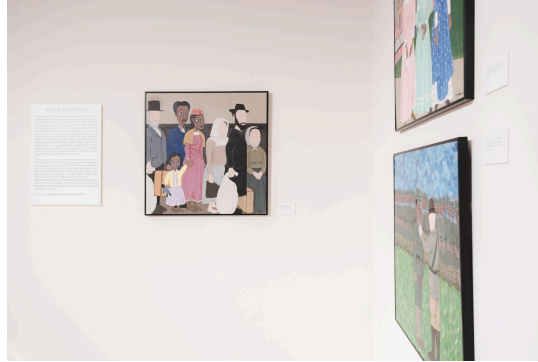


Lesson Plan
The Windrush Generation and Windrush Scandal:
Comparing British Policies from 1948 to the 21st Century



Installation photograph of *Arwe Journey: Twentieth-Century Afri-Caribbean Migration*
Image credit: Brandon Smith, Whiskey & Oxfords

This lesson plan has been developed by the Housatonic Museum of Art Graduate Summer Intern, Chi-Ann Lin, to accompany the exhibition, *Arwe Journey: Twentieth-Century Afri-Caribbean Migration* (September 18, 2024 - February 21, 2025).

Grade Level: High School

Subject: World History

Required Time: 3-4 class periods (may be modified/shortened)

Objective

Utilizing various historical sources, students will explore and compare British government policies, treatment, and attitudes towards Caribbean migrants and their descendants from the arrival of the *HMT Windrush* (1948) to the recent Windrush Scandal (21st century).

Note for Teachers:

Before beginning the lesson, it may be helpful to review these terms with students. Teachers may also want to consult the additional resources for further contextualization and background.

Terms:

- Commonwealth
Source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Commonwealth-association-of-states>
- Home Office
Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/about>
- MPs (Members of Parliament)

Source: <https://members.parliament.uk/>

➤ Migrants

Source:

<https://www.rescue.org/article/migrants-asylum-seekers-refugees-and-immigrants-whats-difference>

Additional Resources:

➤ BBC article on the Windrush Generation (a good overview)

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-43782241>

➤ Changing immigration legislation in Britain

- BBC article

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-24463873>

- Black Cultural Archives video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eq0poblYcjE>

➤ UK National Archives lessons

- <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/the-empire-windrush/>

- <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/mangrove-nine-protest/>

➤ National Windrush Monument lessons:

- <https://windrush-monument.leveellingup.gov.uk/education-resources/>

Assignment 1: Setting the Context

Show students the following maps illustrating the extent of the British Empire (Map #1) and the years when British colonies gained independence from Britain (Map #2). Direct students to focus on the Caribbean region. What do they notice? What stories do the maps tell?

❖ Map #1–British Empire

Source: Britannica

<https://cdn.britannica.com/98/129798-050-DCA90B02/Map-British-Empire-extent.jpg>

❖ Map #2–Independence from Britain

Source: GlobalPost/Salon

<https://mediaproxy.salon.com/width/1200/https://media2.salon.com/2014/09/EJCINQf.jpg>

Assignment 2: Introductory Activity

Before exploring the sources, provide students with an overview of the Windrush Generation by playing the short videos below.

British Pathe Video: <https://www.britishpathe.com/asset/137221/>

BBC Video: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-43782241>

After viewing the videos, answer and discuss the following questions.

1. Who does the Windrush Generation refer to?
2. Once they arrived, what were their impressions of Britain?
3. What was the 1971 Immigration Act and its impact?

Finally, briefly inform students about the recent Windrush Scandal. As Caribbean colonies gained independence in the 1960s-1980s, their British citizenship status was no longer secured as evidenced by the passage of the 1971 Immigration Act. Consequently, individuals who could not prove their legal status with proper documentation were denied vital services and threatened with deportation.

Assignment 3: Source Activity

Have students (individually or in pairs/groups) explore each source and respond to the corresponding questions. Teachers may complete the first source as a whole class to model analysis techniques.

The following sources and questions may be reduced or modified to suit your classroom's needs. To further support document analysis skills, teachers may refer to the educator resources available at the National Archives:

<https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets>

Note for Teachers:

Sources #1-3 cover the historical era (1940s-1950s).

Sources #4-7 cover the contemporary period (21st century).

Source #1

Prime Minister Clement Attlee's Letter to Members of Parliament

July 5, 1948

Link:

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/attlees-britain/empire-windrush/>

Questions

1. What is important about the date of the letter?
2. Based on Attlee's response, what do you think the previous letter (written by 11 Members of Parliament) stated?
3. What assurances does the prime minister provide to the concerned Members of Parliament?
4. What is Attlee's view of the recently arrived Caribbean migrants? Choose 2 specific passages to support your answer.

Source #2

Excerpt from "West Indian in England" Pamphlet

1949-1951

Link:

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/commonwealth-migration-since-1945/booklet-west-indian-on-england/>

Note: There is a disclaimer on the website regarding language—"Contains original language used at the time, which is not appropriate today."

Read sections c and d only (on accommodation and the colour bar).

Questions

1. The British government distributed these booklets to the Caribbean colonies. Why is this important to acknowledge? How might this influence the contents of the booklet?
2. How do the authors describe the experience of finding housing?
3. Despite "no legal colour bar," how do the authors describe racial attitudes towards migrants?
4. How useful do you think this information brochure was for recent arrivals? How would the information influence those who were in the process of deciding if they would go to Britain?
5. How does this source compare to Source #1?

Source #3

Recruitment Documents

1940s-1950s

- “The Recruitment of Barbadian Women” (1947-1948)

Link:

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/commonwealth-migration-since-1945/barbadian-women-workers-scheme/>

Note: There is a disclaimer on the website regarding language—“Contains original language used at the time, which is not appropriate today.”

- Advertisement for a Ship Sailing from Jamaica to London (1950s)

Link:

<https://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/collections/collections-online/photographs/item/2006-15852>

- “Come and Join Us” Poster (1953)

Link:

<https://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/collections/collections-online/posters/item/1983-4-6633>

Questions

1. What types of jobs were available for recent Caribbean arrivals?
2. What various attitudes towards Caribbean migrants are illustrated in these 3 recruitment documents? Consider the text as well as the images.
3. How do these attitudes compare with the perspectives and treatment of migrants revealed in Sources #1-2?

Source #4

Windrush Scandal Oral History Interviews

Conducted in the 2020s

Link: <https://windrushscandal.org/>

Note: This website is in the process of being updated and therefore, some interview clips may not be available yet.

The interviews are grouped into categories (Windrush survivors, British MPs & Councillors, Caribbean activists, etc.). Choose at least 2 interviews from 2 different categories.

Questions

Interview 1

1. What do they reveal about their personal experience connected to the Windrush story?
2. What are your reactions to the interview? (Consider what is surprising, interesting, upsetting, or questions that you have.)

Interview 2

1. What do they reveal about their personal experience connected to the Windrush story?
2. What are your reactions to the interview? (Consider what is surprising, interesting, upsetting, or questions that you have.)

Comparisons

1. How are the 2 interviews you listened to similar and/or different?
2. In what ways do the 2 interviews you listened to connect to the previous historical sources you explored in Sources #1-3? Do they confirm, contradict, and/or add to previous information?

Source #5

UK Government Fact Sheet

2018

Link:

<https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2018/04/12/factsheet-on-the-rights-of-commonwealth-citizens/>

Questions

1. Why did the government create this fact sheet?

2. The government recognizes some individuals may not have the required documents to prove their right to reside in the UK. What does the government urge these individuals to do?
3. How does the government explain the changes to its policy and their intentions?
4. How does this source compare with the oral history interviews from Source #4?

Source #6

Government Apologies for Windrush Scandal 2018

- Prime Minister Theresa May's Statement (video clip)

Link: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-43792411>

- Quotes from Home Secretary Sajid Javid (excerpts listed below)

Link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-apologises-to-members-of-windrush-generation>

"I have been very clear that the experiences of some members of the Windrush generation has been completely unacceptable, which is why I am committed to right the wrongs of successive governments."

"I have personally apologised to those identified through this review and I will make sure they receive support and access to the compensation scheme."

"Since we launched the Commonwealth Citizens' Taskforce, over 6,400 individuals have been given documents to confirm their status so that they can get on with their lives in the UK."

Questions

1. What does Prime Minister Theresa May specifically apologize for?
2. What does Home Secretary Sajid Javid specifically apologize for?
3. How do both leaders seek to repair the harm that has been done?
4. What are your reactions to these apology statements?

Source #7**Executive Summary of Wendy Williams' Report on the Windrush Scandal
2020**

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5e74984fd3bf7f4684279faa/6.5577_HO_Windrush_Lessons_Learned_Review_WEB_v2.pdf

Read page 7 (the "Executive Summary") only.

Questions

1. What are the conclusions of the report?
2. Choose 1 passage that you find to be the most powerful. Explain your choice.
3. What are your reactions to the executive summary?

Assignment 3: Summary Questions

After students have viewed each source, have a class or small group discussion on these culminating questions.

1. What conclusions can you make about British policy towards Caribbean migrants over time? Consider trends and patterns you notice throughout the sources you explored.
2. What lessons can be learned from the Windrush Scandal?
3. What questions are you still left with after exploring these sources?

Extension Activities

If time allows, students may extend their learning with these tasks.

1. Have students take one of their unanswered questions (their response to Question #3 in the Summary Questions) and conduct independent research to find an answer.
2. Have students (individually or in pairs/groups) research the experiences and treatment of Caribbean migrants during the time periods not discussed in the sources (late 1950s to 1990s). Some suggested topics to explore are listed below:
 - a. Late 1950s: Anti-immigrant leader Oswald Mosley, Nottingham and Notting Hill race riots (1958)
 - b. 1960s: Bristol Bus Boycott (1963), Black Power Movement, Enoch Powell's anti-immigrant speech (1968), connections to US Civil Rights Movement, impact of Caribbean music on British culture (Calypso/blues/ska)
 - c. 1970s: Police harassment, Mangrove 9 (1970), Notting Hill Carnival Riot (1976), Bob Marley (reggae, Rastafarianism), anti-immigration National Front Party
 - d. 1980s: New Cross house fire (1981), Labour Party's Black Sections Movement

- e. 1990s: Murder of Stephen Lawrence (1993)
- 3. Conduct research on the most recent updates on the Windrush Scandal—have the recommendations in Wendy Williams’ 2020 report been followed through?
- 4. Connect Caribbean migration to Britain (the Windrush Generation) to other global migrations and diaspora. What are some similarities and differences? Students and teachers may consult the following sources for ideas and research:
 - a. United Nations’ website on international migration
<https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/migration>
 - b. Pulitzer Center’s website on migration and refugees
<https://pulitzercenter.org/journalism/topics/migration-and-refugees>

Relevant Standards from CT Secondary Social Studies Standards-Approved 2023 Draft

- MW.His.4.a. Analyze the complex and interacting cultural, religious, and racial factors that influenced perspectives of imperialist policies.
- MW.Geo.2.a. Explain the relationships between the locations of places and the impact of imperialism using maps and other representations.
- MW.Geo.7.a. Analyze how historical events during imperialism influenced migration patterns and population distribution.
- MW.Civ.12.a. Investigate how different groups have struggled to gain freedom, equality, and social justice at the national and international levels.
- MW.Civ.3.a. Analyze the impact of treaties and laws on the maintenance of national and international order in the 20th century