The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. The activity is structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Students are encouraged to further reflect on the issues.

Core Skill Sets:
These icons identify the most relevant core skills students will develop using this resource. Learn more about the WE Learning Framework at www.WE.org/we-at-school/we-schools/learning-framework/.

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

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KEY TERMS

Black History Month—Drawing inspiration from Black History Month in the United States which dates back to 1976, Black History Month was federally recognized in Canada in 1995. Black History Month is a time to learn about the contributions of black Canadians and to celebrate their achievements.

Racial profiling—The practice of law enforcement officials targeting specific individuals based on their race. The existence of racial profiling and its impact on the disproportionate number of visible minorities in Canadian prisons, has been generally acknowledged by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and other bodies.
THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

- **Themes:** Community, Values and Ethics, Local Issues
- **Course Connections:** Language, Social Studies, History

MATERIALS

- Front board
- Paper and writing utensils
- Computer/tablet with Internet access and video capability

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Understand the importance of learning multiple historical perspectives with a focus on Black history
- Recognize the need and space for black history in current history curriculum
- Identify the need to learn more about black Canadian history

DISCUSS

1. What do you know about the history of black Canadians?
2. Is the perspective of black people in Canada taught adequately in schools?
3. How can learning about the history of black people in Canada make you a better Canadian?
4. How much do you know about significant black individuals in Canadian history and the impacts they made on the Canada we live in today?
5. An elementary student quoted in the *Global Voices* article “Black History Month can make us all better Canadians” states “[Black History Month is] the month we have to feel bad about black people because there were slaves.” Why might this student say this? What is the problem with this statement? What is Black History Month to you? How can we make Black History Month more meaningful?

DIVE DEEPER

On the front board, write the names Mathieu Da Costa, Jacques Cartier, Delos Davis, Sir John A Macdonald, Viola Desmond and Desmond Cole. Ask students who these individuals are and what role did they play in Canadian history? Which names are students able to identify and why?

Read the *Global Voices* article and use the discussion questions above.

Show students “CBC News: Being black in Canada” www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORW_e8P8RcY (6:34).

In pairs, have students discuss the following questions:

- What do you know about the history of black people in Canada?
- How can this history be better integrated into school curriculum? What can we do as a class to learn more about black history in Canada?
- What do you think the effect would be on students who learn about history through multiple perspectives?

In small groups, ask students to create a presentation about an important black figure and explain the impact they have had on Canadian history. Students may select any individual of personal interest or choose from the following list mentioned in the *Global Voices* article Viola Desmond, Delos Davis, Desmond Cole, Mathieu Da Costa or Senator Anne Clare Cools. In preparing the presentation, students should consider the following:

- Who was this person? (When were they born? When did they die? Where did they live? What did they do?)
- What was Canada like when they were alive?
- How did they affect Canadian history?
- What was significant about their contribution to Canada?
- Why is it important to learn about them?

Note: The above questions uses “Canada” to refer to the land area and history that has brought us to the Canada that exists today, though the individuals students study may have been significant in Canada’s history before Confederation and the subsequent territorial expansion. Please frame the questions accordingly.

Students may present using chart paper, PowerPoint, Sway, video or interview.

Ask students, what might Canada be like if these individuals had not made their contributions?

RESOURCES

“CBC News: Being Black in Canada”
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORW_e8P8RcY (22:34)

Book of Negroes www.cbc.ca/bookofnegroes/

Black History Canada www.blackhistorycanada.ca/

Historical Black Canadians www.cbc.ca/news2/interactives/black-history-month/