

Topic

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

Aims

- To practise speaking skills in a discussion
- To listen to a poem, and review related vocabulary
- To write a version of a poem in English
- To practise reading short texts and paraphrasing
- To practise writing an informal letter

Age group

12 years old - adult

Level

CEF Level B1 and above

Time

45-60 minutes per lesson if using all activities

Materials

- Worksheet 1 - the Windrush generation
- Worksheet 2 – three profiles
- <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'. The people who came to Britain from the West Indies came to be known as the 'Windrush' generation.

There are also three texts which give background to well-known people in the Black community today. These extra texts can be used with tasks 4 and 5. You can choose to miss out these 2 tasks and move on to the theme of cultural identity in task 6. Adding the texts and tasks 4 and 5 will expand the theme of

this lesson to the present-day contribution of black members of UK society. You can choose the tasks and your focus depending on your students' level and interests.

Try to get some images of 1940s and 1950s immigrants to set the scene or use pictures from the press of recent immigrants. Headlines from recent news reports of immigrants may work well with higher level students.

The personalities outlined in the 3 extra texts can be illustrated by using the web links. If you have any other photos of well-known black Britons or have photos of people who your students may know you can use these. The 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.

Procedure

<p>1. Warmer (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Student worksheet task 1 – Your country</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>2. Class discussion (5–10 minutes)</p>	<p>Student worksheet task 2 – going away</p> <p>Handle this task 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. If they are keen to talk, ask for examples of what they or their parents brought. Give examples for yourself or describe a member of your family who has moved abroad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put the class in pairs for the first 2 questions. • 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. • Build up a list of possible reasons on the board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - economic hardship - a wish for a better life for their children - to escape religious or political persecution

**3. Reading
(15–20
minutes)****Student worksheet task 3 – poem**

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.

- Ask pairs to think of a question that might be on the minds of the passengers. You could make some suggestions yourself.
- 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.
- Write the questions for task 3 on the board and ask them to read them silently.
- Then ask them to listen to the poem but they do not have to rush to answer the questions. Read the poem out loud to the students.
- Ask them to listen again and note any key words or phrases.
- They can then compare key words in groups or pairs.
- Look at the questions again and get some suggestions.

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.

- Read it in a measured and natural manner. You can ask students to read it aloud in groups or pairs if appropriate.

Help students understand the context when you run through the answers to the questions. 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 in to a history lesson, just fill in the essential background. Try not to over explain the poem.

4. Comprehension (10 minutes)	<p>Student worksheet task 4 – interpretation</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. Tell them that there is not necessarily one correct answer to the questions and they should try to look for clues in the poem</p> <p>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>
5. Reading (15-20 minutes or homework task)	<p>Student worksheet task 5 – Black Britons</p> <p>This task could be given to students as homework for the next class.</p> <p>With higher levels you could ask students to select a profile from the website https://blackpresence.co.uk and write a summary for homework.</p> <p>Give students one of the profiles on worksheet 2</p> <p>Ask them to read the questions in task 5 on their worksheet and then look at the profile. The questions help to focus their attention. Collect in the profiles if you have given them out and 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.</p>
6. Creative writing (10-15 minutes)	<p>Student worksheet task 6 – finish the poem</p> <p>This creative writing exercise is best done in small groups. The discussion of the poem in task 4 and the work on the present-day Britons should give them food for thought.</p> <p>Explain that they should try to keep the lines simple.</p> <p>Read aloud the attempts or pass them around for groups to share.</p>

**Extension
activities**
Student worksheet task 7 – a letter home

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. Another group may do tasks 4 and 6 before they do this letter.

Give guidance on organising and especially on language to lower level groups: I was hoping to find, I was surprised to see... Give them some stem sentences to help them.

Student worksheet task 8 - cultural identity

This is a discussion task. Put students in pairs or groups and get suggestions. Ask if there are regional identities within their country. Give examples for yourself depending on where you come from.

Student worksheet task 9 – the English-speaking world

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. Make a second list of English Speaking countries.

This should not turn in to a geography lesson, but it will appeal to pairs or groups of students who like working with charts. Try to give every student a map to work from and ask them to locate countries.

An alternative is to hold a quiz in the next lesson based on English speaking countries.

Student worksheet task 10 – project

This task gives extended speaking and presentation skills practice for small groups of high level students. You may need to do an example presentation to help them start planning.

Original lesson plan by Clare Lavery