

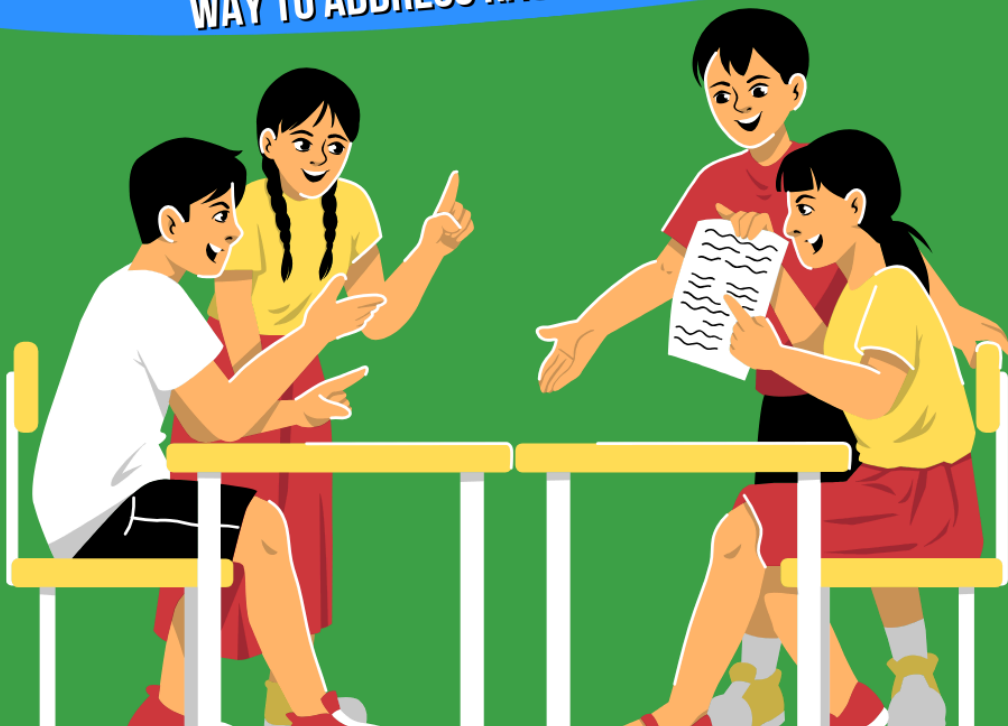


Smart School Councils

DEBATE PACK

Are you passionate about sharpening your critical thinking and speaking skills?

IS DEDICATING A SINGLE MONTH TO BLACK HISTORY A SUFFICIENT WAY TO ADDRESS RACIAL INEQUALITY?



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How to Use this Debate Pack

Whether you have just a few minutes or a full lesson, this Debate Pack has got you covered. Check out the Certificates at the end too.

How to find the debate video and send to teachers

1. Log in to the [Smart School Councils platform](#) using your school details.
2. Click on the blue Class Meeting Tool button in the dashboard.
3. Click on 'Next Meeting' at the top of the page.
4. To get started, click on 'click here' to browse existing questions and options.
5. If the debate topic is part of this week's question, it will appear there. Otherwise, click 'Search All' and type in the debate topic you're looking for.

Got five minutes?

Play the debate video straight through and dive right into the debate. No need to pause at the prompts. It's a quick, engaging way to get your students thinking.

Got 10/15 minutes?

Pause at the prompts in the video to explore additional ideas your class might have. Use the additional points or Power Facts if you'd like.

Want to extend to 30 minutes or a full lesson?

Check out the lesson plan and writing tasks below. There is also a full Fact Sheet with amazing further reading if your students want to go deeper on the topic.

What do the icons in the pack mean?



This is what the presenter says on the video



This is a Power Fact to explain or prompt debate that's not in the video



This is an additional debate point that's not in the video

Introduction and Brain Gym Question

Introduction



Welcome to Big Debate Club!

My name is Becky and today we are debating the question...

Is dedicating a single month to Black history a sufficient way to address racial inequality?

Every October in the UK, we celebrate Black History Month. It's a time to honour the achievements and contributions of Black people throughout history, from activism and politics to science, art, and music.

But some people ask: is just one month enough? While Black History Month brings attention to powerful stories, others feel that true equality means recognising Black history and voices all year round — not just for 31 days. So, is this one-month spotlight really helping solve racial inequality? Or is it just a starting point? You decide.

Brain Gym Question

Before we get started with the debate, I have a question for you...

When was Black History Month first officially celebrated in the United Kingdom?

- a) 1968
- b) 1975
- c) 1987
- d) 1996

Black History Month is celebrated in America (February), Canada (February), UK (October), and recently in Ireland (October). Each focuses on highlighting local Black history as well as global struggles and achievements. (Source: *Black History Month UK*, [LINK](#))



FOR: Dedicating a single month is a sufficient way to address racial inequality

We're going to share reasons for both sides of the debate, then it's up to you to think of the rest!


The month is dedicated time to bring focused attention



You might be thinking that it means dedicated time to bring focused attention. A dedicated month encourages schools, media, and organisations to highlight stories that are often not the rest of the year, which means it highlights the inequality of sharing these stories.

A dedicated month gives space to start the conversation

You could say that having a dedicated month starts the conversation. Having a special time encourages people to learn, talk, and reflect. This can lead to real change when people are brought to the table to talk about inequality at the same time with a united focus and effort.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that dedicating a single month is a sufficient way to address racial inequality? 

Space for representation is important for young Black people



Seeing role models in Black history boosts aspirations: in a survey, 85% of Black pupils said representation of Black leaders in lessons made them feel more confident about their future. (Source: Runnymede Trust, [LINK](#))

It gives everyone an opportunity to think about inclusivity



Many organisations use Black History Month to have conversations about their inclusion strategies and how they support their Black employees and users - making sure they are doing everything they can to support the community throughout the year through space to discuss it in October. In 2023, 52% of UK employers reported running diversity initiatives linked to BHM. (Source: CIPD, [LINK](#))



AGAINST: Dedicating a single month is not a sufficient way to address racial inequality

Now let's change positions and consider why you might argue that dedicating a single month is not a sufficient way to address racial inequality.




Why is it just one month?

You might ask why is it just one month? History is taught and talked about all year in school, limiting Black History month to one month suggests it's separate from regular history, and therefore does not address it in equality to other history.

Inequality is all year round so discussing it should be too

Or you could also say inequality is all year round so discussing inequality should be too. Discrimination, underrepresentation, and bias don't stop after October, so action shouldn't stop either and just focusing on it only in October isn't sufficient.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that dedicating a single month is not a sufficient way to address racial inequality? 

Resolving institutional bias can't happen in just a month

One month of racial discussions and cultural events doesn't solve structural and institutional bias in terms of racism which causes barriers for the community. A TUC report found one in three Black workers had faced workplace racism in the last five years. (Source: *The TUC*, [LINK](#))



Despite BHM existing for 40 years, there are still gaps in knowledge

Despite Black History Month happening since 1987, there are still big gaps of knowledge of Black British history for so many people in the UK, more needs to be done to raise the level of understanding. A YouGov/Bloomsbury poll found 75% of UK adults know "very little or nothing at all" about Black British history. A single month can't cover such gaps. (Source: *Bloomsbury*, [LINK](#))



FactSheet: Is dedicating a month to Black history a sufficient way to address racial inequality?



Here's six key facts - three on each side - if you'd like to go a little deeper.

Yes

Having space for representation makes a difference to young Black people

Seeing role models in Black history boosts aspirations: in a survey, 85% of Black pupils said representation of Black leaders in lessons made them feel more confident about their future. (Source: Runnymede Trust, [LINK](#))

Gives everyone, including businesses, an opportunity to think about inclusivity

Many organisations use Black History Month to have conversations about their inclusion strategies and how they support their Black employees and users - making sure they are doing everything they can to support the community throughout the year through space to discuss it in October. In 2023, 52% of UK employers reported running diversity initiatives linked to BHM. (Source: CIPD, [LINK](#))

Raising awareness to issues regularly is important for their solution

Every October, Black History Month sparks thousands of lessons and cultural events raising awareness for issues around racial inequality, important aspects of cultural identity and reinforcing the importance of supporting the Black community. In 2022, 78% of UK schools reported marking it in some way. (Source: BBC Newsround, [LINK](#))

No

Institutional and structural bias can't be solved in one month a year

One month of racial discussions and cultural events doesn't solve structural and institutional bias in terms of racism which causes barriers for the community. A TUC report found one in three Black workers had faced workplace racism in the last five years. (Source: The TUC, [LINK](#))

Despite BHM existing for 40 years, it hasn't fixed knowledge gaps

Despite Black History Month happening since 1987, there are still big gaps of knowledge of Black British history for so many people in the UK, more needs to be done to raise the level of understanding. A YouGov/Bloomsbury poll found 75% of UK adults know "very little or nothing at all" about Black British history. A single month can't cover such gaps. (Source: Bloomsbury, [LINK](#))

Resolving deeper issues can't happen in one month only

Only by resolving issues for the community can we can make it stronger and more successful into the future, can these be resolved in just a month? For instance, Black people make up 12.1% of the UK prison population yet 4% of the general population, we should resolve any issues that are making this the case to make it more proportionate. (Source: Gov.uk, [LINK](#))



Sentence Starters

POINT

LEMON & HERB: One reason why I (agree/disagree) with this debate is because...

MEDIUM: One point I have for this debate is...

HOT: You could say that...

EVIDENCE

LEMON & HERB: One way I can prove my point is through this example...

MEDIUM: I can show this works through the fact that...

HOT: I know this because...

EXPLANATION

LEMON & HERB: The evidence I have discussed above proves my point as...

MEDIUM: This example proves my point because...

HOT: Therefore, this proves my point as...

LINK

LEMON & HERB: All together, this answers the debate question asked by...

MEDIUM: This point answers the overall question because...

HOT: These ideas answer the debate as...





**Post your debate on
social media!**

SHARE YOUR VOICE

We shout out the best opinions each week

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DEBATER OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

For debating fairly, respectfully and persuasively. Well done!

Share a snap or video @SSCCTY on Twitter for a national shoutout and a prize!



Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils

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CLASS MEETING LEADER OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

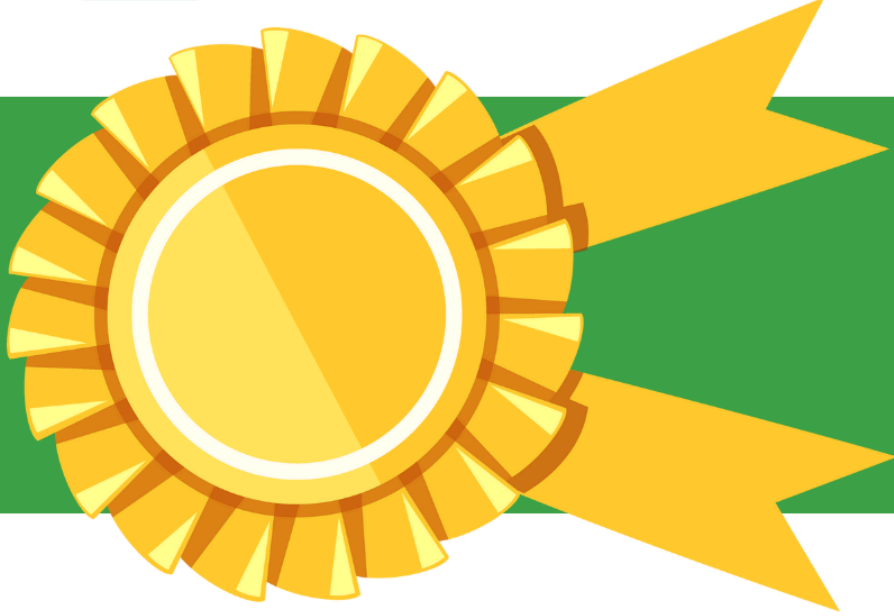
For showing skill and confidence in leading today's Class Meeting.

Share a snap or video @SSCCTY on Twitter for a national shoutout and a prize!



Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils



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BEST IDEA OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

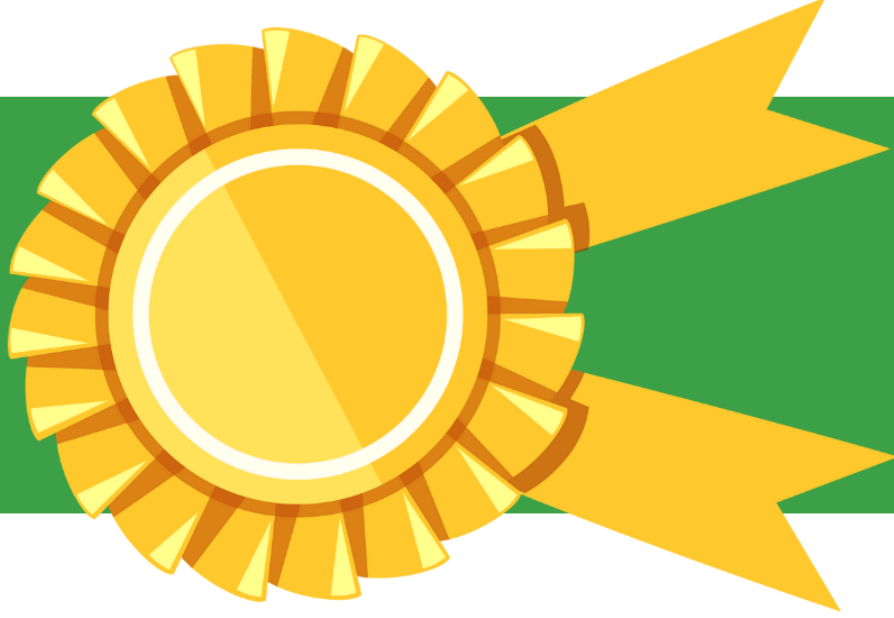
For speaking up with a great new idea on today's topic. Amazing.

Share a snap or video @SSCCTY on Twitter for a national shoutout and a prize!



Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils



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