

Key Definitions to support the Racial Literacy Curriculum Framework: a working document

Word	Definition	Pupil and student friendly
	These definitions have been taken where possible and appropriate from academic, professional or published sources. They are not definitive and we recognised that language is constantly evolving and changing. We would encourage schools to discuss language definitions and terms.	The wording used here is the same as the wording used in the GTBM and GARS resources. We recommend that schools use these definitions with children for consistency.
Anti-Racism	Anti-racism goes beyond thinking of racism as an issue of individual actions, and incorporates the examination of racism in systems, structures and institutions, and includes the role of implicit biases in attitudes, behaviours and policies (Kendi, 2019). Anti-racism is characterized by conscious effort and deliberate action <i>For example: Standing up and speaking out at school, making sure lessons, curriculum, books, displays, toys include everyone and that everyone is able to join in all aspects of school regardless of how they look, where they're from or their family heritage</i>	GARS Y3 lesson 1 Anti- racism is standing up and taking action against racism by saying it is not ok to treat someone differently or unfairly because of how they look, their hair, their skin colour, their ethnicity, their family heritage For example: Anti-racism in action in school is talking to a trusted grown up if you or a friend have been differently or unfairly treated because of how you look, your hair, your skin colour, ethnicity or family heritage. Anti-racism is also learning about and understanding the past and present contribution of <u>all</u> people to Britain and the world.
Asylum seeker	See Person seeking asylum	See Person seeking asylum
Assumption	An assumption is a belief that we take for granted – we accept it without questioning or seeking evidence. (Cambridge English Dictionary online, 2022)	To hold a belief or make a decision about someone or something without thinking about it or looking for evidence.
Asian* and South Asian	People from, originating from or with heritage from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka	See left
(nationality or heritage)	*UK context only. In other parts of Europe and in the US, 'Asian' refers to people from East and SE Asia	
BAME	An acronym of the categories found in government and institutional data collection surveys. It stands for Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic. A term used to describe people from minority groups, particularly those who are viewed as having suffered racism or are in the minority because of their skin colour and/or ethnicity. In some neighbourhoods, towns and cities in Britain however the term is now mathematically inaccurate. This term has evolved over time becoming more common in official	Not used in GTBM/GARS

	language as the term “black” has become less all-inclusive of all those experiencing racial discrimination “BME” was/is an attempt at comprehensive coverage. The term is commonly used in the UK.	
Bias	Inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group (also place or item, including food) that is unfair or thoughtless. Bias is a conscious or unconscious prejudice against an individual or group based on their identity (Agarwal, 2020 p24)	When we choose or prefer someone, something or a group of people based on false ideas and beliefs or because it’s unfamiliar to us. For example: Saying that food is disgusting or horrible because we have never tasted it or we have heard other people say it is disgusting. Not wanting to play with someone based on the way they look because someone has told us that people who look like them are not good people.
Black	Black is a term used to describe people who may have a specific African or African-Caribbean origin. In past decades (80’s and 90’s) Black was often used to refer to anyone who was not white although this is seldom the case today. Black is not a literal, descriptive term but is be used by those who identify themselves as such, possibly including people of mixed race or Asian origin. The word is capitalised to highlight its specific use. The term ‘Black’ was once used as a negative epithet but was reclaimed by activists in the American Civil Rights movement in the 1960s who used it to replace derogatory terminology that included terms such as ‘negro’. Therefore, the term comes from a resistance to racism. The use of the term Black in schools can be generally used to refer to people of African and African–Caribbean origin. (The term African-Caribbean is preferred rather than Afro-Caribbean).	GARS Y2 and Y3 No one is actually Black, all humans are on a spectrum of shades of brown from very light brown to very dark brown.
Bullying	Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online (ABA)	
British Values	Schools should promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (Promoting fundamental British Values (DfE))	• Democracy – everyone has a say in how things are done and what’s going to happen • The rule of law – We make rules called laws, they are to help us live together and know how to behave • Individual liberty – everybody can make choices for themselves

		• Mutual respect – we are kind to others and expect them to be kind to us • Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs – We accept and celebrate that others may think differently to us
Colonialism	Western colonialism, a political-economic phenomenon whereby various European nations explored, conquered, settled, and exploited large areas of the world. The age of modern colonialism began about 1500, following the European discoveries of a sea route around Africa's southern coast (1488) and of America (1492). (Britannica)	When people from one place settle in another place and act as if it belongs to them even when people are already living there. Colonialism benefits settlers at the expense of local people.
Culture	An umbrella term which encompasses the social behaviour, institutions, and norms found in human societies, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities, and habits of the individuals in these groups. Culture is often originated from or attributed to a specific region or location. Everyone has a culture The idea of culture is a key concept in sociology and anthropology.	Culture is a shared way of doing things that we learn from our grown-ups and from the place where we live: language, music, art, religion, how to behave, how to dress, what to celebrate, what to eat. Every country has its own mix of cultures. The culture of a country is made up of lots of different traditions that have been created by different groups of people through time.
Direct discrimination	Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat – or would treat – other people. (DFE, 2018) Societies continue to make distinctions based on ethnicity, race, sex or gender and other characteristics that should have no bearing on people's achievements or on their well-being. The Report on the World Social Situation 2016 argued that discrimination is one of the key drivers of social exclusion (United Nations, 2016). Discrimination remains a fundamental problem in the world today. Based on existing literature, the Report found that discriminatory norms and behaviours remain widespread and continue to drive social exclusion. Yet while formal institutional barriers faced by marginalized groups are easy to detect, informal barriers are frequently more subtle, making measuring discrimination difficult. UN report on prejudice and Discrimination	(Racist) discrimination <i>Negative behaviour or actions towards a person or group because of their skin colour, hair, ethnicity, religion or family heritage. This can happen face to face or online.</i> <i>Discrimination is behaviour and actions that stop people having equal rights to join and live their best lives because of who they are, how they look or what they believe.</i> <i>Discrimination causes people to feel that they don't belong, to feel left out and isolated.</i>

Diversity	Diversity means a variety of something, such as opinion, background or experience. When used to promote social inclusiveness, this term is often used to mean diversity within society of race, culture , gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic status, type of area (urban/rural), age, faith and/or beliefs. Diversity as an ideology for schools aims to recognise, respect and value people's differences and realise their full potential by promoting an inclusive culture. (Asare 2015)	GTBM Y4 Diversity means variety or the difference(s) between two or more things or people.
Ethnicity / Ethnic Group	Since ethnicity is a multifaceted and changing phenomenon, various possible ways of measuring ethnic groups are available and have been used over time. These include country of birth, nationality, language spoken at home, skin colour (an aspect for consideration for some and not for others), national/geographical origin and religion. What seems to be generally accepted, however, is that ethnicity includes all these aspects, and others, in combination. (ONS, 2021 Census) There is no consensus on what constitutes an ethnic group and membership is something that is self-defined and subjectively meaningful to the person concerned. (ONS, 2021 Census)	<i>Your ethnicity is where your ancestors (like your grandparents and great grandparents) are from.</i>
Extremism	Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and respect and tolerance for different faiths and beliefs. (Gov.uk 2015)	Not used in GTBM/GARS slides
Generalisation	A generalisation is a written or spoken statement in which we say or write that something is true all of the time when it is only true some of the time. (Cambridge English Dictionary online, 2022)	Not used in GTBM/GARS slides
Globalisation	The action, process, or fact of making global; <i>esp.</i> (in later use) the process by which businesses or other organizations develop international influence or start operating on an international scale, widely considered to be at the expense of national identity. (Oxford English Dictionary online, 2022)	Not used in GTBM/GARS slides
Harassment	Unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. (DFE, 2018)	Not used in GTBM/GARS slides

Hate Crime	The law recognises five types of hate crime on the basis of: Race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and transgender identity. Any crime can be prosecuted as a hate crime if the offender has either: demonstrated hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity or been motivated by hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity. (CPS)	<i>Not used in GTBM/GARS slides</i>
Heritage	Genetic heritage: that which has been passed on through your genetic code Ethnic/ Cultural heritage: traditions and ways of living, believing speaking passed on through families and community groupings	GTBM Year 4 Heritage is something that is passed along to us from our ancestors: it can be a physical thing like a pot or a necklace or a house. Heritage can also be ideas, thoughts, beliefs or ways of doing things – the language we speak, styles of music and dance, what to eat and how to cook. This kind of heritage is called cultural heritage.
Human Rights	Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings - they are not granted by any state. These universal rights are inherent to us all, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. They range from the most fundamental - the right to life - to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to food, education, work, health, and liberty (UN).	<i>Not used in GTBM/GARS slides</i>
Indirect discrimination	Indirect discrimination occurs when a “provision, criterion or practice” is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic. (Gov.uk, 2018)	<i>Not used in GTBM/GARS slides</i>
Intersectionality	Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It's not simply that there's a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LGBTQ problem there. Many times that framework erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things. (Crenshaw quoted in law.columbia.edu , accessed 28.6.22)	<i>Not used in GTBM/GARS slides</i>
Melanin	a dark brown pigment (= substance that gives colour), found in eyes, skin, hair, feathers, etc. It helps to protect the skin against harmful light from the sun.	<i>Melanin is the chemical in our skin that gives our skin and hair their colour, and acts like a natural sunscreen. More melanin means darker skin and hair; less melanin means lighter skin and hair.</i>
Migration / Migrant	There is no internationally accepted legal definition of a migrant. Amnesty International understand migrants to be people staying outside their country of origin, who are not asylum-seekers or	<i>Not used in GTBM/GARS slides</i>

	refugees. Some migrants leave their country because they want to work, study or join family, for example. Others feel they must leave because of poverty, political unrest, gang violence, natural disasters or other serious circumstances that exist there. (Amnesty, 2022)	
Mixed / dual heritage	This is a term increasingly used by public authorities to refer to people who might otherwise be referred to as being 'mixed race'. The term does not specifically refer to someone's racial background and as such its meaning may be unclear as it can also be used to refer to a person's national or cultural origins. The term does not therefore necessarily indicate the same implications as 'mixed race'.	<i>Not used in GTBM/GARS slides</i>
Multicultural	In an educational context this term refers to schools offering a curriculum that makes reference to a variety of cultural perspectives. Multicultural education is sometimes critiqued for 'exotification' of cultural difference and for making claims about other cultures that are superficial and stereotypical. Furthermore, this approach is also criticised for representing cultures as being static and fixed. 'Critical multiculturalism' is an educational approach that acknowledges cultural difference from the perspective of exploring related issues of social injustice inherent in social and cultural diversity.	<i>Not used in GTBM/GARS slides</i>
Person seeking asylum	A person who has left their country of origin and is seeking protection from persecution and serious human rights violations by formally applying for asylum in another country but whose application has not yet been concluded and is therefore waiting to be legally recognised as a refugee. Wherever possible, we prefer to describe someone as a person seeking asylum as we feel that the term asylum seeker is dehumanising. (Refugee Council Website) Seeking asylum is a human right. This means everyone should be allowed to enter another country to seek asylum. (Amnesty 2022)	Someone who is in danger in the country they live in because of their race, what they think or believe or how they live their lives. When they go to another country to ask for help and protection, we say they are seeking asylum. Seeking asylum is asking the government of a different country than yours to let you stay there because it is safer for you than your home country. When the country they go to says yes you can stay, we will help and protect you, that person is then a refugee. Someone who is looking for a safe place to stay because the place they call home has become unsafe for them. Their home will have become unsafe because other people are being unkind to them because of who they are, what they believe or the way they want to live their life.

Protected characteristic	It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of a protected characteristic: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. (EHRC, 2021)	Not used in GTBM/GARS slides
Race	race, the idea that the human species is divided into distinct groups on the basis of inherited physical and behavioural differences. Genetic studies in the late 20th century refuted the existence of biogenetically distinct races, and scholars now argue that “races” are cultural interventions reflecting specific attitudes and beliefs that were imposed on different populations in the wake of western European conquests beginning in the 15th century. (Britannica.com)	<i>There is only one race – the human race</i> <i>The idea of race was invented in Europe so that people could be grouped by categories such as:</i> <i>Skin colour</i> <i>Eye colour</i> <i>Hair</i> <i>Facial features</i> <i>Head shape and size</i> <i>Body shape and size</i>
Racialisation	Racialisation is the process by which race, as a concept, becomes meaningful, and social and cultural meaning assigned to it (Agarwal, p.30, 2020) <i>add mention of use of racialisation to enact social exclusion and domination? - PPK note 29.6.22</i>	Not used in GTBM/GARS slides
Racism	Personal: <i>Racism can be mean words or actions or being treated differently or unfairly because of someone’s skin colour, how they look, their hair, their skin colour, their ethnicity, their family heritage. This can happen face to face or online</i> Social: <i>Racism is also about how groups of people are treated, (left out, not the same chances as others) in schools, health services, housing, police, work, sport, media etc.</i>	GARS Y3 lesson 1 Racism is having false ideas about all people based on skin colour, features, the way people look or family heritage. These false ideas sometimes cause people to be treated unfairly or unkindly because of their skin colour, how they look, their hair, their ethnicity, their family heritage –this is called racism. Racism can be face to face or online
Racist incident	Any incident which is perceived to be racist or religiously motivated by the victim, witness or any other person. (BHCC)	<i>If a person says or does mean things because someone has different skin tone, or speaks a different language this is racist behaviour.</i>
Refugee	The definition of a refugee according to The 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees is: “A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing	Someone who is in danger in the country they live in because of the way they look, what they think or believe. The person becomes a refugee when they leave their home country because of the danger and go to live in another country where they can find refuge/protection from the danger.

	to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.” In the UK, a person becomes a refugee when government agrees that an individual who has applied for asylum meets the definition in the Refugee Convention they will ‘recognise’ that person as a refugee and issue them with refugee status documentation. Usually refugees in the UK are given five years’ leave to remain as a refugee. They must then must apply for further leave, although their status as a refugee is not limited to five years.	
Racial Stereotype / stereotyping	<i>Untrue belief about a group of people linked to their skin colour, how they look, their hair, their skin colour, their ethnicity, their religion and their family heritage. This way of thinking does not see people as individuals or value the differences between people - it is linked to prejudice and discrimination</i> <i>Stereotypes mean making assumptions about people because of, for example, how they look, their hair, skin colour, gender, age, where they live or how much money someone has</i> <i>We have stereotypes because our brains are naturally wired to seek patterns – in everything – whether things or humans. Seeking patterns is a useful way to manage everyday life.</i> <i>As stereotypes can lead to assumptions about someone that might not be true or fair and may also lead to prejudice and discrimination (like racist thoughts and actions)</i> <i>And stereotypical thinking may also limit their expectations about what someone could be or do (like the job someone wants to do as a grown up)</i> <i>A stereotype is thought some people have about what someone or something is like, without any evidence or proof. Stereotypes are harmful because they ignore the differences between people- and what makes each individual unique.</i>	GARS Y4 Racial stereotype means we think something about someone because of the way they look, sound, behave, dress or because of where they live. We make our decision about who someone is or what they can or can't do before we've got to know them or asked them any questions. We also call this making an assumption.

Terrorism	The current UK definition of terrorism is given in the <u>Terrorism Act 2006</u>. Terrorism is a violent action that: • Endangers a person's life, other than that of the person committing the action • Involves serious violence against a person • Causes serious damage to property • Creates a serious risk to the public's health and safety • Interferes with or seriously disrupts an electronic system	Not used in GTBM/GARS slides
Victimisation	Treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment (EHRC)	Not used in GTBM/GARS slides
White	The term is usually used to describe people with European ancestral origins who identify, or are identified, as White. The term is not strictly descriptive of skin colour. White is capitalised to highlight its specific use.	No one is actually White, all humans are on a spectrum of shades of brown from very light brown to very dark brown.

Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) [Our definition of bullying \(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk\)](https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Agrawal, P. (2020) Wish we knew what to say: Talking with children about race. London: Dialogue Books.

Amnesty (2022) [Refugees, Asylum-seekers and Migrants - Amnesty International](#)

Asare, Dr Yaa (2015) A guide to the use of terms culture, race and identity

BHCC [Racist and religiously motivated incidents \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](#)

CPS [Hate crime | The Crown Prosecution Service \(cps.gov.uk\)](#)

Equality and Human Rights Commission (2021) [Protected characteristics | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](#)

Gov.uk (2011) [Prevent strategy 2011 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Gov.uk (2015) [Counter-Extremism Strategy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Gov.uk (2019) [Equality Act Advice Final.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

ONS (2021 Census) [Ethnic group, national identity and religion - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

UN [OHCHR | What are human rights?](#)

UNHCR [UNHCR - What is a refugee?](#)