



# THE POWER OF BOOKS



# EXPLORING THE POWER OF BOOKS

We all know the power that books can harness, but how often do we recognise the need for diversity and inclusion in the books we have available for children?



Literature can educate, enrich and enable children and young people. “When books are within reach, a world of possibilities opens up. Books unlock new ideas. They help people think in new ways.” (Bookaid 2024).



Books should reflect the society in which we live, they should empower, not disempower. Children’s books should be representative of the culturally diverse world around us, and children should all be able to recognise themselves in some of the literature they access.

A study by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education found that in 2021 the percentage of books published which include a main character who is from a minority ethnic background was only 9%. Within the same time period, 33.9% of children in Primary Education were from minority ethnic backgrounds.



1. [bookaid.org/the-power-of-books/](https://bookaid.org/the-power-of-books/)

2. [clpe.org.uk/research/clpe-reflecting-realities-survey-ethnic-representation-within-uk-childrens-literature-2017](https://clpe.org.uk/research/clpe-reflecting-realities-survey-ethnic-representation-within-uk-childrens-literature-2017)

# EXPLORING THE POWER OF BOOKS

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Whether you are a Community Sponsorship volunteer, a teacher or a parent, we encourage you to ask yourself 'could my book corner be more diverse and inclusive?'

On the following pages we will explore some examples of Early Years literature tackling diversity, either through their topics or their representation of black and minority ethnic groups.



Throughout this resource, we will also explore books on important topics such as:

**FEELINGS**

**LONELINESS**

**LOSS**

**FAMILIES**

**MIGRATION**

**COMMUNITY**

**RELIGION**

**CULTURE**

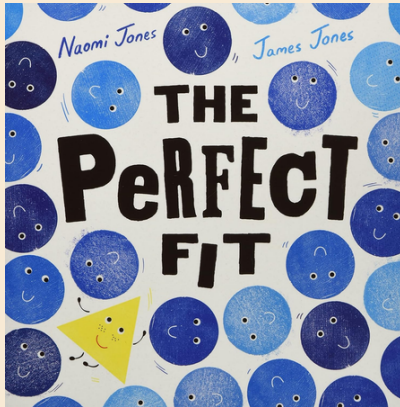
**REFUGEE JOURNEY**

# TOPIC: DIVERSITY



## THE PERFECT FIT

Naomi & James Jones



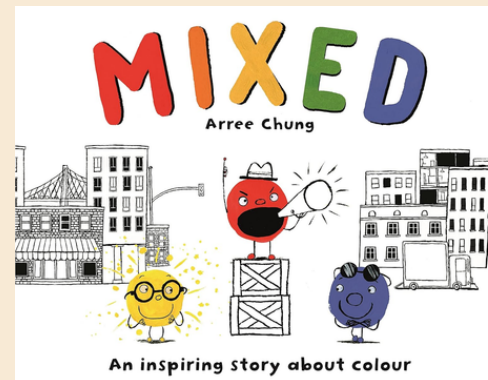
Triangle doesn't roll like the circles, or stack like the squares. So she sets off to find some friends who are exactly like her. But when she finds the other triangles, there is still something missing.

This is a lovely book which highlights in child friendly language why we need diversity in the world.

## MIXED

Arree Chung

Mixed is a brilliant book about embracing and accepting the uniqueness of every human. The colours overcome their differences and learn to work together. This book celebrates our differences and the amazing possibilities they bring.



## WE ALL BELONG

Alex Goss



If you look closely, you soon will see, no one looks the same as me.

In this book the author focuses on a group of friends who compare their similarities and differences.

We All Belong explores diversity, race and empathy.



# TOPIC: RACE



## OUR SKIN

Megan Madison, Jessica Ralli & Isabel Roxas



A brilliant board book to help introduce the topic of race to young children and provide space for conversation.

This book was developed by experts in the field of early childhood and activism against injustice.

## I AM WHOLE

Shola Oz

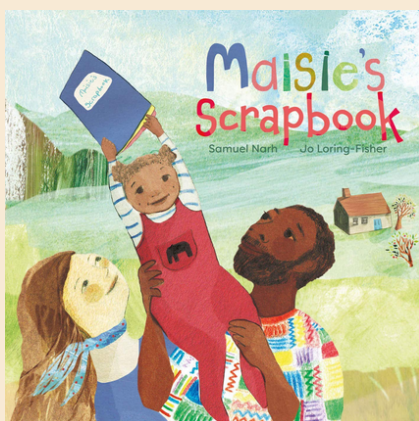
I Am Whole is based on a multi-racial family who bring together their languages, backgrounds, and cultures in the upbringing of their daughter.

Shola does a great job of highlighting the richness involved in the meeting of different cultures and how impactful this is on children.



## MAISIE'S SCRAPBOOK

Samuel Narh



Maisie's parents come from different places. Her Mama wears linen and plays the viola. Her Dada wears kente cloth and plays the marimba.

A beautiful book embracing the joyous combination of multi-racial families sharing snippets of their culture.

# TOPIC: REFUGEE JOURNEY & MIGRATION

## COMING TO ENGLAND

Floella Benjamin



A beautiful book full of hope, love, and determination, An inspiring, true story of Baroness Floella Benjamin: from Trinidad, to London as part of the Windrush generation, to the House of Lords.

## THE DAY THE WAR CAME

Nicola Davies

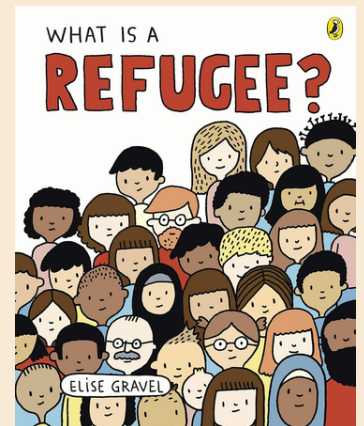


A powerful explorative tool for explaining the ongoing refugee crisis to children. Nicola explores how quickly things can change and how your world can be turned upside down in the blink of an eye.

## WHAT IS A REFUGEE?

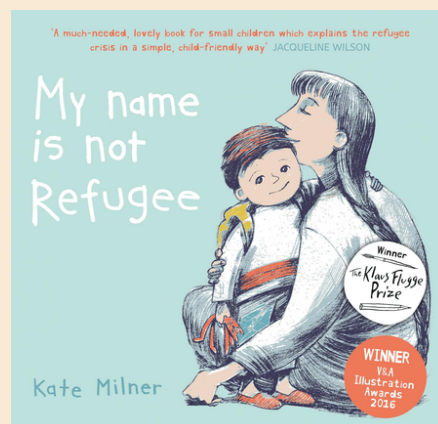
Elise Gravel

In this picture book author Elise Gravel explores what it means to be a refugee and introduces such an important topic to young children.



## MY NAME IS NOT REFUGEE

Kate Milner



A powerful and emotive book which explores a child thinking about the journey he is about to take with his mother.

This book cleverly draws the reader in whilst navigating each step of the journey and what this looks like for the child and family.

This book prompts children to think about what it may be like to be faced with war and the huge decisions it brings.

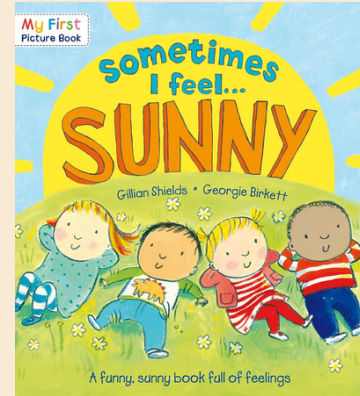
# TOPIC: FEELINGS



## SOMETIMES I FEEL SUNNY

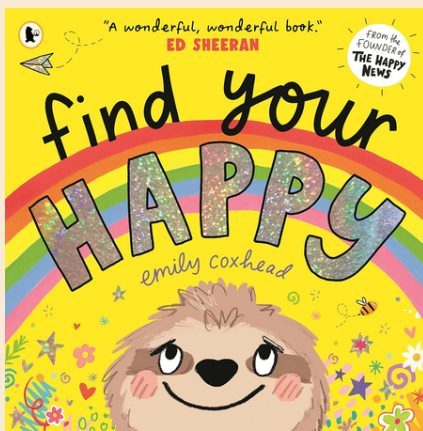
Gillian Shields

In this book the author explores some of the emotions children may face each day and helps children to put language to their feelings.



## FIND YOUR HAPPY

Emily Coxhead



In this beautifully illustrated book, Emily enables the reader to learn and understand why they feel how they feel.

This book looks at ways for us to find our happy when our other emotions are intense.

## THE COLOUR MONSTER

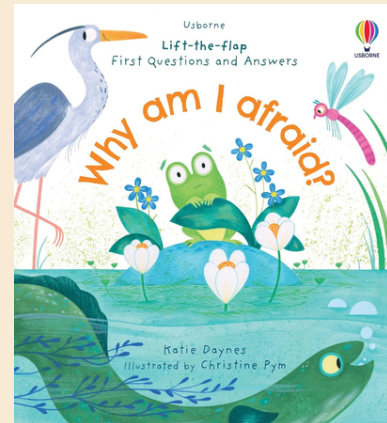
Anna Llenas

A creative way of exploring feelings through colour. Anna introduces the idea of multiple feelings at once and how to feel a little less 'mixed up'.



## WHY AM I AFRAID?

Katie Daynes



A lift-the-flap book which is part of the 'first questions' series. The book follows frogs as they explore why they feel afraid, what fear feels like, and how to feel less scared.



# TOPIC: FAMILIES



## MY MAGIC FAMILY

Lotte Jeffs

The main character has two mothers, and wonders if her friends at nursery have two mothers too. Together the children explore their families with the power of imagination and realise how magic all of their families are.



## ALL ABOUT FAMILIES

Usborne

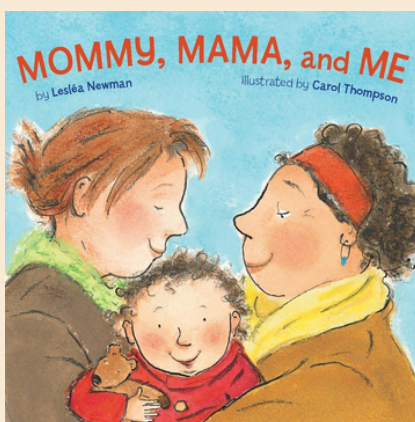


A brilliantly illustrated book which celebrates the diversity of families and highlights how families may change over time.

A great literary example of how families come in all different shapes and sizes. This book includes lone-parent, adoptive, foster, divorced, and step families as well as many others.

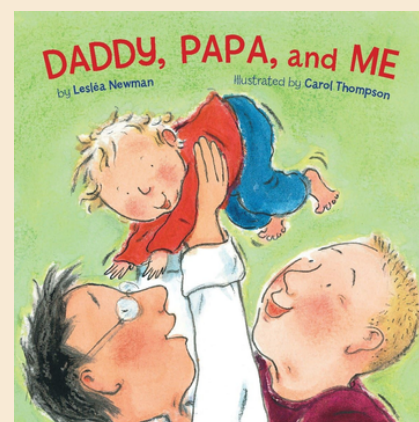
## MOMMY, MAMA AND ME

Leslea Newman



## DADDY, PAPA AND ME

Leslea Newman



Leslea has published two brilliant board books featuring the loving bond between same-sex parents and their child.

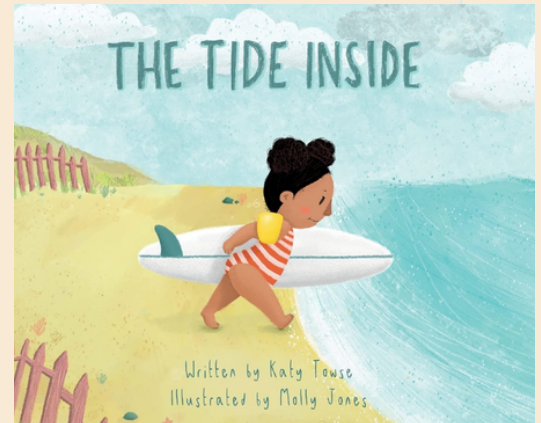
# TOPIC: LOSS AND LONELINESS



## THE TIDE INSIDE

Katy Towse

The Tide Inside explores the feelings that eb and flow after bereavement. Written by a mother who has first hand experience of navigating the emotions faced by her children experiencing family loss.



## THE INVISIBLE STRING

Katie Daynes



Parents, educators, therapists, and social workers alike have declared The Invisible String the perfect tool for coping with all kinds of separation anxiety, loss, and grief.

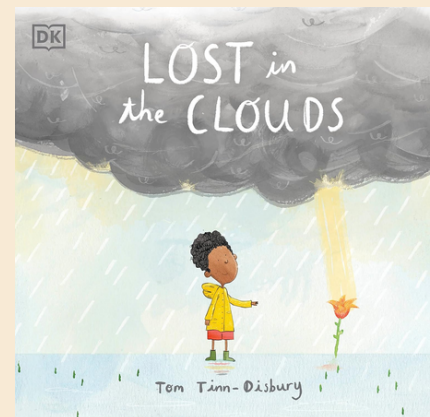
Katie captures the essence of love, connection and an unbreakable bond in a way children can relate to.

## LOST IN THE CLOUDS

Tom Tinn-Disbury

A moving and sensitively written picture book depicting a child navigating their emotions after the death of their mother.

This book offers a space for conversation around the feelings of loss and how they may change moment to moment.





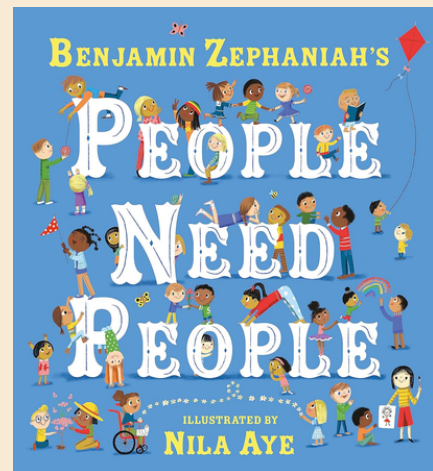
# TOPIC: COMMUNITY



## PEOPLE NEED PEOPLE

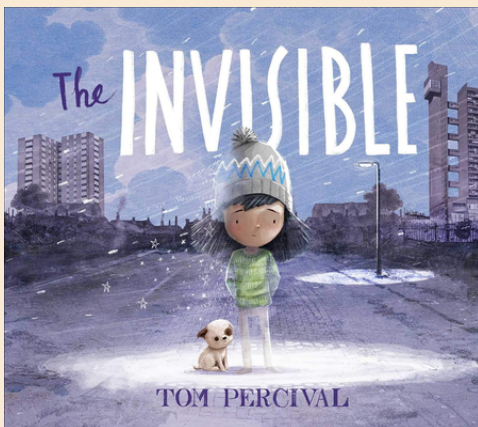
Benjamin Zephaniah

A fabulous representation of why we need one another in this world. This book explores friendship, love, and the need for community in order for us to thrive.



## THE INVISIBLE

Tom Percival



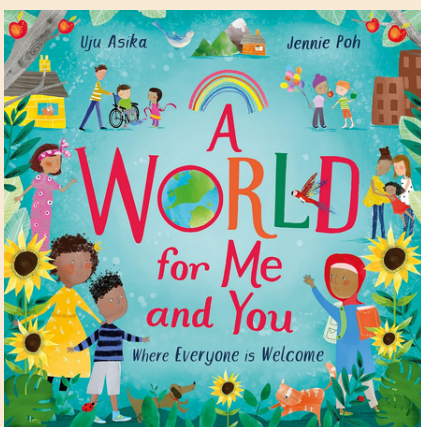
The author beautifully captures the feelings involved in not feeling seen. This is an important story about the need for community and truly seeing those around us,

## ALL ARE WELCOME

Alexandra Penfold & Suzanne Kaufman

## A WORLD FOR ME AND YOU

Uju Asika



This joyful picture book encourages children to imagine the world as a vast library, with room on the shelves for everybody's story. It is a celebration of our incredibly diverse world.

A lovely picture book exploring the strength in diversity by following a group of children on a day at school and the power of friendship and welcome.

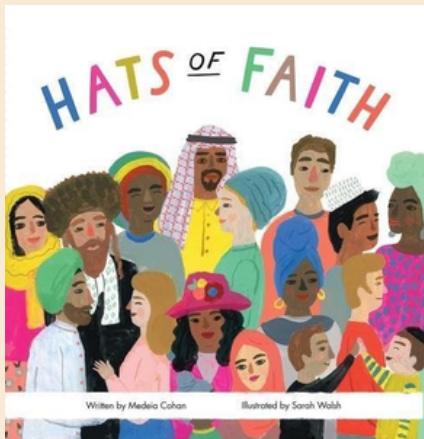




# TOPIC: RELIGION, CULTURE & TRADITION

## HATS OF FAITH

Medeia Cohan

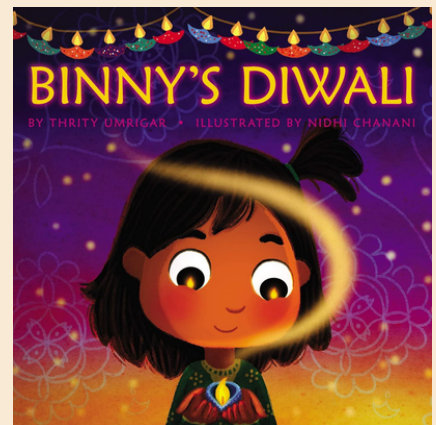


A fantastic book which introduces the idea of different religions wearing different headwear. The author includes the names of the headwear in phonetic language to help children learn pronunciations. Medeia inspires children to understand and respect different faiths and customs.

## BINNY'S DIWALI

Thrity Umrigar

Binny shares the joy of Diwali and her family traditions with her classmates. Thrity offers a lovely lesson on Diwali and the traditional food of jalebis and pedas.



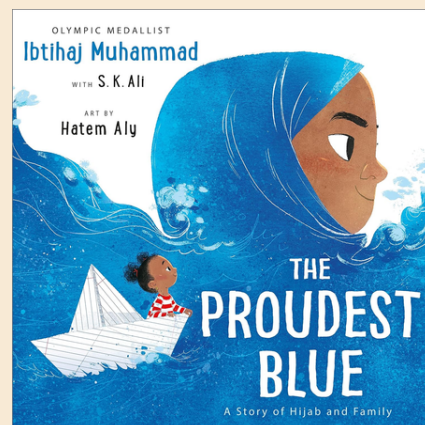
## THE KINDEST RED

Ibtihaj Muhammad and S.K.Ali



## THE PROUDEST BLUE

Ibtihaj Muhammad and S.K.Ali



This pair of books follow two sisters, Faizah and Asiya, as they navigate criticism and unkind words around Asiya and her hijab. Important and uplifting stories about celebrating each other's differences and similarities.