

Black History Month

What do you know about Black History Month? Read the article to find out about this very special month.

Instructions

Do the preparation exercise first. Then read the article and do the other exercises.

Preparation

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary	Definition
1. ...g... an achievement	a. a person in control of a group, country or situation
2. a historian	b. notice, thought or interest
3. a leader	c. treating someone unfairly because of the colour of their skin and/or their religious beliefs
4. attention	d. someone who writes about or studies history
5. a contribution	e. the rights that every person in a society has, for example to be treated equally whatever their sex, race or religion
6. racism	f. something you do to help make something successful
7. to appreciate something	g. something very good and difficult that you have succeeded in doing
8. civil rights	h. to recognise that something is good and valuable

Black History Month

Black History Month is a time to celebrate the achievements made by black people and to learn about black history.

When is Black History Month?

In the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands, Black History Month is in October, but in the United States, Canada and Germany, Black History Month is celebrated in February.

How did Black History Month start?

In 1926, in the USA, a black historian called Carter G Woodson started a special week to celebrate the contribution of black Americans to the United States. The month of February officially became Black History Month in the USA in 1976. In the UK, the month of October became Black History Month in 1987.

Why do we need Black History Month?

In school, we learn about important people like leaders, scientists, writers and artists. Often, the stories of important black people don't get as much attention. Black History Month helps us learn about the contributions and achievements that black people have made in the past.

In every part of history, black people have been treated badly because of the colour of their skin. This is called racism. Black History Month is a time to understand why it's important to treat everybody kindly, fairly and with respect.

What do people do during Black History Month?

During this special month, schoolchildren do many different activities to help them understand and appreciate black history and culture. For example, they read books and learn stories about black people who have done amazing things in the past, like fighting for civil rights. Other activities include things like listening to music, watching plays or films, looking at art or reading poems that come from black cultures.

Is one month enough to talk about black history?

Black History Month helps us celebrate the achievements of black people, but there is a lot to learn, and this shouldn't be the only time of year that we talk about black history. Black history is an important part of world history, and we need to know about black history to understand today's world and fight racism.

Tasks

Task 1

Circle the best answer.

1. Black History Month is celebrated in the UK in
 - a. October
 - b. November
 - c. December
2. Carter G Woodson was an important black in the USA.
 - a. president
 - b. historian
 - c. artist
3. He started a special week to celebrate the contribution of black Americans in
 - a. 1926
 - b. 1956
 - c. 1976
4. became Black History Month in the USA in 1976.
 - a. January
 - b. February
 - c. March
5. In the UK, Black History Month started in
 - a. 1977
 - b. 1987
 - c. 2007
6. Black History Month celebrates the of black people.
 - a. birthdays
 - b. parties
 - c. achievements

Task 2

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

music	leaders	racism	understand
poems	civil rights	films	year

1. It's important to learn about black leaders, scientists, writers and artists.
2. Schoolchildren do activities that help them black history.
3. They learn about black people who have done amazing things, like fighting for
4. They listen to, watch or read from black cultures.
5. We should talk about black history all, not just in Black History Month.
6. Understanding black history helps us fight against

Write and draw

What do you learn about in your history lessons in school? Write about it and draw a picture.

Answers

Preparation task

1. g
2. d
3. a
4. b
5. f
6. c
7. h
8. e

Task 1

1. October
2. historian
3. 1926
4. February
5. 1987
6. achievements

Task 2

1. leaders
2. understand
3. civil rights
4. music, films, poems
5. year
6. racism