

Each year, Black History Month is celebrated in the UK throughout the month of October to recognise and commemorate the history, achievements and contributions of Black people in the UK and across the globe.

Beginning in the US in 1926, the month was originally 'Black History Week', celebrated in February to coincide with Fredrick Douglass' and Abraham Lincoln's birthdays. Black History Month was finally recognised by the US Government from 1976 onwards, later brought to the UK by Akyaba Addai Sebo in 1987. The month of October was chosen to

inspire and invigorate Black children and young people towards the start of the academic year, after summer has ended. (blackhistorymonth.org.uk, 2017) To learn more about Black History Month, [click here](#).

Here at The Diana Award, we have put together a list of ideas for activities and initiatives to celebrate Black History Month, champion diversity and inclusion, and promote allyship in your school.

These activities can also go towards earning our Respect Badge for your Anti-Bullying Ambassador team!

This badge is all about championing diversity and inclusion and promoting acceptance and equal rights for any of the nine protected characteristics, which include religion/beliefs, race (including colour of one's skin, nationality, ethnicity or culture), sexual orientation, and disability. Discrimination and bullying behaviour related to race or religion/beliefs are classed as a hate crime under the Equality Act 2010 and are against the law. If you want to find out more about the protected characteristics, [click here](#). You can find out more about our Anti-Bullying Ambassador Badges and how to earn them [here](#).

Activity Ideas for Black History Month

We recommend getting the whole student body involved in these activities where you can (being mindful of current COVID-related restrictions) to emphasise how important it is to work together and celebrate everyone for who they are. While Black History Month is an amazing opportunity

to run activities and celebrate Black culture and heritage, remember that it's also vital to be an ally to people from racialised communities in your school and an Upstander to racist bullying behaviour year-round.

▶ Deliver a workshop or assembly

Research and plan a workshop about a topic within Black history. Raising awareness about these subjects and educating your peers are amazing ways to champion diversity and help create an inclusive school environment for all.

Here are some suggestions for topic areas you could talk about:

- Black History and Icons (choose a specific period in history, or talk about a specific person and their life/achievements)
- Allyship
- Challenging Racism and Being the Upstander ([check out our Practical Steps to Tackle Racist Bullying Behaviour resource](#) and [Being the Upstander session plan](#) for ideas to get you started on this one!)
- The Black Lives Matter movement; a timeline from inception to its social change.

▶ Ask teachers to celebrate a 'Black Icon of the Day/Week' in their respective subject field

This could be a historical figure, a celebrity, a local hero - anyone! Research their life and/or activism to raise awareness and inspire your peers. Celebrating icons is a great way to incorporate Black history and representation across the entire curriculum - not just in History or PSHE lessons! Your form tutor could also add this into weekly form time.

For example, your Music teacher could plan a lesson about the life, music and achievements of the incredible Aretha Franklin, as well as her contributions to social activism.

▶ Invite an external guest speaker to talk about their experiences

Guest speakers can be a great way for allies to learn about communities that are different to their own and will also help young Black people to see themselves represented - something that can be a powerful and important experience.

▶ Sign a whole school inclusion-focused pledge

Write your pledge statement and have everyone in school sign their name around it (don't forget to get your staff members involved too!). This could be on a noticeboard in Reception or up in the school hall – find a big space where everyone will be able to see this and be reminded of the pledge they have made!

Here are some examples of pledge statements you could use:

- 'I will be an Upstander to racist bullying behaviour'
- 'I will always do my best to be an Ally to all communities'
- 'I pledge to be respectful and inclusive of everyone'
- 'I will embrace difference and be myself'
- 'I will always be myself and support others to do the same'

▶ Create a 'museum' display in your school

Create a display of historic and current Black icons – you could use photos, drawings, and facts about the person, their life, work, and achievements, and put them up on a noticeboard to create your own 'museum' in school. You could even cover the walls of an entire classroom and play music by Black artists to create a truly immersive space for young people to explore and learn about Black history!

▶ Host a charity fundraiser

Raise money for a charity that aids Black people and communities by hosting a fundraiser activity of your choice. For example, you could host a 'Be Yourself' Day where you invite students to have a non-uniform day themed around the colour scheme of the BAME Pride flags. Students could contribute a small amount towards this, with all proceeds going to charity. (Similarly, consider what other opportunities there are to fundraise for a charity – for example, students could pay a small entrance fee for your school 'museum'!)

▶ Set up a lunchtime discussion club

Create a safe space for anyone with a protected characteristic and allies by setting up a lunchtime club. You could provide games, books, music and think of some talking points to get to know each other and encourage discussion about Black history and heritage!

▶ Diversify your school's library

Ensure your school library has a diverse selection of books and literature available. You could even put together a reading list of your favourite books by Black authors to share in school!

*Ask your teachers to check out our new resource **Books Related to Bullying Behaviour** (for Primary Schools) which includes a diverse and inclusive*

*reading list or visit **Book Trust's Black History Month reading list of historical stories** (for reading ages 6-12 years).*

You could also set up a monthly lunchtime book club and choose a book written by a Black author each month for everyone to read and discuss.

▶ Decorate your school

Get the whole school involved by asking each class/tutor group to get creative and decorate their own classroom. You could use photos, colours, artwork and more. This will increase visibility and help promote an inclusive school environment. You could also fly the BAME Pride flag outside your school (and keep it up!) so everyone that visits the school feels welcome. Invite the whole school to watch as the flag is raised!

▶ Timeline Activity

Create or draw a large timeline across paper on a classroom wall and print photos, names, and any relevant information about significant events and people in black history. Ask students to place the photos of the events/people onto the line where they think it would fall in history, and watch the timeline come to life!

▶ Create an 'Our Families' display

Ask students to draw a picture of themselves and their immediate family and display all the drawings on a big noticeboard or wall in school. This is a great way to represent how unique our family units all are and celebrate diversity, while also getting to know your peers and their families.

▶ Documentary Screening

Invite the student body to attend a screening of a documentary about Black history (or also, the Black Lives Matter movement) in a classroom or your school's assembly hall.

▶ Adapt your school's Anti-Bullying policy

Conduct a whole school survey that asks students questions about how your school responds to incidents of racist bullying behaviour. This is a great way to hear directly from the school community about their thoughts on handling racism and bullying behaviour in school, as well as how the process could be improved.

You can then use this information to help adapt your school's Anti-Bullying policy. Why not try creating a separate Anti-Racism bullying policy that details how your school will address racist behaviours (and the necessity of reporting them), or alternatively adapt your current policy to add a sub-section on racist behaviours.

At The Diana Award, we strongly recommend that

schools record incidents of bullying behaviour by category, so staff and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors can be aware of any recurring issues. However, it is always important to remember to respect the privacy and confidentiality of the students when adapting these policies. Check out our resource on **How to Record Bullying Behaviour Incidents** for more information.

Get Creative!

These are just a few ideas for activities to get you started for Black History Month in October, but we encourage you to think of your own initiatives to celebrate Black history, culture and heritage too! Remember to promote allyship and champion diversity and inclusion - it's important to raise awareness about Black history as well as being an Upstander to racist bullying behaviour all year round.



Charities you could fundraise for:

Access UK

<https://www.accessuk.org/donate/>

Blueprint For All (previously Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust)

<https://www.blueprintforall.org/>

Show Racism the Red Card

<https://www.theredcard.org/>

UK Black Pride

<https://www.ukblackpride.org.uk/donate/>

100 Black Men of London

<https://100bmol.org.uk/>

Black Minds Matter UK

<https://www.blackmindsmatteruk.com/>

Runnymede

<https://www.runnymedetrust.org/donations.html/>

The Diana Award (us!)

www.diana-award.org.uk/

Support can be found here:

Barnardo's BAME Helpline

<https://helpline.barnardos.org.uk>

SARI (Stand Against Racism and Inequality) hate crime helpline and online support:

<https://www.sariweb.org.uk/help-support/online-reporting-form/>

Access UK

<https://www.accessuk.org/get-support>

Stop Hate UK

<https://www.stophateuk.org/call-hate-out/>

Diana Award Crisis Messenger Service

Text **DA** to **85258**

or **click here** for more information.

We're proud to be the only charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, and her belief that young people have the power to change the world. It's a big mission but there are two things within it that we focus our charity's efforts on – young people and change.

Throughout all of our programmes and initiatives, 'change' for and by young people is central, including our anti-bullying work which encourages change in attitudes and behaviours.

We hope you found this resource useful and wish you all the best in your anti-bullying journey. If you would like to help us create more resources and train even more Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, you can make a £5 donation by texting CHANGE 5 to 70470 or visit diana-award.org.uk/donate

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