

Black History Month



What is Black History Month?

Black History Month honours the contributions of Afro-Caribbean people to history.

The celebration of Black History Month started off as “Negro History Week,” in America. This was created in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson, African American historian, scholar, educator and publisher.

It became a month-long celebration in 1976 in the USA and Canada.

Black History Month only became a thing in the UK in 1987, almost ten years later. To this day, there are still countries who don't teach their people about Black History Month.



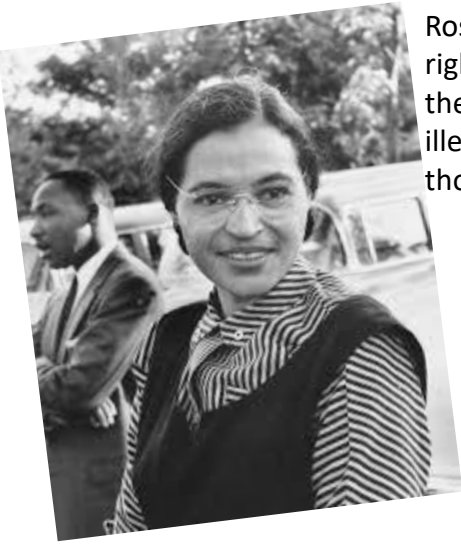
Innovators

If it weren't for many black inventors in the world, many of the things that we use daily and make our lives easier wouldn't exist. Some of these unknown innovators are:

- Alexander Miles – The Elevator (October 11th, 1887)
- James Edward West – The Microphone (1962)
- Dr. Shirley Jackson – Caller ID
- Garrett Morgan – Traffic Lights (November 20, 1923)
- Madam CJ Walker – Black hair care products (1904)
- George Speck – Crisps (1853)



Famous Black people you might recognise



Rosa Parks was an American activist during the civil rights movement best known for sitting at the front of the bus as a black person. During those times it was illegal for a black person to sit at the front of the bus, those places were reserved for white people.



Barack Obama was the first U.S. black president. He was also awarded the Nobel Prize for “extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between people”.



Martin Luther King, Jr. was an American Christian and activist who became widely known for his famous, motivational speech “I have a dream”. King also organized the non-violent protests in Birmingham, Alabama, as well as the 1963 march in Washington where he delivered his famous speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.



“I know what I can do now, so I never doubt myself”. This quote has inspired thousands of people all over the world to not give up on their dreams.



Famous Black British people you might know



Walter Tull was both a professional footballer and a soldier during WWI. He gave up his career to help war efforts and is recognized for being the first black officer to lead White British soldiers into battle



Phillis Wheatley was the first African poet to be published. She was sold to an American family. It was during her time in slavery that she was able to learn to read and write.



Mary Seacole nurse, healer and businesswoman who set up the “British Hotel” behind the line of the Crimean War. Originally Mary wanted to join Florence Nightingale and her team of nurses but was turned down. This didn’t stop her though. Instead her and her friend , Thomas Day, set of to Crimea with a ship stocked full of medical supplies to assist victims of the Crimean war in 1886.



Nelson Mandela was a social rights activist, politician and philanthropist who became South Africa’s president from 1994-1999. In 1993 he won the Nobel Prize. He directed a campaign of peaceful, non-violent defiance against the South African government and their racist policies. In the beginning of 1962, Mandela was sentenced to 27 years in prison for political offences. This was for conspiring to overthrow the state following the Rivonia trial.



BLACK LIVES MATTER

On 25th May 2020, George Floyd, an innocent black man was killed in the streets of Minneapolis. His death was the result of a white police officer, Derek Chauvin, kneeling on Floyd's neck whilst he was pinned to the floor. This murder in broad daylight sparked Black Lives Matter protests worldwide. Millions of people came together to fight for an end to systemic racism and true equality for black people.

Initially, no-one was held accountable for the murder of George Floyd which sparked outrage around the world.

As a result of these protests:

- The day after his death all four policemen were fired. Then on May 29th Derick Chauvin, the police officer who knelt on Floyd's neck for almost 9 minutes, was charged with 3rd degree murder and 2nd degree manslaughter. Shortly after, the police department was disbanded for the safety of everyone in Minneapolis.
- A statue of Edward Colston in Bristol, UK has been pulled down because he was a part of the Atlantic Slave Trade.
- 10th June - an American holiday which symbolises the freedom of those who have been enslaved in the US, has finally been given the recognition it deserves.

The murder of George Floyd and the collaborative action instigated by his death will go down in history as a period of change that future generations will learn of.



Being Black in 2020!



“Look, black is beautiful, black is excellent
Black is pain, black is joy, black is evident
It's workin' twice as hard as the people you know you're better than
'Cause you need to do double what they do so you can level them”

These lyrics sum up the experience of a black British individual in the UK in 2020, it's in a time when it shouldn't be about colour, often all others see is colour!

King Caelan is an 11-year-old boy who took it upon himself to remix a song that was trending at the time but turned it into a song that promotes BLM in the UK.

“Oppressed cause the colour of my skin doesn't matter”

This just shows how young black youths get told that they can be treated differently just because of the colour of their skin.



More Information

If you want to learn more about Black History Month click on the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SsprpsHSdU>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/watch/horrible-histories-songs-martin-luther-king-jr-they-were-the-heroes?collection=black-history-month>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/54357779?collection=black-history-month>