

Black History Month 2024: Celebrating Changemakers



Why is Black History Month Important? Here's what the Ratton BAME group said:

- In the past, black people suffered higher levels of racism and this helps to reduce it.
- It's an opportunity to celebrate and feel special.
- We get to celebrate change.
- Celebrates every black person and the challenges they've been through

What does it take to make a change? What does it take to be 'first'?

In this clip from 'Hidden Figures', we see Mary Jackson, a mathematician at NASA apply to a judge.

In many parts of America in the early 1960s, education was segregated, and white students had more opportunities than black students.

Jackson wants to attend a course at a white school so that she can become an engineer at NASA.



We're going to look at three changemakers.

- All of them were 'first' at something
- All of them did it by staying true to themselves and their culture.



Olaudah Equiano was an enslaved man who managed, through various side hustles, to raise enough money to buy his freedom.



Equiano's 'first' was that he wrote his autobiography. This autobiography became the first 'slave narrative' to be internationally published and widely read. This helped to bring about the abolition of slavery.

He stayed true to his culture by rejecting his 'slave name' of Gustavus Vassa and writing under an African name. He described the cultures of West Africa to a European audience who knew little about them.

Desmond Dekker (who you heard on your way in) was born in Jamaica and settled in Britain. During the 20th century, many people from the Caribbean came to live in the UK. This increased after WWII when the British government invited Caribbean migrants to help rebuild after WWII.



Dekker's 'first' was that he was the first reggae artist to have Number 1 single in the UK. He topped the charts in 1969 with his song 'Israelites'.

He stayed true to his culture by singing a Jamaican form of music (reggae) in Jamaican Patois. Jamaican Patois is an English-based creole language with many influences like West African languages, Spanish and Portuguese.

Dianne Abbot was born to a Jamaican-British family in 1953. She was academically successful and attended Cambridge University. When she was younger, she worked as a journalist and TV reporter.



Abbott's 'first' was that she was Britain's first black female MP, first elected to parliament in 1987. She remains Britain's longest serving black MP.

She stayed true to her culture by representing the community she came from. About half of the people living in her constituency of Hackney North and Stoke Newington are from a minority ethnicity. It is important to them that they are represented by someone who can relate to their experiences.

All of you might aspire to be changemakers. Some of you might even be the ‘first’ to do something. Some of you might find yourself in a position of privilege, where you can enable changemakers. I hope you can all take inspiration from celebrating these amazing black changemakers.



CELEBRATING  YEARS OF WEAR RED DAY

Every heart and every mind that we change changes at least one life but has the capacity to change hundreds, if not thousands of others. Be a proud anti-racist. Be the difference. Join us.

Wear **Red**

To show your support wear a splash of red on Friday - You could wear: socks, a bow, a badge, a scarf, a red card in your blazer pocket.

**CHANGE
HEARTS
CHANGE
MINDS
CHANGE
LIVES**



I'M SUPPORTING



**FRIDAY 18TH
OCTOBER 2024**

#WRD24 SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD