



What's going on?

There have been several nights of protests and violent clashes between police and protestors as demonstrations have swept across cities in the US and other cities around the world. The protests in Minneapolis began in reaction to the death of a man named George Floyd after he was stopped by police officers. The protests have now spread across the country to cities including New York, LA, Chicago and Philadelphia. While many protests have been peaceful, many places have seen rioting, looting and violence and President Trump has said he will call in the army if things aren't brought back under control.

Question:

What does Black Lives Matter mean?

Listen, think, share

- Look at the poster image, are you aware of the protests currently taking place in America and in other cities around the world? Explain that many people are angry about the unfairness and mistreatment of how black African American citizens are treated by the police and in other situations within their lives. They want to raise awareness of racism and are trying to change the opinions and actions of others. As some of the protests have turned violent, they have caused divided opinion. Some people believe that more peaceful methods should be used to help educate and initiate change.
- Explain that many people in America feel the police and the justice system treat black people unfairly compared to how they treat white people. African Americans are five times more likely to be sent to jail than white Americans. Does this surprise us? Have we heard of the Black Lives Matters movement? Explain that the recent protests have brought the ongoing movement to the forefront of peoples' attention all around the world. The movement campaigns against violence and racism and fights for equality for black people around the world, starting in 2013.
- Read through the experience of American author Shola Richards found on the resource. What can it teach us about the effects of racism on his daily life? Does any of his experience surprise us? Why do you think he wanted to share his story at this time?
- On Tuesday 2nd June, millions of people around the world shared a plain black image as part of 'Black Tuesday', a global event to protest against racial inequality. Organisers behind the movement asked people to, post a picture of a black square on their social media account, mute their account for the day and use the time they would otherwise be on social media to educate themselves on Black Lives Matter.
- Watch the video (link found below). Do we think Blackout Tuesday was an effective way to raise awareness? What do you think the benefits are for pausing and using the time to learn? Can you think of any other ways to raise awareness about an issue we care about?

Reflection

Black Lives Matter and Blackout Tuesday are movements to both raise awareness and educate people about racial inequalities around the world. Racism is something we can all learn about and find out ways that we can support and promote equality for all.

Challenge

Can you find out about and create a fact file from a person influential to the black civil rights movement e.g. Rosa Parks or Martin Luther King?

Web Links

George Floyd and the Protests

www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/52813673

Useful Video – What was Blackout Tuesday?

www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/52893017

Send us your challenge!

Email help@picture-news.co.uk

Twitter [@HelpPicture](https://twitter.com/HelpPicture)

Facebook [/PictureNewsPrimary](https://www.facebook.com/PictureNewsPrimary)

Resource

Read through the experience of American author Shola Richards. What can it teach us about the effects of racism on his daily life?



Shola Richards walking with his daughter and dog

Twice a day, I walk my dog Ace around my neighbourhood with one, or both, of my girls. I know that doesn't seem noteworthy, but here's something that I must admit, I would be scared to take these walks without my girls and my dog. In fact, in the four years living in my house, I have never taken a walk around my neighbourhood alone (and probably never will).

Some of you may read that and think that I'm being melodramatic, but this is my reality.

When I'm walking down the street holding my young daughter's hand and walking my sweet fluffy dog, I'm just a loving dad and pet owner taking a break from the joylessness of crisis home schooling. But without them by my side, almost instantly, I change into a threat in the eyes of some. Instead of being a loving dad to two little girls, unfortunately, all that some people can see is a 6'2" athletically-built black man in a cloth mask who is walking around in a place where he doesn't belong (even though, I'm still the same guy who just wants to take a walk through his neighbourhood). It's equal parts exhausting and depressing to feel like I can't walk around outside alone, for fear of being targeted.

If you're surprised by this, don't be. We live in a world where there is a sizable amount of people who actually believe that racism isn't a thing.

So, let me share some points:

1) Having white privilege doesn't mean that your life isn't difficult, it simply means that your skin colour isn't one of the things contributing to your life difficulties. Case in point, if it never crossed your mind that you could have the police called on you for simply bird watching then know that is a privilege that many black people (myself included) don't currently enjoy.

2) Responding to "Black Lives Matter" by saying "All Lives Matter" is insensitive. All lives can't matter until black lives matter.

3) Racism is very real; it isn't just limited to the extremes.

4) In order for racism to get better, it's important we all use our voices and speak up when we see racism.

As for me, I'll continue to walk these streets holding my 8-year-old daughter's hand, in hopes that she'll continue to keep her daddy safe from harm. I know that sounds backward, but that's the world that we're living in these days.