

## US PROTESTS SPREAD WORLDWIDE

## AMERICA BURNS WITH RAGE

After a peaceful demonstration, clashes between protesters and police led to scenes like this in Seattle



Getty

There have been increasing calls for the “defunding” of police departments across the US in recent days. This generally means taking some responsibilities away from the police and using the money for things like investing in better mental health care, so that people with mental health problems can get help instead of being arrested



Getty

**PROTESTS** against police brutality have continued across America, including in Minneapolis, following the death of a black American man, George Floyd, while being held down by a white police officer.

Derek Chauvin, the white police officer accused of killing Mr Floyd, appeared via video conference in court on Monday. He didn't enter a plea of guilty or not guilty.

Although the majority of protesters have been peaceful, some have been accused of taking things too far, with shops looted and even set on fire. Some have thrown objects at police, but the police have also been widely criticised for a string of attacks on peaceful protesters and journalists.

Two police officers in Buffalo have been charged with assault after they shoved a 75-year-old man to the ground, and there

have been more than 200 incidents of journalists being attacked, including one film crew who were shot at with pepper bullets while they were on air.

President Donald Trump has been criticised for his response, including by former senior members of his own party. He called protesters “terrorists” and threatened to send the army in to deal with them.

“Given the track record of impunity [no punishment] for racial violence of this nature in the United States, black people have good reason to fear for their lives,” read a statement from dozens of

independent UN human rights experts. “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 previous police attacks on unarmed black people in the US, such as the LA riots after Rodney King was savagely beaten in 1991. However, the way this protest has spread around the world suggests that the calls for change in America may be too loud to ignore this time.

## NFL: “WE WERE WRONG”



Getty

Colin Kaepernick (No7) taking the knee in 2016

**THE National Football League (NFL) has changed its mind and said players can now protest against racism during the American national anthem.**

Quarterback Colin Kaepernick began kneeling before NFL matches in 2016. It quickly became a symbol of anti-racism in the USA and beyond. Kaepernick was strongly criticised by US President Donald Trump, and the NFL banned players from ‘taking the knee’.

Now, the man in charge of the NFL, Roger Goodell, has said: “we were wrong for not listening to NFL players earlier”. He also said “we believe black lives matter”.

President Trump has continued to strongly criticise players for kneeling during the anthem. Recent protests have seen hundreds of thousands of people worldwide kneeling.

# UK PROTESTS

**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, after a week in which people ignored calls from politicians to avoid mass protests because of coronavirus social distancing.

Demonstrators took to the streets in Edinburgh, Cardiff, Sheffield, Newcastle, Carlisle, Bristol, Dumfries, Derby, Chester, Wolverhampton, Middlesbrough, Lytham and Wrexham, among others. Most of the protests were peaceful, but a small number of people became violent.

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.”

An anti-racism protest was also held in Parliament Square in Westminster, where the statue of WW2 prime minister Winston Churchill was covered in graffiti.

Thousands on the streets of Manchester knelt in protest, and were joined by former footballer Rio Ferdinand, his wife Kate and his three children.

People gathered at Nottingham Forest’s football ground, chanting: “Enough is enough.”

Many more people took part in virtual protests. The #BlackLivesMatter movement said 22,000 people from across the world had joined an online protest to show their support. Apollo Sankara of BLM London said of the protests: “This isn’t just a moment, this is a movement.”



An image of the Peterborough artist Nathan Murdoch’s work has been shared globally

## WHO IS SAYING WHAT?

**CRESSIDA DICK, THE METROPOLITAN POLICE COMMISSIONER**

...said 27 police officers in London had been injured during the first week of protests, when “a minority of protesters became violent” towards officers outside Downing Street. Two officers were seriously injured, she said. She urged protesters to find “another way” to get their voices heard, adding that she was “deeply saddened and depressed” about the violence by a small number of protesters.



## F1 STAR LEWIS HAMILTON

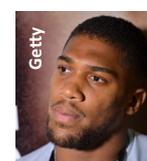
...praised Black Lives Matter protesters for pulling down the Edward Colston statue in Bristol. He said: “All statues of racist men who made money from selling a human being should be torn down! Which one is next? I challenge government officials worldwide to make these changes and implement the peaceful removal of these racist symbols.”



## PRIME MINISTER BORIS JOHNSON

...said: “People have a right to protest peacefully and while observing social distancing, but they have no right to attack the police.”

## BOXER ANTHONY JOSHUA



...spoke in his home town of Watford: “The virus has been declared a pandemic, it is out of control. And I’m not talking about COVID-19. The virus I’m referring to is called racism. We need to speak out. We need to be united.”

## WHO WAS EDWARD COLSTON? (1636-1721)

In Bristol, the statue of a slave trader, Edward Colston, was pulled down. His name is seen across Bristol, 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 toppled 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.

- Colston was born into a wealthy Bristol merchant’s family and, although he lived in London for many years, he was always closely associated with the city.
- 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.
- He donated to churches and hospitals in Bristol, also founding two almshouses (houses provided by a charity) and a school.
- Colston also lent money to the Bristol corporation and was a city MP for a short time.



Protesters hurl Edward Colston’s statue into Bristol Harbour

**GLOSSARY**

**pepper bullets** — A bullet containing a powdered chemical that irritates the eyes and nose in a manner similar to pepper spray

**UN** — The United Nations. An international organisation founded in 1945. It advocates peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and humanitarian assistance

**quarterback** — A position in American football. The successes and failures of the quarterback

can have a significant impact on how well the team does

**‘taking the knee’** — Kneeling has become a symbol of anti-racism in the USA and beyond. Some American football players like Colin Kaepernick started kneeling in 2016 during the American national anthem after several shootings of unarmed black men. Soldiers take a knee in front of a fallen soldier’s grave as a mark of respect. Initially, Kaepernick

stayed seated on the bench, but he started to take a knee alongside his teammates as a middle ground to show that although he was against racial oppression, he was not anti-American or intending to disrespect the US military or military veterans

**Bristol Corporation** — The board responsible for poor relief in Bristol



**BIG NEWS: US PROTESTS SPREAD WORLDWIDE**

**Questions on ‘America burns with rage’**

**Part A — Finding the facts**

**A1.** Fill the gaps in order to provide a summary of the situation.

Protests against police ..... have continued across ....., including in ....., following the ..... of a ..... American man, George Floyd, while being held down by a ..... police officer. Although the ..... of ..... have been ....., some have been ..... of taking things too far, with shops ..... and even set on fire. The ..... have also been widely ..... for a string of ..... on ..... protesters and .....

Minneapolis	police	attacks	accused	black	journalists	peaceful	majority
brutality	looted	peaceful	white	protesters	criticised	America	death

**A2.** What does “defunding” the police mean?

**A3.** Who is Colin Kaepernick and how did he start to protest against racism and police brutality in 2016?

**Part B — Thinking things through**

**B1.** Suggest why there have been increasing calls for the “defunding” of police departments across the US in recent days.

**B2.** Why has President Trump been criticised for his response to the protests?

**B3.** Look at the following statement: “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.” What do you understand this to mean?

**Part C — Discussion tasks**

**C1.** The NFL has lifted the ban on players ‘taking the knee’ during the American national anthem as an anti-racism protest. However, the US president, Donald Trump, has continued to strongly criticise players for kneeling during the anthem. What do you think? Should players protest in this way?

**Questions on ‘UK protests’**

**Part A — Finding the facts**

**A1.** Describe the different ways in which people across the UK have protested about racism following George Floyd’s death.

**A2.** Who was Edward Colston?

**Part B — Thinking things through**

**B1.** Protesters hurled Edward Colston’s statue into Bristol Harbour during a protest against racism. Why was Edward Colston’s name and image honoured across Bristol in the first place?

**B2.** Apollo Sankara of BLM London is quoted as saying: “This isn’t just a moment; this is a movement.” What do you think this means?

**Part C — Discussion tasks**

**C1.** F1 star Lewis Hamilton praised protesters for pulling down the Edward Colston statue and said: “All statues of racist men who made money from selling a human being should be torn down!” However, the home secretary, Priti Patel, called the removal of the statue “utterly disgraceful”. What do you think? Give reasons to support your view.

**C2.** “In England, public gatherings of more than six people are currently restricted according to the coronavirus lockdown laws. Therefore, the protests that we are seeing in England are illegal and police should disperse them and issue fines in accordance with the law.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Justify your opinion.

**GLOSSARY**

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stayed seated on the bench, but he started to take a knee alongside his teammates as a middle ground to show that although he was against racial oppression, he was not anti-American or intending to disrespect the US military or military veterans

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Minneapolis	police	attacks	accused	black	journalists	peaceful	majority
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**A2.** What does “defunding” the police mean?

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**Part B — Thinking things through**

**B1.** Suggest why there have been increasing calls for the “defunding” of police departments across the US in recent days.

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**Part B — Thinking things through**

**B1.** Protesters hurled Edward Colston’s statue into Bristol Harbour during a protest against racism. Why was Edward Colston’s name and image honoured across Bristol in the first place?

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**C2.** “In England, public gatherings of more than six people are currently restricted according to the coronavirus lockdown laws. Therefore, the protests that we are seeing in England are illegal and police should disperse them and issue fines in accordance with the law.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Justify your opinion.

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## Teacher Answers

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 levels have been removed from the answers this week because the focus is on enabling students to explore the issue 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 see our 'Big News' report on page 7 of last week's issue: <https://tinyurl.com/y8vbwtd4>. We have also released an '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>.



### Questions on 'America burns with rage'

#### Part A – Finding the facts

##### A1. Fill the gaps in order to provide a summary of the situation.

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Protests against police **brutality** have continued across **America**, including in **Minneapolis**, following the **death** of a **black** American man, George Floyd, while being held down by a **white** police officer. Although the **majority** of **protesters** have been **peaceful**, some have been **accused** of taking things too far, with shops **looted** and even set on fire. The **police** have also been widely **criticised** for a string of **attacks** on **peaceful** protesters and **journalists**.

##### A2. What does “defunding” the police mean?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

###### *Possible answer*

- This generally means taking some responsibilities away from the police and spending the money on things, such as investing in better mental health care, so that people with mental health problems can get help instead of being arrested.

##### A3. Who is Colin Kaepernick and how did he start to protest against racism and police brutality in 2016?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

###### *Possible answer*

- Colin Kaepernick is an American football player. He began kneeling during the American national anthem before NFL matches in 2016.
- Kaepernick was strongly criticised by US President Donald Trump, and the NFL banned players from 'taking the knee'.

#### Part B — Thinking things through

##### B1. Suggest why there have been increasing calls for the “defunding” of police departments across the US in recent days.

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

###### *Possible answer*

- The calls for the “defunding” of police departments across the US suggest that the American people have a lack of trust in the police at the moment. They have been shocked by the police brutality in the George Floyd case and want crime to be addressed in a different, less oppressive way. Hence, there have been calls for funding to be taken away from the police and put into positive intervention programmes to reduce or prevent crime instead. The American people want to see change in the methods of policing in their country.

##### B2. Why has President Trump been criticised for his response to the protests?

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

###### *Possible answer*

- President Trump has been criticised for his response to the protests because he called the protesters “terrorists”, which is very inflammatory language to describe protesters who, for the most part, are protesting peacefully. He also threatened to send the army in to deal with the protesters. People are angry about Trump's aggressive response and that he is not addressing the concerns behind the protests.
- Trump has also continued to criticise NFL players for kneeling in protest during the American national anthem. He persists in viewing this as an insult to America and as disrespectful towards the US military. This is despite the fact that 'taking the knee' is now widely used as a symbol of anti-racism. Few people have sympathy with Trump's standpoint and indeed the NFL has lifted the ban on players 'taking the knee'.

**B3.** Look at the following statement: “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.”

**What do you understand this to mean?**

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

**Possible answer (Some background research and prior discussion will be needed before students attempt this answer.)**

- This means that racism isn’t confined to the individual views of a few ignorant people, it is ingrained in society. This institutional racism means that there are disparities in education, political power, health care, wealth, income, employment and housing. It means that, implicitly, certain policies and laws result in people in the black community having less access to goods, services and opportunities.
- As the statement asserts, the problem is not just in the United States. For example, in the UK in 2017, when Theresa May was prime minister, she commissioned the Race Disparity Audit, which found that: “There are disparities between ethnic groups in all areas of life affected by public organisations. Some are more pronounced than others or have a greater impact on people’s life chances and quality of life.”
- The statement supports the need for positive action.

**Part C — Discussion tasks**

**C1.** The NFL has lifted the ban on players ‘taking the knee’ during the American national anthem as an anti-racism protest. However, the US president, Donald Trump, has continued to strongly criticise players for kneeling during the anthem. What do you think? Should players protest in this way?

READING SKILL — Develop opinions and provide justifications for view points

**Things to consider:**

YES	NO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Taking the knee’ is now widely recognised as a symbol of anti-racism in the USA and around the world. It is ignorant of Donald Trump to continue to view it as an affront to America.</li> <li>• Sports personalities are often respected and viewed as role models. It is commendable if they use their status to highlight and address injustices in society. Indeed, it is believed that Kaepernick’s NFL career suffered because he was prepared to make his beliefs known but he believed that it was more important for him to raise awareness of racism and police brutality. He started his protest in 2016 and what has happened to George Floyd in 2020 has shown that he was right to be concerned.</li> <li>• Kneeling is a peaceful protest and people have a right to protest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donald Trump views kneeling for the American national anthem as disrespecting the US flag and the military.</li> <li>• Some people don't think sports people should get involved in politics.</li> </ul>

**Questions on ‘UK protests’**

**Part A — Finding the facts**

**A1.** Describe the different ways in which people across the UK have protested about racism following George Floyd’s death.

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

**Possible answer**

- Demonstrators took to the streets in Edinburgh, Cardiff, Sheffield, Newcastle, Carlisle, Bristol, Dumfries, Derby, Chester, Wolverhampton, Middlesbrough, Lytham and Wrexham, among others. Most of the protests were peaceful, but a small number of people became violent.
- 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. An anti-racism protest was also held in Parliament Square in Westminster, but the statue of WW2 prime minister Winston Churchill was covered in graffiti.
- Thousands on the streets in Manchester knelt in protest, and were joined by former footballer Rio Ferdinand, his wife Kate and his three children. People also gathered at Nottingham Forest’s football ground chanting: “Enough is enough.”
- Furthermore, many more people took part in virtual protests.

**A2. Who was Edward Colston?**

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

- Edward Colston was a 17th century merchant and slave trader. He was born into a wealthy Bristol merchant’s family and he was closely associated with Bristol even though he lived in London for many years. He lent money to the Bristol Corporation and was a city MP for a short time.

**Part B — Thinking things through**

**B1. Protesters hurled Edward Colston’s statue into Bristol Harbour during a protest against racism. Why was Edward Colston’s name and image honoured across Bristol in the first place?**

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

**Possible answer**

- 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. Some believe that his wealth led to the housing, education and healthcare that citizens benefit from today. Therefore, he was honoured as a philanthropist.

**B2. Apollo Sankara of BLM London is quoted as saying: “This isn’t just a moment; this is a movement.” What do you think this means?**

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

**Possible answer**

- A moment is fleeting and suggests that nothing much will change. There have been moments of protests in the past in response to police brutality, such as the LA riots after Rodney King was savagely beaten in 1991. However, these protests have spread around the world. Referring to the protests as a “movement” means that they will achieve meaningful political and social change.

**Part C — Discussion tasks**

**C1. F1 star Lewis Hamilton praised protesters for pulling down the Edward Colston statue and said: “All statues of racist men who made money from selling a human being should be torn down!” However, the home secretary, Priti Patel, called the removal of the statue “utterly disgraceful”. What do you think? Give reasons to support your view.**

READING SKILL — Develop opinions and provide justifications for view points

**Things to consider:**

Points to support the view that protesters were justified in removing the statue	Points to support the view that the removal of the statue was disgraceful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a statue in honour of a slave trader is considered by many to be an “insult” to black people. Colston is thought to have been partly responsible for the deaths of 19,000 slaves.</li> <li>• You may not be able to change history, but that doesn’t mean that a slave trader should continue to be honoured just because he was honoured in 1895. He may have used some of his wealth to help worthy causes, but that doesn’t excuse the fact that he made his money through the slave trade.</li> <li>• Several attempts had been made to get the statue officially removed over the years. However, they had been unsuccessful.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The statue was a protected listed structure, and to take it down and throw it into Bristol Harbour was an act of vandalism. People can’t just take the law into their own hands.</li> <li>• You can’t change history by removing a statue. Also, the history books show that Colston wasn’t just a slave trader, he did many charitable works with his wealth.</li> <li>• If people felt so strongly about the statue then they should have gone through the proper channels to have it removed.</li> </ul>

**C2.** “In England, public gatherings of more than six people are currently restricted according to the coronavirus lockdown laws. Therefore, the protests that we are seeing in England are illegal and police should disperse them and issue fines in accordance with the law.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Justify your opinion.

READING SKILL — Develop opinions and provide justifications for view points

*Things to consider:*

AGREE	DISAGREE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By gathering in large groups, with some people not adhering to social distancing rules, the protesters put everyone at risk by making a second wave of coronavirus infections more likely.</li> <li>• If illegal behaviour is condoned then where does it end? People will have seen that the police did not exercise their power to disperse the protests, and this could lead to further lawlessness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People have a right to protest and organisers asked protesters to observe social distancing rules.</li> <li>• Like the boxer, Anthony Joshua, many believe that the “virus” of racism is just as deadly as the new coronavirus, and that the issue could not just be shelved until a more convenient time after lockdown.</li> <li>• There were mass gatherings on beaches in the hot weather, but at least the protesters were supporting a serious and important issue, not just having a day out.</li> </ul>