

Empire Windrush: the Passengers

When the SS Empire Windrush docked at Tilbury, Essex, in June 1948 it began a new and important chapter in the long history of the black presence in England. Many of the people on board left the Caribbean in order to make a new life for themselves in what they saw as the “mother country”.

The activities here are designed to explore the experiences of these people when they arrived in England.

The first thing to do is to go to the BBC website that looks at the Windrush, its passengers and the effect that its arrival had on England.

Please read the memories and thoughts of some of the people on the Windrush and answer the questions about them.

Arthur Curling

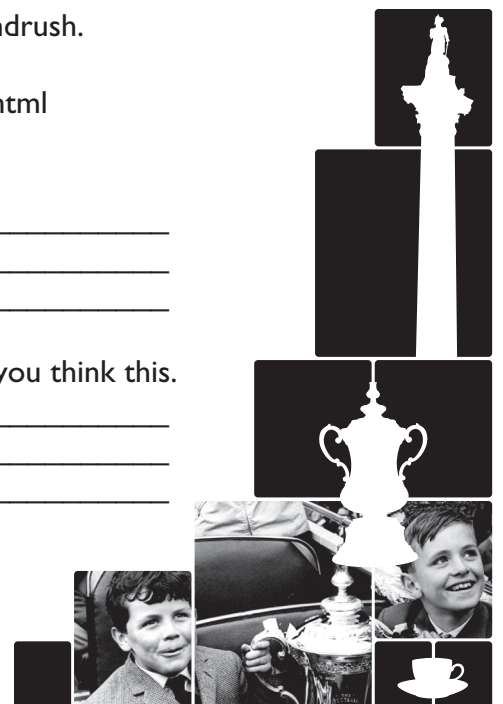
Arthur Curling served with the Royal Air Force during the second world war. He returned to Jamaica in 1946 and then came back to England on the Windrush.

His story is at:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/society_culture/multicultural/arrival_01.shtml

Why do you think Arthur Curling decided to come back to England?

Do you think he enjoyed his experience of England? Give reasons why you think this.



What does he say about the experiences of Caribbean people in Canada?



Clinton Edwards

Like Arthur Curling, Clinton Edwards served in the RAF, went back to the West Indies and then returned to England on the Windrush. His story is at:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/society_culture/multicultural/arrival_02.shtml

Why do you think Clinton Edwards decided to come back to England?

What three jobs did Clinton have in England?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Do you think he enjoyed his experience of England? Give reasons why you think this.

Lucile Harris

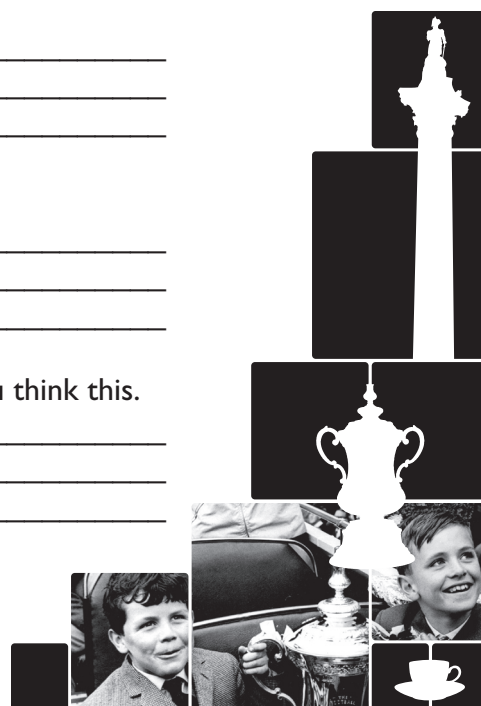
Lucile Harris was one of the few women who travelled on the Windrush to England. Her story is at:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/society_culture/multicultural/arrival_04.shtml

Why do you think Lucile Harris came to England?

What were Lucile's first impressions of England when she arrived?

Do you think that she regrets settling in England? Give reasons why you think this.



The Learning Curve website uses material from the National Archives and has a lot of material on the Windrush. One of the activities they have is a collection of photos from the Caribbean and England from around the time of the second world war.

You can find them at:

<http://www.learningcurve.gov.uk/snapshots/snapshot11/snapshot11.htm>

Use these photos and the memories of the Windrush passengers from the BBC website to imagine that you have just arrived in England from the Caribbean. You have to write a letter to your relatives back home. What can you tell them about life in England and what your experiences are of England and the people who live here.

