

**Topic**

The Windrush generation and the difficulties faced by immigrants coming to the UK

**Learning outcomes**

All learners will:

- practise speaking skills in a discussion
- listen to a poem, and review related vocabulary
- write a version of a poem in English

Some learners will:

- write an informal letter
- read short texts and practise paraphrasing

**Age group**

13 - 17 years old and adult

**Level**

CEF Level B2

**Time**

60 minutes

**Materials**

- Worksheet 1 - the Windrush generation
- Worksheet 2 – three profiles
- Presentation
- <http://www.blackpresence.co.uk/> - This site shows the contributions to the UK of Black Britons and is an excellent source of images
- <http://www.andrealevy.co.uk/> - Andrea Levy's Official website

**Introduction**

This lesson uses a very simple poem to convey the feelings of the Caribbean immigrants who arrived in Britain in the 1940s and 50s. The first wave of immigrants started with the arrival of a troop ship from Jamaica called the 'Empire Windrush'. These people came to be known as the 'Windrush' generation.

There are also a homework task with three texts which give background to well-known people in the Black community today. There are also some extension activities which could make this topic last over two lessons.

Try to get some images of 1940s and 1950s immigrants to set the scene or use pictures from the press of recent immigrants.

The three texts profiles describe people who featured in the recent vote to find the 'Top 100 Black Britons'. There are others to choose from in the web links. Adapt the lesson to suit your learner profile.

**NB:** Handle this topic with sensitivity as you could have someone in your class who has experienced recent immigration. Do not draw attention to them if they seem reluctant to discuss this topic. Stage 2 can be missed out to avoid making immigration a personal issue.

### Procedure

<p><b>1. Warmer (10 minutes)</b></p>	<p><b>Student worksheet task 1 (or slide 1) – Your country</b></p> <p>For this task you can use the example of yourself. If you live outside of your home country, describe the things you miss about it. It could be the people, the habits and lifestyle you have left behind. If you live in your home country, talk about the things you would miss if you left.</p> <p>Keep the discussion of new immigrants neutral. This task should be brief and serve to prepare vocabulary and ideas for the poem.</p> <p>Put the students into pairs to discuss these tasks.</p>
<p><b>2. Class discussion (10 minutes) OPTIONAL</b></p>	<p><b>Student worksheet task 2 (or slide 3) – going away</b></p> <p>Give examples for yourself or describe a member of your family who has moved abroad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put the class in pairs for the first 2 questions.</li> <li>• Discuss the third question with the whole class. If appropriate draw on examples from recent immigration in to the UK and mention the sorts of countries that people come from.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build up a list of possible reasons on the board:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- economic hardship</li> <li>- a wish for a better life for their children</li> <li>- to escape religious or political persecution</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>3. Reading (15minutes)</b>	<p><b>Student worksheet task 3 (slide 4) – poem</b></p> <p>Explain that this lesson is a tale about people changing country. They travel by ship. Introduce the poem in a very simple way so that you do not overload them with information. The people in the poem are travelling on a ship called the Empire Windrush. Encourage speculation about what it must feel like to leave your country. What a long journey on a ship must be like.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask pairs to think of a question that might be on the minds of the passengers. You could make some suggestions yourself.</li> <li>• If you have any photos from websites or books about the Windrush generation, you could ask them to describe the people; what they are wearing and if they look happy.</li> <li>• Write the questions for task 3 on the board and ask them to read them silently.</li> <li>• Read the poem out loud to the students. They only listen at this point.</li> <li>• Ask them to listen again and note any key words or phrases. They then compare key words in groups or pairs.</li> <li>• Look at the questions again and elicit some ideas. Help students understand the context when discussing the answers.</li> <li>• Now you can either ask higher levels to get into groups and try to write a version of the poem or you can give it to the class to read. It is very important to 'hear' the poem.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Mother Country is a key idea, and the word colony should be suggested and the idea of post-war Britain too. Post-war Britain was austere, people still lived with rationing, cities had been bombed. Don't make it a history lesson, just fill in the essential background. Try not to over explain the poem.</p>

<b>4. Comprehension (10 minutes)</b>	<p><b>Student worksheet task 4 (slides 5 and 6) – interpretation</b></p> <p>The more detailed comprehension will be more appropriate to intermediate levels but guide your class depending on their level. Higher levels can try to work through this task in groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain that there is not necessarily one correct answer to the questions, and they should try to look for clues in the poem</li> </ul> <p><b>Pt 1 Suggested Answers:</b> Nostalgic, bitter, confused</p> <p><b>Pt 2 Suggested Answers:</b> 1. Young (not yet a parent); 2. Elderly (they've been in the UK for a lifetime); 3. The government (help build the mother country); 4. They thought they'd get good jobs and give their children a better future); 5. The shock of the climate and that there was nobody there to greet them. 6. Because they were foreign/ looked different</p> <p><b>Note:</b> You could help complete the context at the end. Their colour was a major source of discrimination. Some men had recently been in the UK in a uniform as fighting soldiers in the war and they had been welcomed. Out of uniform they had a different experience. No coloureds, no Irish were notices in boarding houses. But not every white person gave them the cold shoulder and some immigrants have very positive memories.</p>
<b>5. Creative writing (15 minutes)</b>	<p><b>Student worksheet task 5 (slide 7)– finish the poem</b></p> <p>This creative writing exercise is best done in small groups. The discussion of the poem in task 4 should give them food for thought.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check: how many lines are in each stanza (7) Are the lines short or long? (short)</li> <li>• Explain that their poem can start with one of the examples shown. E.g. Our children...</li> <li>• Ask learners to share their ideas.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Homework – Reading</b>	<p><b>Student worksheet task 5 (slide 8) – Black Britons</b></p> <p>With higher levels you could ask students to select a profile from the website <a href="https://blackpresence.co.uk">https://blackpresence.co.uk</a> and write a summary for homework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give students one of the profiles on <b>worksheet 2</b></li> <li>• Ask them to read the questions in task 5 on their worksheet and then look at the profile.</li> <li>• If using the slide make sure learners note down the questions</li> </ul>

- In the next lesson put students in groups of 3 to tell each other about the person they read about. Try to have pictures of the 3 people to show the class.

Individual extension activities could be used for a longer lesson or to build a multi-lesson project around the theme of immigration.

<b>7. Extension activity - The letter home (30 minutes)</b>	<p><b>Student worksheet task 7 (slide 9) – a letter or email home</b></p> <p>This should be a pair or group writing effort. The richness of response to this exercise depends on the level of students' English and the point at which you use it. Some students might go from looking at the poem to this letter/ email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the format of a letter or email (whichever format is most useful to your learners).</li> <li>• Give guidance on organising and especially on language. See <b>slide 10</b></li> </ul>
<b>8. Extension activity (20 minutes)</b>	<p><b>Student worksheet task 8 (slide 11) - cultural identity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give your own example. Which could be a regional identity</li> <li>• Put students in pairs or groups to discuss the questions. Give group roles, such as facilitator (who make sure everyone gets a chance to speak), note taker, speaker, etc.</li> <li>• Ask groups to share a summary of their discussion</li> </ul>
<b>9. Extension activity (20 minutes)</b>	<p><b>Student worksheet task 9 (slide 12) – the English-speaking world</b></p> <p>This should not turn in to a geography lesson, but it will appeal to pairs or groups of students who like working with charts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support this task with a basic black and white world map. Make a copy for yourself and prepare before the lesson. Shade all ex- colonies and draw up a list.</li> <li>• Give students in pairs or small groups a map to work from and ask them to locate countries.</li> </ul> <p><b>NB.</b> An alternative is to hold a quiz based on English speaking countries.</p>

**10. Extension  
activity (60  
minutes)****Student worksheet task 10 (Slide 13) – project**

This task gives extended speaking and presentation skills practice for small groups of high level students.

- Do an example presentation to help them start planning. You can either use the ideas on slide 14 or create your own.

**Contributed by**

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