

Edward Colston's statue thrown in the docks – telling the story through drama

On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June, protesters pulled down the statue of slave trader Edward Colston, dragged and rolled it through the streets of Bristol before throwing it in the docks. Here are some pictures of what happened:



Protesters use ropes to pull down the statue.

Look at the faces of the people. Are they protesters or bystanders...what is going through their minds?



The statue is rolled away. How are the protesters feeling now? What about the people following behind?



One of the protesters "takes a knee" on Edward Colston's neck. Why did he do this?



Colston's statue in the docks. Look at the man with his hands in the air...and the one with his phone...



This is the "new plinth". Who do you think made the placards? When did they put them there? Who arranged them so neatly?



You won't find many photos of police on this day, which is strange given what was happening. Why do you think this was? The man in the circle is Superintendent Andy Bennett, who was in charge of policing the protest. What was he thinking as events unfolded?

Drama is about “putting yourself in someone else’s shoes” – really getting inside their head and finding out what makes them tick. It can also be a powerful way of communicating a message about a subject you feel strongly about.

Your task:

**Create a drama about the pulling down of Edward Colston’s statue. Choose a character who was there and put yourself in their shoes.**

To help get into the mind of your character, you might like to consider these questions:

- Why were they there?
  - E.g. deliberately wanted to protest – took ropes with them ready to pull down statue OR
  - Just happened to be passing by and got caught up in the crowd OR
  - Was on duty as a police officer
- How did they feel as the events unfolded?
  - Proud?
  - Frightened?
  - Surprised?
  - Confused?
  - Worried?
  - Happy?
  - Angry?
- How can you show this in your work?
  - What you say
  - How you say it
  - How you stand
  - Your gestures
  - The expression on your face.
- What did you character do on the day?
  - Actively joined in the protest – e.g. pushed the statue into the docks.
  - Was on the outskirts of the protest – but recorded lots of it on their phone.
  - Tried to stop the protest – didn’t want the statue pulled down.
  - Watched the protest and tried to decide whether to intervene or not.

Some characters you could choose:

- A protester who had always been planning to pull the statue down.
- Someone out for their daily exercise who saw the protest and decided to see and record what was happening.
- A parent, who in general supported the protesters, but was worried about potential violence and the risks of not social distancing.

- Someone who was horrified at what they saw and was angry that the police were not stopping what they felt was vandalism.
- The chief of police...or an officer on duty that day.

### How to create your drama

It is not practical to try to recreate the whole day ....so you need to be creative. Here are some ideas:

- Imagine you are there in real time - recording yourself on a phone at several different points in the day. Explain what you can see / hear and how you are feeling.
- Imagine you are a vlogger...getting home in the evening and creating a vlog of your day in Bristol.
- Create a storyboard of your ideas.
- Write a play script. Doing this allows you to have dialogue between different characters – e.g. bystander and protester, on duty police officer and someone who wants the protest stopped.

It's up to you! Whatever you do, make sure you bring your character to life and that you communicate your ideas – either retelling the events of the day in an interesting and informative way AND/OR making your own points about the BLACK LIVES MATTER movement, Bristol's links with slavery, who should be commemorated with statues etc...

GOOD LUCK – and don't forget to send your drama in (either recordings or on paper) to [oakfieldacademy.org](http://oakfieldacademy.org). or your head of year.