

NoveList Search Strategy

September 2023

Finding Books with 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 particularly noteworthy, and they now include specific information about characters coming from marginalized identities. See a full list in NoveList (search **TI "Appeal Index"** from the Basic Search bar), but a few examples of these terms include:

For disabilities: **Blind or have low vision; Physically disabled; Neurodivergent**

For race/ethnicity: **Asian; Black; Indigenous; Latino/Latina/Latine; Multiracial**

For gender and sexual orientation: **Asexual; Lesbian; Nonbinary; Queer**

For religion: **Atheist; Buddhist; Hindu; Pagan**

TRY IT 

At the [Advanced Search](#), enter one or more of the identity terms in the search boxes.

Select **AP Appeal Factors** from the drop-down for each term selected.

Click **Search**.

At the Results list, use the limiters on the left to narrow the results to the right audience level or to a genre.

Real-world examples

Copy and paste these sample search strings into the Basic Search bar. These searches use [field codes](#).

Black characters in historical fiction: **AP Black AND GN historical fiction**

Books about characters with physical disabilities and friendship: **AP physically disabled AND SU friendship**

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

All kinds of lives

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

TRY IT 

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

Select an audience level: **Adult; Teen; Ages 9-12; or Ages 0-8**.

Click the **All Kinds of Lives** or **All Kinds of Reads** link then select a list.

When to use:

Librarians and Educators: When you need a list of books with characters with different backgrounds.

Readers: When you want to read about people who share your culture/religion/disability/sexual orientation.

Caregivers: When you're looking for a book with characters your child can connect with.

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Finding Books with Diverse Characters (continued)

Search subjects, genres, and themes

While character identity terms provide basic broad character background, subject headings provide even more specific detail, genres connect you to the storytelling tradition, and themes help you dial in on recurring plot elements.

See a full list of genres in NoveList by searching [TI "Genre Index"](#).

See a full list of themes in NoveList by searching [TI "Theme Index"](#).

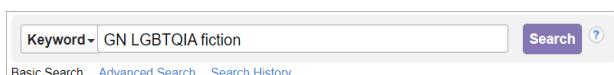
EXAMPLES

Subject examples: **African Americans; autism; interfaith families; interethnic relations**

Genre examples: **LGBTQIA fiction; African American fiction**

Themes examples: **dealing with mental 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**



The screenshot shows the NoveList search interface. A search bar at the top contains the text "GN LGBTQIA fiction". To the right of the search bar is a blue "Search" button with a magnifying glass icon and a question mark icon. Below the search bar, there is a navigation menu with links: "Basic Search", "Advanced Search", and "Search History".

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.



Enter **AP Own voices** in the search bar and click the **Search** button.

Under **Refine Results** on the left, select the **Teen** audience level.

Expand the **Genre** limiter and select **Realistic fiction**.

Expand the **Theme** limiter and select **Immigrant experiences**.

Explore Diversity Resources

From books to services to programming, NoveList has many tools you can use to make your library welcoming for all.

From the toolbar at the top of NoveList or NoveList Plus, go to **Quick Links**.

From the drop-down, select **Explore Pages**.

Click on **Explore Diversity Resources**.

Browse award lists

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

EXAMPLES

Asian Pacific American Award for Literature

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

Coretta Scott King Award

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