



# The Benefits of Diverse Literature for Emergent Readers

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## What is Diversity?

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines diversity as “the inclusion of people of different races, cultures, etc. in a group or organization.”

“...stories themselves are capsules of who we are—they represent our hopes, our dreams, our fears, and our goals. But when the stories that most people read consist of white upper-class characters, they don’t represent everyone doing the reading.”

- Kate Sullivan

## Benefits

- Students see themselves and their life experience in the classroom.
- Students are exposed to different cultures and life experiences.
- Students are more likely to connect with the books.
- Students should be able to make text to world and text to self connections.

## Why does it matter?

- Emergent literacy is where students begin to develop a love of reading.
- Students are more interested in reading when they can relate to the story.
  - Student motivation will rise.
- Creating classroom community and empathy.

## What Does It Look Like?

- Books are available to students the showcase kids of different backgrounds, race, abilities and cultures.
- Display books celebrating different cultural events when they take place. (ex: put out books celebrating Chinese New Year on the week of Chinese New Year).
- Make sure that all students in your classroom are reflected in the literature you choose.
- Invite in guest speakers to read books and tell their story.
- Have books available in different languages.