



# Diverse Perspectives in High School English Curriculum

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# Introduction/Abstract

- **Research Question: To what extent and in what ways are diverse perspectives being taught in high school English classrooms?**
- Analyzing responses by English teachers about what books are taught in their classrooms, their views on curriculum and their roles in curriculum decisions
- Defining the canon- “Stability and Change in the High-School Canon” (Applebee 1992)
- **Importance/Relevance**- Society and Representation, Redefining the traditional canon



# Methodology

- Online Qualtrics Survey form
- 10 Questions: Mix of titles for comparison/qualitative questions about English Curriculum
- Convenience sampling
- 45 American High School English teachers
- Participant Sources- social media groups, personal connections, NCTE

Survey Link: [https://georgetown.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_2bFqoNkSLTBCZcp](https://georgetown.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2bFqoNkSLTBCZcp)



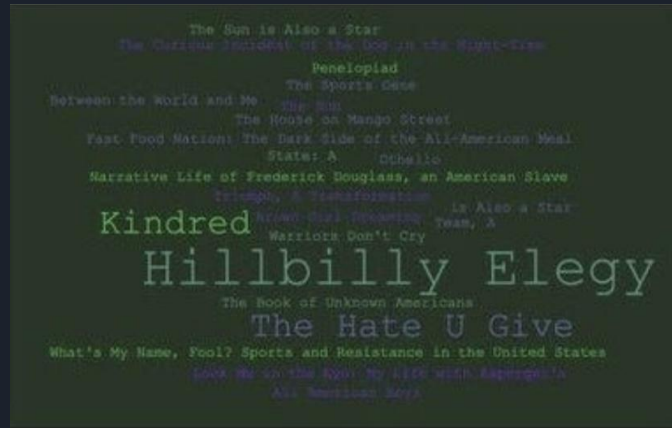


# Results and Findings

**Participant Demographics:** 77.8% teach at a public high school, 15.6% at a religious high school, 4.4% at an independent school, and 2.2% at a school that falls under the category of “other.” The participants represent twenty-four different states.

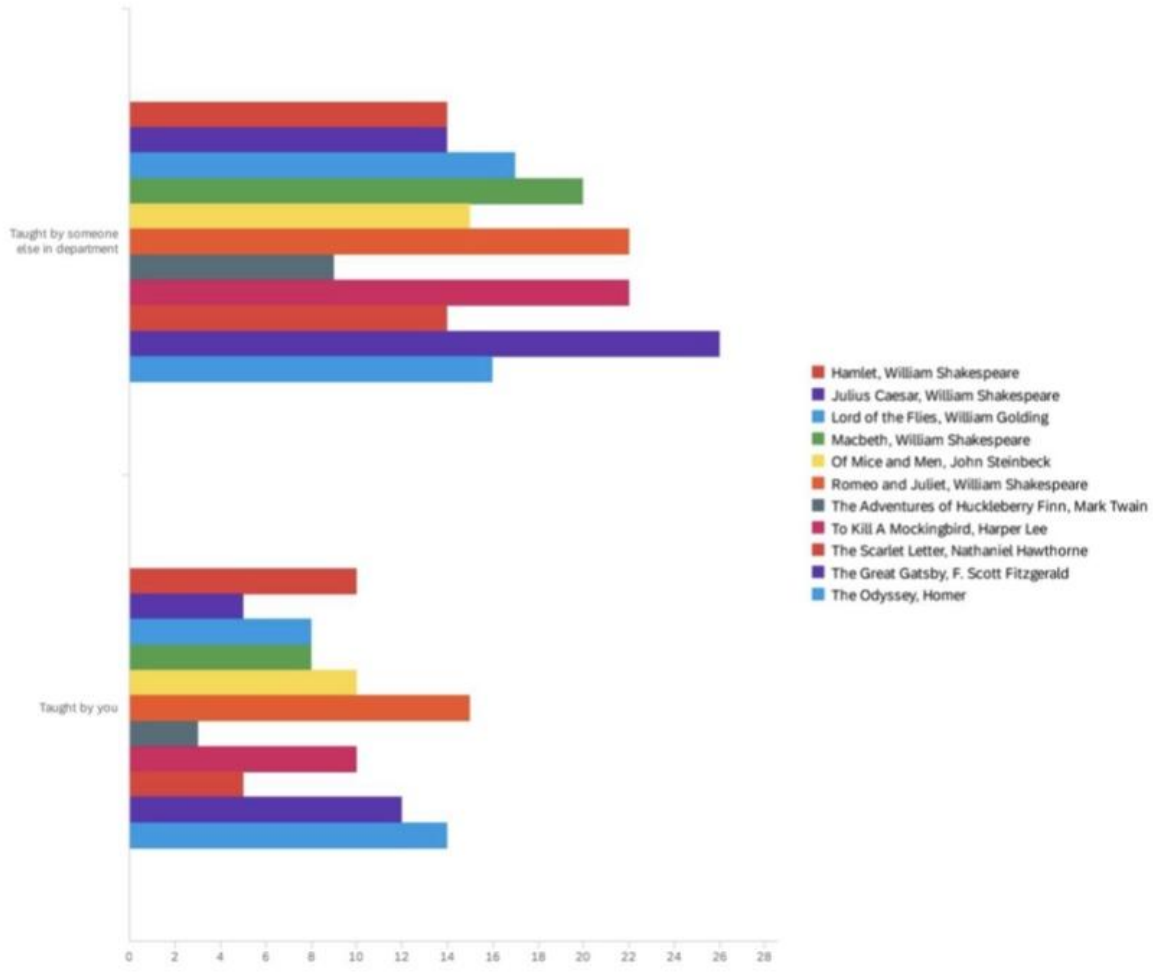
-43% of books taught come from the list of 11 from Applebee (1992)

-192 different titles reported outside of Applebee canon (avg. of approx. 4 per respondent)





# Reported Frequencies of Canonical Texts Based on Applebee (1992)



The National Institutes of Health defines marginalized groups as populations that “include, but are not limited to, groups excluded due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status.” (Sevellius)

*Based on this definition...*

	“Canon” from Applebee (1992)	Other Novels Taught by Respondents
Author identifies as BIPOC	0%	6.1%
Author identifies as a womxn	9.1%	40.1%
Author identifies as a member of a marginalized population	0%	44.8%
Has a main character belonging to a marginalized group or a focus on injustices faced by a marginalized group	27.2%	57.2%






# Answers To Qualitative Questions

*Question 8: In your opinion, what is missing from the literary curriculum at your school?*

## Themes Found in Responses:

- The Classics
- Diversity
- Cultural Relevance
- Student Representation
- Variety
- Positive Progress





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*Question 9: What is your role in adding or removing texts from your school's curriculum?*

Themes Found in Responses:

- Range of Responses
- Most respondents have limited control over curriculum decisions
- Tensions between teachers and school boards
- Varying Schedules
- Finances





*Question 10: When was the last time the literature being taught in your school's curriculum was revised? What changed and what was the outcome of the change?*

-26 out of 45 respondents experienced curriculum change in the last year

-A few had not seen changes in more than a decade

-Every update discussed focused on introducing more diverse perspectives to students

-Positive Effects

-Barriers



## Reflection

- Defining the Canon and IRB Process
- Finding and Interacting with Participants



# Conclusions

- Canon still prevalent, but increasing addition of new voices
- Generally Positive Attitudes of Teachers
- Exposure of Barriers to Positive Curriculum Changes
- Limitations/Questions for Further Discussion





# References

Applebee, Arthur N. "Stability and Change in the High-School Canon." *The English Journal*, vol. 81, no. 5, 1992, pp. 27–32. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/819891](http://www.jstor.org/stable/819891). Accessed

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