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6-16-2018

Fighting Bullying Through LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Education

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Fighting Bullying Through LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Education

Summit on the Research & Teaching of YA Literature

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Today's Session

Curriculum + Environment → Inclusive Education

LGBTQIA+ YA Literature

Why Does Inclusion Matter?

Why It Matters

GLSEN's 2015 National School Climate Survey

% of LGBTQ Students Hearing Remarks Often of Frequently

- 72.6% / 49.7% — "Gay" Used in a Negative Way
- 42.2% / 26.7% — "No Homo"
- 64.1% / 40.6% — Other Homophoic Remarks
- 66.6% / 50.7% — Negative Remarks Regarding Gender Expression
- 44.5% / 26.8% — Negative Remarks about Transgender People

School Does Not Have an Inclusive Curriculum
School Has an Inclusive Curriculum
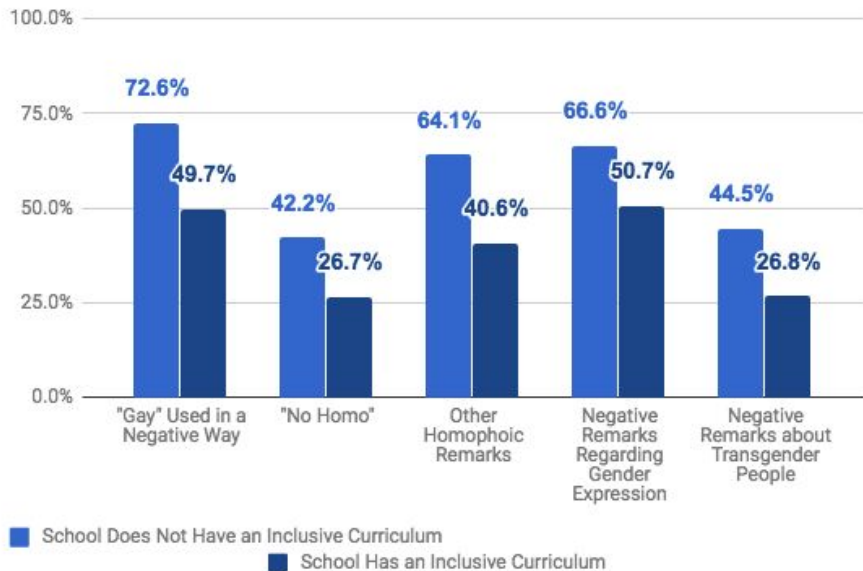
% of LGBTQ Students Experiencing Higher Severities of Victimization

- Sexual Orientation: 31.10% / 14.80%
- Gender Expression: 30.60% / 15.70%

School Does Not Have an Inclusive Curriculum
School Has an Inclusive Curriculum

(Kosciw et al., 2016)

Why It Matters

GLSEN's 2015 National School Climate Survey

% of LGBTQ Students Reporting That Their Peers Were Somewhat or Very Accepting

- 39.60% — Does not have an inclusive curriculum
- 75.20% — School has an inclusive curriculum

LGBTQ Students' Conversation with Teachers about LGBTQ Issues

- Felt Comfortable Talking with a Teacher about LGBTQ Issues: 52.2% (School Does not have an Inclusive Curriculum), 78.0% (School Has an Inclusive Curriculum)
- Had a Positive or Helpful Converstion with a Teacher About LBGTQ Issues: 58.1% (School Does not have an Inclusive Curriculum), 83.2% (School Has an Inclusive Curriculum)

(Kosciw et al., 2016)

Why It Matters

Implementing Lessons That Matter: The Impact of LGBTQ-Inclusive Curriculum on Student Safety, Well-Being, and Achievement

Students who experience LBGTQIA+ inclusive curriculum have increased positive feelings towards their safety, health, and general well-being (Burdge et al., 2013).

> **"Students explain that inclusive curriculum is connected to a positive learning environment in school, including academic achievement, school engagement, work ethic, and ability to focus and engage in learning. Curriculum that is culturally relevant inspires students to pursue their dreams, offers hope for a successful future, and boosts self-esteem."** **(Burdge et al., 2013, p.10)**

Why It Matters

Raises Awareness: What is Bullying/Harassment?

Verbal harassment and anti-LGBTQIA+ language are common and everyday

- "I'd say [LGBTQ students] feel pretty safe, I'd say that there is not much violence, but there is a large amount of slurs."

- "Students may not recognize the connection between verbal harassment and school safety" (Burdge et al., 2013, p.6).

Schools with supportive and inclusive curricula reported less bullying overall, but while perception of safety may go up with inclusive curriculum, reports of bullying can as well (Snapp et al., 2015).
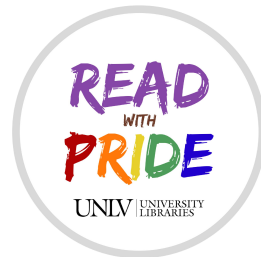
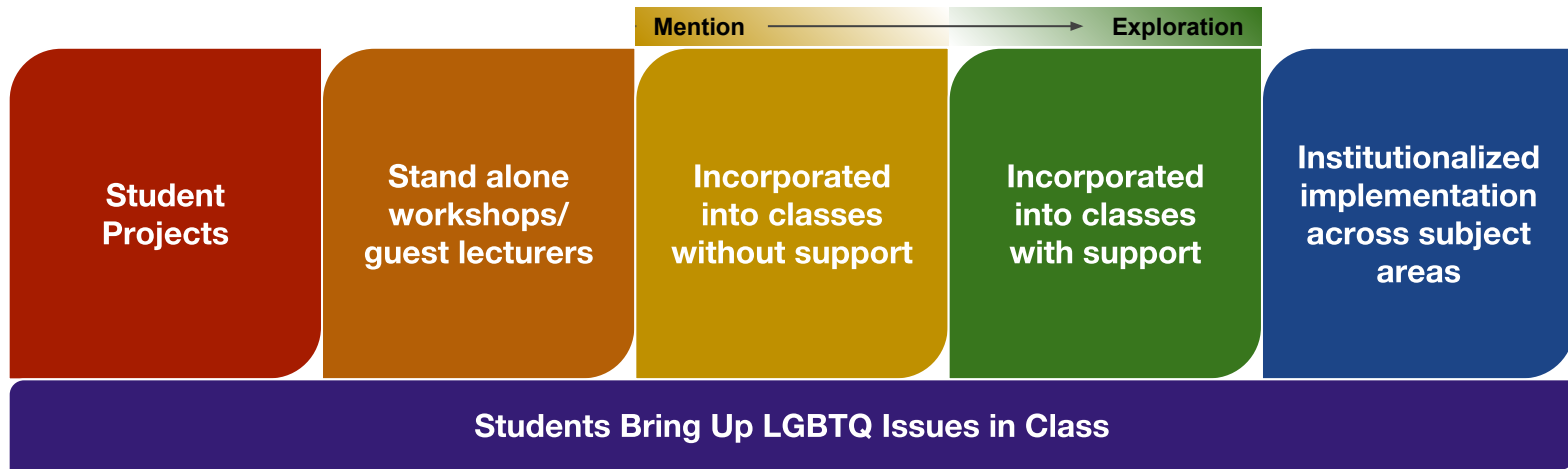READ WITH PRIDE

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Curriculum

Curriculum

"So if you're just told that you should accept LGBTQ students… because that's the right thing to do, I don't think that's going to resonate or create a paradigm shift as meaningful as if you're critically thinking about why society views LGBTQ people the way that they do, why you yourself view them the way that you do, and put it in some sort of context… that's the power of doing it through a classroom and learning it through the curriculum." - Teacher from school A (Burdge et al., 2013, p. 26).
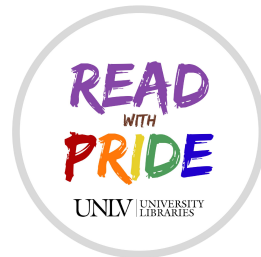
Curriculum

There are different levels of curriculum inclusion:

Mention → Exploration

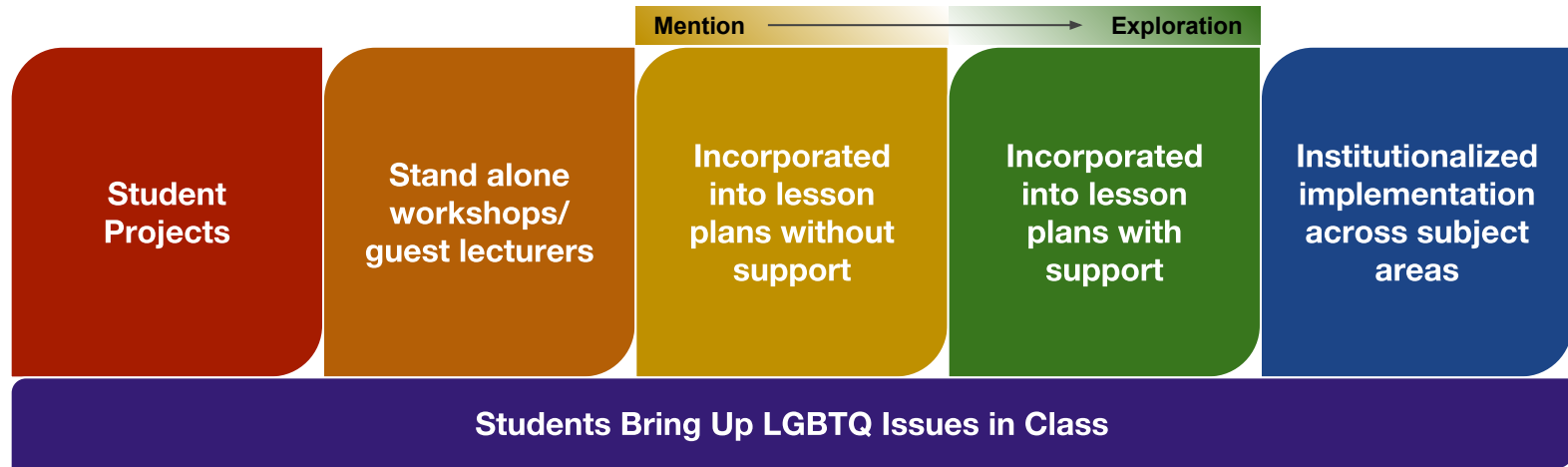| Student Projects	Stand alone workshops/ guest lecturers	Incorporated into classes without support	Incorporated into classes with support	Institutionalized implementation across subject areas

Students Bring Up LGBTQ Issues in Class

The more subjects included and the more students reached through the curriculum, the more effective LGBTQIA+ inclusive curriculum is at reducing bullying/harassment (Burdge et al., 2013).

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What Can You Do?

Teachers: What level of LGBTQIA+ curriculum inclusion do you feel comfortable implementing? What would need to happen to move up to the next level?

Mention → **Exploration**

Student Projects	Stand alone workshops/ guest lecturers	Incorporated into lesson plans without support	Incorporated into lesson plans with support	Institutionalized implementation across subject areas

Students Bring Up LGBTQ Issues in Class

Librarians : What level of LGBTQIA+ curriculum inclusion are you comfortable assisting your teachers with implementing?
What would need to happen to move up to the next level?
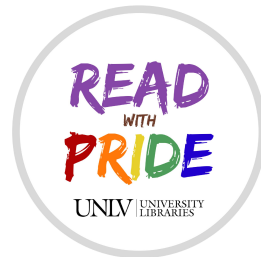
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Environment

Environement: GSAs

Schools with GSAs:

- Have less race/ethnicity and appearance victimization (Greytak et al., 2016).

- Greater feelings of safety for all students (Greytak et al., 2016).

- Less anti-LGBTQIA+ remarks (Greytak et al., 2016; Kosciw et al., 2016).

- More positive attitudes towards LGBTQIA+ people (Greytak et al., 2016).

- More likely to have school personnel intervene with bias remarks (Kosciw et al., 2016).

- LGBTQIA+ Students less likely to feel unsafe (Kosciw et al., 2016).

- LGBTQIA+ students felt more connected to school community (Kosciw et al., 2016).

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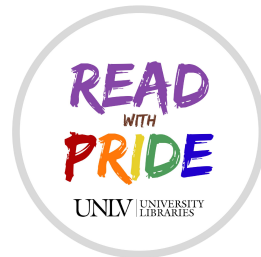
Environment: Teacher Impact

Teachers are key to creating an inclusive educational environment:

Students with LGBTQIA+ supportive staff:
- Were less likely to feel unsafe.
- Had higher GPAs.
- Felt more connected to the school (Kosciw et al., 2016).

How to be supportive:
- Practice using LBGTQIA+ terms to reduce stigma (Fisher & Kennedy, 2012).
- Address biased remarks (Greytalk et al., 2016; Burdge et al., 2013).
- Increase access to appropriate and accurate LGBTQIA+ information (Kosciw et al., 2016).
- Support GSAs (Kosciw et al., 2016; Greytak et al., 2016).
- Safe Spaces/Zones (Kosciw et al., 2016).
- Display LGBTQIA+ posters, books, stickers, etc. in classrooms (Fisher & Kennedy, 2012).

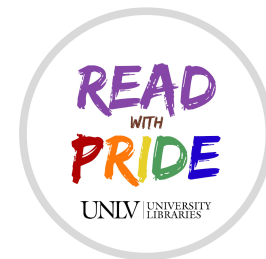READ WITH PRIDE

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Addressing Biased Remarks and Bullying

What types of biased remarks/bullying are you most comfortable addressing?

What types are you least comfortable addressing?

Based on Ability	Sexist	Racist	Homophobic
Based on Religion	Based on Gender Expression	Against Transgender People	"That's so gay."

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Just having an LGBTQIA+ character is not enough. Don't settle.
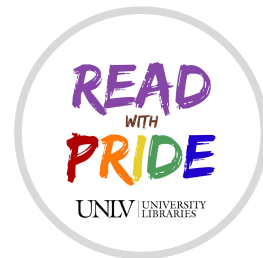
Evaluating Characters

Characters Should be Diverse and Complex

- **Intersectionality:** Is there more to the character than being LGBTQIA+?

- **Will and Grace Syndrome:** Do you like the character because they reinforce LGBTQIA+ stereotypes that you find familiar?

- **Complexity:** Are the characters worried about things besides being LGBTQIA+?

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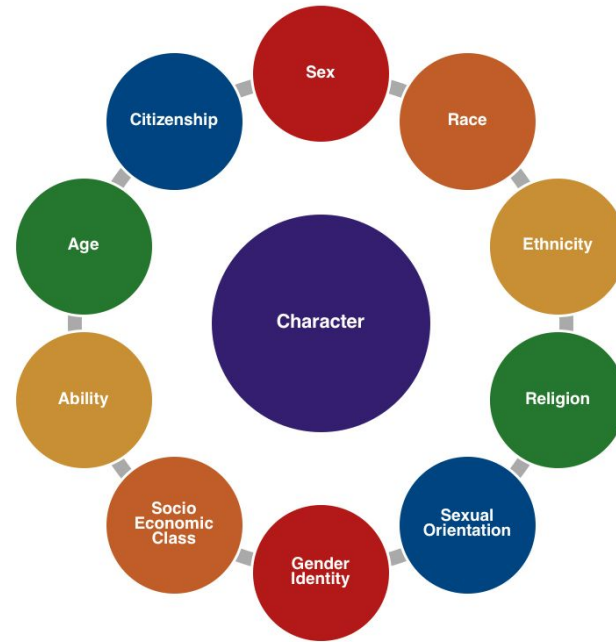
Evaluating Conflict

Is the conflict of the story based solely on the LGBTQIA+ identity of one or more characters?

No -- Evaluate like any other book.

Yes -- Keep these questions in mind:

- What's the purpose?
- Who resolves the conflict?
- Is there a moral lesson?
- Is it realistic? Whose reality is it?

Beware of savior complexes.

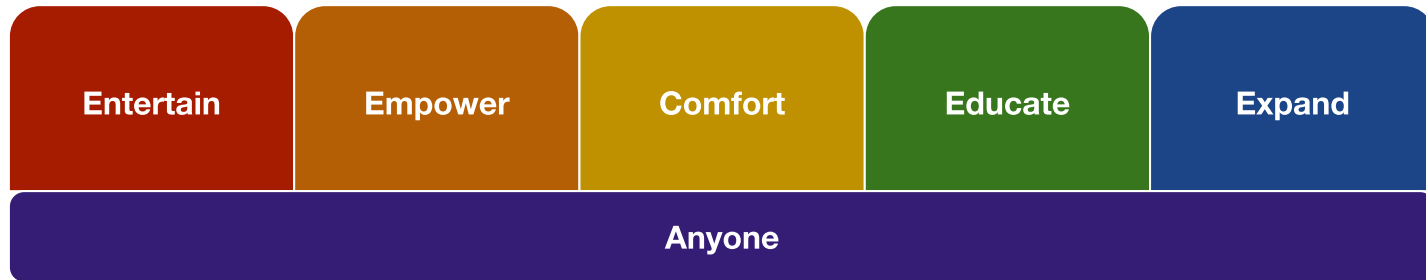**Are there too many "issues"?**

Trick Question: Stories with LGBTQIA+ characters can and should include multiple issues.

- Good writers can handle multiple issues.
- Intersectionality: Teens experience a wide variety of issues throughout their lives.
- LGBTQIA+ characters do not "overcomplicate" things.

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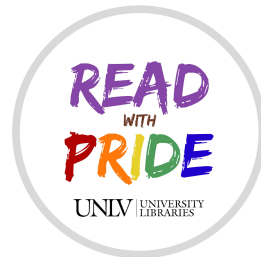
Evaluating Purpose

LBGTQIA+ YA Literature is allowed to (and SHOULD!) service different purposes:

Entertain	Empower	Comfort	Educate	Expand
Anyone				

Evaluate the purpose/use of a book with LGBTQIA+ characters like any other book.

Recommend a book with LGBTQIA+ characters like any other book

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Don't Forget Graphic Novels

Current Publishing Trend: LGBTQIA + Inclusive Titles for Teens

Check out the 2018 Great Graphic Novels for Teens List

Next Year...

What is one thing that you are going to do next school year to work towards LGBTQIA+ inclusive education?

Questions?

Sources

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