

US PROTESTS SPREAD WORLDWIDE



An anti-racism protest in Minneapolis, where George Floyd died

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ANTI-RACISM protests have been taking place across America and around the world following the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, USA, after he was held down by police officers.

During his arrest on 25 May, George Floyd, who was black, died after white police officer Derek Chauvin knelt on his neck. The officer has since been charged with murder, while three other police officers involved in the arrest have lost their jobs.

Protests against police violence and racism then began in Minneapolis, before quickly spreading across the world. People took to the streets to campaign against the police using unnecessary force against black people in the US, united by the words 'Black lives matter'.

Human rights experts at the United Nations issued a statement saying, "Many in the United States and abroad are finally acknowledging that the problem is not a few bad apples, but instead the problem is the very way that economic, political and social life are structured."

There have been protests following police attacks on unarmed black people in the US before, such as those in Los Angeles after Rodney King was attacked in 1991. However, the way this current protest has spread around the world suggests that the calls for change in America may be too loud to ignore this time.

MINNESOTA



New York



Paris



Berlin



Athens





UK

PROTESTS

Protesters hurl Edward Colston's statue into Bristol Harbour

TENS of thousands of people have taken part in protests across the UK to get their voices heard about racism, following George Floyd's death.

There were demonstrations big and small in towns and cities throughout the country, where people ignored requests from politicians to avoid mass protests because of coronavirus social distancing.

In London, crowds gathered at the US embassy to support protesters in America. It was a peaceful gathering of mainly young demonstrators from all ethnic backgrounds.

Daniel Oderinde, 23, said he had never seen protests like these in the UK before, where "white people and black come together in support of the struggles that we've been going through. If I can share that message and we can come together as one, then I can be part of something monumental."

Although the vast majority of protesters have been peaceful, some have been accused of taking things too far. In Bristol, the statue of a slave trader, Edward Colston, was pulled down by the protesters. His name is seen across the city, with streets and buildings named after the 17th century merchant and slave trader. His statue on Colston Avenue was a protected listed structure and has stood there since 1895, but it was pulled down by protesters last weekend and dumped in Bristol Harbour.

His memory has been argued about for years, with some in Bristol saying you can't change history, while others campaigned successfully for his name to be removed from streets, schools and venues. The Labour Mayor of Bristol said the Edward Colston statue was an "insult" to black people.

WHO WAS EDWARD COLSTON? (1636-1721)

- Colston was born into a wealthy Bristol merchant's family.
- By 1672 he was running his own business in London, trading in slaves, cloth, wine and sugar.
- Colston's ships took about 80,000 men, women and children from Africa to the Americas, between 1672 and 1689. They were sold as slaves.
- He donated money to churches and hospitals in Bristol, also founding two almshouses (houses provided by a charity) and a school.
- Colston was Bristol's MP for a short time.



To find out more about why racism is still a big issue watch the FYI: *I Don't Get It* explainer video on the First News website at live.firstnews.co.uk/i-dont-get-it/bfi/racism-why-is-it-still-a-big-issue/



GLOSSARY

racism – Treating people unfairly because of the colour of their skin or the race they belong to

US – United States, a shortened form of USA

United Nations (UN) – An international organisation founded in 1945. It advocates peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and humanitarian assistance

protests – Where groups of people show they disagree with something, by walking in the streets, shouting, holding up signs, etc

Los Angeles – A city in California, US

monumental – Something very big and important

slave trader – Someone who sold slaves

campaigns – Organised events to bring about change

almshouses – Houses provided by charity

MP: Member of Parliament – A person who has been chosen to represent their area in parliament. MPs vote on all new laws



US PROTESTS SPREAD WORLDWIDE

● Look at the article 'US protests spread worldwide'.

1. What does the word '**racism**' mean?
- 2a. Who was George Floyd?
- 2b. What was shocking about his death?
- 3a. Explain what a **protest** is.
- 3b. What are the protests taking place in America and around the world following the death of George Floyd about?
4. Which **three-word phrase** has been used by all the protesters around the world to explain why they are protesting?
5. Look at the **statement** human rights experts at the UN issued. They said police brutality against black people in the USA is **not** caused by "a few bad apples" but by problems with the police force as a whole.
What do you think the phrase '**a few bad apples**' means?

● Look at the article 'UK protests'.

- 6a. Why did politicians ask people to avoid mass protests this week?
- 6b. Even though politicians warned people against mass protests, thousands of people attended protests across the UK. Why do you think people still attended?
7. Daniel Oderinde is a 23-year-old who protested outside the US Embassy in London. What does he believe is unique about these protests?
8. What happened in Bristol that upset some people, but pleased many others?
Edward Colston lived more than three hundred years ago. It says in the article that "**his memory has been argued about for years.**"
- 9a. Why do you think his statue was erected in the city originally?
- 9b. Why do so many people now think his statue should no longer stand in the city?
10. Do you think statues of slave traders, or street and building names linked to the slave trade, should be removed and changed? Explain your thoughts.

Watch the I Don't Get It news explainer video 'Racism: Why is it still a big issue?' on the First News website to find out more.

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TEACHER ANSWERS

THIS WEEK'S NEWS COMPREHENSION explained:

News reports are unique non-fiction texts. Being real, they naturally engage students, and with the range of topics that are covered, help to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world outside the classroom.

The reading skills and leveled answers have been removed from this section this week because the focus is on enabling students to explore the issues rather than on judging the level of their answers.

We want students to use the questions and discussion tasks to do some background research and to discuss this news article with their peers and the adults involved in their schooling. For background research, please watch the 'I Don't Get It' video made in partnership with Sky, asking why racism is still a big issue in our world, which aims to educate your pupils and to help them understand this global crisis: <https://tinyurl.com/y9rcrwxl>.

US PROTESTS SPREAD WORLDWIDE

● Look at the article 'US protests spread worldwide'.

1. What does the word 'racism' mean?

- To discriminate against or treat people unfairly because of the colour of their skin or the race they belong to.

2a. Who was George Floyd?

- An American black man who died after a white police officer knelt on his neck.

2b. What was shocking about his death?

Discussion points:

- He died unnecessarily.
- The police are supposed to protect society.
- Racism caused his death.

3a. Explain what a protest is.

Discussion points:

- A protest is when people demonstrate or argue against something.
- People will take to the streets to march, holding up signs and shouting about the issue they think is wrong.
- The right to protest is linked to the freedom of speech in a democratic society.

3b. What are the protests taking place in America and around the world following the death of George Floyd about?

Discussion points:

- The protests are against racism and police violence.
- People are protesting against the police using unnecessary force against black people.
- They are protesting about black people being treated differently in society.

4. Which three-word phrase has been used by all the protesters around the world to explain why they are protesting?

- Black lives matter

5. Look at the statement human rights experts at the UN issued. They said police brutality against black people in the USA is not caused by "a few bad apples" but by problems with the police force as a whole.

What do you think the phrase 'a few bad apples' means?

Discussion points:

- This means that there are a few dishonest or corrupt people in a group.
- Their behaviour may have a bad influence on others within the group.
- This saying comes from the fact that if a rotten apple is stored with fresh ones, the bad one will cause the others to rot.

● Look at the article ‘UK protests’.

6a. Why did politicians ask people to avoid mass protests this week?

Discussion points:

- Politicians asked people to avoid mass protests due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing rules.

6b. Even though politicians warned people against mass protests, thousands of people attended protests across the UK.

Why do you think people still attended?

Discussion points:

- Because they felt this issue was too important not to make a stand and protest.

7. Daniel Oderinde is a 23-year-old who protested outside the US Embassy in London. What does he believe is unique about these protests?

- At the protests, white people and black people coming together to protest against racism.

8. What happened in Bristol that upset some people, but pleased many others?

- The statue of Edward Colston was pulled down and dumped into the harbour.

9. Edward Colston lived more than three hundred years ago. It says in the article that “his memory has been argued about for years.”

9a. Why do you think his statue was erected in the city originally?

Discussion points:

- Edward Colston was honoured across Bristol in the first place because he donated money to the churches and hospitals there. He also founded two almshouses and a school and lent money to the Bristol Corporation.
- His wealth led to the housing, education and healthcare benefits for the city.

9b. Why do so many people now think his statue should no longer stand in the city?

Discussion points:

- He was a slave trader. He took 80,000 men, women and children from Africa to the Americas between 1672 and 1689.
- He also made his wealth trading in products that relied on slave labour.
- People are questioning why a man who is responsible for the misery of so many people and who made his money from the slave trade should be honoured in any way.

10. Do you think statues of slave traders, or street and building names linked to the slave trade, should be removed and changed? Explain your thoughts.

Discussion points:

- Personal viewpoints linked to the discussion points given for Question 9.

Watch the I Don't Get It news explainer video ‘Racism: Why is it still a big issue?’ on the First News website to find out more.