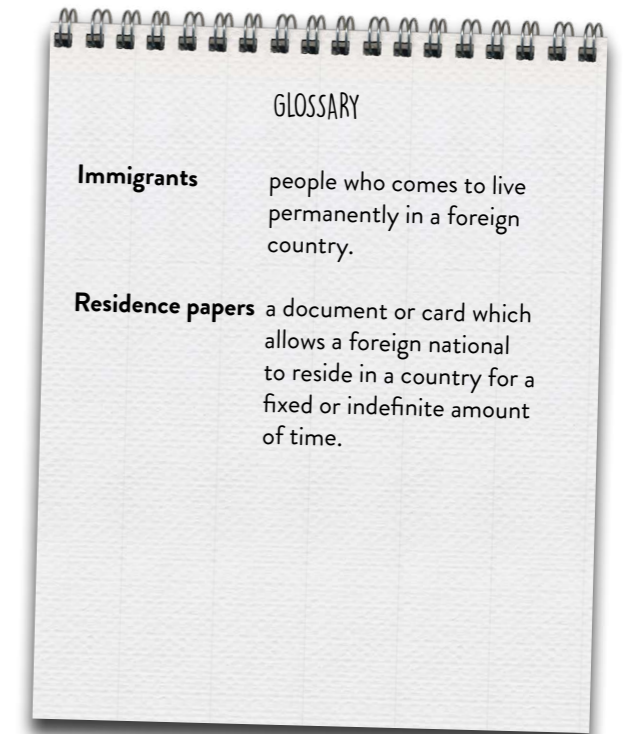


THE WINDRUSH GENERATION

QUIZ

1. Choose five adjectives to describe how child evacuees may have felt during the Second World War. Why have you chosen these adjectives?



WHO ARE THE WINDRUSH GENERATION?

<http://bit.ly/2WI55b1>
<https://bbc.in/3a1lp4S>



CAN YOU ORALLY SEQUENCE EVENTS WITH YOUR PARTNER?

THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE WINDRUSH GENERATION



1939

World War II begins.

2.5 million soldiers from across the British Empire join forces with Great Britain and the Allies.

1945

World War II ends.

Britain faces a major labour shortage and invites workers from across the Commonwealth to live and work in the United Kingdom.

The British Commonwealth

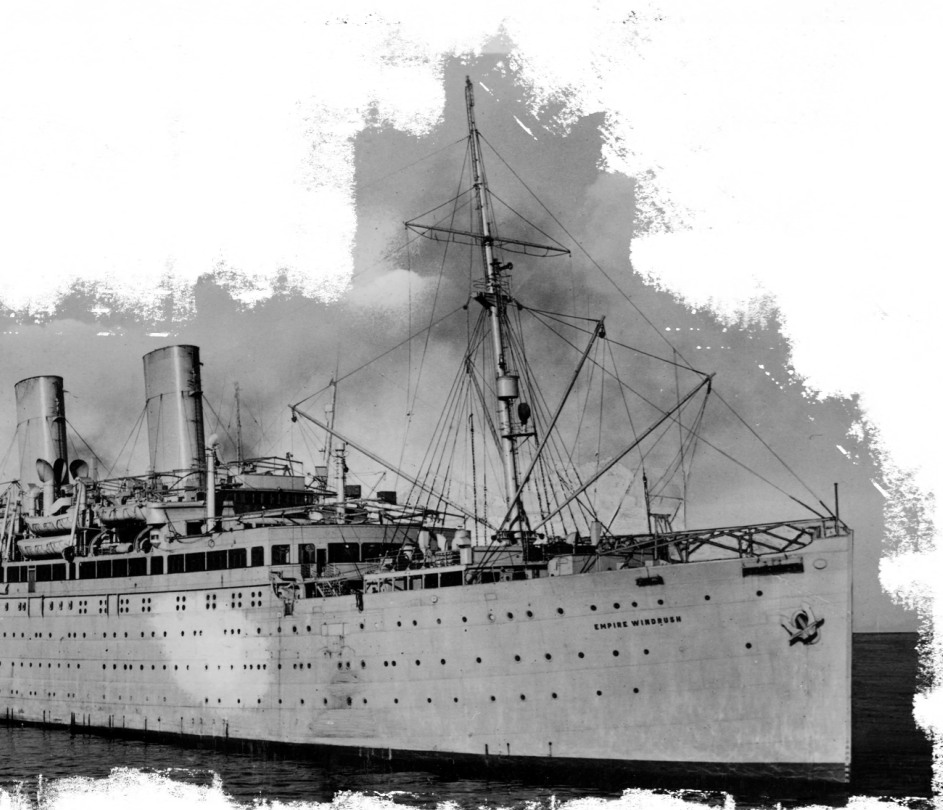
During the war, lots of young Caribbean men and women had served in the British armed forces. This is because many Caribbean countries were still part of the British Commonwealth and had yet to gain their independence. In fact, the British Empire had soldiers from five different continents fighting for them: Europe, North America, Australasia, Asia and Africa.

Britain's colonies sent over two and a half million men to fight for Britain during the war. India sent the most soldiers because India included both Pakistan and Bangladesh at the time. Colonies as far away as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Rhodesia (which is now Zimbabwe) also sent thousands of soldiers.

These colonies fought hard to keep Britain as safe as possible during the war. As a result of their great efforts, many colonies questioned whether they should still be under British rule or whether they were owed their independence. The end of the Second World War marked the beginning of Britain decolonising their Empire.

As well as steps to decolonise their Empire, Britain was also facing a major labour shortage at the end of the second world war. Young Caribbean men and women answered adverts which were posted about many different jobs.

Many of these Caribbean natives were excited to start a new life for themselves and did not hesitate to board a ship and travel thousands of miles across the Atlantic Ocean.



HMS EMPIRE VICTORY



1948

HMS Empire Windrush docked at Tilbury Docks in Essex carrying 492 passengers who had left the Caribbean to seek a new life in the United Kingdom.

THE BRITISH NATIONALITY ACT

Gave all citizens of the British Commonwealth British citizenship.

1971

Immigration Act restricts levels of migration but gives those already living in the United Kingdom Indefinite Leave to Remain.

However the government did not ask any of the Windrush Generation to seek official documents or residence papers.



2012

Home Secretary Theresa May launches the Home Office Hostile Environment policy. Aimed at reducing UK immigration figures by making it hard for people without residence papers to remain in the UK.

As many of the Windrush Generation did not have residence papers, thousands were detained in immigration centres and faced deportation.



2018

Home Secretary Sajid Javid announced that - after a review of 11,800 cases - 18 members of the Windrush generation who could have been wrongfully removed or detained would get a formal apology from the Government.

He also said that anyone who had left the UK would also be helped to return.



COMMUNITY PROGRAMME: WINDRUSH COMMUNITY PROJECT



<http://bit.ly/2vxAHzg>



As you watch these members of the Windrush community being interviewed about their arrival and new life in Britain, consider the following:

1. What were their first impressions of Britain?

2. What do they remember about school?

3. What types of jobs did they do on arrival?

4. What struggles did these people face when they started work?

5. How do they view Britain now?



LIFE IN THE UK



© The British Library

In response to the racist violence and riots that swept through Britain in the summer of 1958 – and in particular Notting Hill and Nottingham – Trinidad-born activist and West Indian Gazette founder Claudia Jones started an annual indoor Caribbean carnival. The first, held in January 1959, was subtitled ‘A people’s art is the genesis of their freedom’.



Above are two sources which offer an insight into what life was like for many Caribbean immigrants in Britain in the 1960s. What do these sources tell us about the sense of community amongst these Caribbean natives? What do they tell us about the hardships that they faced on arrival in the UK?

Prejudice against the Foreigner

On top of all this, there is a definite prejudice that exists against a West Indian, or against a foreigner, even if he is white. One employer explained it to me like this. He said ‘I have a small firm, and it is important to me that all my employees get on together. If I take a coloured man it is possible that some of my people mightn’t like it, and I just don’t want to take the risk, especially as I can find suitable people quite easily.’

This extract is taken from a book published by the BBC Caribbean Service in 1959 aimed at ‘West Indians who are considering going to Britain’.

