**How should Reading recognise its connections to the history of people of African descent?**

**There is guidance on specific lesson activities and how to adapt them in the notes on the PowerPoint slides.**

Ideally, students would have knowledge of the British transatlantic slave trade (TAST) and the 1807 and 1833 abolition movements. The Justice 2 History enquiries on these are ideal:

[https://justice2history.org/resources](https://justice2history.org/resources/). If students have not had an introduction to these, it would be worth expanding these lessons, or introducing the TAST and abolition campaigns before starting these. The Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC) has carried out a significant amount of research on Reading’s links to the slave trade, and in 2007 produced an exhibition summarising their research. It is well worth reading through before teaching this enquiry: <http://antislavery.ac.uk/items/show/34>.

**Many of these lessons could take two lessons for a longer enquiry. Activities that are less essential to the flow and development of the enquiry are identified by a green background, while the main slides are all blue.**

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| **Lesson enquiry question** | **Lesson guidance** | **Key terms to use in this lesson** | **Home learning opportunities** | **Feedback point opportunities** | **Contents** |
| Lesson 1: Why is the Central Club Mural so important to the local community? | This lesson sets up the enquiry and the relevance to local history. Students should be introduced to the Central Club Mural and the debate surrounding the sale of the building after it closed in 2006. It might be worth checking the current status of the sale of the building before teaching, as at the time of writing the building is under offer.  Students find out about the mural, and the thought and care that went into the design and creation. They then consider the reasons why people were chosen to be included on the mural. There is a mix of individuals from all over the world, and some local to Reading, many who were involved in the creation of the mural. This is an opportunity to get students to start to consider the significant contribution that people of African descent have made to world history and to commemorating and recognising that history in the modern period. The task looking at individuals on the mural could be carried out in small groups, or individually with whole-class feedback. This could be given longer, with the lesson continuing over two lessons in total.  This lesson also introduces the fact that we are currently in the UN’s International Decade for People of African Descent 2015–2024; the video clip at the end identifies the importance of slavery in explaining why there are people of African descent all over the world, which can then lead into discussing this history for Reading specifically. | * Mural * Community * Descent * Significance | If you are limited for time, the scholarship reading at the start of Lesson 2 could be set as homework. |  | * Lesson PowerPoint * Information about the mural * Central club Mural images * Individuals information * Clip from UN International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024): www.youtube.com/watch?v=9edo0Qaq-ZI |
| Lesson 2: How should we remember eighteenth-century people of African descent in Reading? | If you do everything in this lesson in detail, it will likely actually take two lessons. If you do not have two lessons to spare, the most essential elements of the lesson are to look at the paintings and the documents proving the existence of Black people in Berkshire in the 1700s – these are on the blue slides. The ‘Black and British’ extract could be done as scholarship reading, at the start of the lesson, as homework in preparation or just using the slide that summarises the view.  Use Slides 3–5 to do as guided reading or Slides 6–7 to cut down the extract task.  This lesson establishes that there have been Black people in Reading since at least the early 1700s. (Miranda Kauffman has established the presence of Black people in Tudor England, and there is a parish record identifying someone as Black in 1610.)  The lesson uses portraits to establish that there were frequently young Africans employed as servants in wealthy households, showing how they were used as accessories and proof of wealth and status. The lesson then demonstrates the evidence that we have for the presence of Africans specifically in Reading, using parish records accessed through the Berkshire Records Office. The list of Black people in these records was compiled by the Black and Asian People in Britain Association. A list is also detailed in the Reading Slave Links document by RISC.  The lesson then links the two together by showing students the Black Boy pub (on a well-known roundabout in Reading) and the possible origin of the pub’s name. This is not even vaguely acknowledged on the website, and students’ response to this is to write to the pub owners to explain the possible origin of the pub’s name. In January 2021, the pub announced that it was going to change its name because of this potential history of the name. However, while they have updated the information on the possible background of the name on the website, they have not added the possibility that it was named after an unfree black servant boy. There is a link to the *Reading Chronicle*’s news story, with a poll that showed that the public are against the renaming – this could be used with groups who would respond well to this, and the class could discuss the arguments for and against renaming. | * Baptised * Georgian * Unfree servant * Pageboy * Archive * Constrained * Destitute * Predicament | Homework to start timeline on the TAST and the history that is connected to Reading. This could be set at any point in the first three lessons and is ongoing throughout the enquiry – it would be needed while students are working on the outcome. | Students’ emails to the Black Boy pub: consider their use of evidence to support their argument and explanation of the likely origin of the name. | * PowerPoint document * Parish records handout * Homework timeline * Scholarship reading from Olusoga * Paintings (referenced in PP) |
| Lesson 3: How did people in Reading benefit from connections to the slave trade? | If you do everything in this lesson in detail, it will likely actually take two lessons. If you do not have two lessons to spare, the most essential elements are on the blue slides, and the optional slides have green backgrounds.  This lesson gets students to see that the beneficiaries of slavery are not all in the Caribbean, and that towns like Reading, which are not normally associated with slavery and the slave trade, have actually got significant connections.  Start with students considering the ways in which people might benefit – directly as well as indirectly. Students might consider the knock-on effect of the slave trade to other connected trades.  If you have got time to do this across two lessons, introduce to students the idea that you are going to be looking at four case studies of individuals or families connected to Reading who benefited from slavery. You might decide to cut these down so that you are only focusing on three. Students then look at the case studies in turn. These could be done in any order, but the one to spend most time on is the Haynes family.  If you only have time to do this in one lesson, focus just on the Haynes family, using the blue slides (optional slides are identified in green). The family’s status and wealth track the introduction and growth of the slave trade and British colonialism. Leaving Reading under Cromwell and settling on Barbados, they initially used indentured labour and then changed to using enslaved Africans, as it was more profitable. The head of the family became influential through involvement in the House of Representatives and the militia, and the views of General Robert Haynes expressed in his diary mirror the attitudes of many plantation owners. Haynes returned to where he felt was his ancestral hometown in Reading.  The lesson also looks at Ann Katherine Storer, who was a white woman from Jamaica who moved to Reading, and at the Stapleton family, who owned Grey’s Court between 1724 and 1934. There is a possible link to the slave ship *Lady’s Adventure* through Ann and Frances Stapleton. | * Militia * Beneficiaries * Plantation * House of Representatives * Colonialism * Indentured labour |  |  | * PowerPoint document * Extract from *Reading to Barbados and Back* * Living graph handout * Table on who benefited * Teacher and student copies of information on Haynes family * Links to LBS pages and National Trust page |
| Lesson 4: How should we remember the abolition campaign in Reading? | This lesson Is about getting students to see that the links to the slave trade in Reading are not one-dimensional and that people in Reading also wanted the abolition of slavery and the slave trade. Students see the petition written by Reading citizens and how the Broad Street Chapel was a centre of abolitionist activity. Students would benefit from having a broader understanding of the abolition campaign, so that they can see how the history in Reading fits into the wider history.  The lesson then moves on to get students to acknowledge that it is more ‘comfortable’ for many people to remember the abolitionist history. It is worth remembering that that won’t be the case for all students in classes, who may not feel a connection with people from Reading in history for all sorts of reasons, but they should be able to see that those people who do feel a connection to Reading would be more likely to want to consider Reading’s abolitionist elements, rather than the benefits that slavery brought. Akala discusses this idea in the scholarship reading about Wilberforce and how he is commemorated. Students should consider why we should study the full history of Reading’s connections to slavery and the slave trade, rather than just one of the people who benefited, the people who were the victims and the people who tried to end it. | * Abolition * Campaign * Abolitionist * Commemorated | Mary Smart homework task – students find out about the Sierra Leonian sent to Reading to train as a missionary | Feedback on homework – perhaps verbal at the start of the lesson in which it is due | * PowerPoint document * Mary Smart homework page and information pages * Reading abolition petition * Scholarship reading of *Natives* by Akala |
| Lesson 5: Why is it important to recognise the history of people of African descent in Reading? | This lesson is aimed at getting students to see that the legacy of British slave ownership continues well past the end of slavery in 1833. This is done by linking to national/international history to consider how they help us to consider public memory. Students start by using their timeline and identifying WWI and WWII as important events in which Africans and people of African descent were involved that they are likely to know about. Using the memorial, students start to think about public memory and how we commemorate events – and how this can be part of what makes the history of Black Britons a ‘forgotten history’.  Students then link back to the mural and consider why the involvement of Black people in British history being forgotten would make people particularly passionate about keeping elements of public recognition of Black history intact when threatened.  Use the *Alt History* clip to show people that it is not just that we do not talk about it today, but even at the time the contribution of Africans and people of African descent was ignored or dismissed.  Link this to Windrush and the scandal surrounding the treatment of the Windrush generation. Use the clip of *The Unwanted* on slide 13 to introduce students to the Windrush scandal – the first couple of minutes are a good overview. While this does not link specifically to Reading, it helps students to understand why the British-Caribbean community in Reading care so much about the mural and preserving it. Using this alongside the information about Reading’s British-Caribbean community will help them to consider public representations of this history and how they might want to do it better.  There is the option to consider a written outcome by writing a letter to the government to ask them to reconsider the funding for the statue to slavery that was turned down at the end of 2019. | * Public history * Commemorate * Windrush scandal * National/   international | Students will need the timeline activity ready for their outcome lesson(s) |  | * PowerPoint document * *Alt History* BBC documentary: https://youtu.be/3lg0mAX0FOM * *The Unwanted: The Secret Windrush Files* BBC documentary: www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m00068sk/the-unwanted-the-secret-windrush-files |
| Lesson 6: How should Reading recognise its connections to the history of people of African descent? | This lesson could easily expand into two or more lessons depending on how you want students to carry out the outcome. It could be done as a design task, with students designing the overall layout and content choices for the display, or they could be asked to consider the specific wording of displays. This would depend on time, the class and the way in which the enquiry has been taught so far, as well as the resources available to the class (e.g. computers, homework policies, etc.).  Bear in mind that many students will not have been to a museum, so try to avoid making this an issue in which they might feel left out of the discussion – the question ‘what do you think curators would say about why it exists?’ was worded carefully so that students who have never been in a museum will not feel excluded from the conversation. For those near to Reading centre, it is a great opportunity to encourage them to go to the museum!  Encourage students to think carefully about museums and how they present displays. Show students the images from the museum and consider how limited the references to the transatlantic slave trade are, considering everything that they have learned about it. Then use the homework timeline to discuss the history that they have learned about the legacies of the slave trade in Reading and link it back to their existing knowledge about the wider history of the slave trade.  Introduce students to the final task of designing the museum display.  Students need to consider how displays might present a broad history, not ignoring elements of the past and presenting a more accurate picture than public history presents in many contexts today. Minority groups are the least likely to go to museums, and museums’ main visitors remain the white middle class. Students should consider how their display might reach and encourage a broader history, showing people of African descent in different centuries and contexts. | * Museum * Curator * Conservation * Recognise |  | Feedback to students from their museum display – could be carried out as peer feedback, or students could present and receive verbal feedback | * PowerPoint document * Postcard homework * Support sheet * Peer-marking sheets (Image credits: Strength – Cuby Design, <https://thenounproject.com/search/?q=strength&i=1615020>; Target – DinosoftLab, https://thenounproject.com/term/target/2961390) |