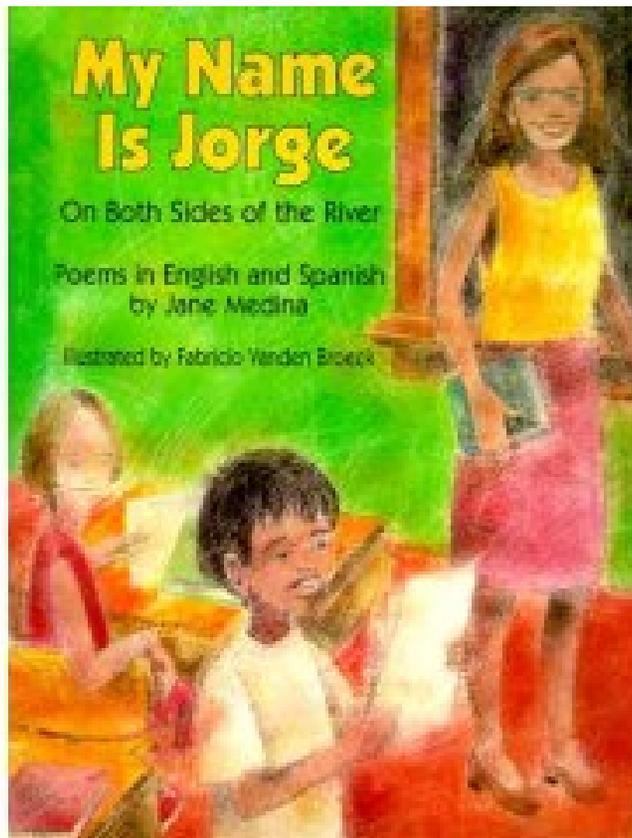
White privilege in urban children's literature

- Where do white people in the city live?
- What do white people do?

- **Equity – Where do you see these texts and stories?**

- Exposure to familiar settings, authors, and illustrators in typical basal series
- Availability of urban titles in big box stores and other outlets
- Developmental gaps in availability of texts – e.g., short chapter books





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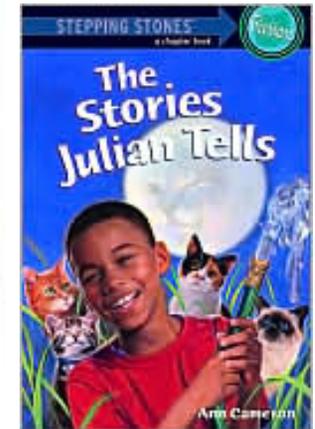
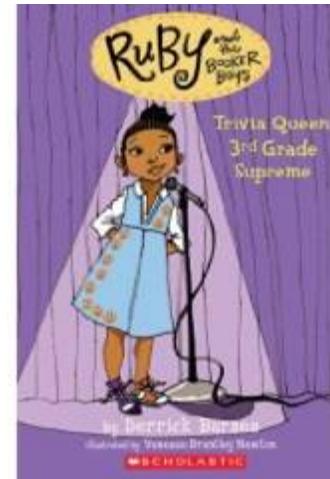
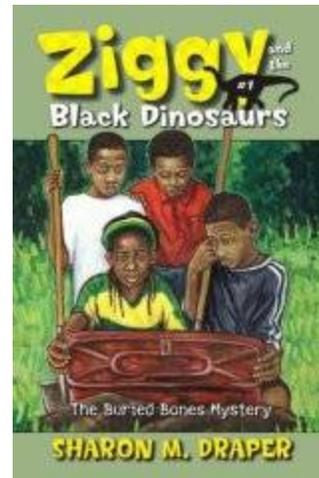
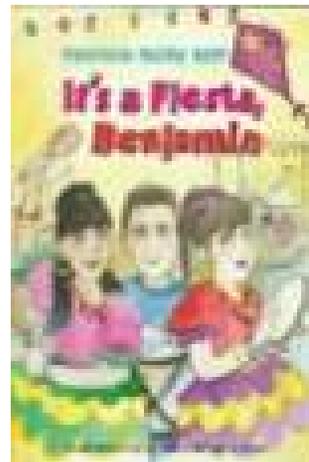
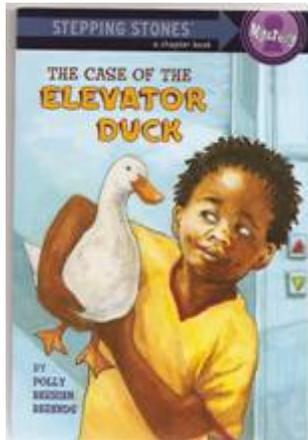
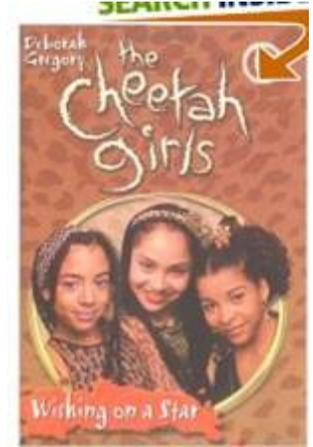
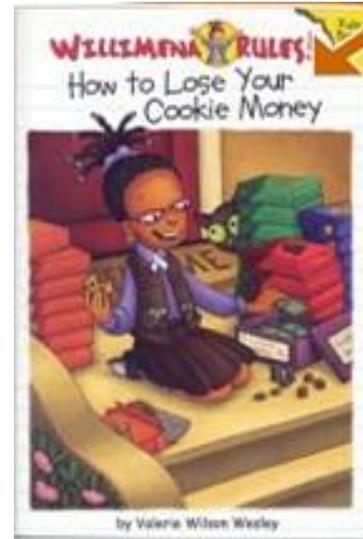
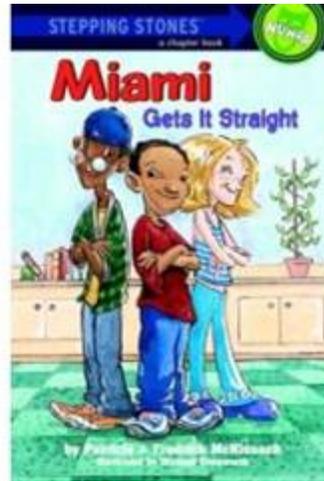
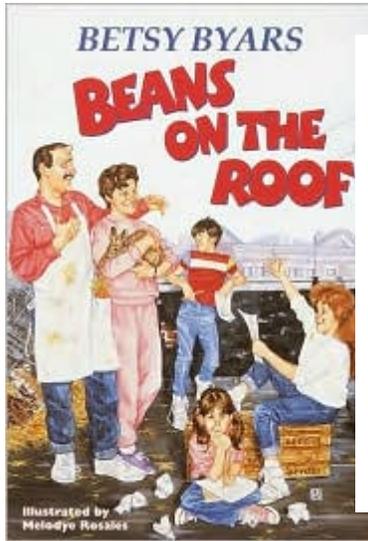
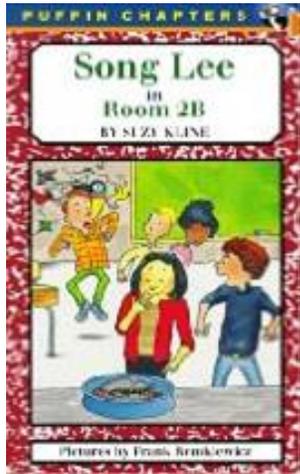
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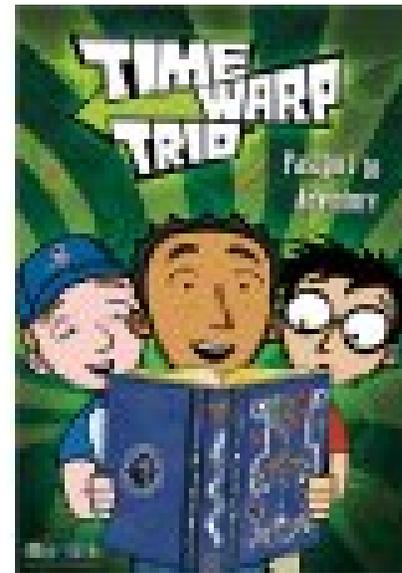
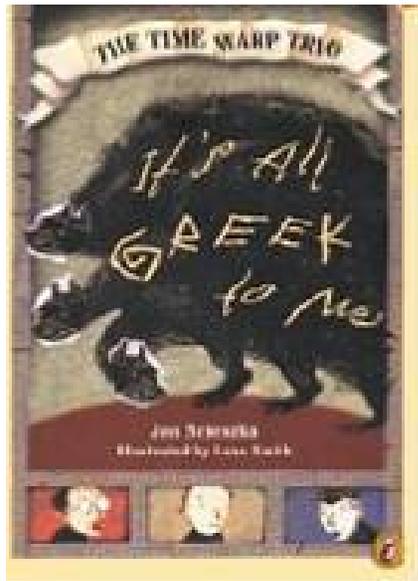
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Changes over time – e.g. Time Warp Trio



Thank you!

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