

Adopting a Multicultural Perspective in Out-of-School-Time Programs

by Sandy Tsubokawa Whittall

Baseball Saved Us – Japanese American

Written by Ken Mochizuki, Illustrated by Dom Lee. 1993.
New York: Lee & Low Books Inc.

A Japanese boy and his family are moved to an internment camp in the early 1940s. The boy's father decides that they need a baseball field to help pass the time and to bring a sense of normalcy to the camp. Playing baseball seems to lift the spirits of the people, and the little boy is determined to overcome his small size by working hard at becoming a good player.

Halmoni and the Picnic – Korean American

Written by Sook Nyul Choi, Illustrated by Karen Dugan. 1993.

New York: Houghton Mifflin Company

Yunmi's grandmother, Halmoni, has just moved to New York from Korea and is finding it difficult to adjust to American culture. Yunmi hopes that having Halmoni chaperone a class trip to Central Park will help her feel more at home. But at the same time, Yunmi is worried that her classmates will not accept Halmoni's traditional Korean dress and the Korean food she has prepared for the trip.

In My Family/En Mi Familia – Mexican American

Written and Illustrated by Carmen Lomas Garza. 1996.
San Francisco: Children's Book Press

Garza writes about and illustrates aspects of life in her family. Each illustration is accompanied by text in both

English and Spanish describing a tradition, event, or memory from her childhood. The descriptions are very personal, and the vivid and colorful illustrations include family members and close friends engaged in the activities discussed in the text. The book is a family album for Garza, and is a glimpse into the life of a Mexican American child for her readers. Some readers may find unfamiliar images in the book, but they will also find much familiarity.

Jingle Dancer – Muscogee/Ojibway

Written by Cynthia Leitich Smith,
Illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright & Ying-Hwa Yu. 2000.
New York: Morrow Junior Books

Jenna is a young Muscogee and Ojibway Indian girl who longs to follow in her grandmother's footsteps as a jingle dancer. Since there is not enough time before the next powwow to mail order the tin for her dress, she finds another way to add "voice" to her dress.

I Love My Hair! – African American

Written by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley,
Illustrated by E. B. Lewis. 1998.

Boston: Little, Brown and Company

A little girl's nightly struggle with a comb turns into a celebration of her family life and heritage. Her mother can style it to look like soft spun yarn or to reflect the rows of vegetables in their garden. Or the little girl can celebrate her African heritage by letting it all go free.