

*“What happened to your leg?”*  
Using Story Stem Completion to Examine Children’s  
Changing Representations of Disability

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# Representation and Inclusion

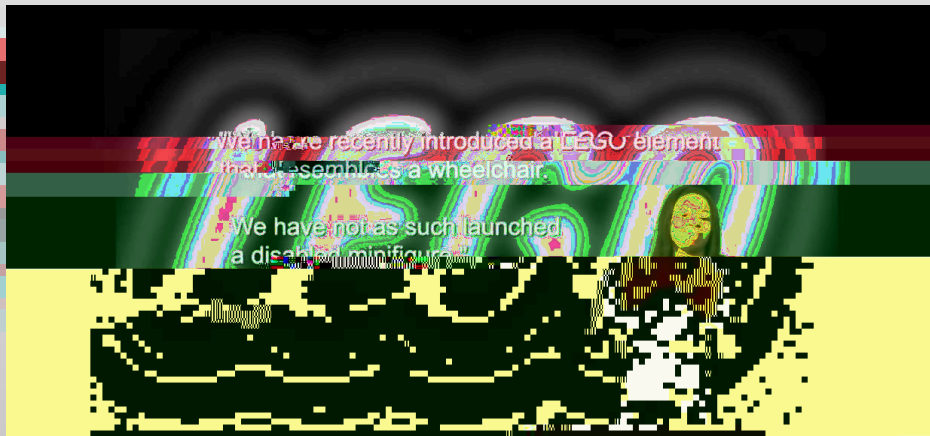
*Representation* can help foster positive attitudes towards school-age children with disabilities.

Positive representation in books and other media lend children higher self-esteem, a sense of belonging, and more positive attitudes towards others (e.g., Cameron et al., 2011).

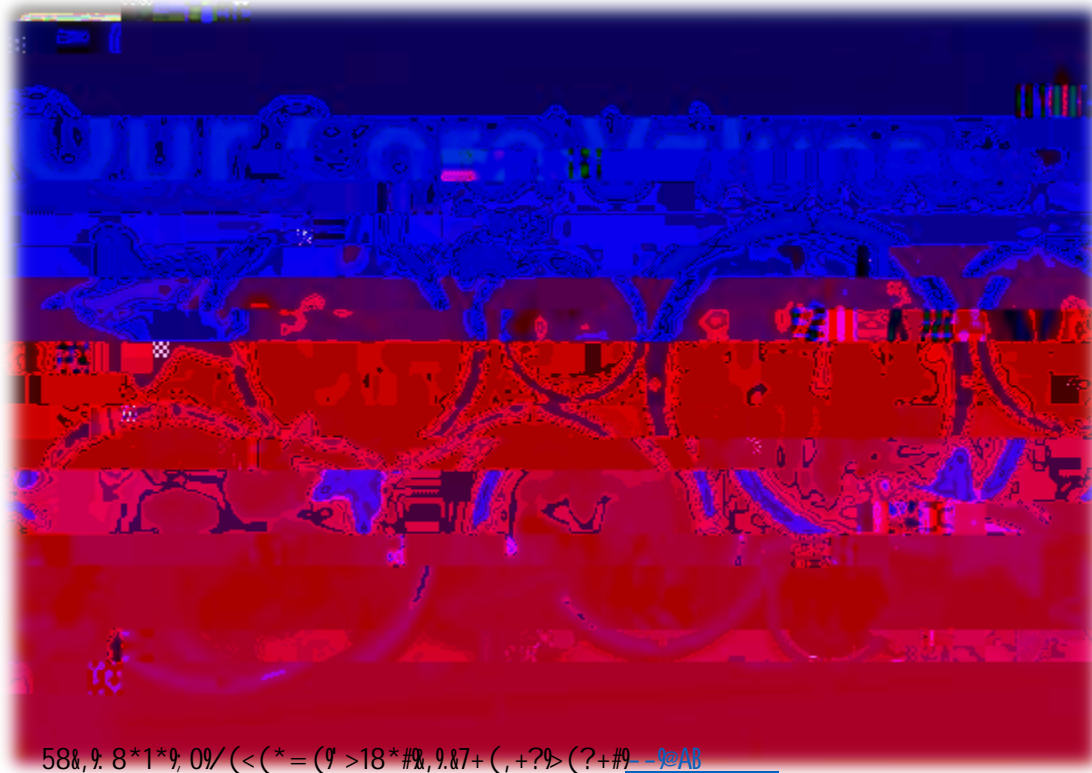
Kim et al. (2016) highlight how integrating diversity into the literacy curriculum can encourage the acquisition of specific information, T EMCe WT TJ q 0iotiocti,

# Times a changin

*" [we] understand  
the importance of representation in  
toys. ... [we] want every*



# In the classroom



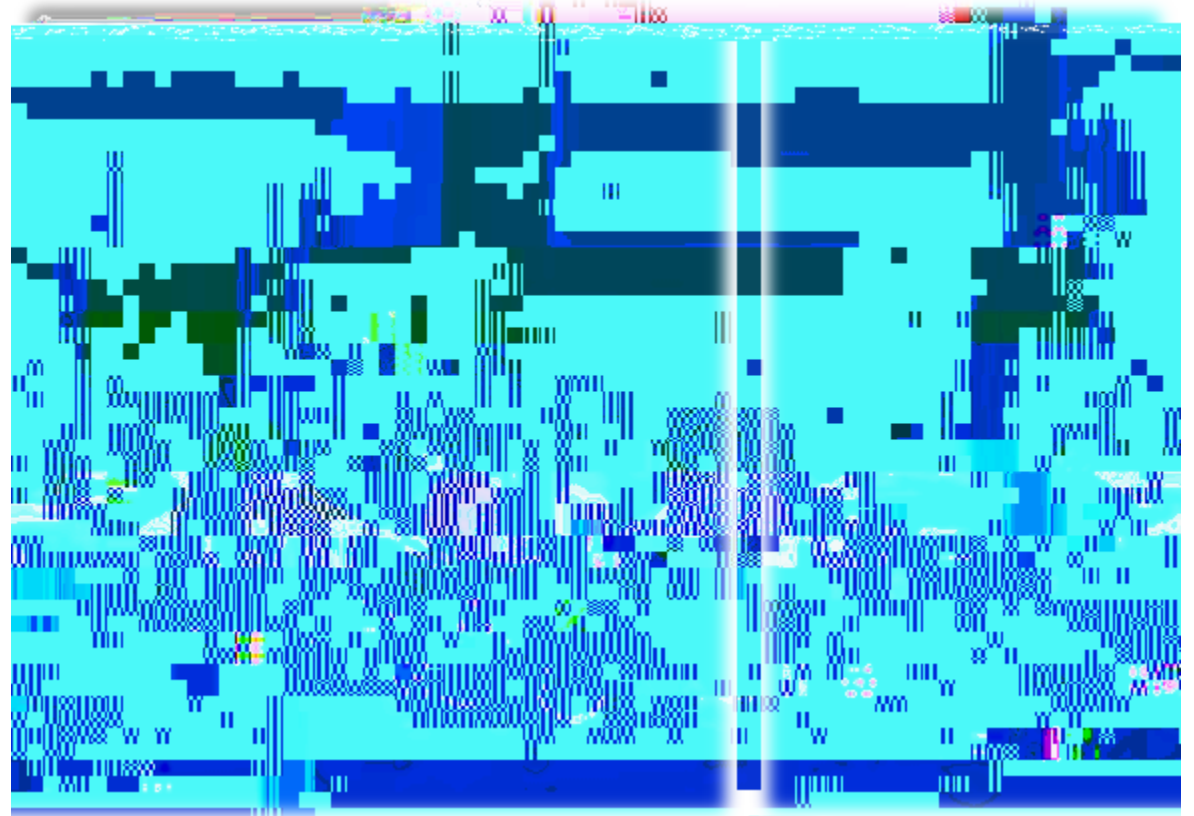
Looked at the representation of disabled people in school resources in 32 infant classrooms.

They found that two classrooms had some representation, 22 classrooms had low representation, and eight classrooms had no representation of disabled people

# Representative Toys

Representative toys promote positive friendship intentions in line with a social model of disability

Our research has shown this in the context of disabled people and immigrants using Playmobil



# Yorkshire Pilot



Data from  $N = 145$  children, aged 5 – 11 years, in three Yorkshire primary schools

Schools recruited through ToyLikeMe

- Children engaged with the ToyLikeMe Exhibition at their school, completing pre and post exhibition tasks.
- Due to Covid restrictions this was entirely teacher led using resources provided by us
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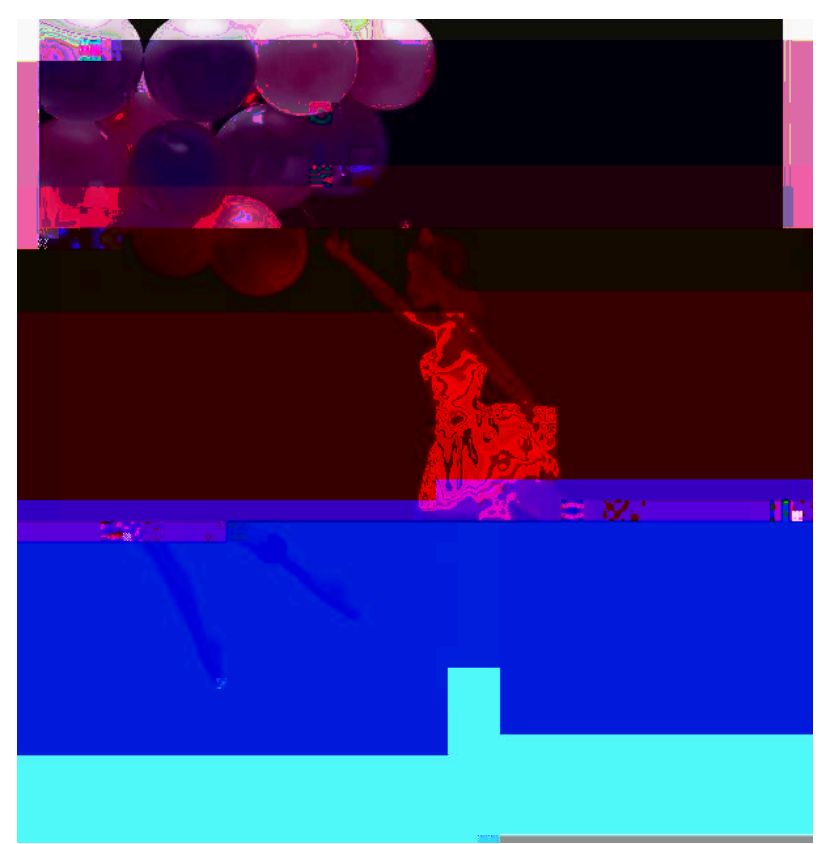


# Methodology

- Asked to write a story about one of the characters in the exhibition, from choice of four, before and after the pop-up exhibition visits.
- Story stem: *Imagine that you are going on a really fun day out with them. Write a story about the adventure that you have...*
- Story Stem Completion tasks have been used to explore attitudes and perceptions in a variety of settings but very much a novel method (so this is exciting!)



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# 12 exhibition posters with Talking Points

# Chatty Pack – Activities and Discussion

## Class challenge

You can use these challenges to get your learners thinking about adaptation and problem solving within society so that everyone can be included.

- How could a deaf cinema-goer understand the plot of a film if they can't hear any of the words being said?
- How could a deaf cinema-goer understand the plot of a film if they can't see any of the words being said?

## Talking about deafness

Print these two images and pass them around your learners. Larger versions of them can be found at the end of this pack.

and hard of hearing children in the UK.  
 How cochlear implant?

## Get creative

Print and share these activities with your learners. Larger versions of them can be found at the end of this pack.

toylikem

e.org

# Results

All stories were transcribed (with some difficulty!) and coded thematically for components of attitude.

Superordinate themes including:

Activity

Relationship (+ve/-ve)

Disability (+ve/-ve)

Social Model

Medical Model

Affective response





# Results: Pre-Exhibition

Once Upon a time me and my friend Superman were playing at school and suddenly he tripped over at this time he was only two so he started bawling his eyes out but I didn't think it was when he fell that made him cry. There was a small orb in his hand blue and magical. From that day he has had no power so I think that orb has got something to do with it. The next day I asked Superman to meet me at the park at 12:00 PM so he did when he got there I said

# Results: Post Exhibition



# Summary

- Playing with toys offers an exciting and engaging way to provide children with an opportunity for imagined contact with people who have a range of disabilities
- This has the potential to positively impact their attitudes towards disability, including peer relationships.
- By integrating these resources into the school curriculum, this contributes to the development of a more inclusive environment in the school.

# Thank you for listening

- Please follow our progress on Twitter @QMU\_Toy\_Research
- With thanks to the QMU Innovation Fund, especially Miriam Smith.
- to Rebecca Atkinson and Karen Newell at ToyLikeMe, <https://www.toylikeme.org/>





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