

What is racism?

Not everyone is happy that Britain is culturally diverse, and there are individuals or groups of people who are racist towards people who they think are different from themselves. However, as long as 5,000 years ago, people travelled from other countries to live in Europe and Britain.

1 Look up the word 'racism' in a dictionary? What does it mean?

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2 Look up the word 'discrimination' in a dictionary. What does it mean?

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3 Describe three ways in which someone can be racist.

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4 Give three reasons why people are racist.

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5 What effects can racism have on the person or group it is being aimed at?

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Citizenship - What is Racism?

1. Read and discuss the 6 scenarios listed below.
2. Decide if each scenario is an example of racism or just a part of everyday life. Give your reasons for each answer.

a) A Sikh boy being teased because he wears a turban.

b) A British National Party magazine, which contains cartoons making fun of Asian and black people, being passed round.

c) A black pupil deliberately tripping up a white boy and the white boy hitting him.

d) An Asian shopkeeper complaining because pupils from the school are constantly being rude to him.

e) People constantly telling jokes about the Irish being stupid to an Irish girl.

f) A black pupil whose parents live on benefit being told 'You lot just come over here to sign on'.

What makes Britain culturally diverse?

Modern Britain is a multiracial, multiethnic, multilingual and multicultural society. All the different groups of people have brought different ideas, customs and languages, which have mixed up together to make up the culture of Britain today.

Write notes in the boxes below to show what makes Britain culturally diverse.


What makes Britain culturally diverse?

Languages	Food
Events	Music
Religions	Other ideas




Match up the key terms with the definitions:

Right or wrong words?



Key term	Definition
Black	Many people with roots in Africa or the Caribbean prefer this word to describe themselves (although some older people may not).
African Caribbean	This is the term preferred by many people with roots in the Caribbean as an alternative to 'black'. They prefer this term to 'West Indian', as this name refers to a time when the British and other European governments ruled the region and called it the West Indies.
Asian	This is the most general word for people with roots or family connections in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. It includes lots of different people with different languages, religions and histories.
Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi, Chinese	These words can be used to describe people with roots or family connections in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh or China.
Roots or family connections in...	This is a useful expression. Taking Jamaica as an example, some people have come to Britain recently; lots of people moved here over 40 years ago and some families have lived in England for generations. Most young people with Jamaican heritage were born here. In this mixture, some have Jamaican passports, but most have British passports and know no other home than Britain. They are British, but they have roots or family connections in Jamaica.
Ethnic minority	People often use this term when they are talking about black and Asian people, though 'ethnic' has nothing to do with colour.
Muslim, Sikh, Hindu	These terms refer to faith rather than family roots. It may be that someone's religion is more important to them than their family's roots, so it is sometimes better to describe them in this way — for example, as a Sikh rather than as an Indian.
Coloured	An old-fashioned word that has fallen out of favour and is now considered to be offensive.
Immigrant	This means someone who has permanently moved home from one country to another. It is often misused because most of Britain's black and Asian people are not immigrants — they were born here. This term should not be confused with asylum seekers and refugees.
Paki, Chinky	Highly offensive and insulting words referring to people from Pakistan and neighbouring countries and China.



(a) Which words do you commonly use to describe people from other cultures?

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(b) Which words are you not sure about using? Explain why.

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(c) Which words do you feel uncomfortable about using? Explain why.

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(d) Which words do you feel should not be used when describing people from other cultures?

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(e) Why do people sometimes find it difficult to know which words to use?

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