ADVICE FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

Education Resources: Notting Hill Riots History and 2011 Riots Timeline
The Facts

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London 1944-1961: Increasing numbers of Caribbean migrants arrived in London after the Second World War. By 1961 there were over 100,000 Caribbean people living in London. Caribbean migrants often found homes in areas of slum or poor housing. One of these areas was Notting Hill in North Kensington. During the 1950s, a strong Caribbean community had grown up in Notting Hill, many from Trinidad and Barbados.

At that time poverty, rootlessness, violence and crime were a part of life in North Kensington. Poor white families competed with poor Caribbeans for housing, a situation that was often exploited by unscrupulous landlords. Velma Davis remembers arriving in the area as a young woman from Trinidad in 1957. "Accommodation was the big problem. In those days they had big signs. Signs were up at the windows - no blacks, no Irish, no dogs, no children. So that was difficult."

'Colour bars' saw black people turned away from pubs and consequently 'shebeens' or illegal bars sprung up providing social places for black people.

**Early 1950’s:** Young White working-class 'Teddy Boys' began to turn hostile towards the growing numbers of Black families in the area. Right-wing groups exploited the situation. Fascist groups such as the Union for British Freedom set up branches in the district. Sir Oswald Mosely, founder of the pre-war British Union of Fascists, held street-corner meetings in west London and further afield. Leaflets and wall slogans urged 'Keep Britain White'.

During the summer, gangs of Teddy Boys became increasingly open about their aggressive intentions toward anyone who was black. Youths smashed Caribbean cafes. Individuals were harassed. On the morning of 24 August, nine white youths assaulted five black men in separate incidents in Shepherd's Bush and Notting Hill, seriously injuring three of them.

After two weeks of civil unrest in Nottingham, rioting erupted in Notting Hill. It began at around midnight on 30 August and lasted a week. Crowds of up to 400 white youths chased Caribbeans in North Kensington. Petrol bombs and milk bottles were thrown at houses. Trouble spread to Paddington, Notting Dale, Shepherd's Bush and Marylebone. Some of the rioters came from as far away as White City, Tottenham and Acton. The police eventually reasserted control and the disorder died out on 5 September.
1. Notting Hill Riots – Historical Background (cont.)

The Aftermath

Some 140 people were arrested, largely White, but including some of the Black victims who had armed themselves in self-defence. The nation generally was shocked at the events and the riots sparked long-running debates about racial prejudice, community harmony and the scale of commonwealth immigration in the inner cities.

Although the rioting calmed down, racial ill-feeling continued to simmer in North Kensington. In May 1959, a carpenter from Antigua, Kelso Cochrane, was stabbed to death in Kensal New Town by a gang of white men. The Notting Hill Carnival is thought to have started as a gesture of defiance following the Cochrane murder, and an assertion of community pride.

Since 1966 the Notting Hill carnival has taken place each year over the August bank holiday and today attracts crowds of up to 1 million people.
2. 2011 Riots: Timeline

29 year old Mark Duggan was shot by the police during an operation tackling gun crime in the black community in London (Operation Trident). The events surrounding the death were very controversial and eyewitness reports show varying versions of events. According to an eyewitness cited by The Independent, Duggan “was shot while he was pinned to the floor by police”. According to a witness cited by the BBC a police officer twice shouted: "Put it down" before Duggan was shot. The incident took place against a backdrop of tensions between the African-Caribbean and the police in Tottenham.

Sat 6 August: Protest March Following the police shooting of Mark Duggan, an initially peaceful protest was held by friends and relatives on Aug 6. This protest began at the Broadwater Farm estate and finished at Tottenham Police Station. At the police station, the protesters were not satisfied with the seniority of the officers available to speak to them and when a younger, armed crowd arrived at dusk, conditions turned riotous. People began throwing bottles at the police assembled and an abandoned police car was set on fire.

Sunday 7th Aug, 00.00 - Firefighting begins; Tottenham Hale: Looters begin to scatter and firefighters attempt to get the blazing buildings under control; 49 blazes have spread around the Tottenham area. The police begin to try and reclaim the streets, meanwhile a crew of BBC journalists come under attack from youths throwing missiles.

Sat 6th Aug, 22:15 - Police Attacked Tottenham Hale: Rioting continued to spread. At 22.15, a gang of youths burned down Tottenham’s post office. Further attacks were carried out on police cars, a double decker bus and local businesses and homes. Further looting of shops ensued and fireworks, petrol bombs and other missiles were thrown at the police.

Sunday 7th Aug, 03.00 - Rioting spreads to Wood Green: Looters make their way to Wood Green shopping centre and began smashing their way into shops, with the police having not yet appeared on the scene. The looting continued until the early morning and local residents awake to carnage unfolding around them.

Sunday 7th Aug, 12.00 – Aftermath in Wood Green: By 8am, the looters had left the area. The police swept the streets for any remaining before cordonning off the crime scene. Firefighters continued to hose down smouldering buildings.

Sunday 7th Aug, 20.00 - Rioting spreads Enfield and Brixton: Police were called to High Street Enfield after reports of shop windows being smashed and a police vehicle getting damaged. In Brixton, three police officers were injured after attempting to break up an altercation. Missiles were thrown. In Enfield, shops continued to get looted and mounted police patrolled the streets.
Monday 8th Aug, 17.00 - Rioting spread to Hackney, West Midlands and Croydon: Rioting spread to Hackney as trouble broke out following a police “stop and search” where nothing was found. A police car was set on fire and a number of shops were looted. West Midlands police report shop windows were smashed in various locations with property being stolen. A bus was set on fire in Lewisham, South London and aerial footage showed several fires burning in Croydon, South London.

Monday 8th Aug, 19.00 - Rioting Spreads, Clapham, Woolwich and Ealing: Fires are reported in Clapham High Street. Police officers from Essex and Suffolk Police were called in to assist the Metropolitan Police. Shops continued to be looted in Woolwich High Street, with several hundred youths involved and no police in sight. Rioting broke out in Ealing; the windows of a Tesco supermarket were smashed and a car was set on fire.

Monday 8th Aug, 03.00 - Fires continue to blaze in Enfield, Brixton and Walthamstow: Six fire engines and 30 firefighters were despatched to a blaze at a Foot Locker store on Brixton Road, after it was set alight. “Copycat criminal activity” spread across London with “small and mobile groups” of looters targeting areas of north, east and south London. Looters continued to attack police officers and shops in Waltham Forest and fire-fighters were called to a number of fires in Enfield, Brixton and Walthamstow. 100 further arrests were made and 16 people charged in relation to disturbances overnight on Sunday.

Tuesday 9th Aug, 17.00-00.00 - Rioting spreads to Salford, Manchester, Birmingham, Nottingham: Rocks and stones were hurled at police vans by gangs of youths in Salford, Manchester. Manchester police made a call for calm following a number of looting incidents on shops in Manchester city centre and Salford. Trouble was also reported in Birmingham and West Bromwich in the form of confrontations between police and groups of young people. A police station in Nottingham was firebombed by a group of rioters.

Tuesday 9th Aug, 01.00-09.00 - Rioting Spreads, Birmingham: West Midlands Police confirm that a police in station in Handsworth, Birmingham has been set on fire and Merseyside Police confirmed that they were dealing with a number of incidents including a car being set alight. In Bethnal Green, more than 100 people looted a Tesco supermarket and in Croydon, fires continued to blaze. In Hackney, around 300 people gathered in Pembury Estate setting alight cars and throwing petrol bombs. Businesses in Mare Street were looted and officers managed contained the situation. Fires blazed in Lavender Hill, Battersea and 40 fire officers are in attendance.

“You felt bullied and you felt under siege. Why couldn't we have had a warning about what the day could be? The couple that started off causing trouble could have been rounded up and put into vans. That would have stopped it. But it seemed to myself that [the police] were not allowed to react.” (Shopkeeper, Hackney – Reading The Riots – The Guardian)
Wedneday 10th August, 00-11.15 - Further arrests made: A murder investigation was launched in Birmingham after two men are killed and one critically injured in a hit and run incident. The third man later died in hospital. It was not known if the deaths were linked to the rioting.

Thursday 11th August, 12.00-00.00 - The Government reflects: Labour leader Ed Miliband called for an inquiry to look at the deeper causes of the "wanton vandalism and looting". Education Secretary Michael Gove said a "culture of rootless hedonism" has taken root in some parts of society but the last week has shown the "worst and best" of our country.

Friday 12th August, 00.30-08.00 - Rioting comes to a close: The Metropolitan Police declared that 1,103 people had been arrested in connection with the riots and 654 people had been charged. Greater Manchester Police said they had so far made 147 arrests and more than 70 people had already gone through the courts. Merseyside Police said they had made 77 arrests and charged 45 people. West Midlands Police said 445 people had been arrested and Nottinghamshire Police said they had arrested 109 people and charged 69. The night passed off peacefully - with officers still on the streets in large numbers.

Wednesday 10th August, 23.15 - Rioting gradually ceases: In London, the number of people arrested in connection with violence, disorder and looting rose to 805, with 251 charged, Scotland Yard said. Tariq Jahan, whose 21-year-old son, Haroon, died after he was run over by a car in Birmingham, called for people not to resort to vigilantism against rioters and asked his community to "stand united". Magistrates courts in London, Solihull and Manchester among others stayed open through the night to fast track those already in custody for disorder related offences.

Thursday 11th August, 00:00-12.00 - The Government reflects: A candle-lit vigil was held in Birmingham - at the spot where three men were killed on Wednesday night when they were hit by a car - passes off peacefully. About 250 people took part. Housing minister Grant Shapps says 100 families have been made homeless following the disturbances.

David Cameron made a statement to MPs in which he admitted there are questions to be answered over the shooting of Mark Duggan in Tottenham last week and also announced a £10m recovery scheme to make areas safe and clean again.