Whether spreading their own opinions or appealing to those of their readers, children's periodical writers overwhelmingly portrayed British people as superior to all other races and ethnic groups. In doing so, they appealed to popular racial and ethnic stereotypes. According to most children's authors, the Arabs were primitive and nomadic, the Chinese intelligent but immoral, Indians superstitious and cowardly, and black Africans violent and simple-minded. However egalitarian their intentions, British children's authors of the late nineteenth century almost always reinforced these stereotypes. They differed over whether the source of this superiority was racial or cultural, as well as over the significance of the distinction between these types of superiority.

