African American literature: Books to stoke dreams

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Abstract
In addition to market forces, unconsciously damaging trends in many textbooks for teacher education have resulted in classroom trade book collections that represent children who are primarily white and middle class. While all children—whether from Argentina, Afghanistan, or Algeria—deserve to see themselves and their families in books, the focus of this article is on new publications that depict African Americans. Teachers who are committed to learning all they can about multicultural literature and culturally and gender relevant pedagogy become agents of change.

Includes significant bibliography of Resources and list of Children’s Literature That Picture Children of African Descent.

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themes exist on many levels of African American literature, they are not the exclusive definition of the genre and don't exist within all works within the genre. In addition, there is resistance to using Western literary theory to analyze African American literature. African-American poet Phillis Wheatley published her Poems on Various Subjects in 1773. She was a slave brought from Africa and while she was a child she was sold to a merchant. She spoke no English at that time, but by the time she was 16, she had managed to master the language with the help of her owners. Wheatley became famous after she wrote a poem on the death of a popular evangelical preacher in 1770. Three years later, 39 of her poems were published in London. Her work was well received by prominent figures of the time including George Washington, whom she praised in one of her poems. S