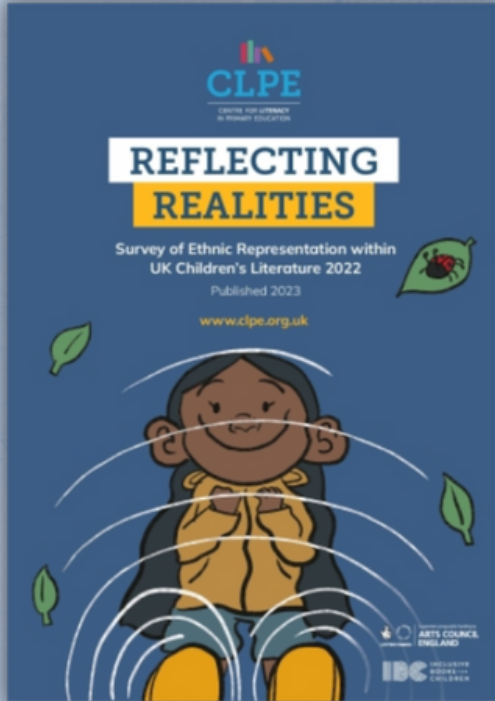




THE CLPE REFLECTING REALITIES REPORT 2023



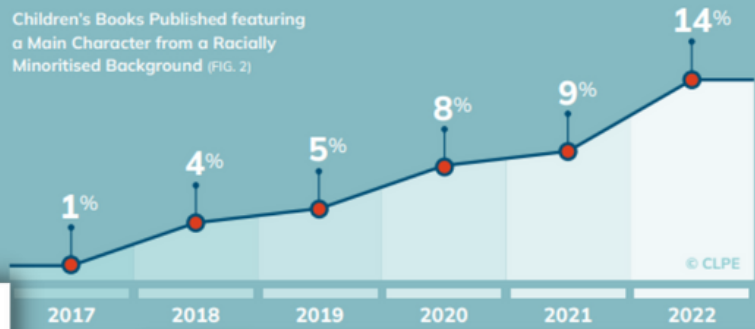
[click to link to the full report](#)

KEY HEADLINES IN GRAPHICS

The overall percentage of Children's Books published that feature a racially minoritised character increased to 30% in 2022, up 10% from the previous year.



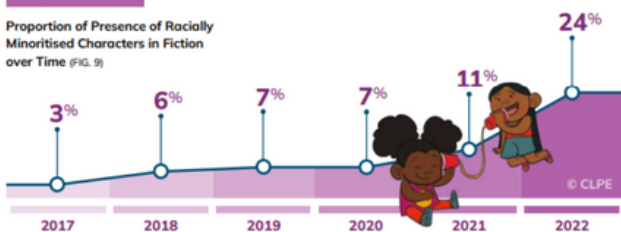
There is an increase of 5% from the previous year of main characters being from a racially minoritised background.



Quality of Presence in Fiction

in Fiction

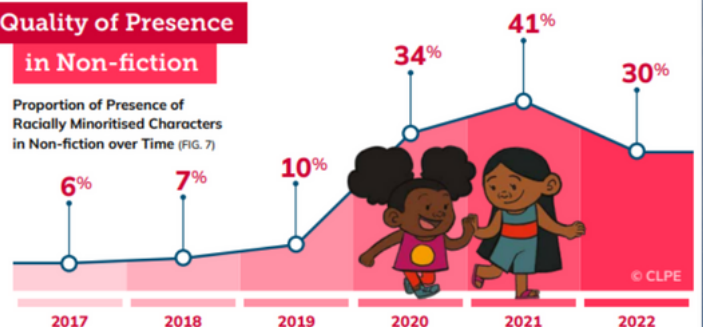
Proportion of Presence of Racially Minoritised Characters in Fiction over Time (FIG. 9)



Quality of Presence in Non-fiction

in Non-fiction

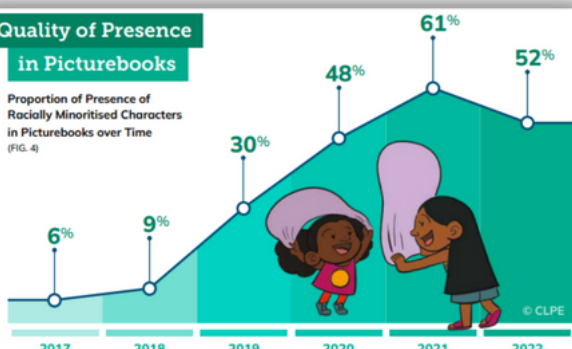
Proportion of Presence of Racially Minoritised Characters in Non-fiction over Time (FIG. 7)



Quality of Presence in Picturebooks

in Picturebooks

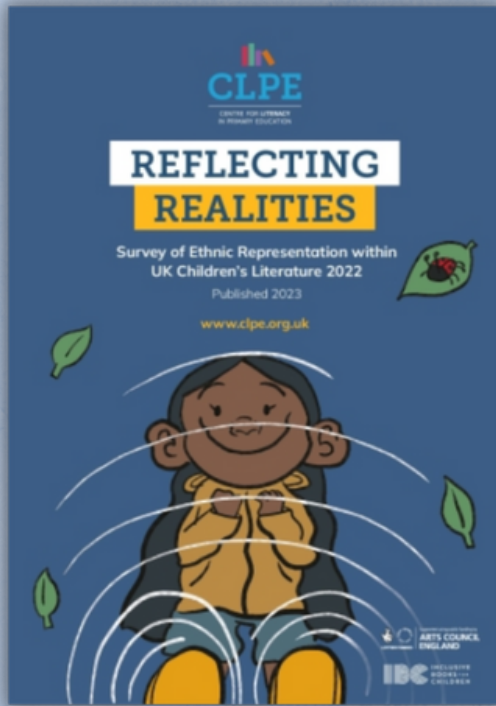
Proportion of Presence of Racially Minoritised Characters in Picturebooks over Time (FIG. 4)



The presence of racially minoritised characters increased across children's fiction, but decreased slightly in picture books and non-fiction from previous years.



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QUALITY TEXTS

As highlighted in previous reports, the increased output of literature that represents racially minoritised groups needs to go hand in hand with an increase in high quality, nuanced and considered representations. In the best books, the reader has the opportunity to access global themes through 'well crafted casts of multi-dimensional characters who are identifiable, nuanced, varied and central to the narrative... leaving readers affirmed, inspired and entertained.'

As teachers and parents, this leaves us with the duty to carefully consider the texts we use in our classrooms and homes, to ensure an inclusive library is not tokenistic.

REFLECTIONS ON FICTION (EARLY CHAPTER BOOKS AND MIDDLE GRADE) AND PICTURE BOOKS

- **Increase from 9% to 14%** in the presence of racially minoritised characters forming part of the **main cast of characters**. Having agency and directing the narrative is important when considering representation.
- There is more representation this year in early chapter books/middle grade **fiction** this year which is great to see.
- There has been a growth in presence in fantasy, mystery, adventure and comedy genres across **fiction** titles.
- Many **fiction** titles represent diasporic experiences which allow readers to meet more nuanced and varied representations than in the past.
- There were fewer exceptional **picture books** this year with the presence of racially minoritised characters often 'feeling generic or lacking in substance.'

REFLECTIONS ON NON- FICTION

- There was a drop of 11% from 41% to 30% of non-fiction books featuring characters from a racially minoritised background.
- 'Thoughtful and carefully researched titles explicitly sought to counteract and reclaim past misrepresentation of communities, cultures and histories of racially minoritised subjects.' e.g. exploring the power dynamics of colonisation and Empire
- It is important to consider the role of 'expert narrator' in a non-fiction as we would consider seeking out 'own voices' authors of fiction. e.g. Dr Maggie Aderin-Pokock as an expert in space.
- The best books grow knowledge, spark curiosity and challenge children's thinking, igniting a passion for learning about the world around them.



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RECOMMENDED BOOKS/AUTHORS INCLUDE...





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THINGS TO CONSIDER IN SCHOOL FROM THE REPORT AND IN A WIDER SENSE OF INCLUSION

- Do the characters in books reflect the population of the UK and wider world?
- Are these representations meaningful, authentic and nuanced?
- Are racially minoritised characters represented across picture books, fiction and non-fiction and within different genres?
- Do you consider how many racially minoritised characters are the main character or make up the main cast of characters, having agency and affecting plot development?
- Do we ensure that texts featuring racially minoritised characters do not reinforce harmful stereotypes?
- Do we consider who has authored the text - do they have lived experience? Who is designated as 'expert?'
- Do we make sure that racially minoritised characters are not always defined by their 'struggle.'
- Do we regularly update book stock and share this with staff and children?