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December 18, 2023

Goal of the Diverse BookFinder Collection Analysis Tool (DBF CAT)

The goal of the DBF CAT is to conduct an analysis of the racially and culturally diverse picture books owned by the Southern Adirondack Library System to provide information for collection development. These books are powerful tools for children in developing literacy, and a sense of self and others. As expert in education, [Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop articulated](#) 30 years ago, picture books act as either 1) "mirrors" in which children can recognize characters like themselves, building a sense of self-esteem and significance, or 2) "windows," introducing children to characters whose lives are different from their own, fostering curiosity, understanding, and empathy. Our hope is that the DBF CAT will help you further develop the "mirrors and windows" offered in your picture book collection.

What You Sent Us

The Diverse BookFinder (DBF) collection is comprised of thousands of fiction and nonfiction trade picture books for children grades K-3 published between 2002 and the present. These books feature depictions of Black and Indigenous people and People of Color (BIPOC) in stories set in the United States and all over the world.

We cross-referenced books from the Southern Adirondack Library System with those in the DBF collection to identify:

- 2988 items submitted by the Southern Adirondack Library System.
- 81 items, including duplicates, that matched those in the DBF collection.
- 81 unique titles that matched those in the DBF collection.
- 2.7108 percent of your collection features BIPOC characters (this number may not be accurate if you submitted more than picture books).

Nonfiction titles with no narrative or titles published before 2002 from your collection would not have been detected by our matching process due to our [collection inclusion parameters](#). Likewise, due to processing time, *very recent* titles in your collection may not have been detected. That said, given the number of detected matches, we feel confident this report offers a representative snapshot of your racially and culturally diverse picture book collection.

Who is represented in your collection and how?

Within the 81 racially and culturally diverse picture books we were able to identify in your collection, the relative prevalence of characters represented was examined to produce the graphs and tables below. Combined they give you a snapshot of ***which racial/cultural groups are represented*** on your shelves and ***how they are represented***. For more information about the DBF collection and our inclusion criteria, click [here](#).

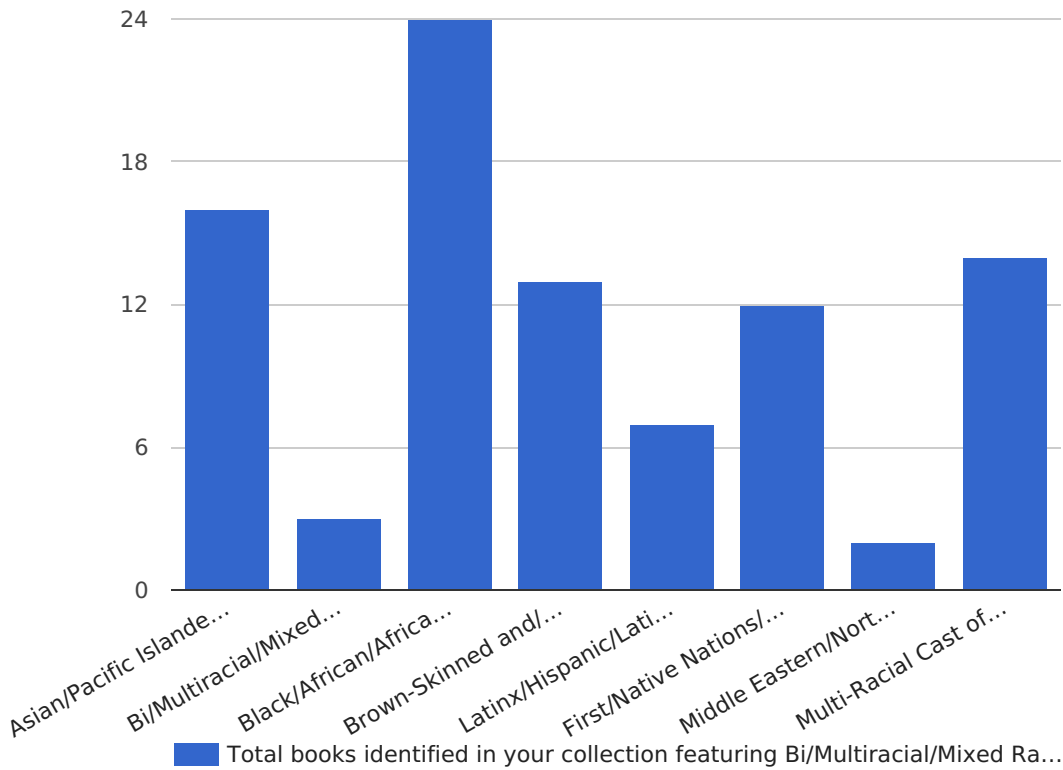
Trends in Your Collection -- Who is represented?

The following racial/cultural groups appear in **Graphs 1 & 2** below:

- Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American
- Bi/Multiracial/Mixed Race
- Black/African/African American

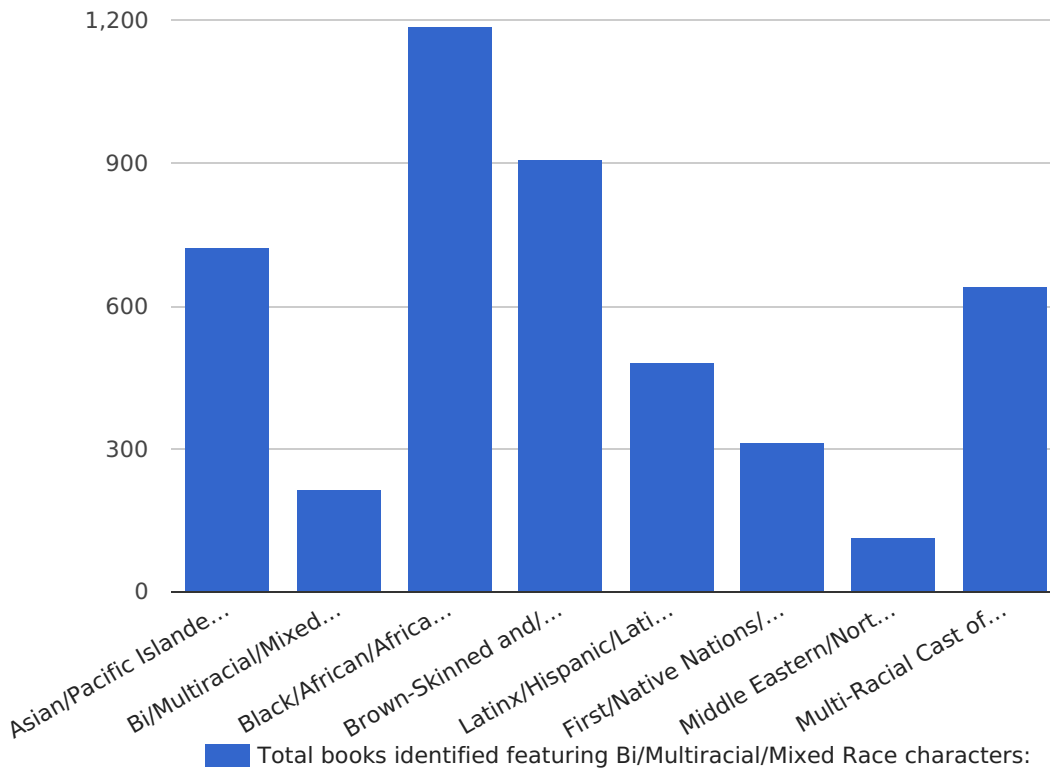
- Brown-Skinned and/or Race Unclear
- First/Native Nations/American Indian/Indigenous
- Latinx/Hispanic/Latin American
- Middle Eastern/North African/Arab
- Multi-Racial Cast of Characters

Graph 1: Who is Represented in Your Collection?



Do you notice any skews or gaps? To see how this stacks up to racially/culturally diverse books widely available, we've included **Graph 2** below showing the number of books *in our collection* featuring characters from each racial/cultural group. Not all groups are represented equally - or in the same way. How does your collection compare to the books that are available?

Graph 2: Who is Represented in the Books Widely Available?



Trends in Your Collection -- How are they represented?

Of course, **who** (which BIPOC characters) is represented on your shelves is only part of the story. **How** they are being represented -- that is, what stories are being told about the BIPOC characters in your collection, also matters. A large number of books featuring Black/African American characters in stories about oppression might teach children, for instance, that the Black experience is defined by pain and struggle. Likewise, if the majority of stories about Asian, Latinx, and Middle Eastern American lives focus on culture, this may convey to children that people from these groups are different, or exotically foreign. It is only through varied stories or story balance that we avoid and disrupt a "[single story](#)" ([Adichie 2009](#)).

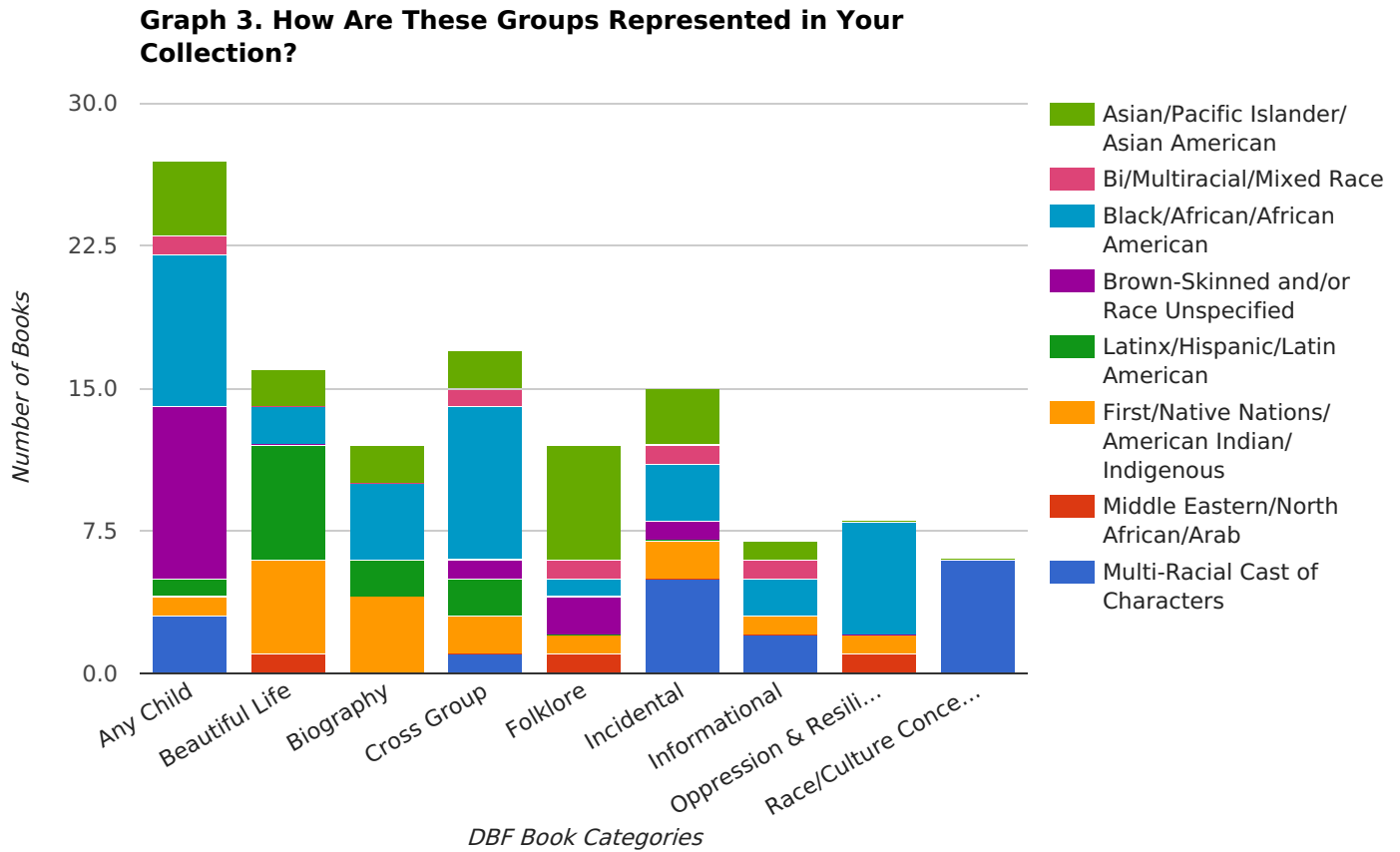
We've analyzed your collection and divided the books depicting BIPOC characters into the nine book categories identified by [Aronson, Callahan and O'Brien \(2018\)](#), described in **Table 1** below. **Graph 3** below shows which types of stories are being told about each BIPOC group in your collection.

Table 1. Diverse BookFinder Book Categories

| Name | Description |
|---|--|
| Any Child | Books featuring BIPOC in which race, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, culture, im/migration, and/or religious, sacred, or origin stories are not central to the story. These elements may be present, but they are <i>not essential to the plot</i> and could be changed without altering the storyline. <u>Example:</u> <i>Benny Doesn't Like to Be Hugged</i> by Zetta Elliott |
| Beautiful Life: A Focus on Identity | Books featuring BIPOC in which race, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, culture, im/migration, and/or religious, sacred, or origin stories are central to the story. These books <i>explicitly</i> focus on the diverse expressions of human experience, depending on these elements to drive the storyline. <u>Example:</u> <i>A Day with Yayah</i> by Nicola I. Campbell |
| Biography | Narrative nonfiction books about the life of a particular person or group of people from a historical or contemporary perspective. <u>Example:</u> <i>Side by Side: The Story of Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez</i> by Monica Brown |
| Cross Group: Relationships Across Difference | Books portraying relationships between named characters across racial or cultural difference , including but not limited to those depicting peer group and cross-generational friendships. The interactions depicted may be positive, negative, neutral or resolving. <u>Example:</u> <i>Lottie Paris and the Best Place</i> by Angela Johnson |
| Folklore | Books featuring tales, proverbs, songs, or legends and myths that transmit the values, knowledge, traditions, practices and rituals of a people. <u>Example:</u> <i>A Pair of Twins</i> by Kavitha Mandana |
| Incidental: Ensemble or Background Characters | Books featuring a racially diverse cast of non-primary characters ; or books featuring a white or animal main character(s) with BIPOC as secondary or background characters. <u>Example:</u> <i>A Family is a Family is a Family</i> by Sara O'Leary |
| Informational: Factual Content | Narrative books, with or without a storyline, presenting factual information ; may be encyclopedic. BIPOC are depicted but race/culture is not always central to the content. <u>Example:</u> <i>The Good Garden: How One Family Went from Hunger to Having Enough</i> by Katie Smith Milway |
| Oppression & Resilience | Books about group-based injustice and struggles for justice . These include stories about BIPOC who experience and/or resist enslavement, internment, imprisonment, or violent conflict; persecution in or forced displacement from their homelands; or barriers to basic freedoms such as land, food, housing, education, health & wellness, and bodily autonomy. <u>Example:</u> <i>Fish for Jimmy</i> by Katie Yamasaki |

| Name | Description |
|--|--|
| Race/Culture Concepts: Examining Difference and Commonalities | Books that explore and/or compare specific aspects of human difference , inviting readers to consider varying perspectives related to racial, ethnic, cultural, or tribal identity. <u>Example:</u> <i>Going to Mecca</i> by Na'ima Robert |

Graph 3 below is a snapshot of *how BIPOC characters from each racial/cultural group are represented* on your shelves. The specific number of books in each category by group can be found on **Table 2** below. In the interactive (html) version of **Table 2**, you can click on each # to link to books in our collection that meet that criteria.



Do you notice any skews or gaps related to the types of stories being told about each group? What types of stories do you need in order to balance your shelves? To view the national snapshot of books widely available in these categories, [go here](#). The skews and gaps present in those books widely available may mirror those in your collection. What does this mean and how can we all work together to ensure that children are exposed to stories that reflect the full humanity of Black and Indigenous people and People of Color?

Table 2. The numbers below are reflected in Graph 3 above.

| | Asian / Pacific Islander / Asian American | Bi / Multiracial / Mixed Race | Black / African / African American | Brown-Skinned and / or Race Unspecified | Latinx / Hispanic / Latin American | First / Native Nations / American Indian / Indigenous | Middle Eastern / North African / Arab | Multi-Racial Cast of Characters | Totals |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------|
| Any Child | 4 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 27 |
| Beautiful Life | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 16 |
| Biography | 2 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| Cross Group | 2 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 17 |
| Folklore | 6 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 12 |
| Incidental | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 15 |
| Informational | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 7 |
| Oppression & Resilience | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| Race / Culture Concepts | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| Totals | 20 | 5 | 34 | 13 | 11 | 17 | 3 | 17 | 120 |

Assistance with collection development

An examination of the above information may reveal some gaps in your current collection. For instance, you may note a low number of books featuring characters from a particular racial/cultural background in relation to the demographics of your service area (for more detailed information on your community and the nation, [search the CensusBureau's Community Facts](#)). Or, you may note a low number of books in a particular category, or limited representation of characters from a particular racial/cultural background within a category, and want to increase representation in this area.

You can search for titles using any of these criteria (racial/cultural group, book category, or a combination of the two) using the [Diverse BookFinder Search Tool](#). For example, if you note very few biographies about people from Asian backgrounds in your collection, you can filter a search by selecting "Biography" under **Categories**, and "Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American" under **Race/Culture**. You can then access summaries and links to professional book reviews of each resulting title to make purchasing decisions.

Please feel free to email the diversebookfinder@bates.edu with any questions you may have about your report or the Diverse BookFinder.