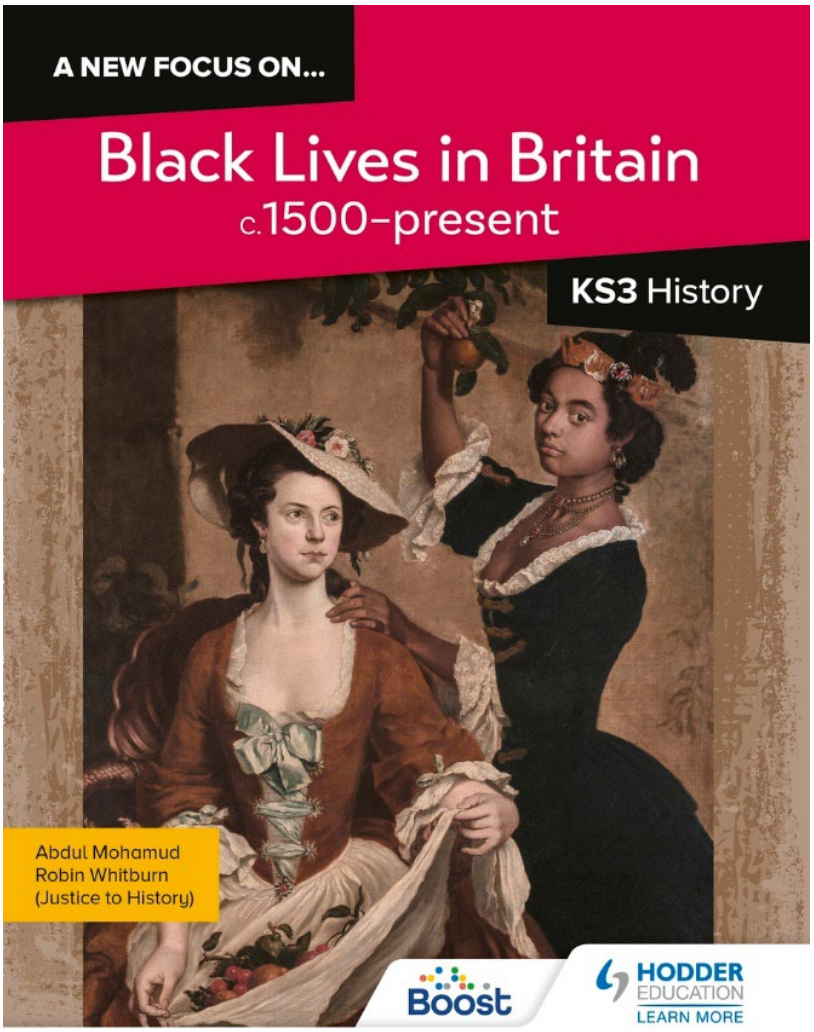
A NEW FOCUS ON...

Black Lives in Britain c. 1500–present

Questions and Answers

This booklet is a guide to the enquiry questions, key questions and source questions that are posed in the textbook, along with our suggestions about the approach answers to these questions might take. We have provided detailed responses to illustrate how the stories of individuals within the textbook can be used to form a wider picture of the story of Black lives in Britain over the period covered by the textbook.

Not all questions included in the textbook are included here as we have restricted answers to questions for which we anticipate teachers would need guidance.



Black Lives in Britain c. 1500–present

Questions and Answers

Introduction

Key question

What can we infer about the history of Black people in Britain from the 'Portrait of Two Women'?

Examining the image 'Portrait of two women' will reveal the complexity of the Black experience in Britain both in the eighteenth century and in the whole period covered in this book. The renaming of the portrait shows how the limited information about Black people in Britain until recently has led people to make incorrect assumptions and incorrect generalisations.

Site enquiry: Black people in Tudor London

What were Black people doing in Tudor London?
(Pages 8–13)

Main questions

Compare the experiences of John Blanke and Dederi Jaquoah in Tudor London. In what ways were both of them awarded high status in English society?

(page 11)

- John Blanke was a trumpeter who worked at the court of Henry VII and Henry VIII. He was one of the first recorded Black people in England, and his trumpeting skills were highly valued. He was paid well and was even granted a pay rise by Henry VIII in recognition of his service. Blanke's status in English society was largely due to his musical talent and his position at the royal court.
- Dederi Jaquoah, on the other hand, was a merchant and a member of the Guinea Company, a trading organisation that brought goods from West Africa to Europe. He was also an interpreter, and he worked as a translator for the English government. Jaquoah was highly respected by the English authorities and was baptised in London.
- In both cases, Blanke and Jaquoah were able to achieve high status in English society by providing valuable services to the country. Blanke's musical talent and Jaquoah's commercial and linguistic skills were highly valued, and the men were rewarded accordingly. However, their experiences were also shaped by their different roles and positions in society. Blanke was a member of the royal court, while Jaquoah was a merchant and interpreter. Despite these differences, both men were able to achieve recognition and respect in Tudor London.

Using the limited information we have of these two men's lives, consider how far they might have considered themselves to be 'Black Englishmen'. (page 11)	• It is likely that both Blanke and Jaquoah saw themselves primarily as individuals of African descent, rather than as Black Englishmen. This is because England was a relatively new home for them, and they likely identified more with their African heritage and culture. Dederi's positive feelings about England are suggested by him calling himself after his English host, John Davies, when he went back to Africa, at least when he was meeting Europeans. • It is also important to note that the concept of race was not as rigidly defined during this time period as it is today. It is possible that Blanke and Jaquoah did not think of themselves in terms of race at all, but rather as individuals with their own unique identities and backgrounds. • Overall, it is difficult to say exactly how Blanke and Jaquoah would have considered themselves in terms of race and nationality, as their perspectives and experiences were shaped by a vastly different historical and cultural context than our own.
Source 2: A map of the Guinea Coast, 1638 (page 11)	There is no question for this source. The map was produced in 1638 by the famous Dutch cartographer Jan Jansson and was widely reproduced. It was almost certainly used by Europeans exploring West Africa in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.
Final Enquiry Activity **How far do the lives in this enquiry show that London was a place where Black people lived as 'England's Other Countrymen'?**	Assessing the lives of John Blanke, Dederi Jaquoah, Mary Fillis and Reasonable Blackman and to what extent Black people were accepted in Tudor London, suggests that they were regarded as 'England's other countrymen'. While they were not entirely excluded from English society, they were still subject to prejudice and discrimination.

Depth enquiry: Black Georgians in 18th-century England

How did some Black people become celebrities in Georgian England?
(Pages 16–25)

The enquiry question	
How did some Black people become celebrities in Georgian England?	Beyond the individual achievements of the three men, general conditions of London society in the late eighteenth century that helped them become so well-known included: • The emerging group of more radical humane English people known as *abolitionists*, like Granville Sharp. • The more openly humane attitudes of the time, influenced by the Enlightenment, which even influenced the royal family. • The collective support of prominent Black Africans, including the Sons of Africa. • The less pleasant idea that Black people were 'exotic' and of interest because of their difference and novelty.
The three individual cases:	**Olaudah Equiano** • Equiano was a formerly enslaved African who earned his freedom in the 1760s and became a prominent figure in Georgian England. His work for Scottish inventor Charles Irving would have given him contacts in London society and possibly more self-confidence. • He wrote an autobiography, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, which was published in 1789 and became a best-seller. The Prince of Wales at the time, the future King George IV, owned a copy of his book. The book was widely read and helped to shape public opinion on slavery in England. • Equiano also became known for his public speaking and his advocacy for the abolition of slavery. He travelled extensively throughout Britain, giving lectures on his experiences as a slave and his views on slavery. He became a close associate of White English abolitionists like Granville Sharp. He would also have gained confidence and support from the group of Black Georgians in London called the Sons of Africa. **Ottobah Cugoano**

	• Cugoano was also a formerly enslaved African who gained his freedom in the 1770s and became a prominent figure in Georgian England. He worked in the 1780s for an artistic couple, the Cosways, who had connections with elite London society. He would also have gained confidence and support from the group of Black Georgians in London called the Sons of Africa. • He wrote a book, *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species*, which was published in 1787 and became an influential anti-slavery text. The Prince of Wales also owned a copy of his book. Cugoano also became known for his public speaking and his advocacy for the abolition of slavery. **Julius Soubise** • Soubise was a young Black man who was adopted by a leading London aristocrat, the Duchess of Queensbury. Their relationship was a source of gossip in London and spoiled his celebrity somewhat. • Soubise gained fame as a fencer and horse-rider in Georgian England. He was known for his skill and athleticism, and his performances were popular among the upper classes. He became a celebrity and was featured in newspapers and magazines, and there are some images of him that still exist. • Despite his fame, Soubise faced racial prejudice and discrimination, and his success was often attributed to his supposed exoticism rather than his actual abilities.
Source question **Dido and Elizabeth Painting** (page 16)	• The painting depicts two young women, one Black and one White, standing side by side with a picturesque landscape in the background. • Dido Belle, the Black woman, is depicted in an elegant dress, holding a rose and looking confidently at the viewer. Lady Elizabeth Murray, on the other hand, is dressed in a more modest gown and appears to be leaning towards Dido Belle in a protective manner. • The painting reflects the affection and respect that the Murrays had for Dido Belle, despite the racial prejudices of the time. It also highlights the complexity of social and cultural relations in the eighteenth

	century, where race and class played important roles in defining one's status and position in society.
Source question **Compare the portraits in sources 1 and 2 with the painting by Stephen Slaughter on the front cover. What similarities and differences are there between the pairs of Black and White people in the three pictures** (page 17)	• The relationship between Black people and White people in eighteenth-century Britain is shown in the three pictures, and each one shows respect for the three Black people: the Slaughter woman is very grand and dignified; Dido is an individual with warmth and character; the servant is in a highly trusted situation with the king. • The degree of intimacy between the subjects is clearly different: the Slaughter women are very close indeed, with warmth and physical contact; Dido and Elizabeth are close, but Dido is behind and no eye contact is suggested; the servant is clearly so much lower than the king and his face is not visible. • The differences between the three pictures would have shown similar characteristics if both people had been White or both Black. A White servant dressing the king would not have been more visible, indeed we don't know of paintings at the time of White servants so prominent in a monarch's painting. So, overall the three painting suggest that there was more respect between the races than we might expect in the 'age of slavery'.

Depth enquiry: Black radicals in the 19th century

How significant were Black people in the radical political movements of the early nineteenth century?
(pages 28–35)

Enquiry question **How significant were Black people in the radical political movements of the early nineteenth century?**	This question focuses on the challenging concept of *significance.* Students should be reminded (or taught for the first time) that the significance of a historical figure should be considered in two complementary ways: 1. **The impact of the person on the situation at the time. The three men in this enquiry had limited impact on radical movements.** William Cuffay was the most prominent, as he was a leader of a group

of national importance, the London Chartists. He was also significant in being a key **physical force** Chartist leader, when many wanted only **moral force**. Cuffay continued to influence local politics when he was transported to Australia for his 'crimes'; trade unions in Australia would have been inspired by his leadership in the 1860s.

William Davidson was a marginal figure in the Cato Street Conspiracy, as he himself declared at his trial. Robert Wedderburn was one of many radical speakers and writers in the 1810s who were known for their challenges to society, but he wasn't part of any important uprisings or events like Peterloo.

2. **The insight into the historical period that this life gives historians studying it now.**
The three men are remarkable because the early nineteenth century was still a high time for the enslavement of Black people on British plantations in the Caribbean, but the three men shaped lives for themselves as free Black men in British society. They were all of mixed heritage and were proud to identify as Black, even though they were aware of the negative consequences of their identity. They seemed to be building on the renown of previously politically active Black men in England, like Equiano and Cugoano, but they themselves are not followed by Black political activists for many years to come.

The best answers will consider both aspects of historical significance, with clear supporting evidence from all three of the men studied.

Source question

Explain how Source 2 shows the political mood of the time. What kind of issues were people unhappy about?

- The drawing gives the idea that lots of people are protesting about life and politics in Britain in the early nineteenth century and they present different ideas about how society should be changed. Owen presented a *utopian* vision of the perfect society without religion, but Wedderburn saw this as no better than slavery and called for a place for faith and religion, in his case, Christianity. There are aspects of the protests that resonate with the 2020s: one man is complaining about vaccination, as it had just become well known through the smallpox work of Jenner and others.

How does the picture show the Black British man Wedderburn? Consider positive and negative aspects of the way he is portrayed. (page 29)	• Although the artist has given Robert Wedderburn a prominent place in the drawing, he has not shown him much respect. He is shown with massive holes in his stocking and no shoe; his facial features are those of a man from Africa, but Robert was of mixed heritage. However, he is shown as the defender of religion against Owen, which would have been an important viewpoint.
Source question **Cuffay's speech from court before he was sentenced to transportation.** (page 35)	In his speech, Cuffay was expressing his disappointment, anger and possibly shock at not being given a fair trial because of the media hostility to him as a Black man. He used this as another opportunity to condemn the governments of the time, which were refusing to grant the vote to all men, as the Chartists demanded. We don't know much about Cuffay's thoughts on politics and race, so this is an important source. He seems to know that he won't be taken seriously and chooses to turn his scorn on the government, rather than plead for mercy.

Site enquiry: Black people in industrial Liverpool, 1860–1950

What was the impact of Black migration on Liverpool from 1860–1950?
(pages 38–45)

Source question **What was the impact of Black migration on Liverpool from 1860 to 1950?**	There are both social and economic aspects of the impact of Black migration on Liverpool. The main emphasis of the stories explored in the book is on the social impact, particularly in terms of the development of mixed heritage families, where Black sailors involved in the various trades coming in and out of Liverpool decided to settle in the port and marry local women. Students should consider the impact on both the Black people and their families and on Liverpool as a whole. The best answers will look at a range of aspects and consider both positive developments and negative challenges. **Economic effects** • Black labour helped the growth of trade and industry in Liverpool in the later nineteenth century. Sailors from West Africa and the Caribbean

islands were employed on Liverpool ships engaged in the palm oil trade with West Africa in particular. Sometimes those men would settle in the port and they often worked on the docks. In the World Wars, Black men were often employed in local factories when White British men joined the armed forces. Black labour was key for the prosperity of Liverpool.

- Occasionally, there were Black middle-class people who became involved in the business management of trading ventures. One example was the Christian family: father Jacob, who set up his son, George W. Christian (1872–1924), as a trading clerk, and George ended up with his own firm.

Social effects

- Black men who settled in Liverpool in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would marry local White women. Their children were therefore of mixed heritage and the diversity of the city grew; James and Elizabeth Clarke had thirteen children, and John and Elizabeth Quarless had six.
- Some of these Black men became prominent figures in the communities near the docks: John Quarless became church warden of St Michael in the City on Pitt Street, and James Clarke became a renowned swimmer, coach and lifesaver for dock accidents.
- After the First World War, the environment in Liverpool turned hostile for Black people. White men thought that Black men were a threat to their jobs that they wanted to return to after fighting the war, and they also felt jealous of Black men who married White women. Riots broke out in the port in 1919 and at least one sailor, Charles Wotten, was murdered by a mob.
- The idea of mixed heritage families was uncomfortable for some citizens of Liverpool (and other parts of the country) who had clear prejudices about inter-racial relationships. Academics at Liverpool University carried out research into those families and they seem to have deliberately targeted the poorest families. Their Fletcher Report condemned mixed race families and caused bad feeling in the Black communities of Liverpool. When Black Americans were stationed in Britain during the Second World War, there were a number of mixed-race children born to local women. A local African pastor, Rev. Daniels Ekarte, tried to get support for these children and their mothers after the war ended, but the local authorities were not supportive.

Black Lives in Britain c. 1500–present

Questions and Answers

Questions on the Fletcher Report (page 44)

How did British racist thinking of the time influence the work of Muriel Fletcher between 1928 and 1930?

- The crude racial ideas that had emerged from some universities in the early twentieth century were an obvious influence on Muriel Fletcher. As a social science academic, Fletcher would have been aware of eugenics, the bogus scientific idea that society would be improved if human beings confined their breeding to the so-called 'superior races', and the world should let inferior races die out. Racial mixing, as in dual heritage families, was regarded as corrupt and bound to cause inferior children. It was not surprising that Fletcher announced that Black men were inferior and should not be allowed to have children with White women.

Why might the English media have been so keen to praise Fletcher's work at a time of national economic hardship?

- The Fletcher Report came out at the beginning of the Great Depression in Britain, and it would be convenient for the government to be able to blame social problems on immigrants, rather than consider the failures of their own social policies. So, the Fletcher Report was applauded in the national right-wing press in Britain.

Site enquiry: Black communities in Tiger Bay, Cardiff, 1890–1960

What was the impact of racism on Black people in Cardiff and how did they face those challenges from 1890–1960?
(pages 46–53)

The enquiry question

What was the impact of racism on Black people in Cardiff and how did they face those challenges from 1890–1960?

There were three main periods during these years when Black people in Cardiff had to face the challenges of racism, in their jobs and in their social worlds:

1. **After the First World War**
   1919. During the war, sailors from South Asia, the Middle East, West and East Africa had taken up more jobs in the merchant ships of Cardiff and other port towns, as well as some serving in the Royal Navy. Although they had been seen as making a vital contribution to Britain's war effort, when the war was over they were seen as

competition for Welshmen's work. There was a major riot in Cardiff in June 1919. When White mobs attacked, some of the Black and Arab sailors defended themselves; mixed race veteran Ivor Landsman ended up in prison for doing that, as did some of the Somali men who defended Abdi Langara's boarding house.

2. **The Inter-War years, 1919–39:**
Economic hardship continued for many workers in the Cardiff area after the war, and the seamen's organisation, the National Union of Seamen, took a racist stance in defending White sailors' rights against being 'over-run' by Black, Asian and Arab men. The government ended up supporting this racist position and passed an act in 1935 that gave financial support only to shipping firms that exclusively used White labour. Harry O'Connell, a Black communist ship's carpenter, led an organisation called the Colonial Defence Association in the 1930s that defended the rights of workers excluded by the Whites-only rule. In 1936, the rule was overturned, allowing funds to ships that used any workers from the British Empire. Harry served at sea at the start of the Second World War, but was later banned because the authorities distrusted him.

3. **After the Second World War**
The area of Bute Town, also known as Tiger Bay, was quite open for Black people after 1945. Muslim sailors of Cardiff had been able to worship at their own mosque since the 1930s, and the cafes and pubs of Bute Town did not operate a 'colour bar' that excluded anyone who wasn't White. However, the local police were hostile towards the Black communities and when a Jewish shopkeeper was murdered in the area in 1952, racism impacted on the life of one Somali sailor. Mahmood Mattan was wrongly accused and convicted of the murder and hung, despite there being hidden evidence to support his innocence. It took decades of campaigning by his family and friends before his conviction was overturned in 1995. Some Black families had made great sacrifices during the war: the Young family – father Wilmot, from Jamaica, mother Beatrice, a Welsh woman, and five children – were devastated by the conflict. Wilmot and his two sons died in the forces against the Germans. Patti Young (later Flynn) campaigned for 26 years to get a public memorial to Black servicemen and women killed in the war, finally succeeding in 2019.

Source question

Read Source 1. How far does Spring's description of Tiger Bay show a respect for the area and its people?

(page 47)

Spring's description of the racial cultural diversity of Tiger Bay in the early twentieth century would now be considered flawed by ideas of racial superiority. He wanted to convey his joy in visiting the area and seeing all the different cultural groups with their heritages from all over the world, living and interacting side-by-side on the port's streets. Although Spring wanted to be positive about the place, he wrote as if he was visiting some strange 'other world' rather than being in his own country. This kind of 'voyeurism' wasn't very respectful of other cultures and probably would not have helped with any fight for equality and justice in a multiracial British society. Spring's description shows interest but not respect.

Depth enquiry: Black British lives in the Second World War

How did the Second World War bring both opportunities and threats to Black people in Britain?

(pages 54 –61)

Enquiry question

How did the Second World War bring both opportunities and threats to Black people in Britain?

The World Wars saw the whole of the British Empire brought into a global conflict. By the time of the Second World War, the British government did not want to be seen to operate racist policies when they were fighting the racist Nazi regime, but they operated an unofficial 'colour bar' in certain aspects. They preferred Black people in the Caribbean and Africa to serve in their own areas, rather than come to Britain. In Britain itself, some Black people were accepted into the armed forces and the organisations of the Home Front, but others faced rejection on the basis of race.

1. **The Armed Forces: Navy**
   The Navy continued its practice from the First World War of using Black sailors only in the Merchant Navy, securing trade, and not the Royal Navy, fighting the enemy directly. The Youngs of Cardiff (see page 50 of the book) saw father, Wilmot, and son, Jocelyn, killed in service on merchant ships. Henry King, a migrant from British Guiana, and his son also served in the merchant fleet.

2. **The Armed Forces: RAF**
The Royal Air Force suffered severe losses of men and aircraft in the Battle of Britain in 1940 and needed to recruit urgently. This opened up opportunities for Black men and women to serve. Over 6,000 men came from the Caribbean to serve in the RAF, about 450 as air crew (details of one or two are given on page 55). There were also some British born Black men who trained for aircraft duties, including Arthur Young. Many of the Black men from the Caribbean who served in the RAF came back as migrants to settle in Britain after 1948. There were also a few Black women serving in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, including Liverpool-born Lilian Bailey, who was initially sacked from an army canteen because her father was Black, but then served in the WAAF checking aircraft equipment.

3. **The Armed Forces: American troops**
British army regiments had very few Black soldiers, but when the USA entered the War in 1941, their soldiers, both White and Black, were often stationed in Britain as they prepared to fight in Europe or Africa. The American 'GIs' were received warmly by many local British communities and the Black Americans were struck by their openness, compared to the strict segregation of American life. When mixed heritage children were born to White British mothers during and after the War, they were often rejected by family and local communities, ending up in the social care system.

4. **The Home Front: Active service**
There were Black people living in Britain who wanted to serve their communities on the Home Front. Some were welcomed, like Nigerian-born air-raid warden Ita Ekpenyon, serving in the West End of London. However others faced rejection, like Sierra Leonean Laminoh Sankoh who was fired as a stretcher-bearer near Ekpenyon's district because other people didn't want to work with him. When Amelia King wanted to serve in the Women's Land Army (WLA), officials in the East End of London told her that no farmer would want her, so she should work in a factory instead. Amelia and her local MP fought for her to have the right to serve on the land, and they won.

5. **The Home Front: Communications and liaison**
The government and the BBC employed some prominent Black people to communicate with the Caribbean islands and Black people in Britain

and boost their support for the war effort. Una Marson worked for the BBC Overseas Service, broadcasting programmes of interest to Black people and sharing messages from the forces to their families. Learie Constantine, a famous Caribbean cricketer playing in Britain, worked for the government in looking after the welfare of Black people in service. He struggled to secure support for mixed heritage children born during the war, and was himself a victim of racial discrimination in a London hotel in 1943.

The Second World War saw a number of pioneering Black men and women show their loyalty and identity with Britain through service in both the armed forces and Home Front organisations. However, they often had to struggle against racial prejudice to give their service and commitment to the country.

Source question

How far does Akin Shenbanjo's story show racial tolerance and a positive wartime spirit in Britain?

(page 55)

The question looks at the significance of Shenbanjo's story in terms of race relations in Britain at the time. His loyalty to Britain's fight against the Axis powers in the Second World War suggests a strong identity with the idea of the imperial 'mother country'. He was already coming to England to study and was prepared to sacrifice that opportunity to join the armed forces. The central authorities at the War Office encouraged him to come and join the RAF in 1941, and they had to overrule the prejudice of the local office in England to secure Shenbanjo a training place. After passing his training as a gunner and radio operator, he was placed in Yorkshire.

There was certainly a warm welcome for him in his plane crew, and they named the bomber after him: the Black Prince. The photograph of them shows how at ease Shenbanjo is with them and what a tight team they were. Jimmy Watt, the Canadian pilot of the plane, had clearly encouraged this integration, but unfortunately it may not have been the same for all Black people in the forces. The Royal Air Force does appear to have been a pioneer of multiracial integration in Britain during the war, but we know that the struggle for racial equality and justice would run on for decades after the war was over.

Site enquiry: Bristol's Black community, 1960–80

How important was Black Leadership in the growth of a Black community in St. Paul's, Bristol from 1960–1980?

(pages 64 –71)

Enquiry question

How important was Black Leadership in the growth of a Black community in St. Paul's, Bristol from 1960–1980?

The Black migrants settling in Bristol in the 1950s and 1960s faced a lot of challenges. They were generally able to find jobs, but accommodation and opportunities to socialise, relax, play sport and 'let their hair down', were more difficult because of the 'colour bar' that was a widespread feature of British life in those decades. People needed to find ways of supporting themselves in social activities and in securing equal rights to White British people in housing, education and employment. Struggles like that were happening in the USA, where Black Americans were organising a Civil Rights Movement. Black Bristolians took up these ideas of community organisation and helped to develop themselves as a strong local community that could oppose the injustices in society and create spaces for Black people to socialise and improve themselves, just the same as White British people. In the early 1960s there was no government funding or support for such work, so it was all self-help:

1. The Commonwealth Coordinated Committee (echoing the American Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee): this group was founded in 1962 by three Jamaican migrants, Roy Hackett, Owen Henry and Clifford Drummond. They were joined by others, including Carmen Beckford, a nurse from Jamaica, and Paul Stephenson, Bristol's first Black social worker, of mixed West African-English heritage. The CCC's leaders met at Drummond's Speedy Bird Café on Sundays to consider what they should campaign about. In 1962, Eva Hackett, Roy's wife, also Jamaican, was refused a job by the Bristol's bus company as a conductor, even though there were vacancies. The CCC took up this issue of equal employment on the buses in their Bus Boycott campaign of 1963. Their protest movement drew support not only from the Black community, but also from White students in Bristol and sympathetic Labour party politicians. Paul Stephenson became the public leader of the boycott, and it was one of the first successful Black-led protest movements in Britain.

2. The CCC inspired Owen Henry and Clifford Drummond to start a travel agency service to help both Black and Asian Bristolians arrange holiday trips back to their homelands. Drummond also helped with immigration paperwork at his café.
3. The Bamboo Club was founded by Tony Bullimore, a White man from Essex, and his Jamaican wife Lalel in 1966. They were helped by Paul Stephenson. This music club and restaurant was open to everyone and specialised in bringing Black musicians to perform, including Bob Marley and Tina Turner. The club became the headquarters for the Bristol West Indian Cricket Club and the Western Star Domino Club.
4. The St Paul's Festival that was first held in 1968 was another triumph of local organisation, led by Beckford and Hackett of the CCC. Like the very first street festival in Notting Hill a few years earlier, the festival was to be a fusion of Caribbean and British cultures, with Scottish dancing on display as well as Carmen Beckford's West Indian Dance Team. From 1975, after Francis Salandy from Trinidad took up leadership of the event, it took on more features of Caribbean culture and became the St Paul's Carnival.
5. Education: Black children faced prejudice and misunderstanding in the school system. That was the experience of Catherine Waithe from Dominica, and when she had left school and secured a degree in social science, she set up various enterprises to help young people with study skills and reading. With the Bristol Black Women's Group, she helped start up a Black Supplementary School, Buktu, in 1981.

Source question

What does each source tell you about the Speedy Bird Café and its importance for the community in St Paul's in the 1960s and 1970s?

(page 66)

- Roy Hackett's testimony in Source 4 tells us about the role that the Speedy Bird Café played as the headquarters for the new Commonwealth Coordinated Committee, set up in 1962. The café served Caribbean food and drink and played Caribbean Calypso music, probably on a vinyl gramophone record player. The CCC leaders, Roy Hackett and Owen Henry and others, would have appreciated this little 'taste of home' as they tried to navigate the challenges Black people faced in the district.
- Michelle Curtis's mural in Source 5 gives a strong sense of Drummond's Speedy Bird Café being a centre for all new Commonwealth migrants in

the area in the 1960s. The ackee fruits on their tree in the foreground speak of Jamaica, where it is the national fruit, and ackee and saltfish the national food dish. The local people in the mural are clearly Sikhs from India, West Indians and also a Muslim couple, possibly from Pakistan. Drummond helped Asian migrants with immigration paperwork, as well as travel agency services, through the business with Owen Henry.

Site enquiry: Brixton: the 'capital of Black Britain', 1948–90

Why was Brixton described as the `capital of Black Britain' between 1948–1990? (pages 72–81)

Enquiry question

Why was Brixton described as the 'capital of Black Britain' between 1948–1990?

Brixton was referred to as the 'capital of Black Britain' between 1948 and 1990 due to several key factors that contributed to its status as a vibrant centre for the Black community. (NB there is some additional context in this answer that is not in the book, but is widely known.) Here are some reasons:

Post-war immigration: Following the Second World War, there was a period of immigration from former British colonies, particularly from the Caribbean to Britain. The arrival of the *HMT Empire Windrush* in 1948 played a significant role in shaping Brixton as a destination for West Indian immigrants. The *Windrush* carried the first large group of West Indian migrants to Britain, some of whom were encouraged to come to help rebuild the country after the war. Brixton became one of the primary areas where these immigrants settled, creating a strong West Indian community. The experiences of figures like Sam King, a Jamaican born former RAF pilot during the Second World War, have come to embody the experiences of those post-war migrants who came to be known as the '*Windrush* Generation'. He was elected as the Mayor of Southwark in 1983 and founded the *Windrush* Foundation in 1995. Brixton is also home to the Black Cultural Archives on 1 Windrush Square (renamed as such during the fiftieth anniversary celebrations in 1998 of the arrival of the Empire *Windrush*).

Brixton, like many other inner-city areas in London, experienced damage during the war and had a significant number of properties that needed to be repaired or rebuilt. The availability of housing, often in the form of

converted Victorian houses or rented rooms, made Brixton an accessible and affordable option for West Indian immigrants. As more West Indian immigrants settled in Brixton, a sense of community began to develop. The presence of fellow West Indians, shared cultural heritage and a supportive network of family and friends already residing in the area made Brixton an attractive choice for newcomers.

Brixton's emerging reputation as a hub for Caribbean culture and social life also played a role in attracting West Indian immigrants. The presence of Caribbean shops, restaurants, churches and social clubs provided a familiar environment that helped newcomers feel at home and maintain their cultural traditions.

Brixton quickly became a cultural hub for the Black community, with a vibrant music, arts and food scene. It was home to numerous Caribbean shops, restaurants, clubs and community centres that became vital gathering places for the Black population. International figures, such as Muhammad Ali, reinforced Brixton's status as the centre of Britain's Black community through his decision to visit there, including giving an assembly at the Tulse Hill School in 1974 (see page 77 of the book).

In the 1960s through to the 1980s, Brixton became a focal point for Black activism and political engagement. Organisations such as the British Black Panther Movement and the Race Today Collective were based there, advocating for racial equality, challenging systemic racism and addressing issues faced by the Black community. Black people in Brixton faced significant social challenges, including high unemployment rates, poverty and racial tensions. In the 1980s, Brixton witnessed civil unrest, particularly during the Brixton Uprisings of 1981 and 1985, as a response to systemic racism, police harassment and socio-economic disparities. These events highlighted the community's resilience and their fight against racial injustice.

Overall, Brixton's concentration of Caribbean and later African immigrants, its cultural vibrancy, political activism and historical factors such as its association with the '*Windrush* Generation' contributed to its reputation as the 'capital of Black Britain' between 1948 and 1990.

Black Lives in Britain c. 1500–present

Questions and Answers

Source question

Why do you think racist groups like the National Front targeted Black bookshops?

(page 78)

Racist groups like the National Front targeted Black bookshops in Britain in the 1970s due to their opposition to Black empowerment and racial equality. These bookshops played a vital role in spreading knowledge about Black history, culture and activism, challenging the racist narratives propagated by these groups. By targeting Black bookshops, these racist groups sought to suppress the dissemination of Black perspectives, undermine Black communities and promote their own discriminatory ideologies. They also aimed to intimidate the broader Black community by making them feel unsafe and unwelcome in places where they felt at home, such as Brixton.

Thematic enquiry: Black British lives in music

How did Black people help to shape music in Britain from 1500 to the present day?
(pages 84–91)

Enquiry question

How did Black people help to shape music in Britain from 1500 to the present day?

This is an enquiry that could be studied in any year at KS3 or beyond. There are interesting stories that can be appreciated by Year 7 students who could also investigate the ways in which the musical contributions of Black people changed over the centuries. Using recordings of the music in lessons and video performances in the later twentieth and twenty-first centuries will add an interesting dimension to lessons. There are also interesting themes in social and cultural history that older students could consider, particularly as they prepare to study change and continuity at GCSE, possibly in a thematic on migration.

Change is clear in terms of the key concepts of assimilation and autonomy. The earliest Black musicians in Britain, like John Blanke, Ignatius Sancho and George Bridgetower, aimed to assimilate and played the conventional European music of the time. This has continued to the present day, and there are important Black musicians performing classical music, like the Chineke! Orchestra and the Kanneh-Mason family (good for students to research).

The influence of music that belonged to Africa and the African Diaspora in the Americas can be seen having some influence by the end of the nineteenth century, after the influence of the Fisk Singers, in the work of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. The influence of American jazz and swing music can be seen in some of the bands of the 1930s and 1940s (see page 57 for Ken 'Snakehips' Johnson).

Paul Robeson was a frequent visitor to Britain at that time, bringing his famous performances of Black spiritual music. Robeson was very popular in Wales, and in Cardiff's 'Tiger Bay' district there were young Black people aspiring to singing careers, like Shirley Bassey and Patti Young (page 51). Bassey became one of the first famous Black British singers from the 1960s onwards.

Caribbean music began to feature on the British music scene after the Second World War and the *Windrush* arrivals. The calypso singer Lord Kitchener made a famous performance on the deck of the *Windrush* when it arrived in June 1948, and in the years afterwards steel pan performances were also seen in public for the first time in England. In areas of concentrated Caribbean migration, like Brixton and Notting Hill in London and St Paul's in Bristol, Caribbean musical styles were heard in premises where the migrants held public parties, playing their own choice of music on 'sound systems', particularly **ska** and then **reggae** from Jamaica. Both Notting Hill and St Paul's became sites of major street festivals and then Caribbean carnivals that celebrated Black musical styles and fun for a wide audience. Notting Hill Carnival developed into a major international annual British event.

In the 1970s, the most famous reggae artist of the time, and possibly since, Bob Marley, came from Jamaica to spend time recording and performing in England; one time he visited a school in South London to play for the students (see page 89 of the book). British artists took up the new genre, like Janet Kay and Musical Youth, and it reached an increasingly diverse audience in Britain, influencing multiracial groups like UB40.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, genres of Black British music emerged, building on African-American influences from hip-hop and house music. Jungle, UK garage and Grime music belonged to local communities of Black and White people developing new sounds, initially often in their own homes rather than a studio, and with support from local radio. Many of

these local artistes achieved national fame, like UK garage collective So Solid Crew and Grime artists like Stormzy, Dizzee Rascal and Kano (see pages 90–91). British popular music was being directly transformed by Black British genres and performers. The assimilation was now other groups fitting in to Black British culture rather than the other way round.

As well as forces of change, often prompted from outside of Britain, there are continuities, including the Black participation in classical music; royal patronage of Black musicians, from George IV and Bridgetower, through Queen Victoria and the Fisk Singers, to the Kingdom Choir under Charles III, as Prince of Wales; and the acceptance of Black British musical stars, from Samuel Coleridge Taylor, to Paul Robeson, Shirley Bassey and later Bob Marley, who surpassed racial barriers and enjoyed widespread British support.

Thematic enquiry: Black British lives in sport

How important was sport in helping Black British people to overcome racism in the twentieth century?
(pages 92–99)

Enquiry question

How important was sport in helping Black British people to overcome racism in the twentieth century?

Sport played a crucial role in helping Black British people overcome racism in the twentieth century. Throughout this period, sports provided a platform for Black athletes to challenge stereotypes, break down racial barriers and promote racial equality.

Firstly, the success and excellence of Black athletes in various sports served as powerful counter-narratives to prevailing racial stereotypes. Their achievements showcased the talent, skill and capability of Black individuals, challenging the notion of racial inferiority and proving that racial background does not dictate athletic ability. This helped to dispel racist assumptions and stereotypes that hindered the advancement of Black people in society.

Secondly, Black athletes became important figures of inspiration and pride within Black communities. Their accomplishments on the pitch, ring or track provided positive role models and symbols of achievement, motivating younger generations, and instilling a sense of possibility and

self-belief. Black athletes became symbols of resilience, determination and success, demonstrating that hard work and talent could overcome racial barriers.

Furthermore, Black athletes often used their platforms to raise awareness about racial inequality and promote social change. They became outspoken advocates against racism, using their influence to draw attention to racial discrimination in sports, particularly football, and society at large. Through their activism, they sparked important conversations, challenged existing norms and pushed for greater inclusivity and equality within sports and beyond. The footballer Marcus Rashford used his status to promote broader social causes such as child poverty and gained major national recognition as a result.

Sports also played a significant role in fostering interracial understanding and breaking down racial prejudices. Through competition and teamwork, athletes from different racial backgrounds had opportunities to interact, collaborate and develop mutual respect. The example of Harry Edwards at the 1920 Olympics demonstrates this well. Sporting events brought people together, crossing racial divides and promoting a sense of shared humanity, leading to greater acceptance and appreciation of diversity. The number of Black sports people that have won the BBC Sports Personality of the Year shows how popular some Black athletes were with the wider British public.

Moreover, the success and recognition of Black athletes in international competitions, such as the Olympics, served as a source of national pride and challenged racist ideologies. Black athletes represented their country on the global stage, proving that Black excellence is an integral part of the national identity and contributing to the dismantling of racial prejudices within the broader society.

In summary, sport played a vital role in helping Black British people overcome racism in the twentieth century. It provided a platform for Black athletes to challenge stereotypes, inspire others, raise awareness about racial inequality, foster interracial understanding and promote social change. The achievements and activism of Black athletes paved the way for greater inclusivity, equality and appreciation of diversity in sports and society as a whole.

Source question

What can you infer from this source about how Tull was viewed by the people of Northampton?

(page 93)

Racism and discrimination were still pervasive in early twentieth-century Britain, and Tull faced prejudice and unequal treatment as a Black soldier. However, this source suggests that he was respected by some people in Northampton – the headline and detail of the article conveys a sense of pride that a footballer from the town was recognised for his bravery and no mention is made of his race. However, his experience in the army and in Britain before the war suggests that not everyone would have welcomed him. Despite his bravery and competence, he was subjected to racial slurs and unfair treatment from some fellow soldiers and superiors and before that from opposition fans as a footballer. But he also received support and acclaim. These experiences reflect the racial biases that existed within society, including in Northampton.

It is important to note that individual opinions varied, and Tull would have had supporters and detractors among the people of Northampton. While some recognised his contributions and respected him as a talented footballer and soldier, others held racist views and expressed prejudice against him due to his race.

Depth enquiry: Black excellence in Britain

How have Black Britons contributed to our modern world?
(pages 100–106)

Enquiry question

How have Black Britons contributed to our modern world?

This enquiry is quite different from the others in the book and would be well suited to more independent student work, in groups or as individuals; students of any age could make one or more of these life-stories the basis for an extended piece of research and presentation work. Many of the stories begin with a short account of previous or contemporary Black achievements in the field and these could provide research tasks for homework or extended class work.

The enquiry also provides rich material for whole-school cross-curricular events, such as assemblies and Black History Month activities. Many of the figures in the enquiry, like David Adjaye and Maggie Aderin-Pocock,

attended regular state comprehensive schools, and they can feature as role models for students across the school.

In many of the individual stories that are featured as examples of excellence in the important contemporary fields of science, architecture, medicine, literature, law, classical music and the political establishment, there are challenges that have had to be overcome for our leading Black person to excel. In many cases these challenges are linked to the racism in the hostile environments that have been explored within the book. That aspect of personal challenge and resilience should not be underestimated in these Black lives. Some of those challenges, as in the cases of Elizabeth Anionwu and Chi-chi Nwanoku, have come from being a child of mixed racial heritage.

Six of the seven figures in the enquiry are Black women and many of their challenges have been **intersectional**, coming from the interaction of prejudice against their gender and race, such as Linda Dobbs. Many of them have been the first Black woman in a particularly prominent position, as in Baroness Amos's story. All seven have received honours for their achievements, and some have been given the highest honours possible for British citizens; two of them, Dame Elizabeth Anionwu and Baroness Amos, took prominent roles in the coronation service of King Charles III in 2023. It would be valuable for students to consider why Britain has come to honour its Black citizens so much more in the early decades of the twenty-first century, compared to the decades of struggle for opportunity and justice in the centuries before.

However, the chapter should not be taken as declaring that Black people in Britain no longer have to struggle for fairness and equality. That is not the message of any part of this book. The Interludes on the *Windrush* myth and on Racial Injustices clearly indicate the history of institutional racism in state bureaucracy and the forces of law and order in Britain.