



BOOK BOX BITES

Reflecting Realities Special

With the publication of the latest CLPE Reflecting Realities report, I thought I'd create a Book Box Bites sized round up of its contents and recommend some reads for reflecting realities on your shelves both at home and school.

Hope it is of use.

Esther x



Click [HERE](#) to read the full report

This is the fifth CLPE Reflecting Realities Report. Within the report, the CLPE analyse both the volume and quality of representation of Ethnic representation within children's literature. There are some real improvements since the first report but also areas with much work still to be done.

It is important to 'ensure that all children have access to a range of quality texts in order that they can become happy, enthusiastic readers and writers with all of the benefits this brings. This means that in their schools, their homes, their libraries and their bookshops, children need to meet characters that look like them - and those that don't look like them, characters that inhabit similar - and different - worlds; stories that both reflect their lives and show them the lives of others.' CLPE 2022



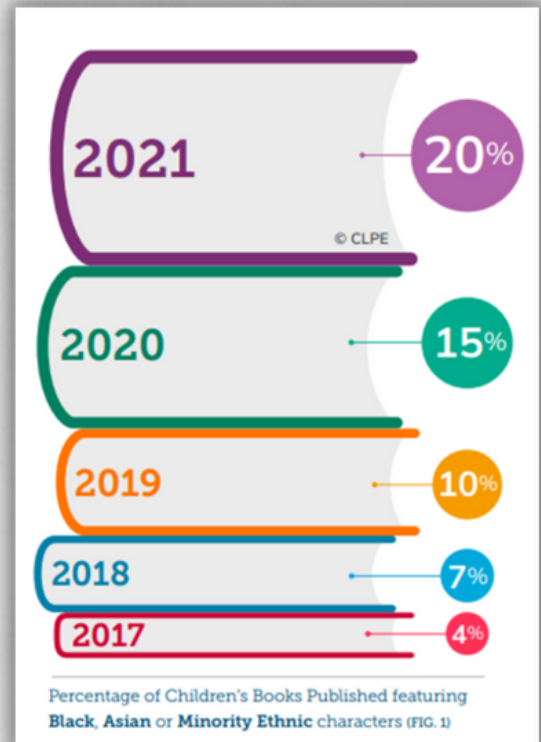
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KEY FINDINGS

Annual reporting shows an increase in the number of children's books published featuring a minority ethnic character from 4% in 2017 to 20% in 2021.

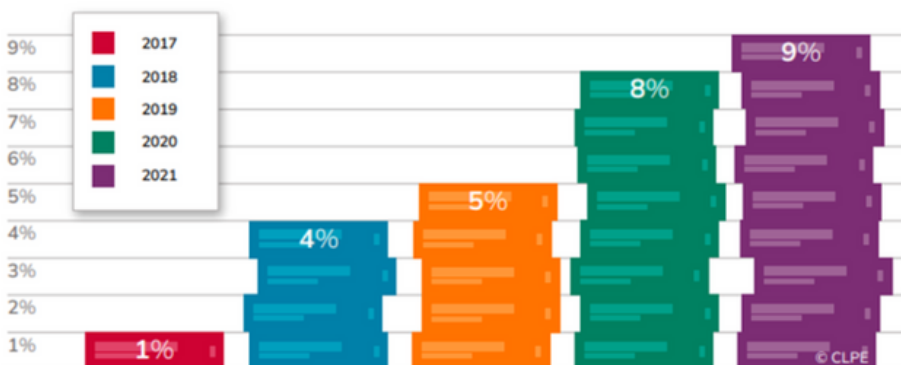
This shows a continued positive trend. A point the report makes that I found very interesting was that this increase in volume gives space to writers to develop and shape their characters and stories in different ways, knowing that they are not the only book featuring a particular demographic group and feeling the pressure to be 'everything to everyone.'



Main Cast of Characters

The increase of representative titles published also corresponds with an increase in the presence of racially minoritised characters forming part of the main cast. 9% of the children's books published in the UK in 2021 had a main character from an ethnic

minority background, compared to 8% in 2020, 5% in 2019, 4% in 2018 and 1% in 2017. As the 9% figure indicates, we are continuing to see a slow but positive growth in the number of children's books featuring a main character from a minority ethnic background.



'The percentage of books published with a main character from a racially minoritised background has risen year on year but remains extremely low at 9% in 2021.' (CLPE)

How many do you have on your shelves?

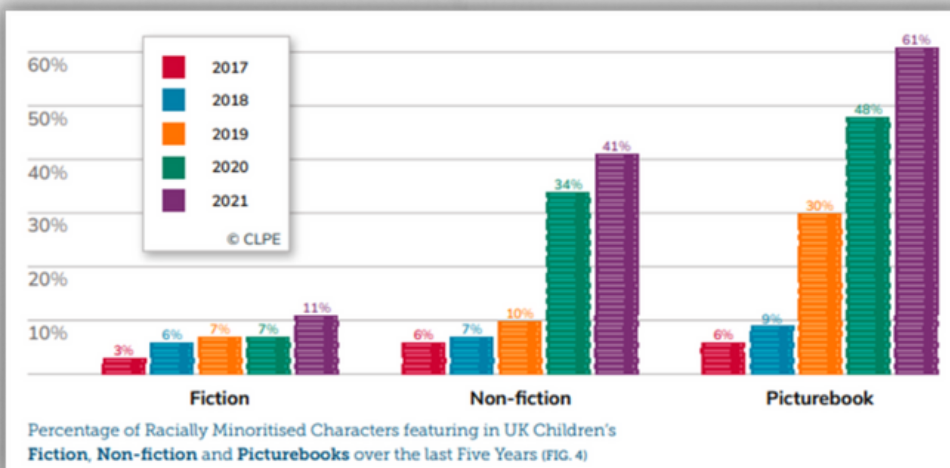
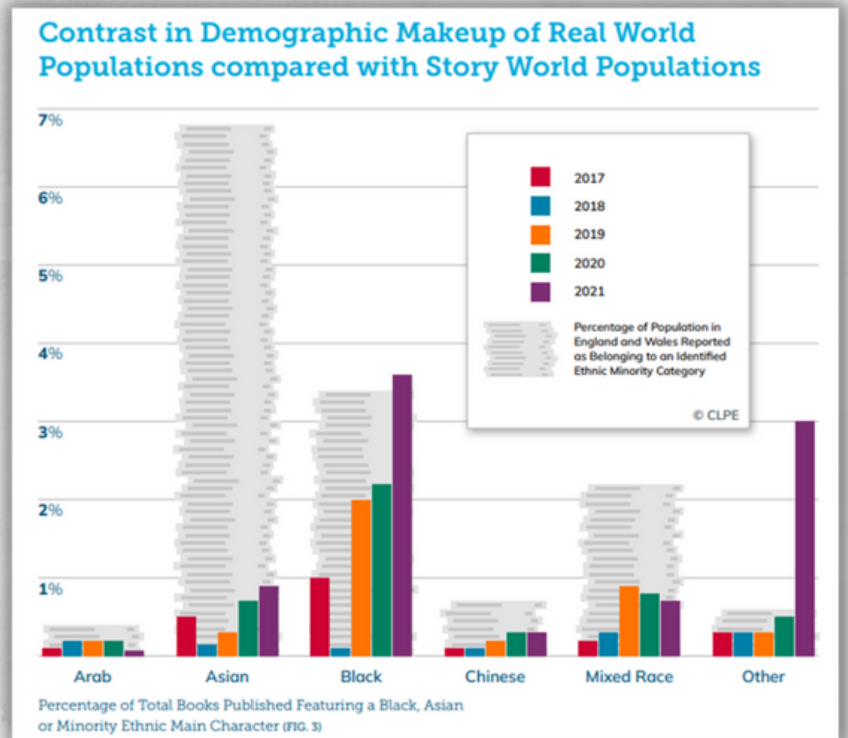


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These statistics show that the percentage of books being produced featuring Arab, Asian, Chinese and Mixed Race children, is not reflective of the population of England and Wales, meaning these children are less likely to see themselves reflected in both stories and non-fiction.



'Representation in Fiction (chapter books) remains low and lags significantly behind increases in Picture books and Non-Fiction.'

The genres of horror and sci-fi were particularly under represented.



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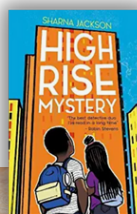
Throughout the report, reference is made to the quality of the representation seen in the submitted selection of books. Some was problematic or poorly executed whilst in other books it was seen to be nuanced with well-developed characters and plots. This is something to be mindful of when building our book collections.

When reflecting on our own shelves... What representation do we have there? Do we have breadth and balance across genres? Can all our children both see themselves in books and have windows into world and lives different from their own? Do we consider and invest in 'own voices' authors? Do we consider both conscious and incidental representation? Do we have conversations with our class about the representation and under representation of ethnic groups in books?

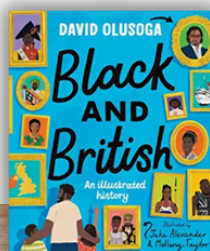
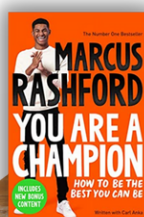
MY RECOMMENDATIONS



PICTURE BOOKS



CHAPTER BOOKS



NON-FICTION