

Google Arts & Culture

Learn Together: A Glimpse Into the Black Power Movement



Using the lesson plan and Google Arts & Culture resources

This lesson plan is designed to support you as you explore Google Arts & Culture stories and exhibits related to the lesson topic. The images you will see here are just a sample of the media—texts, images, audio, and video—available to you on the Google Arts & Culture website. A parent or teacher might be guiding you through the lesson, or you might choose to complete it on your own.

All you need to access the lesson is an internet connection and a web browser. You may want to take notes, whether you do that digitally or with paper and pen.

The lesson plan has an **introduction**, which will describe the topic and provide some background information that will help you understand what you are seeing, hearing, and reading. Then the lesson will take you on a journey from one **Story** or **Exhibit** to another, fill in some details along the way, and pose **questions** that will help you focus on important ideas. Some lesson plans include a **project** related to the lesson topic. All end with a **quiz** and some **ideas for exploring the topic further**.

The lesson plan includes **questions** about the main stories and exhibits, and there is also a **quiz**. You will want to write answers to the questions in a notebook or on a piece of paper. Then you can check all your answers when you've finished the lesson.

Resources on the Google Arts & Culture website include Themes, Stories, Museum Views, items, and images.

- ❖ **Themes** bring together stories, exhibits, collections, images, audio, and video files that relate to a topic.
- ❖ In a **Story**, clicking on the arrow on the right side of a slide will move you forward. The arrow on the left side takes you back. Sometimes, clicking on the right arrow will zoom you in on an image. Just keep clicking to keep moving forward. Audio and videos on slides will play automatically. Clicking on an image title will take you to a page with more information about it.
- ❖ In **Museum Views**, you move through a 3D space. Click to move forward. Click, hold, and move the cursor left or right to turn.
- ❖ An **item** will take you to an individual **image**, where you can zoom in and sometimes read more about the artefact.



**The Afro, Stephen Shames 1968, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
The New York Public Library**

In this lesson, you will learn about:

- ❖ some leaders, organizations, and programs of the Black Power movement.
- ❖ the push for educational reform to reduce racism and instill pride within the Black community.
- ❖ how some Black people found ways to express their history and who they are through art.
- ❖ what the Black Power movement was like in the United Kingdom.

You will:

- ❖ view some stories and exhibits about the Black Power movement.
- ❖ answer some questions about what you have seen and read.

This lesson will take **30–45 minutes** to complete.



Learn Together: The Black Power Movement

Perhaps like no other ideology, the Black Power movement built an immense legacy that continues to shape the contemporary American landscape. On June 16, 1966, Stokely Carmichael of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) called for "Black Power" in Greenwood, Mississippi. Seizing the slogan, young people developed countless political, social, cultural, and economic organizations and programs under the banner of the Black Power ideology.

Some activists moved from one organization to the other or belonged to several at the same time. Many Black Power theoreticians, strategists, and foot soldiers spent time in prison for their activities, while some prisoners joined and profoundly shaped the Black Power movement.

Following in Black Power's footsteps, the politics of group identity entered mainstream education, academia, culture, politics, and society at large. American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic, LGBTQ+, and women's groups asserted themselves. The influence of the Black Power movement on hip-hop and spoken word artists cannot be overstated.

The Black Power movement has had a tremendous impact on race, politics, criminal justice, culture, and education in the United States and around the world.

As you view the exhibits and stories in this lesson, think about these questions:

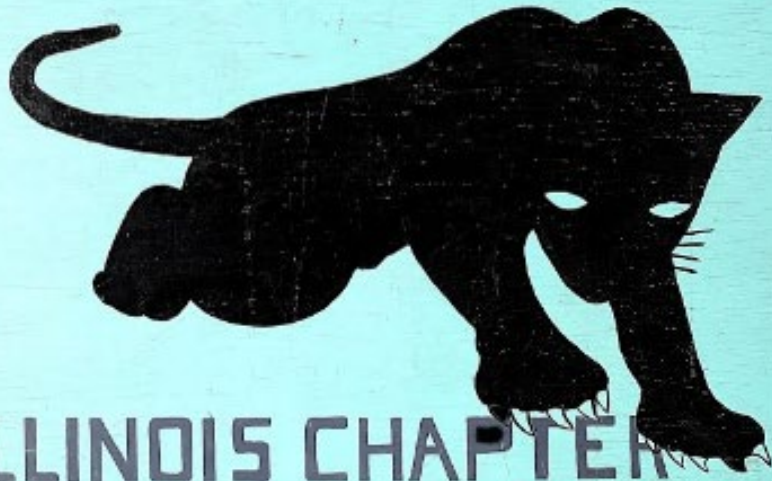
- ❖ Why did millions of people support the Black Power movement?
- ❖ What did most organizations and coalitions within the Black Power movement have in common?
- ❖ According to the stories and exhibits related to this topic, what does "Black Power" mean?

FREE

BREAKFAST FOR
CHILDREN SERVED
HERE

MON. thru

FRI. — 7AM to 9AM



ILLINOIS CHAPTER
BLACK PANTHER PARTY

The Black Panther Party

By the late 1960s, Malcolm X and others were speaking out in favor of Black nationalism, resistance, and self-determination. New organizations developed, including the Black Panther Party (BPP). Huey Newton and Bobby Seale originally founded the BPP in 1966 to patrol Black neighborhoods and protect residents from police brutality. The Panthers established many social welfare programs to provide services to the community. Party activists—among them Fred Hampton, Angela Davis, and others—called for revolution and armed resistance against unjust government authority. Violence and confrontation with the police and government agencies resulted in multiple arrests, jail sentences, assassinations, and targeted assaults against perceived enemies.

Click [here](#) to learn about the Black Panther Party and other organizations in the Black Power movement.

Then come back to answer these questions:

1. Who were the founders of the Black Panther Party?
2. Which government agency distorted the message and hindered the growth of the BPP?
3. Why did the BPP and other organizations break with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s nonviolent approach to civil rights?

To learn about the Black Panther Party, click [here](#).



Panther School, Stephen Shames 1972
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

Teaching Black

Black Power was an extensive, multi-faceted array of smaller movements and grassroots attempts to improve quality of life, raise consciousness, and change mindsets. Educators, specifically, felt that the key to effecting change within Black communities was through the re-education of its youth—a reshaping of curriculum that would have a long-term impact on reducing racism, instilling pride, and encouraging the kind of self-confidence and self-respect that would equip Black youth to make a difference in society. Renewed interest in Black heritage brought about a nationwide effort to develop Black Studies programs, curricula, and textbooks that presented a different and more equal treatment of African Americans.

Click [here](#) to learn about Black Power educational initiatives.

Then come back to answer these questions:

1. What was the key to effecting change within Black communities according to Black educators?
2. What was Pan-Africanism?
3. Compare two books published during the 1960s that helped shape the Black Power movement. Explain what each book was about and how it contributed to the movement.

To learn about the journey of African Americans at one university, click [here](#).



The Black Aesthetic and Black Arts Movement

During the late 1960s, a blossoming Black Arts Movement (BAM) advocated a “Black aesthetic,” meaning artistic expression rooted in African cultural heritage, incorporating the contemporary Black experience, and aimed at Black audiences. Black writers, poets, musicians, visual artists, dancers, playwrights, actors, and cultural workers saw culture as a central element of political liberation and self-determination. They fostered a new aesthetic, declared that Black was beautiful, and saw art as an integral part of the revolution. BAM helped lay the foundation for modern-day authors such as Maya Angelou, hip-hop music and culture, and other later Black cultural expression.

Click [here](#) to learn about the Black aesthetic and the Black Arts Movement.

Then come back to answer these questions:

1. What is the “Black aesthetic”?
2. How did berets become important symbols of militancy and political consciousness?
3. Larry Neal, an influential BAM artist, once said, “The Black Arts Movement is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept.” What do you think he meant by this statement?

To learn about the history of Black activism in the theater, click [here](#).

The British Black Power Movement

Although the term “Black Power” is mostly associated with the civil rights movement in the United States, the British Black Power Movement was a movement in its own right. Black and Asian migrants, who were dedicated to shaping a future in Britain, led this movement during the 1960s and 1970s. Their aim was to end White supremacy, the idea that White people are a superior race. Black people have been subordinated to Whites in many ways, including access to healthcare, safe housing, voting, and equal education. Activists in the British Black Power Movement worked to combat police brutality and an unfair justice system and to create a liberation movement led by Black people for Black people.

Click [here](#) to learn how the Black Power movement in the US inspired a similar movement in Britain.

Then come back to answer these questions:

1. Who led the British Black Power Movement?
2. What does the word *liberation* mean for members of the Black Power movement?
3. Research how the Black Power movement in the United States influenced the British Black Power movement. Write a brief essay—three to four paragraphs—about this topic.

To learn about a Black Power uprising in Britain in 1981, click [here](#).



Quiz

Read the questions and write your answer in your notebook or on a piece of paper.

1. Give three examples of social programs created by the Black Panther Party.
2. Who was Fred Hampton?
3. Who coined the slogan “Black Power” in 1966?
4. What was a main result of the work of the Black Student, or Black Action, movement?
5. How did art help shape and spread the Black Power message?
6. How is an Afro an example of the Black aesthetic during this era?
7. Who inspired the British Black Panther movement in 1967?
8. Where did the Black Liberation Front get its main ideas?

Explore Further

This lesson has given you some vocabulary to talk about the Black Power Movement. It has also introduced you to some basic ideas that are relevant to this topic. To learn more about Black history and culture in the United States, click [here](#).

It's Your Turn!

In this lesson, you learned how the Black Power movement worked to overcome the discrimination aimed at Black people in the US . Now it's *your* turn to do something. Here are some ideas for projects that you can do at home or in the classroom.

- ❖ At the 1968 Olympic Summer Games in Mexico City, as “The Star-Spangled Banner” played and two American flags were raised, sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos stood on the victory platform with their black-gloved fists lifted in the air and their heads bowed down. The gesture provoked a national conversation about athletes, protest, and patriotism. Most recently, NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick refused to stand for “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Research and create a timeline of the long line of athletes who have spoken out against racial injustice.
- ❖ In his contemporary photograph “Empowerment,” Richard Mark Rawlins situates a Black Power hand rising from a quintessentially English teacup, examining the concept of Black identity. During the Black Power movement, Black artists created art that was based on their own ideas, communities, and experiences. Create a piece of artwork that explores your own identity.
- ❖ Poet and playwright Amiri Baraka was a key figure in both BAM and Black Power politics. Baraka helped popularize a type of poetry known as “spoken word poetry,” which is performed for an audience and uses word play and intonation to help communicate ideas and experiences to others. Research and listen to Amiri Baraka perform his poetry. Then, write a poem about a social issue important to you. If possible, perform your poem in front of an audience or digitally record your poem and share it through social media.



Answers

The Black Panther Party

1. Huey Newton and Bobby Seale founded the BPP.
2. The FBI distorted the message and hindered the growth of the BPP.
3. Sample Answer: They thought Dr. King's approach was too passive and that Black people needed to determine their own fates.

Teaching Black

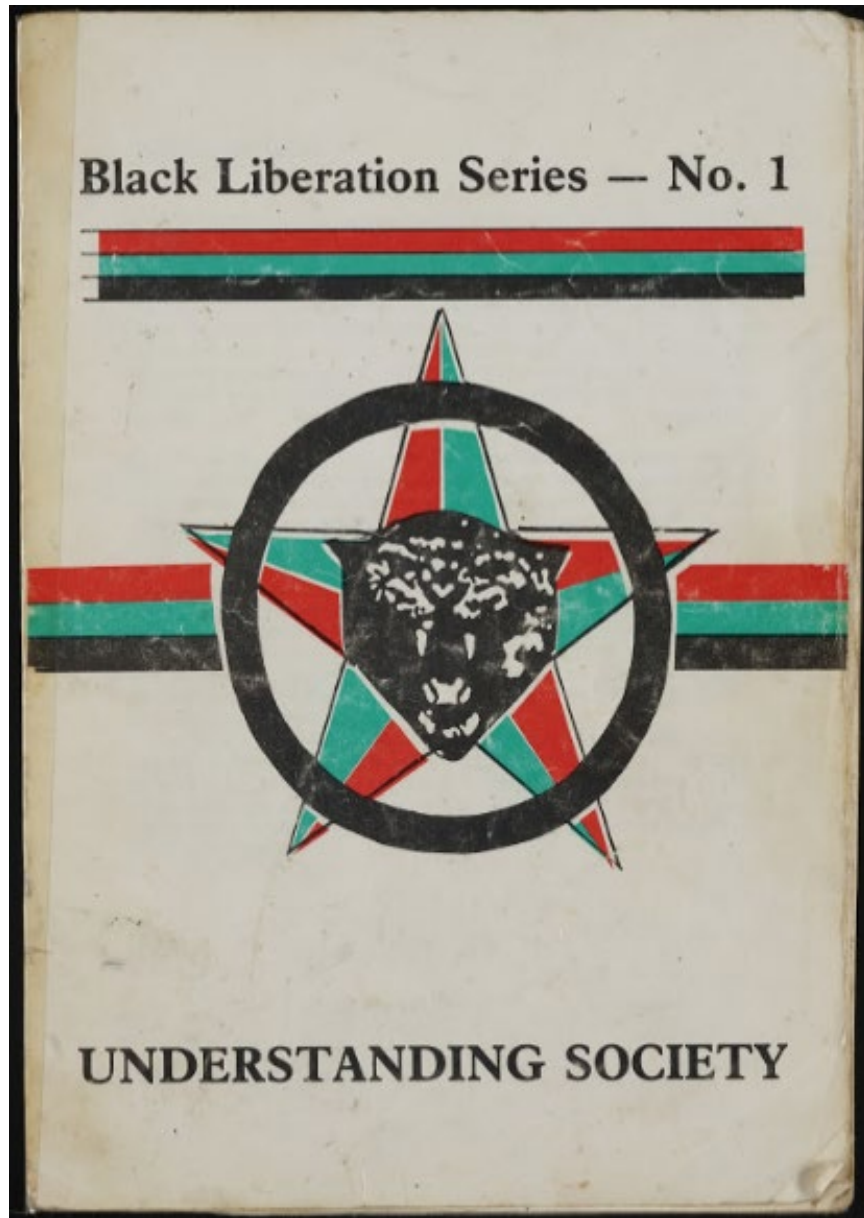
1. Black educators felt the key to effecting change within the Black community was through the re-education of its youth.
2. Pan-Africanism was the recognition that the destinies of all people living in or having come from Africa were intertwined.
3. Answers will vary but could include comparisons of *Black Power*, *Africa in History*, *To Be A Slave*, *The Vanguard*, *Black Students*, or *We Walk The Way of the World*.

The Black Aesthetic and Black Arts Movement

1. The Black aesthetic is the artistic expression rooted in African cultural heritage, incorporating the contemporary Black experience and aimed at Black audiences.
2. Berets became important symbols of militancy and political consciousness because members of the BPP wore them.
3. Sample Answer: Like Black Power activists, BAM artists saw culture as a central element of political liberation and self-determination.

The British Black Power Movement

1. Black and Asian migrants led the British Black Power movement.
2. For members of the British Black Power movement, the word *liberation* means ending White Supremacy.
3. Essays will vary but students should understand that the British Black Power movement was less concerned with desegregation than Black activists in the US. Both groups worked to combat the unfair justice system and police brutality.



Answers

Quiz

1. Three examples of social programs created by the Black Panther Party are free breakfast for children, free medical clinics, and testing for sickle cell anemia.
2. Fred Hampton was a community organizer for the Black Panther Party. He was fatally shot by the Chicago police for his involvement with the party.
3. Stokely Carmichael coined the slogan "Black Power" in 1966.
4. A main result of the work of the Black Student, or Black Action, movement was the creation of Black, or Afro-American, Studies programs or departments at many universities in the 1970s.
5. Black writers, poets, musicians, visual artists, dancers, playwrights, actors, and cultural workers created graphic arts, newspapers, poetry, music, and theater to help shape and spread the Black Power message.
6. Afros celebrated African ancestry, so they became popular hairstyles during this time.
7. Stokely Carmichael and Malcolm X visited London in 1967 and inspired the British Black Panther movement.
8. The Black Liberation Front drew its main ideas from Pan-African Socialism and Black nationalism.

Black Liberation Series — No. 1, Black Cultural Archives