



MULTICULTURAL children's books ...a selection

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Book Selector

South Africa, with its rich cultural diversity is widely known as a rainbow nation. This year marks the celebration of ten years of democracy. To commemorate this, I have compiled a multicultural list of books for older children and teens - J, J/JT & T categories, concentrating on contemporary novels. My selection includes a list of South African titles as well as international titles. However, before introducing this list, I want to provide a brief introduction to this genre.

Multicultural books can be distinguished from other books by one common feature: they seek to promote cultural awareness and appreciation in children. Books that provide a sensitive portrayal of another culture broaden readers' minds and can thus be labelled multicultural. If the author is able to create believable characters with whom the reader can identify, then he/she will be able to relate to their situation and experiences, no matter how different from the reader's own. In this way a climate of empathy and understanding is created, and a multicultural world-view is created.

The multicultural genre consists of two categories of books:

- those that are depicted within one specific culture, often a marginalised culture
- those in which an individual from one culture has to find a place in a society where another culture dominates.

The titles in the accompanying booklist mostly focus on the second category.

The benefits of this genre lie in the fact that it can affirm the existence of minority and oppressed groups. In South Africa, there is definitely a need for more contemporary books on the topic to create an environment of mutual understanding and tolerance amongst the various cultures. This is not an easy task.

Below is a selected list of South African multicultural titles as well as other titles. This list can be used by librarians, educators and students in the field of library science.

South African multi-cultural titles

- Bailey, Dennis. **Khetho.**- Heinemann, 1994. JT BAI
- Beake, Lesley. **The strollers.**- Maskew Miller Longman, 1987. J BEA
- Beake, Lesley. **A cageful of butterflies.**- Maskew Miller Longman, 1989 (1992 printing). JT BEA
- Bransby, Lawrence. **The boy who counted to a million.**- Human & Rousseau, 1995. J BRA
- Bransby, Lawrence. **Down street.**- Tafelberg, 1989. T BRA
- Bregin, Elana. **The boy from the other side.**- Maskew Miller Longman, 1992. J BRE
- Bregin, Elana. **The kayaboeties.**- Maskew Miller Longman, 1989. JT BRE
- Case, Bonita. **Wart.**- Tafelberg, 1995. T CAS
- Davidow, Shelley. **Freefalling.**- Maskew Miller Longman, 1991. JT DAV
- Gordon, Sheila. **Waiting for the rain: a novel of South Africa.**- Orchard Bks, 1989. T GOR
- Hofmeyr, Dianne. **A sudden summer.**- Tafelberg, 1987. J HOF
- Jones, Toeckey. **Go well, stay well.**- Heinemann Educational Bks., 1987 (1989 printing). T JON
- Ludman, Barbara. **The day of the kugel.**- Maskew Miller Longman, 1989. T LUD
- Naidoo, Beverley. **Journey to Jo'burg: a South African story.**- Collins, 1987 (1990 printing). JT NAI
- Naidoo, Beverley. **Chain of fire.**- Collins, 1989. T NAI
- Naidoo, Beverley. **Out of bounds: stories of conflict and hope.**- Puffin, 2001. JT NAI
- Naidoo, Beverley. **No turning back.**- Viking, 1995. JT NAI
- Parker, Carolyn. **Witch woman on the Hogsback.**- De Jager-HAUM, c1987. J PAR
- Pinnock, Patricia Schonstein. **Skyline.**- D. Philip, 2000. T PIN
- Reynolds, Barbara M. **Valley of the rain-birds.**- Tafelberg, 1987. J REY
- Seed, Jenny. **The hungry people.**- Tafelberg, 1992. JT SEE

- Silver, Norman. **A monkey's wedding.**- Faber, 2000. T SIL
- Slingsby, Peter. **Flood Sunday.**- Tafelberg, 1992. J SLI
- Smith, Janet. **Streams to rivers.**- Maskew Miller Longman, 1988. JT SMI
- Wende, Hamilton. **Msimangu's words.**- Maskew Miller Longman, 1992. JT WEN
- Williams, Michael. **Who killed Jimmy Valentine?**- Oxford U.P., 1997. T WIL

General multi-cultural youth titles

- Banks, Lynne Reid. **One more river.**- Penguin, 1988. T BAN
- Blackman, Malorie. **Trust me.**- Livewire, 1992. T BLA
- Bosse, Malcolm Joseph. **Ganesh.**- Red Fox, 1993. J BOS
- Brooks, Kevin. **Lucas.**- Chicken House, 2003. T BRO
- Erdrich, Louise. **The birchbark house.**- Dolphin, 2000. J ERD
- Fuqua, Jonathon Scott. **Darby.**- Walker, 2003. JT
- Gibbons, Alan. **Whose side are you on?-** Orion, 1994. J GIB
- OIL short stories: ten teens, ten issues, ten real-life stories** / edited by S George & C Mercer.- Ebony Bks., 2002. T OIL
- Gibbons, Alan. **The edge.**- Dolphin, 2002. T GIB
- Gibbons, Alan. **Caught in the crossfire.**- Dolphin, 2003. T GIB
- Hamilton, Virginia. **Bluish: a novel.**- Scholastic Signature, 2002. J HAM
- Hamilton, Virginia. **Plain city.**- Scholastic Signature, c1993. (on order)
- Hicyilmaz, Gaye. **Girl in red.**- Dolphin, 2000. JT HIC
- Hicyilmaz, Gaye. **Pictures from the fire.**- Dolphin, 2003. JT HIC
- Hill, Anthony. **The burnt stick.**- Viking, 1994. J HIL
- Johnson, Angela. **Toning the sweep.**- Orchard Bks., 1995. T JOH
- Koertge, Ron. **The Brimstone journals.**- Walker Bks., 2001. T KOE
- Laird, Elizabeth. **Secret friends.**- Hodder, 1999. J LAI
- Lisle, Janet Taylor. **The art of keeping cool.**- Aladdin Paperbacks, c2000. JT LIS

- Mazer, Harry. **A boy at war: a novel of Pearl Harbor.**- Aladdin Paperbacks, 2002. J MAZ
- Murray, Millie. **Cairo Hughes.**- Livewire, 1996. T MUR
- Paterson, Katherine. **The great Gilly Hopkins.**- Penguin, 1981 (1986 printing). J PAT
- Paulsen, Gary. **Nightjohn.**- Macmillan, 1994. JT PAU
- Rai, Bali. **The crew.**- Corgi, 2003. T RAI
- Rowe, Leanne. **Girl X recreated: hopes + dreams of young people.**- Random House, 2002. T ROW
- Ryan, Pam Munoz. **Esperanza rising.**- Chicken House, 2003. T RYA
- Smith, Rukshana. **Salt on the snow.**- Bodley Head, 1988. T SMI
- Smith, Rukshana. **Rainbows of the gutter.**- Muthuen, 1988. T SMI
- Smith, Rukshana. **Sumitra's story.**- Bodley Head, 1982 (1992 printing). T SMI
- Speare, Elizabeth George. **The witch of Blackbird Pond.**- Penguin, 1967. J SPE
- Spinelli, Jerry. **Maniac Magee: a novel.**- Little, c1990. JT SPI
- Staples, Suzanne Fisher. **Storm.**- Red Fox, 1999. JT STA
- Swindells, Robert. **Smash!**- H. Hamilton, 1997. J SWI
- Taylor, Mildred D. **Roll of thunder, hear my cry.**- London, 1977. T TAY
- Taylor, Mildred D. **Let the circle be unbroken.**- Penguin, 1988. T TAY
- Taylor, Theodore. **The cay.**- Penguin, 1973 (1986 printing). J TAY
- Ure, Jean. **Just sixteen.**- Orchard Bks., 1999. T URE
- Woodson, Jacqueline. **Last summer with Maizon.**- Heinemann, 1991. J WOO
- Woodson, Jacqueline. **Maizon at Blue Hill.**- Heinemann, 1993. JT WOO
- Woodson, Jacqueline. **From the notebooks of Melanin Sun.**- Scholastic Signature, c1995. JT WOO

Source

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