


5-2019

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## Recommended Citation

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The Relationship Between Anti-Bias Curriculum and Cultural Competency Among Middle  
School Students


Submitted on May 13, 2019

in fulfillment of final requirements for the MAED degree

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Suzanne Parrett", is written on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

Advisor:

Date 5-15-19

### Abstract

Implementation of an anti-bias education framework is relatively new in the history of cultural competence movements. While some research has been done, sighting positive effects for K-12 students, few studies exist within the Montessori pedagogy. Furthermore, little research has been done in the effects of implementing this type of curriculum within a Montessori adolescent environment. Consequently, there is a need to gather information on effective anti-bias education best practices and how to introduce these strategies in a classroom environment. The purpose of this action research study is to explore how implementing anti-bias activities including literature, journaling, and Socratic discussions, affects students' cultural proficiency in a Montessori Middle School .

Maria Montessori, Italian physician and educator, created a hands-on method of education that looked at each child not only through an academic lens, but nurtured their social, emotional, and spiritual growth. Credited by many as the founder of peace education, Montessori believed that the roots of creating peace on Earth are developed through the education we provide to children. Montessori (1947) believed only through intentionally teaching children about global citizenship, a respect for diversity, and personal responsibility toward correcting social injustices could world peace ever be achieved. In her study of the development of children, she found that adolescents were in the plane of social justice as they demonstrated strong interest in issues of injustice and finding ways to solve these problems. As a result, Montessori subsequently designed learning opportunities to engage adolescents in developing their role in the world.

Several broad movements over the last 70 years in general education have taken place to help students gain a deeper understanding of culture. Historically, these movements have taken on many forms. From the desegregation of the 1950's, the equal rights movement in the 1960's, multiculturalism in the 1970's, a shift to diversity in the 1980's, a focus on cultural competence in the 1990's, and finally the current focus on anti-bias education and cultural proficiency. The term culture has come to include far more than ethnic or racial differences, but to encompass age, gender, language, sexual orientation, faith, and physical abilities. (Lindsey, Nuri-Robins, Terrell, Lindsey; 2019).

In creating an authentic Montessori adolescent environment, it is important for the curriculum to follow an anti-bias education framework, to be in alignment with Montessori philosophy and to meet the needs of the students these programs serve. Observations of students ages 12-14 in my Montessori adolescent environment have made me profoundly aware of adolescents' strong desire to learn about issues relating to anti-bias education: from social

injustice to self-identification. Introducing meaningful curriculum, through age-appropriate literature, art, and weekly Socratic discourse (the dialogue between two or more people on philosophical or moral problems) may allow students a platform to learn about cultural identities, self-identification, and issues related to social justice.

### **Review of Literature**

Learning to be a culturally proficient member of society is an important component of children's education. Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell's (2019) review the six points of the cultural proficiency continuum: cultural destructiveness, cultural incapacity, cultural blindness, cultural pre-competence, cultural competence, and cultural proficiency, with cultural proficiency being defined as the ability to respond in a variety of cultural settings to issues raised by diversity (p.8). According to Lindsey et al. (2003),

Culturally proficient people may not know all there is to know about others who are different from them, but they know how to take advantage of teachable moments, how to ask questions without offending, and how to create an environment that is welcoming of diversity and change (p. 121).

Kuh, LeeKeenan, Given, and Beneke (2016) write the ability to respect a range of human differences gives people the tools to recognize unfairness and bias and can encourage people to speak up for the rights of others.

The goal of cultural proficiency has not always been at the forefront of education. Many classrooms had and still do have a cultural blindness or cultural pre-competence approach to diversity (Doucet and Adair, 2013; Kuh, et al. 2016; Lindsey, et al., 2003). Doucet and Adair (2013) write two of the most common ways of including the topic of race in classrooms is the color-blind approach or the celebration of diversity approach.

The color-blind approach places an emphasis on sameness or the idea that what people have in common matters more than the differences. Silencing conversations about differences misleads children into thinking that there is something wrong with diversity (p. 89-90) and can exacerbate oppression (Kemple, Lee, & Harris, 2015, p. 95). According to Doucet and Adair (2013),

“There is no evidence that ignoring visible differences benefits anyone. People’s histories—their ethnic backgrounds, national origins, religious legacies, racial heritages—are an important part of their identities. Silencing talk about difference may mislead children to thinking there is something wrong with the wonderful diversity in the world” (p. 90).

Many adults assume that young children are color-blind, however, studies have proven that children notice racial cues as early as six months old and by age three or four have a rudimentary concept of race (Lee, Ramcey, & Sweeney, 2008, p. 68).

The celebration of diversity approach is the other most commonly used approach. This approach aims to celebrate diversity through stories and special celebrations and is also known as the “tourist curriculum.” This approach fosters the idea that diversity is not part of everyday life but is something separate. It only focuses on the joys of differences, while ignoring bias and oppression (Doucet and Adair, 2013, p. 90). Banks (2013) echoes the problems with the “Heroes and Holidays” approach stating that ethnic content remains separate and distinct from the mainstream curriculum (p. 74).

To educate culturally proficient students, research agrees that an anti-bias approach must be taken. Anti-bias education requires more than implementing a few activities. It is a way of teaching that supports children to develop a sense of identity in a diverse society (Kuh, et al., 2016, p. 58). Marulis (2000) writes an effective anti-bias curriculum is immersive and woven

into all areas of the classroom and curriculum (p. 27). Linking anti-bias ideas to all subject materials teaches children to be assertive against prejudice and discrimination (Byrnes & Kiger, 2005, p. 370; Killoran et al., 2004, p. 150).

Current research on anti-bias education supports an immersive curriculum spanning all disciplines which includes topics such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, family structure, and abilities. Topics can be introduced through students' observations or interests in both historical and current events (Kuh, et al. 2016, p. 58). Kuh and her colleagues (2016) recommend a framework for anti-bias teaching that they used in their 2015 study of one pre-K, one kindergarten, and one first and second grade classroom. First, teachers gather baseline data and entry points through watching children's play and conversations and reviewing current events. Secondly, the teacher self-reflects on personal feeling about the topic, being sure to uncover any biases. Then, the teacher plans a meaningful activity to explore with the students. The teacher then responds and shares the outcome, making necessary adjustments during a post-activity reflection (p. 59). Kuh and her colleagues found this method of implementation effective and discovered that the students demonstrated more knowledge about race, ethnicity, and gender after the curriculum had been implemented. Additionally, Kuh et al. found that building a community of support and trust was necessary to facilitate this work. Doucet and Adair (2013) also write that dialog about anti-bias topics require a community of trust, listening and questioning, honesty, preparation and knowledge from the teacher, and an involvement of the family and community (p. 90-91). Using students' personal and cultural knowledge will enrich the curriculum (Hyland, 2010, p. 83).

Researchers have used discussion or dialog, literature, art activities, games, puzzles, and role play to facilitate student learning in anti-bias topics (Doucet and Adair, 2013; Killoran, et al. 2004; Kuh, et al. 2016; Marulis, 2000). Studies have demonstrated that encouraged with

meaningful discussion and questions, students begin to express, compare, and challenge their own views (Lee et al., 2008, p. 69). A study conducted in an early childhood environment by Lee, et al. (2008) found that art activities such as drawing self-portraits and discussing skin tones eventually led to students' awareness of differences and responding to a variety of skin tone colors in a more positive way (p. 72). Studies by Lee, et al. (2008), Kemple, et al. (2015), and Killoran, et al. (2004) all saw positive results such as a greater understanding of racial terminology and bias through utilizing literature for anti-bias topics and discussion. Killoran, et al. (2004) implemented each text through a series of steps: 1) Class discussion reviewing what students already know about a particular equity issue, 2) Probe the students to question their reactions and stereotypes, 3) Examine overt types of discrimination, 4) Find hidden discrimination, and 5) Empower students to take action in a situation they could change (p. 152). The steps followed by Killoran, et al. allow students to examine their previous knowledge and empower students to understand bias and discrimination and effect change in their community.

Similar to Killoran's (2004) steps, Teaching Tolerance, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center (2014) published an anti-bias framework to be used in K-12 education. The anti-bias framework includes a set of standards and age appropriate learning outcomes that are divided into four domains: identity, diversity, justice and action. Teachers can use the twenty standards within the four domains to guide curriculum development.

Many current research studies focus on early childhood students. There seems to be less research available for the implementation and effects of an anti-bias curriculum with adolescents. To gain a complete understanding of anti-bias education, it is necessary to conduct a study that examines the effects of anti-bias instruction on students past early childhood. It is important to understand how to best facilitate understanding about crucial topics like race, ethnicity, gender,



socio-economic class, etc. to educate adolescents to become culturally proficient members of society.

### **Methodology**

This study collected various forms of qualitative data including classroom observations, student journals, teacher journals, and transcripts of student discussions. Analysis of students' written responses to prompts were utilized in the interest of triangulation. Pre and post-assessments were presented in the form of Likert scales, gauging student understanding about cultural competence issues.

The population for this action research study was four seventh grade and six eighth grade students enrolled at a small private Montessori middle school located in the southwestern United States. The sample featured 4 males and 6 females. The middle school classroom was self-contained, meaning the two teachers teach all curriculum areas within one classroom environment.

Pre and post-assessments in the form of Likert scales were administered at the beginning and end of the study (Appendix A). The questions on the Likert scale allowed students to choose if they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with twenty statements related to cultural competence. Prior to implementing the anti-bias curriculum, the teacher also took classroom notes detailing observations related to students demonstrating skills associated with anti-bias or cultural competence or a lack thereof.

Throughout the action research study, transcripts of student discussions were kept. After each activity, students wrote in individual journals and were asked to answer a series of prompts (Appendix B). Room for open-ended journaling was also allowed. The teacher recorded notes in a teacher journal after each activity using a series of pre-determined prompts and space for open-ended reflection. Students' written responses were analyzed and coded using a pre-determined

coding system. Codes included: incorrect use of cultural terminology, correct use of cultural terminology, and student posed question.

Anti-bias activities were chosen based on the needs identified from the student pre-assessment and teachers' observations before the study began. For example, one theme that was common among many students was lack of knowledge about racial identification. To address this, culturally responsive literature and discussion was planned as part of the language curriculum for a period of four weeks. Each day, a reading sample was presented to the students. After having a day to read and reflect on the passage independently, the students came together for a group discussion. Students were given an opportunity to share their initial thoughts. Then, the circle was open for discussion. Each discussion lasted approximately 15 to 20 minutes and took place three days a week. Common themes among student responses were recorded on the board. After the discussion, journal prompts were provided, and students reflected on their understanding of the text and the discussion. The researcher reviewed the student journals at the end of each activity and used common themes to inform the choice of the next activity.

### **Data Analysis**

The raw data was in the form of student journal entries, teacher journal entries, pre and post assessment in the form of a Likert scale, and transcriptions of student discussions. The researcher systematically identified a series of discrete categories for the student journal entries and transcriptions of student discussions, which were based upon themes that emerged from the pre-assessment given at the beginning of the study. Each piece of data was highlighted and placed into the appropriate category. Data pieces that covered more than one category were recorded in each category. The pre and post assessment results were quantitatively analyzed by utilizing a data table to look for trends. Finally, the results of coding the journal entries and transcripts of student discussions were transcribed and given to an external source for a final

review to assure triangulation and their feedback allowed for final adjustments in the coding to be made. This data was compared to the pre and post assessment data to inform the research findings.

### **Research Findings**

The purpose of this study was to identify the extent that anti-bias curriculum affects students' understanding of culture and to what extent students' progress on the cultural proficiency continuum would change after completing anti-bias activities. The research design was descriptive and a journal with a series of open-ended prompts was used to gather information about the students' concept of culture and how they self-identify. A pre-assessment and post-assessment using a Likert scale gauged students' understanding of race, ethnicity, religion, and gender.

The subjects for this study were middle school students enrolled in a self-contained Montessori middle school program at small private Montessori school in the southwestern United States. The classroom was composed of ten students and two teachers. Students remained in the same classroom all day with the two teachers serving as generalists (teaching all subject areas). Participants included 6 female and 4 male students. Table 1 describes how the students self-identify by race. Some students struggled to identify by race or felt that the racial categories listed did not reflect how they identify.

<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	<i>7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students</i>	<i>8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students</i>
<i>Hispanic or Latino or Spanish origin of any race</i>	1	2
<i>American Indian or Alaskan</i>	0	0
<i>Asian</i>	0	1

<i>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander</i>	0	0
<i>Black or African American</i>	0	0
<i>White</i>	2	0
<i>Two or More Races</i>	1	3

Table 1: Sample Demographics

### *Understanding of Culture*

The first research question that this study addressed was to what extent anti-bias curriculum affected students' understanding of culture. To answer this question the researcher began with a pre-assessment gauging students' understanding of topics including race, ethnicity, religion, gender and self-identification (Appendix A). For example, one statement read "I know which racial group(s) with which I identify." Another statement read: "I am comfortable talking about race." Students were asked to select from the following choices: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree for the twenty statements on the pre-assessment. This data (see Table 2), collected in week one, was used to inform teacher lesson planning.

In weeks two through six, anti-bias activities were implemented as a regular part of the curriculum as recommended by current best practices in anti-bias education. For example, during language arts class, literature with an anti-bias theme was utilized as a regular part of class reading and discussion. During each discussion, notes were transcribed of students' comments during the whole class discussion. After each discussion, both the teacher and students were given a set of journal prompts. A set of fixed prompts remained the same after each discussion and some additional open-ended prompts were added as pertained specifically to that day's discussion. The students recorded their answers in composition notebooks. The journal entries were copied, and key ideas were highlighted in their responses, coded, and counted.

*Cultural Proficiency*

The second research question was to what extent will students’ placement on the cultural proficiency continuum change after completing the anti-bias activities. To answer this question, the post-assessment on cultural proficiency was compared to the pre-assessment given at the beginning of the study. The post-assessment had the same twenty statements as the pre-assessment and asked the student to choose *strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree* with each statement. This data allowed the researcher to determine if there were any differences from the beginning to the end of the study and to determine if the anti-bias activities had any effect on the student’s view of their own cultural proficiency.<sup>1</sup>

The teacher’s journal and transcription of student discussions were coded for key concepts and counted. This data established trends in students’ understanding of anti-bias terms and culture as well as students’ comfort in talking about anti-bias issues. It is difficult to come to conclusions due to the small student cohort and the absence of two students at the conclusion of the study. However, some trends from the data did emerge. More students communicated through written response and classroom Socratic discussion that they felt more comfortable talking about self-identification after completing the anti-bias activities than they had before beginning the study.

Key:

Pre-Assessment Data		Post-Assessment Data	
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Statement	<i>Strongly Agree</i>		<i>Agree</i>		<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	
I know which racial group(s) with which I identify.	3	4	5	3	2	1	0	0
I know which ethnicity(ies) with which I identify.	2	4	7	4	1	0	0	0
I know which religion with which I identify.	6	5	3	2	1	1	0	0
I understand that there are different socio-economic groups.	3	4	5	4	0	0	1	0

<sup>1</sup> The pronoun their is used to refer to students in both the singular and plural in alignment with cultural competency standards.

I know which gender with which I identify.	9	7	0	0	1	1	0	0
I evaluate my use of language to avoid terms or phrases that may be hurtful to groups of people.	4	3	5	5	0	0	0	0
I avoid stereotyping or generalizing other people based on their group identity.	5	3	5	5	0	0	0	0
I worry about using the wrong term to identify someone.	7	5	2	3	1	0	0	0
I am comfortable talking about race.	4	2	4	4	1	2	0	0
I am comfortable talking about religion.	3	3	4	3	2	2	1	0
I am comfortable talking about gender.	4	4	1	0	4	3	1	1
I am comfortable talking about socio-economic class.	1	4	6	0	2	3	2	1
I value cultural differences and avoid statements such as “I never think of you as ” which discredits differences.	5	4	3	4	1	0	0	0
I am comfortable discussing the issues of racism and other forms of prejudice with others.	7	5	2	2	1	1	0	0
I am open to other people’s feedback about ways in which my behavior may be culturally insensitive or offensive to others.	0	4	9	4	1	0	0	0
When other people use hurtful language and behavior regarding a person’s identity, I feel comfortable speaking up, asking them to stop and stating my reasons.	5	5	4	2	1	1	0	0
My family and I talk about issues regarding race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or socio-economic class.	3	4	2	1	4	1	1	1
I feel accepted by my peers in how I self-identify.	1	5	8	1	1	2	0	0
I have felt stereotyped or judged based on how I self-identify.	1	1	3	1	4	3	2	3
I feel happy about the groups with which I identify.	7	6	2	2	1	0	0	0

Table 2: Pre and Post-Assessment Results

\*2 students were absent during the post-assessment.

Students were asked at the conclusion of the study to offer comments about the anti-bias lessons and study of culture we had completed over the course of the six weeks. Some comments from student journals included:

- I am concerned about the use of hurtful language related to the LGBTQ community.
- I didn’t know culture and self-identification was that involved. The Iceberg Model was an interesting way to look at culture.
- I feel like I need to know more. It’s way more complicated than I thought.

- I feel like I learned more about racism and that saying certain things can really hurt someone.
- I learned a lot about discrimination based on race.
- I could see myself in many of the stories we read.

These comments showed interest in cultural competency and engagement in learning more about the topics we had studied thus far.

### **Action Plan**

The purpose of this action research project was to understand the effects on seventh and eighth grade students' cultural proficiency by implementing anti-bias activities throughout the existing Montessori seventh and eighth grade curriculum. It was hoped that if this goal was achieved, students would view themselves as more culturally competent individuals, display a greater understanding of self-identification and the ways in which people can self-identify with regards to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, etc. Additionally, an aim was to empower students to discuss difficult topics such as racism or sexism and help students find ways to advocate for an anti-bias community.

As outlined above, students were introduced to literature as part of the language arts curriculum that was heavily focused on anti-bias or cultural competency topics and lessons and Socratic discourse on cultural competence as part of the health and wellness curriculum. With the many competing demands on both the teacher and middle school students, as well as the recommendations from research, it was important that the activities were interwoven into the existing curriculum for two reasons. First, it placed no additional work or special assignments on the students' already rigorous academic work load. Secondly, it emphasized the importance of anti-bias work and cultural competency throughout the school day, and not something that was a

separate study. In this way, students were exposed to examples of anti-bias work, cultural competence, and social justice, either formally or informally, on a daily basis.

Logistics associated with implementing anti-bias activities into the existing middle school curriculum need to be considered. There is the question of how much time is required to add or exchange literature activities and prepare lessons and Socratic seminar work that is relevant and engaging for the middle school student population. Time was needed prior to the start of this study, especially in regard to vetting appropriate literature that both met the Language Arts curriculum standards and the cultural competence aims. See Appendix C for a list of literature used in this study. It is also important to note that literature and activities were chosen based upon the students' initial cultural competence assessment and teacher observations. However, once literature is chosen and study guides and reflection questions created, it will not be very time intensive to implement the same activities with future groups of students. As all activities met other curriculum standards, no additional classroom time was needed for students to complete the activities.

As the project progressed, I became curious about students' willingness to dialogue and share with other students and the possible correlation to the sense of connection each student had to the middle school community. Most students who were part of this study have been students at the school for several years and eight out of 10 students have been in a classroom where I have taught for five to seven years. How much did feeling a sense of community and connection to other students and teachers impact engagement and ultimately cultural competency growth? As the research suggested, an environment of safety and openness must first be created before engaging in anti-bias work. According to Kay (2018),

Successful race conversations depend on a very specific ecosystem. As teachers, our biggest mistake is undervaluing any of the many elements that might, on their surface,



seem inconsequential—but that turn out to be vital for our discourses’ survival. Without healthy classroom relationships and sound conversational structures, race conversations cannot thrive (p. 13).

The space we have fostered over several years created an environment of safety and openness that may have increased the likelihood that students would bravely and willingly engage in anti-bias and self-reflection work. Had I not had a classroom of students that was already so closely bonded, I do not believe I would have been able to implement the lessons I created as part of this study without first spending a significant amount of time in trust and relationship building.

Reflecting back on the lessons and guided discussions, there was excitement and engagement from the group of students in this study. All students were eager to learn about all aspects of cultural identity and seemed unafraid to ask sometimes difficult questions. For example, “How do I support a friend who is coming out?” “If my mom is white and my dad is black, can I self-identify as black or do I have to say bi-racial?” All of these discussions challenged me as a teacher and a person continuously working through my own biases and cultural competence. Students also seemed more engaged with literature in which they could see parts of their own story within the main characters. One student remarked after reading *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* (Sanchez, 2017), “This is the most relatable book I’ve ever read.” After seeing how empowering it was for students to see main characters that represented a wide range of identities, I will continue to look for additional literature and cultivate a yearlong language arts curriculum that includes culturally responsive literature. Future action research could focus on the effects of implementing anti-bias activities throughout the entire two-year middle school curriculum and an emphasis on empowering students to engage and advocate for social justice issues.

The use of the pre and post-assessment to gauge understanding of cultural competence topics like race, ethnicity, etc. did not as easily gauge a student's understanding of each topic as I had hoped. This data coupled with teacher observations, however, was enlightening. For example, all students answered that they *strongly agreed or agreed* to the following statement: I evaluate my use of language to avoid terms or phrases that may be hurtful to groups of people. Although students found this to be true for themselves, teacher observation notes detailed several times in which a student unintentionally used a word that was not correct in describing an identity. Therefore, both data points were important in determining the lessons that were necessary for this group of students. For future use, I would like to edit the survey statements, so they align with the twenty learning outcomes in the Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Anti-Bias Framework and the lessons I incorporated into the middle school curriculum (Teaching Tolerance, 2016).

Finally, there are my favorite moments of this study to share. During the course of this study, many students began to think about how they self-identify. Some began sharing parts of their identity with the entire group which they had not shared openly before. The warm, loving, respectful embrace each student received was more than I could have ever hoped. Whether through spoken words or a written note, students time and time again shared with one another that they valued and loved exactly how each person identified. As an educator, it is exciting to consider the potential impact anti-bias education has on a student's life. This action research project sheds light on the importance of anti-bias work and has the potential to inform classroom instruction and further action research. Anti-bias focused curriculum in a supportive, safe community of learners has the promise of creating culturally competent teens who strive for authenticity in self-identification and compassion for others.

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10. I am comfortable talking about religion.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

11. I am comfortable talking about gender.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

12. I am comfortable talking about socio-economic class.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

13. I value cultural differences and avoid statements such as “I never think of you as \_\_\_\_\_” which discredits differences.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

14. I am comfortable discussing the issues of racism and other forms of prejudice with others.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

15. I am open to other people’s feedback about ways in which my behavior may be culturally insensitive or offensive to others.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

16. When other people use hurtful language and behavior regarding a person’s identity, I feel comfortable speaking up, asking them to stop and stating my reasons.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

17. My family and I talk often about issues regarding race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or socio-economic class.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

18. I feel accepted by my peers in how I self-identify.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

19. I have felt stereotyped or judged based on how I self-identify.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

20. I feel happy about the groups with which I identify.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

### Appendix B Student Journal

Student Journal: Students will be asked to write reflections after each activity. Students will be given a few prompts each time to guide their reflection as well as space for free writing. These prompts will be used after each discussion. Additional prompts may be added to reflect the specific activity or discussion.

What did you learn from the discussion today?

Did what you learn change the way you view (race, religion, etc)?

Why is this information important to know?

### Teacher Journal

Teacher Journal: I will record information about planning, implementation, reflection, and adjustments for the next step in the AR project.

After each activity, I will answer the following questions in the journal:

1. What worked? What about the activity led to engagement?
2. What should I change? Why?
3. What did I learn?
4. What are my overall thoughts about the efficacy of the activity or dialog?

## Appendix C

## List of Literature Used in Middle School Anti-Bias Lessons

Title	Author
American Like Me	America Ferrera
Brown Girl Dreaming	Jacqueline Woodson
Fresh Ink	(Anthology)
A Poet X	Elizabeth Acevedo
Kids Like Us	Hilary Reyl
As Brave as You	Jason Reynolds
All American Boys	Jason Reynolds
Ghost Boys	Jewell Parker Rhodes
Bad Boy	Walter Dean Myers
Moxie	Jennifer Mathieu
The Dreamer	Pam Munoz and Peter Sis
Amal Unbound	Aisha Saeed
The 57 Bus	Dashka Slater
The Hate U Give	Angie Thomas
The Stars Beneath Our Feet	David Barclay Moore
American Street	Ibi Zoboi
I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter	Erika L. Sanchez
Piecing Me Together	Renee Watson
George	Alex Gino
Simon Vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda	Becky Albertalli
El Deafo	Cece Bell
Symptoms of Being Human	Jeff Garvin
It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime	Trevor Noah