

SOLIDARITY WITH BLM

INTRODUCTION

With the devastating murder of George Floyd, the subsequent protests, and the ongoing struggle of coronavirus, we can all agree that it has been a particularly difficult couple of weeks.

For white people this has meant a period of uncomfortable, but highly important, conversations and self-reflection, prompting many to speak out, educate themselves, and challenge racism in places where it has been ignored for too long. For BAME communities, especially black people, these issues are by no means new; however, for all of us, recent events have served as a disturbing reminder that a lot of work is still to be done to make the world more equal.

At Latymer, we wanted to send out this newsletter to firstly make clear our position: that we unequivocally support the Black Lives Matter movement and are committed to challenging racism both within and outside of the school community.

On top of this, we want to focus on making Latymer a safe space and offer support to those whose well-being has been affected by recent events. Racism in any form is not tolerated at Latymer and we strive to create a safe and overtly anti-racist environment for all to be able to learn and thrive in, without exception.

On this, if you have any suggestions for ways in which the school can become a more inclusive and welcoming environment, please let any member of staff know; we are keen to hear from you.

Following on from the well-being newsletter that went out last week, we wanted to draw attention to the organisation 'Black Minds Matter UK'. Their aim is to make professional mental health services more accessible to black people in the UK, and they have a fund that covers the cost of this. We are determined to donate to this cause in our future Latymer fundraisers.

What we are doing as a school:

- Creating a new display dedicated to the achievements of black people throughout history and keeping students up to date with the progress of the Black Lives Matter movement.
- Having conversations with subject departments in regard to broadening and diversifying our curriculum
- Discussing the implementation of form-time activities for the Autumn term, in order to maintain momentum around the discussion of equality

If you don't know where to start on your journey to becoming a better ally, we have compiled a short reading/resource list. Books have been sorted into age-appropriate categories and the age certificates of films/documentaries/TV shows have been included where possible.

READING/RESOURCE LIST

YA fiction on race

- The Hate U Give - Angie Thomas
- Noughts & Crosses - Malorie Blackman
- Dear Martin - Nic Stone
- This Side Of Home - Renée Watson
- Tyler Johnson Here - Jay Coles
- Out Of Darkness - Ashley Hope Pérez
- How It Went Down - Kekla Magoon
- All American Boys - Brendon Kiely & Jason Reynolds

Fiction on race suitable for older years

- The Color Purple - Alice Walker
- Americanah - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- Half of a Yellow Sun - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- Beloved - Toni Morrison
- Homegoing - Yaa Gyasi
- Girl Woman Other - Bernadine Evaristo
- Things Fall Apart- China Achebe

Non-fiction on race (USA)

- The Fire Next Time - James Baldwin (two essays)
- I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings - Maya Angelou (autobiography)
- Your Silence Will Not Protect You / Sister Outsider - Audre Lorde (two books of essays, poems, and speeches)
- Black Feminist Thought - Patricia Hill Collins

Race in the UK

- Black and British: a Forgotten History - David Olusoga
- Mother Country - edited by Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff

Learning about white privilege

- Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race - Beni Eddo Lodge
- White Fragility - Robin DiAngelo (read the article version here - <https://libjournal.uncg.edu/ijcp/article/viewFile/249/116>)
- So you want to talk about race - Ijeoma Oluo

The police/prison system

- The End of Policing - Alex S. Vitale - FREE EBOOK

- Are Prisons Obsolete? - Angela Davis

Documentaries

- 13th (Netflix & Youtube) (15) - *eye-opening exploration of the history of racial inequality in the US focussing on the prison system*
- I Am Not Your Negro (Amazon Prime) (12A) - *in the words of James Baldwin, this documentary tells the story of his personal encounters with civil rights leaders Malcolm X, MLK, and Medgar Evers.*
- The Death and Life of Martha P. Johnson (Netflix) (15) - *investigation into the death of one of the most prominent figures of the 1969n Stonewall Uprising*
- Black Power Mixtape (12A) - *Footage shot by a group of Swedish journalists documenting the Black Power Movement in the United States*
- Explained: The Racial Wealth Gap (Netflix & Youtube) (15) - *in only 16mins this episode discusses how slavery, housing discrimination and centuries of inequality have compounded to create a racial wealth gap.*

Films/TV Shows

- Just Mercy (12A) - *film about a civil rights lawyer attempting to overturn the wrongful conviction of a black man on death row*
- Fruitvale Station (film on Netflix) (15) - *based on the true story of the death of Oscar Grant, killed by a police officer in 2009*
- When They See Us (Netflix) (15) - *based on the notorious 1989 Central Park jogger case, a heartbreakin and informative look into racial inequality in the US justice system*
 - Follow-up: When They See Us Now (12) - Oprah Winfrey talks with those involved in the case
- Noughts and Crosses (BBC iPlayer) (15) - *based on Malorie Blackman's book, this series explores a world where the race power dynamic is flipped.*
- Dear White People (15) (Netflix) - *a series following a group of students of colour at a predominately white Ivy League college*
- Do the Right Thing (18) - *a timeless study of racism by Spike Lee*

Podcasts/Episodes

- What Matters - Black Lives Matter Global Network
- Co-conspired Conversations - Myisha T
- About Race - Reni Eddo-Lodge
- Witness History: Witness Black History - BBC World Service

Articles to think about

- <https://freedomnews.org.uk/from-minneapolis-to-london-who-polices-the-police/>
- <https://www.vox.com/2016/7/11/12136140/black-all-lives-matter>
- <https://www.inquest.org.uk/bame-deaths-in-police-custody>
- <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/acab-abolish-police-george-floyd-protests-cops-a9543386.html>