

October 2021

The UK Black History Zone (bhm21.imhistory.uk) ran from 4 October to 15 October 2021. The Zone featured historians and activists championing historical figures that helped shape the modern-day UK.

Key activity figures

Schools	5
Students logged in	103
Students active	83%
Historians	8
Questions asked	2
Questions approved	2
Answers given	6
Live chats	7
Lines of live chat	1,961
Average lines per live chat	245

Historical figures

8 historians created a profile for a historical figure in the Zone.

You can see the historical figures at bhm21.imhistory.uk/historicalfigures

Students

103 students from 5 schools across the UK logged into the Zone.

100% of active students were from target schools: 63% from underserved schools and 37% from widening participation schools.

Live chats

7 live chats took place during the activity: 6 were school classes booked by teachers and 1 was an additional chat, open to all the students.

An additional 2 live chats were booked, however both schools were unable to attend. There was capacity in the Zone for 10 live Chats with 5 on each week. There were an additional 6 Chat requests that could not be filled.

There was 1 live chat where teachers asked questions on behalf of their students. Therefore, the number of students reached will be higher by approximately 25.

On average, 3 historians attended each live chat.

Historians

During the Zone the historians interacted with students by writing 464 lines of live chat, and providing 6 answers to 2 posted questions.

School activity

44 teachers registered to take part from 35 schools. Students from 5 schools across the UK participated in the Zone. In addition to live chats booked by teachers, there was 1 Monday after-school Chat for the students and their families.

School	Active users	Chats attended	Chat lines (total)	Questions approved
Dinglewell Junior School, Gloucester U	31	1	435	0
Loughborough Primary School, London WP	14	1	259	0
Ladybridge High School, Bolton WP	23	1	351	2
Weaverham High School, Northwich U *	2	2	33	0
Cedar Mount Academy, Gorton WP	20	1	419	0

* In these chats teachers typed questions on behalf of their students, with the chat displayed on a screen.

We want to increase the participation of under-represented groups. Find out what we mean by under-served (U) and widening participation (WP) schools, and how you can support us in working with more of these: about.imascientist.org.uk/under-served-and-wp

Live chats

The word cloud below demonstrates what students and scientists talked about in live chats. The bigger the word, the more frequently it was used.



Good engagement

Historians helped school students learn about Black British history, from Roman Britain to the present day, through narratives that aren't centered on slavery...

Student: Did Andrew Watson's teammates respect him or help him out?

Tony (Andrew Watson): Andrew Watson appears to have been well respected which is one of the reasons why he was the team captain and also the first Black football administrator because he was the secretary of the Queen's Park football club in Glasgow in the 1800's

Students gained a well-informed and fuller understanding of UK History..

Student: Were Black people treated as equals in the Roman Empire?

Liz (Ivory Bangle Lady): There certainly could be - one of the Roman Emperors, Septimius Severus, was born in Libya. The Romans recognised differences in skin colour but that was less important than class, free/enslaved status and wealth.

Student: Were there many Black people at [the historical figures] time?

Hannah (William Cuffay): There were lots more Black people than you might think. Dido Belle and William Cuffay were just two of the many Black people in 18th and 19th century Britain.

Many students were able to practise their inquiry skills and enhance their school learning...

Student 1: Why was the march called off last minute to hand in a petition to the house of commons?

Hannah (William Cuffay): Good knowledge! The march was called off because the authorities were scared of what the chartists might do. They didn't have any evidence for this, but they were scared the march might turn violent.

Student 1: Why do we tend to hear more about male activists than female activists?

Kwaku (Claudia Jones): Good question. There is obviously an over representation of male activists. Firstly, we don't hear so much of the females, because they are not well highlighted and so one has the dig for information...

Students also learned about the impact of the historical figures on Modern Day UK..

Student 1: How did you change history?

Leah (Dido Elizabeth Belle): Good question. Historians have also talked about her influence on her Great-uncle, Lord Mansfield. Lord Mansfield was a very important judge in England. He was in charge of judging cases involving enslaved people.

Leah (Dido Elizabeth Belle): When cases ruled in favour of the enslaved person, people at the time thought Lord Mansfield's decisions could have been because he brought Dido up in his family home

Leah (Dido Elizabeth Belle): She is also important because her life shows that there were Black people living in Britain throughout history, and in her case could be seen in upper class families.

Feedback

It's very important for our learners to ask questions to gain more of an understanding. I have never seen them so focused **History Teacher**



Paddy Russell
@HeadLadybridge

...

Our Year 8 learners are chatting live to historians about influential people who have fought for equal rights as part of Black History Month. There is a real buzz in the rooms about this experience! Brilliant. 😊
@LadybridgeHigh



I usually hide behind the words in my articles and *I'm History* has pushed me to try different things. I really enjoyed sharing my knowledge. It's given me the confidence to seek out other face-to-face public engagement opportunities.

Leah Conway (historian)

Thank you for your time answering our questions and really appreciate the answers and will help with our learning

Student

The amount of knowledge that the experts had surpassed our expectations and it was shared in a child friendly way.

Humanities Curriculum Lead

Thank you historians. It was my favourite English lesson ever!

Student

It was nice to be able to reach so many schools and a good thing to do for the university. It's really good to be able to do something meaningful for Black history month. Historians don't get a lot of time to do things and it's great to be able to collaborate in an activity that has an impact. Definitely would like to take part again, the profile is ready and it's efficient.

Liz Gloyn (historian)