

Questions to Consider When Analyzing Texts for Cultural Authenticity

Literary Qualities

- How well does the author tell the story? Is it quality literature?

Origin of Book

- What is the origin of the book?
- Who was the original publisher, and in what country is it located?
- Who is the author? Illustrator? Translator? What are their backgrounds?

Authorship

- How do the author's experiences relate to the setting and characters in this book?
- On what experiences and/or research is the book based?
- Why might the author have chosen this story to tell?

Believability

- Is this story believable? Could it have happened?
- In what ways does it feel real/authentic?
- Are the characters larger than stereotypes but less than perfect heroes?

Accuracy of Details and Authenticity of Values

- Are there inaccurate details in the book?
- What values are at the heart of the book?
- How do those values connect to the lives of actual people within the culture?
- Does this book reflect a specific cultural experience, or could the story have happened anywhere?





Questions to Consider When Analyzing Texts for Cultural Authenticity *continued*

Perspectives and Experiences

- Whose perspectives and experiences are portrayed?
- Who tells the story?
- What is the range of insider perspectives?

Power Relationships

- Which characters have power or significance in the book?
- Who takes action?
- How is the story resolved?
- Where does the story go, and how does it get there? Who takes it there? Why?

Audience

- Who is the book's intended audience?
- Is the book written for children from a particular country or culture, or to inform children in other parts of the world about that country or culture?

Relationship to Other Books

- How does this book connect with other books about this culture?
- Do the available books about this culture capture a range of perspectives and experiences within that culture?

Response by Insiders

- How have insiders responded to this book?

Connections for Readers

- What are the possible connections for students? Is the book accessible?

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