



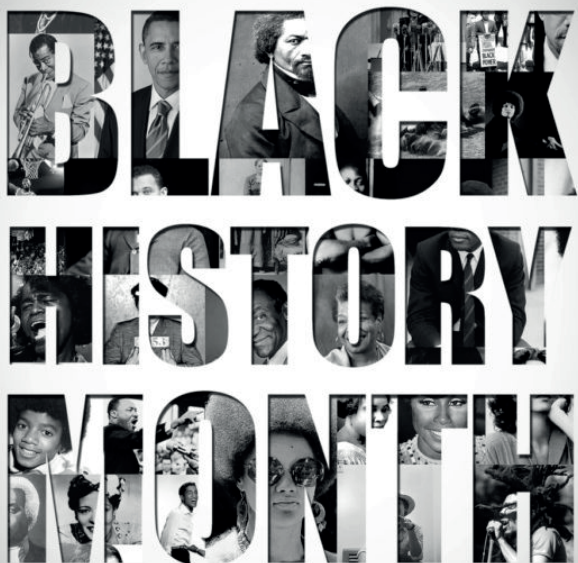
Emanuel School



# BLACK HISTORY WEEK

Monday 12th – Friday 16th October

FRIDAY



## The effects of the Empire

Susanna Tuffrey, Upper Sixth

I think one of the most important parts of black history that we, as British people, need to learn is the Empire. I don't think most people understand the true extent of the awful acts towards people of colour that British colonialists committed, and how those acts from the past are still impacting everyday life right now. For example, Brits would never have our tea and sugar without the Empire, and although I'm not saying we should ban anything associated with the Empire, we should at least acknowledge the fact that our privileges are due to exploitation. However, it is now up to us to make the best of the situation. As a result of the British Empire, we have become a much more multi-cultural society, having people from many different backgrounds and ethnicities living together. I've lived in South London my entire life and went to a very multi-cultural primary school. Since a very young age I've learnt about the heritages of all my class mates and been lucky enough to share different cultural experiences with them. For example, I remember we had several World Food Days, where people brought in traditional or popular foods from their respective countries, which was an incredibly fun way of learning more about different societies around the world.



## Archer Advisory Group

Mrs Alleyne-Graham

As a black girl, growing up in Shepherds Bush during the 70s and early 80s, was a good experience for me. I don't recall having any problems or being discriminated against due to the colour of my skin. However the generation before me (especially the boys) experienced significant racial abuse and conflict with various groups and the police.

Despite living in one of the most diverse cities in the world, I have found that few of my workplaces have reflected this diversity and to tell you the truth it has been lonely. Having someone that looks like you and can identify with you is so important. As a member of the Archer Advisory Group, I look forward to working with Emanuel staff and pupils in focusing on the ways in which we provide education regarding race, anti-racism and forms of inequality and representation.



## Desert Island Discs

Baroness Floella Benjamin, DBE

**Looking for something to listen to over half term? In the latest episode of BBC Radio 4's Desert Island Discs, Baroness Floella Benjamin DBE, broadcaster, shares eight discs, book and luxury she would want with her if she were cast away to a desert island.**

Baroness Floella Benjamin DBE is a Trinidadian-British broadcaster, writer and politician. She became a familiar face to millions of viewers through her work on children's television, most notably on Play School, which she first presented in 1976.

She was born in Trinidad in 1949, the second of six children. When her parents emigrated to the UK, she and her siblings were initially left behind with foster parents. After 16 months, the family was able to reunite, when the children travelled to England by sea. At first they all lived in one room in south London. Eventually her parents were able to buy a house in Beckenham, where they lived for 40 years - which is why Floella decided on the title Baroness Benjamin of Beckenham when she entered the House of Lords in 2010 as a Liberal Democrat peer.

There was no hint of her later high public profile when she left school at 16 to work in a bank, until she dared to audition for a West End musical during her lunch break. She was successful, going on to appear in numerous London shows, before her move into television. Along with her work in front of the camera, she set up her own TV production company, as well as publishing books and working closely with charities for children and young people. She has also campaigned for high standards in children's broadcasting and more diversity in the creative industries.

She was the Chancellor of Exeter University for a decade, starting in 2006, and earlier this year she received a Damehood for her services to charity.





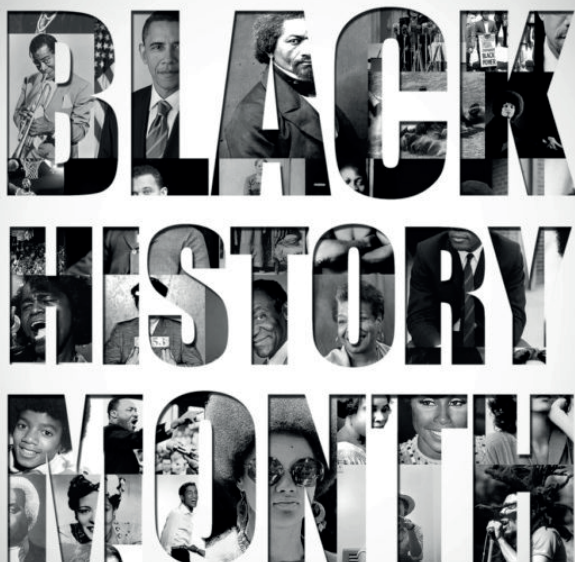
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## History Recommendations

Mr Andrews

I highly recommend *Britain's Black Past*, a series on BBC Radio 4 in which Professor Gretchen Gerzina explores a largely unknown past, the lives of black people who settled in Britain in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

Professor Gerzina reveals a startling paradox – although Britain was at the heart of a thriving slave trade, it was still possible for many black people to live here in freedom and prosperity. A few even made it to the very top of fashionable society.



But there were others who were brought over by slave-owners from the West Indies and who were never free, despite living for the rest of their lives in Glasgow or Bristol or London. Some took the law into their own hands, and managed to free themselves, others went further and advocated violent revolution. Free or unfree, they all saw Britain as a place of opportunity that could become a home.

Over two weeks, Professor Gerzina travels across Britain and talks to historians, unearthing new evidence about Britain's black past. From a country estate in Chepstow, via the docks of Liverpool, to grand houses in London and Bristol, she evokes the daily texture of black people's lives, using first-hand accounts from letters and autobiographies.

The first week of the series focuses on the 18th century, with the lives of servants, sailors, and two extraordinary figures who made it to the top of English society – the butler Ignatius Sancho and the former sailor Olaudah Equiano.

In the second week Professor Gerzina hears about new research into the lives of runaway slaves in Scotland and discovers how one man took the law into his own hands and ended slavery in Scotland for ever. She goes on to explore the moving story of Mary Prince, whose first-hand narrative of her life in slavery is the only account we have by a British woman.

There is also the story of a forgotten revolutionary, Robert Wedderburn, and compares the lives of two black people who

lived in the higher echelons of English society, in households which were not their own.

The programme ends with the troubling story of Nathaniel Wells, the son of an enslaved mother and plantation owner.

And if you enjoyed this, I suggest heading to Radio 3's *Private Passions*, in which Professor Gerzina's choice of music reflects her interest in 18th- and 19th-century black composers including Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Joseph Boulogne. She reveals, too, a passion for Early Music, with Corelli and Purcell, whose exuberant "Welcome, Welcome Glorious Morn" heads her playlist.



Britain's black past has been commemorated in Google Doodles; the former sailor Olaudah Equiano (top), butler Ignatius Sancho (middle) and enslaved Mary Prince (bottom) have all been featured previously.

