

Pioneers of Progress: Black History Month

Learning objective: To analyse the significance of Black History Month and evaluate the contributions of individuals who challenged inequality.

Read the passage below carefully. Use your inference skills to look beyond the text and consider the broader impact of the figures mentioned. Answer the questions in full, detailed sentences.

Every October, the United Kingdom observes Black History Month. This important period serves as a vital opportunity to celebrate the achievements, culture, and resilience of Black individuals throughout history. While many focus on the global struggles for civil rights, it is equally essential to recognise the specific contributions Black people have made to British society. From pioneering scientists and doctors who bolstered our National Health Service, to writers, artists, and political leaders who have challenged systemic unfairness, these figures have fundamentally shaped the modern nation. Ellie, our history-loving elephant, often reminds us that history is not just about the past; it is a living narrative that continues to evolve. By highlighting stories that were once omitted from textbooks, we ensure a more accurate and inclusive understanding of our shared heritage. Black History Month encourages us to reflect on the progress made, while acknowledging that the journey toward true equality requires ongoing effort. It is a time for education, celebration, and a commitment to listening to diverse voices that strengthen the fabric of our communities.

Word bank: pioneer · inequality · advocacy · resilience · legacy · systemic · commemoration · contribution

1. According to the text, what are the primary purposes of observing Black History Month in the UK? (2 marks)

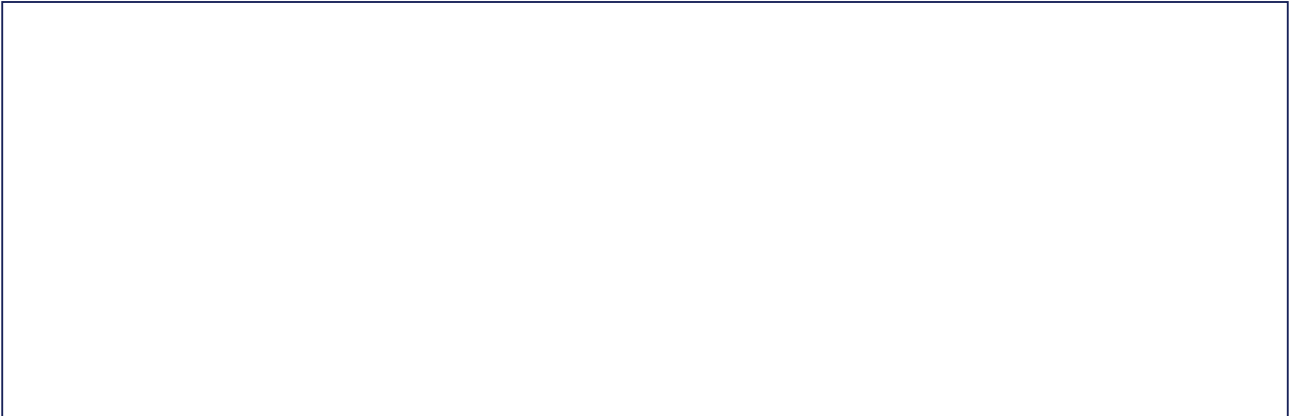
2. Identify two specific fields mentioned in the text where Black individuals have made significant contributions to British society. (2 marks)

3. Why does the author describe history as a 'living narrative' rather than a static list of dates? (3 marks)

4. Explain why the author suggests that highlighting previously omitted stories is necessary for an 'accurate' understanding of heritage. (3 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Does the celebration of Black History Month have relevance for people who do not identify as Black? Explain your reasoning. (4 marks)

Draw: Design a commemorative poster for Black History Month that incorporates symbols of growth, community, and the passage of time, using a colour palette that represents unity.



Extension challenge: Research a Black British historical figure who was not mentioned in the text. Write a short biography (100 words) explaining why their specific contribution was a turning point in history. Compare and contrast their experiences with a historical figure you have studied previously.