

## Frequently Asked Questions

***Q - What are the appropriate terms for people of African descent?***

**R -** It is important that educators are conscious of why certain terms to describe people of African descent are no longer socially acceptable. Primarily, these terms once used in the past had been used in a derogatory manner or because new terms better conveyed African heritage. In this document, the terms 'Black,' 'Afro-Caribbean,' 'African Canadian,' and 'diasporic African,' are used to refer to people of African descent. In the past, terms such as 'negro,' 'coloured,' and 'mulatto' were used but are no longer acceptable. Presently, acceptable terms for people of mixed ancestry include: 'biracial,' 'mixed heritage,' 'mixed ancestry' or 'mixed culture.' A student engaging with lesson plans in this document might encounter these terms and others and should understand them within the historical context.

***Q - Did slavery exist in Canada?***

**R -** Yes. It was legal to buy, sell and enslave Black people in Canada (New France) from the early 1600s until it was abolished throughout the British Empire in 1834.

***Q - Is this resource for planning classes/events in February?***

**R -** While it is worthwhile to plan activities and events for Black History Month, the teaching of African Canadian history should not be viewed as an "event," but rather as an ongoing process taking place throughout the school year and not just during Black History Month. The intent of the information presented in this document is to build background knowledge on the accomplishments and contributions of people of African descent to Canadian history to embed in all courses and educational spaces.

***Q - Does the amount of Black students in the class/school/environment impact who participates in engaging with this resource?***

**R -** No. This information is intended for all students and everyone engaging with it as it will familiarize them with another side of Canadian history. All students need to have a balanced sense of their historical contributions and need to know a history of Canada that includes all of the founding pioneer experiences in order to work from an understanding of the true reality of this nation. All students will benefit by arriving at an understanding of themselves as people living in Canada in the most accurate and complete socio-historical context. As a country with such diversity, all histories need to be known and all voices are worthy of being expressed.

**Q - Does *Black history start with enslavement*?**

**R** - No. It can do more harm to teach this approach. Instead, teach students about the ancient African civilizations that made significant contributions to our world. Slavery altered Black history, it was not the beginning.

**Q - How should I add this into my curriculum?**

**R** - The intent of the document is not to “add it in” to your work but to integrate it into your curriculum...(i.e. In discussing the soldiers of WW1, examining the varied participants from all over Canada, it would be prudent to diversify and identify the people of the time.)

**Q - Do we have to follow exactly what is in this resource?**

**R** - This resource is a beginning, or perhaps a continuation but is certainly a guide. Involving a community of authentic voices, including students into your planning, and accessing the knowledge of parents and elders in the community will enhance the lessons delivered.

**Q - I'm new in my journey in Equity, where do I start?**

**R** - The Critical Consciousness Questions! Asking yourself those critical questions when you are at all stages of your planning can guide you into thinking critically about how to start and how to proceed. Taking the time to explore additional courses on race and diversity and anti-oppression pedagogy that offer a thorough understanding of Black Studies can also grow your understanding. Any investment in your own education is a positive step towards achieving confidence in delivering these curriculum aids.