**Theme:** Our overall theme for our text set is called “Schooling across Cultures”.

**Rationale:** We chose this theme because we felt it would benefit our students to learn how other children are taught across many different cultures. This will not only give our students an opportunity to enter into another child’s world, but will broaden their thoughts and ideas of other children around the world. Learning about different schooling systems, and the way other children were taught was also a topic we found very interesting and unique. When people think about other cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds outside of their own, their first instinct is to think of the different languages, food, beliefs, and clothing that accompanies a particular group of people. We wanted to take this a step further, and look deeper into the schooling system, and discover what it is like to go to school in a different country. Our overall goal for this particular theme is to encompass all children, no matter what culture they are from, and to provide many different examples of what schooling is like for other children. We hope that our students will come to appreciate the importance of school, but will allow for greater acceptance of others, no matter whom they are or where they come from. Our text set is suggested for fourth grade students, though a few of the books may be used with students younger than fourth grade.

**Text Set Includes:**

Baer, E., & Bjorkman, S. (1990). *This is the way we go to school: A book about children around the world.* New York: Scholastic.

Looking for a great book to get students captivated in learning about other students around the world? This book captures their attention and leads them into a whole new world. There are many unique ways that students get to and from school, and this book includes many of them. Ranging from using different landscape forms, or different ways of transportation, these children from all over the world sure have a great story to tell. This book allows students to open their eyes to new transportation types, as well as learning about the different cultures expressed in the text. Students will be fascinated with this book. Soon, they will be asking their parents to use different forms of transportation to and from school each day. (FICTION)

Reader response activity for this book: Complete a reader’s theatre with a small group of three or four. In your groups, choose a new way that you will get to school each day. Choose something different than what was listed in the book. You are going to be given 15 minutes to brainstorm and practice your new idea. As a group, you will show the class exactly what you came up with, and the other students will guess what you are acting out. Each student needs to participate in some form. After all students have had a chance to act out their form of transportation, a class discussion will be held.

Hall, M. (2002). *Schools.* Chicago, Ill.: Heinemann Library.

In this brightly colored book, full of photographs, is a new world that many students can experience. This book encompasses all areas of life that many children will recognize is similar to their own. The author of this text allows for the students to explore different activities and needs of many individuals. Students will be able to relate their own stories to many of the people included in this book. The author uses clear language to express the thoughts of others, and the illustrator captivates the reader by the unique use of pictures chosen for this book. Students will feel right at home when they realize how similar everyone’s lives really are, no matter where they may live in the world. (NONFICTION, PICTURE BOOK)

Reader response activity for this book: After a small group discussion has taken place, the class will have a Venn diagram to complete. They are to share ideas about what they learned from the book. As a class, two different topics will be placed in the circles. (The topic will be chosen by the students. An example includes the need of brushing teeth and paying bills). The students will explain how these needs are different, and what the two topics have in common from country to country. This activity will allow students to visually see how similar tasks can be completed in a different way based on the culture the individual is raised in.

Heydlauff, L., Upadyhe, N., & Shakti for Children (Organization). (2005). *Going to school in India.* Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.

Going to school in India is a series of 10 mini books that are combined into one book. These 10 Going to School in India mini books are broken down into stories about going to school in a tent, in the dark, in a tribe, in a temple, under a mango tree, by the sea, on a railway station platform, on a mountaintop, in the middle of a lake, and on wheels. The mini books provide the reader with opportunities to see what kinds of unusual places a child from India may attend school. There is also information regarding how they go to school and different times of day and night that they may attend school, in order to work. The author describes this book as “a celebration of what school can be” and provides pictures of each place with lots of facts and information. (NON FICTION, PICTURE BOOK)

Reader response activity for this book: Answer the following prompts and write them as a journal entry or for display in the classroom. Discuss your responses with the class and/or write similarities and differences on the board.

1. If you went to school \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (one of the 10 mini stories), how would that be different from the school you attend now? How would that be the same?
2. What supplies would you need for school there? Why?
3. How would you get to school if you went to school \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? How long do you think it would take you to travel to school or back home? Why?
4. What would be the best thing about going to school \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? Why? What would be the worst? Why?

Hopkins, L. B., & Soentpiat, C. K. (2010).*Amazing faces.* New York: Lee and Low Books.

Our face gives away all of our emotions. This book includes a variety of poems that allow children to meet many different children of all ages and cultures. Everyone experiences different emotions of happy, sad, frustrated, mad, etc. Lee Bennett Hopkins allows us to experience all of these feelings and how we deal with them as individuals. Sixteen poems are brought to life on these pages due to the creative use of words and illustrations that all humans experience at least once in their life. Allow author, Lee Bennett Hopkins, and illustrator, Chris Soentpiat, to take you away to a whole new world. (POETRY)

Reader response activity for this book: Students are encouraged to think of their favorite poem from the sixteen read in class. They are to illustrate their own cartoon, acting out their favorite poem they have chosen. Once all illustrations are complete, each student will present their cartoon with the class. Each student will need to explain what their favorite poem was and why. After all presentations are complete, the cartoon illustrations will be hung up around the room for students to refer to at any time.

Smith, P., Shalev, Z., & UNICEF. (2007). *A school like mine: A unique celebration of schools around the world.* New York: DK.

This book walks readers through what school is generally like on six of the continents around the world. Maps show the continents, pictures and introductions of students from those areas as well as pictures and information about key places. The main focus of this book is on education. There are pictures and descriptions of the classroom, students, technology, activities and other information that allows students to make connections to their own classroom. The index is a great reference to find information on specific things (examples: basketball, uniforms), so students can easily compare one country to another and makes this book a great tool to reinforce reading and reference skills. (NON FICTION, PICTURE BOOK)

Reader response activity for this book: When searching for books, I found a teacher’s guide that offered worksheets, discussion questions and a variety of other activities, including information regarding pen pals. Although many of the activities would be beneficial, the crossword puzzle offered a different type of activity. By offering students fill-in-the-blank sentences, they are encouraged to research within the book to revisit readings and find the answers by using the table of contents and the index based on the clues. Looking for the answers can help students gain another form of exposure to what they have read about.

A school like mine Teacher’s Guide: [*http://www.kiddk.com/static/html/parentteacher/images/SchoolLikeMineTG.pdf*](http://www.kiddk.com/static/html/parentteacher/images/SchoolLikeMineTG.pdf)