



**THE NATIONAL  
WINDRUSH  
MONUMENT**

**LEARNING RESOURCE**

# THE NATIONAL WINDRUSH MONUMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The Windrush Generation has helped make Britain as it is today. The experience, culture and enthusiasm they brought over from the Caribbean, the sacrifices they made, and the ways that they created a home for themselves and their children in the UK, have enriched the nation. This learning resource presents some of the stories of the Caribbeans and British-Caribbeans who are part of the Windrush Generation. It explores the journey to Britain, the experiences of migration and settlement and encourages the use of writing and creative skills to deepen understanding.

Aimed at children aged 7-11, this resource has been created to accompany The National Windrush Monument, unveiled on Windrush Day, 22 June 2022 by Windrush Pioneers Alford Gardner and John Richards in the presence of Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. The monument, situated at Waterloo Station, London, was created by Jamaican artist Basil Watson, and was commissioned by the Windrush Commemoration Committee and

the Government's Department of Levelling Up Housing & Communities, with public art consultancy from UP Projects.

The story of The National Windrush Monument began in 2018 when the Prime Minister tasked the Windrush Commemoration Committee with creating a permanent tribute to the Windrush pioneers and their descendants. The Committee is led by Baroness Floella Benjamin DBE DL, and is made up of influential voices within the UK's Black communities, many of whom have a direct, personal connection to the Windrush Generation.

The Committee's vision was that the monument reflects the journey and the diversity of the Windrush Generation, with emphasis on the experience of the children brought to England by their parents who came to 'rebuild Britain' in search of a better life. While this experience was specific to the Windrush Generation, it also resonates with many other experiences of migration and belonging, encapsulating a collective memory and experience of the Caribbean diaspora in the United Kingdom.



## THE ARTIST SELECTION PROCESS

UP Projects was appointed to manage the artist selection process. In early 2021, over 250 British and international cultural leaders, curators and leaders in the Caribbean community were invited to nominate artists in response to specific criteria agreed by the Windrush Commemoration Committee (WCC). Over 100 artists were nominated, of which four were shortlisted and invited to put forward a proposal. The shortlisted artists were Danish-Trinidadian artist Jeanette Ehlers, Jamaican-British artist Valda Jackson, British sculptor Thomas J Price and Jamaican sculptor Basil Watson. You can view their proposals here: [bit.ly/Windrush-Artist-Proposals](https://bit.ly/Windrush-Artist-Proposals).

In July-August 2021, the public, including intergenerational focus groups of British Caribbean people, were invited to consider the proposals and provide feedback. In September 2021, the WCC, taking into account the commission criteria and public feedback, awarded the commission to Jamaican artist Basil Watson.



Photography: Steve Russell Studios

## BARONESS FLOELLA BENJAMIN

Baroness Floella Benjamin, DBE, DL was born in Trinidad before coming to Britain as part of the Windrush Generation. She became one of the first children's TV presenters and is well remembered for her role in 'Play School' and 'Playaway' and has worked in television for many years. She has written over 30 books and for over 2 decades her book 'Coming to England' has been used in schools and universities as a tool to explore the Windrush journey. She is a Liberal Democrat peer and a campaigner for children and received a Damehood Medal in 2020 to honour over 40 years of charitable work. In June 2018, Baroness Benjamin was commissioned by the Prime Minister to chair the Windrush Commemoration Committee, which provided advice on how best to create a permanent, fitting tribute to the Windrush generation and their descendants.

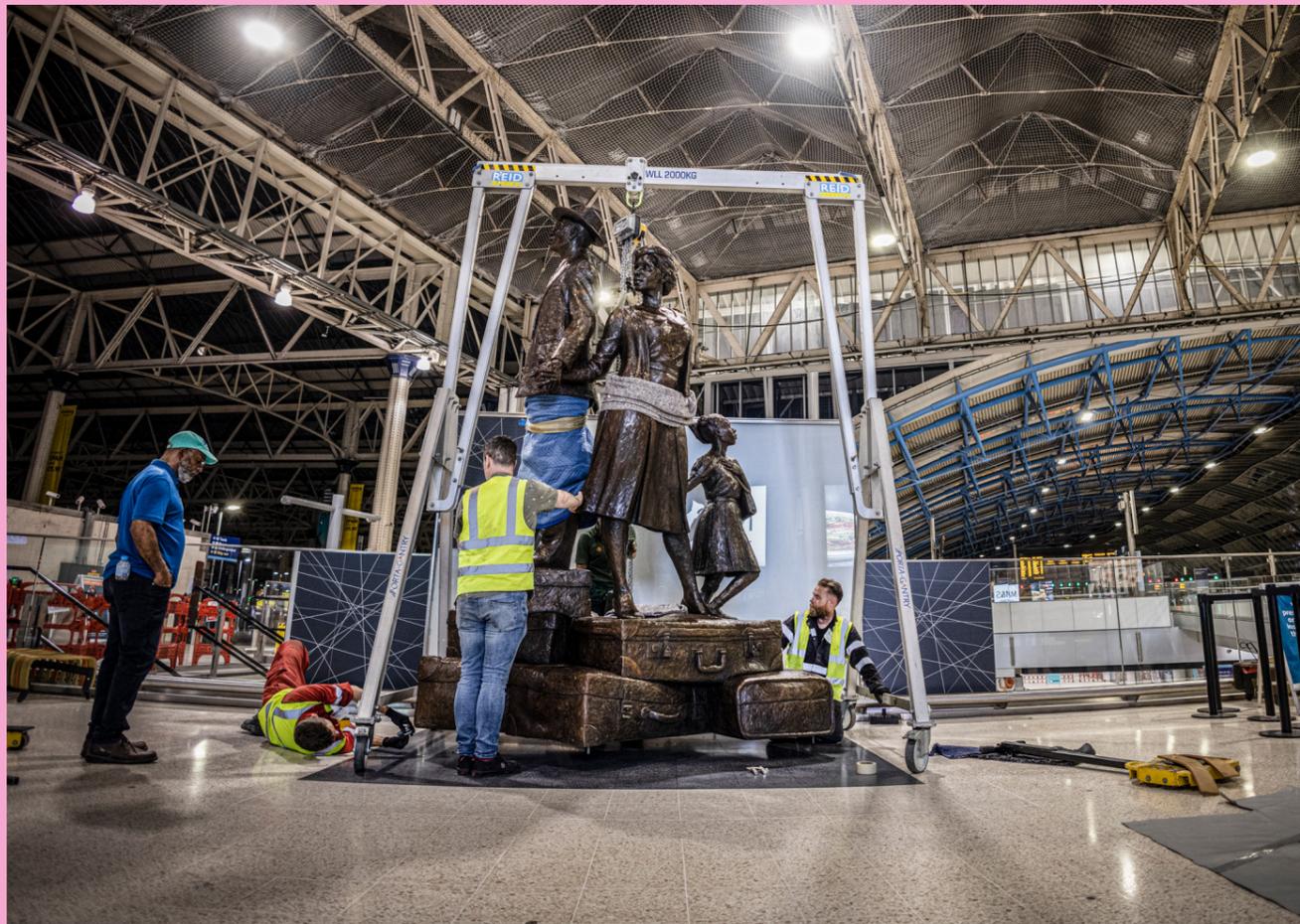
## BASIL WATSON

Based between Jamaica and Atlanta, USA, Jamaican artist Basil Watson is a prolific sculptor and painter who has created many high-profile public monuments in the Caribbean and the USA. In 2016, the Government of Jamaica awarded Basil the Order of Distinction (Commander) in appreciation of his artistic accomplishments. Since achieving international recognition, he has completed major commissions in China, Guatemala, and in various States within the US. He is known for his statues of sporting heroes such as Usain Bolt and Merlene Ottey, and most recently he was commissioned to create a statue of Martin Luther King Jr for the City of Atlanta, USA.

*"I feel privileged that I had the opportunity to express the aspirations, vision and courage of my parents, who took the long sea voyage to England in 1952 as part of the Windrush Generation in search of a brighter future."* - **BASIL WATSON**



Photography: courtesy of the artist



Images courtesy of Steve Russell Studios





## Academic Learning Outcomes

- Know and understand the history of Britain as a coherent, chronological narrative, and understanding the history of Windrush to the present day: how people from the Caribbean have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world.
- Explore and appreciate the diverse national, regional, and ethnic cultures, groups and communities in Britain; understanding the differences and similarities between people's experiences and how these arise from several factors.
- Confidently discuss and convey opinions, and explain views, on topical issues, problems and events that affect themselves and society.

## Creative Learning Outcomes

- Develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by listening to, discussing and expressing views about people's experiences.
- Understand and interpret simple recurring literary language in stories and poetry through creative writing and experimentation.
- Explore and develop creative approaches and techniques towards different art and design mediums; including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials.

The activities in this resource have been devised by spoken word artist Dauda Ladejobi. The outcomes can be linked to Key Stage 2 History and Citizenship objectives of the National Curriculum to further consolidate learning.

## RESOURCE VIDEO

Accompanying this learning resource is an 8-minute film featuring Chair of the Windrush Commemoration Committee Baroness Floella Benjamin DBE, DL and artist Basil Watson. The film provides background information on why The National Windrush Monument was commissioned and how the artist designed and made it. To view the full video, please follow this link here: [bit.ly/national-windrush-monument-video](https://bit.ly/national-windrush-monument-video).



*"This monument has been created to inspire greater understanding of our diverse history by acknowledging the importance of the contribution made to Britain by the Windrush Generation and their descendants, which will inspire future generations forever."*  
- WINDRUSH COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE

# THE STORY OF THE WINDRUSH GENERATION

The Caribbean is a region that consists of the Caribbean Sea, many islands, and the surrounding coasts. On a map you'll find it in between North and South America.

After World War II ended in 1945, Britain needed help to rebuild, and people from the Caribbean region, including Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Guyana were invited by the British government to start a new life here.

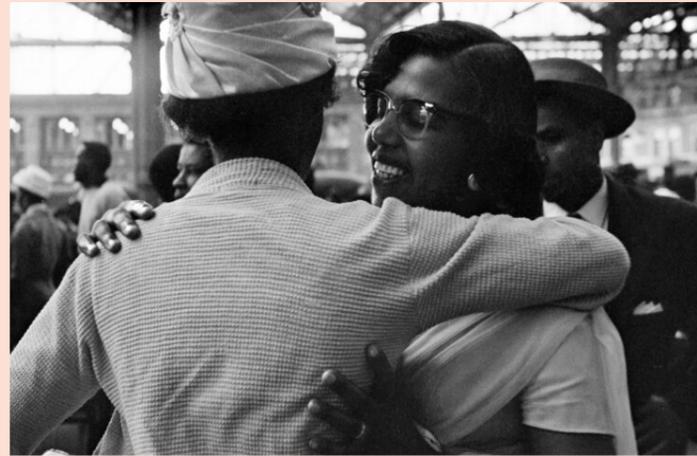
A large group of people from the Caribbean crossed the Atlantic Ocean to Britain on a ship called the Empire Windrush. They arrived in Britain on 22 June 1948, which is why we celebrate Windrush Day on 22 June every year.

Throughout the 1940s, 50s, 60s and 70s, thousands of people left their homes behind to start a new life in Britain. Full of hope and determination, they had many skills and lived experiences to offer.

They helped rebuild the country by working in construction, public transport, factories and manufacturing. Many Caribbean women found employment as NHS nurses and nursing aides in hospitals across the country.

Unfortunately, many were treated badly because of the colour of their skin and/or for being of a different culture. This left many of the first Caribbean workers feeling afraid and isolated.

Despite these difficulties, the Windrush Generation made a huge contribution to all aspects of British life, from our health and transport services to our politics, businesses, literature, and culture.



Photography: Howard Grey



Photography: Howard Grey



Photography: Daily Herald Archive/SSPL via Getty Images

22nd June  
1948

The Empire  
Windrush  
arrived in the UK

700

Number of  
Caribbean  
islands

6

Official languages  
spoken in the  
Caribbean

1027

Number of  
passengers on the  
Empire Windrush

22nd  
June

Windrush  
Day

Jamaica, Trinidad  
& Tobago,  
Barbados and  
Guyana

Some of the Caribbean  
regions invited by the  
British government to  
start a new life in the UK

Empire  
Windrush

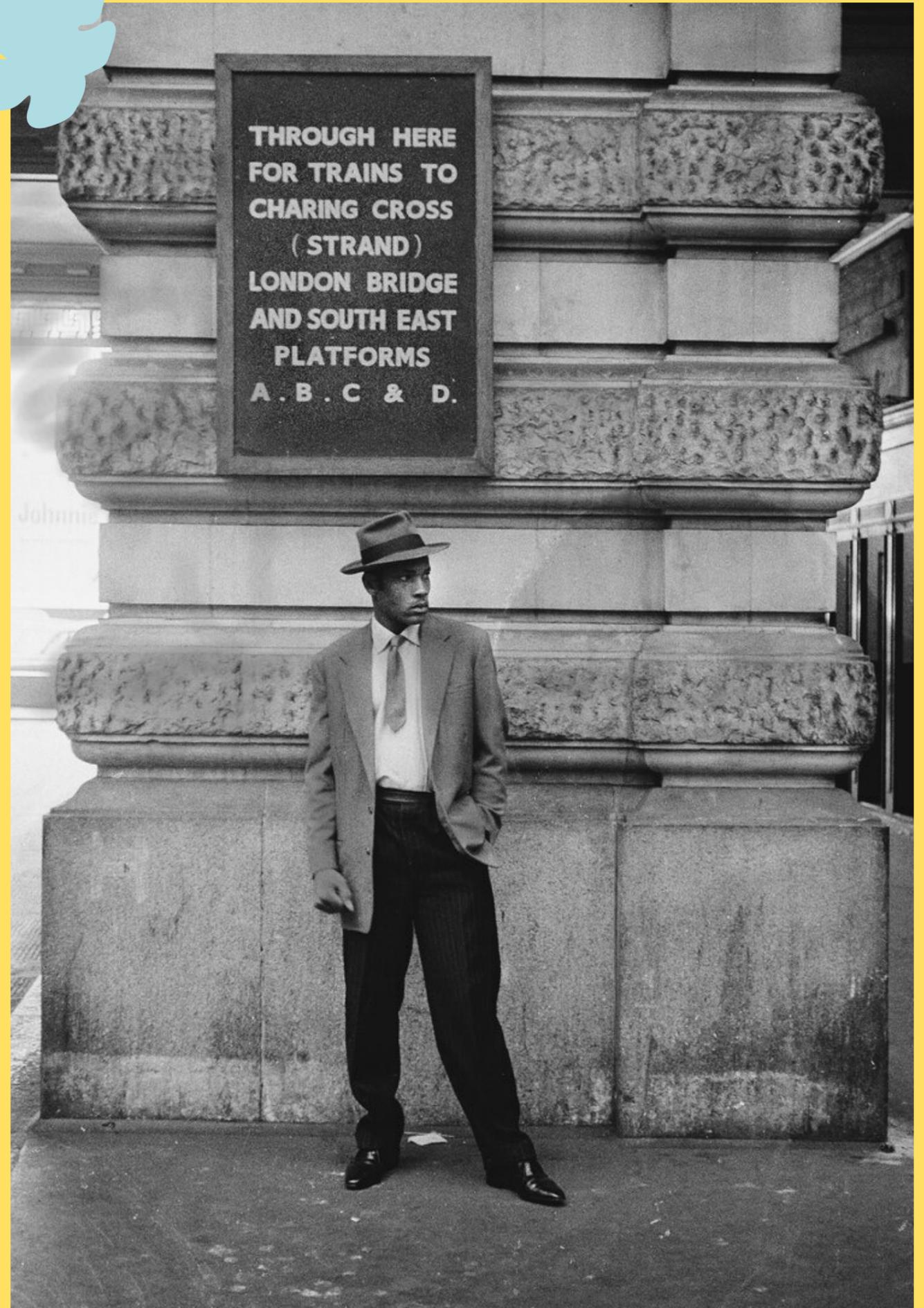
The ship that carried  
the first members  
of the Windrush  
Generation to the UK



Photography: Howard Grey



Photography: Howard Grey



Photography: Howard Grey

# ACTIVITY 1: POETRY WRITING

In 2017, Professor Laura Serrant OBE PhD Queens Nurse, former nurse and diversity specialist, wrote a poem to recognise and celebrate the contributions made by Black nurses to the health system of England. It describes the difficulties, prejudice and challenges faced by the brave men and women that left their countries to come to Britain.

Below is an extract of the poem, *You called...and we came*, which can be used in conjunction with Activity 1: Poetry Writing. You can read the full poem on the author's website here: [bit.ly/you-called-and-we-came](http://bit.ly/you-called-and-we-came).

## *You called...and we came*

*You called...and we came.  
In ships bigger than anything we had seen,  
dwarfing our islands and covering them  
in the shadows of smoke and noise.  
Crowded, excited voices filled the air,  
travelling to the 'motherland'.  
Driven by a wish, a call to save, to rebuild  
and support efforts to establish 'health for all'  
in the aftermath of war.*

*You called...and we came.  
A new millennium – new hopes spread across this land.  
New populations, engaging and reflecting  
the varied, diverse and vibrant nature of these shores.  
Challenging and reflecting on leadership for health.  
Moves to melt the 'snow' at the peaks of our profession.  
Recognising the richness of our kaleidoscope nation.  
Where compassion, courage and diversity are reflected  
in our presence and our contribution:  
Not only the hopes and dreams of our ancestors.  
Human values needed to truly lead change...and add  
value.*

*Remember...you called.  
Remember...you called.  
Remember, it was us, who came.*

©Professor Laura Serrant OBE PhD Queens Nurse

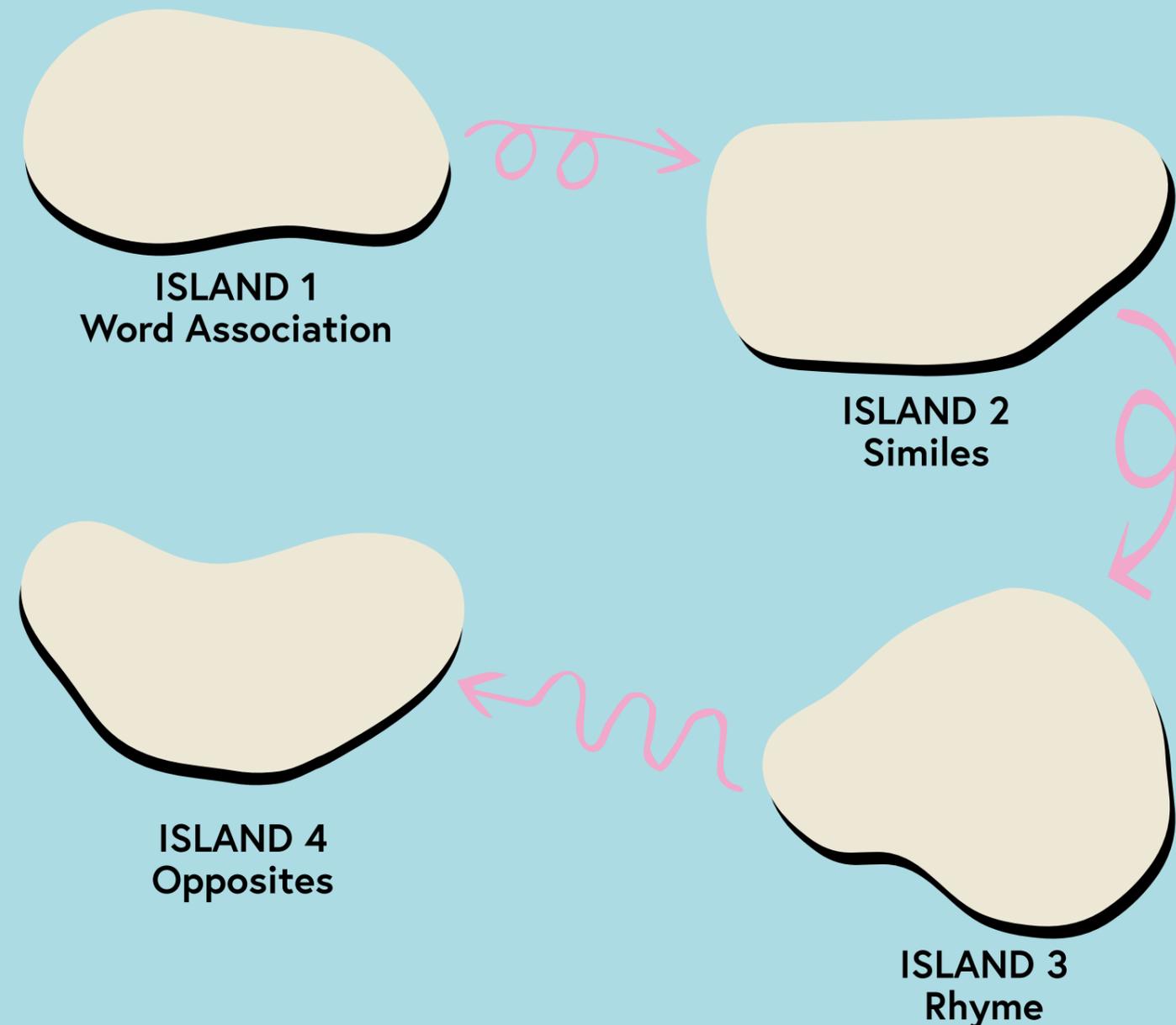
Thinking about the poem, put yourself in the shoes of those who were called. Imagine how they would have felt, from the moment of being called to arriving, working and living in Britain. Think of four words that describe their feelings and write one word in each island. For example:

*They felt **excited** because they had never been on such a big boat*

*They felt **sad** to be leaving their homes and families behind*

*They felt **pride** helping rebuild Britain*

*They felt **disappointed** about how they were treated*



Now it's time to write your own poem. Each island explains a poetry writing technique that will help you turn your chosen word into a sentence. Each of these sentences will make up a line of your poem.

## ISLAND 1 - WORD ASSOCIATION

On this Island we'll explore words that have a connection with your chosen word. Word association helps you find ways to explain feelings.

**TASK:** Make a list of words associated with your chosen word. For example:

*Excited = thrill, flutter, surprise, fireworks, presents*

**Create a full sentence from your associated words. To help with this, give your chosen word an action or a simple description. For example:**

*They were excited, the thrill of the journey ahead.  
Their excitement was like fireworks in the night sky.*

## ISLAND 3 - RHYME

Not all poems rhyme, but rhymes cause lines or words to end with a similar sound and make them fun to read!

**TASK:** List words that Rhyme with your chosen word. For example:

*Pride, Ride, Slide, Glide, Confide*

**Try creating sentences with your rhyming words. For example:**

First full of *pride*  
Excited for this *ride*  
The journey was smooth like a *slide*  
So easily we *glide*  
Looking for someone in which to *confide*

## ISLAND 2 - SIMILES

A simile compares two different things in an interesting way using the word 'like' or 'as'. It helps us to connect with the reader's senses.

**TASK:** Using your senses (sight, touch, smell, taste, sound) try to find creative ways of explaining your chosen word. For example:

*Excitement **smells** like sweet popcorn, **feels** like a thunderstorm brewing, **looks** like fireworks going off, **tastes** like popping candy, **sounds** like a crowd cheering.*

**Create a full sentence giving your chosen word an action or a simple description. For example:**

*Excitement smells like sweet popcorn **popping**, tastes like popping candy **fizzing in your mouth**. Excitement is a barbecue with all your favourite food. Excitement is a million hands **clapping together**.*

## ISLAND 4 - OPPOSITES

Using opposites helps us explore feelings and add a different perspective.

**TASK:** List words or situations that are the opposite of your chosen word. For example:

Disappointment = fulfilled, happy, content

**Create full sentences using the opposite words. For example:**

To never be *fulfilled*  
This doesn't make me *happy*  
I can't be *content*

**Now put all your sentences together to create your very own poem!**

# JOURNEYS

Throughout our lives we all face changes and new beginnings. Can you think of any big changes that have happened in your family's life? Many people have stories to tell about important journeys that have shaped them.

*"My mother and her siblings were part of the Windrush Generation; leaving the Caribbean, responding to England's call for help. Their intention, to assist with the rebuilding of "Mother Country" shattered by the war years; an opportunity also to further develop their skills and return home with improved lives. Three decades later I arrived in Britain, age 18 with the sole purpose to study to be a Minister of Religion. My first memory was of grey houses with smoke-filled chimneys. I had left behind brightly coloured houses and wonderful sunshine! But I was curious and this was going to be an adventure!"*

**The Right Reverend Rose Hudson-Wilkin, CD, MBE, The Bishop of Dover**



Photography: Kenneth Wilkin



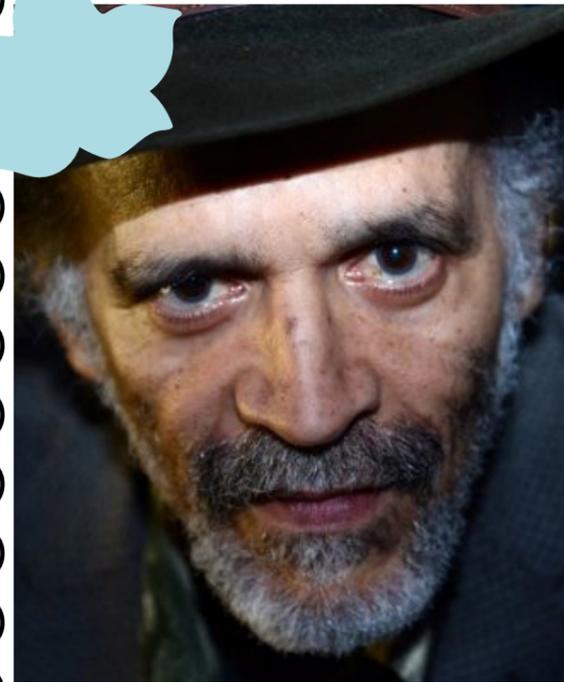
Photography: Khadifa Wong

*"I was born and went to school in Trinidad. I had options to go to the University of the West Indies, seek a university scholarship in Canada, USA or India or take the traditional path - a university in Britain. I got a place to study English at Hull University and arrived in London in 1965. I came and learnt, earned money during vacations and decided to stay in England. Four lines from a William Wordsworth poem echoed in my mind as I anticipated arriving in London:*

*I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er cakes and hills  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils*

*I had never seen daffodils in my life and this simple expectation defined my journey to London."*

**Ansel Wong CBE**



Photography: Camilla Greenwell, courtesy of Renaissance One

*"I am like a word carpenter, a poet inspired by words, language and the ways we can tell our stories. Words are bursting with history and resonance. I was born in Guyana and am a Georgetown boy. Named after King George. We in the English Caribbean have been very much tied to Britain and at school I wrote my essays in standard English, doing the same syllabus as a 16 year old in Cornwall. My father was Black and my mother was Portugese. She never travelled out of Guyana but when things got rough, she came to England aged 60. She would sit in her chair and be a mariner of a kind. I have written poems about her, 'Anna from Guyana', observing the tides of the world's breaking news. I know if I'm feeling a bit fragile, I will sit in that chair and think of my mother and the journey she made."*

**John Agard FRSL**

*"My family history is a history of journeys: my father's journey from Jamaica to Britain in 1947; his father's journey from China to Jamaica in the 1920s; and centuries before, the forced journeys of enslaved people from Africa to Jamaica. On my mother's side is the journey of Huguenot refugees from France to England in the 17th century. Without these journeys, I wouldn't be here.*

*At the end of a journey there is usually settlement, of some kind. My father traveled the world, but most of his life was lived in London, as mine has been."*

**Hannah Lowe  
Writer, Academic (Brunel University, London)**



Photography: Lealle Brady



**Coming to England by Floella Benjamin**

Coming to England is the inspiring true story of Baroness Floella Benjamin's journey from the Caribbean to a new life in Britain at the age of ten. From the bright colours of Trinidad to a cold and unfriendly London, the book follows her experiences of moving home, making new friends and ultimately meeting the Queen!

# ACTIVITY 2: TRACING YOUR JOURNEY

Think about a journey you or someone in your family has made. This could be moving from a different country like the Windrush Generation and other migrant populations, or it could be moving to a new neighbourhood, changing schools, or even a trip to your favourite place. Document the three stages of your journey (the beginning, the journey, and the destination) using writing and drawing.

## THE BEGINNING

In this first section, imagine you are about to go on a journey. Think about how you would feel at the beginning of your journey. What would you take with you? If you could choose only five of your most treasured belongings, what would they be? Why are they important to you? It could be pictures of your family, favourite food, a book or even a toy. Alongside your drawing, write down your chosen belongings.

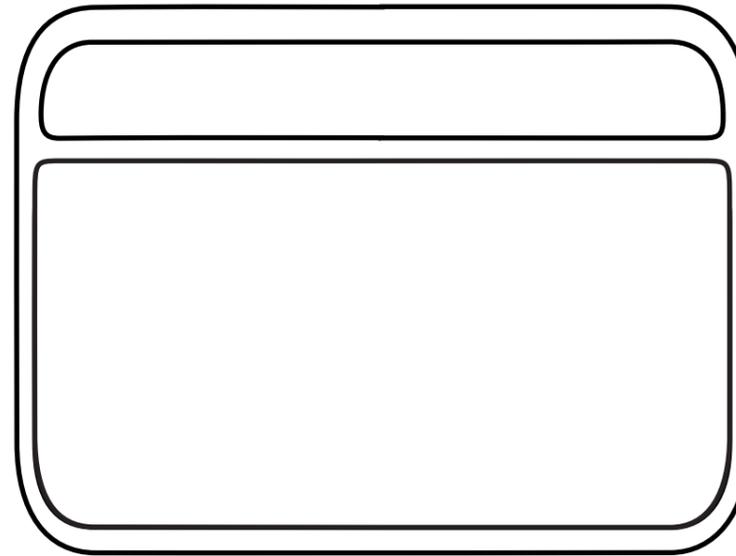
## THE JOURNEY

In this next section, imagine the journey itself. Think about how you would feel during your journey. Did you travel by boat, plane, train or car? What did you see along with way? Choose three things that you saw. It could be a person, building or wildlife. Alongside your drawing, write down the three things you saw.

## THE DESTINATION

In this last section, imagine you have just arrived at your destination. Did you notice anything different when you arrived? Did you see an interesting landmark? Did you notice something that was unfamiliar? What type of things did you see around you? Alongside your drawing, write down the three things that you noticed when you arrived.

## THE JOURNEY

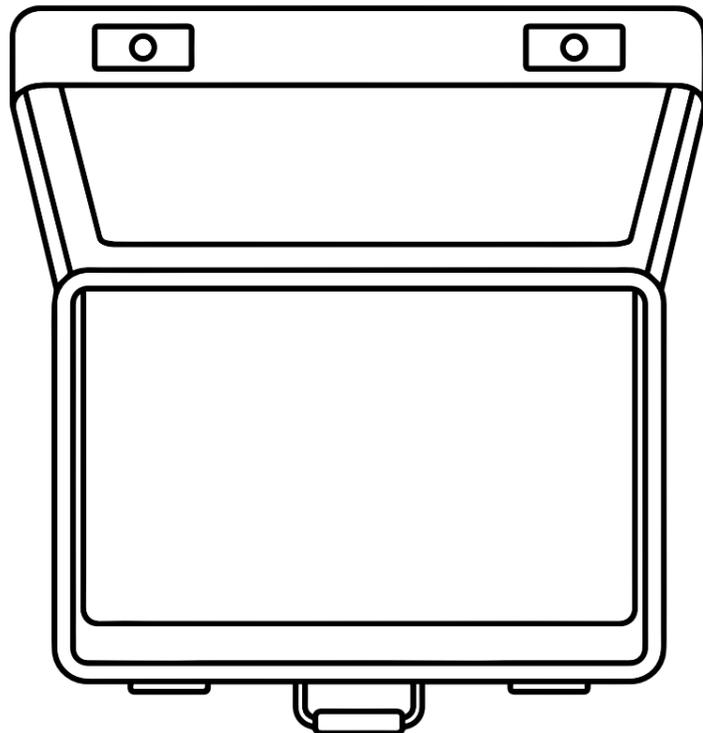


What three things did you see on your journey?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....



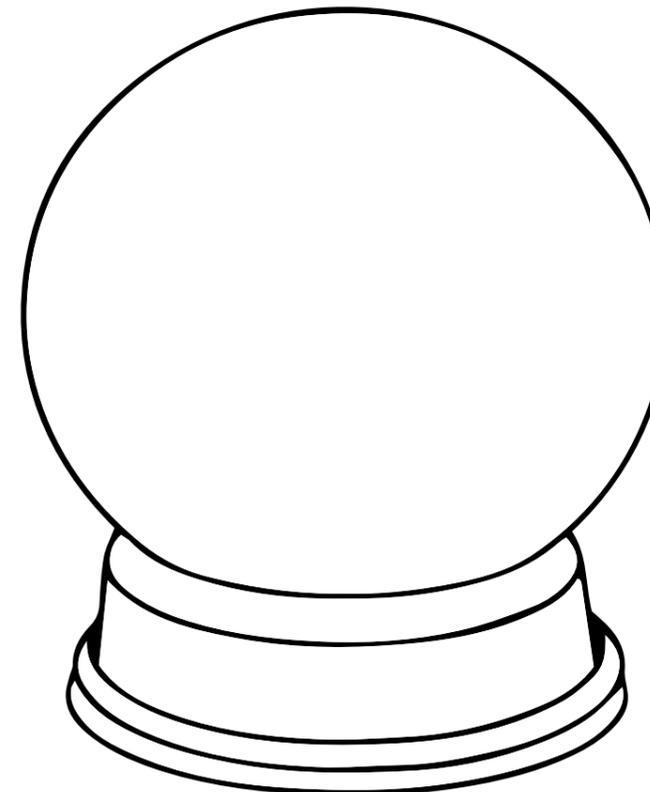
## THE BEGINNING



If you could choose only five of your most treasured belongings, what would they be?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....

## THE DESTINATION

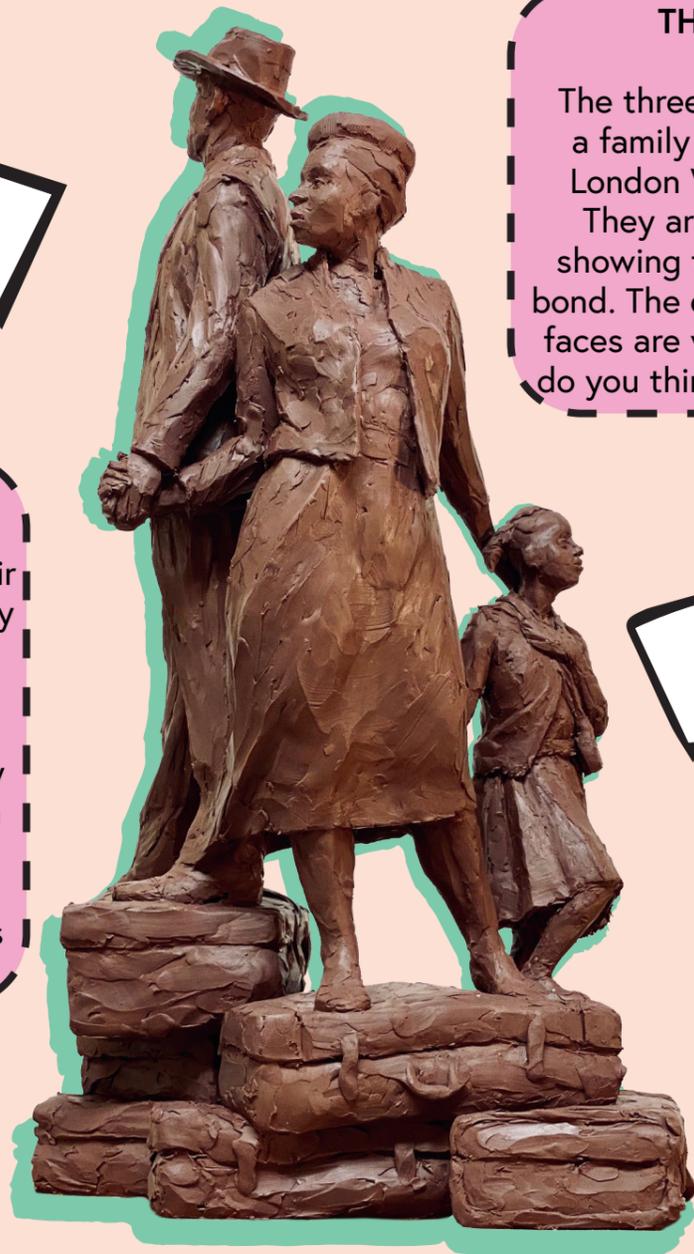


What three things did you notice when you arrived at your new destination?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

# MONUMENTS

Artist Basil Watson was chosen by the Windrush Commemoration Committee to create The National Windrush Monument. Each part of Basil's design was carefully considered to reflect the experience of the Windrush Generation, including his own parents, who took the journey to Britain. Basil has created three figures: a man, woman and child, hand-in-hand and dressed in their 'Sunday best', standing on a mountain of suitcases. Like many monuments, Basil's design is made from bronze.



## THE FIGURES

The three figures represent a family having arrived at London Waterloo Station. They are holding hands, showing their strong family bond. The expressions on their faces are very powerful. How do you think they are feeling?

## THE CLOTHING

The family is dressed in their finest clothing, their 'Sunday best'. In the Caribbean in the 1950s, smart clothing was expected for special occasions. Taking a journey to Britain would have been a very special occasion and many families either made or purchased clothes especially for the trip.

## THE SUITCASES

People of the Windrush Generation arrived in Britain with just a few of their most precious belongings packed in suitcases often called "grips". In many traditional monuments, the figures stand on a plinth, a big block of stone or metal. Basil has placed the figures on top of a pile of suitcases. What would it have been like to arrive in Britain with just a few possessions?

# EXAMPLES OF OTHER MONUMENTS

Monuments can be made of different materials

Monuments can include objects and artefacts

Monuments can be figurative or abstract



*The End, Heather Phillipson, 2020  
Photography: Juliet Rix*



*Caribbean fruits: Custard Apple (Annonaceae), Breadfruit (Moraceae), and Soursop (Annonaceae), Veronica Ryan, 2021. Photography: Andy Keate.  
Courtesy the artist, Paula Cooper Gallery and Alison Jacques*



*Rumors of War, Kehinde Wiley, 2019.  
Photography: Ka-Man Tse for Times Square Arts*

Monuments can be on a plinth or not

Monuments can be really colourful



*Brick House, Simone Leigh, 2019.  
Photography: Eric Suar*

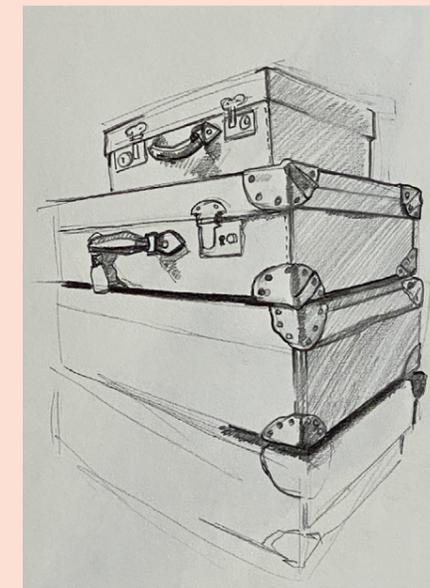
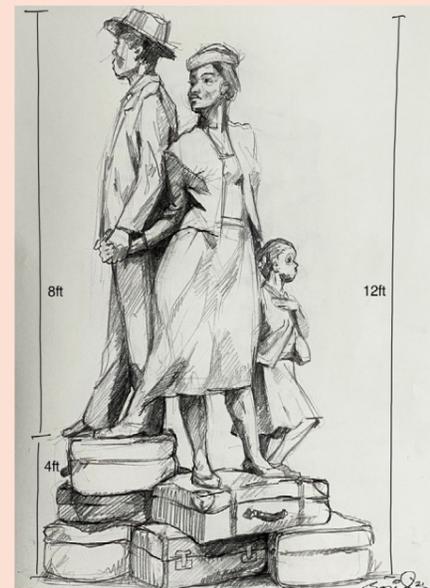
# ACTIVITY 3: MAKE YOUR OWN MONUMENT

A monument is a statue or other structure that commemorates an important person, event or object. How do monuments help us think about history? Which events, people and objects are worth remembering, and why? If you designed a monument, what story would it tell? If you designed a monument:

Who or what would it be for?

What would it include?

Would you give it a name?



Photography: Courtesy of Basil Watson

Before creating the monument, Basil created a sketch of what he wanted it to look like. He also had to figure out the size, weight and scale of the monument. Now you have thought about what your monument would include and be made of, draw a sketch to show what it would look like:



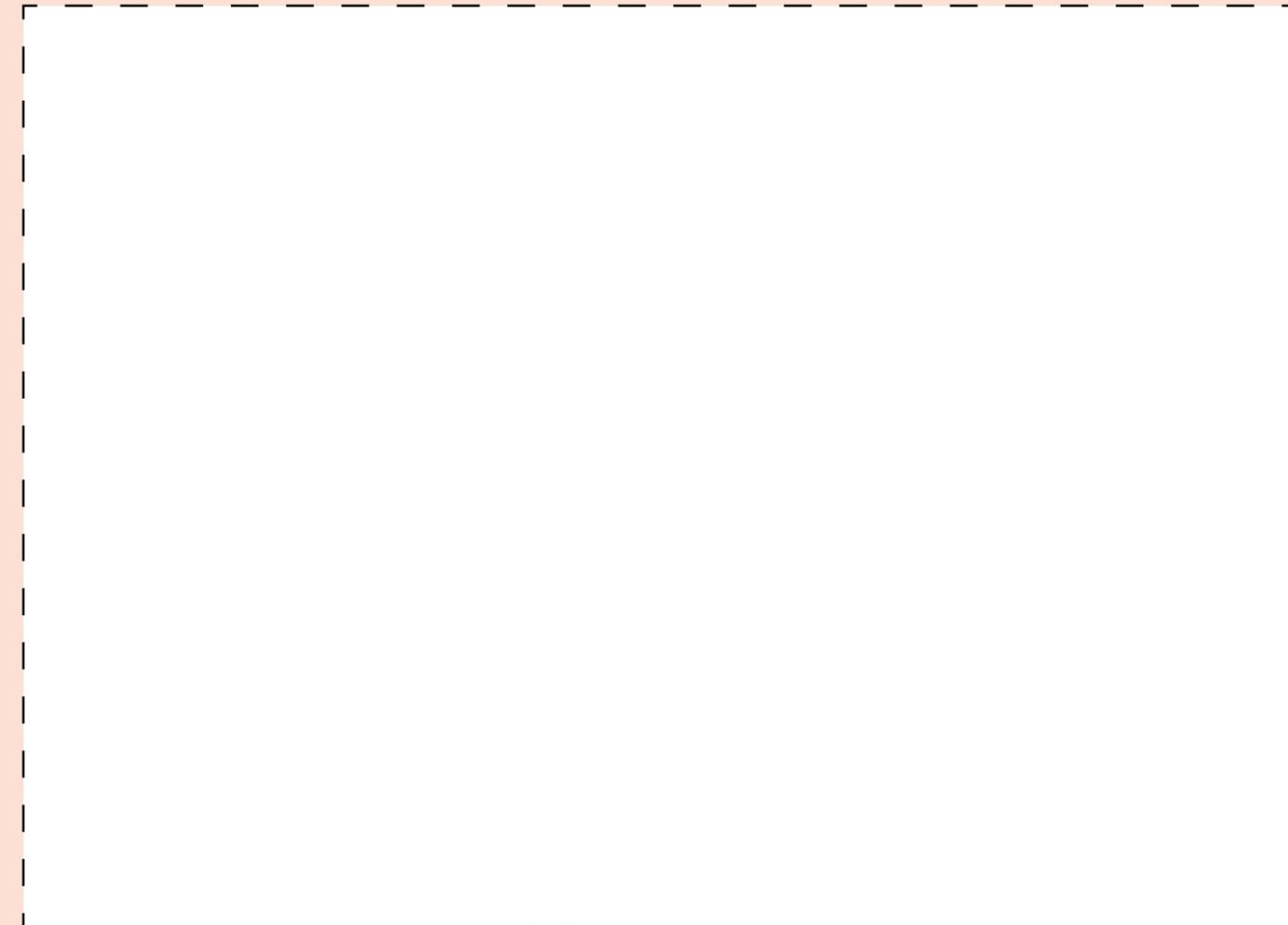
Photography: Courtesy of Basil Watson

Basil's monument is made from bronze metal and includes a stack of suitcases rather than a plinth. It was made at one of the world's largest foundries - a factory where objects in metal are made - Pangolin Editions, in Stroud, England. However, monuments can be made from various materials like granite, marble, stone, metal, steel and even glass. If you created a monument:

What materials would you use?

What colour would it be?

How big would it be?



Time to make a model of your monument! Models are very important when making sculptures as you can visualise your idea for others to see what the final outcome will be. Models also don't have to be the same size or the same material. A lot of artists make smaller scale models of their sculptures and use a variety of materials such as clay, paper and tape, cardboard, wire and even Play-Doh!

# FURTHER RESOURCES

Use the links below to find out more about the activities suggested in the learning resource, other areas to explore and helpful tools for teaching.

## WINDRUSH RESOURCES:

Windrush day 2020 presentation, Hackney Museum  
• [bit.ly/windrush-hackney-museum](https://bit.ly/windrush-hackney-museum)

Windrush Stories teaching pack (primary students): Creative writing activities, British Library  
• [bit.ly/windrush-british-library](https://bit.ly/windrush-british-library)

Windrush Day with Nathan Bryson: Educational activities for KS2, Puffin Schools  
• [bit.ly/windrush-puffin-schools](https://bit.ly/windrush-puffin-schools)

Windrush Learning Resource, 2020, The Geraldine Connor Foundation  
• [bit.ly/windrush-geraldine-connor-foundation](https://bit.ly/windrush-geraldine-connor-foundation)

Basil Watson's Artist Proposal  
• [bit.ly/basil-watson-proposal-video](https://bit.ly/basil-watson-proposal-video)

Windrush Teachers Activity Pack, Lambeth Council  
• [bit.ly/windrush-lambeth-council](https://bit.ly/windrush-lambeth-council)

Windrush worksheet – KS2: My Windrush stories, Reading Museum  
• [bit.ly/windrush-reading-museum](https://bit.ly/windrush-reading-museum)

Windrush Legends & Legacy, Haringey Council  
• [bit.ly/windrush-haringey-council](https://bit.ly/windrush-haringey-council)

KS2 Learning Resources | Poppy Bienias, Create London  
• [bit.ly/KS2-create-london](https://bit.ly/KS2-create-london)

## CHILDREN'S BOOKS:

*Windrush Child*  
-Benjamin Zephaniah, 2020

*Coming to England: An Inspiring True Story Celebrating the Windrush Generation*  
-Baroness Floella Benjamin, 2021

*John Agard's Windrush Child*  
-John Agard, 2022

*The Story of the Windrush*  
-K.N Chimbir, 2020

*We Sang Across the Sea: The Empire Windrush and Me*  
-Benjamin Zephaniah, 2022

*The Place for Me: Stories About the Windrush Generation*  
-Baroness Floella Benjamin; K. N. Chimbir; E. L. Norry; Judy Hepburn, 2021



## WINDRUSH VOICES:

The Right Reverend Rose Hudson-Wilkin, CD, MBE, The Bishop of Dover  
• [www.canterburydiocese.org](https://www.canterburydiocese.org)

John Agard FRSL  
• [www.renaissanceone.co.uk](https://www.renaissanceone.co.uk)

Ansel Wong CBE  
• [bit.ly/windrush-commemoration-committee](https://bit.ly/windrush-commemoration-committee)  
• [www.nhcarnival.org/ansel-wong](https://www.nhcarnival.org/ansel-wong)

Hannah Lowe  
• [www.hannahlowe.me](https://www.hannahlowe.me)  
• [bit.ly/Bloodaxe-books-Hannah-Lowe](https://bit.ly/Bloodaxe-books-Hannah-Lowe)

## ABOUT UP PROJECTS

UP Projects curates and commissions public art, working collaboratively with artists, communities and partners to create extraordinary projects through artist-led community engagement. With an international outlook, activating spaces across the globe and in the digital domain, UP's work explores the multitude of ways in which people can encounter and connect with contemporary art in unexpected places.

UP Projects worked with the Windrush Commemoration Committee and the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities to support the artist selection and commissioning process for The National Windrush Monument, and ensure the views of the British Caribbean community were sought on what would represent a meaningful legacy.

[www.upprojects.com](https://www.upprojects.com)

## ABOUT DAUDA LADEJOBI

Dauda Ladejobi is an award-winning Nigerian born poet, workshop facilitator and youth educator from East London. He has performed his poetry at the houses of parliament, Rich Mix, Barbican, Roundhouse and the Edinburgh and Camden Fringe. As an educator he has worked with educational institutes, councils and youth groups to create learning resources to further young people's engagement with the arts. He has contributed to TIE productions for schools along with creating activity packs covering bullying, sexual health and mental health. Currently he is lead artist for the Speak Up project, focusing on using arts and virtual reality as a tool for young men from Black and Asian minority ethnic groups to talk about mental health.



Produced by UP Projects on behalf of The Department for Levelling Up Housing & Communities and the Windrush Commemoration Committee with activities by Dauda Ladejobi and support from curator Melanie Abrahams with accompanied film produced by Maël Hénaff.

[www.upprojects.com](http://www.upprojects.com)

Designed by: Jack Newbury, UP Projects