Pioneers of Progress: Black History Month

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

Read the passage carefully. Use the word bank to help you understand complex terminology. Answer the questions in full sentences, ensuring you justify your opinions with evidence from the text.

In the United Kingdom, October is dedicated to Black History Month, a time to recognise the vital contributions of Black people throughout history. While many celebrate these achievements annually, the month serves as a catalyst for ongoing education and reflection. It is an opportunity to look beyond the history books and uncover the untold stories of individuals who challenged injustice and championed equality. From the courageous activists who fought for civil rights to the brilliant scientists and artists whose work has shaped our modern society, these figures possess a legacy that continues to inspire. By studying these narratives, we gain a more comprehensive understanding of our shared history. It is not merely a celebration of the past; it is a commitment to fostering a more inclusive future. As we explore these biographies, we are challenged to consider how individual resilience can spark systemic change. Through this month, we honour the diversity that enriches our communities and recognise that every voice contributes to the tapestry of human achievement. Education is the key to ensuring these stories are preserved, celebrated, and understood by future generations.

Word bank: Legacy · Contribution · Pioneer · Injustice · Diversity · Perspective

1. According to the text, what is the primary purpose of Black History Month in the United Kingdom? (2 marks)

2. What does the passage suggest about the relationship between education and the stories of the past? (2 marks)

3. Why does the author describe these historical figures as having a 'legacy that continues to inspire'? (2 marks)

4. Explain why the author uses the metaphor of a 'tapestry' when discussing human achievement. (3 marks)

5. Do you agree that it is important to learn about history beyond what is traditionally found in textbooks? Justify your answer using evidence or reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Illustrate a 'Tapestry of Achievement'. Draw a large tree with roots labelled 'History' and branches reaching out to show different symbols of progress, such as books, musical notes, or scientific tools.

Extension challenge: Research a Black pioneer who made a significant contribution to science or literature. Compare and contrast their achievements with a historical figure you have studied previously. Justify why their specific contribution was a turning point in history and explain what might have been different if they had not pursued their goals.