



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

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

Literature for Every Child

Guide for Curriculum Unit 98.05.05
by Carolyn S. Williams

This is an eighteen week literature course built around short stories and novels whose theme ideas mirror every child's culture. It is designed as a child-centered approach to learning about self and others. Although targeted for grade four students in New Haven's TAG Program, it is easily adapted for use with other grade levels.

The skills and lesson ideas are intended to invite students to work cooperatively as well as independently to investigate cultural differences among America's diverse ethnic populations. It's feature novel is a story about a Vietnamese family who finds that they are able to make the adjustments necessary to remain in America. The story features twelve year old boys who, despite their cultural differences form a working friendship.

Through reading ethnic literature, open ended discussion activities, research, and personal writings, students are invited to open lines of communication among ethnic classroom populations and take that learning out into their communities. The unit's larger purpose is an attempt to create a society who more that tolerates, but understands, accepts and celebrates America's diversity.

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