We are EdTrust

Analyzing Representational Balance in English Language Arts Curricula

FIERCE ADVOCATES

for education equity and justice for students of color and students from low-income families

Equity-Driven • Data-Centered • Student-Focused

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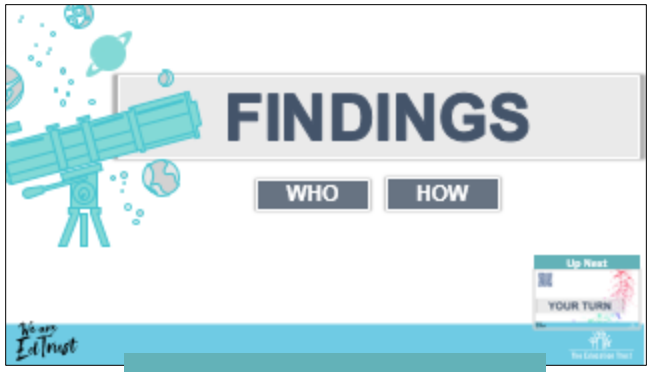
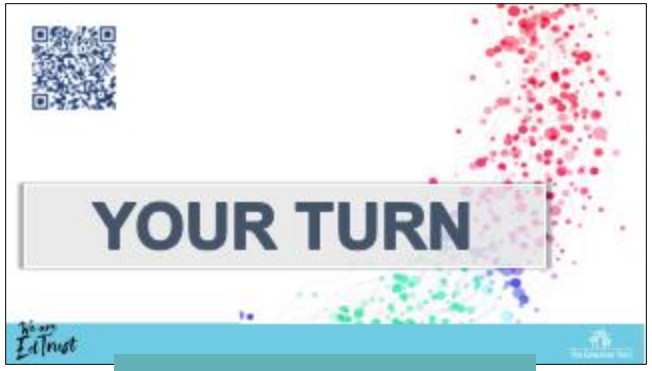
Today's Agenda

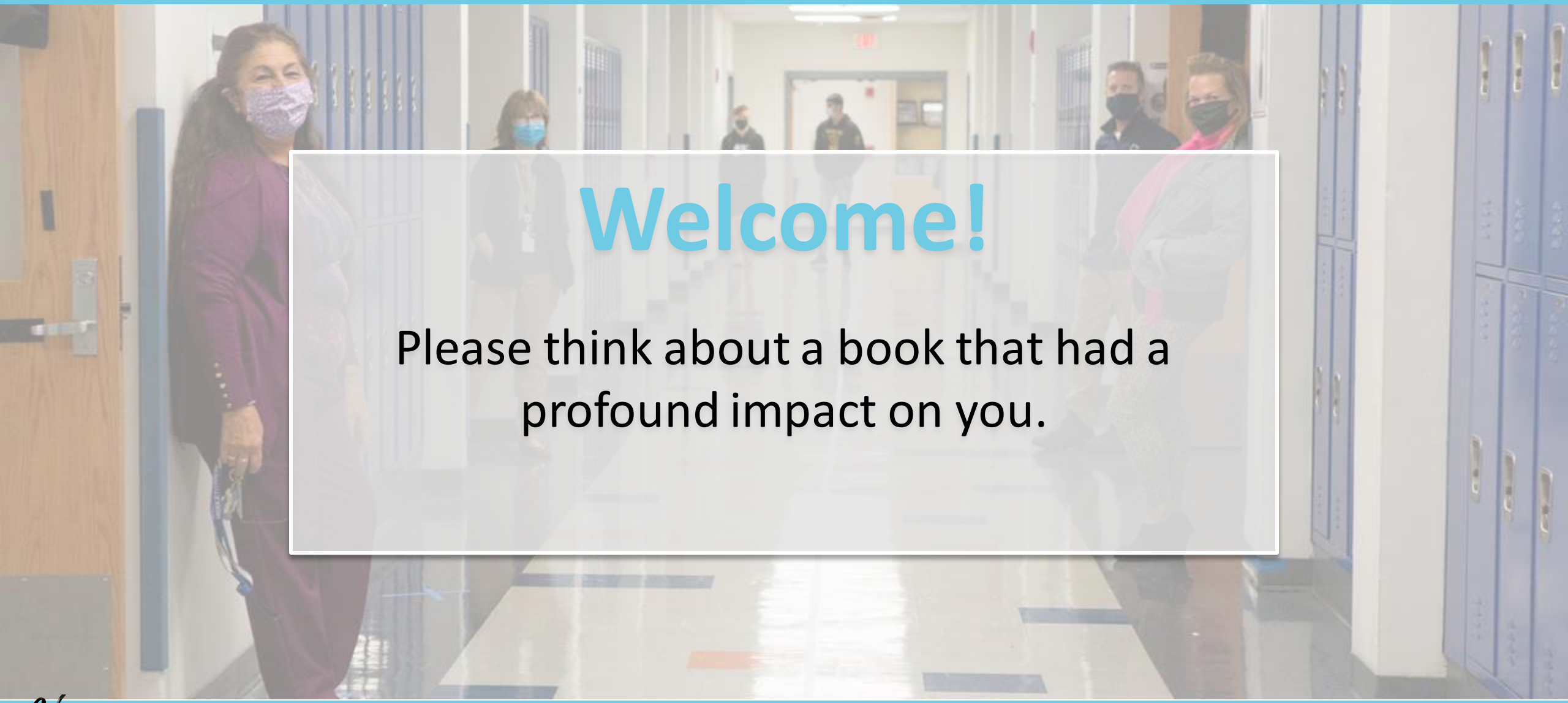
10 Minutes



15 Minutes



15 Minutes



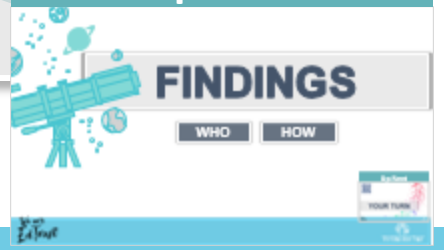
Welcome!

Please think about a book that had a profound impact on you.

THE FRAMEWORK

Tool for Representational Balance

Up Next



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PEOPLE

GROUPS

TOPICS

PEOPLE

Curriculum Analysis Key Questions: People

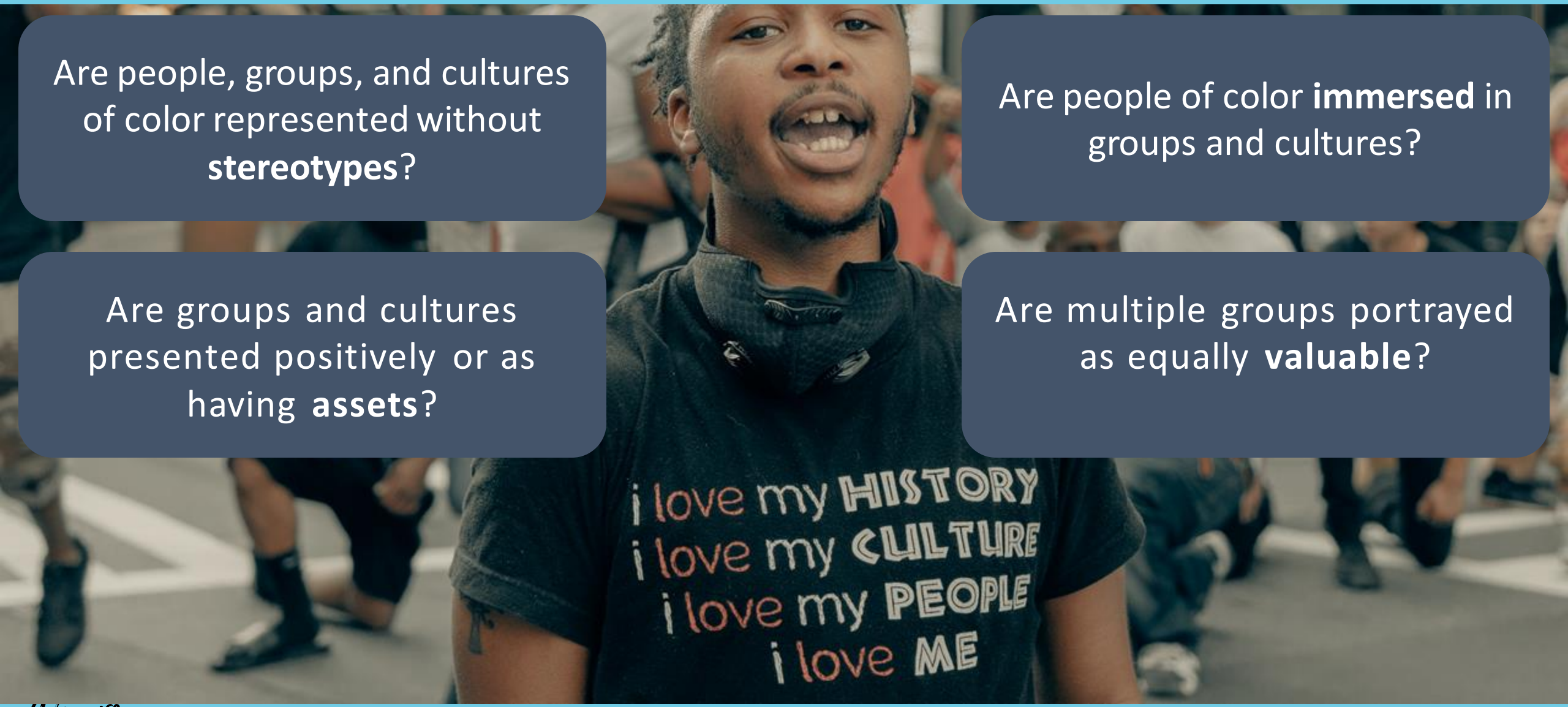
Are people of color **multidimensional**?

Do people of color have **agency**?

Are people of color **positively influential**?

GROUPS

Curriculum Analysis Key Questions: Groups



Are people, groups, and cultures of color represented without **stereotypes**?

Are people of color **immersed** in groups and cultures?

Are groups and cultures presented positively or as having **assets**?

Are multiple groups portrayed as equally **valuable**?

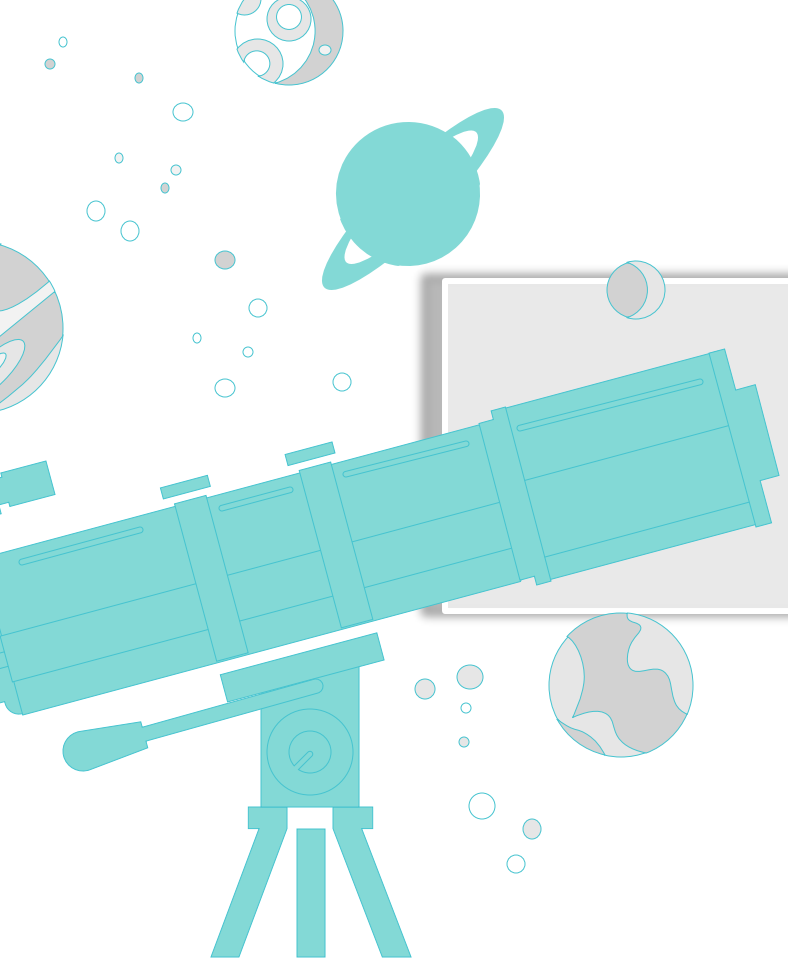
TOPICS

Curricula Analysis Findings: Topics

Are historical and social topics presented without **sanitization**?

Do historical and social topic presentations include the **perspectives** of people of color?

Is there a **connection** between historical and social topic presentations and the real experiences of students?



FINDINGS

WHO

HOW

Up Next

YOUR TURN

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Curricula Analysis Findings: Authors

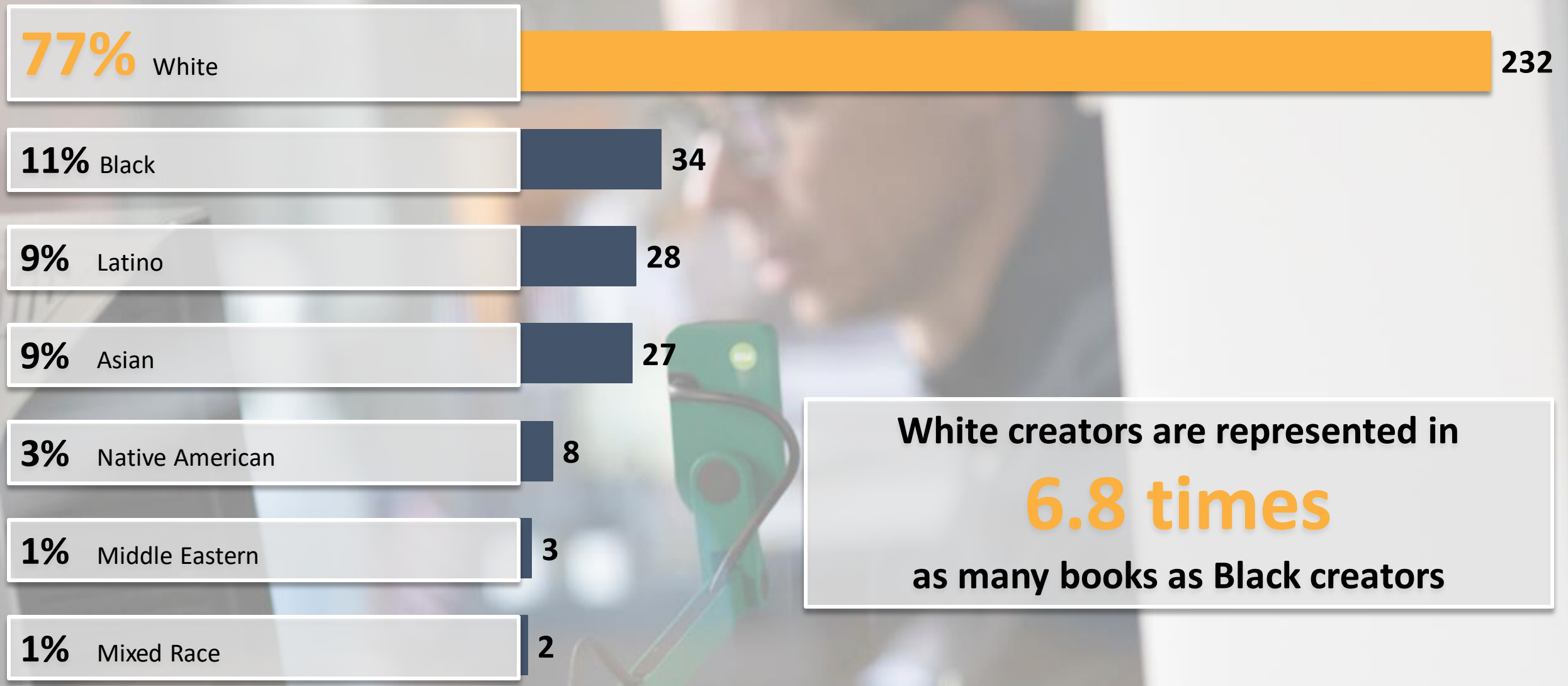
WHO

Curricula Analysis Findings: Authors

232 of 300

WHO

Curricula Analysis Findings: Authors



White creators are represented in

6.8 times

as many books as Black creators

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Curricula Analysis Findings: People

Curricula Analysis Findings: People

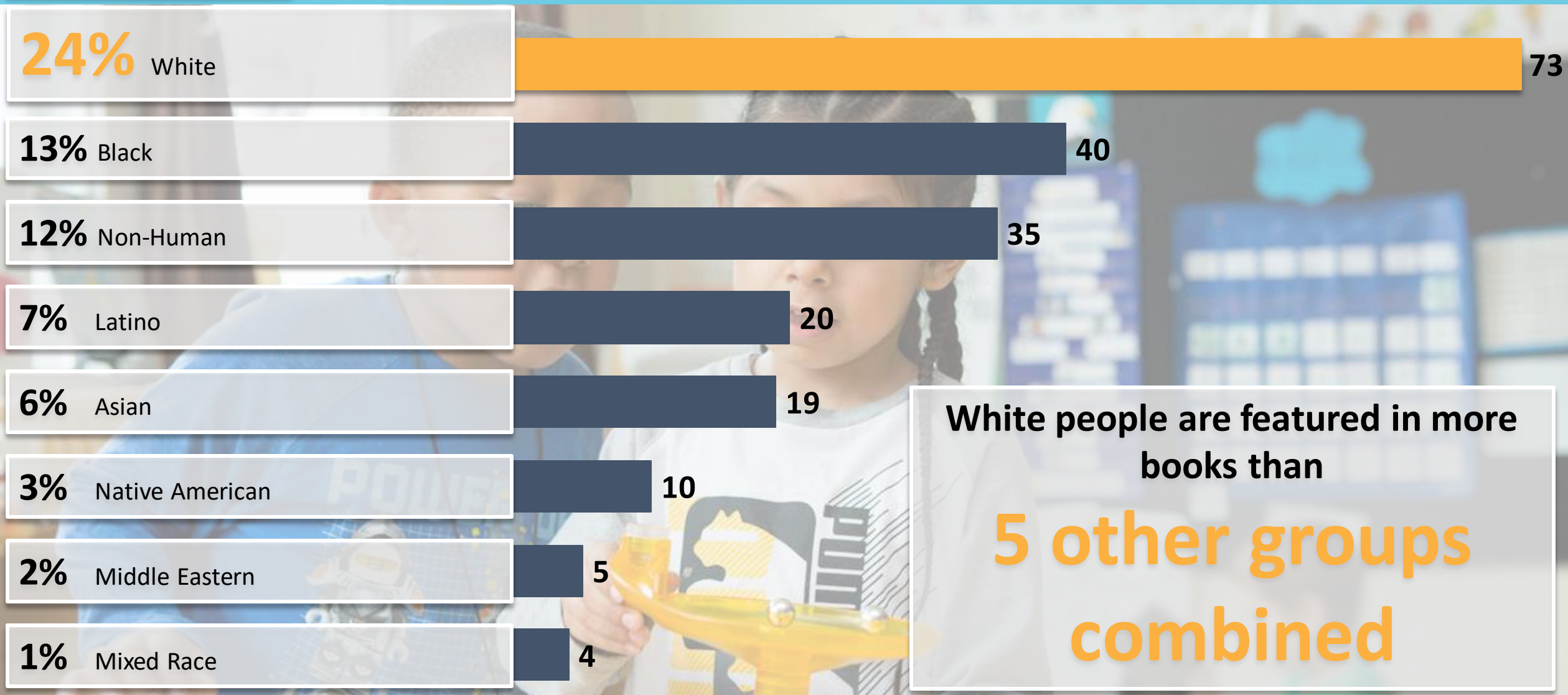
White

Black

Non-Human

WHO

Curricula Analysis Findings: People



White people are featured in more books than

5 other groups combined

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HOW

COMPLEX

PARTIAL

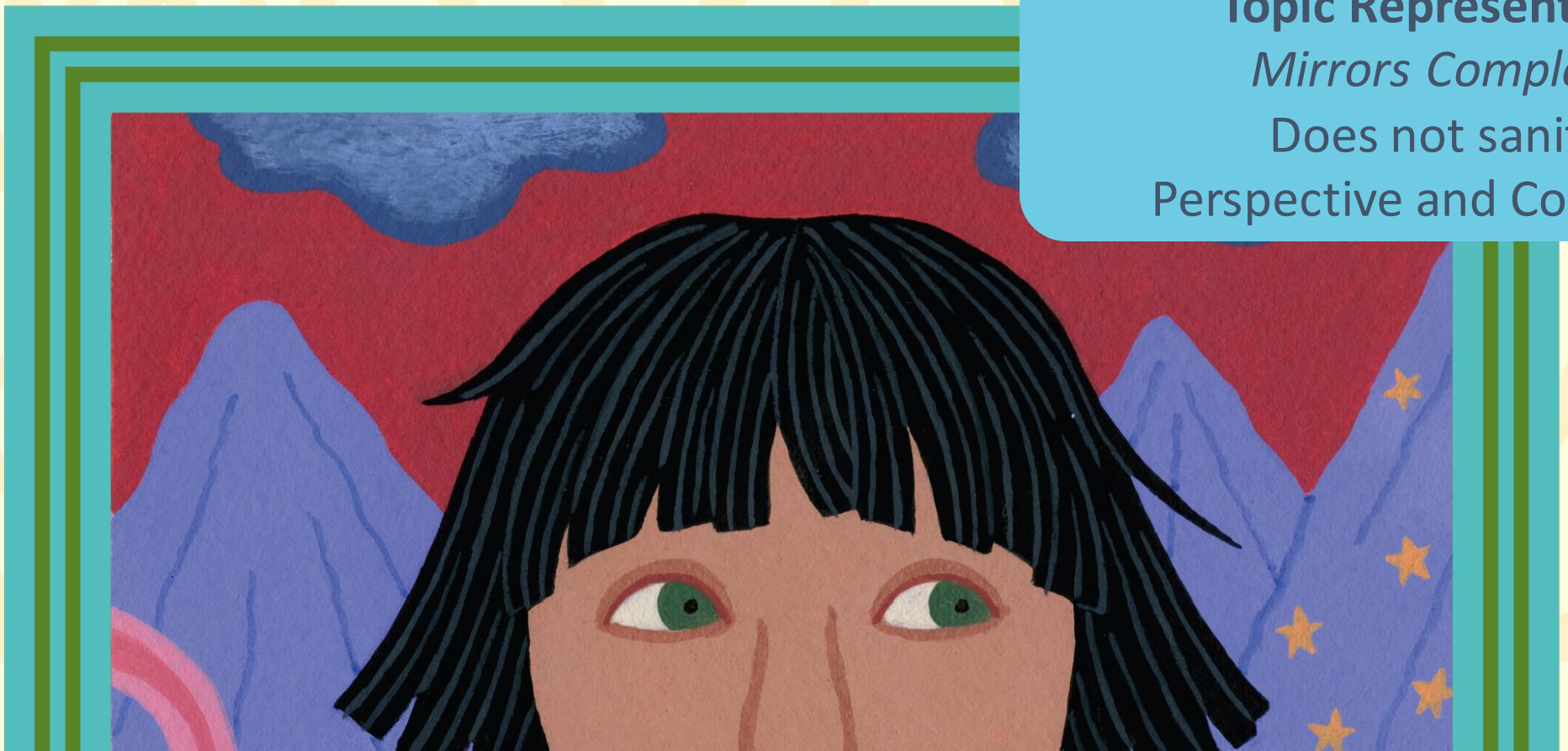
LIMITED

HOW

HOW

Nasreen's Secret School

A TRUE STORY FROM AFGHANISTAN



Topic Representation

Mirrors Complexity

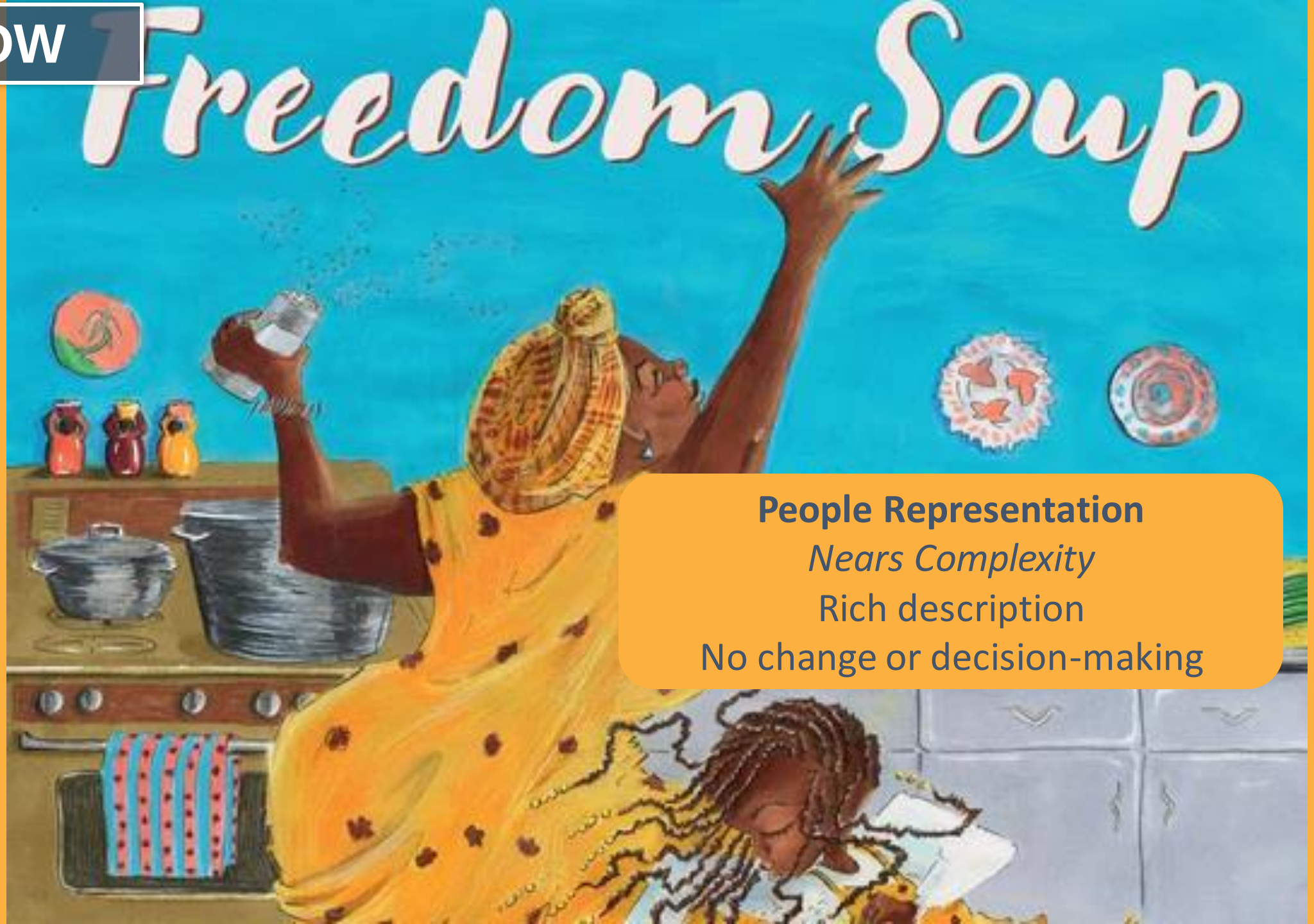
Does not sanitize

Perspective and Connection

HOW

PARTIAL

HOW



People Representation

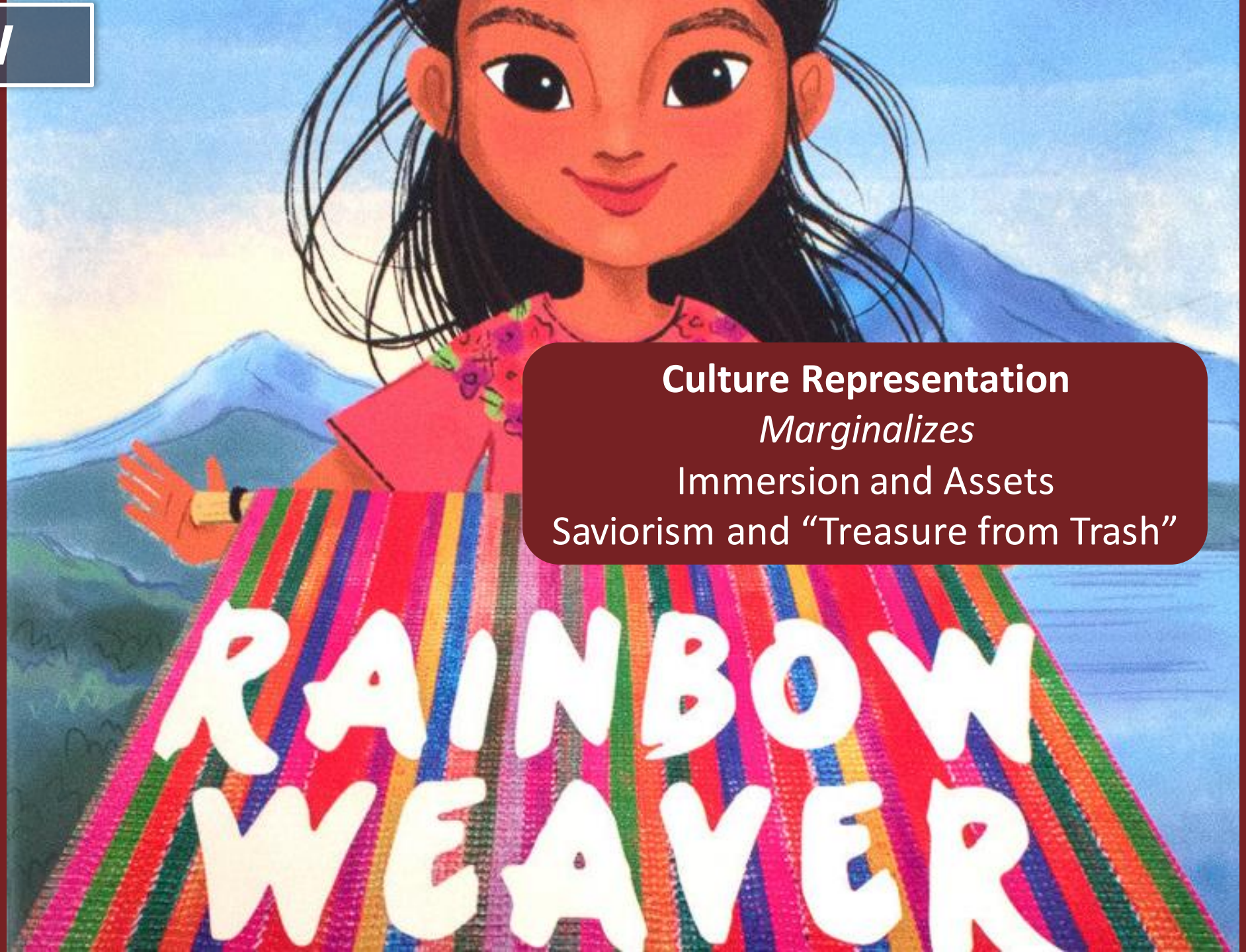
Nears Complexity

Rich description

No change or decision-making

HOW

HOW



Culture Representation

Marginalizes

Immersion and Assets

Saviorism and “Treasure from Trash”

Curricula Analysis Findings: People

HOW

Curricula Analysis Findings: People

124 out of **280** people centered in texts are people of color

53%

are given **complex** representation

3%

are given **partial** representation

44%

are given **limited** representation

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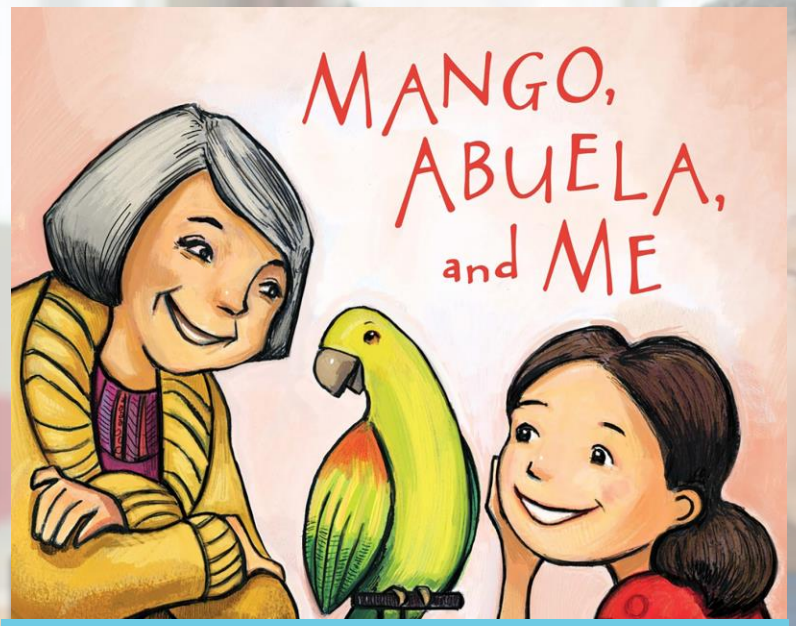
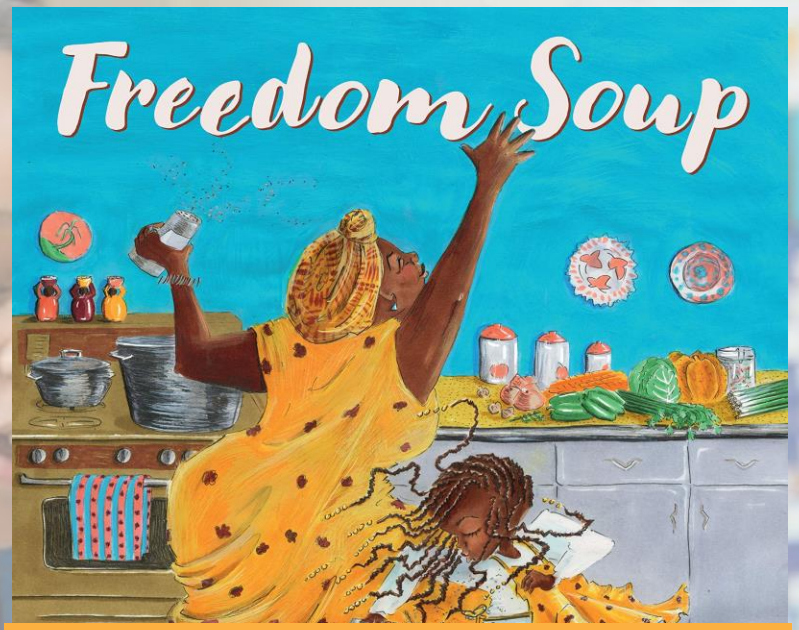
HOW

Curricula Analysis Findings: People



Mia and her abuela learn from one another and grow together, resulting in a deep and loving bond.



Belle's joy is richly described, but she is not shown to change or make decisions that affect others.

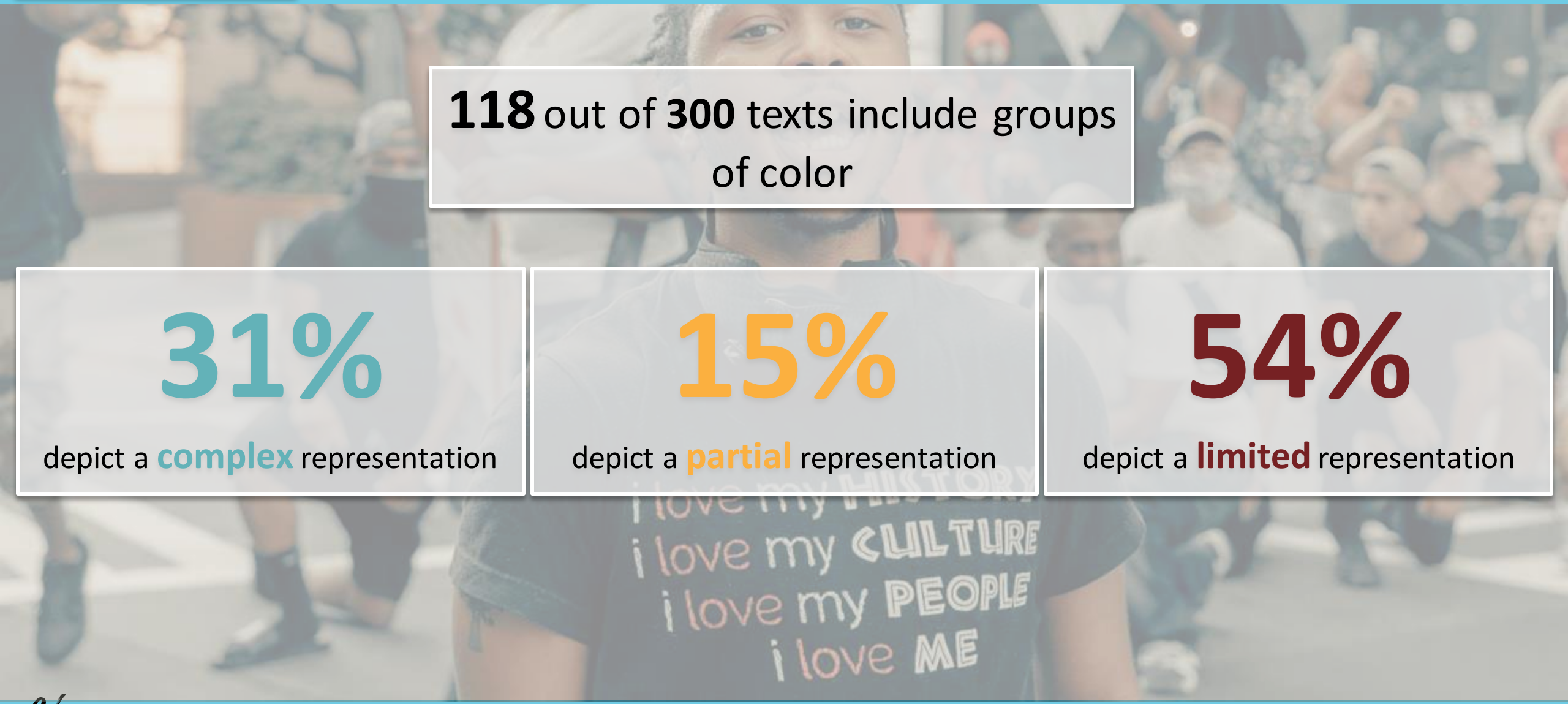
Tessie and Mamma joyously dance in the rain with neighbors, but there is little description of them as individuals or of their effect on others.

HOW

Curricula Analysis Findings: Groups

HOW

Curricula Analysis Findings: Groups



118 out of **300** texts include groups of color

31%

depict a **complex** representation

15%

depict a **partial** representation

54%

depict a **limited** representation

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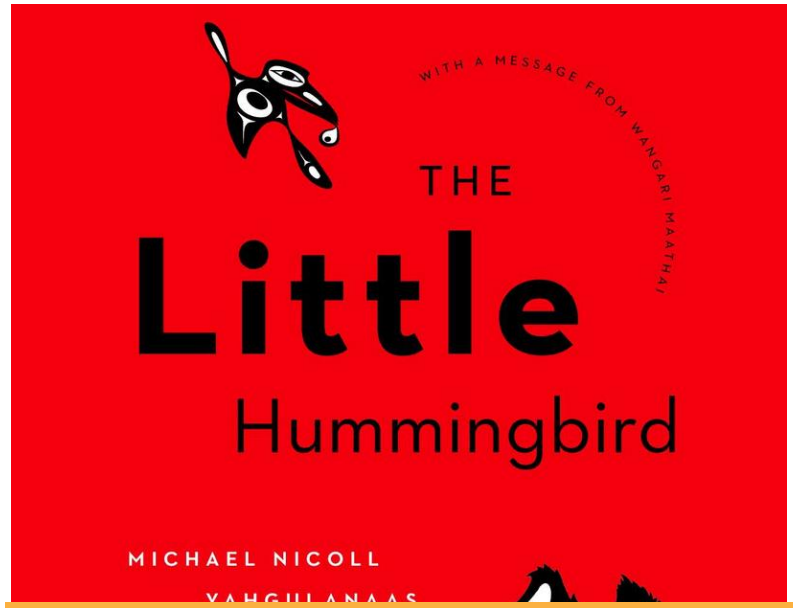
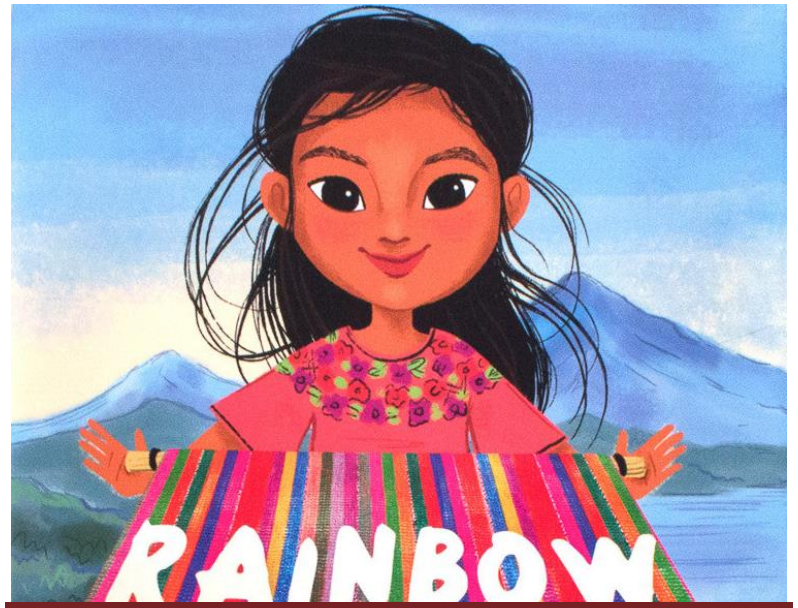
HOW

Curricula Analysis Findings: Groups

The reader is a witness to the hopes and nurturing community around a family and their newborn baby through a Navajo tradition.



Values and cultural practices from Haida culture are positively described but without any connection to the people at the center of that culture.



A detailed description of the multigenerational practice of weaving is enriched by Spanish translation but situated in a “treasure from trash” storyline, where the value of weaving depends on the interests of White tourists.

HOW

Curricula Analysis Findings: Topics

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HOW

Curricula Analysis Findings: Topics

137 out of **300** texts include historical or social topics

16%

provide a **complex** representation

4%

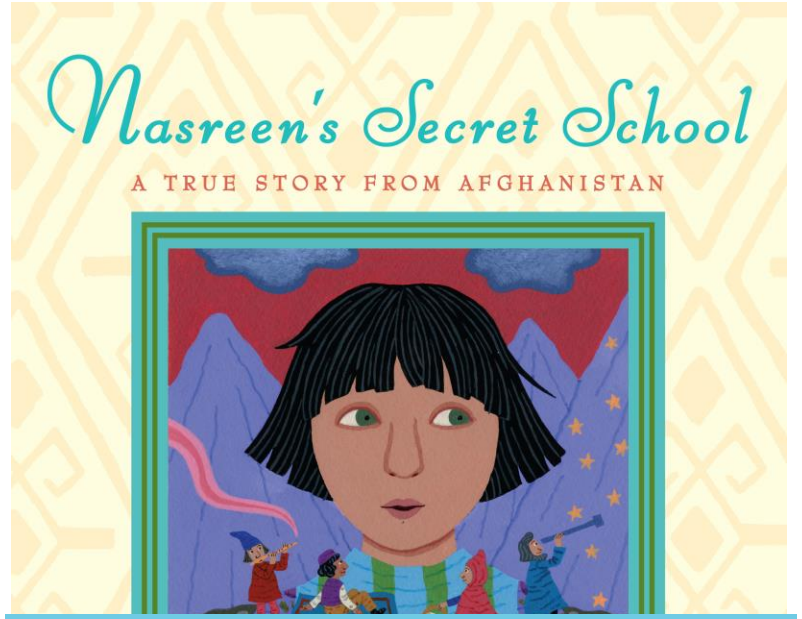
provide a **partial** representation

80%

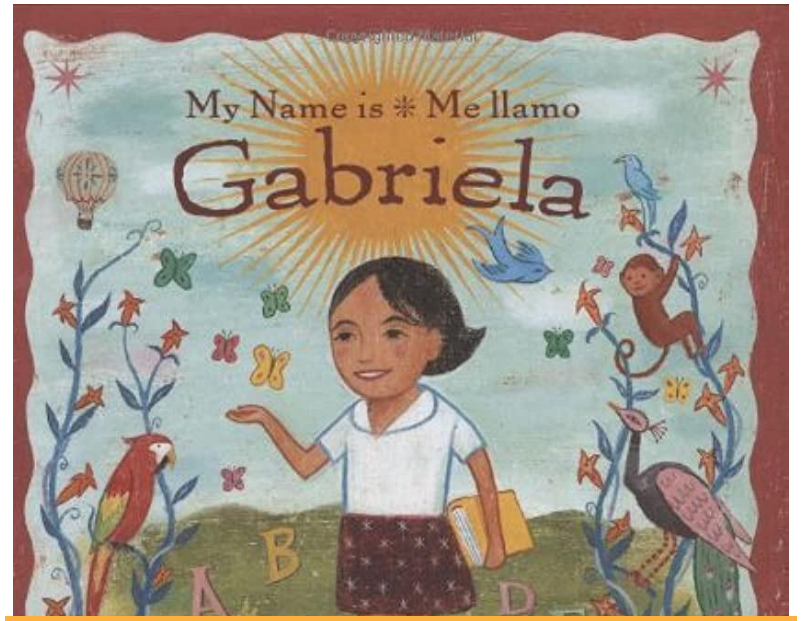
provide a **limited** representation

HOW

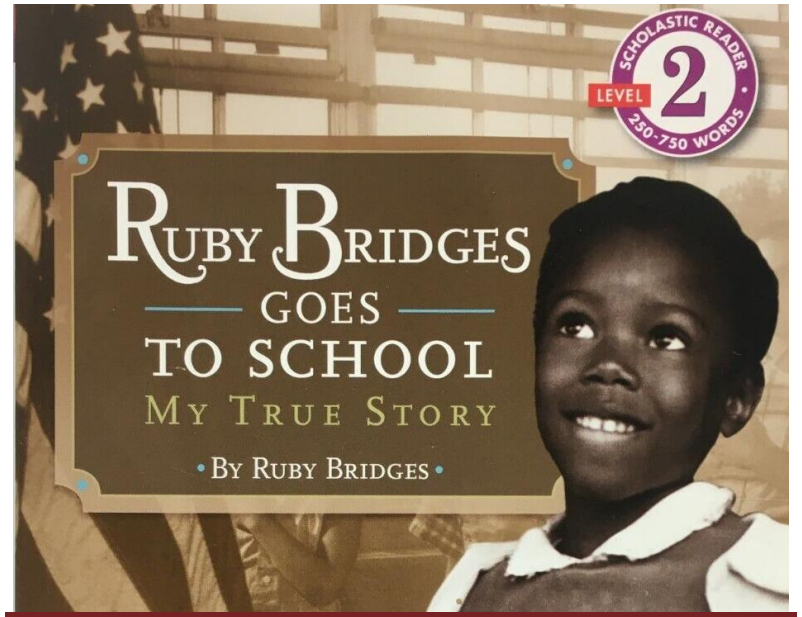
Curricula Analysis Findings: Topics



The denial of education to girls and women is shown as an enactment of societal structure through government policies and violent enforcement.



Gabriela Mistral broke barriers as the first Nobel-Prize winning Latina woman, but those barriers remain hidden in this story.



Legal segregation is framed as an individual problem--as people thinking "black people and white people should not be friends," which can be solved if we are kind to one another.

YOUR TURN

Tool Example: Tito Puente: Mambo King, Rey del Mambo

Tito's dream finally came true when he led his very own big band—the Tito Puente Orchestra. He wrote music and recorded more than one hundred albums! He made music with Celia Cruz, Santana, and La Lupe.

El sueño de Tito al fin se hizo realidad cuando logró dirigir su propia orquesta: la Orquesta de Tito Puente. ¡Tito escribió su propia música y grabó más de cien álbumes! Hizo música con Celia Cruz, Santana y La Lupe.

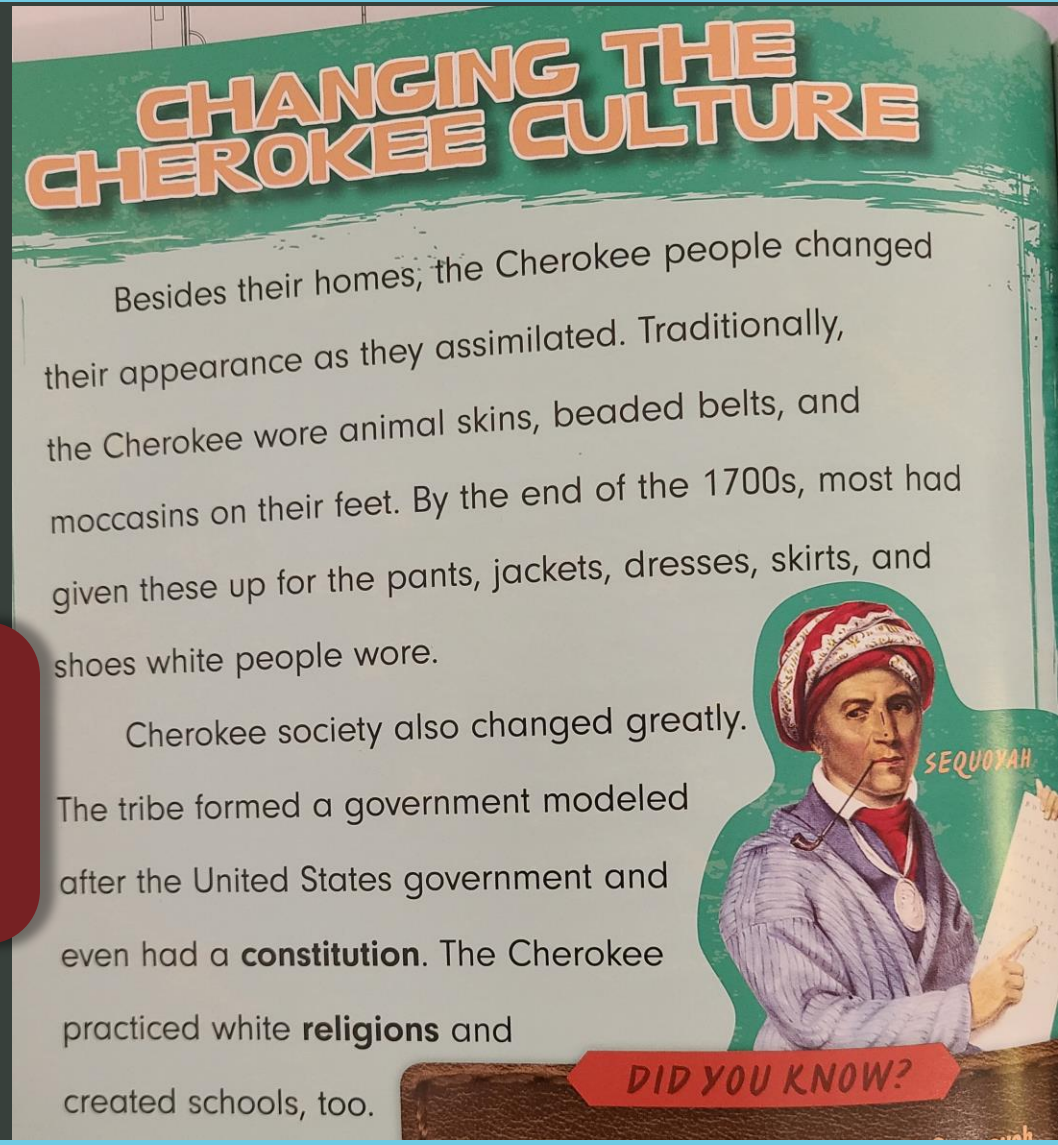
What about the text or image gives a sense of character dimension or agency?

Tool Example: We Are Water Protectors

What about the text or image gives a sense of character influence or topic perspective?

Tool Example: The Cherokee People

What about the text gives a sense of group assets, group relationships, or the degree to which a topic is fully presented or minimized?



CHANGING THE CHEROKEE CULTURE

Besides their homes, the Cherokee people changed their appearance as they assimilated. Traditionally, the Cherokee wore animal skins, beaded belts, and moccasins on their feet. By the end of the 1700s, most had given these up for the pants, jackets, dresses, skirts, and shoes white people wore.

Cherokee society also changed greatly. The tribe formed a government modeled after the United States government and even had a **constitution**. The Cherokee practiced white **religions** and created schools, too.

QUESTIONS

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