

Pioneers of Progress: Celebrating Black History

Learning objective: To develop retrieval and inference skills while exploring the significance of Black History Month.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Use full sentences where appropriate to demonstrate your understanding.

In the UK, October marks Black History Month, a time to celebrate the remarkable achievements of Black individuals throughout history. It is an opportunity to recognise stories that were often overlooked in the past. Ellie the elephant, who treasures history, often reminds us that understanding our shared past helps us build a brighter, more inclusive future.

Historically, many Black pioneers have made incredible contributions to science, literature, and social change. For instance, Mary Seacole, a courageous nurse, travelled vast distances to care for soldiers during the Crimean War, displaying immense compassion under pressure. Similarly, figures like Olaudah Equiano campaigned tirelessly for justice, using his voice to change the world. Today, Black History Month encourages us to look beyond textbooks and discover the diverse heroes who have shaped modern society. By studying these lives, we gain a deeper appreciation for the resilience and creativity that define our global community. Whether it is through art, technology, or community leadership, the contributions of Black people continue to inspire progress and spark vital conversations in our classrooms and beyond.

Word bank: contribution · pioneer · legacy · significant · resilience · achievement

1. Which month is dedicated to celebrating Black History in the UK, and what does Ellie the elephant suggest is the benefit of studying the past? (2 marks)

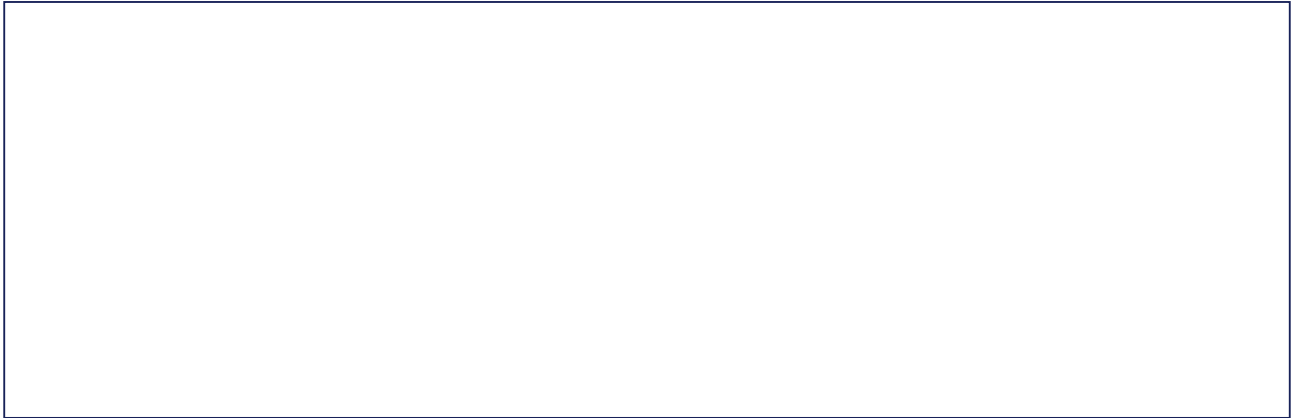
2. What are two specific ways that Mary Seacole and Olaudah Equiano contributed to history according to the text? (2 marks)

3. Why does the author use the word 'overlooked' when describing stories from the past? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, why might it be important to look 'beyond textbooks' when learning about history? (2 marks)

5. Do you agree that celebrating Black History Month is essential for a modern school? Justify your answer using evidence from the passage. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a commemorative stamp that represents one of the historical figures mentioned in the text, including symbols that reflect their achievements.



Extension challenge: Research a person who has made a significant contribution to your local community. Write a short biography explaining why their legacy is important and what qualities they possess that make them a 'pioneer of progress'.