

Emily Brown  
4/9/12  
LIBR 268  
Bookstore Inventory

For this Quick Write I decided to go to my local library, which I also volunteer at, the Gregory Heights branch library of Multnomah County, in Portland, Oregon. I chose this location because it has a very large children's book section. It's five very large, roughly eight feet long, and four feet high shelves that are packed with picture books. There is also a shelf that borders the corner that is also four feet high and wraps around the corner. All of these shelves have picture books displayed and my survey was the books displayed on top.

The surrounding community demographics, based on the events the library hosts, the sort of native language books available, is fairly multicultural compared to other Multnomah branches. When I was selecting the library I would volunteer at, they told me that Gregory Heights had a large Asian and Hispanic group as regular users. I felt that it would be the best fit for me, based on my own experiences growing up in a very multicultural area of Seattle where the demographics were very similar. So far it's been a very good fit. There is a sizable Vietnamese and Hispanic minority population that regularly uses Gregory Heights. I can confirm this impression based on the languages spoken by the patrons as well as the library staff.

Looking at the Mapping the 2010 U.S. Census website, the library borders two quadrants. Therefore, the minority percentages are variable. The Asian population percentage is between 7-8%. The Black population percentage is between 4-5%. The Hispanic population percentage is 6%. The Native American population percentage is 1%. The multiracial population percentage is between 3-4%. Other groups is 0-1%. The rest of the population is Caucasian, or 76-78%. I would also like to add that the library is very close to bus lines, a train station and several major road arteries.

My results, which consisted of a quick run through hash count of what the cover looked like where I determined if it was a regular cover (ie. Caucasian) or a multicultural book cover (with the title and illustration indicating it was a non-Caucasian cast of characters). I also included any children's books that were in another language under the title of multicultural, of which there were several. The total count of all the books displayed on the top of the shelves in the children's section was 87. There were 22 of what I determined were multicultural, with the criteria I mentioned above. I would also like to add that I switched five books over from the regular category to the multicultural based on the fact that even though the illustrations looked like a Caucasian cast of characters, the title was in Spanish. 25.3% of the children's books on display at the Gregory Heights Library are what I would term as multicultural.

The implications for a minority child in the community surrounding Gregory Heights library would be that they are fairly well represented. I saw books with African-American cast of characters, as well as Spanish and Asian. This indicates to me that the minority population user base of Gregory Heights is very well represented, and their children have many excellent books to read and enjoy that have characters that resemble themselves and other members of their cultural group.