

# **First Place School: Acquisition of Multicultural Resources**

## **By Katie Fearer**

### **I. Introduction and Purpose**

First Place is a school in Seattle, Washington for children in families that are homeless or in transition. First Place operates a library, but does not have the resources necessary to purchase books that meet all of the needs of its diverse student body. First Place is not publicly funded, and with the Seattle area's poor economic conditions, donations have been diminishing. As a result, at this time, the library is relying largely on donations of books for collection development. (Harris 2003)

While First Place's collection contains a relatively significant percentage of books focusing on African-American and Hispanic races and cultures, books portraying some of the other ethnic and cultural groups are not as prevalent. Donors often do not choose books about less common cultural or ethnic groups when making donations, but they may be able to donate these resources if presented with a list of titles. (Harris 2003)

The purposes of this project were to (i) learn how multicultural resources benefit children (Agosto [2001a] points out that "multicultural" can refer to groups identifiable by ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, gender, disability, political, geographic, or socioeconomic status), (ii) familiarize myself with the demographics of First Place's student body and identify types of multicultural resources that are needed by the library, (iii) identify criteria for evaluating and selecting multicultural literature for children, (iv) develop a bibliography of tools that can be used to select resources appropriate for First Place's students, and (v) use these tools to select resources for one particular cultural group. Each of these aspects of the project is described below.

### **II. The Importance of Multicultural Resources in First Place School's Library**

Multicultural literature benefits all children. Children from minority groups more easily learn from literature depicting their own lifestyles, races, linguistic backgrounds, religions, and other characteristics with which they identify. Moreover, seeing their own cultures and characteristics in books fosters a sense of self-worth in children from marginalized populations. (Agosto 2001a, Agosto 2001b)

Multicultural resources also benefit majority students. When children are exposed to literature portraying diverse cultures and people, they grow to respect individual differences. Multicultural literature can serve as a mechanism for people to communicate with each other about their differences and similarities, increasing understanding and cooperation. (Agosto 2001a, Agosto 2002b) For example, literature can be used to help teach children about bias. (Higgins/New Horizons for Learning 2002)

Considering these benefits, it is critical that any children's library contain a diverse collection, reflecting the linguistic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds of both its students and other people in the community. (Agosto 2001a; Washington 2001)

### **III. First Place School's Students**

First Place teaches children in Grades K through 6, and has plans to add grades 7 and 8 over the next few years. (Harris 2003) As of February 7, 2003, 81 students were enrolled at the school. Their grade levels and ethnicity were as follows:

<b>Grade</b>	<b># Students</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Samoan</b>	<b>Filipino</b>	<b>East Indian</b>
<b>K</b>	11	7		3	1		
<b>1</b>	8	2	3	3			
<b>2</b>	11	4	4	2	1		
<b>3</b>	11	5	1	3	1		1
<b>4</b>	11	6	2	2	1		
<b>5</b>	11	1	7	1	1	1	
<b>6</b>	18	10	2	4		1	1
<b>Totals</b>	81	35	19	18	5	2	2

(First Place 2003)

When I talked with Sam Harris, who is an iSchool student and manages the library at First Place, Sam immediately identified two minority groups that she felt were underrepresented in the library's collection: Middle Eastern and African cultures and traditions. For this project, I decided to focus primarily on identifying books depicting the Arab world and Muslim traditions.

Although Arab children are not currently attending the school, Sam pointed out that it is critical that the library contain resources depicting their cultures. The student body does sometimes include these students. (Harris 2003) Further, with recent tensions between America and the Middle East, and public attitudes towards Islam deteriorating, it is important for all students to be exposed to literature accurately portraying Arab and Muslim cultures and traditions.

### **IV. Selecting and Evaluating Multicultural Literature**

What is good multicultural literature? Agosto (2001a), citing Yokota, identifies five criteria for selecting and evaluating multicultural material, including:

- Cultural accuracy
- Rich cultural details
- Authentic dialogue and relationships
- In-dept treatment of cultural members
- Inclusion of members of minority groups for a purpose

For anyone not intimately familiar with the culture depicted in a book, determining whether the book meets these criteria can be difficult. In these cases, bibliographies of resources and online databases published by credible sources can be helpful. These appear in book format, in

journals, and on the Web. Guidelines for determining whether a book meets the criteria described above can also be helpful. One of the most practical guides I found is a detailed checklist produced by Jennifer Johnson Higgins for *New Horizons for Learning* (2002). The checklist is reproduced in Appendix A.

The criteria listed above can assist in determining whether a multicultural book is of high enough quality to include in a school library. In addition to these factors, acquisition decisions should be based on genre and format, the extent to which a resource can assist in teaching particular skills or values, the presence of both male and female protagonists in works, and bilingual content. (Washington 2001) Even when children speak English as a primary language, a book containing some foreign language words can foster respect for the other language. (Washington 2001; Agosto 2001b)

## **V. Bibliography of Selection Tools**

In creating the bibliography, I focused primarily on free Web-based selection tools. While one recent book does appear in the bibliography and a number of others have been published, First Place's budget does not allow for the purchase of many reference books, and time constraints do not always permit staff to travel to other libraries to review resources. For similar reasons, while some fee-based selection tools exist for children's literature, I did not consider these tools.

The bibliography appears below. I included resources that emphasize multicultural literature, are easy to access and use, and are published by credible sources. I divided resources into two categories: (1) tools for selecting general multicultural resources or resources portraying many cultures and ethnic groups, and (2) tools for selecting resources focusing on Arab and Islamic cultures and traditions. Resources in the first category represent just a small sample of the book lists and selection tools available for children's literature. Resources in the second category include nearly all I could find – relatively few such book lists exist.

### **A. Selection Tools for General Multicultural Resources**

#### **Searchable Databases**

Bartle, Lisa, comp. *Database of Award-Winning Children's Literature*. Available at <http://www.dawcl.com/search.asp> [Accessed on March 7, 2003]. Ms. Bartle is a reference librarian at California State University. The database contains over 3,500 records and is searchable by ethnicity/nationality, language, multicultural content, age level and other data elements.

Montgomery County Public Schools, Program of Assessment, Diagnosis and Instruction (PADI). *Database of Multicultural Trade Books for Elementary Aged Children*. Available at [http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum/socialstd/MBD/Books\\_Begin.htm](http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum/socialstd/MBD/Books_Begin.htm) [Accessed on March 7, 2003] The database is designed for use with Montgomery County, Maryland's curriculum, but can serve as a useful selection aid for any children's library. The database is searchable by title, author, cultural group, illustrator, grade level, and subject.

## Other Resources

Internet School Library Media Center. *Children's Book Awards and Other Literary Prizes*. Available at <http://falcon.jmu.edu/%7Eramseyil/awards.htm> [Accessed on March 7, 2003]. This site includes a list, with links, of major book awards and best book lists. The awards are arranged by category. Among the categories is "Multicultural Book Awards." Included are the America's Award (Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino/Latina); the Carter G. Woodson Award (ethnicity in general); the Coretta Scott King Award and the John Steptoe Award for New Talent (both given to black authors and illustrators); National Jewish Book Awards; Pura Belpre Award (given to a Latino or Latina writer and illustrator); the Sydney Taylor Book Awards (Jewish); and the Thomas Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award.

Internet School Library Media Center. *Multicultural Resources for Children*. Available at <http://falcon.jmu.edu/%7Eramseyil/multipub.htm> [Accessed on March 7, 2003]. This site includes links to resources about multicultural children's literature, including "Bibliographies" of multicultural resources and selection aids. As of March 7, 2003, links existed for the following cultures or ethnic groups: African American; African; Appalachian; Asian American and Asia/Pacific Islands; Christian; European American; Hispanic American; Central and South American; Mexico; Puerto Rico; Jewish; Native American; Gay and Lesbian.

Kruse, Ginny Moore and Kathleen T. Horning, comps. *Fifty Multicultural Books Every Child Should Know*. Revised and updated January 2001. Available from the Cooperative Children's Book Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, School of Education, at <http://www.soemadison.wisc.edu/ccbc/50mult.htm> [Accessed on March 7, 2003].

Murantz, Sylvia and Kenneth. "Picture Books Peek Behind Cultural Curtains." *Book Links* 9, no. 3 (January 2000). Available at <http://www.ala.org/BookLinks/v09/curtains.html> [Accessed on March 7, 2003]. This article describes important considerations in selecting multicultural resources and includes a short bibliography of new (at the time of publication) picture books depicting different cultures (African, Asian, Mexican, Middle Eastern, Native American).

Steiner, Stanley. *Promoting a Global Community Through Multicultural Resources*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited and its Division, Teacher Ideas Press, 1991. 179 pages. This book includes a bibliography of multicultural books divided into the following categories: "The Ties that Bind: Celebrating Life around the World," "Refugees and Homeless: Nomads of the World," "Navigating the Road to Literacy," and "Books that Bring People Together." Subcategories exist for works such as poetry, fiction, picture books, nonfiction, and "food around the world."

Vandergrift, Kay. *Kay Vandergrift's Children's Literature Page*. Available at <http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander/ChildrenLit/> [Accessed on March 7, 2003]. Kay Vandergrift is a professor in the School of Communication, Information and Library Studies at Rutgers University. Among the wide variety of resources offered at this site are lists of children's literature focusing on African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic-American, Native-American, and Islamic traditions and Muslim cultures.

## B. Resources for Materials Portraying the Arab and Muslim Worlds

Holmes, Meg, and Deborah Gesing. *Arab and Islamic Culture: Grades K-5*. Revised January 23, 2002. Available at <http://www.mslma.org/selection/institute01/Islam.htm> [Accessed on February 19, 2003]. Ms. Holmes is Library Media Specialist and Ms. Gesing is Fourth Grade Teacher at the Sargent School in North Andover, Massachusetts. They have compiled this bibliography for use by educators in teaching grades K through 5 about Arab and Islamic culture. Bibliographic descriptions include abstracts (many with notes about how the books can be used by educators), appropriate grade level, and recommendations and awards.

Lechner, Judith V., comp. *The World of Arab and Muslim Children in Children's Books*. n.d. Available at <http://web6.duc.auburn.edu/academic/education/eft/lechner/arabbooks.pdf> [Accessed on March 7, 2003]. Ms. Lechner is Associate Professor, Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology, Auburn University. This is the most extensive bibliography I found of children's books which portray the Arab and Muslim worlds. Bibliographic descriptions are arranged by category, including the following: picture books and books for younger readers, generally through ages 9 or 10 (fiction and nonfiction), and books for older children, generally through ages 13 or 14 (fiction, nonfiction, and folklore). Descriptions include the country or ethnic group portrayed and, usually, appropriate age level. The article is not dated, but appears to have been published since 2001.

Lems, Kristin. "The Arab World and Arab Americans." *Book Links* 9, no. 2 (November 1999). Available at <http://www.ala.org/BookLinks/v09/arab.html> [accessed on March 7, 2003]. This article includes a bibliography of literature, for both children and older readers, representing Arab cultures. The titles are arranged by country and ethnicity. Bibliographic descriptions include appropriate grade levels and substantial abstracts.

## **VI. Resources Depicting Arab and Muslim Cultures and Traditions Selected for First Place School**

To select resources appropriate for First Place, I reviewed the bibliographies published by Holmes and Gesing (2002), Lems (1999), and Lechner (n.d.) and the database compiled by Bartle. I then reviewed some of the books identified in these resources at Seattle Public Library. I tried to select both fiction and nonfiction appropriate for the full range of grades taught at First Place; portraying both male and female protagonists; including some non-English vocabulary; and depicting Arab-American cultures, Islamic traditions, and life in selected Middle Eastern and North African countries.

The list of resources I selected appears in Appendix 2. A few of these books were not available for review at the library (some were checked out or at other branches, for example). With two exceptions (noted on the list), I chose books I did not review only if they won awards or, according to Holmes and Gesing, were recommended by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard. I compiled much of the information appearing in Appendix 2 from the information in the bibliographies published by Holmes and Gesing, Lems, and Lechner, and also from the books I reviewed.

## **VII. Conclusions**

Building a multicultural library is not easy. I had difficulty evaluating the multicultural quality of the books, even when using New Horizons' checklist. For example, I reviewed *Samir and Yonathan* but could not be sure that "all cultures involved are represented accurately" in the book, because I am not intimately familiar with Palestinian and Israeli cultures. This is one of the reasons why I selected mostly award-winning or highly recommended books.

Further, some of the books I chose deal with sensitive issues, such as war and the Arab-Israeli conflict. (I found myself next wanting to review First Place's collection for books about Israel and Israeli children.) And even as I included the books I wondered if some of them would be too disturbing for children. On the other hand, these conditions are part of the life of children in North Africa and the Middle East. Only through considering and talking about these topics can children in the United States come to understand the world of Arab and Muslim children.

The benefits of a diverse collection (described in section II) are well worth the time and effort required to evaluate multicultural resources. It is my hope that the book list and bibliography of selection aids created through this project will help First Place in its collection development efforts.

## **Acknowledgments**

This project would not have been possible without the support and assistance of First Place School, and in particular Sam Harris. The members of iSchool Friends of First Place also deserve recognition - the members' continuing interest in helping First Place encouraged me to focus on the needs of First Place's library and students for my diversity project.

## References

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**MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN’S LITERATURE EVALUATION TOOL**

BOOK TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHOR \_\_\_\_\_ PUBLICATION DATE \_\_\_\_\_

1. THE STORY IS WELL WRITTEN.	<u>YES/TRUE</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT</u>	<u>NO/FALSE</u>
The story itself is interesting and engaging	_____	_____	_____
Syntax, grammar, word usage, etc. makes the story easy to read for children of the age for which it is written	_____	_____	_____
Comments:			
2. THERE ARE NO DISTORTIONS OR OMISSIONS OF HISTORY.	<u>YES/TRUE</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT</u>	<u>NO/FALSE</u>
Various perspectives are represented	_____	_____	_____
All cultures involved are represented accurately	_____	_____	_____
Comments:			
3. THERE IS NO STEREOTYPING IN THE TEXT OF THE ETHNIC GROUP BEING PORTRAYED.	<u>YES/TRUE</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT</u>	<u>NO/FALSE</u>
There are no derogatory overtones used in the text to describe the characters and culture in the story (such as “savage,” primitive,” “lazy,” or “backward”)	_____	_____	_____
Ethnic characters are portrayed as individuals, not as combinations of culturally stereotypical characteristics	_____	_____	_____
Comments:			



<p>4. THE ILLUSTRATIONS ARE AUTHENTIC AND NON-STEREOTYPED.</p> <p>The illustrations do not generalize about aspects of the cultural being portrayed</p> <p>Characters of the same ethnic group are depicted as individuals and do not all look alike; the illustrations show a variety of physical attributes</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<p><u>YES/TRUE</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>SOMEWHAT</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>NO/FALSE</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>5. LIFESTYLES OF THE CHARACTERS ARE CULTURALLY ACCURATE.</p> <p>The lifestyles of the characters are not oversimplified or generalized, but are genuine and accurate</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<p><u>YES/TRUE</u></p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>SOMEWHAT</u></p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>NO/FALSE</u></p> <p>_____</p>
<p>6. THE DIALOGUE USED IS CULTURALLY AUTHENTIC.</p> <p>The characters use speech that accurately represents the oral tradition from which they come</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<p><u>YES/TRUE</u></p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>SOMEWHAT</u></p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>NO/FALSE</u></p> <p>_____</p>
<p>7. STANDARDS OF SUCCESS ARE CONSISTENT ACROSS CULTURES.</p> <p>The ethnic characters are not portrayed as helpless, or in need of the assistance of a white authority figure</p> <p>Ethnic characters do not have to exhibit extraordinary qualities to gain acceptance or approval with the majority</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<p><u>YES/TRUE</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>SOMEWHAT</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>NO/FALSE</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

<p>8. THE ROLE OF FEMALES, ELDERS, AND FAMILY ARE CULTURALLY ACCURATE.</p> <p>Women and the elderly are portrayed accurately within their culture</p> <p>The significance of family is portrayed accurately for the culture.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<p><u>YES/TRUE</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>SOMEWHAT</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>NO/FALSE</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>9. EFFECTS TO A CHILD’S SELF-IMAGE ARE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.</p> <p>There is nothing in the story that would embarrass or offend a child whose culture is being portrayed</p> <p>You would be willing to share the book with a mixed-race group of children</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<p><u>YES/TRUE</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>SOMEWHAT</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>NO/FALSE</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>10. THE AUTHOR’S AND/OR ILLUSTRATOR’S BACKGROUND IS RELEVANT TO THE CULTURE PORTRAYED.</p> <p>The author and illustrator have the qualifications and background needed to deal with the cultural group accurately and respectfully</p> <p>The author and illustrator are members of the cultural or ethnic group they are portraying</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<p><u>YES/TRUE</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>SOMEWHAT</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><u>NO/FALSE</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

11. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHARACTERS	<u>YES/TRUE</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT</u>	<u>NO/FALSE</u>
<p data-bbox="185 176 667 233">FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES ARE RELEVANT AND AUTHENTIC.</p> <p data-bbox="185 275 737 369">Whites do not possess the power while cultural minorities play a supporting or subservient role</p> <p data-bbox="185 411 719 468">The minority characters are leaders in the community and solve their own problems</p> <p data-bbox="185 510 326 537">Comments:</p>	<p data-bbox="764 327 857 338">_____</p> <p data-bbox="764 468 857 478">_____</p>	<p data-bbox="927 327 1052 338">_____</p> <p data-bbox="927 468 1052 478">_____</p>	<p data-bbox="1131 327 1256 338">_____</p> <p data-bbox="1131 468 1256 478">_____</p>
<p data-bbox="136 613 732 707">12. HEROINES AND HEROES ARE PORTRAYED AUTHENTICALLY WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE CULTURES.</p> <p data-bbox="185 749 760 911">Heroines and heroes are defined according to the concepts of and struggles for justice appropriate to their cultural group. They are not those who avoid conflict with and thus benefit the white male establishment</p> <p data-bbox="185 953 326 980">Comments:</p>	<p data-bbox="764 764 857 774">_____</p>	<p data-bbox="927 764 1052 774">_____</p>	<p data-bbox="1131 764 1256 774">_____</p>
<p data-bbox="136 1058 727 1188">13. THE COPYRIGHT DATE REFLECTS THE CURRENT UNDERSTANDING OF THE DYNAMICS OF THE CULTURE BEING WRITTEN ABOUT.</p> <p data-bbox="185 1230 745 1287">The book was originally written within the past decade</p> <p data-bbox="185 1329 326 1356">Comments:</p>	<p data-bbox="764 1251 857 1262">_____</p>	<p data-bbox="927 1251 1052 1262">_____</p>	<p data-bbox="1131 1251 1256 1262">_____</p>

**RESOURCES DEPICTING ARAB AND MUSLIM CULTURES AND TRADITIONS  
SELECTED FOR FIRST PLACE SCHOOL**

Author	Title	Publisher	Grade Levels*	Pub. Date	Fiction, Nonfiction, Folktale, Video	Female / Male Prot.	Focus	Description	Awards or Recs.	Reviewed by....
Carmi, Daniella	Samir and Yonathan	Arthur A. Levine Books	4-6	2000	Fiction	Male	Palestine; Israel	While being treated in an Israeli hospital, a Palestinian boy and an Israeli boy become friends.	The Batchelder Award (Association of Library Service to Children)	Lechner
Ghazi, Suhaib Hamid	Ramadan	Holiday House	K-2; 1-6	1996	Nonfiction		Islam	"The religion of Islam and the celebration of Ramadan are simply explained by recounting how Hakeem and his family observe the special month. The pictures suggest they are an American Muslim family." Quoted from Holmes and Gesing (2002).	Rec. by Center for Middle Eastern Studies (Harvard University)	Holmes and Gesing; Lechner; Lems
Heide, Florence Parry and Gilliland, Judith Heide	The Day of Ahmed's Secret	Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books	K-4; 1-3	1990	Fiction	Male	Egypt	"This story depicts the boy Ahmed as he wanders the streets of modern day Cairo. Lewin's illustrations capture the working class neighborhood and the contrast of old and new ways of life." Quoted from Holmes and Gesing (2002).	ALA Notable Book; School Lib Journal Best Book of 1990	Holmes and Gesing; Lechner; Lems
Heide, Florence Parry and Gilliland, Judith Heide	The House of Wisdom	DK Ink	K-4; K-3; 3-8	1999	Fiction	Male	Iraq (9th century)	"This story of 9th century Baghdad is a fictional account of Ishaq and his father, Hunayn, who were actual translators of scholarly books for the House of Wisdom, a world renowned library built by the Caliph. The glory and achievement of the Islamic Empire are captured in lyrical prose." Quoted from Holmes and Gesing (2002).	Picture Book Winner of First Middle East Book Awards 2000	Holmes and Gesing; Lechner; Lems
Heide, Florence Parry and Gilliland, Judith Heide	Sami and the Time of Troubles	Clarion	K-5; 2-5; 3-7	1992	Fiction	Male	Lebanon	"What happens to children and families when their life is dominated by conflict? This powerful book portrays how ordinary people survive daily in war torn Lebanon." Quoted from Holmes and Gesing (2002).	Rec. by Center for Middle Eastern Studies (Harvard University)	Holmes and Gesing; Lechner; Lems
Hickox, Rebecca	The Golden Sandal: A Middle Eastern Cinderella Story	Holiday House	K-2; K-4	1998	Folktale	Female	Iraq	"As the Author's Note mentions, Hickox has adapted this Cinderella tale from a story from Iraq. Maha's transformation is choreographed by a magical fish, similar to the Chinese Yeh-shen." Quoted from Holmes and Gesing (2002).	Rec. by Center for Middle Eastern Studies (Harvard University)	Holmes and Gesing; Lechner; Lems
Husain, Shahrukh	What Do We Know About Islam?	Peter Bedrick Books	4-5; 2-8	1995	Nonfiction		Islam	"The detailed explanation about the history of Islam and its modern culture make this a useful overview. Colorful illustrations and photographs, a timeline, a glossary, and an index help make the information accessible to young readers." Quoted from Holmes and Gesing (2002).		Holmes and Gesing; Lems

Author	Title	Publisher	Grade Levels*	Pub. Date	Fiction, Nonfiction, Folktale, Video	Female / Male Prot.	Focus	Description	Awards or Recs.	Reviewed by....
Kimmel, Eric	The Tale of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves: A Story from the Arabian Nights, as retold by Eric Kimmel	Holiday House	2-5	1996	Folktale	Both		"This is a captivating read aloud for children, who will enjoy the delightful detailed drawings of the characters' expressions. The story has action, adventure, wealth and poverty, and an avenging heroine. Some vocabulary words to discuss before reading the story are brocade, dinar, purveyor, bushel measure, sesame, barley, caraway and cardamom." Quoted from Holmes and Gesing (2002).	Rec. by Center for Middle Eastern Studies (Harvard University)	Holmes and Gesing
Nye, Naomi Shihab	Sitti's Secrets	Simon & Shuster	1-5; 1-6	1994	Fiction	Female	Palestine; Arab American	"This wonderful book must be shared. An Arab-American girl describes her visit to Palestine to meet her grandmother. The loving inter-generational relationship is captured as is the Palestinian way of life. Particularly compelling, in light of Sept. 11th, is the letter Mona writes to the President of the United States when she returns to America. This could be one of those picture books used to spark discussion with older students." Quoted from Holmes and Gesing (2002).	Jane Adams Book Award (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom)	Holmes and Gesing; Lems; Bartle
Nye, Naomi Shihab	Habibi	Simon & Shuster; Four Winds Press	6 and up	1997	Fiction	Female	Palestine; Arab American	Fourteen-year-old Liyana Aboud moves with her Palestinian father and American mother from the United States to the West Bank.		Holmes and Gesing; Lechner; Lems
Stotsky, Sandra	The Arab Americans**	Chelsea House	4-7	1999	Nonfiction		Arab American			Lechner
	Arab-American Heritage; American Cultures for Children Video Series**	Schlesinger Video	1-6	1997	Nonfiction; Video		Arab American	"This 25 minute video is part of the American Cultures for Children series. Information on the Arab world, Arab-Americans, customs, food, language, and lifestyle is packed into a kid friendly format. ....The folktale, The Three Princes, is retold ..... After viewing the video, fourth grade students asked some thought provoking questions such as "Do all Islamic girls cover their faces?" and "Why is Arabic written from right to left?" Quoted from Holmes and Gesing (2002).		Holmes and Gesing

\*Grade levels are taken from Holmes and Gesing (2002), Lechner (n.d.) and Lems (1999). Lechner's bibliography provided appropriate age groups rather than grade levels. For this table, I converted age groups to grade levels.

\*\*I have not had a chance to review these items. Their appearance on this list is subject to change.

