

Pioneers of Progress: Black History Month

Learning objective: To analyse the contributions of significant historical figures and reflect on the impact of their achievements.

Read the passage about Mary Seacole, a remarkable nurse and businesswoman, and answer the questions below. Use your best handwriting and full sentences to explain your reasoning.

In the mid-19th century, Mary Seacole, a woman born in Jamaica, became a beacon of hope during the Crimean War. Despite facing significant prejudice and being rejected by official organisations when she offered her services as a nurse, Mary refused to be deterred. Using her own resources, she travelled thousands of miles to the war front. There, she established the 'British Hotel', a sanctuary where she provided food, comfort, and medical care to wounded soldiers. Mary's ability to combine her knowledge of traditional herbal medicine with her sharp business sense allowed her to support those in desperate need. Her story is one of profound resilience, reminding us that an individual's determination can overcome societal barriers and leave a lasting legacy of compassion.

Word bank: pioneer · resilience · humanitarian · contribution · legacy · adversity · determination

1. Identify two specific ways Mary Seacole demonstrated resilience when faced with obstacles during the Crimean War. (2 marks)

2. Explain why the author describes Mary Seacole as a 'pioneer'. Use evidence from the text to support your answer. (2 marks)

3. Compare and contrast the challenges Mary faced with the support she provided to others. How did she balance these two aspects of her life? (3 marks)

4. Justify why it is important to remember the contributions of individuals like Mary Seacole in modern history lessons. (3 marks)

5. What might have happened if Mary Seacole had decided to return home after being rejected by the official organisations? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a commemorative stamp honouring Mary Seacole. Include symbols that represent her nursing skills, her journey from Jamaica to the Crimea, and her spirit of kindness.



Extension challenge: Research another historical figure who overcame adversity to make a positive impact. Write a short, persuasive speech (150 words) arguing why this person deserves a statue in your local town centre, focusing on the values they demonstrated.