

# Disrupting Dominant Narratives of Asian Americans in the United States Using Yang's *Front Desk*

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In this article, we illustrate how to use the award-winning novel, *Front Desk* by Kelly Yang,<sup>1</sup> with young learners in grades 4–6 to examine the myriad of experiences with class, race, language, and exploitation that immigrants from China to the United States often encounter. As readers will learn, Yang's lived experiences and *Front Desk* disrupt the dominant narratives of Asian Americans in the U.S. We describe how to use specific events and scenes from *Front Desk*, discussion questions, and domain-specific vocabulary to teach themes from the National Council for the Social Studies' Curriculum Standards and the Learning for Justice Social Justice Standards when analyzing various characters and their motivations.

This article models the integration of social studies and language arts commonly used in elementary classrooms by using a text that incorporates straightforward social studies content in the context of the daily experiences of a Chinese family in the U.S. We begin with an overview of Asian Americans in children's literature, then identify the dominant discourses around Asian identity and immigration to the U.S. Following, we introduce the book for readers, including an overview of Yang as a cultural insider author. We then discuss the potential for vocabulary development when planning instruction and offer a comprehensive application of *Front Desk* for upper elementary classrooms.

## Asian Americans in Children's Literature: Problems and Possibilities

### How are Asian Americans Depicted in Children's Literature?

The scholarship of children's literature has for decades argued for the availability of windows and mirrors to disrupt a single story of identity, representation, and experience in childhood picture books and novels.<sup>2</sup> Data from the Cooperative

Children's Book Center has documented the continued, abysmal underrepresentation of Asian and Asian American characters in picture books; the most recent data reports that a mere 7% of picture books published in 2018 included human characters that were Asian or Asian American.<sup>3</sup> While the scope of children's literature has widened in marginal ways regarding protagonist representation, there remains a significant lack of high-quality titles that portray the complex and diverse experiences of Asian Americans. Moreover, there exists a worn narrative of Asian Americans and immigration in the public sphere, only complicated by the problems with how immigration from Asia has been represented in the formal curriculum and also in the availability of children's literature.<sup>4</sup> What is more, content analysis research has shown that, oftentimes, the small number of books that do include Asian and Asian American children and families include significant inaccuracies in cultural traditions and practices.<sup>5</sup> The national rhetoric around immigration and reform further complicates the problems with literature depictions, while also echoing a sense of urgency for disrupting stereotypes, misconceptions, and misrepresentations of the experiences of Asian Americans in the U.S.

### How Can Literature Disrupt Dominant Representations of Asian Americans and Support Children's Racial Literacy Development?

The formal school curriculum offers an incredibly narrow and misinformed narrative of Asian Americans' contributions and lived experiences;<sup>6</sup> therefore, we argue it is essential to develop racial literacy with children,<sup>7</sup> that goes beyond a traditional White/Black binary to a more accurate representation of Asian Americans. We believe books like *Front Desk* offer classroom opportunities for expanding the curriculum of race and align with a much larger, overarching goal

of developing racial literacy in children. When educators use this book in classrooms, they will be able to relate the content to multiple NCSS and Social Justice themes in the formal curriculum while disrupting the monolithic view of Asian Americans.

*Front Desk* offers a textual vehicle to confront problems with standards and dominant discourses related to teaching young children about immigrant experiences and the racial interactions faced by Asian Americans in the U.S. We believe that to increase knowledge about what many individuals and groups experience in the U.S., students must engage in open, honest discussions, whether the character's experience offers a window or a mirror to the learner. Using *Front Desk*, teachers can reframe how race, racism, and immigration are broached with young learners. We suggest three compelling questions as entry points into instructional planning: What do young learners need to know about Asian Americans? What should children learn about Asian American immigrants? About the complexities of immigrating to the U.S.? We invite readers to consider these three questions as they read and determine how to use *Front Desk* with children in grades 4–6.

### **What are the Dominant Discourses of Asian Americans in the U.S.?**

The Asian population in the U.S. has almost doubled since 2000 and is projected to grow to 46 million in the next 40 years. Today, Chinese Americans comprise 5.4 million people in the U.S., nearly a quarter of the Asian population and the largest group of Asian origin in the U.S.<sup>8</sup> To understand the need for books that offer counterstories of Asian Americans, we must first identify the dominant discourses that have saturated the formal curriculum<sup>9</sup> and most children's literature with Asian American or Asian American immigrant characters. By and large, picture and chapter books offer an overwhelmingly narrow and inaccurate depiction of Asian Americans, mostly written as a monolithic experience, as though nationalities and cultural values are singular (e.g., Asian as one massive identity), and often with broad-brushed inaccuracies in depictions of cultural norms and practices<sup>10</sup> and historical events and experiences.<sup>11</sup> When immigration is included, it is most often a flat, stereotypical view of Asian immigration. Similarly, state history standards also present a flat representation of “perpetual foreigner” or “model minority.”<sup>12</sup> The *model minority myth* is the perpetuation of a harmful set of stereotypes of Asian Americans including overbearing mothers, fathers skilled in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM), and children who are academically gifted at a level higher than other children and who excel in STEM as compared to their non-Asian peers. In a similar vein, the *perpetual foreigner stereotype* is monolithic and frames Asian Americans as new immigrants, regardless of

their documentation status and diverse cultural and family heritage backgrounds.<sup>13</sup> Both myths have historically been used in attempts to negate acts of racism specifically around social and educational success and among people of color.<sup>14</sup> The invisibility of Asian Americans in state history standards, coupled with the problematic nature of racial knowledge in standards,<sup>15</sup> points to the need for classroom instruction that purposefully incorporates Asian Americans as multifaceted individuals and cultural groups with complicated experiences with race in the U.S.

### **Why are Race, Racism, and Immigration Central to the Teaching of Asian Americans in Social Studies?**

Historical events and trends have documented the ongoing history of Asian American discrimination<sup>16</sup> and anti-Asian violence.<sup>17</sup> Policy examples include anti-Asian policies like the Chinese Exclusion Act, Immigration Act of 1917, and Executive Order 9066; there is also a long history of scapegoating around public health crises, particularly pandemics, further dehumanizing Asian Americans and fueling hate crimes.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, most mentions of race and racism in standards and curricular resources exclude Asian American perspectives and contributions<sup>19</sup> and fail to adequately discuss race, racism, and immigration as central to understanding the experiences of other race and ethnic groups beyond Black and White Americans;<sup>20</sup> in turn, this exclusion promotes a White/Black binary of race in the dominant curriculum. This is only further exacerbated by contemporary examples of hate crimes aimed at Asian Americans.<sup>21</sup> When Asian American perspectives and contributions are excluded from the curriculum, a binary of race is upheld, Asian Americans are dehumanized, and the curriculum is fraught with inaccuracies and incomplete narratives. Planning instruction that centers Asian Americans disrupts the White/Black binary of race and racism,<sup>22</sup> and highlights the long history of anti-Asian racism, such as the perpetual foreigner, experienced by Asian immigrants to the U.S.<sup>23</sup> To support developing content knowledge for teachers and students around Asian American studies and immigration, we have provided a collection of suggested resources (see Sidebar 1). For examining the intersections of race, racism, and immigration with young learners, *Front Desk* offers an accessible textual vehicle for humanizing Chinese American immigrants, while also troubling dominant narratives of race that characters encounter repeatedly throughout the book.

### **Centering Bishop's Mirrors through Cultural Insider Authorship**

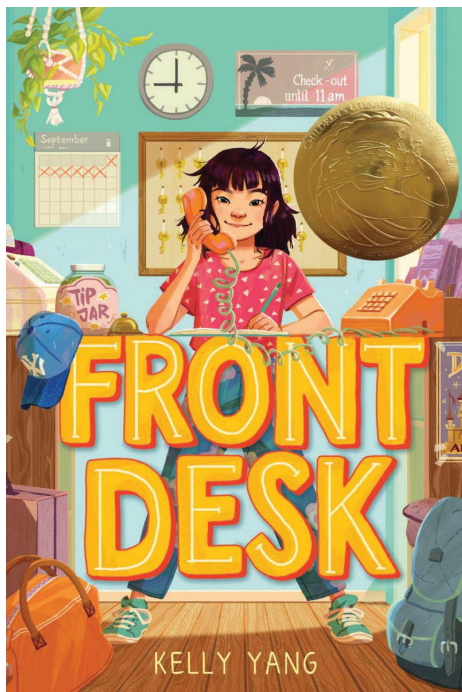
Readers will find a strong parallel between author Kelly Yang's experiences and Mia in *Front Desk*. Yang immigrated to the U.S. from China when she was six and grew up in Southern California. Yang and her parents worked in three

different motels during her childhood. Yang expressed that life working in motels was hard, and these complex experiences, which were not known to her school peers, felt like carrying a gigantic backpack—unless she was in the library. Some kids teased her about her second-hand clothes and small eyes, but she hid in the library, her safe haven. In class, she felt “a little dumb” and behind, but in the library, she felt smart as the librarians shared and discussed books with her. She attended the University of California, Berkeley and then Harvard Law. After law school, she pursued her strong

interest in writing, challenging the model minority myth of Asian American success. Yang has credited her success to all “heroic librarians of this country who looked at me and didn’t see a poor motel girl with messy hair and tattered pants.”<sup>24</sup> She has said she is “living, walking proof in the power of libraries and librarians to change lives.”<sup>25</sup> Like the librarians in her life, her goal is to write stories with diverse experiences wherein all children can see themselves. She also founded The Kelly Yang Project, a program focused on writing and reading for children in Asia.<sup>26</sup>

### Sidebar 1. Resources for Teachers: Asian American Studies and Immigration

<i>Asian Americans</i> (PBS, 2020).	Full streaming five-episode series centering Asian American perspectives and experiences; numerous short clips included
Erika Lee, <i>The Making of Asian America: A History</i> (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2016).	A comprehensive overview of Asian America, with a strong focus on the contributions of Asian Americans in the United States
“Asian Americans in the People’s History of the United States;” <i>Zinn Education Project</i> .	Overview of over 20 Asian American people and key events for teaching U.S. History
“Asian American Pacific Islander Data Sets.” <i>AAPIData</i> .	Statistical data and infographics on people, policy impacting Asian Americans, and daily life
“An AsianCrit Perspective on US History;” <i>Visions of Education</i> (podcast), episode 160.	Podcast guest Dr. Sohyun An discusses children’s inquiry of lesser-known Asian American contributions in U.S. History
Laura Lim, “Asian Stereotypes: Rethinking Perceptions;” TEDxKids@ElCajon (2018).	Laura shares her experiences with the model minority and perpetual foreigner stereotypes as an Asian American middle schooler
“Teaching Asian American Histories;” <i>Visions of Education</i> (podcast), episode 76.	Podcast guest Dr. Noreen Naseem Rodríguez discusses disrupting the traditional teaching of Japanese Incarceration during WWII
“Where Are You Really From?” <i>Code Switch</i> (podcast).	This podcast series focuses on the varied experiences of immigrants of Color
Wayne Au and Benji Chang, “You’re Asian, How Could You Fail Math?” <i>Rethinking Schools</i> 22, no. 2 (Winter 2007/2008).	Short overview of the model minority myth
Sarah-Soonling Blackburn, “What is the model minority myth?” <i>Learning for Justice</i> , March 21, 2019.	Overview of the model minority myth and perpetual foreigner with examples of each
Ronald Takaki and Rebecca Stefoff, <i>A Different Mirror for Young People: A History of Multicultural America</i> (New York: Triangle Square, 2018).	Multiple chapters devoted to themes and issues around Asian American experience, particularly immigration and xenophobia
Jeff Chang, “The long history of violence against Asian Americans that led up to Atlanta;” <i>The Washington Post</i> , March 22, 2021.	A brief overview of documented racism towards Asian Americans in the United States
Viviane Eng, “Processing Anti-Asian Violence, through Corky Lee’s Lens;” <i>Hyphen Magazine</i> , January 11, 2022.	Photographer Corky Lee raised awareness across decades of anti-Asian violence in the United States.
Bancroft Library, “Timeline of Chinese immigration to the United States;” University of California Berkeley.	Overview of Chinese immigration to the United States from 1884–1944



## Front Desk

*Front Desk*, which has won 26 awards, is based on Kelly Yang’s real-life experiences. In the book, Mia Tang, a 10-year-old Chinese immigrant, works with her parents at the Calivista Motel in Anaheim, California. Mia narrates her family’s struggles adapting to life in the U.S. and enduring immigrant exploitation at the motel. Mia helps her family by working the front desk, where she makes friends with the weeklies, learns hard lessons about racial injustice and financial hardship, and hones her love for writing. Mia and her family constantly navigate harsh working conditions under Mr. Yao, the motel owner. However, when Mia finds out about an essay contest with a free motel in Vermont as its prize, she knows she has to apply so her family will not have to continue suffering Mr. Yao’s wrath. While Mia’s mother discourages her dream to write since English is not their first language, Mia is determined to win the contest and pursue her passion for writing.

### **How does *Front Desk* Align with Social Studies and Social Justice Standards?**

In the following section, we describe a number of applications of *Front Desk* for classrooms in grades 4–6. The book aligns with at least two sets of national curriculum standards. First, it is a strong fit for teaching two anchor standards of Learning for Justice’s Social Justice Standards: justice and identity. Examples of each standard for grades 3–5 and 6–8 include the following:<sup>27</sup>

- ID.3–5.3: “I know that all my group identities are part of who I am, but none of them fully describes me and this is true for other people too.”

- JU.3–5.13: “I know that words, behaviors, rules and laws that treat people unfairly based on their group identities cause real harm.”

*Front Desk* can also be used in collaboration with the NCSS National Curriculum Standards.<sup>28</sup> Three of the ten themes are a strong fit: ⑦ **INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY**, “lived experiences shared with people inside and outside the individual’s own culture throughout her or his development”; ⑤ **INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS**, “what controls and influences [institutions], how they control and influence individuals and culture, and how institutions can be maintained or changed”; and ⑥ **POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNMENT**, “an increasingly comprehensive awareness of rights and responsibilities in specific contexts.” We have modeled the inclusion of both social justice and national social studies standards in the following thematic examples.

### **How Can Teachers Cultivate Young Learners’ Vocabulary using *Front Desk*?**

*Front Desk* includes domain-specific vocabulary that upper-elementary readers will need to understand. Other vocabulary, like *power*, *authority*, and *governance*, while not written in the text, is used to understand themes such as immigrant exploitation. In the themes that follow, we unpack the domain-specific vocabulary (see Sidebar 2) and provide quotations from the book and discussion questions to support not only vocabulary development but also learners’ understanding of more complex concepts like power and justice.

### **What is the Role of Power, Authority, and Governance in Immigrant Exploitation in the U.S.?**

The book begins with Mia’s excitement about the U.S. and the new job her parents are offered. Mr. Yao has three conditions for the motel, which seem reasonable at first. The package Mr. Yao offers Mia’s family is initially a relief for Mia because she thought they would get to live in the motel for free, earning \$150 per day. However, the relief is short-lived as Mr. Yao returns the next day and informs them that in the contract “terms may change from time to time.”<sup>29</sup> This gives him the power to implement unfair conditions, such as cutting the pay. Later, he makes the Yangs pay for broken appliances, fails to install security measures after Mia’s encounter with a drunk customer, and constantly belittles Mia because she grew up in China.

*Front Desk* provides numerous examples of how authority can be abused and how this can often happen to immigrant families (see Figure 1 in Pullout). For example, Mr. Yao’s frequent actions illustrate immigrant exploitation, which relates to the NCSS social studies standard ⑥ **POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNMENT**. Under this theme, students explore questions such as “What are the proper scope and limits of authority?” Mr. Yao’s actions also provide numerous opportunities for

students to apply Learning for Justice’s Social Justice Standard of justice.

**How Do Individuals, Groups, and Institutions Enact Racism and Prejudice in the U.S.?**

A second theme in this book is racism and prejudice. The model minority myth introduced earlier is rooted in racism and prejudice. We suggest that as students begin reading *Front Desk*, they form small groups and view the PBS Learning Media video, “The Model Minority Myth.”<sup>30</sup> In groups, students can identify specific examples of how this myth, along with the perpetual foreigner myth, is damaging to Asians and Asian Americans, and how monolithic discourse contributes to racism and prejudice. Prompts include stereotypes of minority careers, stereotyped academic strengths, and stereotypes of immigrant success (e.g., grateful for opportunity, the American dream), and model citizenship. Using the video, students can also discuss how this myth operates to create strife between various communities of color.

In *Front Desk*, Mia learns the harsh reality of how some people may perceive her as an immigrant from China. Drawing on the monolithic, dominant discourse of Asian Americans, particularly the model minority stereotype, her classmates automatically think she should be good at math. They are disappointed when she gets the wrong answer to a math problem, and Mia wonders whether this would not have happened if she had blonde hair and blue eyes. She becomes frustrated with the stereotype, especially when her mother also says to focus on becoming better at math, suggesting her math skills would provide her opportunity for success. However, Mia disrupts this dominant discourse by focusing on writing

instead of math, by learning a subject she prefers rather than buying into the common stereotype. Not only do Mia and her family endure stereotypes, but so do other marginalized characters in the book, such as Hank, one of the weeklies. Hank is racially profiled when one of the motel customers, Mr. Lorenz, accuses Hank of being involved when his car is stolen. Furthermore, when Mia tells Mr. Yao the customers who had left that night, he is infuriated that she rented to a customer on his list. Mr. Yao maintains a list of people who cannot rent a room based on race, and this repulses Mia. She realizes that Mr. Yao is racist and is frustrated that Hank is targeted for a crime solely based on his race.

When Mia’s parents say that they should not judge an individual based on the color of their skin, Mr. Yao replies, “If you really believe that, you’re even dumber than I thought. Clearly you have no idea of how this country works.”<sup>31</sup> Institutional racism is prevalent as readers see Hank face issues with the police, employment, and housing due to racial bias. *Front Desk* describes realistic examples of institutionalized racism which learners can discuss.

These displays of racism and prejudice provide a context for teaching the NCSS theme 5 INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS and the Learning for Justice Standards of justice and identity (see Figure 2 in Pullout).

**How does Front Desk Demonstrate Individual Development and Identity?**

7 INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY is another strong theme present in the book. Mia and her family are seen as poor immigrants who do not speak English well, which is why Mia’s mother pushes Mia to focus more on math. As the

**Sidebar 2. Domain Specific Vocabulary in *Front Desk***

6 POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE	5 INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS	7 INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY
power authority government governance motel exploit immigrant exploitation loan shark passport abuse of power	race class Cultural Revolution China racist discrimination prejudice arrest immigration belittle perception racial bias institutionalized racism stereotypes minority myth perpetual foreigner	employee employer working conditions immigrant agency action American dream friendship language passion

book unfolds, Mia finds her identity through writing and soon develops agency of self and for others using writing. Though she comes across many obstacles and has internal self-doubts, she continues to improve her writing skills. Mia's letters, specifically the way she crosses out words or phrases and replaces them with new ones using a thesaurus or dictionary, are excellent examples to show elementary students how Mia uses available resources and continues improving with hard work and dedication.

Furthermore, elementary students can learn the power of writing through Mia's many examples of action using language and the written word. She helps new immigrants with English phrases and customs and creates a list of places to avoid working because of bad working conditions. She writes a letter to an employer who took Mr. Zhang's passport and ID, asking for his possessions to be returned and signing it as his lawyer. Her success in writing a formal letter makes her letter so believable that Mr. Zhang's possessions are returned.

Another way Mia's identity shifted is through her cross-cultural friendship with Lupe. She first saw Lupe as a girl with a perfect house and family. However, through learning that Lupe is not living the "American dream," Mia realizes that she has found a friend who will not judge her based on her socioeconomic status and race. The girls talk about a metaphorical roller coaster, about how poor people and rich people go on different journeys, and for poor people, the only way out is to get off the roller coaster. While this mindset remains with Mia, she realizes that the stereotypical identity of a poor, immigrant family is not one she should be confined to. She does not let people's judgment stop her

from entering the Vermont motel contest.

Learners' work with the theme of identity aligns well with both the Learning for Justice Standard of identity and the NCSS standard **1 INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY**. Figure 3 (see Pullout) provides quotations and discussion questions for examining the role of identity, including how Mia's identity shifts and changes throughout the book.

The book's accurate depictions of racism and prejudice experienced by Chinese American families create a valuable space for young learners to unpack these themes, particularly the inaccuracies of a monolithic Asian experience. These representations certainly impact an individual's identity and development, and at times, Yang describes the direct impacts on Mia's understanding of her multifaceted and rich experience. To this end, we suggest pairing *Front Desk* with a curated set of primary sources aimed at understanding the diverse lives and traditions shared by many Chinese Americans while also positioning students to disrupt stereotypes around Asian Americans that directly impact identity. The pullout contains a graphic organizer with overarching questions, primary source photographs, and supporting questions. The curated set is well-suited for students working in pairs or triads, and can be used as a single, comprehensive lesson or implemented as a series of shorter engagements with the overarching questions, one image at a time. The organizer provides space for students to record their answers using a printed handout; a digital common space like Flipgrid for video or Padlet for writing would also work well for students' responses.

We know that many teachers like to use supplementary

*continued on page 17*

### Sidebar 3. Suggested Picture Books to Expand Chinese American Narratives

<p>Nancy Tupper Ling, <i>Double Happiness</i>, Illustrated by Alina Chau (San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2015).</p>	<p>Siblings navigate immigration to the United States and work together to collect things that exemplify happiness in their lives. Cultural depictions are considered authentic; cultural insider authored.*</p>
<p>Grace Lin, <i>Thanking the Moon: Celebrating the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival</i> (New York, NY: Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2010).</p>	<p>A Chinese American family takes part in the cultural values and traditions of the annual Mid-Autumn Moon Festival, a widely celebrated annual Chinese observance.</p>
<p>Eva Chen, <i>I Am Golden</i>, Illustrated by Sophie Diao (New York, NY: Feiwel and Friends, 2022).</p>	<p>Written as a sort of love story to Chinese American children, brimming with validation and empowering text.</p>
<p>Sennah Yee, <i>My Day with Gong Gong</i>, Illustrated by Elaine Chen (Toronto: Annick Press, 2022).</p>	<p>A story about how a Chinese American child connects with her grandfather after recognizing and overcoming the generational and cultural gap.</p>

\*We strongly suggest using titles authored by a cultural insider as often as possible when your purpose is to expand the representation of culture to include varied perspectives. For a very helpful guide when considering titles for expanding culturally accurate narratives of Asian and Asian American children and families, see Noreen Naseem Rodríguez and Esther June Kim, "In Search of Mirrors: An Asian Critical Race Theory Content Analysis of Asian American Picturebooks from 2007 to 2017," *Journal of Children's Literature* 44, no. 2 (2018): 17–30.

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picture books during novel studies; therefore, we have curated a short collection of picture books with Chinese or Chinese American characters, books which portray Chinese American families in everyday contexts without a strong focus on the immigrant experience (see Sidebar 3).

### **Three Keys and Room to Dream**

If your students love *Front Desk*, we want you to know that Yang has published a trilogy featuring the Tang family. We encourage you to share Yang's sequel, *Three Keys*, with your students! *Three Keys* chronicles the Tangs' experiences as the newest owners of the Calivista Motel. In this book, Mia continues her development as a writer as Yang continues to explore the complexities of the immigrant experience, including historical examples of documentation status and race relations in the U.S. In September 2021, Yang's most recent novel about the Tangs, *Room to Dream*, was released. Like *Front Desk* and *Three Keys*, *Room to Dream* situates readers within the context of social issues like colorism and corporatization, as well as common themes of adolescence like navigating friendships, and humanizes each issue through the Tang family's experiences.

### **A Final Word**

*Front Desk* by Kelly Yang can be used to give young learners the opportunity to learn the struggles that Chinese immigrants endure and the different factors that affect them such as class, race, language, and exploitation. Using *Front Desk*, young learners can analyze the experience of Chinese immigrants and debunk stereotypical views of Asian immigrants. Throughout this article, we discuss ways educators can use the book to teach social studies and social justice standards through the quotations, vocabulary, and discussion questions provided. We encourage teachers to review their standards and formal curriculum and identify the places where they can teach *Front Desk* and the lived experiences of a Chinese American immigrant author to disrupt the dominant discourses of Asian Americans and center their complex experiences in the U.S. for learners in grades 4–6. ■

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### **Notes**

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23. Jeff Chang, "The long history of violence against Asian Americans that led up to Atlanta," *The Washington Post*, March 22, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/03/22/atlanta-shooting-history-asians/>.
24. Kelly Yang, "The Real Story," *Front Desk*, <https://frontdeskthebook.com/the-real-story/>, para 5.
25. Yang, "The Real Story," para 6.
26. A *Front Desk* teacher guide is located on the Scholastic website and also on Yang's website under "Teacher Resources." The Front Desk website offers classroom discussion guides, writing prompts, games, and activities, and videos of Yang speaking about *Front Desk* and answering common questions from children. These are excellent resources for educators to use when introducing the book to grades 4–6. Readers can also locate short videos by Yang on YouTube as she answers questions submitted by young readers. Students can also locate Yang's "The Real Story" on her website. Sarah Park Dahlen, *Discussion guide: Immigration and activism: Sparking reader engagement with the Front Desk novels by Kelly Yang* (New York: Scholastic, n.d.), <https://www.scholastic.com/content/dam/scholastic/educators/discussion-guides/kelly-yang-discussion-guide.pdf>.
27. Readers unfamiliar with the social justice standards can learn more and access the full anti-bias framework of K–12 social justice standards and scenarios at Learning for Justice, *Social Justice Standards: The Teaching Tolerance Anti-Bias Framework*. (Learning for Justice, 2020), <https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/TT-Social-Justice-Standards-Anti-bias-framework-2020.pdf>.
28. National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), *National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment* (Silver Spring, MD: NCSS, 2010).
29. Yang, *Front Desk*, 26.
30. "The Model Minority Myth: Asian Americans," PBS Learning Media, <https://unctv.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/model-minority-myth-video/asian-americans/>.
31. Yang, *Front Desk*, 96.

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## National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies (2010 edition)

NCSS announces the publication of the revised national curriculum standards for social studies: National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment. The revised standards, like the earlier social studies standards published in 1994, continue to be structured around the ten themes of social studies. However, the revised standards offer a sharper focus on:

### Purposes

- Questions for Exploration
- Knowledge: what learners need to understand
- Processes: what learners will be capable of doing
- Products: how learners demonstrate understanding

### The revised standards also include:

- Enhancements in the descriptions of the ten themes and the associated learning expectations
- The addition of new descriptions of standards-based class practices to time-tested descriptions that were included in the original edition of the standards
- A stronger focus on student products and their assessment
- An updated list of essential social studies skills and strategies, including literacy strategies

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