HISTORICAL FICTION PICTURE BOOKS

By: Maggie Owens
WHAT IS IT?

- fiction that is based on historical events or people and includes pictures
  - some aspects of the story may be true
  - settings can be real or imaginary
  - characters can be imaginary or actual people who lived during the time period
  - conflict or problem would have been real for that particular time period
- dialogue also shows the audience the thoughts and knowledge of the people
- blends actual historical facts with fiction
RATIONALE

- puts students into history
- promotes multiple perspectives
  - students are introduced to characters who have different opinions and point of views
  - learn how other people handle problems
- integrates history into the students' everyday lives
- picture aspect allows students to understand the main concept of the book without needing too much background information
- picture books can make a complex topic more understandable
- transforms historical experience for younger students
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Creating a timeline
  - Teach kids about constructing timelines by reading historical fiction picture books and having them place the books from the oldest time period to the most recent.

- Reenactments
  - Have kids reenact the book so they can put themselves into the characters’ positions and understand the historical significance.

- T-Charts
  - Students can see the two different side of views with the conflict, allowing them to be non-biased about the situation, while understanding where the “bad guys” are coming from.

- Connections
  - Have students make connections from their personal life to the book, from their world to the book as well as from other books to that specific book.

- Interviews
  - Have students interview each other as they act as characters from the book.
POPULAR BOOKS

- These Hands, by Margaret H. Mason
- Passage to Freedom: The Sugihara Story by Ken Mochizuki
- Baseball Saved Us by Ken Mochizuki, Illustrated by Dom Lee
- Friend on Freedom River by Gloria Whelan
- The Cats in Krasinski Square by Karen Hesse
- Coming on Home Son by Jacqueline Woodson
- Boxes for Katje by Candace Fleming
- Pink and Say by Patricia Polacco
- Seven Brave Women by Betsy Hearne
- Train to Somewhere by Eve Bunting
- One Candy by Even Bunting
- Mudball by Matt Tavares
- Hot Iron: The adventures of a Civil War Powder Boy by Michael Burgan
MY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Players In Pigtails** written by Shana Corey and illustrated by Rebecca Gibson
  - This story, published in 2003, is about a young girl named Katie Casey who loves playing baseball. The problem is, the time period she is in does not allow for girls to play and society does not accept it. Eventually, President Roosevelt and Phillip Wrigley decided that women should be able to play baseball. So, they started up a team on which Katie Casey was on and they played the first baseball game ever for women. Eventually, the crowd learns to love the game with women and respect them as well. This story really teaches kids about how Katie defies a single story.
  - Loosely based off of the movie “A League of Their Own”

- **The Babe and I** written by David A. Adler and illustrated by Terry Widener
  - The story follows a young boy who lived during the Great Depression. His father is out of a job, so the boy decides to help make money for his family. His neighbor, Jacob, introduces him to selling newspapers and they advertise their newspapers by yelling out the most recent news of Babe Ruth. One day, the boy sells a paper to Babe Ruth himself and makes a lot of money off of it. The book is great for kids who love baseball and they get a glimpse into life during Babe Ruth’s time.
The Great Migration: Journey to the North written by Eloise Greenfield and illustrated by Jan Spivey Gilchrist
- This book takes on different perspectives from each member of an African American family as they learn that they are allowed to travel up north. Each member has a different emotion associated with leaving, the trip itself and starting a new life. This is great to teach kids about different perspectives as well as how excited the African American’s were to learn that they had freedom in the north.

When Jessie Came Across the Sea written by Amy Hest and illustrated by PJ Lynch
- Jessie lives with her grandmother in a poor village in the valleys of eastern Europe. When, to everyone’s surprise, young Jessie is chosen by the village rabbi to travel to America, and to leave her grandmother behind, they both feel their hearts will break.

I Lay My Stitches Down: Poems of American Slavery written by Cynthia Grady and illustrated by Michele Wood
- This book of poems mixes everyday lives of slaves with everyday items/practices.
TIPS FOR CHOOSING GOOD BOOKS

The books should...

- present a well-told story that doesn't conflict with historical records,
- portray characters realistically,
- present authentic settings,
- artfully fold in historical facts,
- provide accurate information through illustrations, and
- avoid stereotypes and myths.

Credit: http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/why-how-i-teach-historical-fiction
WORKS CITED

- http://books.google.com/books?id=gWYieGRmuPsC&pg=RA2-PA1991&lpg=RA2-PA1991&dq=instructional+strategies+using+historical+fiction+picture+books&source=bl&ots=CiKfldX_vh&sig=XLI9oJBHQwLePjAPEWBwcJS2qIY&hl=en&sa=X&ei=H932UorSJYqwygHy0IG4Bg&ved=0CE0Q6AEwBDgK#v=onepage&q=instructional%20strategies%20using%20historical%20fiction%20picture%20books&f=false