



Multicultural Literature:

A Challenge and An Opportunity

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The BIG Questions ?????

- **What is multicultural literature?**
- **Will it teach the truth?**
- **Will it prepare students for life?**
- **Why study any literature?**
- **What is the purpose of education?**

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Carnegie Foundation Reports:

- **EDUCATION is**
“a study of those consequential ideas, experiences, and traditions common to all of us by virtue of our membership in the human family at a particular moment in history.”



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Carl Sagan and Ann Druyan say:

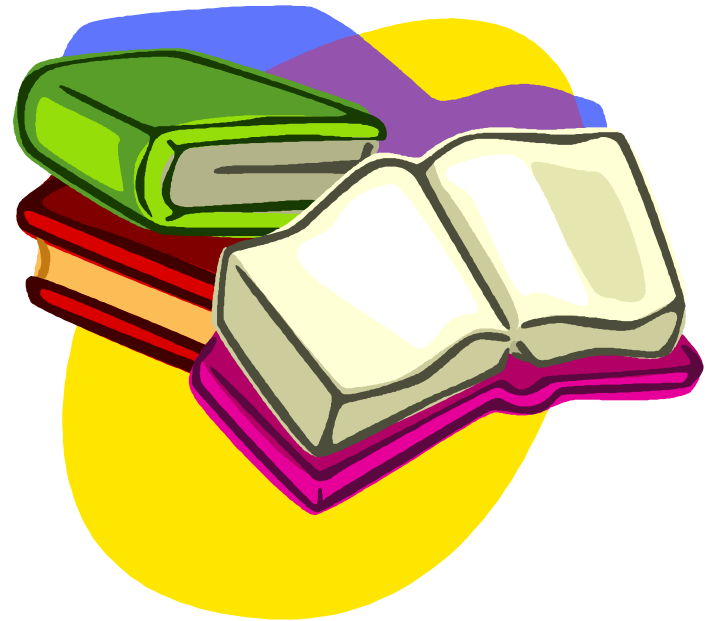
- **Books... permit us to interrogate the past with high accuracy; to tap the wisdom of our species; to understand the point of view of others.... Books are the key to understanding the world and participating in a democratic society.”**



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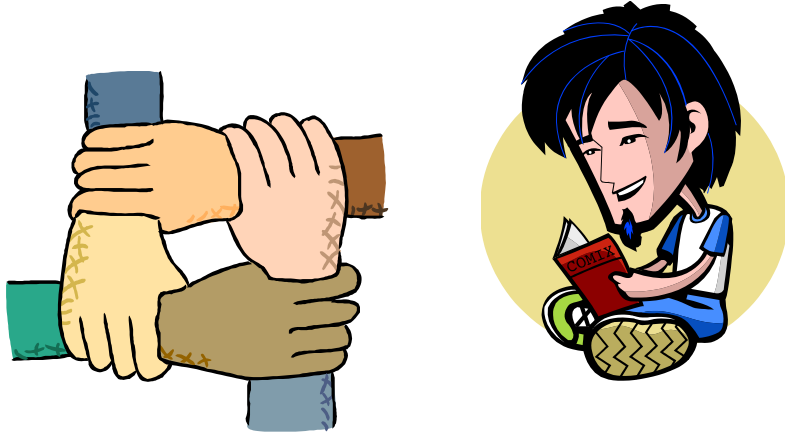
What is GOOD literature?

- it is **ENGAGING** -- it pulls the reader into itself for a time.
- it is **TRUTH** -- it reflects what is real, but not necessarily literal.



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How do students **BENEFIT?**



- See **THEMSELVES**
- See **COMMON BONDS**
- See **MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES**
- See authenticated a **LARGER VARIETY** of students than traditional canon.



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Teach MC as LITERATURE!!!

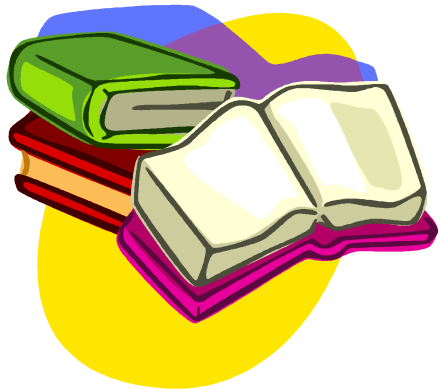
- **Not necessary to teach multicultural selection as an *ethnic* work.**
- **Let different races be *incidental* to the unit.**
- **Use such MC authors as Hurston, Erdrich, Anaya, and Kingston just because they are writers of GOOD LITERATURE.**



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Good MC literature can reveal:

- the power of poetic language
- the emotional upheavals of coming of age
- the need for intergenerational respect
- that one must live with the results of ones choice



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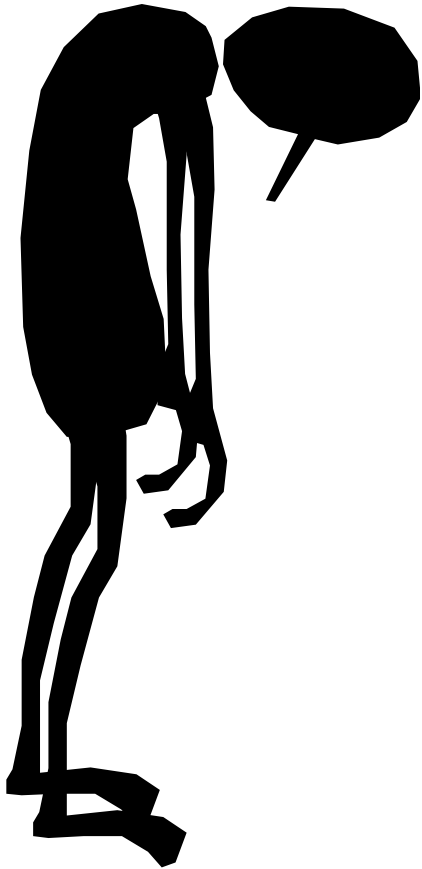
Meeting OBJECTIONS



- Strive for **BALANCE** between objections of concerned parents and goals of responsible educators.

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Why the RESISTANCE?



- **Teacher fear FAILURE**
- **Parents fear CHANGE**
- **Some even may fear POWER OF BOOKS**

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CENSORSHIP ISSUES

- **Sex, profanity, violence**
- **All in Christian Bible, Mythology and Shakespeare**
-  **Truth told in light of values taught at home can provide profitable educational experience that prepares students for life.**

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It's WORTH THE EFFORT!!



- Encourage parents to **TRUST CHILD**
- Share **SUCCESSSES**
- Provide **CONTEXT**
- Show ways MC lit **RELATES** to the traditional canon.
- **JUST DO IT!!**