



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1998 Volume V: Reading Across the Cultures

Travel through Children's Literature into the Lives of the People of Our Nation

Guide for Curriculum Unit 98.05.03
by Nancy Taylor Skolozdra

This unit uses children's literature as the catalyst with which to explore the Inuit, African American, Hispanic, and Chinese cultures. It has been patterned as a whole language integrated reading, language arts, social studies curriculum to be used at a middle elementary level where the reading levels range from third grade to fifth grade. The integration of authentic pieces of literature into a study of several cultures within our nation draws children to a place, creates a bond, and springboards an exploration into the daily lives of others who at a closer look are really very much like them. Various non-fiction children's books and computer research supply the information base for the children to successfully accomplish the social studies objectives. Each study includes activities for building background, developing vocabulary strategies and key words, previewing and predicting, setting a purpose, and the actual guided reading of each text. This unit includes opportunities for personal responses to the literature through summarizing, writing, and critical thinking. It provides a variety of hands-on activities which will transform the classroom into a multicultural environment.

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