

Black History Month

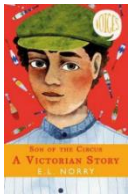
Historical stories from Black History around the world.

Windrush Child by Benjamin Zephaniah – 10+



This is the story of Leonard, who at 10 years old makes the journey with his mother from Jamaica to join his father in England. Leonard is part of the Windrush generation, one of thousands of people and families who were persuaded by the government to help rebuild England after the Second World War and make a better life for themselves. A book to make children and adults alike think hard about our history, about racism and the Black Lives Matter movement, about fairness, about politics - and also about bravery and unsung heroes.

Son of the Circus: A Victorian Story by E L Norry – 10+



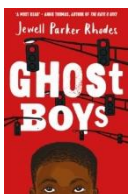
Based on real people and historical events, Son of the Circus is a tale of triumph, perseverance, fitting in and standing out in a crowd. With a real feel of Victorian Britain, the story deals delicately with the experience of being a person of colour in the latter part of the 19th century, and delights readers with the intricacies of circus life.

Black and British: A Short, Essential History by David Olusoga –11+



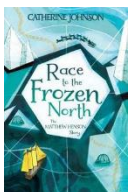
David Olusoga's latest edition of Black and British has been revised and rewritten especially for secondary school children. Olusoga concisely explains the much-overlooked history of Black peoples in Britain and beyond, from the multicultural diverse society of Roman times and the first Africans in Britain to the link between the Industrial Revolution and the American Civil War, as well as more modern history such as the Second World War and the Windrush scandal.

Ghost Boys by Jewell Parker Rhodes –11+



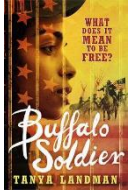
A heart-breaking and powerful story about a black boy killed by a white police officer. As a ghost, young Jerome witnesses the aftermath of his death, including scenes with his family, the police and the media. Jerome goes on to meet another ghost- that of the real life figure Emmett Till: a black boy whom himself was murdered in 1955. A story dealing with grief, history, the idea of biases (both conscious and unconscious) and the fight for justice.

Race to the Frozen North: The Matthew Henson Story by Catherine Johnson 11+



Based on the story of real-life 19th-century explorer Matthew Henson, a remarkable story and an exciting read which sheds important light on the way prejudice has white-washed the way we learn about the past. A super-readable book and printed in a dyslexia-friendly format.

Buffalo Soldier by Tanya Landman 12+



When Charley is freed from slavery at the end of the Civil War between the Yankees and the Confederates, she imagines a new world of unlimited opportunities. Instead, she finds a life that is more dangerous than ever before. Her only way to survive is to disguise herself as a boy and join the army.

However, the army, like everywhere else, is riddled with prejudice and danger. It is only when Charley is sent to fight against the Apache Indians, another much discriminated against group that she begins to learn what it could mean to be free.

Coram Boy by Jamila Gavin – 12+



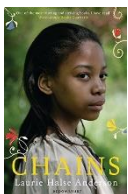
The harsh realities of 18th century life, of slavery, of prejudice, of tragedy, of corruption, of the haves and the have nots, are woven together in this story of Toby, saved from an African ship as a child, and Aaron, the illegitimate son of the heir to a great estate. The two boys' lives are linked by the Coram Man, a shady figure who collects abandoned and unwanted children from across the country, supposedly to deliver them to a safe new life at the Coram Hospital in London. In reality, however, the unscrupulous man sells the unfortunate children into slavery, or 'disposes' of them if they are of no use to him.

A Change is Gonna Come 12+



From the tale of a dystopian prison camp in Brighton to a Harry Potter fan trying to keep her compulsions a secret; from an historical circus member finding their place to friends growing apart and a grief-stricken young person discovering their heritage, A Change Is Gonna Come is a must-have anthology full of gripping entries. Featuring poems and stories from 12 black, Asian and minority ethnic authors – including four previously unpublished writers – this absorbing book offers refreshing perspectives and thought-provoking questions about the meaning of change that will hit home with everyone.

Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson 12+



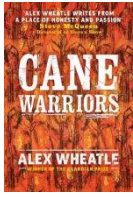
Isabel and her sister, Ruth, are slaves. Sold from one owner to the next, they arrive in New York as the Americans are fighting for their independence, and the English are struggling to maintain control. Soon Isabel is struggling too. Struggling to keep herself and her sister safe in a world in which they have no control. With a rare and compelling voice, this haunting novel tells not only the story of a remarkable girl and her incredible strength, but also of a time and place in which slavery was the order of the day.

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas 13+



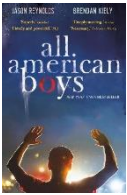
One night, Starr and her childhood friend Khalil get pulled over by police. They end up shooting and killing Khalil after apparently mistaking the boy's hairbrush for a gun. Starr is the only witness and has to decide whether to use her voice to try and fight for justice. What follows is a brilliant and fantastically told exploration of race in America - and of growing up, too.

Cane Warriors by Alex Wheatle 13+



This story is inspired by a real life rebellion in British-owned slave plantations in Jamaica in 1760. Moa is fourteen. The only life he has ever known is toiling on the Frontier sugar cane plantation for endless hot days, fearing the vicious whips of the overseers. Then one night he learns of an uprising, led by the charismatic Tacky. Moa is to be a cane warrior, and fight for the freedom of all the enslaved people in the nearby plantations. Cane Warriors is a book about doing the right thing, unbelievable bravery and deep friendship; but most importantly this book is about a part of British and Jamaican history that is hardly known.

All American Boys by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely 14+



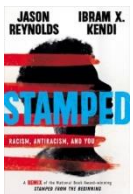
An immensely powerful, timely novel about police brutality against young Black men. Shining a stark light on white privilege and the racism implicit in not speaking out, it's a punch-packing wake-up call for us all to stand up and plant ourselves on the right side of history.

The Help by Kathryn Stockett 14+



Where black maids raise white children, but aren't trusted not to steal the silver . . . There's Aibileen, raising her seventeenth white child and nursing the hurt caused by her own son's tragic death; Minny, whose cooking is nearly as sassy as her tongue; and white Miss Skeeter, home from College, who wants to know why her beloved maid has disappeared. Skeeter, Aibileen and Minny. No one would believe they'd be friends; fewer still would tolerate it. But as each woman finds the courage to cross boundaries, they come to depend and rely upon one another.

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi - 14+



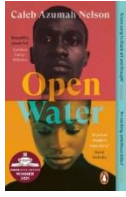
Chronicles the story of anti-black, racist ideas over the course of American history. Racist ideas in our country did not arise from ignorance or hatred. Instead, they were developed by some of the most brilliant minds in history to justify and rationalise the nation's deeply entrenched discriminatory policies. But while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited. In shedding light on the history of racist ideas in America, this adaptation offers young readers the tools they need to combat these ideas - and, in the process, gives society a reason to hope.

The Black Friend on Being A Better White Person by Frederick Joseph 14+



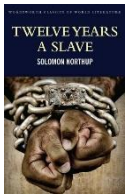
Speaking directly to the reader, Frederick Joseph offers powerful reflections on his own experiences with racism. As a former token Black kid, he now presents himself as the friend many readers need, touching on topics including cultural appropriation, reverse racism and white privilege.

Open Water by *Caleb Azumah Nelson* - 16+



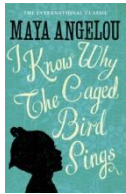
Two young people meet at a pub in South East London. Both are Black British, both won scholarships to private schools where they struggled to belong, both are now artists - he a photographer, she a dancer - trying to make their mark in a city that by turns celebrates and rejects them. Tentatively, tenderly, they fall in love. But two people who seem destined to be together can still be torn apart by fear and violence. At once an achingly beautiful love story and a potent insight into race and masculinity, *Open Water* asks what it means to be a person in a world that sees you only as a Black body, to be vulnerable when you are only respected for strength, to find safety in love, only to lose it.

Twelve Years a Slave by *Solomon Northup* - 16+



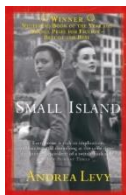
Twelve Years a Slave is the extraordinary true story of Solomon Northup, a free black man living in New York State who, in 1841, was kidnapped and sold into slavery. A fascinating and important period of American history

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by *Maya Angelou* - 16+



1930's America teaches Marguerite that black is ugly and that the abuse she suffers is her own fault. It is only in her teens that she emerges from the private world of muteness into which she has withdrawn and confronts the prejudice around her. Maya Angelou's classic autobiographical account of her childhood is a powerful and moving evocation of a black girl's struggle against her oppressors.

Small Island by *Andrea Levy* - 16+



It is 1948, and England is recovering from a war. But at 21 Nevern Street, London, the conflict has only just begun. Queenie Blyth's neighbours do not approve when she agrees to take in Jamaican lodgers, but Queenie doesn't know when her husband will return, or if he will come back at all. What else can she do?

Gilbert Joseph was one of the several thousand Jamaican men who joined the RAF to fight against Hitler. Returning to England as a civilian he finds himself treated very differently. It's desperation that makes him remember a wartime friendship with Queenie and knock at her door. Gilbert's wife Hortense, too, had longed to leave Jamaica and start a better life in England. But when she joins him she is shocked to find London shabby, decrepit, and far from the golden city of her dreams.

