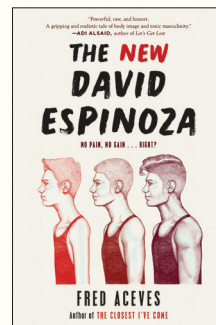
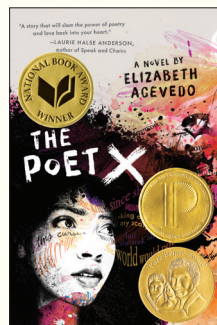
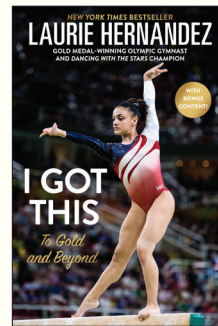
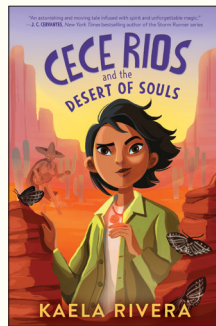
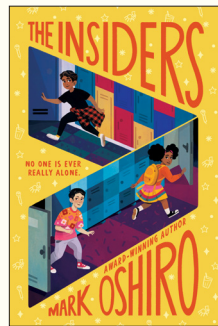
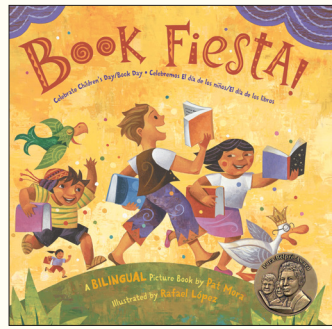
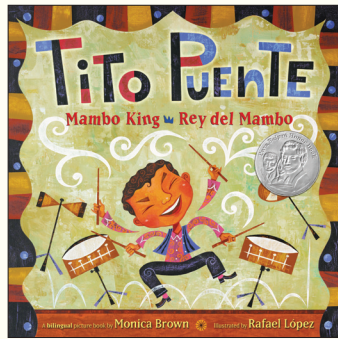
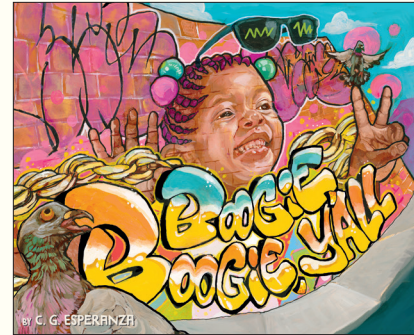
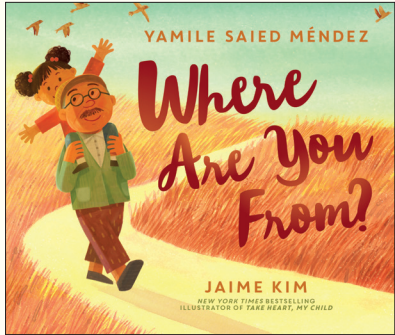


SHAKE UP YOUR SHELVES

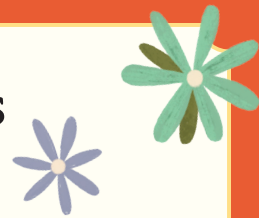
LIBROS LATINOS



Educators' guide to building an inclusive bookshelf representing Latinx voices



Why the inclusion of Latinx children's books is important and how to make it happen



Latinx students make up **more than 25%** of students enrolled in schools across the United States, but as the most recent survey from the Cooperative Children's Book Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has found, only 5% of children's books published depict a character that is Latinx. **The Latinx population residing in the United States is very diverse, representing different languages, cultures, ethnicities, and nationalities.**

There are several terms to refer to individuals from Latin America or individuals who speak Spanish. The more recent gender-inclusive terms are *Latinx* or *Latine*. This is used to push against the gendered binary terms of *Latino* and *Latina*. *Latino* and *Latina* are used to refer to an individual from Latin America, including Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. *Latinidad* is a Spanish language term used to reference the various attributes that are shared by Latin American people and their descendants.

The majority of Latinx people living in the United States are U.S. born rather than foreign born. While many Latinx people might speak Spanish, they might also speak a variation of Spanish spoken by Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, or Mexicans. They might also speak an indigenous language such as Q'anjob'al, one of the many indigenous languages spoken by Guatemalans. There are also Latinx people who do not speak an additional language other than English. **This means that in the classroom you must bring in an array of children's books to ensure you move beyond the "single story"** (Adichie, 2009).

A good place to begin thinking about the books you want to bring into your classroom or library is with the Latinx population that is represented in your school community. When students don't see themselves, their families, or their communities represented in the literature shared, they can begin to think something is wrong with them or that their experiences do not matter. **The first step is to take the time to learn about your students and their families.** Learn and gain an understanding of their cultural practices, linguistic abilities, and funds of knowledge (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). Once you have that information you can then search for books that are representative of students' lives, experiences, and histories. Of course, even if you don't have Latinx students in your classroom, **Latinx books still need to be a part of the curriculum.** Books featuring Latinx characters can provide students with another perspective to counter false narratives, stereotypes, and monolithic views of the Latinx community. It is important that students from all backgrounds learn about the valuable contributions, both historical and contemporary, that the Latinx community has made to the United States.

It is also important to consider the use of multilingual texts. Using multilingual texts can be intimidating for teachers who might not be as familiar with the additional languages, **but the benefits to our students outweigh the teachers' discomfort.** There are many different types of **multilingual texts.** There are bilingual texts that have the same text in English and an additional language, such as Spanish, and there are other texts that **translanguage.** Texts that utilize translanguage will include words in different languages with no translation, but the text surrounding the word or the illustrations contextualize the meaning and support the understanding of that specific word.

We encourage you to Shake Up Your Shelves by adding titles that are inclusive of the Latinx experience both in the United States and abroad. Here we offer you some first steps that you can take to make changes to your collection and your curriculum.



Questions to consider when selecting Latinx children's books for your shelves

1

Do the Latinx characters actively participate in the story as main characters or are they only secondary characters? What roles do they have in the story? Do they have leadership roles?

2

Are the Latinx characters in culturally stereotyped roles such as newly arrived immigrants, men full of machismo, shy girls, mothers of many children?

3

Is a strong sense of community and family expressed in the illustrations and text? Do elders help care for the children?

4

Do all of the Latinx characters have the same appearance? Or is a diversity of skin tones, hairstyles and textures, and clothing presented? Not all Latinxs have a "Latin look" of dark skin, hair, and eyes.

5

Are varied cultural experiences of Latinxs represented? Is the diversity of Latinx cultures represented, such as Central and South America, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Cuba, etc.?

6

How are languages represented in the text? Is language used in expansive and authentic ways that are aligned to the linguistic practices of Latinx communities? Or do they reproduce negative stereotypes of languages beyond English?

7

Is multilingualism represented in the text reflective of your students' languages?

8

Do the Latinx characters abandon some aspect of their culture and/or language in order to achieve happiness?

9

Do the books represent both historic and contemporary stories of Latinx communities?

10

Does the author/illustrator have experience with the Latinx subculture that he/she is representing? Or is the book written/illustrated by someone who has briefly visited a Latin American country? How qualified is the author/illustrator to write the book?

Further reading and resources

Latinx Kidlit Book Festival

<https://www.latinxkidlitbookfestival.com>

Latinxs in Kid Lit

<https://latinosinkidlit.com>

Latino Children's and Young Adult Book Awards Websites

Pura Belpré Award

<http://www.ala.org/alsc/belpre>

Tomás Rivera Mexican-American Children's Book Award

<https://www.education.txstate.edu/ci/riverabookaward/>

Américas Award

<http://www4.uwm.edu/clacs/aa/index.cfm>

Learning for Justice Selecting Diverse Texts Tool

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/publications/reading-diversity>

Julia López-Robertson (2021). Celebrating Our Cuentos

Choosing and Using Latinx Literature in Elementary Classrooms. Scholastic

Diverse Book Finder

<https://diversebookfinder.org>

We Need Diverse Books

<https://diversebooks.org/>

Social Justice Books

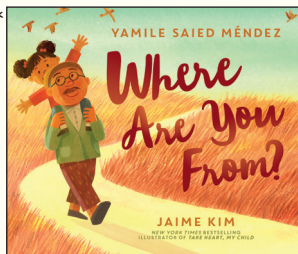
Latinx and Latin American titles: <https://socialjusticebooks.org/booklists/latinx/>



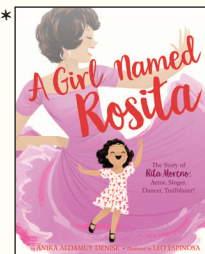
Suggested Books



Planting Stories
by Anika Aldamuy Denise,
illustrated by Paola Escobar



Where Are You From?
by Yamile Saied Méndez,
illustrated by Jaime Kim



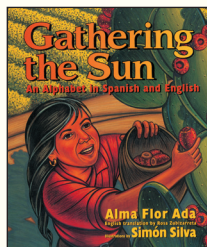
A Girl Named Rosita
by Anika Aldamuy Denise,
illustrated by Leo Espinosa



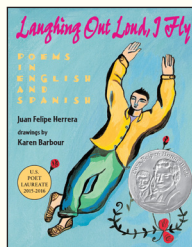
Paletero Man by Lucky Diaz,
illustrated by Micah Player



My Papi Has a Motorcycle by Isabel
Quintero, illustrated by Zeke Peña



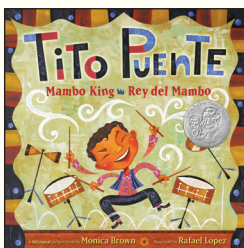
Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet
in Spanish and English
by Alma Flor Ada,
illustrated by Simón Silva



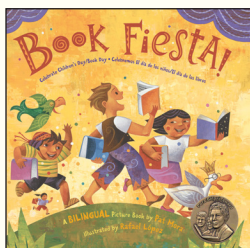
Laughing Out Loud, I Fly
by Juan Felipe Herrera,
illustrated by Karen Barbour



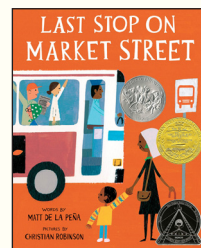
Boogie Boogie, Y'all
by C.G. Esperanza



Tito Puente, Mambo King /
Tito Puente, Rey del Mambo
by Monica Brown,
illustrated by Rafael Lopez



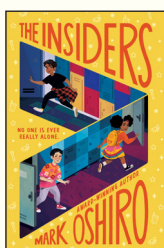
Book Fiesta! by Pat Mora,
illustrated by Rafael Lopez



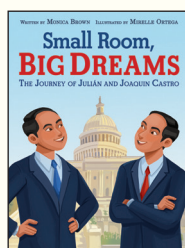
Last Stop on Market Street
by Matt de la Peña,
illustrated by
Christian Robinson



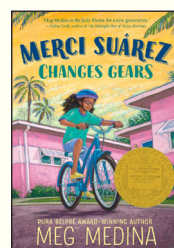
Efrén Divided
by Ernesto Cisneros



The Insiders
by Mark Oshiro



Small Room, Big Dreams
by Monica Brown,
illustrated by Mirelle Ortega



Mercy Suarez Changes Gears
by Meg Medina



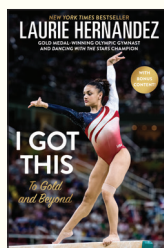
Mañanaland
by Pam Muñoz Ryan



Love Sugar Magic:
A Dash of Trouble
by Anna Meriano, illustrated
by Mirelle Ortega



Cece Rios and
the Desert of Souls
by Kaela Rivera



I Got This
by Laurie Hernandez



Us in Progress
by Lulu Delacre

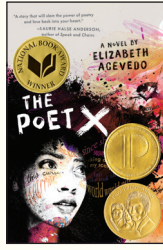


Chunky
by Yehudi Mercado





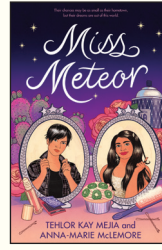
Suggested Books



The Poet X
by Elizabeth Acevedo



They Both Die at the End
by Adam Silvera



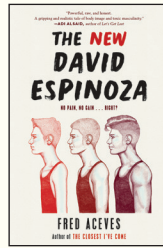
Miss Meteor
by Tehlor Kay Mejia and
Anna-Marie McLemore



*Everything Within
and In Between*
by Nikki Barthelme



Clap When You Land
by Elizabeth Acevedo



The New David Espinoza
by Fred Aceves



We Set the Dark on Fire
by Tehlor Kay Mejia

This guide was created by Dr. Tracey Flores and Dr. Sandra Osorio.

Dr. Tracey T. Flores is an Assistant Professor at the University of Texas at Austin and founder of Somos Escritoras/We Are Writers, a creative space for Latina girls (grades 6-12) that invites them to share and perform stories from their lived experiences. Tracey is a former English Language Development and English Language Arts (ELA) teacher, working for eight years alongside multilingual students, families, and communities in K-8 schools throughout Glendale and Phoenix, Arizona.

Dr. Sandra L. Osorio is an Associate Professor at Illinois State University. She is a former bilingual teacher of PreK-2nd grade in Central Illinois for over 10 years. Tracey and Sandra's work focuses on centering Latinx students' dynamic community languages, practices, and knowledges. They both are passionate about the implementation and use of Latinx children's literature with teachers, students, families, and their own children.

Martínez-Roldán, C. (2013). The representation of Latinos and the use of Spanish: A critical Content analysis of "Skippyjon Jones". *Journal of Children's Literature*, 39(1), 5-14.