

The City Classroom

Continuing the Conversation Black Curriculum for Leicester(shire)

Reflections and actions from our event 'In Conversation, with Carol Leeming MBE FRSA' which saw the presentation of our recently commissioned Black Curriculum Learning Resources. This event was led by Black academics and cultural arts practitioners and brought together local artists and educators to feed in to ongoing and urgent discussions about how we can build a more relevant, representative curriculum for children in Leicester/shire and embed a Black Curriculum in all Leicester/shire schools.

View The City Classroom's Black Curriculum Resources at:
www.cityclassroom.org/resources

What can we do now? What can we achieve within one year? What about five years? Ten? How do we build a long-term vision for the integration of Black arts, culture, and history into our children's education?

Remember: this is a starting point, not an end. Decolonising education calls on all of us to be a part of the change, with both a readiness to speak and strive for anti-racist progression, and to listen to and elevate the voices of people with lived experience as part of the global majority.

Key Comments:

- Think globally, act locally
- We are all seekers, gatherers and creators
- Lived experience enables us to create things differently
- Ensure the cultural offer of the city is connected with its communities
- Creativity is a vital transferable skill which can support attainment
- All learning is multi-sensory and life long
- Curiosity is to be welcomed

*This work is in the wake of Black Lives Matter –
We need to keep it on the agenda*

Reflections and Considerations

Be confident about terminology and conscious about your use of language

- **Global Majority:** This refers to people of colour who comprise the majority of our global community.
- **Black:** In the context of our Black Curriculum Learning Resources, Black refers at different points to all people whose identities have been politicised as 'non-white', and specifically to African and Caribbean nationals and diasporic peoples.
- **Decolonisation:** Decolonising education means dismantling curricula which privileges a white-centric colonial lens and building a school system which is responsive to and representative of all people. It also acknowledges how forces of imperialism and colonialism have marginalised, deprived and ignored Black arts, histories, and knowledges.

Use, share and amplify Black curriculum resources

- Share with peers and colleagues via word of mouth.
- Welcome curiosity and multi-sensory approaches to learning and engagement.
- Schools & teachers can amplify to senior leadership teams (SLTs).
- Keep the Black curriculum on your agenda – be confident and persistent about raising its importance / relevance / urgency.
- Get everybody on the same page about decolonising education.
- How can the Black Curriculum Learning Resources act as a catalyst or springboard for a school's learning and development?

Engage in training

- Training could enable confidence in teaching a Black curriculum and using creativity as a transferable skill.
- Connect with national organisations for teacher training, assemblies, workshops, and bespoke services.
- Develop confidence in using arts in cross-curricular learning.
- Remind other professionals how vital creativity is for all children, and how it can support wellbeing and attainment.
- Share practice and peer learning with other educators, artists, colleagues, and networks
- Acknowledge white privilege and the importance of developing legitimate white allyship

Get involved in Black arts & history

- Go and see performance work, exhibitions, etc. by global majority / Black artists.
- Read / listen to / watch work by Black academics, activists, and educators, from current and historical contexts.
- Look out for other events around the Black curriculum.
- Diversify your school's reading materials and displayed artwork.
- Plan more projects for students based around the work of Black artists / academics / etc.
- Don't overlook the students, families, or communities you work with as a fount of cultural knowledge and lived experience. There is space for rich child-led and community-led work here.

Difficulties – Time & Money

- Difficulties in implementing changes in schools arise from the limited time and money available to teachers. This is one reason why amplifying to senior leaders is so important – we need to buy in for changes to planning and budgets to be pushed through.
- Schools make trip bookings and class project plans at least an academic year in advance. It is difficult for teachers to find events far enough in advance, and short-notice events are often unable to be funded to go ahead.
- Trying to bring in larger partners, such as Universities, who have more funding and ability to influence a broad community.

Next Steps for The City Classroom

- Expand our bank of learning materials by commissioning further global majority focused resources.
- Understand and review how resources are accessed and used, to create a hub of relevant and useful tools.
- Establish a “go to” group of Black artists and educators who can act as an expert network to support the delivery of Black arts education.
- Add a regular section to our future newsletters with Black curriculum information.
- Joined up comms - Strengthen communications between schools and strengthen signposting for schools to be able to plug in to relevant arts opportunities.
- Review national organisations, networks and groups who are doing similar work, including other LCEPs
- Connect with The Black Curriculum (national organisation) for teacher training, assemblies, workshops, and bespoke services.
- An opportunity for a Creative Schools Network.
- Explore child-led projects on Black History.

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