

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alina O'Donnell
609.280.3905
press@reading.org

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION PROPOSES MORE EXPANSIVE APPROACH TO LITERATURE SELECTION

Newark, Del. (November 30, 2018) — When thoughtfully paired with contemporary children's literature, educators can elevate the power of traditional canonical literature to enhance literacy learning while both affirming students' own lives and engaging them in new worlds, according to ILA's new brief, *Expanding the Canon: How Diverse Literature Can Transform Literacy Learning*.

A long-standing proponent of diverse classroom libraries, ILA suggests a more expansive approach to literature selection that validates more contemporary, multilingual and culturally specific experiences. By identifying themes in traditional canonical literature that are mirrored in contemporary children's literature and pairing those in instruction, educators can couch universal social, political, racial and cultural motifs in relevant and timely narratives.

"The classics will always have a place in the classroom," says ILA Executive Director Marcie Craig Post. "By scaffolding them with more relatable storylines, we can make them more accessible and engaging to today's students. It's about creating those entry points for personal connection."

Integrating multiple literature formats, genres and their hybrid types can support classroom learning and engage interested readers, asserts ILA. Students should be exposed to a variety of genres (such as fiction, informational and poetry) and text formats (such as graphic novel, picture book and chapter book).

Additionally, a response-based approach to teaching literature, which demands personal meaning making with texts, lends itself to more authentic reading experiences. Supporting student book choice in the classroom helps students to navigate their own interests, tastes and preference, driving self-selection of texts.

The brief closes with five suggestions for cultivating a classroom library that reflects the rich fabric of culture, history and language that compose today's increasingly global society.

The full brief is available [here](#).

About the International Literacy Association

The International Literacy Association (ILA) is a global advocacy and membership organization dedicated to advancing literacy for all through its network of more than 300,000 literacy educators, researchers and experts across 146 countries. With over 60 years of experience, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught and evaluated. ILA's Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals 2017 provides an evidence-based benchmark for the development and evaluation of literacy professional preparation programs. ILA collaborates with partners across the world to develop, gather and disseminate high-quality resources, best practices and cutting-edge research to empower educators, inspire students and inform policymakers. ILA publishes *The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* and *Reading Research Quarterly*, which are peer reviewed and edited by leaders in the field. For more information, visit literacyworldwide.org.

###