



## **Examining African-American Culture through the Use of Children's Literature**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 97.02.05

by Karen E. Carazo

My unit examines African-American culture as it is depicted in literature for young children. It is designed for a third grade class at L. W. Beecher Elementary School but could easily be used with second and fourth grade students as well. I have used a variety of children's books, including fiction and poetry, to increase students' awareness and appreciation of African-American culture and history. Although this unit focuses primarily on African-American culture as it is today, it will also expose students to famous African-Americans in history.

This unit is divided into four sections: Self-Awareness, Relationships With Family, Relationships With Friends, and Relationships To/Within A Community. This unit is interdisciplinary in its approach, lending itself to various reading, writing, history, social development, art, music, and drama activities. As a culminating activity, students will perform an adaptation of Faith Ringgold's "Dinner At Aunt Connie's House," written by two former students, Brittney Talley and Jaala Johnson, during the 1995-1996 school year, which combines family tradition with a dose of history. This unit has been developed and activities will be shared with other members of the L. W. Beecher Team, who have written individual units geared towards diversity, throughout the 1997-1998 school year in an effort to increase students' awareness, understanding, and appreciation of other cultures besides their own.

(Recommended for Social Development, Language Arts and Fine Arts, grades 2-4)

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