

Great Big Live Assembly



A national school assembly
to celebrate

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



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GREAT BIG LIVE *ASSEMBLY*

Tuesday 15th of October at 9.05am (Primary Schools)
Wednesday 16th of October at 9.05am (Secondary Schools)

After the challenging summer the UK faced with riots across the nation it is more urgent than ever to celebrate our diversity.

Sadly racism is an ongoing challenge for society and sometimes that impact is felt in our schools. A study by the Guardian newspaper found that more than 60,000 racist incidents were recorded in UK schools over a five year period. Another study found that 95% of young black people in the UK have heard or witnessed racist language at school, with 51% of boys saying they heard it “all the time”.

Even in schools where racist language and incidents are rare, there can be misperceptions about the value, impact and challenges of diversity. We want to stand with you as you deal with this and work for a more equitable society.

For me growing up racism was an everyday part of my school experience. I felt its impact not only in the taunts and bullying from other students, but in the low expectations some teachers had of me, the lack of role-models who looked like me in literature, science, arts and sport, and the absence of Black and asian figures of influence across the curriculum.

Although there have been great strides forward in all of these areas since my childhood, there is much more to be done. This year the theme of Black History Month is “Reclaiming Narratives”. We will explore this theme through the lens of honouring our black heroes past and present.

The 20-minute Great Big Live Assembly aims to explore:

- **how children and young people can thrive in a diverse environment**
- **how children and young people can feel excluded or experience bullying**
- **how to make children and young people from all backgrounds feel welcome and supported in our schools**
- **how diverse role-models and figures of influence can inspire children and young people in learning and relationships**
- **how Black history and cultural diversity values can be embedded into the curriculum and school life**

LINK AND *TECH*

The technical set up for the Great Big Live Assembly is very simple.

To join the **PRIMARY SCHOOL** assembly on Tuesday 15th of October:

[CLICK HERE](#)

To join the **SECONDARY SCHOOL** assembly on Wednesday 16th of October:

[CLICK HERE](#)

This link will send you to a closed YouTube channel. Simply project this channel using your usual set up. You can adjust the volume and brightness in the usual way.

The channel will be broadcasting on a loop until 9.05am so you can get everything ready ahead of time.

At 9.05 we will begin the broadcast. The Great Big Live Assembly will last approximately 20 minutes.



FOR *PARENTS & CARERS*

You may wish to inform parents and carers that you will be holding an event for Black History Month. Here is a sample letter you could use:

Dear Parents and Carers

This week, to mark Black History Month, our school will be taking part in the Great Big Live Assembly. This is a 20-minute virtual assembly that will connect together schools across the country simultaneously.

The Great Big Live Assembly will celebrate the ways that schools up and down the UK are embracing diversity. It will honour Black individuals from history who continue to inspire us all. It will reinforce the importance of respecting those who are different from us and it will invite us all to play our part to make sure everybody feels welcome and valued.

The Great Big Live Assembly has been organised by the charity Sanctuary Foundation. Dr Krish Kandiah OBE, who leads the charity and will be hosting the assembly, has worked in child welfare for over 16 years. He is an inspirational communicator, children's author and diversity trainer and always leads the Assemblies in an engaging and sensitive way, alongside some familiar faces.

The Great Big Live Assembly will be interactive, informative and inspirational. It will encourage our young people to talk about the challenges and benefits of cultural diversity. We hope this will make a positive impact in our classroom and playground environment and beyond.

We recognise that this event may prompt questions about identity, injustice and prejudice and we have prepared some of our teachers to handle these questions sensitively.

If you would like to know more, please get in touch.

Yours sincerely



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HONOURING OUR *HEROES*

The Great Big Live Assembly on October 15th and 16th 2024 is proud to support schools to take part in Black History Month (1 October - 31 October 2024). This national celebration aims to promote and celebrate the contributions of those with African and Caribbean heritage to British society and to foster an understanding of Black history in general.

This year, Black History Month will be dedicated to honouring the achievements of Black women and men and the crucial role they have played in shaping history, inspiring change, and building communities.

The Great Big Live Assembly is delighted to showcase some of those heroes to a future generation, and discover how they relate to our lives and learning today.

Honour Our Heroes: Challenge the narratives that have often overlooked the contributions and achievements of Black individuals both in the UK and globally.

Embrace Our Stories: Take control of our stories, honour our heroes, and shine a light on the diverse and profound impact of Black individuals across various fields.

Empower and Educate: Join us in embracing, educating, and empowering one another through the stories that shape our collective identity.

TALKING ABOUT *BLACK HISTORY*

Black History Month offers an opportunity to show children and young people how to talk about the complex and often contentious issues of race and racism safely and constructively. It gives us the chance to reduce misperceptions and discrimination, model respect for those from different backgrounds, and develop an appropriate emotional and moral response to those who are at risk of marginalisation. Here are some practical tips for tackling this subject with students in school.

1. Discover what they already know

Students are likely to have ideas about their own racial and cultural identity, and that of others. Discover points of connection as well as opportunities to appreciate differences. Let them share their experiences, perspectives and stories. Ask open-ended questions, e.g., who they most respect and why, what they love about other cultures, where they have been, and which news stories or books they have read.

2. Listen to what they think

Listening to children and young people is vital. It permits and enables them to process information they have heard, to make connections for themselves, and to reassure them that they and their opinions, feelings and memories are important. It can also reveal something of their beliefs, prejudices or experiences that may shape their reactions to those who are from different backgrounds. Be curious - ask them often what they think and why.

3. Identify how they feel

Give children and young people space and opportunity to express their opinions and worries. Ask 'How do you feel about that?' or "How do you think other people might feel about that?" Thank them for sharing their feelings, and praise them for identifying the feelings of others. Point out their facial expressions and body language to help them recognise their own range of emotions when considering difficult topics such as racism.

4. Encourage empathy

When we put ourselves in other people's shoes, or consider their perspectives, circumstances or feelings, this builds the empathy and respect needed to develop strong and healthy relationships. Praise and encourage empathetic and respectful behaviour to help embed it. Model empathy and respect towards people from different cultures and backgrounds to promote the building of safe, diverse and rewarding communities.

5. Warn about wrong attitudes

Racism can highlight the worst of humanity. Take the opportunity to warn of the consequences of racist attitudes. State that it is not right when people are treated unfairly because of the colour of their skin, or other perceived difference. Look out for social media posts, assumptions or playground jokes that are wrong or unkind and help children and young people know what they can do when they see and hear racism.

6. Make them feel safe

It's important that all children and young people feel safe. Reassure those who are at risk of marginalisation. Listen to those who feel they are being excluded or misunderstood or discriminated against. Have a conversation about what it would take for them to feel safe. Create a safe environment in your school or classroom where everyone can talk freely and experience compassion, understanding and support.

7. Explore and explain

The better you understand the issues around race and racism, the better you'll be able to talk about it. There are a number of resources that can inform you, your school and others that you can explore with those in your class. Take time to look through these and share as appropriate.

8. Inspire them to action

Celebrate change-makers and those who make the world a better place. Learn about those people together to show the children and young people they can make a positive difference too. Offer them opportunities to take action, and encourage them through the process.

SIGNPOSTS FOR *TEACHERS*

We recommend teachers look at some of the following resources in preparation for the Great Big Live Assembly.

1. Black History Month

This website has a wide range of resources and articles, to help school staff develop their own knowledge and understanding. You can also purchase a pack of informative and inspirational posters that ties in with this year's theme.

2. The Black Curriculum

A social enterprise committed to the teaching and support of Black history all year round. Their website offers a wide range of resources (including videos) for using in the classroom or to support planning. Suitable for using with KS2 and KS3 pupils.

3. The Difference Course

Archbishop Justin Welby has brought together leading practitioners and thinkers to create this resource looking at the power of faith in a conflicted world and equipping you to cross divides, navigate disagreement and pursue a just and flourishing world.

4. Runnymede

The Runnymede Trust is the UK's leading independent race equality think tank and offers access to some interesting reports and blogs on racial equality.

5. Mentally Healthy Schools

Mentally Healthy Schools brings together quality-assured mental health resources, information & advice for schools. Their resources focus on mental health themes, helping schools to explore ideas around diversity, self-belief, identity and the impact of racism on those who experience it. [This video is a good starting point.](#)

6. University College London

Staff and students have helpfully put together a curated list of books, films and more.

7. BBC Teach

A collection of resources to explore black history, heritage, culture and achievements with your class. Each resource is accompanied by teacher notes to aid classroom use. We recommend you start with [this article by Josiah Isles](#), an assistant headteacher who has written about his experiences within the education system as a black teacher in the UK. There is also an interesting [panel discussion programme](#) with ideas and best practice around teaching black and diverse histories and experiences

8. Education World

An online resource for schools based in the US, with a focus on the contribution made by African-Americans.

9. TES

Teachers and parents can use this hub for information, advice and practical resources to better understand the experiences of black individuals. Within the hub Black British History is highlighted alongside and resources to support the teaching of anti-racism.

10. Black History Walks

This organisation works with museums, schools, communities and universities to deliver a diverse and engaging programme of educational experiences for students, sightseers, businesses, film fans and anyone with an interest in history and learning. They organise walks, and have also created resources.

FOLLOW UP *ACTIVITIES*

To help young people reflect on what they have heard and seen in the Great Big Live Assembly, why not organise follow up activities that connect with Black History Month. Here are some ideas of ways you can connect cultural diversity learning with the curriculum.

1. **Creative Writing:** Starting with 'Dreams', explore the poet Langston Hughes and his work. Talk about his story, his themes, and his metaphors. Encourage the students to create their own Hughes-inspired poetry. Alternatively compare his work with other [Black poets](#).
2. **Literacy:** Use one of our recommended books for a comprehension, reflection and creation exercise. Look through your own library for books by or about Black people. Which ones do you like best and why?
3. **Art:** The colours of the Black History Month flag—black, yellow, green, and red—are deeply symbolic. Find out why these colours were chosen. Create artwork using only this colour palette. The piece could visually represent themes like freedom, unity, justice, optimism and resilience or depict historical figures and symbols of Black excellence
4. **Maths:** Use the film Hidden Figures ([trailer here](#)) to talk about the maths - and diversity - needed to develop the space programme.
5. **Geography:** Begin by celebrating Black explorers such as Ibn Battuta and Matthew Henson. Then use world maps to trace key migration routes during the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Windrush generation.
6. **PSHE:** Create a “Black History Month Wall of Fame” in the classroom, showcasing Black role-models past and present. Discuss how they can inspire positive change.
7. **Drama:** Pick 3 Black heroes and write an imaginary play in which they meet. What would they talk about? What did they have in common? What would they say to the world today?
8. **Music:** Talk about your favourite Black musicians. What is it you like about their music? Create a Spotify playlist for Black History Month. Write your own piece of music to introduce it.
9. **RE:** How do different religions teach forgiveness and reconciliation. Explore the life of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Consider some of the Bible teachings that led him to promote racial harmony.
10. **PE:** Talk about Black sports heroes. Who is your favourite and why? What do you know about them and their time at school? What are their most important training exercises? Create a mini training session inspired by one of these heroes.
11. **History.** Create a living timeline using black heroes from history. Use [this resource](#) to help. When did they live? What was the world like then? How have they shaped the world today
12. **Science.** Pick an inspiring Black scientist to introduce your lesson. [Here are some ideas](#). The resources on Donald Palmer, for example, can help talk about 'coughs and sneezes' (younger students) or tackling malaria (older students)
13. **Field Trips.** The [International Slavery Museum](#) in Liverpool, or [The Africa Centre](#) in London could be good options for older students. Or perhaps there is a Black History walk in your town or city.

RESOURCES FOR *STUDENTS*

Feeling confident to talk about identity and race, diversity and inclusion is vital in our multi-cultural Britain today. The Great Big Live Assembly is a great opportunity to start that journey, but there are lots of resources out there to help you connect with bigger conversation and play your part in making the world a better place for all.



First News FYI News Club

This can help grow students understanding of world news and global issues as well as developing their confidence and communication skills.



BBC Bitesize

Check out these guides, videos and activities about Black history in the UK and worldwide



National Geographic Kids

Discover the origins of Black History Month and the people that inspire us today.



Newsround

Discover all about Black History Month with this BBC Children's programme video playlist



The Black Curriculum

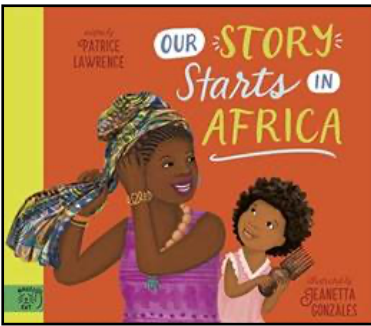
Watch through this playlist of inspirational Black British History Animations



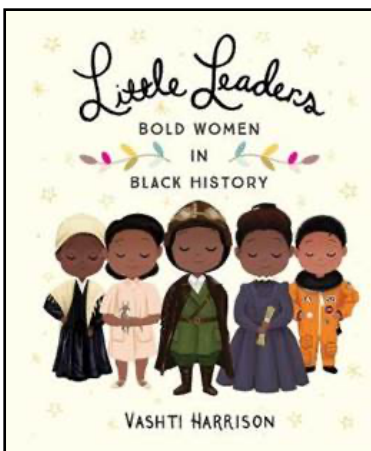
National Literacy Trust

Discover more resources here as well as tips, ideas and recommended reading to enhance your learning.

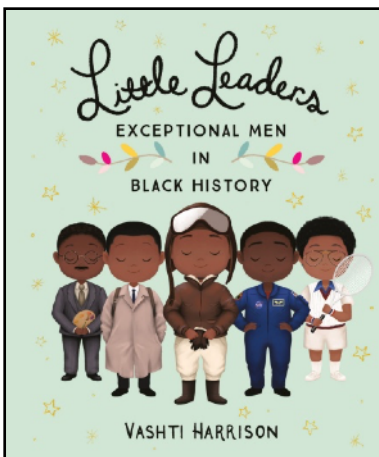
BOOKS FOR *KS1*



A beautifully told story of Black history, perfectly pitched at young children who want to learn more about their family – or anyone else’s family. Its a story about ancient combs, of warrior queens and treasures, of beautiful fabrics and of storytelling - all set in Africa.

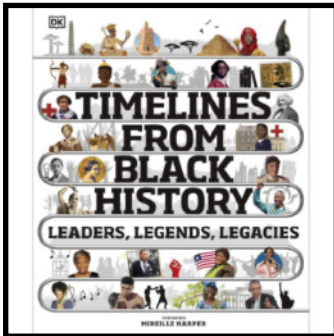


A beautiful and profound book, which chronicles the struggles and achievements of 50 historic and contemporary Black women from around the world. This is an inspiring book for girls and boys as it shows how a determined nature, ambition and hard work can make important change in the world.

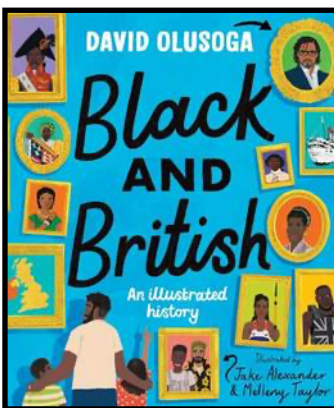


From aviators to artists, politicians to pop culture icons - an illuminating text paired with irresistible full-colour art bring to life both iconic and lesser-known figures.

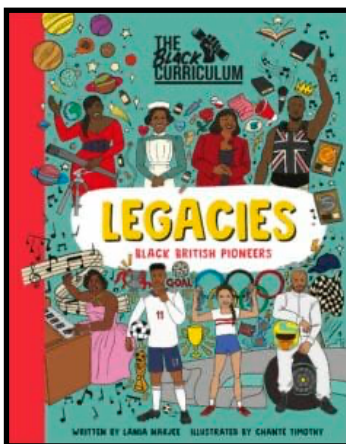
BOOKS FOR *KS2*



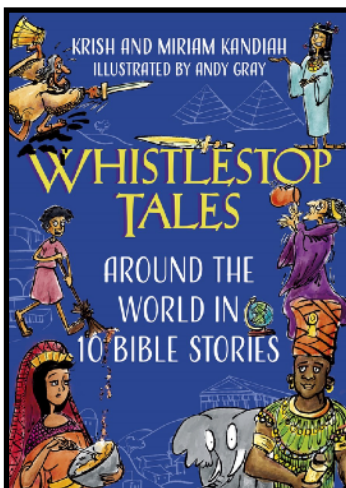
This important book seeks to begin to redress the imbalance in written history, where very often, significant contributions by black men and women have been overlooked and marginalised. Through vibrantly designed and graphically stunning double-page timeline spreads, we learn about inspiring, powerful, talented and world-changing figures from the fields of music, dance, engineering, mathematics, politics and sport, as well as Ancient African rulers and present day activists.



When he was growing up, David Olusoga didn't think there had been any Black people in British history because nothing he learned at school told him that there was. This fascinating illustrated book features key Black figures from Roman, Tudor, Stuart and Georgian and Victorian Britain and tells their fascinating and often heartbreaking stories. This is a truly brilliant and well-realised book that would be great for every classroom.

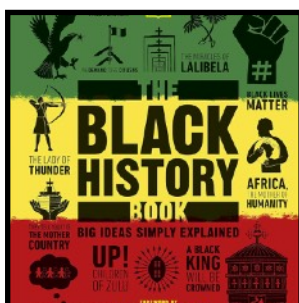


An engaging and thought-provoking exploration of Black British History. This bold, colourful work tells the stories of the trailblazers, innovators, and champions that have helped shape Britain, many of whom have previously been overlooked in mainstream education. With a foreword by Lewis Hamilton, this book is an invaluable addition to any library, classroom, or bookshelf, filling a crucial educational gap and providing a much-needed resource for teachers and students.

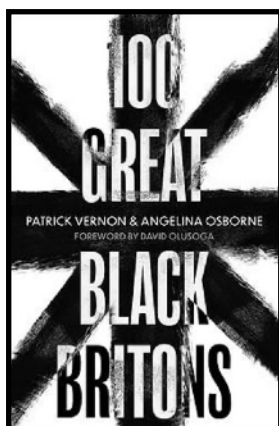


In ten action-packed stories, this book looks at racial diversity in the Bible by looking at characters in their original context and cultures. Krish and Miriam Kandiah are a mixed race couple and they bring their expertise as foster parents and theologians in these compelling and empathetic stories that can help children from all races encounter the wonders of the Bible and significant figures from ancient history.

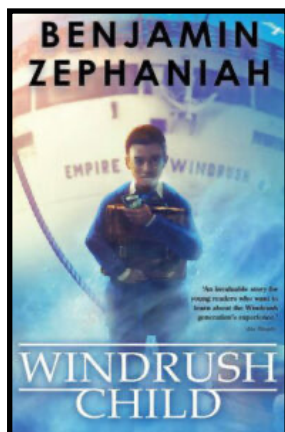
BOOKS FOR *KS3 AND KS4*



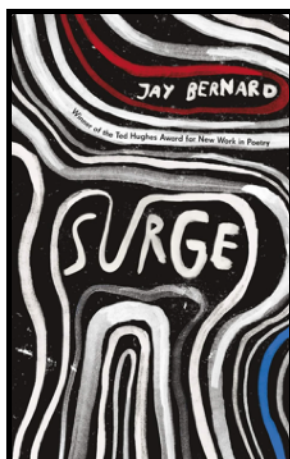
Part of the fascinating Big Ideas series, this book tackles tricky topics and themes in a simple and easy to follow format. Learn about Black History in this overview guide to the subject, brilliant for novices looking to find out more and experts wishing to refresh their knowledge alike! The Black History Book brings a fresh and vibrant take on the topic through eye-catching graphics and diagrams to immerse yourself in.



What makes a Great Black Briton? How do we recognise unsung heroes who may not have had the same profile and coverage about their impact and legacy? This book has help educate, inform and advance the contributions of Black people in Britain, and inspire the next generation of role models and achievers.



This masterpiece delivers a striking account about what it was like to be part of the Windrush Generation. Based on real events of the time, this fictional story features Leonard – a boy who was born in Jamaica and grew up in England. We see how he is treated at school, at work, socially and in his later years too. An important and powerful read, endorsed by Amnesty International, and would be well-placed in the hands of readers in Upper KS2 and Lower KS3.



Jay Bernard's extraordinary debut is a fearless exploration of the New Cross Fire of 1981, a house fire at a birthday party in which thirteen young black people were killed. Tracing a line from New Cross to the 'towers of blood' of the Grenfell fire, this urgent collection of poems speaks with, in and of the voices of the past that resonate with the Britain of today.

FEEDBACK

We would greatly value your feedback

You can fill in the [feedback form](#) here. Many thanks for joining us this year on this journey.



SANCTUARY *FOUNDATION*

Sanctuary Foundation is a charity led by Dr Krish Kandiah committed to working quickly and collaboratively to find solutions to issues involving marginalised people groups.

Following successful civil society and community-based campaigns for Syrian, Afghan and Hong Kong new arrivals, Sanctuary Foundation has been catalysing Ukrainian refugee welcome and support across the whole of the UK.

Sanctuary Foundation has partnered with Save the Children, UNHCR, Choose Love, Royal College of Paediatricians, Anna Freud Centre, The Children's Commissioner and many others providing training and inspiration on the area of refugee welcome and integration.

It also raises funds, provides information, and undertakes projects and events which advocate for refugees and promote understanding.

www.sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1198534