

# Mary Seacole



## 1. As the pupils enter

Have the webpage open:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/assemblies-ks1-ks2-mary-seacole-black-history-month/zvrqkty>

Play your chosen music and display the image of key words:

[http://teach.files.bbci.co.uk/schoolradio/assemblies/images/mary\\_seacole\\_key\\_words.jpg](http://teach.files.bbci.co.uk/schoolradio/assemblies/images/mary_seacole_key_words.jpg)

## 2. Introduction

Place the video in the context of study your school has been doing for Black History Month. Share brief biographical details about Mary Seacole's life: **Mary Seacole was born in 1805 but we remember her today for her actions during a war called the Crimean War that happened in the 1850s. Two of the armies fighting in the war were the British and the Russians and the battles took place in an area called the Crimea.** Display the map showing the UK and the Crimea.

## 3. Play the video

The duration is 6' 22". Final words: 'It was the proudest day of my life.'

## 4 & 5. Time to talk

Use the Video questions to help pupils recall the details of the video. Then tell the assembly what happened to Mary after the Crimean War: **Mary returned to London but people quickly forgot about what she had done. She had been left with many debts and lived in poverty. Then William Russell, the journalist who had visited her in the Crimea, found her and began a campaign to ensure that Mary had enough money to live on and that her achievements would not be forgotten again. In 2004 she was voted the 'greatest Black Briton' in an internet poll.**

Lead a discussion asking some or all of the following:

1. **Early in the video Mary says that she was turned down from becoming a nurse. How do you think she felt? Why do you think she was turned down?** (You may wish to explore the word 'prejudice'.)
2. **Mary then says she travelled to the Crimea on her own. What do you think Mary needed to do this?** (Money - but what personal qualities?)
3. **On the battlefield William Russell asks Mary if it's true that she treats soldiers from both sides of the conflict - the British and the Russians. Why do you think some people might not have liked Mary doing that?**
4. **At the end of the video, when the soldiers are cheering Mary, she says it was the proudest day of her life. Why do you think she felt like that?**
5. **Why do you think we remember Mary Seacole by learning about her in school? What do you think we can all learn from her life?**

Play video



## 7. Opportunity to reflect

'Mary Seacole lived a long time ago. She was born over two hundred years ago. She is a figure from *history*...

But today we remember Mary and we learn about her in school - and there must be a good reason for that. So let's think about what some of those reasons are: what the important things are we can *all* learn from Mary's extraordinary life..?

Her determination to help others...

Her refusal to listen to those people who thought she wasn't good enough...

Her immense courage and energy...

The care she provided to soldiers from all backgrounds during a terrible time of war...

The way she demonstrates what it is possible for one person to achieve when they show persistence...courage...and determination...

Think to yourself quietly about why you think it is important to remember Mary Seacole and people like her...

How will you show some of Mary's courage and determination today..?'

## 8. Opportunity for prayer

'Thank you for the lives of all those like Mary Seacole who we can learn from. Help us all to think each day how we can help others... And in times of trouble and conflict help us all to be the peacemakers. Amen.'