



Wednesday marks the start of Black History Month



LINKED UNCRC ARTICLES

The activities in this pack about Black History Month link with many articles of the CRC but two particular rights stand out when we explore this theme

Article 2 (non-discrimination)

The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

Article 30 (children from minority or indigenous groups)

Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.





Rebecca Lee Crumpler 1831 - 1895

PHYSICIAN

From the very beginning, caring for others was a part of Rebecca's life. She was raised in Pennsylvania by her aunt, who provided healthcare services to the people in her neighbourhood. Helping her community became her passion and her life's mission.

She attended a private school in Massachusetts and went on to work as a nurse for eight years. In 1860 she applied to an all-white medical school, the New England Female Medical College – a bold and risky move, but she was accepted. Rebecca graduated in 1864, becoming the first African American woman doctor in the country. Out of more than fifty thousand physicians in the United States at the time, only about three hundred were women, and Rebecca was the only black woman.

She began her practice in Boston, specializing in the care of women and children. But when the Civil War came to an end, she moved to Richmond, Virginia, to work with the Freedmen's Bureau. The fallen Confederate South was extremely hostile to the newly freed slaves, so Rebecca worked with the bureau to provide healthcare to them. Rebecca had been born free in Delaware – the state with the highest number of free black people before the war. She was new to the adversity and racism of the South, but she endured it in order to help the poor and needy.

Throughout her career, Rebecca was concerned with the health of women and children. In 1883 she published a two-part text entitled *A Book of Medical Discourses*. The first part focuses on care for infants and the second part on women's health. It is possibly the first medical article published by a black woman.



Mary Seacole (1805–1881)

Mary Seacole was a very brave nurse who helped sick and injured soldiers during the **Crimean War** — a war in the 1850s between Russia and countries like Britain, France, and Turkey. The war was far away, and many soldiers not only got hurt in battle but also caught deadly diseases like cholera.

Mary was born in Jamaica and learned about medicine from her mother. When she heard about the war, she asked to go and help, but she was told “no.” This wasn’t because she wasn’t good enough — it was because she was a woman and because she was Black.

Mary didn’t give up. She spent her own money to travel all the way to Crimea and built a place called the **British Hotel** near the fighting. There she cooked warm meals for the soldiers, made medicines from herbs and treated sick men, and even went onto the battlefield to care for those who were injured. She gave the soldiers somewhere to rest and feel safe.

It was an incredibly brave thing to do. Mary worked close to the fighting, risked catching deadly diseases, and faced racism from people who didn’t believe she should be there at all. She used her own money to pay for everything, not knowing if she would ever get it back.

The soldiers loved her and called her “**Mother Seacole.**” Today she is remembered as a hero who showed courage and kindness, and who never let unfair treatment stop her from helping others.

Mary Seacole



EXPLORING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Why do you think it is important to celebrate Black History Month?

- To recognise the contribution and achievements of those with African and Caribbean heritage throughout history.
- To ensure that we hear a diverse range of stories when considering the past.
- To celebrate people's heritage and cultures.
- Because all communities, including schools, should encourage respect for everyone and celebrate diversity and inclusion.
- To think about how we can make the world a more equal place where everyone's rights are respected.
- To learn how to challenge negative stereotypes.
- To ensure that there is time and space for people to discuss more recent events and issues such as Black Lives Matter, the treatment of the Windrush generation and the death of George Floyd.
- Because no one should be treated differently because of who they are.
- To learn about racism and its effects.
- To support people to recognise and challenge discrimination.

Did you think of anything else?





REFLECTION

Take a little time to think...

- Spend some time thinking again about what makes you **proud to be the person you are**. How can you regularly remind yourself of these things?
- What can you say to others to **help them feel proud of themselves** and who they are?
- Think about what you could do if you ever **hear or see racism** at school or in your community.
- How can you challenge this and **be an ally** to others?
- [A Brief History of Steelpan](#)

