



## **Guidance on the use of educational materials accompanying The Forgotten Generations – Lest We Forget Project with primary age children**

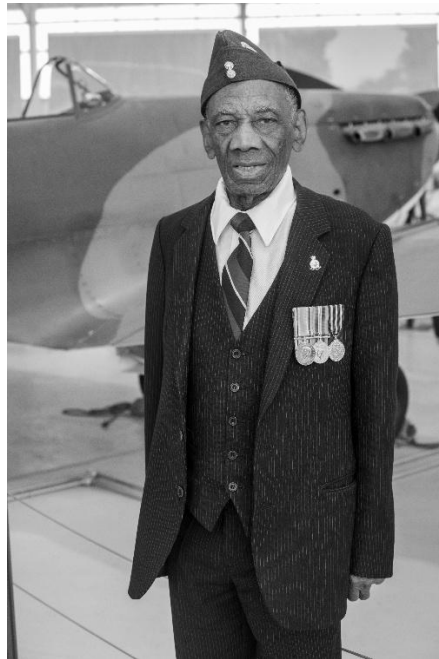
It is claimed that stories are ‘psychologically privileged’. As humans, we are receptive to listening to them and the complications and characters add depth and interest to our understanding. It may mean we more easily retain knowledge when it is presented to us in the form of a story.

Each of the veteran stories written for this project and aimed at primary age children are based on the filmed interviews with seven black RAF veterans of the West Midlands. They can be used in a variety of ways in particular settings and at different times, for example:

- in primary school assemblies during Black History Month
- during the teaching of local history at KS2, or as part of a development study beyond 1066, for example, on migration, the British Empire or Black British history (Stories might be used to teach about historically significant individuals at KS1 but they are more pitched at KS2)
- as part of a presentation to a voluntary organisation aimed at or including young people, e.g. cadets, guides, scouts, faith youth groups, etc.

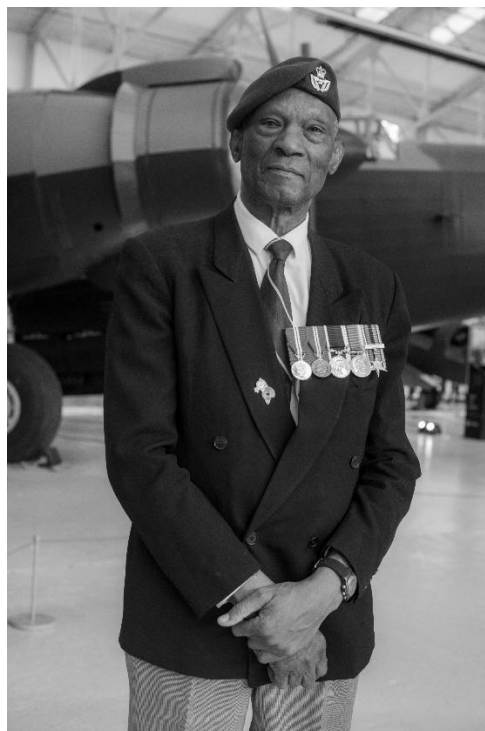
In common with accepted best practice in Primary History, each story title is framed as an historical enquiry question which poses a problem for children to consider as the result of listening to the story. Different stories are linked to different disciplinary concepts of primary history included in versions of the National Curriculum since 1991. In some, reference is made to the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the descent of interviewed veterans from enslaved Africans brought to the Caribbean by British traders. This content needs to be treated sensitively in a classroom setting, particularly if children of colour are present. The questions for each veteran story are listed below with a particular disciplinary concept they mainly relate to given in brackets.

Prince Albert ` Jake ` Jacob



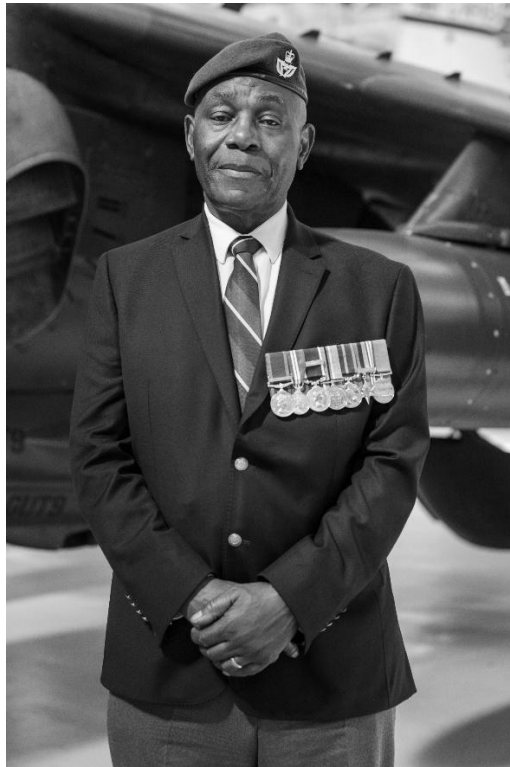
**How did a Trinidadian Prince become a black Brummie? (Change and Continuity)**

Kenneth Straun



**How did a 'small islander' from the Caribbean become a Black Briton? (Change and Continuity)**

Donald Campbell



**How did Donald Campbell become a Black Briton and Brummie?**  
(Change and Continuity)

Karen Kellar



**How did Karen Kellar prove her Britishness? (Cause and Consequence)**

Bryan Scott Hughes



**What does evidence reveal about how Bryan Scott Hughes was treated in the RAF? (Handling Evidence)**

Jeff Nelson



**What made life difficult for Jeff Nelson in the RAF? (Cause and Consequence)**

John Winston Clarke



**Why was John Winston Clarke successful in the RAF?**

## Ways of using stories

Telling the story in one sitting



The text of the story could be read out to a class or group, displaying the image or images on each slide in turn.

Pausing the story



After a particular section of the story, it could be paused and children asked to consider a question relevant to that content. Immediate responses might be invited or time given for pairs or groups of children to discuss the question. A teacher or leader might then ask a range of individuals about what they were discussing. Pausing at a critical moment in the story can also heighten curiosity and interest with listeners keen to find out what happens next.

Some questions might ask children to put themselves in the place of individuals in the story, and consider how they might have felt or reacted e.g. *How do you think this made Jeff feel? How might you have felt? What would you have done? How do you think this made John feel about Britain/the Royal Air Force?*

Some questions might ask children to use their knowledge to predict what might happen next e.g. *What do you think Jake did next? What do you think happened next? How might things have happened differently?*

Some questions might ask children to consider comparisons with the present e.g. *Do you think this could still happen today? If so, why?*

Some questions might probe the causes and consequences of a particular incident or event e.g. *Why did Karen react like this?*

Some questions might probe change and continuity in terms of a particular incident or event e.g. *How much did this change Donald's life?*

Some questions might consider the significance of a particular incident or event e.g. *Why might this part of the story be significant for Kenneth's future?*

## Freeze framing

Particular scenes from a story could be acted out with individuals posing as particular characters. These scenes could be “frozen” and individuals in the scenes asked to describe their thoughts and feelings. Such scenes could be sketched by pupils, featuring speech and thought bubbles to record their thinking.

## Weighing the answer to an historical enquiry question



A discussion could be held about the possible answer to the historical enquiry question that began the story. After paired/group discussion, leading to whole class discussion, pupils could complete a writing frame, attempting a piece of extended writing in response to the enquiry question.

## Using original evidence from the story slides



Original photographs (and documents) of each veteran from different points in their lives have been included in each presentation. These could be analysed on their own e.g. annotated with labels for what they reveal about the person.

What else do I need to know? What other questions could I ask?

What can I infer? What does this tell me?

What can I see?



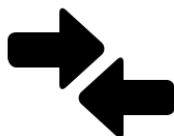
Sources can be placed in inference frames like the one above with children answering the concrete questions closest to the source first then moving out to answer the abstract ones. Questions can make use of evidential language such as source and infer.

A mystery source related to a veteran might be analysed before the telling of the story with child questions about it recorded. These questions might be reviewed after the story has been told to see which ones have been answered as a result of listening to it.

Photographs of the same veteran from different stages of their lives could be compared for evidence of Change and Continuity.

Discussion could be held about why the veteran kept the particular photograph or document, and why they might have allowed it to be included in the presentation.

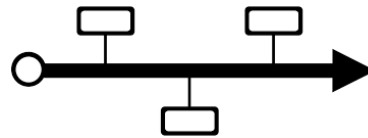
## Comparing stories



One or more stories might be compared, with a view to answering a further historical enquiry question, such as *How similar and different were the lives and careers of John Winston Clarke and Jeff Nelson?* *Why was this?* *Why were the lives of Kenneth Straun and Prince Albert 'Jake' Jacob so different?* *How were the lives and careers of Bryan Scott and*

*Jeff Nelson similar?* Factors such as education and the attitude of the RAF could be compared in deciding how the careers of individual veterans were affected by them. The details from different veterans' lives could be converted into a card sort with children organising cards across a Venn diagram, placing cards in common in the overlap between the circles.

## Constructing veteran timelines



As a veteran story is told, or retold, the adult, teacher or leader could construct a timeline with copies of particular images, documents or photographs from slides reproduced and laid along a toilet roll timeline with evidence corresponding to particular years or turning points.



A toilet roll timeline of London using historic maps.

A graphic version of a timeline could be produced with key dates along a horizontal axis and a qualitative measure devised for the vertical axis e.g. very happy, quite happy, quite sad, very sad. Individuals, pairs or groups of children could then compare their versions of the same graph and discuss reasons for any differences between them. A toilet roll timeline could be rolled out and years marked on with visual evidence of the veteran`s life displayed around the room. As a recall activity, children could be asked to place particular images against particular years, demonstrating their knowledge of the story.

## Linking the veteran story to national and international history and to `golden threads` of substantive concepts

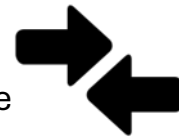


Having told a veteran story, and perhaps consolidated knowledge through activities and repeated retellings of it, their life could be placed in wider, chronological context by more explicit linkage to national and international events that help to explain why veterans were recruited and deployed in different locations and at particular times.

For example, a second toilet roll timeline could be rolled out alongside one representing the veteran`s life, picking up major events or military campaigns with an appropriate image. String or coloured ribbon could be laid across the timelines, showing direct links between events in the life of an individual, veteran and national and international events. If time allowed, more stories could be told, and links could be made across the lives of all seven veterans.

Content and vocabulary could be highlighted to support the teaching of substantive concepts such as Empire and Migration where these have been identified as particular `golden threads` through the Primary History curriculum and revisited at intervals on the basis of a spiral curriculum.

## Comparing stories to filmed veteran interviews

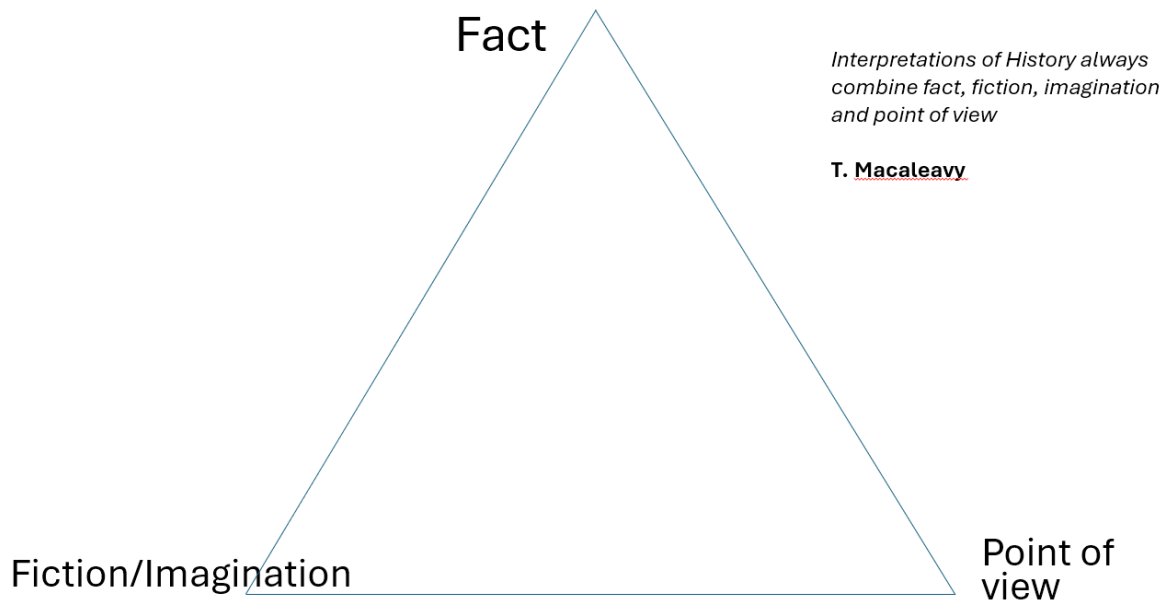


The veteran stories are an historical interpretation, looking back on the veteran's life, selecting some details for inclusion, while leaving others out. They are affected by the view of the writer and the appropriateness of particular details for inclusion because of the age group they have been written for. They also include original evidence of the veteran's life such as photographs within the slides.

The filmed interviews are original testimony from the ultimate eyewitness of their own lives in each case- the veterans! Sometimes children are erroneously taught that eyewitness testimony is always superior to an historical interpretation on the grounds that the writer of the interpretation did not witness the events they describe. However, individuals looking back on their own lives are just as selective as anyone else in responding to an interview. Depending on their character and circumstances, some events will be highlighted while there might be personal details that are left out. Sometimes people forget or misremember things. Sometimes an omission may be deliberate. Sometimes it might be because the person wasn't asked a question about that, or because the interviewee considered the detail irrelevant to the question. The filmed interviews have also been subject to a process of editing.

Comparing the stories written about each veteran with extracts from their interviews can be a rich way of exploring differences between types of historical evidence. Enquiry questions could be posed such as *'How is the story of Jake' different to what he says about himself in his interview?'* *'To what extent can we trust the story about Karen?'* *'To what extent can we trust what Donald said about himself in his interview?'* *'How useful are the interviews as historical evidence?'* *'Which type of historical evidence is most useful, the stories or the interviews?'*

When weighing reliability and usefulness like this, it is important that children are steered towards nuanced conclusions which they can justify by reference to evidence. No historical source can be entirely objective, and some can be deeply flawed but should never be dismissed as so biased that they cannot be used. All types of historical evidence are useful for study because they can tell us about the view of the person who produced them. They can also be cross referred so that sources like the stories can be created which are based on the filmed interviews but sometimes include further information researched by the writer.

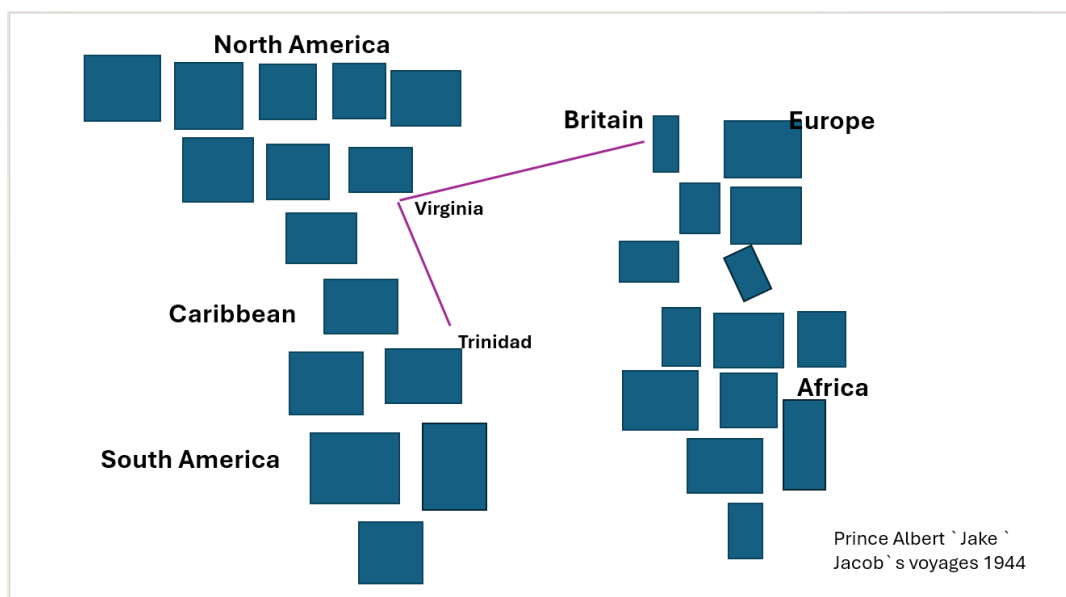


Children could be asked to plot a cross on a diagram like this in assessing the extent to which a veteran story contains fact, fiction, imagination and a point of view – all characteristics of historical interpretations.

## Creating a living map in the classroom



Many of the veterans interviewed for this project travelled widely in the course of their RAF careers. Three migrated from the Caribbean to Britain (Prince Albert ` Jake' Jacob, Kenneth Straun and Donald Campbell). A classroom or hall could be converted into a 'living map' with items of furniture, moved and labelled with the names of different locations, such as Britain, Cyprus or Germany.



As particular lives are explored, string or ribbon could be spread across the classroom from location to location, creating a web which illustrate the travels of the particular individual in the RAF and also reflecting their migratory history.

## Incorporating the lives of local black RAF veterans into study of local history, for a study in development after 1066 or a turning point beyond 1066

The lives of the interviewed veterans reflect the extent of change in the West Midlands since the end of the Second World War. Enquiry questions focusing on particular veterans could be slotted into existing coverage of local history, which is a National Curriculum requirement in Primary History, for example *‘Why was Prince Albert ‘Jake’ Jacob welcome in 1944 but not in 1947?’* (the question refers to the contrast in the welcome that ‘Jake’ Jacob received as a Caribbean volunteer supporting the British war effort during the Second World War and the racist treatment he received afterwards as an economic migrant. The same question could be used to slot the personal history of ‘Jake’ Jacob into a local or wider study of the Second World War).

The lives of the veterans also cover the history of mass migration to Britain since the end of the Second World War. A focus on particular veterans such as Donald Campbell and Kenneth Straun illustrates the impact of the post war Windrush Generation. Questions could be posed such as *‘How different was the life of Donald Campbell in Jamaica and Birmingham?’* and *‘Why did Kenneth Straun not return to St Kitts after settling in Britain?’*. Such questions can be a way of exploring the push and pull factors that affect migration in any period and that have applied to Britain as a destination over time.

The lives of the veterans also cover the development of black British identity and the transformation of the British Empire into the Commonwealth of Nations during the late twentieth century. Black British identity has existed for centuries, for example there were African soldiers

stationed on Hadrian 's Wall during the Roman period. However, the emergence of modern black, British identity can be partly attributed to the postwar settlement of the Windrush Generation from the Caribbean. Exploring how veterans felt towards Britain and how they responded to sometimes racist treatment could be slotted into a development study of Black British History or of the British Empire. Enquiry questions could be posed such as *'How did racism change the life of Karen Kellar?'* and *'Why were the RAF careers of John Winston Clarke and Jeff Nelson so different?'*

## Retelling the story as a group or class

A group or class could be tasked with telling the story of a veteran in their own words. Research groups could contribute to a whole class retelling with different children reading out different sections of the story and being filmed telling it.



Year 5 children at Welford Primary School in Handsworth telling part of a whole class story about Prince Albert ` Jake ` Jacob written with support from teachers Andrew Wills and Janice Weathers. This was part of a 2023 Historian-in-residence project with Andrew Wrenn and funded by Birmingham Education Partnership to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Windrush Anniversary.

Access the video from this link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8nhLp-YWrw>

Andrew Wrenn, Teacher Fellow of the Historical Association