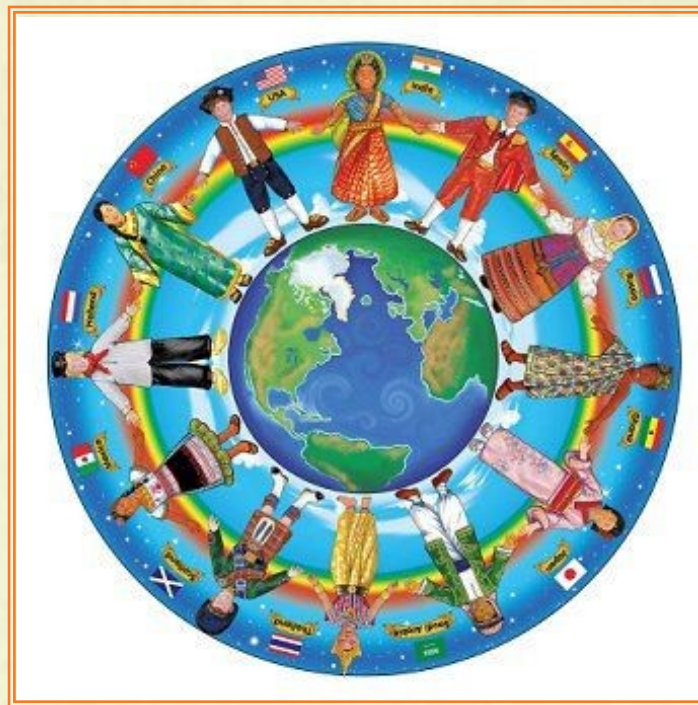


## CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LITERACY INSTRUCTION

All students bring unique cultural and language experiences to their learning. Generally, culturally responsive literacy instruction connects students' backgrounds, interests, and experiences to the standards-based curriculum. A beginning point is to acknowledge the significance of the five critical areas of reading instruction as identified by the National Reading Panel (2000).

1. Phonemic Awareness—the skill of using the individual sounds in spoken words.
2. Phonics—the relationships between the letters of written language and the individual sounds of spoken language and learning to use these relationships to read and write words.
3. Fluency—ability to read a text accurately and quickly with appropriate expression.
4. Vocabulary—the words we must know to communicate effectively—listening, speaking, reading, writing.
5. Comprehension—the purpose of reading.



Other, more general teaching and learning characteristics for culturally responsive literacy instruction include:

1. Setting high expectations for students as they develop the literacy appropriate for their ages and abilities;

2. Developing positive relationships with families and the community in terms of curriculum content and relationships;
3. Exhibiting cultural sensitivity by modifying the curriculum, connecting the standards-based curriculum with the students' cultural backgrounds;
4. Involving students more by incorporating active teaching methods;
5. Acting as facilitators when presenting information;
6. Instructing around groups and pairs, reducing the anxiety of students by having them complete assignments individually but usually working in small groups or pairs with time to share ideas and think critically about the work before it is completed (Algozzine, O'Shea, & Obiakor, 2009).

#### References

Algozzine, B., O'Shea, D. J., & Obiakor, F. E. (2009). *Culturally responsive literacy instruction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (NIH Publication No. 00-4769). Bethesda, MD: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.