



Love For All

A Christian Reflection on Black Lives Matter for Children

This assembly resource is produced in response to the 2020 'Black Lives Matter' movement following the killing of George Floyd in the USA on 25th May.

The underlying message of the assembly is that Jesus talked to, ate with and visited everyone regardless of their background or how society viewed them - and He wants us to offer that same love, kindness and respect to others. Sometimes however, people are treated differently because of the colour of their skin or the culture they come from: this is racism. This helps children to make sense of racism. It explores how, with Jesus' help, we too can extend love, kindness and respect to everyone.

NB. This assembly mentions the death of George Floyd, but not in great detail. You may choose to embellish or omit teaching on this depending on the age and stage of the children in your care.

NB. This resource capitalises 'Black' in line with the recent changes to the Associated Press' influential style guide, as reported here.

Learning Objective

Children will learn:

- About racism, systemic racism, anti-racism and white privilege
- That Jesus calls us to treat everyone with love, kindness and respect

Success Criteria

Children will:

- Engage with the film and teaching, answering questions on both
- Participate in a time of reflection

Resource Materials

- PowerPoint Presentation

Preparation Notes

- Read over the teaching on Slides 4 – 10. Given the subject matter of this special assembly, there is a lot of content to deliver and it is important you are familiar with it.
- Particularly review Slide 8 which discusses 'white privilege' – if this is beyond the age and stage of your assembly gathering, save to discuss at a later date with older pupils only.

Written by Edith Kirkwood

One-page Summary

1. Love for All

(5 min)

Slides 1-3 Introduce the theme of the assembly, then watch a video and ask differentiated questions about how Jesus showed love, kindness and respect to everyone He encountered.

2. Black Lives Matter

(6 mins)

Slides 4-6 Deliver teaching on racism (this includes the death of George Floyd).

Slides 7-8 Ask children to help define 'anti-racist' and 'white privilege'.

Slides 9-13 Celebrate some examples of Black achievement and innovation that have previously been under-recognised.

3. Help Us Love Others

(4 min)

Slide 14 Take a moment to acknowledge the magnitude of the issues covered in today's assembly and invite children to respond in various ways.

Slide 15 Invite children to welcome Jesus into their hearts, so He can help them to love others like He does.

Total Time

15 mins

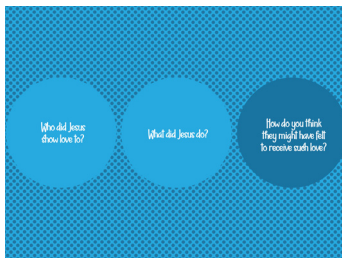
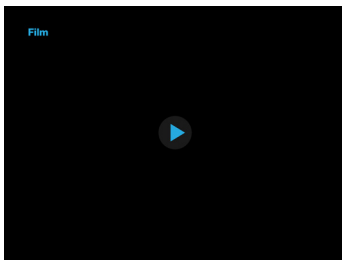
Prayer of Preparation

Dear Lord,
Thank you for this opportunity to nurture the faith of the children in my care. By the power of your Holy Spirit, lead and guide me as I prepare this assembly and bless each and every child with an open heart and mind to hear your Word.
In your name, Jesus, Amen.

Teacher Script

1. Love for All (5 mins)

Introduce the theme and watch a short film about Jesus' love for all.



Slide 1

Welcome children and explain that in this special assembly, you will be helping them to think about some events they might have seen on the news. Not the coronavirus this time, but something that's been going on a lot longer than that - **the 'Black Lives Matter' (BLM) movement.**

Slide 2

Say that before talking further about this, children are going to watch a short film about how Jesus showed love, kindness and respect to everyone He met.

Click to play the film.

Slide 3

Ask the following differentiated questions:

Lower

Question:

Who did Jesus show love to?

Answers:

- The disciples
- Peter and his Mother-in-law
- Zacchaeus
- Lepers
- The woman at the well
- The thief on the cross etc

Middle

Question:

What did Jesus do?

Answers:

- Showed them love, kindness and respect
- Showed people that he knew them, really knew them, and loved them

- Taught them
- Healed them
- Spent time with people who society didn't approve of etc.

Upper

Question:

How do you think they might have felt to receive such love?

Answers:

- Any appropriate answers, e.g. welcomed, warm, loved, accepted, valuable etc.

2. Black Lives Matter (6 mins)

Introduce the principles and context of the Black Lives Matter movement.



Slide 4

Ask children to discuss with a partner any pre-existing knowledge they have of news events regarding Black Lives Matter, and hear some responses.

Discuss that in the news in recent weeks there have been:

- Peaceful protests, mass marches and demonstrations
- Some rioting and violence
- Petitions and political speeches
- A viral logo and hashtag, and a huge surge in online activism and education

Teaching

Use the following or your own words:

- 'Black Lives Matter' is about recognising that **Black people have been treated badly throughout history purely because of the colour of their skin.**
- You will often hear us say in assembly and in school, "we're all equal" or "God loves us all the same". These things are true – **we are all equally loved and valued by God as His precious children.** We know that – but the world doesn't always reflect that.
- What the BLM movement is helping people realise is that **black people are often not treated like they are of equal value and worth/ importance.**
- These concepts might feel very difficult to understand, so imagine the following scenarios:



Slide 5

Click to reveal and ask the following questions to children, highlighting the unfairness of the situations:

- If your Dad took you to the shop and gave your little sister 5 sweets and only gave you 1, how would that make you feel?
- If you were really hungry and your Mum made dinner for everyone else but didn't give you any do you think that is fair?
- If you did something wrong and your Grandpa punishes you by taking away your favourite toy and your sister did the exact same thing and he gave her a treat... do you think that's fair?

Click to reveal and say that:

The BLM movement is showing the world how unfair it is to Black people: this unfairness is called **racism**.



Slide 6

Say that children might be thinking, "why is all this happening now?" or, "I thought racism was in the past?", or, "why has no-one done anything about it?!"

Explain in these or your own words that:

- **Racism hasn't suddenly appeared from nowhere.** It has been ongoing for centuries, no matter how many times people have said "stop" or asked for help.
- **(Click to reveal image)** On the 25th May this year, a Black man called George Floyd was killed by a white American police officer. This was completely illegal and wrong – as we know, police officers should always be kind and helpful!
- **We know that we should never judge someone based on their appearance** – but the police system in the USA (and in many other institutions around the world) seems to have forgotten this. This is called **systemic racism**.
- The terribly tragedy of George Floyd's death brought the BLM movement back into the spotlight of the world's media and has got everyone talking.
- In the UK, it has got us talking about ways that our society has been unfair.

- The movement calls for racial justice: calling for people not only to 'not be racist' but to become **anti-racist**.



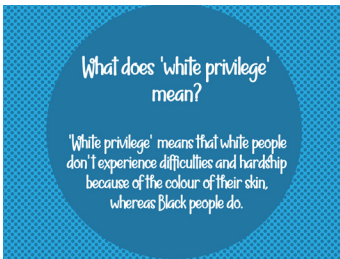
Slide 7

Ask:

Does anyone know or can guess what 'anti-racist' means?

Take suggestions, then **click to reveal** and say that:

To be anti-racist means **to stand against racism in all its forms, whenever and wherever you see it.**



Slide 8

Say that another term children might have come across is 'white privilege'.

Ask:

Does anyone know or can guess what 'white privilege' means?

You might like first to ask/explain what '**privilege**' means:

- A person with 'privilege' has some built-in advantages that other people don't.
- For example, able-bodied people are privileged because they can usually climb stairs, whereas a disabled person in a wheelchair will need assistance, like a lift.
- Or some people are privileged to have a home to live in and a bed to sleep in, whereas others don't have this privilege and are homeless.

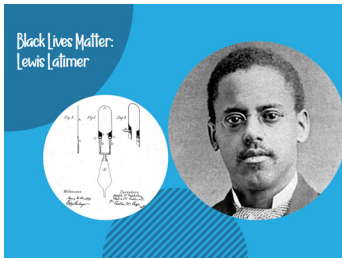
So it is with 'white privilege'.

Click to reveal and say that:

'White privilege' means that white people don't experience difficulties and hardship because of the colour of their skin, whereas Black people do.

You might hear some adults saying that 'all lives matter' and of course they do, but when there is a lot of pain experienced by a certain group more than others, we need to focus on healing that pain.

It's like having a broken leg and saying that while all of your body is precious, we need to focus on healing the bone in your leg.



Slides 9-13

Say that a lot of content has been covered today, but that there is one last really important thing:

- **As well as fighting against racism** – being anti-racists – **it's equally important to celebrate Black achievements, contributions and history.**
- Let's consider a few now!

Click to reveal each, with an image of what invention they contributed to:

- While Thomas Edison is renowned for inventing the lightbulb, few people know that it was actually **an African-American inventor, Lewis Latimer**, who **invented the carbon filament that allows the bulb to function.**
- Other inventions which were pioneered or greatly improved by Black inventors include **the three-light traffic light system (Garrett Morgan, 1923), refrigerated trucks (Frederick McKinley Jones, 1940) closed circuit TV security systems (Marie van Brittan Brown, 1969) and the first colour PC monitor (Mark Dean, 1980).**

3. Help Us to Love Others (4 mins)

Lead children in a final reflection.



Slide 14

Explain that this topic might feel difficult or upsetting to hear about, but that it's really important. "So how do we go forward?" many people around the world are asking. Some answers are:

- With love
- With striving to recognise prejudice and privilege
- With seeking change, personally, locally and globally
- With educating ourselves (*encourage children to talk to their parents about these issues further*)

Slide 15

Reflection

Music plays automatically.

In these or your own words, say that:

- Think back to the film at the start, where Jesus responded with love, kindness and respect towards everyone He met – the disciples, lepers, Zacchaeus, the woman at the well, the thief on the cross etc.
- Jesus talked to, ate with and visited everyone regardless of their background or how society viewed them.
- Jesus calls us to treat others with love, kindness and respect too – and the best way we can do that is by making space for Jesus to work in our lives.
- It's not always easy, but with God's help, we can love others like He does.

Invite children to close their eyes and imagine that they are welcoming Jesus into their hearts. After a few moments, ask the children to:

- Breathe in
- Breathe out
- Open their chests: gently push their shoulders back
- Turn their hands palm upwards and hold them slightly away from their sides
- Tilt their heads slightly back
- Breathe in
- Say, "Welcome"
- Breathe out
- Say "Jesus"
- Repeat

With their eyes still closed, ask the children to imagine holding Jesus in their hearts as they go about their day, knowing that Jesus will help them show love to everyone they meet.

Allow a few moments of quiet prayer with music.

Finally, conclude the assembly with the **Sign of the Cross**.