

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK Developed by Sandra Hughes-Hassell and Amanda Hitson

The Culturally Responsive Library Walk is designed to be a collaborative tool for administrators, librarians, and teachers to assess the library's responsiveness to the needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students who attend the school. The goal of the Library Walk is to identify strengths, to discover areas that need improvement, and to develop a path to achieve a culturally responsive library program. It is an observation and planning document that is informed by research on culturally responsive pedagogy and is based on the philosophy of creating a student-centered library program. The Culturally Responsive Library Walk steps are listed in order with the observation sheets attached.

Date: _____

1. FORM A TEAM: To be most effective, Library Walks must be conducted by a team. Members might include the principal, librarian, teachers, parents, and/or students.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

2. COLLABORATIVE BELIEFS / VISION OF A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY PROGRAM: (Conversation among Team):
What is the school community's vision for a culturally responsive school library program?

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY PROGRAMS: Creating a culturally responsive library program that fulfills your beliefs and vision involves developing quality in the following areas (observation sheets are attached with fuller descriptions of each area):

- Librarian/Library staff beliefs and behaviors
- Library space
- Library resources
- Library programming
- Library instruction

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4. FOCUS FOR LEARNING WALK:

Learning Walks are more effective if they are focused around **one or two Focus Areas or questions**. For example: How well do the library resources meet the needs of our Latin@ students? As a Library Team, decide the particular area(s) listed above that would most effectively move your school toward your vision of a culturally responsive library program.

- 1.
- 2.

5. OBSERVATIONS / QUESTIONS

For each focus area, look at the examples of indicators you might observe. As a team, discuss the indicators until everyone has a clear picture of what you might observe or what information you might gather to give a clear picture of what is happening in that area of focus.

6. CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK

Once you have scheduled the Library Walk and assembled the team (including the librarian, principal, teachers, external educators, parents, students, or others), you will want to **pick the appropriate focus sheets** and make individual observations. For indicators that are not observable, you may need to talk with the librarian. You may choose to follow up the time in the library by going to a classroom or two to interview a few students and teachers (using the interview sheets on pages 14-15).

7. DEBRIEFING / LONG-TERM PLANNING

Once the Library Walk has been completed, reassemble the team to share each participant's Wonderings/Observations and then look at the observations in relation to Beliefs/Vision and research on culturally responsive pedagogy. Together, team members decide the library's Next Steps and outline a plan for continued development of the library program by filling out the **Long-Term Planning Sheet** on page 13.

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FOCUS AREA: LIBRARIAN/LIBRARY STAFF BELIEFS AND BEHAVIORS

Objective	Characteristics	Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
Interact with CLD youth as individuals, set high expectations, and develop agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Culturally competent ➤ Caring ➤ Affirming ➤ Committed ➤ Accountable ➤ Courageous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ knows students’ names and how to pronounce them ➤ enforces the school’s anti-bullying policy in the library ➤ adapts classroom management strategies to match the cultural background of the students ➤ is bilingual or knows a few key phrases in each of the languages represented in the school ➤ reads community newspapers (for example: <i>La Conexion</i> and <i>The Triangle Tribune</i>) ➤ attends community events ➤ serves on school- and district-wide diversity committees ➤ attends school board meetings to advocate for the needs of CLD students ➤ has attended Safe Zone training ➤ sponsors or co-sponsors the school’s GSA ➤ belongs to a PLN focused on understanding and meeting the needs of CLD students ➤ leads professional development for teachers 		

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		<p>and staff focused on culturally responsive pedagogy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ reads widely in the culturally responsive pedagogy literature➤ subscribes to publications such as <i>Teaching Tolerance</i> that provide up-to-date information on issues related to diversity and culturally responsive pedagogy➤ introduces teachers, staff, and students to resources that offer multiple cultural perspectives and viewpoints➤ exhibits affirming views of students from CLD backgrounds, seeing resources for learning in all students rather than viewing their differences as problems to overcome		
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FOCUS AREA: LIBRARY SPACE

Objective	Characteristics	Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<p>Provide a welcoming place that respects individuals and their cultures and allows CLD students to express their learning and individuality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nurturing ➤ Respectful ➤ Responsive ➤ Comfortable ➤ Welcoming ➤ Flexible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Signage is in multiple languages and includes images that are culturally relevant ➤ Self-checkout is available ➤ Images in the library and used in marketing the library are representative of the range of CLD students served by the school ➤ The space and the website is ADA compliant ➤ The website includes images of the range of CLD students served by the school ➤ The library is open before and after school for students ➤ Current and relevant bulletin boards display activities and events involving CLD communities ➤ Student work is prominently displayed in the library ➤ The library is open to families and community members ➤ A variety of work spaces are available (individual, group, loud, quiet, etc.) ➤ The school’s anti-bullying policy is visible and enforced 		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Some space is set aside to allow food and beverages in the library➤ Comfortable seating is provided➤ Furniture is movable so space can be changed to accommodate students as needed➤ Students have a forum for making suggestions➤ Library website includes work of CLD students➤ Website contains images, booklists, etc. that represent CLD students➤ Website changes in response to student feedback➤ Website connects CLD students to resources related to their interests as well as academic topics		
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FOCUS AREA: LIBRARY RESOURCES

Objective	Characteristics	Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<p>Nurture the resolve of CLD youth, help them reconcile their different identities, and imagine their place in the world</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meaningful ➤ Relevant ➤ Legitimate ➤ Developmentally appropriate ➤ Enabling ➤ Provide Counterstories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collection development policy includes criteria for evaluating and selecting culturally relevant and enabling texts ➤ Culturally relevant materials are included in book displays and lists ➤ Members of the community are asked to help check resources for authenticity (i.e. materials in Spanish if the librarian does not speak Spanish) ➤ The website contains links to culturally relevant resources and information in the home languages of CLD students ➤ Culturally diverse community resources are utilized (e.g. civic leaders, business leaders, artists, writers, members of police/fire department, etc.) ➤ Newspapers and magazines in the students' home languages are available ➤ Award winning multicultural literature is purchased (i.e. Coretta Scott King, Pura Blepré Medal, Stonewall Award, etc.) 		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Library newsletters, program flyers, etc. are available in CLD students' home languages ➤ Collection includes resources that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ have been evaluated based on language, pictures and stereotypes ➤ are written by members of CLD communities ➤ offer multiple cultural perspectives and viewpoints ➤ represent the diversity within CLD communities ➤ Resources are age-appropriate as well as reading level appropriate ➤ Text starters have been identified for a wide variety of texts ➤ Librarians mediate texts for students and help them relate text to their lives and interests ➤ Resources are provided that allow students to express themselves—blogging platforms, video and audio recording tools and software, word processing software, etc. 		
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FOCUS AREA: LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

Objective	Characteristics	Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<p>Connect to the real world and enable CLD youth to act in their own communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Honors & promotes voice ➤ Develops agency ➤ Increases engagement ➤ Sets high expectations ➤ Provides authentic & relevant experiences ➤ Fosters community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Book groups include quality fiction and nonfiction that authentically depicts CLD communities ➤ Book discussions revolve around essential questions that engage students in critically examining issues such as identity, racism, power, etc. ➤ Author visits include authors/illustrators from CLD communities ➤ Students are taught to use many tools for promoting their own ideas and engaging with others—blogging, filmmaking, podcasting, photography, writing, etc. ➤ Programming goes beyond the superficial aspects of culture (i.e. celebrating holidays or months such as African American History Month) ➤ Family programs are scheduled with the transportation needs, child-care needs, and work schedules of parents in mind ➤ Family programs are held to introduce parents to library 		

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		<p>resources, literacy practices, Web 2.0 tools, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Programs focus on issues or concepts that apply to CLD students’ community or cultural group ➤ Programs are developed collaboratively with parents and community members to build on the meaningfulness between home & school experience ➤ Evening meetings are held in the library to discuss issues that are important to the community ➤ Programs are related to community issues— fundraising or volunteering for local organizations, changing school or district policy, etc. ➤ Students can work collaboratively ➤ Programs relate to interests of a variety of student groups ➤ Librarian, mentors, and other students provide additional support and feedback for students who need extra help ➤ Purpose and value of participation in programs is explicitly explained 		
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FOCUS AREA: LIBRARY INSTRUCTION

Objective	Characteristics	Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<p>Employ an inquiry-based model of instructional strategies and behaviors that builds on the strengths and interests of CLD students and leads to improved academic achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sets high expectations ➤ Provides authentic & relevant experiences ➤ Builds on funds of knowledge ➤ Collaboratively developed with teachers ➤ Utilizes cooperative and interactive learning groups ➤ Employs ongoing and culturally responsive assessments ➤ Utilizes scaffolding techniques such as teacher demonstration and modeling of strategies ➤ Requires students to think critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sets high expectations for all students ➤ Utilizes performance assessments that build on students' strengths ➤ Asks students how they would like to be evaluated/assessed ➤ Elicits and respects prior knowledge ➤ Explains the purpose of assignments/tasks ➤ Relates assignments/tasks to the students' lived experience and interests ➤ Utilizes cooperative and collaborative groups ➤ Provides wait time for students from CLD backgrounds to foster increased class participation ➤ Uses culturally familiar speech and events ➤ Makes use of primary resources and manipulative materials ➤ Provides explicit instruction on using resources and offers group and one-on-one assistance both in and out of class time to students who need additional help 		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Allows students to offer feedback and/or help others understand the material and learn to use tools or resources➤ Involves collaboration with teachers to plan instructional activities in person and via email or social media➤ Includes inquiry based and uses a standard research model➤ Provides students with clear guidelines in the form of instructions, examples, rubrics, and etc. that let them know what they are expected to do		
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Long-Term Planning

Focus Area(s)	Desired Outcomes	Next Steps

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CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK: Teacher Interviews

1. How familiar are you and your students with the resources available through the library?
2. How does the library program meet the curricular and everyday life information needs of your school's CLD students?
3. How do you and the librarian plan and teach together to meet the needs of your school's CLD students?

Name:	Date:
Name:	Date:
Name:	Date:

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CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LIBRARY WALK: Student Interviews

1. Why do you come to the library?
2. What do you like most about your library?
3. What do you not like about your library?
4. How does the library help you learn?
5. How does the library meet your everyday life information needs?

Name:	Date:
Name:	Date:
Name:	Date: