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Teaching poems by authors of colour at key stage 3: categorising what is taught

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ABSTRACT

This paper draws on a survey conducted in 2020–21 in which 163 secondary English teachers in England named a total of 68 individual poems by poets of colour from the global majority which they taught in Key Stage 3 (students aged 11–14). Using the concepts of framing and mental schemas, we categorised these poems by considering which was the most likely frame or theme under which they would be taught. The largest category was Identity (15 poems), followed by War and Conflict (12 poems) and Racism (11 poems). War and Conflict, together with Love and Relationships (7 poems) are categories which reflect GCSE groups of poems. We suggest that poems by global majority poets which are incorporated into the curriculum are likely to be largely framed as being about race or related issues. The exception is the “strong” framing of the GCSE clusters. We argue that this is a shortfall in the ways in which the curriculum is being diversified. We note the long shadow of “Poetry from Other Cultures” and suggest that we need both more poems from global majority authors and more variety in the themes which they explore.

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Introduction

In this article we draw on a survey conducted between 2020 and 2021, asking teachers in England to report their teaching of texts by authors of colour, to explore the named poems by authors of colour taught to students in Years 7 to 9 (ages 11–14, known as Key Stage 3). Using the concept of “framing” as a means of guiding poetic analysis in the classroom we grouped the 68 poems mentioned into the most likely thematic frame for their use in teaching, and use these frames to consider the ways in which poets of colour are represented in the curriculum.

Poetry is historically the genre in which authors of colour are most represented in the UK and the US; it is a literary genre in which participation can be freely attained via live or performance poetry, and in which publication is lower “risk” than novels as both investment and expected profit are lower. This means that there is a greater variety of poetry by authors of colour from which to choose texts for teaching; poetry is also the place in the

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English curriculum where students are most likely to encounter authors of colour (Elliott et al. 2021). Although fewer than 1% of GCSE students answer on a novel by an author of colour in their examinations, all students will study at least one poem (although in some cases only one) by an author of colour in their poetry clusters. In GCSE English specifications before 2015, students studied a variation on “Poetry from Other Cultures” as part of their poetry anthology, and there is some evidence that these poems are now taught at Key Stage 3 instead (10 poems named by our participants were previously part of AQA’s “Poetry from Other Cultures” anthology). In addition to this strong association between authors of colour and poetry in the English curriculum, we know that both teachers and students find poetry to be particularly challenging (Cremin et al., 2008; Weaven and Clark 2013). This has the potential to place authors of colour in a particular silo of difficulty in the classroom, compounding teacher worries about their knowledge base of texts by authors of colour (Elliott et al. 2021).

In this article we explore the ways in which poems by authors of colour which are reported as being taught at Key Stage 3 in England can be framed, and how that contributes to representation within the classroom. We also consider whether this particular snapshot of the poems which are taught raise a larger issue in relation to poetry in secondary schools.

The concept of framing

We draw here on the concept of mental schemas and pre-reading as outlined by Giovanelli and Mason (2015) and Mason and Giovanelli (2017). Reading in the classroom is usually framed by the pre-reading of others, whether that be the teacher or that supported by resources such as questions at the beginning of a chapter. Students rarely approach a text without some sort of contextual, historical, thematic or other framing given to them by the ways in which the teacher presents them. This means that their reading of a text is not independent, but is directed towards certain points and interpretations.

Literature from other cultures and traditions was embedded into the national curriculum from the outset across all key stages (Blake 2019), and had been noted to be important for children of all ethnicities in the Swann report *Education for All* (Great Britain 1985). This followed a movement towards “relevant” literature teaching through the 1970s and 1980s, and from the later period “there was also discussion of a ‘relevant’ role for poetry in articulating young people’s experiences in contemporary multiracial urban British settings” (Blake 2019, 32). “Poetry from Other Cultures and Traditions” entered the GCSE specification for the Northern Examinations and Assessment Board in 1998, although “other” swiftly became “different” by 2004. Rogers (2015) noted the strong framing provided by the term “Poetry from Other Cultures”, which directs students to concentrate on the “other” and the different. The poems that were taught under this title, or as “Poetry from Different Cultures”, in the GCSE qualifications which preceded the reforms in England in 2015, can be bluntly and cynically reduced to two themes: the difference of life in other countries, e.g. “Night of the Scorpion” by Nissim Esekial, or an identity crisis caused by (im)migration, e.g. “Presents from My Aunts in Pakistan” by Moniza Alvi. The embedding of multicultural poetry into the examination specifications was an important step forward at the time, but the name given to these poems has rapidly dated. The framing has also an impact on the particular poems named and their continued interpretation in the classroom.

One example of the ways in which this frame has persisted in its relevance, despite changes to exam specifications, is the understanding of the poem “Limbo” by “Edward Kamau Braithwaite” (as presented in the AQA anthology of the time). This is in fact an extract from a longer poem called “Caliban”; the true poem title gives a very different framing – that of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* – and this contextual clue changes the readings that may be made. In addition, the poet changed his forename from Edward to Kamau after writing this poem, in order to honour his own cultural identity; his name might be more appropriately given as “Kamau (formerly Edward) Braithwaite” when this poem is cited.

One of the most biting critiques of the “Poetry from Other Cultures” approach and framing has been made by the poet Daljit Nagra, particularly in his poem “Kabba Questions the Ontology of Representation, the Catch 22 for ‘Black’ Writers” which is in the voice of a parent whose child has brought home the GCSE anthology. Kabba objects to the depiction of “*Poems/from Udder Cultures/and Traditions*” which depict “us/as a bunch of Gunga Dins” and asks “My boy, vil he tink ebry new/Barrett-home Muslim hav goat blood-party/barbeque?” (Nagra 2007, 42–3). Nagra has also noted the tensions that exist for him “writing about an Indian community that can’t speak English, on the whole, but my poetry is largely bought and read by a white middle-class audience. That’s unsettling. I’m making fun of my own community, but if they’re not reading the poems what are the politics of that?” (Green 2020, 393–4). He goes on to suggest his role is as “cultural translator” (Green 2020, 394), but it is questionable whether these tensions are brought out in the classroom when his poem “Singh Song” is taught as part of the AQA GCSE anthology.

Elliott (2020) reported some interviews with beginning teachers who identified the use of strong thematic framing as one of the key ways in which students were able to approach poems with confidence; so the themes of GCSE poetry clusters such as “war and conflict” provided a way in for students to begin understanding poems. Participants also saw familiarity with individual poets as a potential supportive contextual framing, giving the example of Carol Ann Duffy encountered at GCSE after being familiarised at KS3. McGuinn (2014) noted the narrow range of categories of poetry which school students were likely to encounter, including love and death, related to the choices made by anthologists and exam boards; Xerri (2017) argues that both anthologies and teachers act as substantial gatekeepers to the world of poetry. Meanwhile, Cremin et al. (2008) suggest that teachers are comfortable with a limited range of poems, and that this limits exploration in the classroom. This lack of “comfort” becomes extremely relevant in relation to the high stakes world of externally examined poetry study, and a common theme in the research literature on poetry teaching is the way that students and teachers use the metaphor of a puzzle, or lock, and believe there is an answer or a key which is usually in the possession of the teacher to give or withhold from students (e.g. Dymoke 2003). Together high-stakes poetry examination and a perception of poetry as difficult have led to a situation where poetry teaching is often knowledge of a poem rather than knowledge of poetry more generally (Marsh 2017). Other authors, such as Lawrence (2020), have noted the potential lack of “authentic engagement” with poems in the classroom.

Linguistic dissidence

It is particularly interesting that poems written in dialect, phonetic spelling, creole, or in distinctively or even parodically Black British voices, including those of Nagra and John Agard, with poems such as “Half-Caste” and “Checkin’ Out Me History’, have been set for GCSE study and are popularly taught, in the context of politicised and inspectorate-enforced emphasis on Standard English for pupils themselves (Cushing 2021; Cushing and Snell 2022). Rachael Gilmour asks what happens “to the idea of language in literature, when the ideological force of English monolingualism comes under pressure from an actually occurring diversity of languages, registers, codes and styles” (2020, p. 3)? In schools the question is flipped: what happens to the idea of language (in literature or in life) when the “actually occurring diversity of languages, registers, codes and styles” comes under pressure from the “ideological force of English monolingualism”, or standard English? Gilmour (2014) argues for close attention to how poets such as Nagra, Agard, Capildeo and others utilise voice and “linguistic dissidence” (p. 355) as important to understanding their craft. However, the poems which are explicitly “writing which is metalinguistically *about* as much as *in* language” (Gilmour 2022, 22) are rarely the ones which are taught in schools. We teach “Checkin’ Out Me History’, not “Mr Oxford Don” by Agard; the one poem in the “other/different cultures” anthologies that did explicitly address language prejudice was an extract from *Unrelated Incidents* by Tom Leonard, a white Scottish poet, commonly known as “The Six O’Clock News”.

Representation within the curriculum

We have previously noted that poetry is the most common way for authors of colour to be present in the English curriculum, and also that adding individual poems is one of the easiest routes to (nominally) diversifying a curriculum (Elliott et al. 2021). In the survey that was partially reported in that study, and which is also the basis of this article, one White secondary survey respondent said “I genuinely believed the only literature written by people of colour was poetry. I understand why poetry is often used to explore different experiences – it is brief, deep, well-attuned to capture a multifaceted snapshot of a lived experience. But it never gives Black, Asian or minority ethnic literature a chance to breathe” (Elliott et al. 2021, 28). This was more recently echoed by Saunders (2022) in her poem in this journal, “The problem with poetry”.

A number of British Black and Asian writers have reflected on the lack of diverse representation in school curricula more generally (Olufemi, 2019; Ogunbiyi, 2019; Hirsch 2018). Ogunbiyi noted in particular the problems with the types of representation available: “The only times you might see someone who looks like you represented in your curriculum will be at the mention of slavery, colonising, lynching and maybe political corruption in African states – a dehumanising experience” (2019, p. 70). In recent years the importance of representation outside histories and stories of violence and racism has become better recognised in educational research (e.g. Elliott et al. 2021; Oladehin 2020; Mohamud and Whitburn 2016). Dawson has also pointed out the importance of “renewal” in the texts by authors of colour in the curriculum, rather than one or two texts becoming entrenched and lone representatives (Dawson 2009, 196), echoing Guillory’s arguments about the social, dynamic nature of canon formation (Guillory 1993). Similarly, Nelson-

Addy et al. (2018) argued that “we should seek further literary representations of the ethnic involvement in British history, in addition to the same, recycled, isolated rap-style poems like ‘Half-Caste’ and ‘Checkin’ out mi History’ by John Agard” (p. 198).

Relevant here is also a term drawn from Canadian multiculturalism, that of “recognition”:

The thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognitions or its absence, often by the *misrecognition* of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being. (Taylor 1994, 25)

Texts within the curriculum, and the way that they are framed, directly contribute to the recognition or misrecognition of people or groups of people, impacting on the ways in which students from Global Majority Ethnic backgrounds experience school and the curriculum. To return to the argument of Nelson-Addy et al., this raises the question of whether texts from ethnically diverse authors should be about their efforts to assimilate with “British white norms or whether we should seek literature that deals with ... everyday common experiences that do not strive to highlight the differences or the efforts to be treated equally” (Nelson-Addy et al. 2018, 198).

Methodology

The data considered here were part of those collected via an online survey which asked teachers about various aspects of their teaching of ethnically diverse authors and texts in English. Participation was voluntary and respondents were generated via a number of different online methods. Ethical clearance was obtained through the University of xxxx ethical procedures (approval number ED-CIA-20-226). The data here relate exclusively to the secondary respondents in England ($n = 163$), the vast majority of whom (115) taught at a state comprehensive. The survey was open from August 2020 until April 2021. Postcodes were collected to check for clustering of participants in schools; 8 schools had 2 respondents each and 2 had 3 respondents each. The schools were geographically distributed across the length and breadth of England. Participants had a wide range of length of professional experience, including a fifth who had been teaching for over 20 years. A limitation must be noted that a volunteer sample on this topic is likely to comprise teachers who are sympathetic to the diversification of curriculum. Similarly in this study we must acknowledge that we are taking as one body of work poems by authors of widely differing origins, ethnicities and experiences and that, for example, adding more poems by African-American writers is not necessarily helping to diversify the literature curriculum a great deal.

The survey comprised a mixture of closed and open questions, including asking participants to list the texts they taught by authors of colour for each year group. For the data reported here we recorded all the individual poems named for years 7, 8 and 9. There were 69 individual poems named; one of which we could not identify, and which might have been a typographical error. A list of the poems can be found in Appendix A. Before analysis we discussed the existence of two categories of “poetry from other

cultures” in the legacy GCSE specifications, namely “life in other countries” and “the effect of immigration on identity”. Utilising the concept of framing identified above, we then separately categorised the poems before reviewing the categorisation together.

Both authors coded 38 of the poems the same independently; the highest levels of agreement were for those coded “war and conflict” and “identity”. On the remaining 30 poems we reached agreement with a short discussion. Our aim was not to achieve high levels of inter-coder agreement but to utilise our different knowledges and backgrounds, and our instinctive responses, to find the most plausible set of categorisations. We follow Richards (2015) in seeing strength in our differing initial understandings.

Positionality Both authors are White and this impacts on our analysis of the data. Victoria is a former secondary teacher and English Education academic whose research includes representation of race and gender in the curriculum. Matthew is a former primary school teacher who continues to work within the primary sector with a focus on reading and children’s literature.

We believe that it is important not to leave analysis of racism and race to those who are racialised as Black or Brown; it is the responsibility of all who believe in equity. We acknowledge the limitations of our viewpoints; we also acknowledge the fact that the White gaze is a major shaper of our curriculum, pedagogy and analysis in the English classroom.

Findings

The largest proportion (72) of participants said that the department chose which texts were taught at KS3, 54 said the head of department, 38 chose their own texts for KS3, 10 said they were chosen by the multi-academy trust, and 34 reported it was a mixture of these. A number of respondents said that they were teaching the “old AQA poetry from other/different cultures” anthology or enumerated the names of the poems from one of the clusters in that anthology, or a handful of those poems. We did not use the “Poetry from Other/Different Cultures” anthology as a clustering mechanism. Twelve poems which were either historically or currently GCSE poems were mentioned a total of 46 times in the survey; the most popular were John Agard’s “Half-Caste” taught by 10 people, and Grace Nichols’ “Island Man” and Moniza Alvi’s “Presents from my aunts in Pakistan”, each taught by 8 respondents. No other poems from outside the “Poetry from Other Cultures” anthologies were named by more than three respondents.

Table 1 shows the groups into which we categorised the poems. The largest category was Identity (15 poems), followed by War and Conflict (12 poems) and Racism (11 poems). War and Conflict, together with Love and Relationships (7 poems) are categories which reflect GCSE clusters of poems, and in this there appears to be a genuine movement towards ensuring the reflection of authors of colour within existing schemes of work (although each poem was only mentioned a handful of times at most, so each individual school might only be adding one poem).

It is most notable, however, that poets of colour at Key Stage 3 are included largely when their works reflect the themes of racism, identity and slavery. In providing this framing, we may be representing the work of poets of colour to students in a particular way, which not only dictates what they see in individual poems, but which provides a model for how they see the work of poets of colour more broadly.

Table 1. Poems by group

Group	Poem	Poet
Identity	You're Not Black	Amy Saunders
	The British	Benjamin Zephaniah
	I come from	Dean Atta
	Mama Dot	Fred D'Aguiar
	Island Man	Grace Nichols
	Hurricane Hits England	Grace Nichols
	In My Country	Jackie Kay
	Half-caste	John Agard
	Checking Out Me History	John Agard
	Flag	John Agard
	I, Too	Langston Hughes
	Hijab Scene 7	Mohja Kahf
	Presents from my Aunts in Pakistan	Moniza Alvi
	American Arithmetic	Natalie Diaz
	Search For My Tongue	Sujata Bhatt
	The Coloured Man is No Slacker	Ada Peters
War and Conflict	Ode to a Drone	Amit Majmudar
	Vultures	Chinua Achebe
	Invasion	Choman Hardi
	The Looks of Loss	Jackie Kay
	O, Little David, Play On Your Harp	James Seamon Cotter, Jr.
	In Times of Peace	John Agard
	Let There Be Peace	Lemn Sissay
	Not My Business	Niyi Osundare
	The Gift of India	Sarojini Naidu
	War Poem	Warsan Shire
	Camouflaging the Chimera	Yusef Komunyakaa
	No Problem	Benjamin Zephaniah
	Neighbours	Benjamin Zephaniah
	What Stephen Lawrence Has Taught Us	Benjamin Zephaniah
	not an elegy for Mike Brown	Danez Smith
	Go Home	George The Poet
Racism	The Right Word	Imtiaz Dharker
	Mother to Son*	Langston Hughes
	Sonny's Lettah	Linton Kwesi Johnson
	Still I Rise**	Maya Angelou
	I Can't Breathe	Pamela Sneed
	Nothing's Changed	Tatamkhulu Afrika
	Singh Song	Daljit Nagra
	Love After Love	Derek Walcott
	Praise Song for My Mother	Grace Nichols
	Wha me mudder do	Grace Nichols
	Grace	Roger Robinson
	Wedding in the Flood	Taufiq Rafat
	My Country for Mandela	Zindziswa Mandela
	Blessing	Imtiaz Dharker
	109	Jay Bernard
	I Am Listening to Istanbul	Orhan Veli Kanik
Love and Relationships	Inside My Zulu Hut	Oswald Mbuyiseni Mtshali
	Sheffield	Warda Yassin
	The Hill We Climb	Amanda Gorman
	A Litany for Survival***	Audre Lorde
	Another Planet	Dunya Mikhail
	Dreams	Langston Hughes
	A Mother in a Refugee Camp	Chinua Achebe
	Sympathy	Paul Laurence Dunbar
	Home	Warsan Shire
	Woman Work	Maya Angelou
	Phenomenal Woman	Maya Angelou
	Eve Remembering	Toni Morrison
	Limbo	Edward Kamau Brathwaite
	Caged Bird	Maya Angelou
	Billie Holiday	E. Ethelbert Miller
	A Century Later	Imtiaz Dharker
Place		
Hope		
Refugee experience		
Women		
Slavery		
Major figures		

There was also a sense in the poems which were named that there was some reaction to international events over the last few years, with poems that responded to the international refugee crisis, to Black Lives Matter, and to specific events such as Amanda Gorman's poem "The Hill We Climb" at the inauguration of Joe Biden as President of the United States of America in January 2021. This reflects some movement towards curriculum change as a result, particularly, of Black Lives Matter protests in 2020 (reported in Elliott et al. 2021). It also reflects the ways in which some poems gain public recognition, such as Warsan Shire's "Home" which was widely quoted in response to refugee drownings. As well as "Home" and Gorman's "The Hill We Climb", Maya Angelou's "Still I Rise", already well known, became better known in Britain after Serena Williams made a recording of it for the BBC's Wimbledon coverage in 2016. Other poems illustrate the importance of serendipity: it is hard to imagine how else Ada Peters' poem could have reached a British classroom in the 2020s.

Four poems did not fit into the categories easily, three of which are identified through asterisks in Table 1. One of these, Langston Hughes "Mother to Son" fitted easily into the group of (resisting) racism, but only if you knew the poet was African-American. Without this contextual knowledge, however, the poem also reads as a warning of the challenges of life and a call to resilience, framed through family relationship, and could be taught either way. Another was "Brendon Gallacher" by Jackie Kay, whose main character is the imaginary friend of the speaker. This poem defied the framing precisely because it was not "other": it did not speak to the poet's race, but rather to universals of childhood, play and the imagination. It is notable that, when talking of teaching poetry to 11–14 year olds, this was the only poem that reflected these themes. The remaining two, "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou and "Litany for Survival" by Audre Lorde, could both have been categorised as "Hope" or as "Racism" and in the end we placed one in each category. Equally there is a sense of defiance to both; these discussions serve to illustrate the potential disservice that could be done to poems by simple framing and by the ways in which school curricula organise and categorise texts.

Discussion and conclusion

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of our approach: we do not know how the respondents actually taught these poems, only what the most dominant themes are to our eyes. Only a few respondents named more than a handful of poems which were taught to each year group; we are looking at the big picture rather than individual experiences of English classrooms, but nevertheless would argue that looking for patterns in the texts which are taught is a valuable activity which enables us to think more broadly about the pedagogy of poetry and poets from the global majority. It is clear that the "Poems From Other Cultures" anthologies have cast a long shadow; where resources exist and texts are in cupboards, schools recycle both material and teacher expertise where they can. We also want to acknowledge that many of our respondents were committed to change, and were making what change they could. Some described frustration in the slow pace of change or the refusal of senior leadership to see the imperative.

Julie Blake argues that school canon formation is "rhizomatic", "not having a single centre of influence or operation" (Blake 2019, 3); poems come to be taught, and remain part of a school's textual environment for a wide variety of reasons. In particular, the will of the

individual may not be sufficient to move away from what we might call “sticky” texts on the curriculum. English teachers are also often not confident with poetry (e.g. Cremin et al., 2008; Weaven and Clark 2013) and this alone might keep many teaching poems for which resources are plentiful and their knowledge secure.

One element that might be important in the teaching of poems by poets of colour at Key Stage 3 is providing the contextualisation of dates. Poems such as “In my Zulu Hut” and “Nothing’s Changed” can easily be read as contemporary, or more accurately as timeless and therefore contemporary, whereas they reflect specific historical periods. Treating them as contemporary creates a specific representation of Africa (and a generic “Africa” rather than an understanding of the poems as coming from specific geographic regions or countries). Similarly, “Wedding in the flood” presents a historical Indian superstition which needs contextualising as being in the same category as, for example, “red sky at night, shepherd’s delight” as a belief. That is to say, without contextualising this as historical, the poem can create or reinforce beliefs about India (in this instance) as primitive.

For the data analysis for this article we read the poems rapidly one after the other and this created an overwhelming impression of melancholy, sadness and difficulty as the themes of the poems that were cited as being taught, with few patches of light in the darkness. The question arises, are these the types of poems by authors of colour being taught at Key Stage 3, or is it a more general tenet of Key Stage 3 poetry (or indeed school literature in general)? McKinney (2020) wrote about the commodification of Black pain by the publishing industry; interviews with Black, Asian and other minority ethnic authors of Young Adult fiction have indicated that writing with a White audience, and their expectations of ethnic minority characters, in mind is a factor in being published (Ramdarshan Bold 2019). Poetry which reflects these themes may fit best with teachers’ schemas of poetry by authors of colour. Alternatively, it may be that poetry at Key Stage 3 skews towards a more melancholic palette, for reasons that we could speculate over, but which would be just speculation.

We are not arguing that poems by authors of colour that are about racism or identity should be excluded from the curriculum, but it seems that chosen poems tend to fall into certain well-worn tropes, as warned by Nelson-Addy et al. (2018), and that to prevent teaching poems by authors of colour dropping into the equivalent of the strong framing of Poetry From Other Cultures, care must be taken, and a wider net cast. There are many poets of colour writing of things other than their race and experiences of racism or of immigration. The poet Daljit Nagra has said “I sometimes feel as if I’m being asked to provide sociological answers about ‘my people’ ... I don’t sit easily ... with the idea of being an insider representative” (Green 2020, 397). Where we are teaching poetry that draws on the dynamic language of phonetics, creole, accent, dialect, borrowings and so on, it is important to draw attention to where they are “writing which is metalinguistically *about* as much as *in* language” (Gilmour 2022, 22) rather than allowing the framing ideology of Standard English to reinforce stereotypes.

A final thought is that poetry has a long history as a genre of protest. Amiri Baraka wrote in “Black Art”: “Poems are bullshit unless they are/Teeth”. The poem was written shortly after the assassination of Malcolm X and published in 1966 and calls for poems for and by Black people, and the imagery creates the notion of poetry as a weapon. We cannot deny the existence of racism as a shaping factor in the lives and experiences of the global majority, nor the (growing) impact of migration, in a world where both war and

climate change will increasingly generate refugees. We are not calling for the erasure of poems which deal with racism or identity from the curriculum, but suggesting that they must not be the only poems which represent poets of the global majority in our classrooms. The outcomes of this survey suggest that there is limited engagement with a huge range of poets of colour. Other research has documented nervousness around poetry in general for some teachers (e.g. Weaven and Clark 2013) and it may be that teachers seek a strong framing to provide a scaffold for teaching interpretation, in the absence of supporting teaching materials for adding new poems to the curriculum.

Recent changes to the specifications at GCSE and A level have introduced more texts by authors of colour in all genres, including poetry, many of which demonstrate the wider engagement which we call for here. Change has begun, but there is more work to be done. Not only do we urge teachers to take up the challenge, but educational publishers and Awarding Bodies to do so too, with a focus on providing the kinds of curricular support that can enable the flourishing of new texts in the educational canon.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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