

CASDA EdCasts Episode 7

Instruction for Equity: Culturally Responsive Text Sets for Literacy and Content Engagement

This month's EdCast highlights the work that will be explored at "Building Culturally Responsive Literacy Using Text Sets," a workshop that will be facilitated by Kerri Messler, K-12 English Language Arts and Library Coordinator for Schenectady City Schools and Carmella Parente, K-12 Social Studies, World Language, and Family Consumer Science Coordinator for Schenectady City Schools. Messler and Parente discuss the **Interactive Strategies Approach-Extended (ISA-X) literacy intervention**, developed by UAlbany Child Research and Study Center researchers Lynn Gelzheiser, Laura Hallgren-Flynn, Margaret Connors and Donna Scanlon, and how they adapted to meet the needs of Schenectady's diverse student body and support their district's commitment to equity, multiculturalism and social justice. Going beyond representation, this work aims to help students access rigorous content and engage in discussion and critical thinking to support achievement.



Download the podcast here or by visiting www.casdany.org/podcast.

For additional research on the topic, check out Marquette University scholar Kathleen F. Clark's article "**Investigating the Effects of Culturally Relevant Texts on African American Struggling Readers' Progress**," in which it is "revealed that the comprehension growth of children who exclusively read culturally relevant texts significantly outpaced that of peers who did not read them as well as those who read them intermittently." These gains were realized with just 90 minutes of weekly instruction. Considering most schools are devoting upwards of 700 minutes of class time each week to literacy instruction, integrating culturally relevant texts is quite feasible.

Keep the conversation going by heading to www.casdany.org/forum and joining our **EdCasts Exchange**. Sign up with your email and create a password, then post comments and discuss topics relevant to you with your peers.



"To create a text set takes some careful selection of the books, and weaving in the sequence very purposefully so that all students are going to gain some knowledge and level the playing field."

- Carmella Parente, K-12 Social Studies, World Language, and Family Consumer Science Coordinator for Schenectady City Schools