

THE VALUE OF GLOBAL LITERATURE: DEVELOPING EMPATHY AND GLOBAL AWARENESS IN CLASSROOMS

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With globalization making the world a small community, it has never been more important to encourage students to respect diversity and develop empathy. World literature, the stories, poems, novels, and plays from multiple cultures and countries, is a rich resource for this purpose. World literature invites students to stand in the shoes of others, see different lenses, and find beauty in cultural diversity.

In schools all over the Philippines, and in particular, with the work of DepEd Bataan, students become a better sense of open-mindedness, kindness, and cultural awareness.

What is World Literature?

World literature is written works from many different countries, languages, and cultures. It includes classic works such as Homer's epics from Greece, Rabindranath Tagore's poetry from India, Gabriel García Márquez's novels from Colombia, and contemporary stories from African, Asian, Middle Eastern, and Indigenous authors.

Through literature from all around the world, students are encouraged to consider a variety of human experiences, investigating differences that distinguish the various cultures and the similar feelings that make us human.

The Importance of World Literature in Celebration of Diversity

Provides students with global perspectives, reading literature from other regions of the world has the added benefit of allowing students to see how other cultures live,

think, and express themselves. If a student reads a Chinese folktale, a Yoruba short story from Nigeria, or a haiku from Japan, they gain insight on values, traditions, and struggles that are unique to that culture.

Challenges stereotypes, world literature also provides an alternative way to challenge simplistic or biased opinions of other people and places. It offers a glimpse into cultures that rarely share the same depth, richness, and complexity beyond soundbites expressed in social and mainstream media, allowing students to circumvent the simplistic and stereotypical ideas we all sometimes have about other cultures.

Reveals universal human experiences, at their core, however, recorded stories from all cultures show that people from across the globe have a commonality of feeling, love, grief, hope, fear, and joy, even through the lens of cultural differences. That recognition has the potential to engage students in lessons about human connection, and provoke discovery

Amplifies Marginalized voices, utilizing the works of diverse authors and representing diverse narratives, particularly authors and stories from populations that have historically been silenced or marginalized, helps students to achieve a fuller and more complex understanding of history and society. This is also the opportunity to teach students to listen to the voices that do not get to speak, and to realize how special every person's story is.

Encourages Respect and Tolerance, when students read about culture which is different from their own, they can develop a sense of respect for diversity and an appreciation for multiplicity. Ultimately, this value promotes tolerance not only in what they read, but also in how they interact with their real-world context.

Using world literature in the classroom cultivates empathy, global awareness, and cultural understanding among students, enriching their perspectives and preparing them for a connected world. In celebrating diversity and promoting respect and tolerance,

world literature helps mold students into compassionate, open-minded, and sympathetic global citizens.

References:

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