

There are various and broad definitions used to describe multicultural literature. Yokota (2001) defines multicultural literature as stories about groups of individuals outside of the mainstream of society and who are, in some way, marginalized; for example, people of color, working class, people who identify as LGBTQ, and disabled individuals.

This work explores a more specific definition of multicultural literature to describe any text used as literature that focuses on historically underrepresented people of color and their experiences during the Civil Rights Movement in American history (Menkart, Murray, & View, 2004). This body of multicultural literature, “Movement Oriented Civil Rights-Themed multicultural literature” (MO-CRiTLit) has been categorized under the umbrella of multicultural children’s literature. Within the last ten years, there has been an increase in the availability of multicultural children’s literature that meets the definition of Civil Rights-oriented multicultural literature, thus providing teachers a pool of such literature from which to select. Teachers must be mindful in the selection because even that literature that appears to be, or is billed as being, movement-oriented, teachers must authenticate the literature. This process ensures that the content is factual, authentic and otherwise accurate, and does not promote stereotypes or superficial representations of historically underrepresented people of color (Jackson & Boutte, 2009; Kohl, 1993). This paper identifies how teachers, as practitioners, can implement MO-CRiTLit in classroom practices for true, authentic, and otherwise rich depictions of historically underrepresented people of color primarily during the historical period of the Civil Rights Movement to create agents of change.