Damon Reflection Blog

by [Betsy Damon](http://www.plymouth.edu/courses/user/view.php?id=20904&course=22775) - Thursday, November 20, 2014, 6:53 PM

When looking at reviews, I have two sources. I have a subscription to *School Library Journal* and I will just go through the book reviews to learn of new offerings. While reading the reviews, I think about how the book could be used in the classroom - it's curriculum connection - and how it fits into the interests shown by my library patrons. When I'm looking for a specific book's reviews, I usually start with Amazon.com which oftentimes shares reviews from *Booklist*, *School Library Journal*, and/or *Kirkus R*eviews. Usually, I am searching for reviews for particular books that I've heard of or seen somewhere or been asked about rather than having the reviews come to me and then searching for the books. I don't think I'll change my way of evaluating children's literature unless I come upon a book that is so different that I would need to be able to defend its inclusion in the collection. The majority of the books I plan to bring in to the collection are tried and true and easily found in other public and school libraries, so in a way I am using those sources as an informal nod for inclusion or I am adding new volumes to current series that have not caused any controversy in the past.

I feel that Chimamanda Adichie has a strong case in her talk about the single story and looking at new books to include, I need to consciously make an effort to include multiple stories (and many versions of each of them). This brings to mind the 4th grade Cinderella unit we just completed. Everyone knows the "original" (really just the most popular!) version but our students worked through 15 more versions and looked at how they were the same and how they were different. Beyond that we looked at how those differences change the story and what had to happen for those differences to be accepted. We looked at how gender played a role in how the story evolved by comparing Cinderella to Sydney Rella - she marries and lives happily ever after while he graduates law school, becomes a judge, and then starts his own company. By giving students examples of how the story can be changed, we give them permission to change their own story so it is imperative that when I look at books, I identify was variations on the single story appear and then determine how to make sure that students have an opportunity to critically compare all the versions.

The danger of a single story. (2009, July). Retrieved November 19, 2014, from http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\_adichie\_the\_danger\_of\_a\_single\_story