

Finding Books that have Diverse Characters

Search character appeal

Character appeal terms are a great way to search for books where the personalities and characteristics of the individuals are really the focus of the story. See a [full list](#) in NoveList, but a few examples of character appeal terms include:

- Ability diverse
- Culturally diverse
- LGBTQIA diverse
- Own voices
- Religiously diverse

TRY IT

At the **Advanced Search**, enter **culturally diverse** (or another diverse term) in the search box

Select **AP Appeal Factors** from the drop-down

Click **Search**

Use the limiters on the left to narrow the results to the right audience level or to a genre

Real-world examples

African American characters in Historical fiction:
SU African American AND GN historical fiction

Books about characters with disabilities and friendship:
AP ability diverse AND SU friendship

Character-driven books about a multiracial teenager:
AP character-driven AND SU multiracial teenage

Search subjects or genres

While appeal terms describe the overall sense of characters in the story, subject and [genre](#) headings instead get at the who, what, when, and where. And [themes](#) help you dial in on recurring plot elements.

EXAMPLES

Subject examples: African Americans, autism, interfaith families, interethnic relations

Genre examples: LGBTQIA fiction, multicultural romances

Themes examples: dealing with illness; engendering gender; living with invisible disability; living with visible disability; all kinds of families

Search subjects (SU), genres (GN), and themes (TH) using [field codes](#), for example **GN LGBTQIA fiction**.

All kinds of lives

Our *All Kinds of Lives* Recommended Reads lists are ready-made lists with books that highlight the diversity of family and social situations.

TRY IT

From the Recommended Reads Lists section on the homepage, click the **Fiction** tab

Select the **Teens, Ages 9-12**, or **Ages 0-8** audience

Click the **All Kinds of Lives**, **All Kinds of Parents**, or **All Kinds of Reads** links, and select a list

When to use:



Librarians: Need a list of books for readers of all different backgrounds?

Readers: Want to read about people who share your culture/religion/disability/sexual orientation?

Parents: Looking for a book with characters that your child can connect with?

Finding Books that have Diverse Characters (continued)

Browse award lists

In the search bar, enter **ND award winners AND SU diversity** to find lists of culturally diverse award-winning books like the Walter Dean Myers Awards for Outstanding Children's Literature and the American Indian Youth Literature Awards.

Use the limiters to narrow the audience age group.

EXAMPLES

Asian Pacific American Award for Literature

BCALA (Black Caucus of the American Library Association) Literary Award

CODE Burt Award for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Young Adult Literature

Coretta Scott King Award

Glyph Comics Awards

Hurston/Wright Legacy Awards

Lambda Literary Awards

National Jewish Book Awards

Pura Belpré Award

Schneider Family Book Awards

Tomás Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award

Author gender identity

Use our Advanced Search page to show results based on author gender identity. Search by male, female, nonbinary, or transgender.

To search for multiple categories, use the search bar and use AND. For example, to search for books written by female transgender authors, search **AG female AND AG transgender**.

At this time, not all authors in NoveList are cataloged with gender identity information. These authors may not be included in the search results.

Search for #OwnVoices

To find works where the main character and the author share a marginalized identity, use the **own voices** appeal term. The term started as a hashtag created by YA author and disability activist Corinne Duyvis in September 2015. Enter **AP own voices** in the search bar and then set limiters to narrow down the results.

You can also type **own voices** in the search bar, and then click on the Lists & Articles tab to find our recommended lists for a variety of age groups and genres.

TRY IT

Enter **AP own voices** in the search bar

Select the **Teen** audience under Refine Results

Expand the **Genre** limiter and click on **Realistic fiction**

Expand the **Theme** limiter and click on **Immigrant experiences**

