



BLACK
HISTORY MONTH

TIMELINE FOR SECONDARY PUPILS: BLACK BRITISH HISTORY – PAST AND PRESENT.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This timeline is intended to provide information about a selection of significant events and people who have impacted on Black British history. You can use this to support different subjects, discuss key people and events, and to encourage independent research. As the timeline does not fully reflect the contribution of the Black diaspora within the UK or throughout the world, we hope that it will inspire you to find out more.

TIMELINE: BLACK BRITISH HISTORY – PAST AND PRESENT.



Roman Emperor **Septimius Severus** becomes the first African-born Roman Emperor (now Libya). He led a military campaign in Britain which included Hadrian's Wall

Kingdom of **Benin** is established and by the 1400s wealthy kingdom rich in brass, palm oil and rubber

The **Mali** Empire is established by King Sundiata Keita as a trading empire which flourishes in West Africa until the 1500s due to its gold dust and salt deposits

Shakespeare's play Othello is published and performed. The main character is a Black man

10,000 YEARS AGO

10,000-year-old skeleton known as Cheddar Cheese Man is unearthed. He is said to have dark skin, blue eyes and curly hair

253-258 AD

Aurelian Moors – a part of the Roman Empire – are stationed at Hadrian's Wall. The Moors were from 'Mauretania' which means they came from northern Africa (now Morocco and Algeria)

193-211 AD

African-born scholar, Hadrian of Canterbury, becomes an abbot

668 AD

900s



1200s

Mani Kongo Diogo mounts defence to stop the Atlantic slave trade

1350

1604



Maroons with their leader Queen Nanny – escaped former enslaved Black Jamaicans – force a British governor to sign a peace agreement giving them both land and freedom

Dido Elizabeth Belle (great-niece of Lord Mansfield) is raised as part of an aristocratic family



UK parliament abolish the slave trade

Shaka Zulu – Zulu chief who founded the Zulu empire - conquers areas of southern Africa and quadruples the size of his army

1700s

Asante Empire (now Ghana) is established and becomes successful under Osei Tutu

1739

1761



Olaudah Equiano – a famous Black writer and former enslaved person – has his life story published

1789

1807

1818



1833

1833 UK parliament abolish slavery

1846

Alexandre Dumas (Haitian-born father) published *The Count of Monte Cristo*. He also wrote *The Three Musketeers*

1853

Mary Seacole – a Jamaican born nurse and healer – travelled to England to help in the Crimean War (now part of Ukraine). Following refusal by the British War Office, she made her own way to nurse sick soldiers on the battlefield

1875

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor – a composer, poet and political activist – studied at the Royal College of Music and wrote *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

1880s

Queen Mother Yaa Asantewaa becomes the gatekeeper of the “golden stool” and leads an army of 5,000 in the Ashanti–British War in 1900

1902

JS Risien Russell becomes one of Britain’s first Black British consultants and neurologists. He was from British Guiana (now Guyana) and during the 19th and 20th century he was viewed as a pioneering figure in neurology





John Richard Archer becomes London's first Black Mayor in Battersea

Sir Learie Constantine MBE – famous cricketeer in the Lancashire League – later becomes a statesman, the first Black peer and the author of Colour Bar

Una Marson – a Jamaican journalist and poet – travels to London and becomes the BBC's first Black producer



1904

1913

1914-1918

1929

1932

1939-1945

Dr Harold Moody – who came from Jamaica to study medicine and lived in Peckham - forms the League of the Coloured Peoples

Walter Tull – English professional footballer and British Army Officer – becomes one of the first Black men to command White soldiers in action in WW1



World War 2. Troops from the British Empire play a crucial role. Around 2,600,000 men and 100,000 women actively serve in the war. There are 1,200 in the Caribbean regiment; 5,500 in the RAF as ground crew; 300 Africans and Caribbeans in the RAF as air crew; 13 Victoria Crosses are awarded to “colonial soldiers”; and the UK imports huge quantities of grain, tea, fish and other commodities from the British Empire.*

*Source: Black and British: An illustrated history (Macmillan Children's Books) by David Olusoga

The SS Empire Windrush carrying 500 passengers from the Caribbean, docks at Tilbury, Essex



Notting Hill Carnival is founded by Claudia Jones who broadcasts the first indoor Caribbean carnival



Olympics, **Tommie Smith and John Carlos** give the Black power salute to highlight the need for Black coaches, as well as their strident disapproval of apartheid

1948

1957

1959

1963

1968

1970s

Althea Gibson becomes the first Black Wimbledon champion. She also won the French Open (1956) and US Open (1957-58)

Fela Kuti – a Nigerian musician – studies at Trinity College (London) and later creates a modern afro-beat and style which achieves international success

Bristol Bus Boycott takes place, organised by Stephenson, Henry, Hackett, Evans and Brown to challenge the union's decision to ban 'coloured' people from becoming conductors and drivers

Bob Marley – a Jamaican-born singer and songwriter – achieves success as a politically-infused reggae star. He becomes an international star



Arthur Ashe becomes the first Black male Wimbledon champion. He also won the US Open (1968) and the Australian Open (1970)

1975

Moira Stuart becomes the first female African-Caribbean newsreader

1981

3 Black MPs – Bernie Grant, Paul Boateng and Diane Abbott – are elected to parliament.

1987

Laurie Cunningham becomes the first Black footballer to play for England in a competitive international match

1979

Paul Ince becomes the first Black captain of the senior men's England football team

1993

Stephen Lawrence is murdered, and his parents (Baroness Doreen Lawrence and Neville Lawrence) and family begin a campaign for justice

Chris Ofili wins the Turner prize (a prestigious award for British artists)

1998



2002

Paul Boateng becomes the first Black British cabinet minister

2004

Wangari Maathai
– Kenyan environmentalist – becomes the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize



2008

Lewis Hamilton wins his first Formula One title. He was honoured as a Sir, owns the F1 record for career race victories and became the first Black driver to win the F1 world drivers' championship



2013

Malorie Blackman becomes the UK's children's laureate

2014

Steve McQueen wins Best Picture at the Oscars; he later develops a mini-film series, Small Axe, about Black resilience and triumph

2018

Sheku Kanneh-Mason MBE – first Black winner of the BBC Young Musician award in 2016 - performs on the cello at the Royal wedding of Harry and Meghan



Stormzy becomes the first Black UK rapper to headline Glastonbury's Pyramid Stage

May 2020 George Floyd is murdered in the USA. His death sparks the Black Lives Matter movement which has worldwide impact and leads to activism across the UK



October 2021 The **Welsh government** become the first UK nation to make the teaching of Black, Asian and minority ethnic histories and experiences mandatory

June 2022 A National **Windrush monument** is unveiled at Waterloo Station

2019

2020

2021

2022



June 2020 Edward Colston's statue is toppled in Bristol



SUGGESTED KS3 AND KS4 ACTIVITIES.

GO FURTHER: LEARN MORE

1. Look into ancient **African kingdoms**. You can choose from: Asante, Benin, Songhay, Kongo, and Dahomey and Oyo. Find out why they were successful, what they achieved and why they are no longer in existence.
2. Find out about the **Bristol Bus Boycott**. What was the significance of Roy Hackett's role in the Bristol Bus Boycott? What are the similarities and differences between this event and Rosa Parks' actions?
3. In preparation for the **75th anniversary of Windrush** 2023, learn about post-war migration to the UK here.
4. Research Steve McQueen, Malorie Blackman or Wangari Maathai. What can you celebrate about each of their lives? How can their stories and achievements inspire you?
5. Create an online quiz using key figures from the timeline. Publish it on your school's: website, twitter or newsletter.
6. Take inspiration from John Agard's poem **Checking Out Me History** and write your own.
7. Create your own timeline celebrating key events in your lifetime. Compare and contrast with your peers.
8. Research migration into your local area. Find out how it has positively impacted on the local community.

#TIMETOACT

What actions can you take to continue to increase empowerment, knowledge and understanding about Black history?

EAGER TO FIND OUT MORE? TRY...

- Black and British: A Short Essential History by David Olusoga
- 100 Great Black Britons by Patrick Vernon and Angelina Osborne
- Homecoming: Voices of a Windrush Generation by Colin Grant



Black and British,
A Short Essential History
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