DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY LEICESTER

STEPHEN LAWRENCE RESEARCH CENTRE

STEPHEN LAWRENCE DAY

NATIONAL
STEPHEN LAWRENCE DAY
APRIL

HOPEFUL FUTURES
SL30 CREATIVE CHALLENGE

"Imagination is one of the most powerful tools we can use to inspire meaningful societal change, and I cannot wait to see what ideas are born from this project."
Baroness Doreen Lawrence of Clarendon OBE

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Contents

Hopeful Futures: SL30 Creative Challenge 1

Stephen Lawrence Case and Inquiry 3

Why Hopeful Futures? 4

Classroom Resources 5

Submissions 7

Further Support and Information 7

Hopeful Futures: SL30 Creative Challenge

Guidance for Teachers/Facilitators

22nd April 2023 will mark the 30th anniversary since Stephen Lawrence was murdered in a racially motivated attack.The Stephen Lawrence Research Centre (SLRC) at De Montfort University (DMU), in partnership with the Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation (SLDF) are delivering the SL30 programme to commemorate Stephen's life and legacy.

As part of this programme, we are inviting children and young people KS2 and above (7-18 years) to take part in the **SL30 Creative Challenge.**

Stephen was a creative and artistically gifted young man and it is in this spirit that we wish to ask young people to imagine a world beyond discrimination by creating art around the theme of Hopeful Futures. Our theme of Hopeful Futures is inspired by wider themes including love, care, change, friendship and family. They are further inspired by the work of Stephen's mother, Baroness Doreen Lawrence and her family to promote hopeful futures for children and young people in the wake of their tragic loss and subsequent battle for justice.

The Challenge

We challenge children and young people to imagine what hopeful futures might like look like for them. This could mean they create art around topics like, but not limited to:

- The kind of world they would like to live in in the future
- What changes they would like to see made to create a better future
- How a world free from discrimination might look
- Stephen Lawrence's legacy
- A just society

We have worked with our local teacher network to ensure that the challenge is as inclusive as possible. Submissions can be in a variety of art forms so that everybody has an opportunity to draw on their skills.

This leaves it up to the children and young people to decide how they might want to communicate their vision of hope using mediums including:

- Poetry
- Drama and dance (filmed)
- Paintings, pictures, drawings
- Graphics
- Comic Strips
- Short stories
- **Creating a gallery within your school to mark Stephen Lawrence Day, 22 April**

We love the idea of **wall displays in your schools** that are **dedicated to Stephen's legacy** appearing up and down the country to mark Stephen Lawrence Day!

Teachers can select a number of artworks to send to the SLRC for a chance to feature in a **touring exhibition** across multiple cities nationwide, starting at Leicester Gallery, De Montfort University (DMU).

An example display from Year 6 students at St Saviour's Church of England Primary School, South London.

You can submit individual submissions or group submissions via your school. Children and young people can also submit via their parent/guardian. One form of group submission we are keen to see are photographs of the wall displays, which can be reproduced and exhibited.

One piece will be selected to be part of a prestigious national faith service to be held in the City of London, led by Baroness Doreen Lawrence, which will take place to commemorate Stephen's life and memory.

At the end of the touring exhibition, the pieces will be kept alongside the **Stephen Lawrence Archive** at DMU making them a part of Stephen's long-term legacy for future generations to use.

Stephen Lawrence Case and Inquiry

The racially motivated murder of Stephen Lawrence on 22nd April 1993 sent shockwaves throughout Britain and continued to do so for years to come. Stephen was just 18 years old at the time of his death. The Lawrence family battled for many years enduring much hardship in order to attain justice for Stephen. The Lawrence case lifted the lid on the state of institutional racism in Britain, where access to protection and justice under the law were demonstrated to be sites of serious racial disparity.

In 1997, then Home Secretary Jack Straw ordered the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry to look into matters arising from the murder, specifically asking for issues relating to the investigation and prosecution of racially motivated crimes to be investigated. In 1999 the Macpherson report was published and this broke new ground in recognising the role of institutional racism in the Metropolitan Police and their investigation into the murder of Stephen Lawrence. On 3rd January 2012, 19 years after Stephen's murder, two of the six people involved in the attack were convicted.

After the convictions in 2012 it could be tempting to view the Lawrence case and subsequent issues raised as resolved. In 2020 Cressida Dick, then Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, informed members of the family that the investigation into Stephen's murder was currently inactive. This was in spite of four of Stephen's attackers never having been convicted.

Issues of race and racism are still prevalent in our society. Subsequent Home Affairs Select Committee reports into the implementation of the Macpherson report's recommendations (published in 2009 and later in 2022) "...**found persistent, deep rooted and unjustified racial disparities in key areas**" [of policing and criminal justice] (Commons Select Committee, 2022).

These findings must be contextualised in a moment where anti-racist campaigns like Black Lives Matter have gained global traction, shedding light on issues of racism in society – a society children and young people have to navigate.

Why Hopeful Futures?

The outlook of the SL30 Creative Challenge is fundamentally a hopeful one. Through this creative challenge we are seeking to offer participants the opportunity to engage in their own form of what Henry Giroux has described as 'educated hope' where we engage the imagination as a social practice that takes seriously the importance of civic education (Giroux, 2002).

We believe visualising better and hopeful futures is an important and nourishing act, enabling this current generation to enact positive transformation in their lifetimes. Such changes begin with the *imagination.*

Stephen's legacy is a progressive and unifying one, where children and young people can relate to one another across lines of difference and aspire to living a fulfilling future, something that Stephen was denied.

This package seeks to provide support and guidance for teachers and facilitators to engage children and young people with Stephen Lawrence's story along with some of the challenging societal issues which have emanated from it. We envision that teachers and facilitators will spend some time with children and young people thinking and talking about Stephen's life and tragic death as part of this challenge. This might look different in different settings.

Fundamentally, we hope that children and young people can draw inspiration from the Lawrence family's story and ethos, supporting them to imagine futures inclusive of those from all marginalised groups, including: racialised, religious, gendered, LGBTQ+ and disabled peoples.

Below we offer some suggested resources and classroom activities for teachers and facilitators to help children and young people to learn more about the Lawrence family's story and imagine a brighter future in keeping with Stephen's legacy.

Classroom Resources

We recognise the challenging environment teachers and other educators work within and we hope these resources will be flexible enough to support teachers working under varying time constraints. Therefore we have pulled together a variety of resources teachers and facilitators can use in order to help to engage students on this topic.

SL30 Slides Template

We have included slides that teachers and facilitators can use as a framework and adapt as part of their lesson plans when introducing the story of Stephen Lawrence and the SL30 Creative Challenge.

The Life of Stephen Lawrence by Verna Alette Wilkins

This book is very accessible to KS2 students and above with each chapter only a few pages long, it explores different stages of Stephen's life as well as building up a picture of his family life, talents and interests. It includes contributions from members of the Lawrence family as well as Stephen's friends and former teachers.

With students at KS2, teachers may want to read a couple of chapters a day together with their class before students begin the SL30 Creative Challenge. Alternatively, teachers may want to select specific chapters that they feel will resonate most strongly with their students, these could be set as independent reading or class reading. We find that Chapter 10 'Music & Work' is a particularly interesting chapter, giving insights into Stephen's tastes and interests, as well as highlighting his creative gifts and work ethic.

Still I Rise: A mother's search for justice by Baroness Doreen Lawrence

In her autobiography, Baroness Doreen Lawrence reflects on her life, from the time she spent growing up in Jamaica, to her life and family in London, as well as the tragic murder of her oldest son Stephen. The book gives detailed information about the case and the police failings to properly investigate it, as well as insights into the struggles the Lawrence family had to endure as they fought for justice. This book is accessibly written and should be suitable for KS4 and above.

BBC Bitesize

The BBC have put together some resources which include reflections from members of the Lawrence family, as well as footage and photographs of Stephen himself. The videos are intended for GCSE level students (14-16 years) and do deal with some challenging themes as well as including re-enactments of Stephen's murder. We have included links to these videos below:

Institutional racism | **Diversity & Identity** | **Democracy & Justice**

The Macpherson Report: Twenty-two years on

This is a recent Home Affairs Committee Report which evaluates the extent of success of the implementation of the Macpherson Report. It highlights key areas where racial disparity is still prevalent like Stop and Search, the retention of Black officers and in new technologies like the Metropolitan Police's use of the Gangs Matrix which has elsewhere been described by Amnesty International as '… discriminating against people because of their race, identity and socio-economic background' (amnesty.org.uk).

Sections of, or issues raised by the report might be useful for KS4 and above students and will help to contextualise the case into contemporary issues.
Visit here to find out more.

Online Drop-in Sessions

We will be holding online drop-in sessions for those who wish to discuss their plans relating to the SL30 Creative Challenge. This is an opportunity to share ideas with other teachers as well as being able to ask for help, advice and support from the SLRC.

These will be taking place online via MS Teams on the 25 & 26 January and 6 & 7 February 2023 between **3:30-4:30pm**. To join these sessions, please click on the relevant links below:

Wednesday 25 January | **Thursday 26 January** | **Monday 6 February** | **Tuesday 7 February**

Submissions

Submission Form

Submission deadline: **Friday 24 March 2023.** Submit online.
Accepted file types are JPEG, PNG, PDF, MP4 and MOV.

Further support and information

If you have any further questions, please contact us at: **SLRC@dmu.ac.uk** putting "Creative Challenge" in the subject line of the email.

Social Media
We'd love to see how you're progressing with the SL30 Creative Challenge. Tag us on Twitter **@SLRC_DMU** using **#SL30**