

Year 6 Reading Friday 19th June 2020. LO: Mixed comprehension questions.

# US PROTESTS SPREAD WORLDWIDE



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An anti-racism protest in Minneapolis, where George Floyd died

**ANTI-RACISM** protests have been taking place across America and around the world following the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, USA, after he was held down by police officers.

During his arrest on 25 May, George Floyd, who was black, died after white police officer Derek Chauvin knelt on his neck. The officer has since been charged with murder, while three other police officers involved in the arrest have lost their jobs.

Protests against police violence and racism then began in Minneapolis, before quickly spreading across the world. People took to the streets to campaign against the police using unnecessary force against black people in the US, united by the words 'Black lives matter'.

Human rights experts at the United Nations issued a statement saying, "Many in the United States and abroad are finally acknowledging that the problem is not a few bad apples, but instead the problem is the very way that economic, political and social life are structured."

There have been protests following police attacks on unarmed black people in the US before, such as those in Los Angeles after Rodney King was attacked in 1991. However, the way this current protest has spread around the world suggests that the calls for change in America may be too loud to ignore this time.







Protesters hurl Edward Colston's statue into Bristol Harbour

**TENS of thousands of people have taken part in protests across the UK to get their voices heard about racism, following George Floyd's death.**

There were demonstrations big and small in towns and cities throughout the country, where people ignored requests from politicians to avoid mass protests because of coronavirus social distancing.

In London, crowds gathered at the US embassy to support protesters in America. It was a peaceful gathering of mainly young demonstrators from all ethnic backgrounds.

Daniel Oderinde, 23, said he had never seen protests like these in the UK before, where "white people and black come together in support of the struggles that we've been going through. If I can share that message and we can come together as one, then I can be part of something monumental."

Although the vast majority of protesters have been peaceful, some have been accused of taking things too far. In Bristol, the statue of a slave trader, Edward Colston, was pulled down by the protesters. His name is seen across the city, with streets and buildings named after the 17th century merchant and slave trader. His statue on Colston Avenue was a protected listed structure and has stood there since 1895, but it was pulled down by protesters last weekend and dumped in Bristol Harbour.

His memory has been argued about for years, with some in Bristol saying you can't change history, while others campaigned successfully for his name to be removed from streets, schools and venues. The Labour Mayor of Bristol said the Edward Colston statue was an "insult" to black people.

## WHO WAS EDWARD COLSTON? (1636-1721)

- Colston was born into a wealthy Bristol merchant's family.
- By 1672 he was running his own business in London, trading in slaves, cloth, wine and sugar.
- Colston's ships took about 80,000 men, women and children from Africa to the Americas, between 1672 and 1689. They were sold as slaves.
- He donated money to churches and hospitals in Bristol, also founding two almshouses (houses provided by a charity) and a school.
- Colston was Bristol's MP for a short time.



To find out more about why racism is still a big issue watch the FYI: I Don't Get It explainer video on the First News website at [live.firstnews.co.uk/i-dont-get-it/bfi/racism-why-is-it-still-a-big-issue/](https://live.firstnews.co.uk/i-dont-get-it/bfi/racism-why-is-it-still-a-big-issue/)



Look Closer 

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**GLOSSARY**

**racism** – Treating people unfairly because of the colour of their skin or the race they belong to  
**US** – United States, a shortened form of USA  
**United Nations (UN)** – An international organisation founded in 1945. It advocates peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and humanitarian assistance  
**protests** – Where groups of people show they disagree with something, by walking in the streets, shouting, holding up signs, etc

**Los Angeles** – A city in California, US  
**monumental** – Something very big and important  
**slave trader** – Someone who sold slaves  
**campaigns** – Organised events to bring about change  
**almshouses** – Houses provided by charity  
**MP: Member of Parliament** – A person who has been chosen to represent their area in parliament. MPs vote on all new laws



## US PROTESTS SPREAD WORLDWIDE

● Look at the article **'US protests spread worldwide'**.

1. What does the word **'racism'** mean?
- 2a. Who was George Floyd?
- 2b. What was shocking about his death?
- 3a. Explain what a **protest** is.
- 3b. What are the protests taking place in America and around the world following the death of George Floyd about?
4. Which **three-word phrase** has been used by all the protesters around the world to explain why they are protesting?
5. Look at the **statement** human rights experts at the UN issued. They said police brutality against black people in the USA is **not** caused by "a few bad apples" but by problems with the police force as a whole.  
 What do you think the phrase **'a few bad apples'** means?

● Look at the article **'UK protests'**.

- 6a. Why did politicians ask people to avoid mass protests this week?
- 6b. Even though politicians warned people against mass protests, thousands of people attended protests across the UK. Why do you think people still attended?
7. Daniel Oderinde is a 23-year-old who protested outside the US Embassy in London. What does he believe is unique about these protests?
8. What happened in Bristol that upset some people, but pleased many others?  
 Edward Colston lived more than three hundred years ago. It says in the article that **"his memory has been argued about for years."**
- 9a. Why do you think his statue was erected in the city originally?
- 9b. Why do so many people now think his statue should no longer stand in the city?
10. Do you think statues of slave traders, or street and building names linked to the slave trade, should be removed and changed? Explain your thoughts.

Watch the I Don't Get It news explainer video **'Racism: Why is it still a big issue?'** on the *First News* website to find out more.