



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1997 Volume II: American Children's Literature

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## **Tales from around The World**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 97.02.10  
by Delci C. Lev

The society we live in is multicultural and multilingual. I often see my students struggling to bridge the differences between and among themselves. Differences in ways of thinking, living, believing, and conducting oneself can lead to conflict and friction. Children need to internalize the strength which is deeply imbedded in this pluralism. These differences can serve as a dividing mechanism unless we are taught to embrace them. Understanding the underlying flexibility in these differences will foster tolerance.

Literature, reflecting cultural diversity, allows children to understand cross-cultural concepts and has the additional advantage of teaching a community of learners how to share, reflect, and understand diversity. The classroom becomes a laboratory. Communities of young people can become involved with organizations that deal with issues such as pollution, environment, and peacemaking. The basic concept of community continues beyond the classroom and provides structure for future patterns of life.

My hope is that exposure to different ways of thinking, believing, and resolving problems will become habits of life, not just a classroom exercise. And this habit will grow with the children I teach, and they in turn will create a better world for all to live in.

(Recommended for Language Arts, middle school level)

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