

# Black History Month

Black History Month happens every year in October in the UK and in February in America. It is a month when many people can learn more about what happened in the past to black people and what black people have done through history that affects our lives today.

## When Did It Start and Why?

It was started in 1926 by an African-American man called Carter G. Woodson, who was a writer and history expert. He is now widely known as 'The Father of Black History' because he started Black History Month. He knew that many history books have been written to only include what white people had done and he wanted people to know what black people had done in history too. Many people believed this was important for black people so they know their own history and it was also important to white people to know that black people had also done some amazing things in the past.

## What Happens During Black History Month?

In the UK in October, you might see special programmes or reports about black history and the achievements of black people on the television, radio, within newspapers and on the Internet. You might also see events happening in your local area such as concerts, films or celebrations. At school, you might have special lessons on famous black people or learn more about slavery or black musicians, athletes or actors from the past.

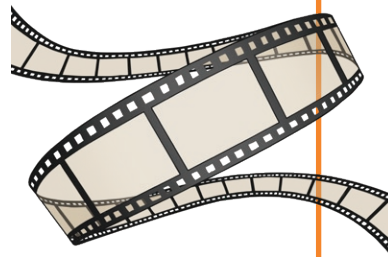


## Why Is It Still Important?

Even though a lot has been done to change many attitudes of society, a number of people think that there is still a way to go to change the views of some people. This is getting better, but just think that in the UK, we have still never had a black prime minister. Also, in the 2016 Rio Olympics, black athletes were still making history with people like Simone Manuel becoming the first ever female black swimmer to win a gold medal. And just how many black super heroes can you name – are things really equal?

### Black History Month Facts:

- America chose February to have Black History Month because this was the birthday month of President Abraham Lincoln and also Frederick Douglass as many people believe they did important things for black people in America.
- Barack Obama was America's first black president.
- Britain banned slavery in 1833 and Mauritania in Africa was the last country to ban slavery in 1981.
- Unlike what you see in films, a quarter of cowboys were black.
- Hattie McDaniel was the first black woman to win an Oscar (in 1940) but she wasn't even allowed to go to the film premiere of her film, *Gone with the Wind*, because she was black.
- British black comedian Lenny Henry was a huge influence in promoting comedy by black comedians – something that was unheard of before him.
- Lewis Hamilton, a British black Formula One driver, is the most successful British F1 driver in history.



# Black History Month Questions

1. In what month does Black History Month happen in America?

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2. What did Carter G. Woodson do?

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3. In the third paragraph the author has used the word **famous**, write a synonym for this word.

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4. In what year did Britain ban slavery?

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5. Find **three** conjunctions in the text.

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6. Find the name of the first black American president.

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7. Why is Simone Manuel famous?

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8. What was Hattie McDaniel the first black woman to do?

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9. Write down **one** fact from the text that you have learnt

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10. Has anything in this fact file made you think? If so, explain your thoughts.

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# Black History Month Answers

1. In what month does Black History Month happen in America?

**Black History Month happens in February in America.**

2. What did Carter G. Woodson do?

**Carter G. Woodson started Black History Month (as well as being a writer and history expert).**

3. In the third paragraph the author has used the word **famous** – write a synonym for this word.

**A synonym for 'famous' would be 'well known' (also accept other correct examples including: popular, famed, prominent, celebrated, etc.)**

4. In what year did Britain ban slavery?

**Britain banned slavery in 1833.**

5. Find **three** conjunctions in the text.

**The conjunctions in the Fact File are: because, and, but, when, even though, etc.**

6. Find the name of the first black American president.

**Barak Obama was the first black American president.**

7. Why is Simone Manuel famous?

**Simone Manuel was the first black woman to win a gold swimming medal at the Olympic Games at Rio 2016.**

8. What was Hattie McDaniel the first black woman to do?

**Hattie McDaniel was the first black woman to win an Oscar for her acting.**

9. Write down **one** fact from the text that you have learnt.

**(Accept any fact from the text – not opinion)**

**May include:**

- **Black History Month is in October in the UK**
- **Black History Month is in February in the USA**
- **Black History Month started in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson**
- **The 2016 Olympics were in Rio**
- **Simone Manuel becoming the first ever female black swimmer to win a gold medal.**

10. Has anything in this fact file made you think? If so, explain your thoughts.

**Open-ended for discussion but any opinions must have reasons or evidence from the text to justify them.**

# Black History Month

Black History Month happens every year in October in the UK and in February in America. It is a month when many people can learn more about what happened in the past to black people and what black people have done through history that affects our lives today.

## When Did It Start and Why?

It was started in 1926 by an African-American man called Carter G. Woodson, who was the historian and writer widely known as 'The Father of Black History'. He knew that many history books had been written to only include what white people had done and he wanted people to be more aware of what black people had done in the past. Many people believed this was important for black people as they needed to know their own history and it was also important to white people to know that black people had also done some amazing things in history.

## What Happens During Black History Month?

In the UK in October, you might see much more about black history and the achievements of black people on the television, radio, within newspapers and on the Internet. You may also see events happening in your local area such as concerts, films, talks or celebrations. Many schools and colleges may also have special lessons on black history during the month.

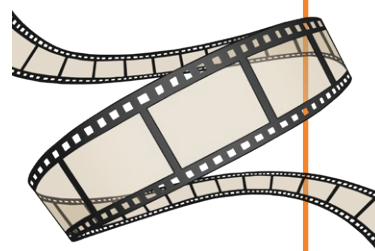


## Why Is It Still Important?

Even though a lot has been done to change many attitudes of society, a number of people think that there is still a way to go to have total equality for black and white people all over the globe. This is still improving but just think that in the UK, we have still never had a black prime minister. Also, in the 2016 Rio Olympics, black athletes were still making history with people like Simone Manuel becoming the first ever female black swimmer to win a gold medal. And just how many black super heroes can you name – is there true equality in society?

### Black History Month Facts:

- In the USA, Black History Month is celebrated in February because this was the birthday month of President Abraham Lincoln and also Frederick Douglass, both of whom are very important people in black history.
- Barack Obama was America's first black president.
- The Quakers (a religious society) first protested against slavery in 1688. Britain banned slavery in 1833 and Mauritania in Africa was the last country to ban slavery in 1981.
- Unlike what the movies show, 1 in 4 cowboys were black.
- Hattie McDaniel was the first black woman to win an Oscar (in 1940) but she wasn't even allowed to go to the film premiere of her film, *Gone with the Wind*, because she was black.
- British black comedian Lenny Henry was a huge influence in promoting comedy by black comedians – something that was unheard of before him.
- In 2015, Lewis Hamilton, a British black Formula One driver, became the most successful British F1 driver in history.



# Black History Month Questions

1. In the second paragraph, what does the word **historian** mean?

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2. Why is Carter G. Woodson widely known as **The Father of Black History**?

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3. Who are the Quakers?

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4. The author has used the word **protested**, write **one** synonym for this word.

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5. What was Lenny Henry famous for?

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6. What is the name of the punctuation mark used to link the words **African** and **American** and why is it used?

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7. Which **two** American presidents are mentioned in this text?

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8. For which film did Hattie McDaniel win her Oscar?

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9. Write down **two** facts from the text that you have learnt.

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10. Has anything in this fact file made you think? If so, explain your thoughts.

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# Black History Month Answers

1. In the second paragraph, what does the word **historian** mean?

**The word 'historian' means a person who studies history/ a history expert.**

2. Why is Carter G. Woodson known as **The Father of Black History**?

**Carter G. Woodson is known as 'The Father of Black History' because he started Black History Month. He was a historian, who knew a lot about black history and wanted to make people more aware of the achievements of black people in the past.**

3. Who are the Quakers?

**The Quakers are a religious society that protested against slavery.**

4. The author has used the word **protested**, write **one** synonym for this word.

**A synonym of protested would be 'demonstrated' (other examples could include: fought/opposed/objected/ marched against, etc.)**

5. What was Lenny Henry famous for?

**Lenny Henry was a huge influence in promoting comedy by black comedians – something that was unheard of before him.**

6. What is the name of the punctuation mark used to link the words **African** and **American**?

**The punctuation mark used to link the two words 'African' and 'American' is called a hyphen. This creates a compound adjective.**

7. Which **two** American presidents are mentioned in this text?

**Barak Obama and Abraham Lincoln are the two American presidents mentioned in this text.**

8. For which film did Hattie McDaniel win her Oscar?

**Hattie McDaniel won her Oscar for her role in 'Gone with the Wind'.**

9. Write down **two** facts from the text that you have learnt.

**(Accept any two facts from the text – not opinions)**

**May include:**

- **Black History Month is in October in the UK**
- **Black History Month is in February in the USA**
- **Black History Month started in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson**
- **The 2016 Olympics were in Rio**
- **Simone Manuel became the first ever female black swimmer to win a gold medal.**

10. Has anything in this fact file made you think? If so, explain your thoughts.

**Open-ended for discussion but any opinions must have reasons or evidence from the text to justify them.**



# Black History Month

Black History Month occurs annually in October in the UK and in February in America. It is a month when many people are made more aware of black history.

## When Did It Start and Why?

It was started in 1926 by the African-American Carter G. Woodson, who was the historian and writer widely known as 'The Father of Black History'. He knew that the achievements of black people had often been omitted from the history books and he wanted people to be more aware of what black people had done through time. Many people believe this was very important for black people as they needed to know their own history, and it was also important for white people to know that black people had done some amazing things. He believed strongly that the history books should show a more accurate representation of what actually happened in the past.

## What Happens During Black History Month?

In the UK during October, you will probably see much more about black history and the achievements of black people through documentaries and films on the television, radio programmes, newspaper articles and the Internet. You may also see some events happening in your local area such as concerts, films, talks or celebrations. Many schools and colleges may have special, themed lessons on elements of black history during the month.

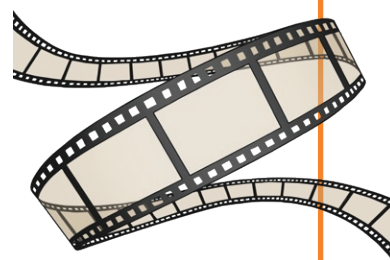


## Why Is It Still Important?

Even though a lot has been achieved so far to change many attitudes of society, a number of people believe that there is still a way to go to have total equality all over the globe. Things are changing for the better all the time but just think that in the UK, we still have never had a black prime minister. Also, in the 2016 Rio Olympics, black athletes were still making history with people like Simone Manuel becoming the first ever female black swimmer to win a gold medal. And just how many black super heroes can you name – is there true equality in society?

### Black History Month Facts:

- The USA celebrate Black History Month in February as this includes the birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and also Frederick Douglass, both of whom made significant contributions to black history in the past.
- Barack Obama was America's first black president.
- A group, who were called The Quakers, first protested against slavery in 1688. Britain banned slavery in 1833 and Mauritania in Africa was the last country to ban slavery in 1981.
- Despite what the movies depict, it is believed that 1 in 4 cowboys were black.
- Hattie McDaniel was the first black woman to win an Oscar (for best supporting actress in 1940) but amazingly wasn't even allowed to go to the film premiere of her film, 'Gone with the Wind', because she was black.
- British black comedian Lenny Henry was a huge influence in promoting comedy by black comedians – something that was unheard of before him.
- In 2015, Lewis Hamilton, a British black Formula One driver, became the most successful British F1 driver in history.



# Black History Month Questions

1. In the first paragraph, what does the word '**annually**' mean?  

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2. Why is Carter G. Woodson known as **The Father of Black History**?  

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3. In the fact file the author has used the word **depict**, write **one** synonym for this word.  

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4. In the fact file the author has used the word **omitted** – write **one** antonym for this word.  

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5. How many years was it from the time the Quakers first protested about slavery to when it was finally banned worldwide?  

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6. What is the name of the punctuation mark used to link the words **African** and **American** and why is it used?  

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7. Who was Hattie McDaniel and why was she treated unfairly?  

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8. In the penultimate paragraph of the main body of text, the author mentions **documentaries**- what are these?  

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9. Write down **three facts** from the text that you have learnt.  

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10. Has anything in this fact file made you think? If so, explain your thoughts.  

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# Black History Month Answers

1. In the first paragraph, what does the word **annually** mean?

**The word 'annually' means once per year.**

2. Why is Carter G. Woodson known as **The Father of Black History**?

**Carter G. Woodson is known as 'The Father of Black History' because he started Black History Month. He was also a historian, who wanted people to know about the achievements of black people from the past.**

3. In the fact file the author has used the word **depict**, write **one** synonym for this word.

**A synonym for 'depict' is (any correct responses which may include) show, portray, detail, represent, illustrate, etc.**

4. In the fact file the author has used the word **omitted** – write **one** antonym for this word.

**An antonym for 'omitted' would be (any correct responses which may include) kept in, included, etc.**

5. How many years was it from the time the Quakers first protested about slavery to when it was finally banned worldwide?

**293 years passed between the Quakers first protesting about slavery and the last country, Mauritania, banning it.**

6. What is the name of the punctuation mark used to link the words **African** and **American** and why is it used?

**The punctuation mark used to link the two words 'African' and 'American' is called a hyphen. This creates a compound adjective.**

7. Who was Hattie McDaniel and why was she treated unfairly?

**Hattie McDaniel was the first black actress to win an Oscar but she was not even allowed to go the film premiere because of people's attitudes to black people at that time.**

8. In the penultimate paragraph of the main body of text, the author mentions **documentaries** – what are these?

**A documentary is a factual/non-fiction television or radio programme.**

9. Write down **three facts** from the text that you have learnt.

**(Accept any three facts from the text – not opinions) May include:**

- **Black History Month is in October in the UK.**
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- **Black History Month was started in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson.**
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