

K-3 Essential 8 Organizing and Presenting Reading Materials Sample Video

MAISA Literacy Essentials

https://youtu.be/_9vSNTsuzhg

Narrator: Abundant reading material and reading opportunities in the classroom support students' literacy learning. In these classrooms, the teachers highlight books and other materials that reflect children's backgrounds and cultural experiences.

Teacher Natasha: So my classroom library is organized by genre and it's also organized by student interest, and students are free to come over, take a look at the books whenever they'd like. Sometimes they're even used as our classroom readouts. So this is one of my favorites. It's *The Rough Face Girl*. She doesn't allow the scarring on her face to outshine the beauty that's within. And I think that this is so important because this is the culture in our room that everyone shines no matter what. My library also encompasses various cultures in our classroom because it's important that students see themselves within the books that they read. These are two of my favorites in our class and even in our school. We have a lot of children that speak various languages, so these outline children all around the world in various languages that they speak. Our classroom culture is built upon a community, and we make this community one big whole group. This is a personal favorite of mine because in our class we talk about how our families celebrate events, and it usually revolves around some type of meal, and it's just amazing to see how different ethnicities celebrate in the things that they eat. So, the books in our classroom library are one way for children to see themselves. They can see themselves within the book and know that they are represented in various ways. I really want children to feel empowered and to feel that their cultures are relevant and that they have some value in this room.

Teacher Erika: Throughout the course of the year, I really try to highlight texts that are relevant to my students' cultures and also that are applicable to topics of interest that they might be interested in. I not only highlight them in a, hey, read this kind of way, but I also choose to read those types of books aloud and to present them in a way in my classroom where they might be more upfront for my students. One of the books I highlight is *Wonder*. It's about a boy with special needs who comes into a classroom really unsure and finds that his classroom is really inclusive. Some other books I like to highlight from characters that are from a range of different backgrounds are *the Friendship Doll*, *I Love Bud, not Buddy*, and then *The Birch Bark House* by Louise Erdrich. She's one of my most favorite authors. I also try to highlight for my students their topic-based interests.

So I make sure to pull out books, like record books based in different topics like animals or things that move. I also find that students and reluctant readers also really tend to gravitate toward fact books, quick small pieces of information that they can read quickly and that aren't as daunting as a chapter book might be. I include things like animals and biographies, and like I said before, the series books like *Diary of A Wimpy Kid* or *Geronimo Stilton* that my kids also find a growing interest in throughout the year. So I really find that my students are better comprehenders, better readers when they're able to see themselves in a text and make personal connections with the text like they would in some of these books. It is really important to me that my students see themselves reflected in the books in my classroom. I really value what the students bring to the classroom culturally, what they bring to the table, and they have the ability to become teachers in this role when they have books that relate to them culturally and they get to be the ones to share more about that and be the teacher in that role.

It can be really empowering for students to make real life connections to these stories and to be able to see themselves in the stories that they are reading and to hold that teacher role and be able to teach others about their culture.

Narrator: Learn more at literacyessentials.org.