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Britain

[Black History Month
2022: What is it all
about? - CBBC
Newsround](#)

What is Black History Month & why is it important?

It is important to recognise and celebrate what Black people have contributed to our every day modern life. From inventions to entertainment, black culture is impactful, influential and important. But why should we only celebrate those from "history" ? Let's also celebrate those who are making history right now!

Fundamental British Values include **mutual respect** for and tolerance of those with **different faiths and beliefs** and for those without faith; this includes **culture and race**.

Unfortunately, Black British people and particularly Black British women often do not get their shine in the UK when it's due.



Christina Adane - Youth Activist

Marcus Rashford has been a voice and celebrated as a hero for making the government U-turn giving young people access to free meals through summer. But it is important to know this was pioneered by a fantastic 16 year old Black girl who started the petition and never gave up – she is the reason over 1million children across the UK had food in summer 2020.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNycRje6EZM>



christina.adane Retweeted



Children's Food Campaign @Childrensfood · Jun 16

The courageous 16 year old who started a petition on [#FreeSchoolMeals](#) to [@BorisJohnson](#) four weeks ago & never gave up, now thanks her 268,000 signatories: "A momentous day for us and 1.3 million kids across the country!" chnng.it/8F7xJpV5 [@BiteBack2030](#) [@ChristinaAdane](#)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5pSbe-9bNQ>

Mary Seacole- *NURSE*

- Mary Seacole (1805-1881) was a Jamaican/Scottish nurse and businesswoman.
- Demonstrated resilience, determination and leadership when, despite repeated rejections in London, she self-funded her boat passage to the Crimea to nurse the soldiers.
- Included Creole herbal remedies to treat patients suffering from cholera and yellow fever.
- Appreciated the importance of hygiene, ventilation, warmth, hydration, rest, empathy, good nutrition and care for the dying.
- After fading from history, Seacole's achievements are now again recognised, with a statue to her in the grounds of St Thomas' Hospital, London



Statue in South East London at St Thomas Hospital



Music/ Performing Arts/ Political /Public Speaking/Influencer

Stormzy Scholarship for Black UK Students



Stormzy Scholarship Application

Michael Kwadjo Owuo - Stormzy

Some of his achievements include:

- Stormzy won Best Grime Act at the 2014 and 2015 [MOBO Awards](#) and was named as an artist to look out for in the [BBC's Sound of 2015](#) list. His debut album, *Gang Signs & Prayer* (2017), was the first grime album to reach number one on the [UK Albums Chart](#) and won [British Album of the Year](#) at the [2018 Brit Awards](#).
- In 2019, Stormzy achieved his first UK number-one single with "Vossi Bop" and his headline appearance at the [2019 Glastonbury Festival](#) was widely praised; he wore a [Union Jack stab vest](#) designed by [Banksy](#), in light of the [rise in knife crime in London](#).
- Stormzy has donated £500,000 to fund educational scholarships for students from disadvantaged backgrounds as part of his commitment to becoming a major philanthropist supporting black British causes.
- In the aftermath of the George Floyd protests, Stormzy issued a statement via his label, that he plans to donate £1 million a year for 10 years to charities, organisations and movements that are committed to fight racial inequality, justice reform and black empowerment in the United Kingdom. In an interview with the BBC, Stormzy said, *"Black people have been playing on an uneven field for far too long and this pledge is a continuation in the fight to finally try and even it".*





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZ1yYOAwvvo>

Music/ English/ Drama/ Politics/Views/Geography

Dr Benjamin Zephaniah Birmingham born Rastafarian writer, dub poet, musician and novelist.

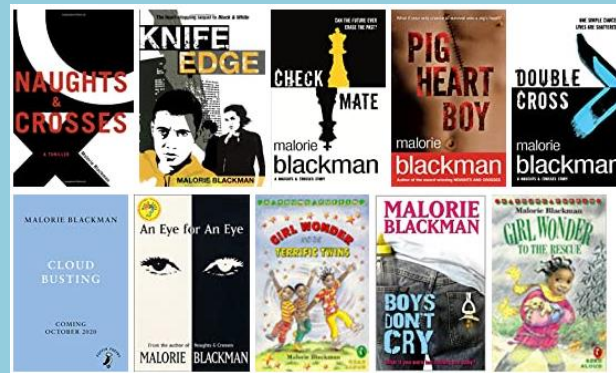
- A dyslexic, he attended an approved school (a school for people with special educational needs) but left aged 13 unable to read or write
- Benjamin's poetry is strongly influenced by the music and poetry of Jamaica and what he calls "street politics"
- **In 1999 he wrote a groundbreaking novel for teenagers. 'Face' the first of four novels to date, proved that teenage boys would read if they have access to books that they can relate to.**
- Zephaniah writes gritty, realistic novels about the lives of teenagers, these novels are directed to adults as much as they are to teenagers. He believes that for the most part teenagers know what they are going through, but adults need reminding, they have short memories.
- Young writers have said that the accessibility of his work has inspired them to take up writing, many record sleeves bear witness to the fact that he has inspired many of the new generation of rappers
- Zephaniah has said that his mission is to fight the dead image of poetry in academia, and to "take [it] everywhere" to people who do not read books, so he turned poetry readings into concert-like performances

He was included in *The Times* list of Britain's top 50 post-war writers in 2008



His 1982 album *Rasta*, which featured The Wailers as well as a tribute to Nelson Mandela, gained him international prestige and topped the Yugoslavian pop charts. It was because of this recording that he was introduced to the political prisoner and South African president Nelson Mandela. In 1996, Mandela requested that Zephaniah host the president's Two Nations Concert at the Royal Albert Hall, London.

We Are Britain! (2002) is a collection of poems celebrating cultural diversity in Britain.



Malorie Blackman British Writer

- She has written over fifty books and is acknowledged as one of today's most imaginative and convincing writers for young readers.
- Malorie frequently raises the theme of unfairness and wrongful accusation – a theme that likely resonates with her young adult readers.
- She has also written several scripts for the popular British TV shows Dr. Who, Pig Heart Boy and Byker Grove.
- 8th British Children's Laureate – **First Black woman to take that title – this was in 2013**
- She has been awarded numerous prizes for her work, including the Red House Children's Book Award and the Fantastic Fiction Award.
- She is name-checked in *Written in the Stars* by Tinie Tempah.





Liv Little

Founder of 'Gal-Dem' – *gal-dem.com* An online and print publication committed to sharing perspectives from women and non-binary people of colour. The *gal-dem* team consists of over 70 women of colour, most of whom are based in the UK but with others in countries around the world.

Unknown and unsung hero who should be recognised as making history for equality of various communities. In 2016 she was listed as one of the BBC's 100 Women



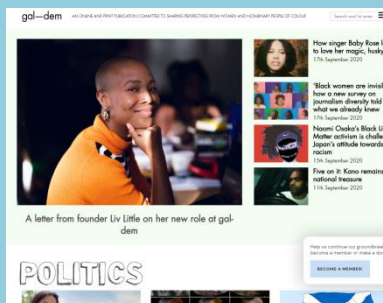
Online influencer/Politics/ Sociology

Drama/ English



Michaela Coel

English actress, screenwriter, director, producer, and singer. She is best known for creating and starring in the E4 sitcom *Chewing Gum*, for which she won the BAFTA Award for Best Female Comedy Performance; and the BBC One comedy-drama series *I May Destroy You* (2020). She is also known for her work in other Netflix productions, including guest starring in the series *Black Mirror* (2016–2017) and the film *Been So Long* (2018). Coel appeared in British *Vogue*'s 2020 list of influential women. Michaela acknowledged refusing \$1 million from Netflix after the streaming service declined to offer her intellectual property ownership of her show.





Barbara Blake Hannah

- Barbara is a Jamaican journalist, author, film maker, festival organiser and cultural consultant. **She was the first black news presenter on British television, in 1968** as an on-camera reporter and interviewer on Thames Television's (ITV) evening news program
- After nine months she was dismissed without formal explanation, although her producer said the company was under pressure from a negative response from viewers for them having a black woman on television.
- Blake-Hannah then worked for the local news programme broadcast by ATV in Birmingham. She was unable to find a hotel which would allow her to stay, and had to commute from London each day until she found a room at the YWCA.
- The British media periodical *Press Gazette* launched the *Barbara Blake-Hannah prize* in 2020 to recognise emerging talented journalists from minority backgrounds



Barbara Blake Hannah - Britain's first Black TV Journalist - 1968-1970

1,597 views • 22 Feb 2011



JaMediaPro
87 subscribers

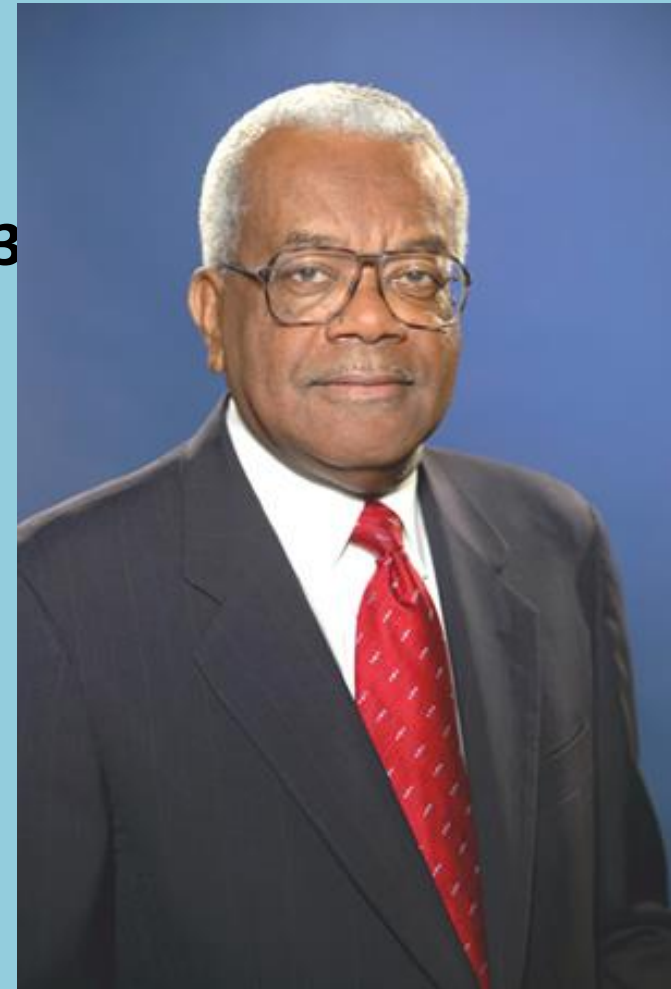
1970 interview with disabled athletes for ATV-TODAY, Birmingham by Barbara B
Black TV journalist



Sir Trevor McDonald OBE

First Black Male News reporter for ITN in 1973

- He's a Trinidadian-British newsreader and journalist, best known for his career as a news presenter with ITN
- Sir Trevor turned down a job with the BBC before he became a big name. They were under pressure by the Race Relations Board (established by the Race Relations Act in 1965) to hire more black reporters,"
- Sir Trevor said "I did not want to be employed solely because I was black. I wanted to be employed on merit"
- McDonald was promoted in 1992 as the sole presenter of *News at Ten* and became a well-known face on British television screens
- McDonald was knighted in 1999 for his services to journalism





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzFNKFitHjw>

Media/ Drama/ Dance/ Entertainment/ Politics

Diversity Dance group

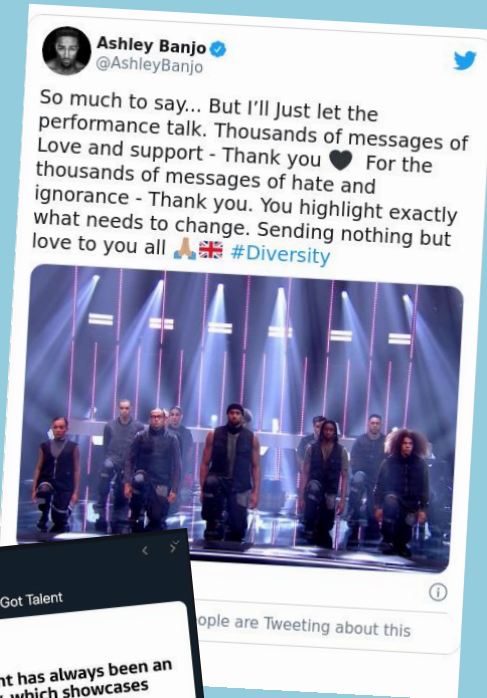
Diversity is a British street dance troupe formed in 2007 and based in London.

Diversity's Black Lives Matter routine on Britain's Got Talent The BGT Diversity performance 2020 that sparked Ofcom complaints was a routine inspired by and in support of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement.

Beginning by reflecting on what had happened in 2020 so far and referencing the coronavirus pandemic, the routine went on to address racism in both the UK and around the world.

The routine was performed to a track which featured the phrase 'I can't breathe', the words repeated by American George Floyd before he died in the custody of Minneapolis police on May 25, 2020.

Following their performance, Ashley Banjo posted a clip of the routine to Instagram with the following caption: 'One day we will look back and realise 2020 was the year everything changed. 'In the present moment though there is still so much to say... But I will just let this performance say it for me. For the thousands of supportive messages of Love and inclusion – Thank you. 'And for the thousands of messages of hate and ignorance I've received – Thank you... You highlight exactly what needs to change and why this was so important to me and the rest of Diversity. Sending nothing but love and positive vibes to everyone.'





Jamal Edwards aka SmokeyBarz

Founder of SBTv

- During his school years, he started rapping and would film videos with his friends that would then be posted on YouTube. These videos would eventually become his business and the beginning of SBTv.
- In 2011, SBTv was featured in a Google Chrome advert which caused the name 'Jamal Edwards' to be searched more than a million times. He became the second-most popular UK YouTube video that year
- Edwards was chosen to be the ambassador for the youth charity, NCS/The Prince's Trust in 2013. The charity is run by Prince Charles to help young people to set up their own businesses.
- In 2013, Edwards released an ebook, 'Self Belief: The Vision: How To Be a Success on Your Own Terms'. His book achieved success and was the number 1 bestselling ebook series .
- Edwards was awarded an MBE in the New Years Honours list in 2014 from Queen Elizabeth II, for his work in music and his business, SBTv.
- Edwards also worked to raise awareness surrounding mental health. In March 2017, he made a documentary with *The Guardian* about male suicide, in which he spoke to his childhood friends who suffer with mental health. Later that year, Edwards continued his work and explored mental health in the music industry



Jamal Edwards sadly passed away at just 31 earlier this year. He leaves behind an incredible legacy that has changed so many lives.



Dr Gladys Mae West

Mathematician and inventor of GPS

Whether you are getting driving directions from your phone or tagging the location of an Instagram photo, the use of GPS (Global Positioning System) has become seamlessly integrated into our daily lives. But less ubiquitous is the knowledge that GPS got its start in the mind of an Air Force mathematician named Gladys West.



Katherine Johnson

Mathematician

Creola Katherine Johnson (Died aged 101 in Feb 2020) was an American mathematician whose calculations of orbital mechanics as a NASA employee were critical to the success of the first and subsequent U.S. crewed spaceflights. During her 35-year career at NASA and its predecessor, she earned a reputation for mastering complex manual calculations and helped pioneer the use of computers to perform the tasks. The space agency noted her "historical role as one of the first African-American women to work as a NASA scientist"



Watch this
biographical
film





Virgil Abloh

As the artistic director of Louis Vuitton menswear, Virgil Abloh is one of the most important people in luxury fashion. But it's his own label, Off-White, established in 2012, which has been named 'the hottest fashion brand in the world'.

Before he founded Off-White (and its predecessor Pyrex Vision) Abloh was creative director of Kanye West's creative agency DONDA,

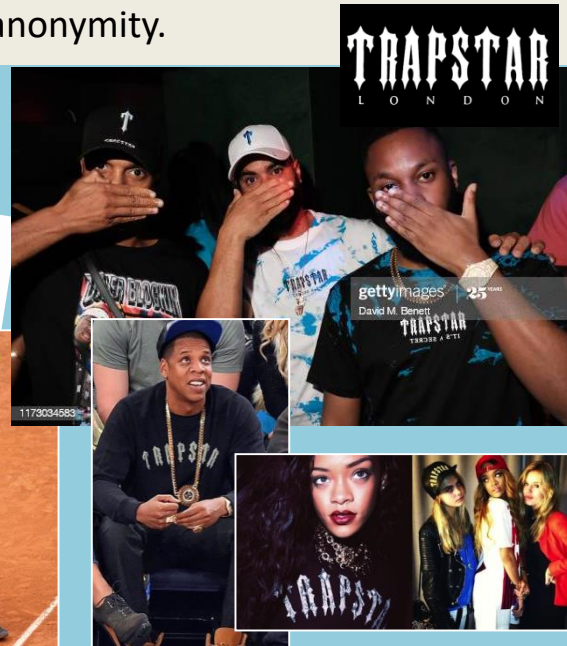


In 2008, three school friends from west London started making their own T-shirts and selling them at Portobello Market.

Now Trapstar is a global fashion brand, worn by stars like Rhianna, Jay-Z and Stormzy.

Trapstar takes its name from Trap music, a subgenre of rap that originated in the southern United States

The label was founded by Mikey, Lee and Will who, despite their success, are trying to maintain a degree of anonymity.



Design Technology & Engineering **Tolu Coker**



This young London-based designer whose clothes have been worn by big hitters like Rihanna, Demi Lovato, Steff London and BurnaBoy, runs a brand that spans from fashion and illustration to films and photography.

There are so many stereotypes and ideas of what "Black culture" is, and I want to shine a light on that. The diaspora community, too. I love those narratives. It always boils down to the wealth of difference in people.' Tolu is also a big believer in making fashion more sustainable – 'and not just the environmental impact but the cultural impact, the wages people are paid, the conditions they work under. I don't think making clothing should be at the expense of other people.' @ToluCoker



Marie Van Brittan Brown

Marie was a nurse – she had a need for security since her husband was often away from home and she lived in a neighborhood with a high crime rate and slow police response.

With her husband she built a security system that was a fixed set of four peep-holes with a camera that would move up and down, thereby allowing her to view and identify people of different heights.

The invention also allowed her to remotely unlatch the door for an expected visitor. They filed for a patent on Aug. 1, 1966 for their “Home Security System Utilizing Television Surveillance” as it was titled.

The application was approved three years later, and opened the gateway to closed-circuit television or CCTV. The system brought her national recognition and honors, including an award from the National Scientists Committee.

It also paved the way for other security systems that use video, push-button triggers, remote-controlled door locks, and alarm devices to contact the police and security companies.

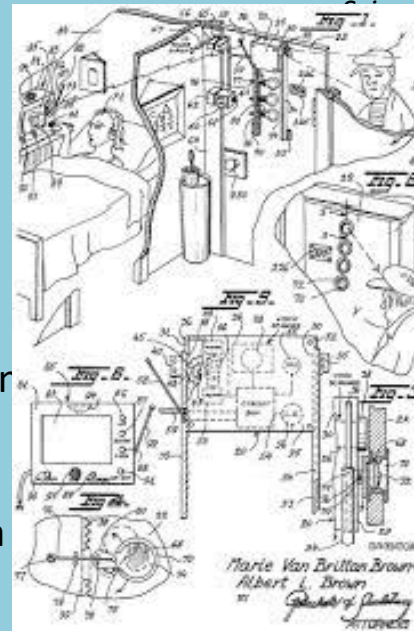


Image: the patent design of the home security system



Q:Where do we use her invention today?

In 2013, Jamie Siminoff, creator and designer of Doorbot referenced this patent to create their device - now known as the Ring





Shirley Ann Jackson

Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson is an American physicist who was also the first black woman to graduate from M.I.T. with a Ph.D.

She's responsible for an impressive number of inventions, particularly within **telecommunications**.

It was her groundbreaking research that enabled the invention of the portable fax, the tone telephone, solar cells, fibre optic cables, and the technology behind caller ID and call waiting.





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfJ82YVCYK4>

Garrett Morgan

Designer and inventor of the safety hood & the electric traffic light system.

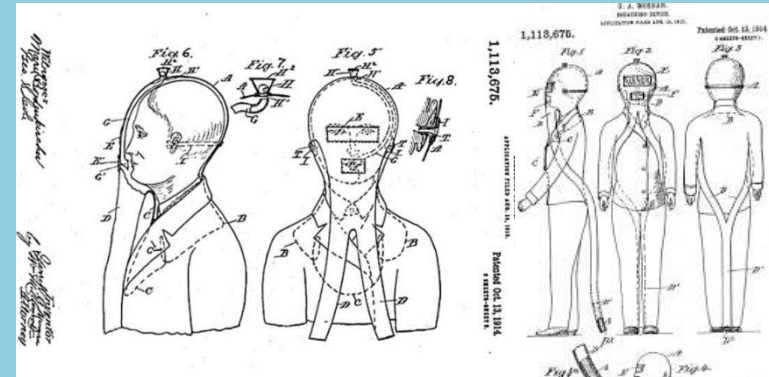
Filed in September 1912, the patent for his "Breathing Device" shows a picture of a hood with a long tube running out of it to the floor. The idea was to provide the firefighter with a means "to supply himself at will with fresh air from near the floor... at the same time forcibly remove smoke or injurious gases from the air tube,".

Later versions would come with a bag worn on the back that supplied up to 20 minutes of air. Today this invention is often called a precursor to the modern gas mask, but it's actually closer to what a modern-day scuba diver wears.

Morgan had troubling selling the potentially life-saving equipment—it seems white fire chiefs didn't want to buy a product made by a black inventor

When asked for advice on selling the hood, J.P. Morgan said to remove the "Garrett A." from the name and call it just the "Morgan Safety Hood." In the other words, he had to remove himself from his own product. This meant hiring white actors to do the selling at firefighter conventions.

Cynical or no, the plan worked. Garrett Morgan sold the hood to fire departments throughout the country and won a contract with the U.S. Navy. By 1917, the year after the Lake Erie Crib Disaster, the hood was standard equipment for the U.S. Army during World War I. "It turned the tide... it made business sense".





Katrina Johnson- Thompson

English athlete primarily known as an elite multi-eventer, both as a heptathlete and an indoor pentathlete.

- She has been World Champion in both disciplines, and a double Commonwealth Games champion in heptathlon for England.
- Broke the British record with 6981 points
- Ranking 6th in the world
- She holds the British high jump records with 1.98 m outdoors (2016) and 1.97 m indoors (2015)
- She retained her heptathlon gold medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games while recovering from Achilles tendon surgery.



[Johnson-Thompson wins heptathlon gold | BBC Sport – YouTube](#)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JafQoOCR1Hg>

Dina Asher –Smith

British Sprinter

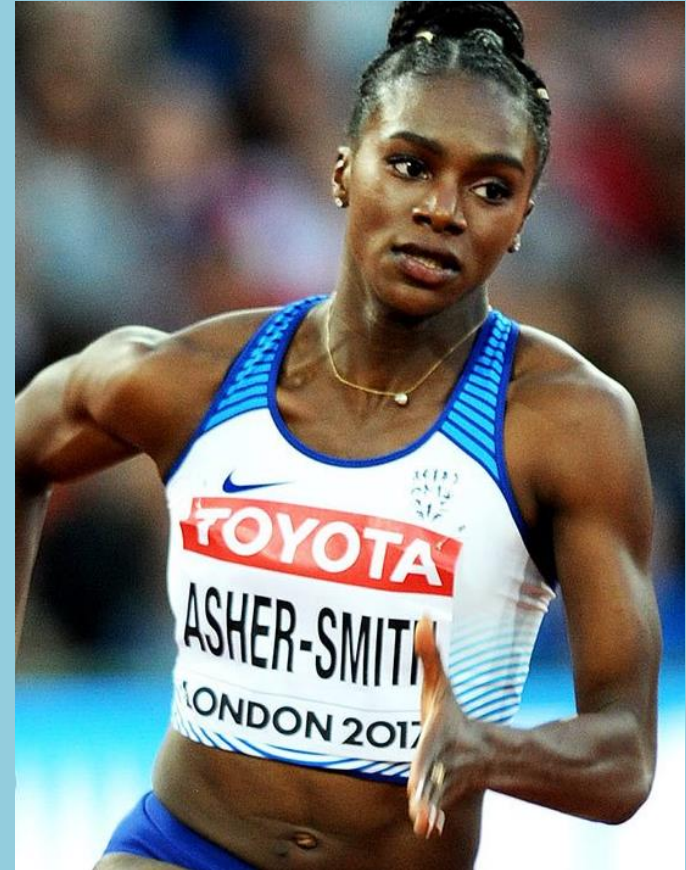
Fastest British woman in recorded history!

2019 WORLD Champion at the age of 23

Only British female to win 3 medals at one championship

Broke British records in both 100m and 200m sprint

Dina Asher-Smith has been listed in the Powerlist as one of the UK's most influential people from African/African Caribbean descent



Q: What do you believe you can achieve by the age 23?



Marcus Rashford - MBE

- The 22-year-old star left home aged 11 to join Manchester United's academy to pursue his football dream
- Note written at time said: 'I want to have a different lifestyle and make my family and others proud of me'
- He is a campaigner against [racism](#), [homelessness](#) and [child hunger](#) in the UK. Rashford has been praised for using his platform to be a political activist and philanthropist to drive societal change.
- Rashford raised £20million during the lockdown for vulnerable children providing over 4million meals as well as supporting NHS and deaf charities
- Significantly, he also forced the government into a u-turn on plans to end free school meal vouchers during the summer holidays.
- He has been awarded many special recognition awards including the pride of Britain.





Lewis Hamilton

- Lewis is a British racing driver currently competing in Formula One for the Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team.
- Hamilton has won a joint-record seven World Drivers' Championship titles (tied with Michael Schumacher), and holds the records for the most wins (103), pole positions (103), and podium finishes (188)
- he is widely regarded as one of the greatest drivers in the history of the sport, and considered by some to be the greatest of all time.
- **Considered to be the first and only black driver in Formula One (2020)**
- In 2008, Hamilton was heckled and otherwise abused during pre-season testing at the Circuit de Catalunya by several Spanish spectators who wore black face paint and black wigs, as well as shirts bearing the words "Hamilton's family"
- At the start of his Formula One career, Hamilton said that he "tried to ignore the fact [he] was the first black guy ever to race in the sport" but later stated that he had since grown to "appreciate the implications", and changed his approach to embrace his position and promote equality within the sport.



"People come up to me from different ethnic backgrounds saying, 'My kid wants to be you one day', and I can assure you that when I started racing, there weren't people from those [ethnic backgrounds]. I take great pride in that."

Hamilton in 2017 commenting on his influence on minority representation in Formula One



Anthony Joshua

WORLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION

- Started boxing aged 18 (only in 2007)
- Trained at Finchley ABC
- In 2010 he earned a place on the GB team
- October 2011 named Amateur Boxer of the Year (40-3 record)
- In 2012 Joshua went to the Olympics as a novice – leaving as the new Olympic Champion.
- AJ turned professional in 2013 and currently holds four of the five heavyweight belts/titles
- As of October 2021, Joshua is ranked as the world's third-best active heavyweight by [BoxRec](#)
- During 2020 AJ attended protest in his hometown of Watford pleading for athletes to unify to end Racism and racial inequality around the world.



"I think an individual trying to make a change is a lot more difficult than a union of people trying. And I think the images that we need to represent are important."



John Boyega

John Boyega is hailed a 'hero' by Star Wars producer LucasFilm following his impassioned speech at the Black Lives Matter demonstration in London's Hyde Park

- The actor, 28, was among thousands who gathered in the park in solidarity with similar protests and marches taking place across the United States
- In his speech, John referenced the killings of unarmed black people in America as well as the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence in London in 1993
- He warned that his activism could damage his career - but he has since been inundated with support from the movie industry

In June, Boyega became a hero for racial injustice when he gave the speech of a lifetime at a Black Lives Matter rally in Hyde Park. "I need you guys to understand how painful this sh** is," he told the crowd of raised fists, a symbol of the movement, after being handed a megaphone at a moment's notice. "I don't know if I'm going to have a career after this, but f*** that," he added. "This is so vital."

Acting/Drama/ Public speaking/ Writing/ Producer





Magid Magid

The first ethnic Somali and youngest councilor to hold the role as Lord Mayor of Sheffield

Born in Somaliland, an autonomous region of Somalia, the aquatic zoology graduate entered local politics as a councillor because he was **“tired of complaining and had enough of asking the wrong people to do the right thing.”**

“I thought, I should get more involved in my community, it wasn’t really about politics.”

It was European politics and the rise of UKIP during the 2014 elections that pushed him to stand.

“Seeing rhetoric that was pushing fear, hate and division, I remember telling myself that if I can at least make my small part of the world, my community, my Sheffield, that bit better, then I’m making a positive contribution.”

After a couple of years working as a local representative, he successfully stood as Lord Mayor for Sheffield.



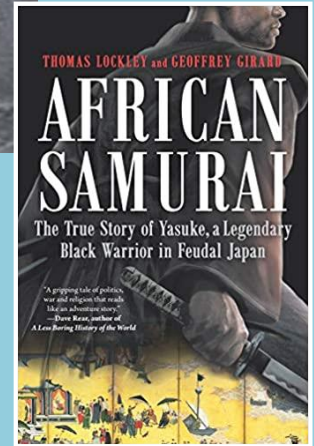
He immediately made an impact on social media, dispensing with the traditional ermine, and coming across more like a hip-hop star, wearing his mayor’s gold chain with his trademark reverse baseball cap and green Doc Marten boots.

During his year as a mayor, he gained over 90,000 followers on Twitter, while pushing the contentious agenda of championing the positive contribution to society of immigrants and refugees.



Yasuke

- Only African Samurai & first foreign-born man to achieve the status of a samurai warrior
- Potentially the first black man to step in Japan.
- His arrival caused uproar but got the attention of the Warlord Oda Nobunaga
- Inspired Anime AFRO SAMURAI
- Hollywood was making a movie – but unfortunately Chadwick Boseman was supposed to play the role- R.I.P





Diane Abbot

- In 1987, Diane Abbott made history by becoming the first black woman ever to be elected to Parliament.
- Her career in politics began in 1982, when she was elected to Westminster City Council, before being voted into the House of Commons five years later.
- It made her part of the first group of black and Asian people to sit in Parliament for almost a century - but back then, only men got the jobs.
- She also started the London Schools and the Black Child programme, which aims to help black children to do well in school.
- She still serves in Parliament to this day as one of the main politicians in the Labour party.





11th November- Remembrance Day. Lets not forget the many Black people that go unmentioned who played a massive role in both WW1 and WW2.



Around 600 Caribbean woman were recruited during WW2 to join the Auxiliary Territorial Service. Around 80- Caribbean women joined the WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Air Force)



Bristol, WW2



RAF – WW2