

Sample Scope & Sequence for Grades K-5: Integrating Asian American Experiences into Reading and Social Studies

What Teachers Should Know

The Asian American and Pacific Islander community is very diverse. Asian Americans trace their roots to 28 different countries and Pacific Islander Americans trace their roots to 22 different countries¹ within which dozens of languages are spoken. It's important not to describe Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders as a monolith and, instead, strive to be as inclusive as possible of the diverse perspectives. In this guide, the 4 regional groupings included are:

- **East Asia** (China, Japan, Korea, and more)
- **South Asia** (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and more)
- **Southeast Asia** (Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines, and more)
- **Pacific Islands** (Hawaii, Tonga, Guam, and more)

How to Use this Teaching Tool

This sample scope and sequence is intended to be a starting point. It is not a comprehensive guide to teaching Asian American history. It offers excerpts from a more extensive, grade-specific resource guide that aligns with Illinois Learning Standards. Visit the [K-12 Asian American Education Resource Database](#) for in-depth support weaving Asian American voices, experiences, and perspectives into existing Social Studies themes.

Theme	K-2: Sample Resources for Incorporating Asian American History	3-5: Sample Resources for Incorporating Asian American History
Identity	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Always Anjali</i> by Sheetal Sheth (South Asian / Indian) • <i>Beautifully Me</i> by Nabeela Noor (South Asian / Bangladeshi) • <i>Eyes that Kiss in the Corners</i> by Joanna Ho (East Asian/Taiwanese) <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Sikh Cultural Identity: Patka Youth Head Covering</u> (South Asian/Indian, Sikh) 	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ho'onani: Hula Warrior</i> by Heather Gale and Mika Song (Pacific Islander/Hawaiian) • <i>Front Desk</i> by Kelly Yu (East Asian/Chinese) <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Redefine American: Asian American Immigration and the American Dream</u> • <u>A Place in the Middle: Gender System of Early Hawaiians and Its Impact Today</u> (Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian)

¹ from the UN designation of East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Oceania. Countries in Central Asia and Western Asia were excluded, as they often are categorized as part of the Middle East. Additionally, members of those communities in the U.S. often do not self-identify as Asian American. **Source: United Nations**

Theme	K-2: Sample Resources for Incorporating Asian American History	3-5: Sample Resources for Incorporating Asian American History
Culture: Families and Friends	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cora Cooks Pancit</i> by Dorina Lazo Gilmore and Kristi Valiant (Southeast Asian/Filipino) • <i>Festival of Colors</i> by Kabir Sehgal (South Asian/Indian) • <i>The Most Beautiful Thing</i> by Kao Kalia Yang (Southeast Asian/Hmong) <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Grandfather's Journey: A Story of Immigration from Japan</u> (East Asian / Japanese) 	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inside Out and Back Again</i> by Thanhha Lai (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) • <i>A Place at the Table</i> by Saadia Faruqi and Laura Shovan (South Asian/Pakistani) • <i>Save Me a Seat</i> by Gita Varadarajan and Sarah Weeks (South Asian/Indian) <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Min Jee's Lunch: Friends as Cultural Allies</u> (East Asian / Korean)
Geography, Labor, and Economics	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Coolies</i> by Yin (East Asian/Chinese) • <i>Ohana Means Family</i> by Ilima Loomis (Pacific Islander/Hawaiian) • <i>Wishes</i> by Muon Thi Van (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Japanese Immigrants in Early 1900s Plantation Society Hawaii</u> (East Asian/Japanese) • Instructional Text: <u>Pacific Coral Reef Coloring Book</u> by Katherine Orr, Nancy Daschbach, and Allen Tom (Pacific Islander) 	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Journey for Justice: The Life of Larry Itliong</i> by Dawn B. Mabalon, Gayle Romasanta, and Andre Sibayan (Southeast Asian/Filipino) <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Chinese Laborers and the Mid-1800s Transcontinental Railroad</u> (East Asian/Chinese) • <u>1960s Filipino American Farmworkers Fight for Their Rights</u> (Southeast Asian/ Filipino) • <u>The Impact of Climate Change on the Marshall Islands</u> (ELA Poetry Lesson; Pacific Islander/Marshallese)
Civics and Community	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Asian-Americans Who Inspire Us</i> by Analiza Quiroz Wolf (Pan-Asian) • <i>Tammy Duckworth</i> by Katlin Sarantu <u>(E-Book)</u> (Southeast Asian) <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Women Advancing Equality: Patsy Mink</u> (East Asian/Japanese) 	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Different Pond</i> by Bao Phi (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) • <i>Muslim Girls Rise: Inspirational Champions of Our Time</i> by Saira Mir and Aaliya Jaleel (South Asian, Middle Eastern, and other Muslim identities) <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Building Community and Standing Against AAPI Hatred</u> (Pan-Asian)
History	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fish for Jimmy: Inspired by One Family's Experience in a Japanese American Internment Camp</i> by Katie Yamasaki (East Asian/Japanese) • <i>Landed</i> by Milly Lee (East Asian/Chinese) <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Baseball Saved Us: 1940s Japanese American Incarceration</u> (East Asian/Japanese) 	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inside Out and Back Again</i> by Thanhha Lai (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) • <i>Nine, Ten: A September 11 Story</i> by Nora Raleigh Baskin (South/Central Asian/Iranian & Muslim) <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and Early 1900s Angel Island</u> (East Asian/Chinese) • <u>Japanese American Incarceration in the 1940s</u> (East Asian/Japanese) • <u>9/11/2001, South Asian Americans, and Islamophobia</u> (South Asian)

Get Started Book List

The titles below offer opportunities to build a more culturally inclusive literacy experience for elementary students. Explore the list for fiction and non-fiction books to provide students with a more comprehensive view of American history that includes Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) perspectives and experiences. The books included in this updated list have been evaluated by a K-12 librarian using the **Asian Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA) Rubric to Evaluate Asian American and Pacific Islander Youth Literature** to ensure that stories include authentic, positive, and empowering AAPI representation. The vast majority of these books center Asian American or Pacific Islander characters and have been written or illustrated by Asian American or Pacific Islander creators. In addition, a few books were included that are set in Asia or feature non-AAPI characters because these stories add insight into AAPI identities and experiences. This list strives to highlight diverse identities, themes, and perspectives within the AAPI community, yet has room for growth over time.

Please contact teach@advancingjustice-chicag.org with title suggestions. Thank you for your support.

For additional teaching tools, visit Advancing Justice | Chicago's **Asian American Education Resource Database:** bit.ly/3t2aFhl.

Picture Books		
Region	Title / Author / Illustrator	Ethnicity Represented
Multiethnic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Our Folktales: The All-Time Favourite Folktales of Asia</i> Edited by Ruth Wan-Lau • <i>Okinawan Princess: Da Legend of Hajichi Tattoos</i> by Lee A.Tonouchi Illustrated by Laura Kina 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singaporean/ Multiethnic • Uchinanchu (Okinawans in Hawaii)
Pacific Islander	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A is for Aloha: A Hawai'i Alphabet</i> by U'ilani Goldsberry and Illustrated by Tammy Yee • <i>Danny's Hawaiian Journey</i> by Patrick Landeza Illustrated by Edna Cabcabin Moran • <i>Kapaemahu</i> by Hialeimoana Wong-Kalu, Dean Hamer, and Joe Wilson Illustrated by Daniel Sousa • <i>Mohala Mai 'o Hau / How Hau Became Hau'ula</i> by Robert Lono 'Ikuwā Illustrated by Matthew Kāwika Ortiz • <i>Ohana Means Family</i> by Ilima Loomis • <i>Sumāhi and the Karabao</i> by Michael Lujan Bevacqua Illustrated by Jack Lujan Bevacqua • <i>Turtle Songs: A Tale for Mothers and Daughters</i> by Margaret Wolfson Illustrated by Karla Sachi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native Hawaiian • Native Hawaiian • Native Hawaiian • Native Hawaiian • Native Hawaiian • Chamorro (Guamanian) • Fijian
Southeast Asian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cora Cooks Pancit</i> by Dorina K. Lazo Gilmore Illustrated by Kristi Valiant • <i>A Different Pond</i> by Bao Phi Illustrated by Thi Bui • <i>Drawn Together</i> by Minh Lê Illustrated by Dan Santat • <i>Going Home, Coming Home/Về Nhà, Thăm Quê Hương</i> by Truong Tran Illustrated by Ann Phong • <i>Ladder to the Moon</i> by Maya Soetoro-Ng Illustrated by Yuyi Morales • <i>A Map Into the World</i> by Kao Kalia Yang Illustrated by Seo Kim • <i>Mommy Sayang</i> by Rosana Sullivan • <i>The Most Beautiful Thing</i> by Kao Kalia Yang Illustrated by Khoa Le • <i>A Path of Stars</i> by Anne Sibley O'Brien • <i>When Lola Visits</i> by Michelle Sterling Illustrated by Aaron Asis • <i>Wishes</i> by Mượn Thị Văn, Illustrated by Victo Ngai • <i>The Yellow Áo Dài</i> by Hanh Bui Illustrated by Minnie Phan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filipino • Vietnamese • Thai • Vietnamese • Indonesian • Hmong • Malaysian • Hmong • Cambodian • Filipino • Vietnamese • Vietnamese

Picture Books (continued)

Region	Title / Author / Illustrator	Ethnicity Represented
South Asian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Always Anjali</i> by Sheetal Sheth Illustrated by Jessica Blank • <i>Beautifully Me</i> by Nabela Noor • <i>Bilal Cooks Daal</i> by Aisha Saeed Illustrated by Anoosha Syed • <i>Bindu's Bindis</i> by Supriya Kelkar Illustrated by Parvati Pillai • <i>Crane Boy</i> by Diana Cohn Illustrated by Youme Landowne • <i>A Dog Named Haku</i> by Margarita Engle, Amish Karanjit, and Nicole Karanjit Illustrated by Ruth Jeyaveeran • <i>I Am Brown</i> by Ashok Banker Illustrated by Sandhya Prabhat • <i>Kamala and Maya's Big Idea</i> by Meena Harris Illustrated by Ana Ramírez González • <i>Laxmi's Mooch</i> by Shelly Anand Illustrated by Nabi H. Ali • <i>Leila in Saffron</i> by Rukhsanna Guidroz Illustrated by Dinara Mirtalipova • <i>Like the Moon Loves the Sky</i> by Hena Khan Illustrated by Saffa Khan • <i>The Moon from Dehradun: A Story of Partition</i> by Shirin Shamsi Illustrated by Tarun Lak • <i>Under my Hijab</i> by Hena Khan Illustrated by Aaliya Jaleel • <i>Where Three Oceans Meet</i> by Rajani LaRocca Illustrated by Archana Sreenivasan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian • Bangladeshi • Pakistani • Indian • Bhutanese • Nepali • Indian • Indian • Indian • Pakistani • Pakistani • Indian • Pakistani & Sri-Lankan • Indian
East Asian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bee-Bim Bop!</i> by Linda Sue Park Illustrated by Ho Baek Lee • <i>Juna and Appa</i> by Jane Park Illustrated by Felicia Hoshino • <i>Dim Sum for Everyone</i> by Grace Lin • <i>Eyes that Kiss in the Corners</i> by Joanna Ho Illustrated by Dung Ho • <i>Fish for Jimmy: Inspired by One Family's Experience in a Japanese American Internment Camp</i> by Katie Yamasaki • <i>Goldy Luck and the Three Pandas</i> by Natasha Yim Illustrated by Grace Zong • <i>Grandfather's Journey</i> by Allen Say • <i>Grandpa Grumps</i> by Katrina Moore and Illustrated by Xindi Yan • <i>Hot Pot Night!</i> by Vincent Chen • <i>How to Solve a Problem: The Rise (and Falls) of a Rock Climbing Champion</i> by Ashima Shiraishi Illustrated by Yao Xiao • <i>The Name Jar</i> by Yangsook Choi • <i>Tales from the Chinese Zodiac</i> (series) by Oliver Chin and various illustrators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Korean • Korean • Taiwanese • Taiwanese • Japanese • Chinese • Japanese • Chinese • Taiwanese • Japanese • Korean • Chinese

Biographies

Region	Title / Author / Illustrator	Ethnicity Represented
Multiethnic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A is for Asian American: An Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Alphabet</i> by Virginia Loh-Hagan Illustrated by Tracy Nishimura Bishop • <i>Amazing: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Who Inspire Us All</i> by Maia and Alex Shibutani and Dane Liu, Illustrated by Aaliya Jaleel • <i>Asian-Americans Who Inspire Us</i> by Analiza Quiroz Wolf with Michael Franco, Illustrated by Tuire Siirainen • <i>Awesome Asian Americans: 20 Stars Who Made America Amazing</i> by Phil Amara and Oliver Chin Illustrated by Juan Calle • <i>Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music</i> by Margarita Engle Illustrated by Rafael López • <i>Kamala Harris: Rooted in Justice</i> by Nikki Grimes Illustrated by Laura Freeman • <i>Muslim Girls Rise: Inspirational Champions of Our Time</i> by Saira Mir Illustrated by Aaliya Jaleel • <i>We Are Here: 30 Inspiring Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Who Have Shaped the United States</i> by Naomi Hirahara and the Smithsonian Institution Illustrated by Illi Fernandez • <i>Yes We Will: Asian Americans Who Shaped This Country</i> by Kelly Yang Illustrated by various AAPI illustrators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiethnic • Multiethnic • Multiethnic • Multiethnic • Chinese, African & Cuban • Indian/Jamaican • South Asian, Middle Eastern, and other Muslim identities • Multiethnic • Multiethnic
Pacific Islander	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Girl Who Heard the Music: How One Pianist and 85,000 Bottles and Cans Brought New Hope to an Island</i> by Marni Fogelson with Mahani Teave Illustrated by Marta Álvarez Miguéns • <i>Ho'onani: Hula Warrior</i> by Heather Gale Illustrated by Mika Song • <i>Surfer of the Century: The Life of Duke Kahanamoku</i> by Ellie Crowe Illustrated by Richard Waldrep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapa Nui • Native Hawaiian • Native Hawaiian
Southeast Asian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Angel of Santo Tomas: The Story of Fe Del Mundo</i> by Tammy Yee • <i>Groundbreaking Women in Politics: Tammy Duckworth</i> by Kelsey Jopp • <i>Journey for Justice: The Life of Larry Itliong</i> by Dawn B. Mabalon with Gayle Romasanta Illustrated by Andre Sibayan • <i>Suni Lee</i> by Morgan Martinson • <i>Yang Warriors</i> by Kao Kalia Yang Illustrated by Billy Thao 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filipino • Thai • Filipino • Hmong • Hmong
South Asian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be the Change: A Grandfather Gandhi Story</i> by Arun Gandhi and Bethany Hegedus Illustrated by Evan Turk • <i>Fauja Singh Keeps Going: The True Story of the Oldest Person to Ever Run a Marathon</i> by Simran Jeet Singh Illustrated by Baljinder Kaur • <i>The Forest Keeper: The True Story of Jadav Payeng</i> by Rina Singh Illustrated by Ishita Jain • <i>Kalpna Chawla (She Persisted Series)</i> by Raakhee Mirchandani Illustrated by Gillian Flint • <i>The Story of Banker of the People Muhammad Yunus</i> by Paula Yoo Illustrated by Jamel Akib 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian • Indian • Indian • Indian • Bangladeshi
East Asian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Chef Roy Choi and the Street Food Remix</i> by Jacqueline Briggs Martin and June Jo Lee Illustrated by Man One • <i>The Fearless Flights of Hazel Ying Lee</i> by Julie Leung Illustrated by Julie Kwon • <i>Fred Korematsu Speaks Up</i> by Laura Atkins and Stan Yogi Illustrated by Yutaka Houlette • <i>I Am an American: The Wong Kim Ark Story</i> by Martha Brockenbrough with Grace Lin Illustrated by Julia Kuo • <i>It Began with a Page: How Gyo Fujikawa Drew the Way</i> by Kyo Maclear Illustrated by Julie Morstad • <i>Paper Son: The Inspiring Story of Tyrus Wong, Immigrant and Artist</i> by Julie Leung Illustrated by Chris Sasaki • <i>Sixteen Years in Sixteen Seconds: The Sammy Lee Story</i> by Paula Yoo Illustrated by Dom Lee • <i>While I Was Away</i> by Waka T. Brown (memoir) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Korean • Chinese • Japanese • Chinese • Japanese • Chinese • Korean • Japanese

Chapter Books		
Region	Title / Author / Illustrator	Ethnicity Represented
Multiethnic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Place at the Table</i> by Saadia Faruqi and Laura Shovan • <i>Step Up to the Plate, Maria Singh</i> by Uma Krishnaswami • <i>Sylvia and Aki</i> by Winifred Conkling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pakistani & Jewish • Indian & Mexican • Japanese & Mexican
Pacific Islander	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kino and the King</i> by Jen Angeli • <i>The Shark King</i> by R. Kikuo Johnson • <i>Voices from Around the World: Pacific Islands</i> (5 book series) by Dr. Ruth Toumu'a, Jane Va'afusuaga, Dr. Tarsi Vunidilo, Trisha Kehaulani Watson Sproat, J.D., Ph.D. and Matthew Kawaiola Sproat, and Philippa Werry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native Hawaiian • Native Hawaiian • Fijian, Hawaiian, New Zealander, Samoan, and Tongan
Southeast Asian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All Thirteen: The Incredible Cave Rescue of the Thai Boys' Soccer Team</i> by Christina Soontornvat • <i>Astrid and Apollo</i> (series) by B.T. Bidania Illustrated by César Samaniego • <i>Bamboo People: A Novel</i> by Mitali Perkins • <i>The Clay Marble</i> by Minfong Ho • <i>The House that Lou Built</i> by Mae Respicio • <i>Inside Out and Back Again</i> by Thanh Hà Lại • <i>The Magic Fish</i> (Graphic Novel) by Trung Le Nguyen • <i>Maybe Maybe Marisol Rainey</i> (series) by Erin Entrada Kelly • <i>Pahua and the Soul Stealer</i> by Lori M. Lee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thai • Hmong • Burmese & Karenni • Cambodian • Filipino • Vietnamese • Vietnamese • Filipino • Hmong
South Asian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ahimsa</i> by Supriya Kelkar • <i>American as Paneer Pie</i> by Supriya Kelkar • <i>Aru Shah and the End of Time</i> (Pandava series) by Roshani Chokshi • <i>Meet Yasmin!</i> (Series) by Saadia Faruqi Illustrated by Hatem Aly • <i>The Night Diary</i> by Veera Hiranandani • <i>Planet Omar: Accidental Trouble Magnet</i> (series) by Zanib Mian Illustrated by Nasaya Mafaridik 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian • Indian • Indian • Pakistani • Indian & Pakistani • Pakistani
East Asian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>American Born Chinese</i> (graphic novel) by Gene Luen Yang • <i>Brother's Keeper</i> (and companion novel) by Julie Lee • <i>Cilla Lee-Jenkins</i> (trilogy) by Susan Tan Illustrated by Dana Wulfekotte • <i>Front Desk</i> (series) by Kelly Yang • <i>Mindy Kim</i> (series) by Lyla Lee Illustrated by Dung Ho • <i>Pippa Park Raises Her Game</i> (series) by Erin Yun • <i>Prairie Lotus</i> by Linda Sue Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese • North Korean • Chinese • Hongkonger • Korean • Korean • Chinese

Acknowledgments

We are incredibly grateful to all of the individuals who devoted their time and expertise to creating these resources. Our team consisted of a wide range of Asian American identities, backgrounds, and experiences -- including current or former K-12 teachers, librarians, professors, education equity advocates, former Illinois public school students, and leaders from Asian American cultural institutions. Everyone shared a passion to ensure that Asian American history is not only represented, but also depicted in a thoughtful, nuanced, and inclusive way. The goal of the Curricular Resource Development team was to create an accessible resource guide that makes it easy for teachers to include Asian American history into their curricula. We hope these resources build greater understanding and empathy within our communities. Special thanks to Maricor Chang, who audited the book lists using the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association's [Rubric to Evaluate Asian American and Pacific Islander Youth Literature](#).

Visit our website to see our [Curricular Resource Development Team](#).



Please contact teach@advancingjustice-chicago.org with questions or title suggestions. Thank you for your support.