

Empire Windrush: The Notting Hill Carnival

What do the sources reveal about the significance of the Notting Hill Carnival and why it began?

Key Stage 2 | Resource Pack

Time periods covered:

- Post-war 1945 - present



FPG/Archive Photos/Getty Images



Charles Bowman/Getty Images

Teacher's Notes

Focus

To encourage pupils to use original sources to find out about the significance of the Notting Hill Carnival and why it began. It is important that teachers ensure that pupils understand these terms: The Colour Bar, discrimination, legislation, immigrant, race-relations.

The documents used in these lessons cover sensitive subjects and may include language and concepts that are entirely unacceptable and inappropriate today. We suggest that teachers look at the material carefully before introducing to pupils. It would be helpful to discuss the language and ideas contained in a source beforehand.

All sources could be shown on a whiteboard/ or as a printed copy. It is suggested that teachers read text-based sources together with the pupils. This lesson also contains two photographs. Therefore, it provides teachers with the opportunity to explore photographs as sources too. What message are they trying to convey? Why were they taken? for example. Teachers may wish to break the written documents into smaller extracts if they appear too long or create additional simplified transcripts. All documents include transcripts with information in square brackets to help. Teachers may wish to divide their class into small groups/pairs. Print the questions on separate cards. Ask the pupils to discuss their answers and report back to the class using the whiteboard to display the source.

Suitable for:

KS2

Time period:

Post-war 1945 - present

Connections to the Curriculum:

Events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally.

Teacher's Notes

Part 1 Starter activity:

What is the Notting Hill Carnival?

Pupils engage with the starter source, a contemporary photograph of the Notting Hill Carnival with prompt questions for discussion.

Part 2: Source Exploration

Building on this approach, the pupils study three further sources which encourage them to think about why the Notting Hill Carnival was started and why it is still such an important event today. They look at the passenger list from Empire Windrush to learn about Sam Beaver King, one of the early founders of the Notting Hill Carnival and West Indian Gazette. Pupils then go on to learn about Claudia Jones. Use the photograph of Claudia Jones (founder and editor of 'The West Indian Gazette and Afro-Caribbean News' and founder of the indoor Caribbean Carnival which is seen as the beginnings of the Notting Hill Carnival) as a 'Mystery Document' with the class. Ask pupils to look at the photograph and then answer the questions. They can then go on to study the Caribbean Carnival Souvenir Programme from 1960, available at the British Library: [Claudia Jones' Caribbean Carnival Souvenir programme, 1960 | The British Library \(bl.uk\)](#). This reveals more about the event and its significance. This source can also be used to emphasise the importance of different archives and collections for historians.

Plenary:

The plenary asks pupils to think about what they have learned from the sources about the Notting Hill Carnival and why it began. Use the background notes to help provide more context as appropriate. Teachers can also ask pupils to look at the photographs used in the blog written by Principal Records Specialist on Diverse Histories, Vicky Iglkowski-Broad on The National Archives website: [Carnival: bringing a 'little bit of heaven' to Notting Hill – The National Archives blog](#).

There is also further guidance for teachers working with photographs as historical sources at: [Uncovering the past – The National Archives](#)

Part 3: Three suggested creative activities:

1. Design a poster to promote the Notting Hill Carnival today. Include information about its beginnings and why it's such an important event for people.
2. Work in pairs/small groups to research and design your own illustrated Fact File about Claudia Jones and her role in establishing the Notting Hill Carnival.
3. Ask the class to create a mini-exhibition looking at the contribution made by migrants from the new Commonwealth countries to Britain (e.g. contributions to the NHS, British transport, art, music, politics.) This could include information about individuals such as Sam King and Mona Baptiste.

Teachers may prefer to use any of the original sources here to create their own resources and activities or adapt the activities provided here for use in their schemes of work.

Introduction

Late 1950s Britain had a growing number of towns and cities that were racially diverse. Notting Hill had become home to lots of people from the Caribbean who had arrived on Windrush and the accompanying ships.

One of these people was Sam Beaver King. He had served for the RAF during the Second World War and after arriving in Britain on the Empire Windrush, he went on to work for the Post Office for over 30 years. He also supported the first Caribbean carnival set up by Claudia Jones in 1959 and went on to become the first black Mayor of Southwark, London in 1983. Sam King co-founded The Windrush Foundation and was awarded an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) in 1998, the year of the 50th anniversary of Windrush.

Yet this multiculturalism was also accompanied by racial tension and the unfair treatment of black people. For example, some white people refused to rent properties to non-white tenants and black people were also sometimes refused service in restaurants and shops. In Notting Hill and the East End of London, there were groups of people who supported far-right policies such as Oswald Moseley's Union Party, and who attacked and harassed their black neighbours.

In 1958 both the Nottingham Race Riots and the Notting Hill riots took place, as violent fights broke out between white and black people. Amid this hostile atmosphere, Trinidadian human rights activist Claudia Jones organised an indoor Caribbean carnival in Notting Hill on 30th January 1959. She wanted to hold an event that brought people together and celebrated Caribbean culture. This is seen as the start of the Notting Hill Carnival.

Claudia Jones was also the founder and editor of 'The West Indian Gazette and Afro-Caribbean News'. This was viewed as Britain's first major Black newspaper. Around the same time, political movements, such as the Coloured Peoples Progressive Association and the Association of Advancement of Coloured People, were also established.

In Notting Hill the following year, Kelso Cochrane, a carpenter who had emigrated to Britain from Antigua, was murdered. He had been attacked by a group of white men in Notting Hill, whilst walking home just after midnight. This was a racist murder and not an attempted robbery as claimed by the Police at the time. His death heightened the growing racial tensions that existed.

In 1976 riots occurred at the Notting Hill Carnival when Police and carnival goers clashed. This was against a backdrop of anger surrounding police use of the SUS law. There has been much distrust by carnival goers over time, about the Police's role and presence at the carnival.

Tasks

Part 1

Starter Source 1: Photograph of Notting Hill Carnival. Source: Charles Bowman/ Getty Images

- What can you see?
- What type of event do you think it shows? Why?
- What does this photograph tell us about the significance of this event?

Part 2

How can we use these 3 documents to find out more about the significance of the Notting Hill Carnival and why it began?

Source 1: Extract from the passenger list of the Empire Windrush, Catalogue Ref: BT 26/1237.

This is from one of the pages from the Board of Trade passenger list of the Empire Windrush, one of the ships that brought people from the Caribbean to the UK and arrived at Tilbury on 21st June 1948.

- What can you see in this source? Look at the layout (how the information is set out on the page) and pick out things that you notice. Based on your observations, what type of source do you think it might be?
- What does it reveal about Sam Beaver King?
- What can it tell us about the other people listed?
- What other sources could help us to find out more about Sam Beaver King?

Source 2a: Photograph of Claudia Jones, founder and editor of 'The West Indian Gazette and Afro-Caribbean News' and founder of the indoor Caribbean Carnival which is seen as the beginnings of the Notting Hill Carnival). Source: Getty images.

- What can you see in the photograph?
- What do you think the woman is doing?
- Are there any clues to suggest what type of job she has?
- Can you spot the name of the newspaper on her desk?
- Discuss why you think this newspaper was important for the Caribbean community?

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Source 2b: Front cover of the Caribbean Carnival Souvenir programme, dated 1960.

Please access the image online, as the original of this document is kept in The British Library: [Claudia Jones' Caribbean Carnival Souvenir programme, 1960 | The British Library \(bl.uk\)](#)

- What can you see? [Clue: think about illustrations, brief text and a title]
- What does the title at the top say?
- What type of source is this?
- Why do you think it has been produced?
- Why have the BBC been mentioned in this source?
- What is the BBC planning to do and what does this reveal about the importance of the event?

Source 2c: Programme of events for the Caribbean Carnival, page 4 of the online record.

Please access image at: [Claudia Jones' Caribbean Carnival Souvenir programme, 1960 | The British Library \(bl.uk\)](#)

- Can you find three different types of entertainment happening at the Carnival?
- What do you think people watching these events would feel?
- What does this programme show about the contribution made by Caribbean immigrants to Britain?

Plenary

Discussion time: Think again about all the sources you've looked at in parts 1 & 2, and consider answers to the following questions:

- Why do you think that the Notting Hill Carnival was started? How did it help people living in this part of London?
- How do you know that the Notting Hill Carnival is still important today? Why do you think this is?

You could also look at the blog written by Principal Records Specialist on Diverse Histories Victoria Iglkowski-Broad on The National Archives website: [Carnival: bringing a 'little bit of heaven' to Notting Hill - The National Archives blog](#)

- What more can you learn about the Notting Hill Carnival from the photographs?

Creative Activities

1. Poster activity

- Ask pupils to design a poster to promote the Notting Hill Carnival today. Include information

Tasks

about its beginnings and why it's such an important event for people.

2. Fact-file

- Pupils can work in pairs/small groups to research and design their own illustrated Fact File about Claudia Jones and her role in establishing the Notting Hill Carnival.

3. Mini-exhibition

- Ask the class to create a mini-exhibition looking at the contribution made by migrants from the new Commonwealth countries to Britain (e.g. contributions to the NHS, British transport, art, music, politics.) This could include information about individuals such as Sam King and Mona Baptiste.

Starter Source 1: Photograph of the Notting Hill Carnival

Source: Charles Brown / Getty Images



Source 2a: Photograph of Claudia Jones

Source: FPG / Archive Photos / Getty Images



Transcript: Source 2b: Front cover of the Caribbean Carnival Souvenir programme, dated 1960.

Find the image online here:

<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/claudia-jones-caribbean-carnival-souvenir-programme-1960>

Caribbean Carnival Souvenir, 1960

Televised by B.B.C Television

Organised by the West Indian Gazette

Transcript: Source 2c: Programme of events for the Caribbean Carnival

Find the image online here:

<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/claudia-jones-caribbean-carnival-souvenir-programme-1960>

Programme

<p>West Indian Gazette Caribbean Carnival, 1960</p> <p>The Cabaret Arranged by Stanley Jack</p> <p>Televised by B.B.C. Saturday February 6th, 1960 from Seymour Hall, London</p> <p>Outside Broadcast Commentator, Ernest Eytle</p> <p>Director B.B.C. Outside Broadcast Cameras, Dennis Monger</p> <p>Guest of Honour:</p> <p>His Worship the Mayor of St. Marylebone and the Mayoress</p> <p>Councillor Lt. Colonel H.C.S. Thomson O.B.E. and Mrs.Thomson</p> <p>Welcome to Guests:</p> <p>Miss. Claudia Jones, Editor, West Indian Gazette</p> <p>CARNIVAL QUEEN CONTEST FINALS</p> <p>Narration: Miss Sylvia Wynter</p>	<p>CABARET</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maria Kamara – Fire Dancer 2. Rupert Nurse & His Orchestra <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Sailors: Vernon Jack and Mike Goddard 3. Russ Henderson Steel Band 4. Tropicana Steel Band 5. Carnival Fiesta: Alistair Bain and his Caribbean Dance Troupe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrine Skinner, Jeff Henry, Joan Gray, Vida Veghanar and Shirley Neptune 6. The New World Singers: under the direction of Parry Jones 7. Cy Grant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chorus: Accompanying Cy Grant: Katherine Pyne, Maureen Usden, and Sally Lubeck. Bongo Player: Ivan Chinn 8. Elaine Delmar 9. Lord Kitchener 10. Limbo Dancers Featuring Patsy Fleming 11. Crowning of Carnival Queen by Mr.Garnet Gordon. Q.C., C.B.E. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras. <p>Musical Score by Rupert Nurse</p>
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Why do our hyperlinks come with footnotes?

Our resources are designed to be printed and used in classrooms, which means hyperlinks aren't always accessible digitally. We include the full link at the bottom of the page so that you can type in the address without distracting from the main text of the lesson materials.

Did you know?

The National Archives Education Service also offers free workshops onsite in Kew and online in your classroom.

Our [Onsite Workshops](#) are available for free here at The National Archives and allow students to experience genuine original documents reflecting over 1000 years of history. From Elizabeth I's signature to the telegrams of the sinking Titanic, students love the wow-factor of being able to see real history on the desk in front of them.

Our [Online Workshops](#) allow our Education Officers to teach through your projector, leading discussions and guiding students through activities based around original documents. All you need is a computer with a projector, webcam and microphone. We'll arrange a test call before your session to check the tech is working.

Find out more:

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