

# Chalkboard

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Chalkboard features textbooks, resource guides, and curriculum materials of interest to educators at the elementary and secondary levels. Recent journal articles and issues that focus on multicultural topics are also highlighted, along with news items related to the development of multicultural curricula.

Please send any news items, curriculum materials, teacher's guides, or ideas to Lyn Miller-Lachmann, 194 Lenox Ave., Albany, NY 12208. If you would like the items returned, please include a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Beyer, Thomas R., Jr. *Learn Russian the Fast and Fun Way*. Hauppauge, N.Y.: Barron's [250 Wireless Boulevard, Hauppauge, NY 11788; phone: (631) 434-3311; www.barronseduc.com], 2009. 240 pp. Illus. Second ed. ISBN 978-0-7641-4214-7, \$18.99 (pb).

This lively, attractive resource for business and leisure travelers introduces Russian in a fast-paced and challenging way. Right away, on page 2, readers learn the most common Russian words, including cognates such as "bank" and "bar," with the words written in the Cyrillic alphabet, transliterated to teach pronunciation, and defined in English. A list of vowels and consonants in the Cyrillic alphabet follows.

Twenty-nine lessons teach basic vocabulary and grammar with a focus on travel-related topics—transportation, time and numbers, entertainment, meals, shopping, essential services, and emergencies. Initially, almost all the Russian words are transliterated, but as readers become more familiar with the alphabet, this crutch is taken away. By lesson 12, readers are expected to learn words and complete workbook exercises entirely in the Cyrillic alphabet. The lessons are followed by an answer key, a section of flash cards, and a pull-out mini-dictionary with a special focus on food and drink, and tips and tipping.

Bruzzone, Catherine, and Martineau, Susan. *50 Spanish Phrases*. Hauppauge, N.Y.: Barron's [250 Wireless Boulevard, Hauppauge, NY 11788; phone: (631) 434-3311; www.barronseduc.com], 2009. 32 pp. Illus. by Leighton Noyes. Spanish consultant: Rosa María Martín. ISBN 978-0-7641-4339-7, \$7.99 (pb).

Lively cartoon-like illustrations distinguish this resource that teaches basic conversational Spanish to children at the older elementary and middle school level. There is no wasted space in this well-designed title. The inside front cover features charts for the Spanish alphabet and numbers from one to 100, while the inside back cover contains a two-way dictionary. Phrases are arranged thematically, beginning with basic greetings and moving on to places, objects, family members, animals, colors, food, leisure activities, clothing, and more. All words and phrases are spelled out phonetically, and a number next to each phrase corresponds to a line in the glossary at the end of the book. There are also quizzes on several of the pages,

matching phrases to pictures, with an answer key at the end.

Christensen, Linda. *Teaching for Joy and Justice: Re-imagining the Language Arts Classroom*. Milwaukee: Rethinking Schools [1001 E. Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212; (414) 964-9646; www.rethinkingschools.org], 2009. 286 pp. ISBN 978-0-942961-43-0, \$19.95 (pb).

Following up on her acclaimed *Reading, Writing, and Rising Up*, Christensen offers additional curricular materials for language arts teachers at the secondary level. Many of the readings and writing activities, though, were ones she developed as a language arts teacher at a high school in Portland, Oregon, where she taught for 25 years.

The curriculum guide is divided into seven sections—Writing Poetry, Narrative Writing, Writing Essays, Literature in Context, Language and Power, Responding to Student Work, and Grading: Moving Beyond Judgment. This resource differs from traditional language arts curriculum guides by considering writing as a tool for achieving social justice and addressing language and power issues such as Ebonics and code switching. Christensen begins each chapter with an introduction to the unit, examples of student work, writing assignments, other individual and group activities and projects, and excerpts from literary classics by authors of color. Among the authors with excerpted works are Zora Neale Hurston, Bebe Moore Campbell, Carmen Lomas Garza, Wangari Maathai, Lois-Ann Yamanaka, Hank Sims, and Joe Suina. Additional recommended books are listed in the introduction to each unit. Indexed.

Cronenberg, Stephanie, ed. *Celebrating Sacred Rhythms: A Teacher's Guide*. Washington, D.C.: The Choral Arts Society of Washington [5225 Wisconsin Ave., NW, Suite 603, Washington, DC 20015-2016; (202) 244-3669; www.choralarts.org], 2009. 102 pp. ISBN 978-1-61584-603-0, \$30.00 (book only), \$41.00 (book + CD).

On the heels of their successful curriculum featuring music of the civil rights movement, *Voices: A Teacher's Guide*, the Choral Arts Society has published a guide to sacred music originating in Latin America as a window into the region's history and culture. Since most of the music is in Spanish, the guide is presented in both English and Spanish so it can be used by foreign language as well as music classes and in dual-language immersion schools. Teachers are encouraged to read fiction and folktales that touch on the themes of the songs. Lessons that tie in with Rudolfo Anaya's novel *Bless Me, Ultima* make this a curriculum of greatest interest to the high school level.

The basis of the curriculum is Argentine composer Ariel Ramirez's *Misa Criolla*, which is widely performed throughout Latin America. Readings include a biography of Ramirez, a description of the instruments used in the performance (many of them indigenous instruments of the Andes, such as the charango, quena, and siku), the

religious background of the Mass, the role of folk music throughout the world, and the pioneering work of Argentine folklorist Atahualpa Yupanqui.

Six lesson plans follow. Some focus on the place of the music in Latin American culture; others on the words and music of the *Misa Criolla*. In addition to the lessons, questions for discussion, and activities, there are a set of reproducible worksheets, a glossary in English and Spanish, and a list of resources for further study.

Davis, Bonnie M. *The Biracial and Multiracial Student Experience: A Journey to Racial Literacy*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press [2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320; www.corwinpress.com], 2009. 148 pp. ISBN 978-1-4129-7505-6, \$40.95 (cl); 978-1-4129-7506-3, \$28.95 (pb).

With a growing number of mixed-race students and students from interracial families (including adopted children), teachers must develop the skills to interact with and meet the educational needs of those who cannot be categorized by a single checked box. The author is the White mother of multiracial children, and the backgrounds of her grandchildren are even more complex. Drawing on her personal experiences, Davis encourages preservice and in-service teachers to reflect on their own backgrounds, assumptions, and values, and to learn more about the backgrounds and experiences of their students. With students who cannot be easily categorized, teachers must be able to listen and learn from others, to incorporate their knowledge into the classroom, and to become effective advocates for their multiracial students.

Each chapter includes case studies, explanatory text, and workbook activities. The major topics explored are definitions of race, defining one's own racial identity, challenges faced by multiracial students, identity development among mixed-race students, the impact of skin color, reaching out to other professionals to become more culturally proficient, and the perspectives of parents. The children and families in the case studies present a myriad of racial/ethnic combinations. Also addressed are the challenges faced by adopted multiracial children and children of cross-racial adoptions. The book concludes with a selected bibliography and an index.

Gonzalez, Virginia. *Young Learners, Diverse Children: Celebrating Diversity in Early Childhood*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press [2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320; www.corwinpress.com], 2009. 224 pp. Foreword by Eugene E. Garcia. ISBN 978-1-4129-7648-0, \$66.95 (cl); 978-1-4129-7649-7, \$30.95 (pb).

Teachers at the early childhood level are the audience for this textbook, which asserts the "ethnic-educator philosophy." The central tenet of Gonzalez's ethnic-educator philosophy is "that the teacher's personality is the most important tool for the assessment and instruction of low-socioeconomic-status (SES), young, diverse children." Gonzalez defines diversity in terms of "ethnicity, minority cultures and languages, and low-SES backgrounds."

Garcia's foreword describes his efforts to serve as a liaison between the administration of a Head Start program in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the growing numbers of Spanish-speaking immigrants who began to move to the area in the late 1990s. The book's eight chapters introduce the ethnic-educator philosophy and pedagogical model and its

applications to the early childhood classroom. Gonzalez addresses teaching strategies, linking those strategies with academic content standards, assessment, storytelling, and alternative reading instruction. Working with students' native languages and with parents are topics that receive attention throughout. Although the approach is quite theoretical, charts and tables help readers to organize the information, and case studies and specific lesson plans help somewhat to make the information more comprehensible. Indexed.

Grant, Carl A. *Teach! Change! Empower! Solutions for Closing the Achievement Gaps*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press [2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320; www.corwinpress.com], 2009. 140 pp. ISBN 978-1-4129-6813-3, \$58.95 (cl); 978-1-4129-6814-0, \$26.95 (pb).

Renowned multicultural educator Grant has created a workbook to help preservice and in-service teachers address achievement gaps in their schools. The subtitle's focus on gaps in the plural is deliberate, and in Grant's words, "teachers deal with more gaps than merely achievement," such as gaps in family income, access to health care, and political power.

The book is arranged in three parts. Part one, "The Harder Work of Teaching," urges teachers to look at their own knowledge base, cultural assumptions, schools, communities, and society at large. Part two, "The Change Process," focuses on attitudes toward change, envisioning change, addressing personal and organizational obstacles, conducting research, and implementing change. Part three, "Change/Solutions in Practice," offers case studies of successful programs characterized by high student interest, culturally responsive curricula, gender equity, and close ties to the community.

In each chapter, workbook exercises encourage readers to reflect on their current situation and to envision alternatives; these can be used to spark classroom or small-group discussions. The book concludes with a list of references and an index.

Harvey, William C. *Spanish for Attorneys and Paralegals*. Hauppauge, N.Y.: Barron's [250 Wireless Boulevard, Hauppauge, NY 11788; phone: (631) 434-3311; www.barronseduc.com], 2009. 280 pp. Includes 2 CDs. ISBN 978-0-7641-9611-9, \$24.99 (pb).

The series of beginning-level Spanish guides geared to specific trades and professions continues with a guide for legal professionals who serve Spanish-speaking clients. *Spanish for Attorneys and Paralegals* contains vocabulary related to the law office; the courthouse; immigration, personal injury, and family law; business, finance, and real estate law; and criminal law. Areas of confusion (the different meanings of "conocer" and "saber" for "to know," for instance), false cognates, and cultural differences receive attention. The book includes a limited number of written exercises with an answer key and a glossary of important legal terms in English translated into Spanish. A set of 2 CDs containing realistic dialogues between attorneys and Spanish-speaking clients helps users to understand spoken Spanish as well as to improve their pronunciation.

Helman, Lori, ed. *Literacy Development with English Learners:*

**Research-Based Instruction in Grades K-6.** New York: Guilford Publications [72 Spring St., New York, NY 10012; (212) 431-9800], 2009. 272 pp. ISBN 978-1-60623-243-9, \$55.00 (cl); 978-1-60623-242-2, \$30.00 (pb).

The 13 essays in this volume address a myriad of issues facing English language learners (ELLs) at the elementary level and are directed to monolingual teachers with some ELLs in their mainstream classes. In the first chapter, editor Helman, a professor of literacy education at the University of Minnesota, provides a conceptual framework for learning English as a second language and the factors that affect English literacy development among speakers/readers of other languages. The following chapters cover culturally responsive instruction, understanding vocabulary and language structure, spelling, phonics, fluency, comprehension, cognates, assessment strategies, the cultural assumptions of monolingual teachers, and specific teaching practices that are effective with ELLs. According to Helman, the structure of the book parallels the structure of her graduate level course, with one week devoted to each of these topics. Thus, the book can serve as a textbook for similar courses.

The articles vary in style—some are dry and abstract while others present their arguments through case studies. One chapter explores reading comprehension through the dialogue of three members of a teacher study group. Each chapter contains its own list of references, and an index concludes the book.

**Kaolin. *Talking About Race: A Workbook About White People Fostering Racial Equality in Their Lives.*** Roselle, N.J.: Crandall, Dostie & Douglass [245 West 4th Ave., Roselle, NJ 07203; (908) 241-5439], 2010. 144 pp. ISBN 978-0-934390-31-3, \$14.95 (pb).

In 1995, at the age of 43, Kaolin (born Patricia Anne Graham) enrolled as an undergraduate at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. There, she was stunned and dismayed to see the hostility of White students as they learned about racism from the African-American professor of their cultural anthropology class. As a White woman married to an African-American man, Kaolin wanted to help her fellow students, most of them a generation younger, to examine their attitudes and assumptions. Motivated by a desire to protect her two biracial children, she petitioned the university to offer a for-credit course on racism that she, a fellow undergraduate, would teach.

*Talking About Race* grew out of this course, which she taught for two semesters before receiving her Bachelor's degree in 2000. Directed to college and older high school students, this workbook asks students to delve into their own beliefs and assumptions that may be considered racist, to examine their upbringing, to note how they may have benefited from White privilege, and to identify the moments in their past when they remained silent in the face of injustice. Kaolin uses case studies of people who may have had the same experiences as readers (such as a girl hearing her father threaten to disown her brother for having an African-American girlfriend) and asks readers to write about what they would have done—and what they should have done. Throughout, readers are encouraged to write as a means of identifying thoughts and feelings and as a basis for small group dialogue. A useful glossary of terms concludes this resource, which is refreshingly jargon-free.

Lindsey, Randall B.; Robins, Kikanza Nuri; and Terrell, Raymond D. ***Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders.*** Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press [2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320; www.corwinpress.com], 2009. 318 pp. Third ed. ISBN 978-1-4129-6362-6, \$75.00 (cl); 978-1-4129-6363-3, \$40.95 (pb).

Designed for in-service teachers and administrators, this manual/workbook, now in its third edition, complements Terrell and Lindsey's *Culturally Proficient Leadership: The Personal Journey Begins Within* (Corwin Press, 2008). First published in 1999, *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders* has been reorganized and updated. The newest edition is divided into three parts: Understanding Cultural Proficiency, Using the Tools of Cultural Proficiency, and Making the Commitment to Cultural Proficiency. The first part offers an overview of cultural, historical, and demographic issues and of leadership in schools. The second part offers concrete steps to making schools and classrooms more culturally responsive. The third part offers a series of case studies to inspire reflection and action.

Nearly half of the book, however, consists of "Resources"—activities that allow teachers and administrators to identify their personal biases and other obstacles to developing cultural proficiency and to applying this knowledge in the classroom. Worksheets and activities may be completed individually or in groups of various sizes. Lesson plans for group activities include a list of materials needed, the amount of time required, the skill level of the facilitator, and the readiness level of the group. The third edition features 25 new activities along with successful activities from previous editions. The book concludes with a list of references, additional readings, and an index.

Treviño, Rose Zertuche. ***Read Me a Rhyme in Spanish and English: Léame una rima en español e inglés.*** Chicago: ALA Editions [50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611; (866) 746-7252; www.alastore.ala.org], 2009. 156 pp. ISBN 978-0-8389-0982-9, \$45.00 (pb).

Library consultant Treviño offers a wealth of program ideas for librarians serving Spanish-speaking communities, all revolving around rhyming songs and poems. Chapters are organized by age group served, beginning with babies and moving to toddlers, preschoolers, and school-aged children. Each chapter focuses on a single program theme; these include the alphabet, numbers, colors, shapes, animals, food, family members, holidays and festivals, and folklore. Accompanying the rhymes and songs are suggestions for other activities (including an opening and closing activity for each program) and a list of books to be shared in the program or loaned to the families.

A useful introduction for librarians addresses such topics as promoting family literacy and the library among Spanish-speaking parents, forming community partnerships, selecting books, using rhymes and songs in Spanish and English, and sources for the rhymes. Rhymes and songs are in Spanish and English, while the explanatory text for librarians is in English only. Most of the recommended picture books are bilingual editions. Although the book does not include a CD with the songs, Treviño provides a discography, along with a list of nursery rhyme collections, a bibliography of recommended picture books, an index of titles and first lines, and an index of craft ideas.

Webb, Lois Sinaiko, and Roten, Lindsay Grace. *The Multicultural Cookbook for Students*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO [130 Cremona Dr., P.O. Box 1911, Santa Barbara, CA 93116-1911; www.abc-clio.com], 2009. 354 pp. Second ed. ISBN 978-0-313-37558-3, \$85.00 (cl); 978-0-313-37560-6, \$32.95 (pb).

First published by Greenwood Press, this updated cookbook contains easy-to-prepare recipes from 152 countries arranged by region. There are at least two recipes per country, and 140 of the recipes are new to this volume. While the authors designate this as a book “for students,” any interested adult with basic cooking skills will appreciate the variety of recipes, the easy-to-follow instructions, and the snippets of information that accompany the recipes. Webb was the owner and chef of a restaurant in Seabrook, Texas, before becoming a food writer; Roten is a high school English teacher with a passion for ethnic foods.

The table of contents is organized by region, then by country alphabetically, and finally by recipe. Non-English names of dishes are translated so readers can know what the dish is and whether it is served as a beverage, an appetizer, a main course, or a dessert. Following a preface for the new edition are general instructions for safe and successful cooking and a useful glossary. Each country entry begins with a brief overview of geography, lifestyle, and flora and fauna as they relate to ingredients and cooking methods. The recipes include the number of people served and the way the dishes are served in their country of origin. Indexed.

Whitesides, Barbara. *Sugar Comes from the Arabic: A Beginner's Guide to Arabic Letters and Words*. Northampton, Mass.: Interlink

[46 Crosby St., Northampton, MA 01060-1804; (413) 582-7504; www.interlinkbooks.com], 2009. 136 pp. Illus. ISBN 978-1-56656-757-2.

A little bit of dictionary, a little bit of grammar, and a little bit of a cultural guide—these characterize this attractive resource for readers, middle elementary school through adult. Readers learn right away that Arabic is read from right to left rather than left to right, and each word's entry repeats this pattern.

Entries are arranged by English letters from A to Z. The book provides the matching Arabic letter and explains when these aren't exact matches. Readers see how each letter is drawn and what it sounds like alone and in combination with other letters. Arabic words that begin with that letter are defined, and in most cases, the entry provides an in-depth discussion of the word, its origin, and/or its broader cultural context. For example, the Arabic word for Palestinians is transliterated as “filasTeence” because Arabic has no P, and readers learn that the name was bestowed by the Romans, who adapted the name of Philistia, a previous kingdom in the region. The entry concludes by pointing out that the word “Palestinian” “has come to mean a Muslim or Christian Arab whose ancestors came from Palestine.” Among the dozens of words chosen to demonstrate the intersection of language and culture, as well as Arabic words that have become part of English vocabulary, are religious words such as “hallelujah” (originating with Arab Christians), common Arabic given names, foods (like sugar), and surprising cognates such as “alcohol” (“al” meaning “the” and “kuHool” meaning “essence”), given the fact that religious Muslims do not imbibe.

Following the definitions are an overview of the history of Arabic and where it's spoken, a list of helpful hints for learning the language, and a chart of Arabic letters and numbers. 🌐

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