

# Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in Bookselling



## What makes a book "diverse"?

As defined by the ABA Diversity Committee + WNDB

Psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals; including but not limited to race, color, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, veteran status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability\*, genetic information and learning styles. A diverse group, community, or organization is one in which a variety of social and cultural characteristics exist.

\*Disability includes but is not limited to physical, sensory, cognitive, intellectual, or developmental disabilities, chronic conditions, and mental illnesses (may also include addiction). This also includes a social model of disability, which presents disability as created by barriers in the social environment, due to lack of equal access, stereotyping, and other forms of marginalization.



## How can booksellers promote diverse books?

Set up displays in your store that promote these books. It's best if you can include them in broader displays centered around themes and age groups, rather than only including diverse books in displays that call them out for their diversity (such as a display for Asian Pacific Heritage Month). Shelf them in prominent areas of the store where they are easy-to-find and customer-facing. Staff can write recommendations for these books and include them in staff picks. Call them out with a shelf-talker or other sign (use these to call out what makes each book exciting beyond just the diverse elements). Mention them to readers who come in asking for book recommendations, or talk them up during events at your bookstore.



## Best practices for booksellers engaging their customers

Treat diverse book titles the same way you would any other book. Often, people assume that diverse books are for a niche market, and that (for example) only LGBTQ+ teenagers will want to read books with an LGBTQ+ lead character, or only black kids will want to read books by black authors. Don't make these assumptions. Instead, include a wide variety of books and authors in your store. Set up events and signings for these books and authors. Host book clubs that discuss these books with the community, including the ABA's book club partnerships (such as the Well-Read Black Girl book club). Mention them in conversations with your customers and keep them in stock for people to purchase.

Explore links to many useful resources on how to find diverse books and authors on the We Need Diverse Books website here: <https://diversebooks.org/resources/where-to-find-diverse-books/>

## Where to discover diverse books and authors

- We Need Diverse Books free OurStory app
- The Dark Fantastic by Ebony Elizabeth Thomas
- American Indians in Children's Literature
- The Brown Bookshelf
- Disability in Kidlit
- Cooperative Children's Book Center
- Multicultural Literature List
- Middle East Book Awards
- People of Color in Publishing
- Latinxs in Kid Lit
- Writers of Color
- YA Pride
- SLJ's Islam in the Classroom
- Reading in Color
- Schneider Family Book Award
- Rich in Color
- Coretta Scott King Book Awards

**WNDB**<sup>®</sup>  
weneeddiversebooks.org

Questions?  
Contact We Need Diverse Books  
info@diversebooks.org

# Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in Bookselling

## American Booksellers Association Resources

Diversity and Inclusion Education Resources [bit.ly/diversitytf](https://bit.ly/diversitytf)  
including: - a glossary of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Terms  
- videos, webinars, audio files from educational sessions  
- Refugee Book Drive suggested titles

Banned Books Week Partnership [bannedbooksweek.org/](https://bannedbooksweek.org/)  
Well-Read Black Girl Book Club Partnership [www.bookweb.org/well-read-black-girl-partnership](https://www.bookweb.org/well-read-black-girl-partnership)

“ A character in a picture book is four times more likely to be a dinosaur than a Native American.

- Cooperative Children's Book Center at the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (CCBC)

“ In 2016, more than a quarter of young adult and children's books featured characters of color, compared to just 10 percent in 2013. However, most of the authors are white.  
- Lee & Low Publishers study

## Committee Members

Denise Chávez  
Casa Camino Real Book Store

Hannah Oliver Depp  
Loyalty Bookstore

BrocheAroe Fabian  
River Dog Book Co.

Sarah Hollenbeck  
Women & Children First

Lane Jacobson  
Paulina Springs Books

Melanie Knight  
Books Inc.

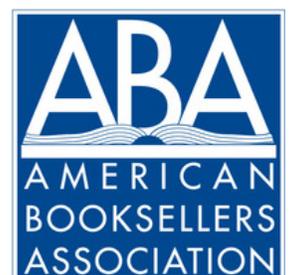
Veronica Liu  
Word Up Community Bookshop

Michelle Malonzo  
Changing Hands

Chris Phipps  
City Lights Books

Angela Maria Spring  
Duende District Bookstore

Questions?  
Contact the Committee  
[diversitytaskforce@bookweb.org](mailto:diversitytaskforce@bookweb.org)



## ABA Committee on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Additional Suggestions for Book-related Activism + Diversity Resources

### Activism

First Book Read + Act [www.fbmarketplace.org/read-and-act/](https://www.fbmarketplace.org/read-and-act/)  
Harry Potter Alliance [www.thehpalliance.org/](https://www.thehpalliance.org/)  
Teaching Tolerance [www.tolerance.org/](https://www.tolerance.org/)

### Book Clubs + Book Lists

Children's Book Council Diversity List [www.cbcdiversity.com/](https://www.cbcdiversity.com/)  
Disability in Fiction Database of Book Titles [bit.ly/disabilityinfiction](https://bit.ly/disabilityinfiction)

#DisruptTexts [disrupttexts.org/](https://disrupttexts.org/)  
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Book Club [www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sdgbookclub/](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sdgbookclub/)

### Industry Reports + Research

The State of Racial Diversity in Romance Publishing Report  
(conducted by The Ripped Bodice)  
[www.therippedbodice.com/state-racial-diversity-romance-publishing-report](https://www.therippedbodice.com/state-racial-diversity-romance-publishing-report)

"Windows, Mirrors, & Sliding Glass Doors" article  
by Rudine Sims Bishop  
[bit.ly/windowsmirrorsglassdoors](https://bit.ly/windowsmirrorsglassdoors)