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Teacher Fellowship programme

Broadcasting and Social Change in Sixties Britain

What can *Rainbow City* tell us about race relations in sixties Britain?

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Scholarly and curricular rationale

This enquiry has been designed to help Year 9 students to understand racism in sixties Britain through the lens of broadcasting materials. They will develop an understanding of migration, race and the end of the British Empire. They will explore the experiences of black and Asian people as a consequence of moving to post-war Britain, and examine how representation on television developed and/or reinforced the tone of race relations. The lessons have been sequenced using Schaffer's 'intention, production, response' model, in order to scaffold student thinking about the programme.

I wanted to create an enquiry about the experiences of people in post-war Britain in order to continue the narratives that are explored about the British Empire throughout Key Stage 3 at my school. The substantive knowledge developed in this enquiry also lays the foundation for successful study of AQA's 'Empire, migration and the people' at Key Stage 4.

I felt that it was important to explore British race relations instead of exploring race relations in the USA and distancing racism from British history; I wanted my students to confront and explore issues in British society. I wanted them to be able to explore social struggles on different levels and examine race relations in more complex ways than just 'black and white'. *Rainbow City* was the perfect programme for helping students to understand the interplay between race, gender and age in the sixties. It was also great for tackling the idea that it was a time of great change and continuity. The world of BBC broadcasting also brought this to life and allowed for explicit discussion about how historians might use this type of resource in their studies.

I have included a detailed **enquiry plan** as part of the enquiry materials, in order to make my thinking really explicit to teachers. There are also **additional notes** and references to help teachers in the notes section of each PowerPoint slide.

Summary of lessons

Lesson focus and learning objectives	Learning activities	Resources for the lesson
1. Why was <i>Rainbow City</i> created in 1967? LO: To develop an understanding of the context of race relations in 1960s Britain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Errol John story as an intro to Windrush Generation and <i>Rainbow City</i>- Colour-code causes of creation of <i>Rainbow City</i> on a timeline- Discussion questions- Answer enquiry question on the knowledge organiser	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Printed knowledge organiser for each student- PowerPoint 1- Teacher story: Slide 16 of PowerPoint 1- Printed worksheet for each student: Slide 17 of PowerPoint 1
2. Whose stories were told in <i>Rainbow City</i>? LO: To develop an	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Podcast extract and John Elliot obituary as an intro	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- PowerPoint 2- History Extra Podcast: The BBC at 100: Change and

<p>understanding of the lives of the writers, actors and characters in the programme and what their stories reveal about race relations in 1960s Britain</p>	<p>to who held power in broadcasting in the 1960s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Watch several clips from <i>Rainbow City</i> and fill in a table *TRIGGER WARNING* - Answer the enquiry question on the knowledge organiser 	<p>innovation in the 1960s (link on Slide 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Printed obituary for each student: Slide 9 of the PowerPoint - Clips of <i>Rainbow City</i>* <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'John & Dennis: What sort of a boy?' (start– 9:30) 2. 'Saadat: Beards and Turbans' (11:00– 16:00) 3. 'Mary & Jill: Always on Sunday' (9:37– 14:27) 4. 'Ivor: Always on Sunday' (15:10– 17:21) - Printed worksheet for each student: Slide 10 of the PowerPoint - Knowledge organiser (from Lesson 1)
<p>3. How did the audience react to <i>Rainbow City</i>? LO: To develop an understanding of the role of broadcasting in changing race relations in 1960s Britain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge recall - Read report and discuss the questions - Answer the enquiry question on the knowledge organiser - Challenge discussion about the value of broadcasting materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PowerPoint 3 - Printed quiz worksheet for each student: Slide 10 of the PowerPoint - Knowledge organiser (from Lesson 1) - Copy of the audience reaction report: PowerPoint 3a
<p>4. What does <i>Rainbow City</i> tell us about race relations in 1960s Britain? LO: To consolidate your understanding of the intention behind, production of and responses to <i>Rainbow City</i> and what these reveal about race relations in sixties Britain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge recall - Website section modelling - Website section writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PowerPoint 4 - Printed worksheet for each student: Slide 10 of the PowerPoint

* Episodes of *Rainbow City* are available for teachers to view on the Educational Recording Agency website. Teachers will need to register for a free login in order to access the clips: [1: What Sort of Boy? | Rainbow City \(ERA\)](#)

Conclusions and reflections

This enquiry was really powerful in my classroom because students could 'see themselves and were taken to other worlds' (Lobo, HA Virtual Conference, 2020). I work in a very diverse school and students found that the stories that were played out on screen resonated with their own experiences. Students were particularly struck by the relationships between different groups of migrants and by the mixed-race characters that they saw on screen. One student commented that this was the first time that anyone had really spoken to them about the experiences of mixed-race people in the past. *Rainbow City* opened up discussions about students' own experiences of racism. Helping them to explore the social struggles of sixties Britain was a privilege for this reason.

Forensically reflecting on my resources also helped me to develop their disciplinary and procedural knowledge. For example, adapting the colour-coding activity in Lesson 1 was valuable for helping students to answer 'Why was *Rainbow City* created?', but the students couldn't fully answer the question 'Why was *Rainbow City* created **in 1967**?'. I reformatted the activity into a timeline so that students could visualise the shape of causation more clearly and could then see the importance of 1965 as a turning point in the climate, allowing for this type of programme to be broadcast. Similarly, I changed the main activity in Lesson 2 and removed the need for students to describe the scenes that they had watched. Students ignored this initially (and I'm very glad that they did) as they were too engrossed in the programme. This showed me that I should remove the need for 'pointless writing' so that they could deepen their experience of the programme and then give them breathing space to actually appreciate it as a source for historians. This was a lot more effective on second teaching. Through adapting these tasks, I've learned how to refine my teaching of disciplinary and procedural knowledge, and feel confident in adapting these tasks to other enquiries in the knowledge that they will facilitate precise historical thought for my students.

I have shared these resources within my department. Other teachers have cited that they were also able to successfully adapt and teach the enquiry using my resources because I put extra notes underneath the PowerPoint slides, wrote 'teacher knowledge' slides and produced a detailed enquiry plan. These resources synthesised my learning from the Fellowship and made my thinking explicit throughout. I hope that this is also useful for colleagues outside of my school.

Useful resources

Podcast

'The BBC at 100: change & innovation in 60s Britain', History Extra podcast, <https://uk-podcasts.co.uk/podcast/history-extra-podcast/the-bbc-at-100-change-innovation-in-60s-britain>

This helps to set the context for broadcasting in sixties Britain.

Book chapter

Schaffer, G. (2014) 'Struggling for the ordinary: race in British television drama' in *The Vision of a Nation: Making multiculturalism on British television, 1960–80*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 231–262

This helps to set the context for *Rainbow City* being broadcast and provided the model for analysis. A Google Books preview can be found at: https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Kx-vAwAAQBAJ&newbks=1&newbks_redir=0&lpg=PP1&dq=editions%3ABef3E-FROT4C&pg=PA231#v=onepage&q&f=false.

Book

Olusoga, D. (2016) *Black and British*, London: Macmillan

This provides excellent subject knowledge for all teachers developing a more diverse and decolonised curriculum. A Google Books preview can be found at:

[https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=zfB5DQAAQBAJ&newbks=1&newbks_redir=0&lpg=PP1&dq=Black%20and%20British%20by%20David%20Olusoga%20\(2016\)&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=zfB5DQAAQBAJ&newbks=1&newbks_redir=0&lpg=PP1&dq=Black%20and%20British%20by%20David%20Olusoga%20(2016)&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false).