

KS1 HISTORY: BLACK BRITISH HISTORY

TEACHER'S NOTES



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INTRODUCTION

In this series of videos children's television presenter Nigel Clarke celebrates the lives of six extraordinary people and their contribution to British history.

The collection is presented in chronological order, beginning with Olaudah Equiano (1745 - 1797) and ending with Malorie Blackman (born 1962). However, each of the films is 'stand alone' and can be viewed independently of the collection as a whole, albeit there are recurring themes that you may wish to draw out if you are sharing more than one of the films with your class or group.

The six have been chosen to represent a variety of historical periods. Two - Baroness Floella Benjamin and Malorie Blackman - are part of the current generation; Betty Campbell and Laurie Cunningham belong to the period 'within living memory'; while Olaudah Equiano and Mary Seacole are figures from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively. They have also been chosen to offer a broad range of occupations and achievements.

It should be noted that although each of the six has made a significant contribution to British history not all of them are actually British by birth. Olaudah Equiano was born in modern-day Nigeria and settled in Britain in his twenties after being taken to America as a slave. Mary Seacole was born in Jamaica and first came to Britain in 1823, when she stayed for two years; she returned at the start of the Crimean War and settled in London after the Crimean War ended in 1856.

Each video is accompanied by Teacher Notes offering:

- a short introduction
- some suggestions for what to discuss with the children before watching the video
- some questions to ask children after the video to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of it
- some suggested discussion pointers, that will help to draw out relevant themes

Some of the videos include themes that will need careful preparation. Olaudah Equiano's story inevitably includes references to slavery and Mary Seacole's to war in the Crimea; a number of the other videos also reference some negative experiences, including racism. It is important to watch the videos before sharing to assess their suitability for your class or group.

OLAUDAH EQUIANO (1745 – 1797)

Introduction

This film covers Olaudah Equiano's early life as an enslaved person before going on to consider his work campaigning in the UK to abolish slavery. It includes some images depicting slavery, including a contemporary illustration of people forced onto a slave-ship. It is essential to watch the film before sharing to assess its suitability for your class or group.

Olaudah Equiano (1745 - 1797) was born in Nigeria. As a child he was sold as a slave and taken to America. During his time as an enslaved person he had several different masters, the last of whom allowed him to buy his freedom. Olaudah travelled to London where he worked initially as a barber. Olaudah was an early campaigner against the slave trade (an 'abolitionist') and key to his success was his autobiography *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, in which he described his early life and the horrors of slavery. It was immensely popular during his lifetime and helped the passage of legislation banning the slave trade in the UK, which happened in 1807.

Before watching the video

Olaudah's story inevitably requires some discussion of slavery - what it is, and its abhorrence. You may wish to describe enslaved people as people who are taken far from their homes, forced to do very hard jobs - all day -

without any pay, often in dangerous conditions, and with little or no hope of release. You may wish also to draw out parallels between the experiences of enslaved people and teaching on 'Stranger danger' or bullying.

You could prepare for Olaudah's story by also asking:

- What do you think everyday life would have been like over 250 years ago when Olaudah lived? How would it have been different from today?
- What is an author?
- What is an explorer?
- Can you show me the continent of Africa on a map / globe?
- Can you help me find Nigeria on a map?

After watching the video

Consolidate pupils' recall and understanding of Olaudah's story by asking:

- Where was Olaudah born? (In modern-day Nigeria)
- What age was Olaudah when he was taken from his village? (Around age 11)
- Where was Olaudah taken? (Across the Atlantic Ocean, first to the Caribbean and then on to America)
- Where did Olaudah travel to once he was free? (London)
- What was the name of the book Olaudah wrote? (The full title is *The Interesting*

Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano)

- What did Olaudah do after writing his book? (He travelled around the UK talking about his experiences as an enslaved person, so that people would understand how bad slavery is)

Activities

Discussion. How do you think Olaudah felt when his name was changed without his permission? How do you think Olaudah felt when he was finally free? Can you find three words to describe his feelings for 'before' and 'after'?

Discussion. Olaudah is described as a 'campaigner'. What is a campaign / campaigner? Is there something that you would like to campaign for? How do you persuade other people to join your campaign?

Discussion. Slavery is wrong and shouldn't happen. When we see someone doing something hurtful to another person what should we do? Who should we talk to?





Olaudah Equiano's enforced journey from Africa to America via the Caribbean

MARY SEACOLE (1805 – 1881)

Introduction

This video celebrates the extraordinary life of Mary Seacole (1805 - 1881). Mary was born in Jamaica, where her mother ran a guest house in Kingston. Her father was a Scottish army officer. Mary learned traditional healing skills from her mother and was able to use these during outbreaks of cholera and yellow fever in Kingston.

In 1853 war broke out in Crimea and one of the combatants was the UK. Mary travelled to London intending to join the group of nurses being organised by Florence Nightingale, but at the War Office Mary was told that her services were not needed. Undeterred Mary arranged her own journey to Crimea, where she established the British Hotel - a place where soldiers could buy a meal or extra provisions. The British Hotel was close to the fighting and Mary was able to use her skills to care for wounded soldiers.

After the war Mary returned to London, but she was destitute. Her fortunes revived thanks to William Howard Russell, a journalist who had visited Mary in Crimea, and subsequently Mary's contribution during the Crimean War was recognised by Queen Victoria.

Following her death Mary was largely forgotten about. A revival of interest in her story culminated in her being voted first in a poll of '100 Great Black Britons' and a statue of her being

unveiled at St Thomas' Hospital in London by Floella Benjamin in 2016.

Before watching the video

Prepare for the video by helping children to grasp how long ago the nineteenth century was. Their parents will mostly have been born at the end of the twentieth century. Their great-great-grandparents may have been born at the end of the nineteenth century - longer ago than the birth of any living person. The time of the Crimean War is another 50 years further back (1853 - 1856).

Use a map or globe to track Mary's journey from Jamaica to London and then on to Crimea. Gauge children's understanding of transport at the time. Mary's journey was made mostly at sea and took many long weeks.

Discuss with the children what a nurse is and what the work of a nurse involves. Share with them that at the time of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole the role and skills of a nurse were still developing.

After watching the video

Consolidate pupils' recall and understanding of Mary's story by asking:

- Where was Mary born? (Jamaica)
- What did Mary's mother do to help people? (She was a healer)

- Where did Mary travel to on her long journey? (First to London, then on to Crimea)
- What was the name of Mary's building in Crimea? (*The British Hotel*)
- What did the British soldiers call Mary? (Mother Seacole)

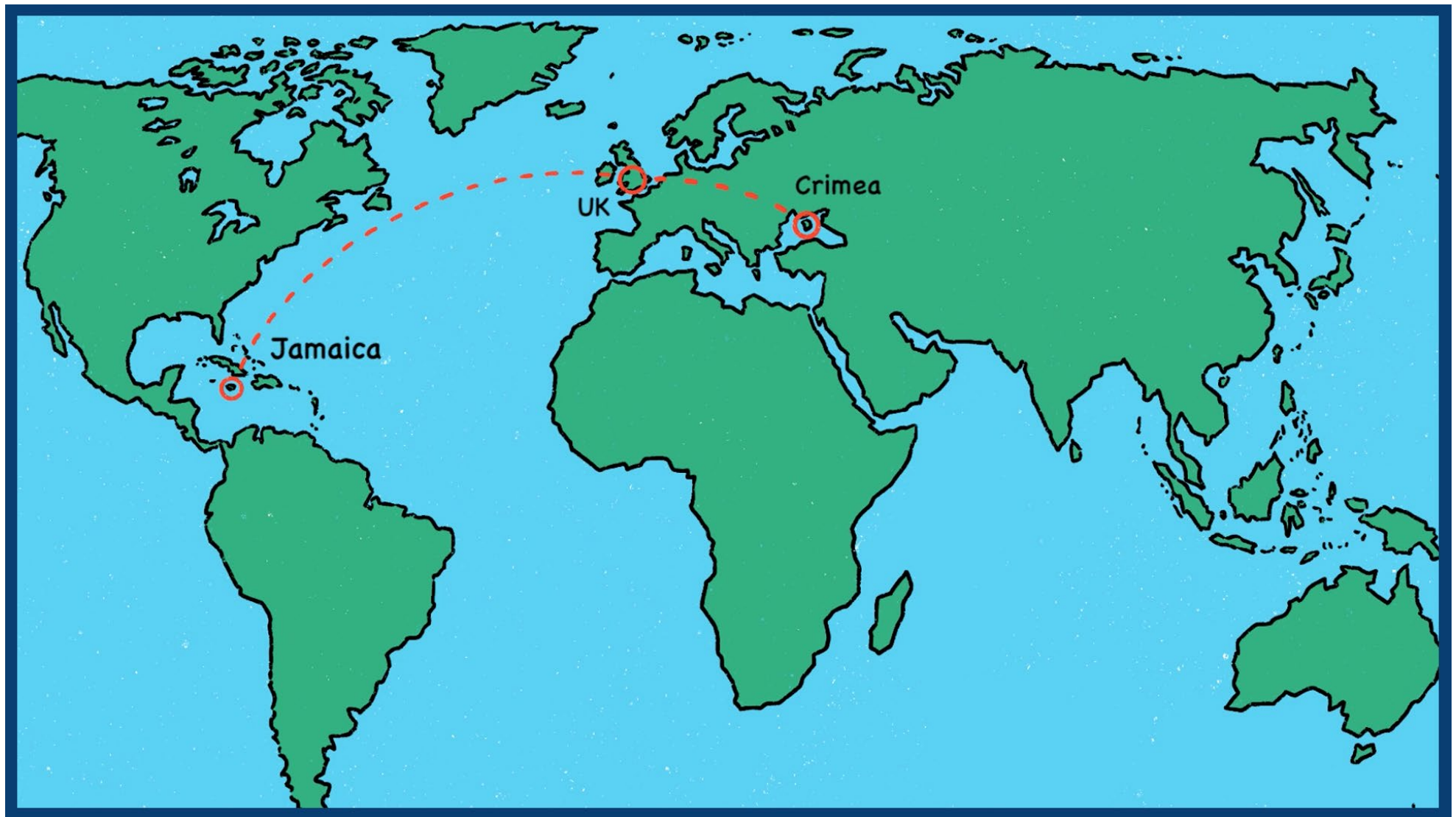
Activities

Discussion. Talk about how Mary must have felt when she was told in London that she couldn't join the team of nurses going to Crimea. What does it tell us about Mary's character that she still made the journey to Crimea?

Sequencing the events of Mary's story. Reinforce the key events of Mary's narrative arc. You could write simple captions on separate pieces of paper - eg 'Birth', 'Healing', 'Journey', 'London', 'British Hotel', etc - and ask children to sequence them in the correct order.

Discussion. Why do you think it's important that we remember Mary's story?





Mary Seacole's journey to Crimea, via the UK

BETTY CAMPBELL (1934 – 2017)

Introduction

In this video Nigel tells the story of Betty Campbell (1934 - 2017), the first black headteacher in Wales. As well as being a teacher Betty was also an important influence in establishing Black History Month in the UK. A statue has been erected to her memory in her hometown of Cardiff.

Betty's story is one of determination and resilience. She faced hostility during her early career and was determined once she became a headteacher that her pupils would experience a multicultural approach to learning. She introduced Black History Month to her school and taught pupils about apartheid in South Africa.

Before watching the video

Gauge children's understanding of key elements of Betty's story by asking:

- What is a headteacher?
- What do headteachers do?
- What is determination?
- What is resilience?

Explore the geography of the UK and the Caribbean by asking:

- Can you help me find Wales on this map of the UK / globe. Where is Cardiff, the capital city of Wales?

- Can you help me find Barbados on this map of the Caribbean / globe.

The motto of the primary school where Betty taught is 'Credwch i gyflawni', which is Welsh for 'Believe to achieve'. Consider the importance of a school motto by asking:

- What languages are spoken in Wales?
- What is a school motto?
- Why is a school motto important?

After watching the video

Consolidate pupils' recall and understanding of Betty's story by asking:

- What is the name of the school where Betty was headteacher? (Mount Stuart Primary School)
- As a child Betty was told that her dream of becoming a teacher would never happen. What reasons were given for this? (That she was black and from a poor family)
- Who was Betty inspired by? (American civil rights campaigner Dr Martin Luther King - see Related links)
- What award was given to Betty? (An MBE)
- Where is there a statue of Betty? What year was it made? (It was unveiled in 2021 in Betty's home city of Cardiff)

Activities

Discussion. Talk with the children about their hopes for the future - what they would 'like to be when they grow up'. Ask how they think Betty must have felt when she was told as a child that she would never achieve her dream.

Discussion. Talk about the importance of a headteacher to a school and to the broader school community. Ask the children what special things they would wish to do if they were a headteacher.

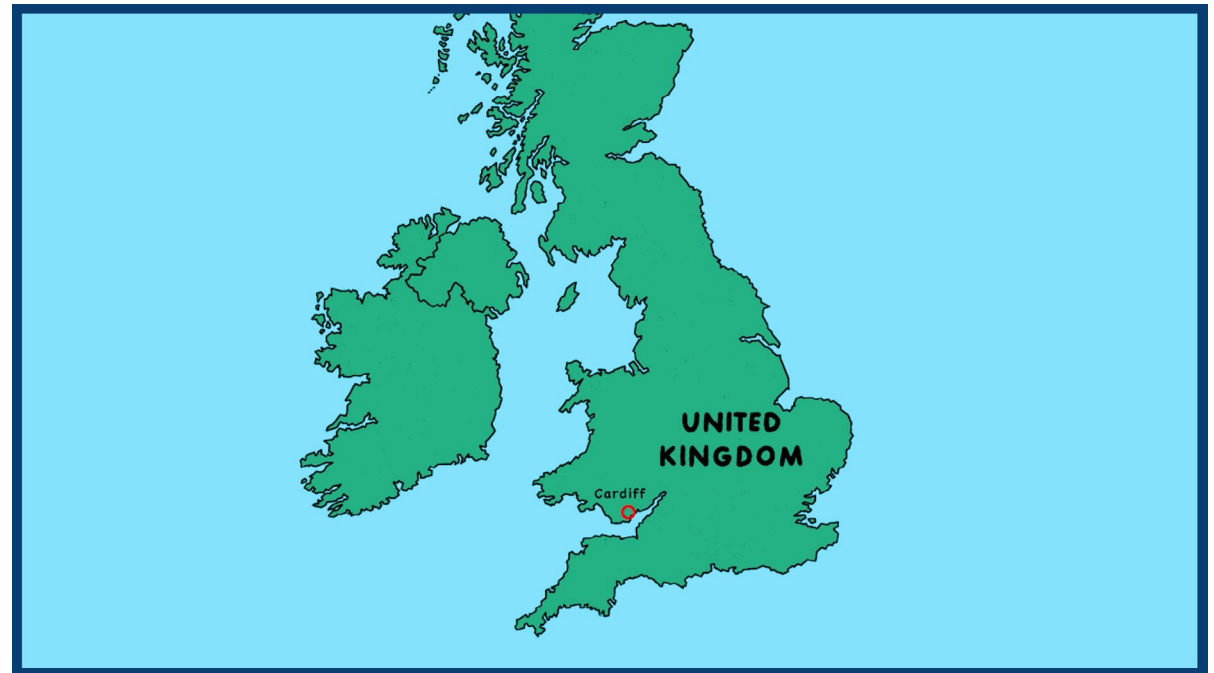
Discussion. If the school has a motto or statement of ethos or values discuss its importance. What do the words of it mean? Why has it been created? If the children could make up a school motto of their own what would it be?





Map locating Wales within the United Kingdom

Map locating Cardiff within the United Kingdom



FLOELLA BENJAMIN (BORN 1949)

Introduction

Baroness Floella Benjamin is an actress, author, businesswoman, politician, writer of children's books, TV presenter and singer. She was born in Trinidad but moved to the United Kingdom when she was 10 years old. She has talked about the racism that she experienced while growing up in the UK and how she found it hard to fit in. She is well-known as a presenter of children's TV programmes, such as *Play School*, *Play Away* and *Fast Forward*.

Floella Benjamin has spoken about the need for children's story books to include characters from different backgrounds. It would be useful to share a copy of her story *Coming to England* if you have one available.

On 28 June 2010 Baroness Benjamin was introduced to the House of Lords.

Before watching the video

You could prepare for the video by asking some of the following:

- Which books or stories that you've read in school or at home do you most like?
- Who is the main character in the story? How would you describe them? Why do you like that character?
- Would you say that the character is like you...or different?

- What is the job of a presenter on TV? What do they do?

After watching the video

Consolidate children's recall and understanding of Floella's story by asking:

- Where was Floella born? (Trinidad)
- How old was Floella when she came to the UK? (10)
- Floella wrote a book called *Coming to England*. What was the book about? (Floella's journey to England and her experiences after she arrived)
- As well as being a writer, can you remember any of the other jobs Floella has had? (Singer, actor, TV presenter and TV producer, writer of children's books, businesswoman, politician)
- Can you remember any of the awards Floella has been given? (An award called an OBE - in 2001, for services to broadcasting; a DBE, awarded at Buckingham Palace in 2020; she has also been Chancellor of the University of Exeter)

Activities

Discussion. Floella has written about how she did not feel welcome when she arrived in the UK and how she did not feel like she fitted in. Discuss with the children how they think Floella must have felt. Discuss how your school

community seeks to welcome a new child. (You might refer to the school's stated values or ethos.) What do you think may have changed in Floella's life to make her feel welcome?

Discussion. Talk about the many different jobs that Floella has done: actress, author, businesswoman, politician, writer of children's books, presenter and singer. Which of those jobs do the children think they would like to do - and why? What sort of person is able to do lots of different jobs?

Discussion. What is the role of a 'politician'? Why is the work of politicians important? What sort of people do you think politicians should be? Is it important that politicians should be all sorts of different people?





Floella Benjamin's journey from Trinidad to the UK

LAURIE CUNNINGHAM (1956 – 1989)

Introduction

This video tells the story of Laurie Cunningham (1956 - 1989), one of the very first black footballers to play for England. Laurie began his career at Leyton Orient in London and went on to play for West Bromwich Albion, Real Madrid and Manchester United. Laurie was a winger and his play was characterised by great speed and skill. In his spare time he enjoyed music and dancing.

Before watching the video

Gauge pupils' understanding of football by asking:

- What is a footballer?
- What football teams do you know?
- Can you name any players who play for the England national team currently?
- Use a globe to locate some of the cities that Laurie played in - London, Birmingham, Madrid in Spain, Manchester.

After watching the video

Consolidate pupils' recall and understanding of Laurie's story by asking:

- Where did Laurie's parents travel to the UK from? (Jamaica)
- Where was Laurie born? (London)
- What year was he born? (1956)

- Can you name any of the teams that Laurie played for? (The teams include Leyton Orient, West Bromwich Albion, Real Madrid, Manchester United)
- What did Laurie like to do when he was not playing football? (He enjoyed music and dancing)

Activities

Discussion. How do you think Laurie felt when he was first chosen to play for England? How would you feel if you were chosen - perhaps to play football for the national team, or another sport, or another activity?

Discussion. Madrid - the city in Spain where Laurie played football - was a long way from his home in this country. Do you think Laurie would have found it hard to move to Spain? What do you think he would have liked about making that move...and what do you think he may have not liked as much?

Discussion. Laurie inspired many of today's top players. What does it mean to be 'an inspiration'? Why do you think that Laurie was an inspiration to others?



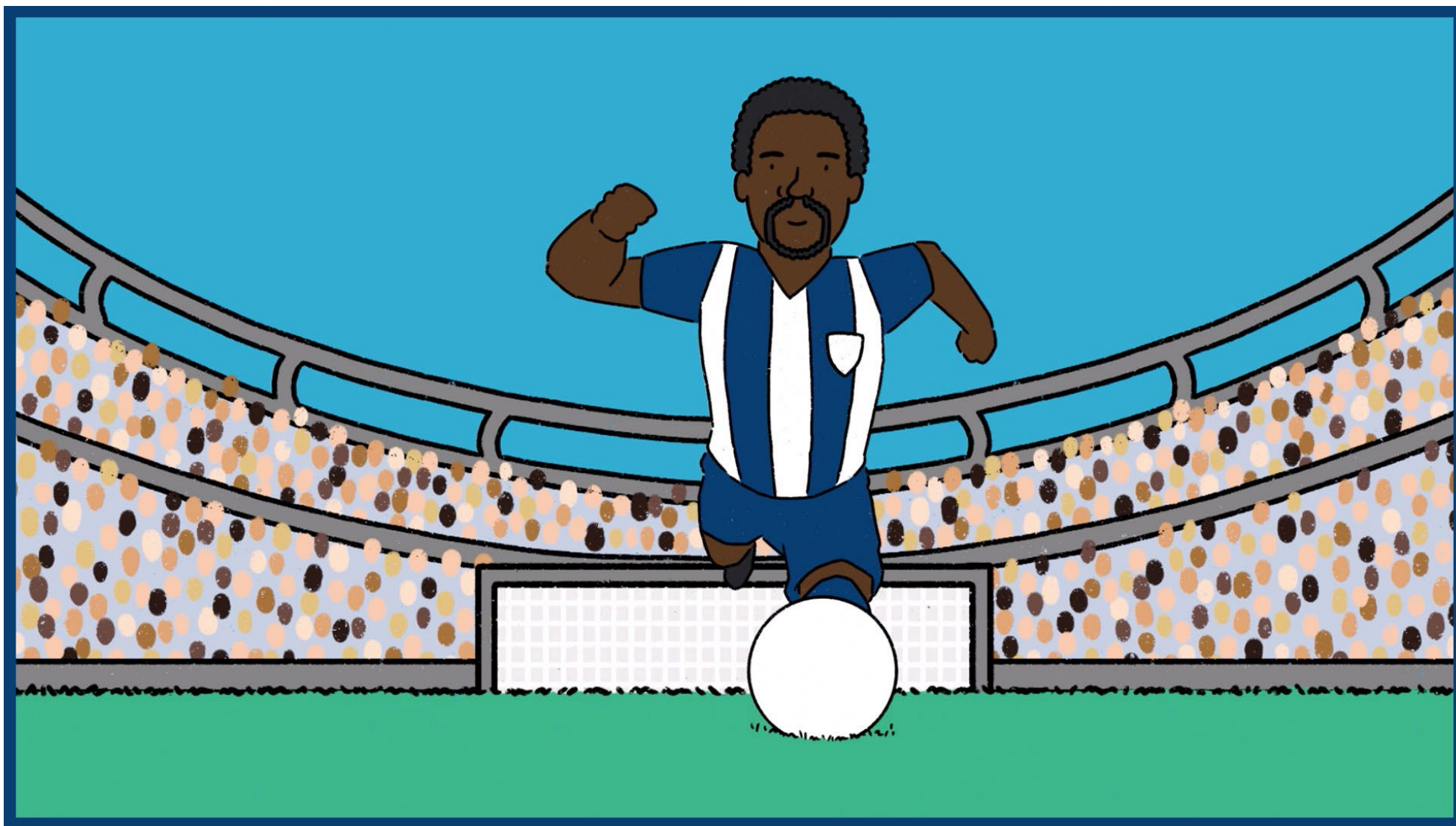


Illustration of Laurie Cunningham playing for West Bromwich Albion

MALORIE BLACKMAN (BORN 1962)

Introduction

Malorie Blackman was born in 1962 in London. She says that as a child she loved reading so much that by the age of 11 she had read all of the children's books in her local library. She dreamt of becoming an English teacher, but at college she studied computer science and her first job was as a computer programmer.

Malorie's first book *Not So Stupid* (published 1990) was written in her spare time and is a collection of science fiction stories. It was rejected by publishers more than 80 times; but Malorie persevered and eventually she found one. Today Malorie has published more than 60 books and has also written a stage play and scripts for television, including *Doctor Who*. Her best-known work is the award-winning *Noughts and Crosses* series, which was adapted for television in 2020.

Before watching the video

Malorie Blackman has written many books for older children. Their themes are too complex for KS1 but you could explain to children that they may read them once they are older. Malorie is considered by many to be an important British writer, who uses her work to explore important issues, including racism.

Malorie's story is one of never giving up. Her first work was rejected many times by

publishers but eventually she realised her ambition. She demonstrates perseverance, passion and a growth mindset - qualities that can be discussed in relation to PSHE.

Prepare for Malorie's story by asking the children:

- What is a writer?
- What is a computer programmer? What is 'coding'?
- Does anyone know what they'd like to be when they grow up?
- Why is it important that we 'never give up trying'?
- Can anyone say what the word 'perseverance' means?

After watching the video

Consolidate pupils' recall and understanding of Malorie's story by asking:

- Where was Malorie born? (London)
- What did Malorie want to become when she was still at school? (A teacher)
- What is the first job that Malorie actually did? (Computer programmer)
- What is a 'publisher'? (Someone who turns stories into books that can be sold in shops)
- What is Malorie's job today? (She writes books for children and young adults)
- How many books has she written? (More than 60)

- Can you remember what any of Malorie's books are called? (For example, *Not So Stupid*, *Trust Me*, *Hacker*, *Thief*, *Pig Heart Boy* and *Noughts and Crosses*)

Activities

Discussion. Talk about how Malorie must have felt when her first book was rejected by publishers. How did Malorie react to this setback? Why was Malorie eventually successful in finding a publisher?

Discussion. As a child Malorie had a passion for reading. Discuss what 'passions' the children have. Are they things that the children can follow through to adult life?

Discussion. Why do you think Malorie chose to write about computers and computer programming in some of her stories? (She was writing from experience). What things would you like to write about in stories - and why?



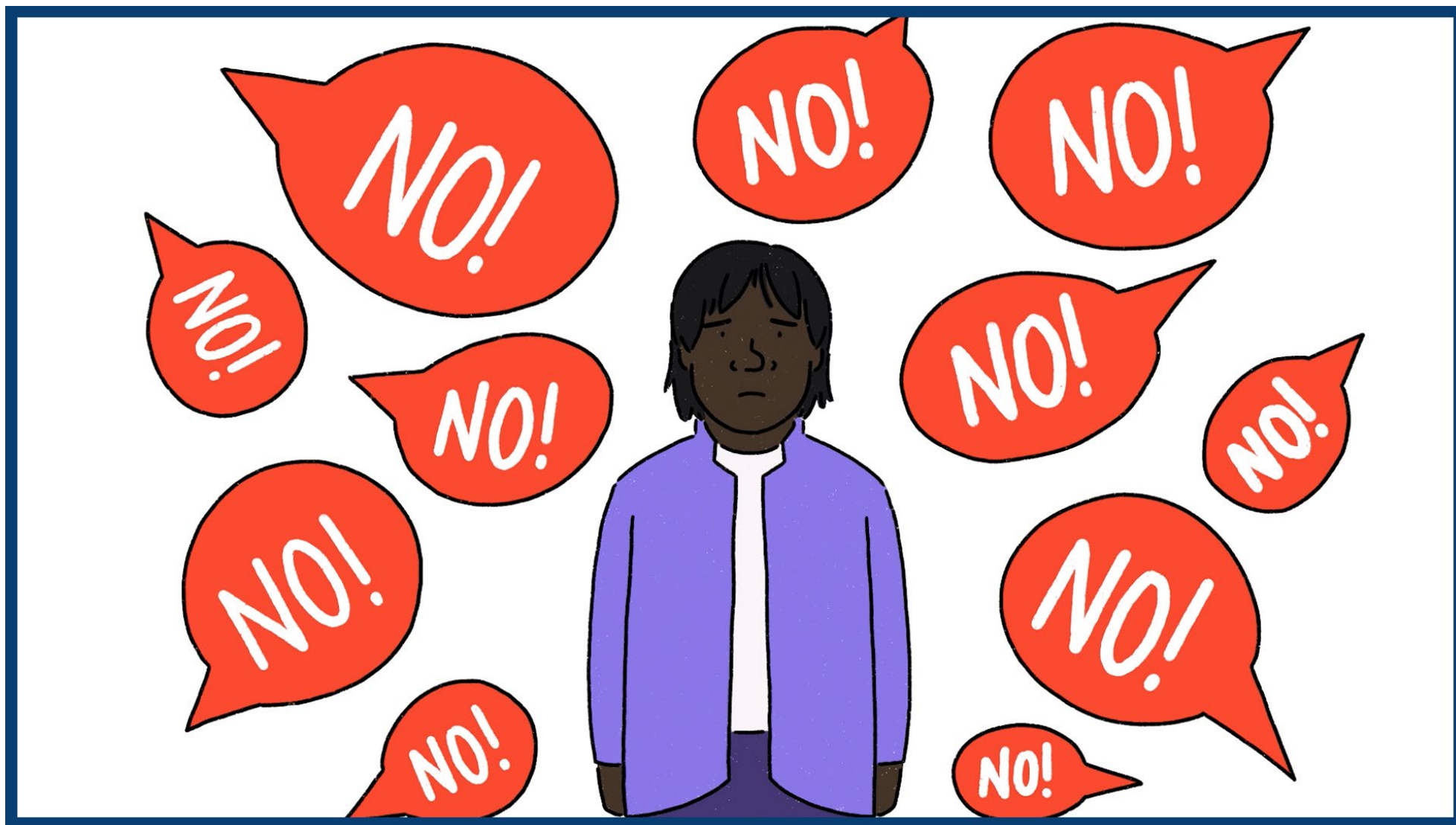


Illustration to accompany the discussion about rejection