



# **More Mirrors in the Classroom: Using Urban Children's Literature to Increase Literacy (Kids Like Us)**

*Jane Fleming, Susan Catapano, Candace M. Thompson, Sandy Ruvalcaba Carrillo*

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Nearly 30% of all public school children attend school in large or mid-size cities, totaling more than 16 million students in 22,000 schools. For schools serving culturally and linguistically diverse populations and large numbers of children living in poverty, a significant achievement gap persists. Proponents of multicultural education often advocate for instruction with culturally relevant texts to promote inclusion, compassion, and understanding of our increasingly diverse society. Less discussion has focused on the significant body of research that suggests that culturally relevant texts have important effects on language and literacy development. By “connecting the dots” of existing research, *More Mirrors in the Classroom* raises awareness about the critical role that urban children's literature can play in helping children learn to read and write. In addition, it provides practical step-by-step advice for increasing the cultural relevance of school curricula in order to accelerate literacy learning.

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