



In partnership with  
**AHRC BBC History 100 Fellowship**

Funded by



# Teacher Fellowship programme

## Broadcasting and Social Change in Sixties Britain

How can we find out about the experiences of Black Britons in the  
1960s?

Hannah Betts

## **How can we find out about the experiences of Black Britons in the 1960s?**

### **Rationale**

Intended year group: Year 9

Second-order concept: Evidential enquiry

My resource is a scheme of learning and lessons that allows students to follow the processes of an historian to uncover the experiences of Black Britons in the 1960s. It begins with establishing 'the 1960s' as a substantive concept. Following that, each lesson guides students through a different set of sources to interrogate in a way that is meaningful and less abstract than the GCSE-style utility questions. The outcome task allows students to review their research process and curate their own archive of sources that they think best reflects the diversity of experiences that Black Britons had in the 1960s.

### **Why did you develop the resource?**

Throughout Key Stage 3, we have told the story of Black British history and the British Empire. In Year 8, students study an interpretations unit on the British Empire and they begin Year 9 with a unit on the colonial soldiers during the First World War. I wanted to 'complete' the narrative to some extent and ensure that students understood the impact of post-war migration on Britain and from the perspective of the Windrush Generation. Furthermore, as part of the GCSE unit, students study America from 1920 to 1973. Throughout this course, students gain an understanding of the African-American experience and they leave Year 11 with in-depth knowledge of the American civil rights movement. It seemed wrong that students left Key Stage 3 with no knowledge of the British movement and I wanted to make it clear to students that there were parallels between the two. I chose an evidential enquiry to allow students to follow the process of an historian and practise source analysis and evaluation in a meaningful way. I hope that this will aid them with the GCSE utility questions in the future and they will understand the reasoning behind them.

### **What did you want your students to learn from this resource?**

#### **Concept:**

I wanted my students to understand the process of 'doing history' and how historians form their interpretations. I wanted them to see themselves as historians and be exposed to a wide range of different sources and analyse and evaluate them with purpose. When students reach GCSE, they are expected to be able to analyse and evaluate sources effectively. This is too abstract an exercise for many, so their evaluations are often surface-level and based around the idea that as something as biased it is useless. I wanted students to get better at this, without doing anything that looked remotely like a GCSE-style question in Year 9.

#### **Knowledge:**

As a result of the type of activities, the conclusions that students reached would differ to some extent. However, I wanted them to have a core understanding that the experiences of

Black Britons were diverse and it is important not to generalise. I wanted them to see that the legislation was changing and that the laws that the government passes can reveal lots about attitudes at a particular time. I wanted them to see that broadcasting and the media were also changing to reflect a growing multicultural Britain. Finally, I wanted students to gain an understanding of the Mangrove Nine and the British Black Power movement.

**Why did you structure the resource in the way you did?**

I started my enquiry with a lesson on the substantive concept of the 'swinging 60s' to ensure that students had a strong sense of period and that they could compare what they discovered later in the enquiry to the stereotypical interpretation of the decade. I chose to look at a different type of source per lesson – until the penultimate lesson – so that they could focus in depth on evaluating that kind of evidence. The sources that I chose were carefully selected to reveal a variety of experiences. I began with legislation as I felt that this set a benchmark of what the government expected and would give students some concrete dates to which to compare their findings. The news reports worked well for this as they were filmed in 1965 and 1966 (around the time of the Race Relations Act). The penultimate lesson was slightly different as it utilised a bank of sources that the National Archives had curated. By this point, I felt that students would have had enough experience with sources to tackle a wide range. I also put this last as chronologically it made sense.

About halfway through the scheme of learning, I planned a source utility task that allowed students to reflect upon what they had learned so far. I created a series of sentence fragments for students to put together. The first fragments were about the sources, and the second were about what the sources could reveal. I made sure that a range of options could apply to show them that there was not one 'right answer'.

For the final outcome, I designed a task that asked students to curate their own archive based on the sources that they had interrogated. To get them thinking, I wrote more sentence fragments. This time it started with a statement about the experiences of Black Britons, and they had to pick which sources provided them with that statement. The success criteria for the outcome task were to include a range of different types of sources, to display a consideration of the different experiences that Black Britons had, and to explain why they have chosen the sources that they have.