

BLACK HISTORY NEWSLETTER

WHAT IS BLACK HISTORY?

- Black history is a celebration of the achievements and contributions of those with African or Caribbean heritage.
- Often black history is associated with Black History Month, which is celebrated annually in the month of October.
- However, the end of October should not signify the end of black history, which needs to be recognised every day of the year.
- Although legislation has been passed to aid the fight for equality, black people still face racism and inequality in their daily lives.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Black history is significant as embracing black culture empowers and encourages members of this community to retain their traditions.
- Educating people to respect the history and culture of black people will lead to a more tolerant and highly diverse society.
- Events such as Africa Oyé, Notting Hill Carnival, and Wireless Festival serve as ways for groups of people to join together and appreciate cultural differences.

CULTURAL APPROPRIATION VS. CULTURAL APPRECIATION?

- Cultural appropriation is when someone takes elements of one culture such as clothing or hairstyles and uses them for their own personal interest.
- Often, it is not made clear where these customs, practices, or ideas originate from or how important they are. This can offend people as they feel like their culture is not being respected.
- For example, in 2018 Kim Kardashian shared pictures of herself wearing blonde Fulani braids, however, she incorrectly called them "Bo Derek" braids.
- This frustrated many people in the black community as protective hairstyles such as braids are deemed 'stylish' and 'cool' when people like Kim Kardashian wear them, but 'unprofessional' and 'inappropriate' when black females wear them.
- On the other hand, cultural appreciation is when someone earnestly seeks to educate themselves about another culture in an attempt to honour the culture and its people.

HOW CAN YOU AVOID CULTURAL APPROPRIATION?

- Educate yourself – use online resources and take the time to thoroughly research and understand different cultures.
- Give credit where credit is due – it is important to recognise where customs, traditions, or ideas originate from rather than falsely claiming them to be your own ideas.
- Learn from your mistakes – you may have culturally appropriated in the past, however educating yourself, appreciating other cultures, and learning to respect these practices are ways for you to avoid this happening again.
- Ask yourself the following questions:
 - Does this custom or idea belong to a certain ethnic, racial or cultural group?
 - Is there a chance that doing this will make this group of people angry, offended or frustrated?

HISTORY FUN FACT:

Dr Charles Drew was an African American surgeon and scientist in the early 1900s who is often called the 'Father of Blood Banking'. This is due to his groundbreaking discoveries in the storage and processing of blood for transfusions!

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUPPORT AND HONOUR BLACK HISTORY?

- Educate yourself and others – ignorance leads to prejudice and education is a powerful tool in leading to change.
- Raise awareness – signing petitions for important causes, sharing articles with your friends and family, and donating to organisations such as the Anthony Walker Foundation all help to raise awareness.
- Speak out – silence is no longer an option and the issue of racism is becoming more apparent in the media, so use your voice and platform to shut down racism.

To have your ideas included in upcoming newsletters, please send an email to: pedroj15@broughtonhall.com