

Celebrating Pioneers: Black History Month

Learning objective: To understand the significance of Black History Month and recognise the contributions of historical figures to British society.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Think deeply about the impact of the individuals mentioned.

Every October, the UK celebrates Black History Month. It is a vital time to reflect upon and celebrate the remarkable contributions that Black people have made to our history, culture, and society. While we should value diversity all year round, this month provides a special opportunity to shine a spotlight on individuals whose stories have often been overlooked.

Take, for example, Mary Seacole. During the Crimean War, she travelled thousands of miles to care for wounded soldiers. Despite facing many obstacles, her bravery and nursing skills saved countless lives. Or consider the legacy of Walter Tull, who became one of the first Black professional footballers in Britain and later a brave officer in the First World War. By learning about these pioneers, we gain a clearer understanding of the challenges they overcame and the progress they helped achieve. Their stories teach us about resilience, empathy, and the importance of standing up for equality. As we explore their lives, we are reminded that everyone has a part to play in shaping a fair and inclusive future for all.

Word bank: contribution · pioneer · legacy · diversity · achievement · equality

1. Which two historical figures are mentioned in the text as examples of pioneers? (2 marks)

2. According to the text, what did Mary Seacole do during the Crimean War? (2 marks)

3. Why does the author suggest that it is important to learn about people whose stories have been 'overlooked'? (2 marks)

4. How might the actions of Walter Tull have inspired others during his lifetime? (2 marks)

5. Do you think it is important to have a specific month dedicated to Black history? Justify your answer using evidence from the text. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a commemorative plaque honouring a person who has made a positive difference in your own community. Include a short sentence explaining their achievement.



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast the challenges faced by Mary Seacole and Walter Tull. Explain why their contributions are still relevant to society today. What might happen if we stopped sharing the stories of historical pioneers? Write a paragraph justifying the importance of preserving these legacies.