HOMO SAPIENS

Human beings evolved in Africa more than 200,000 years ago. Every single person on our planet – no matter what they look like – belongs to our species, the Homo sapiens.

At first, we Homo sapiens were all black with lots of melanin to protect our skin from the hot African sun.

But Homo sapiens did not all stay in Africa ...



Melanin is a pigment found in our skin, hair and eyes that determines the colour.

Historians think that 60,000 years ago we arrived in East Asia. From there our children, and our children's children, spread slowly throughout the world.

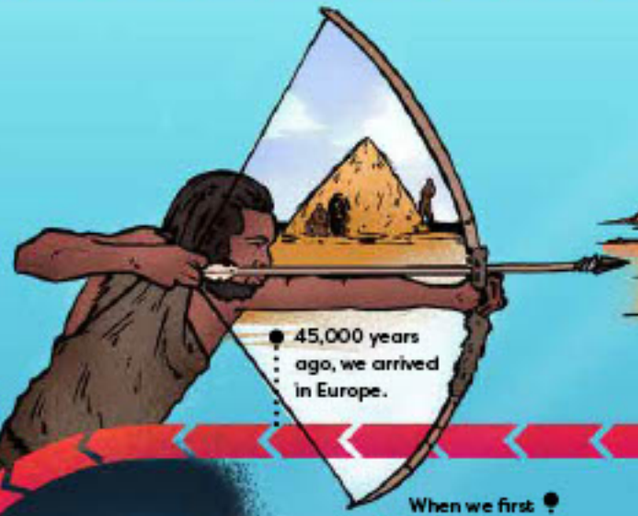
Homo sapiens were incredible explorers. We crossed seas on rafts ...



climbed mountain ranges in moccasins ...

survived the ice ages without houses or central heating ...





45,000 years ago, we arrived in Europe.

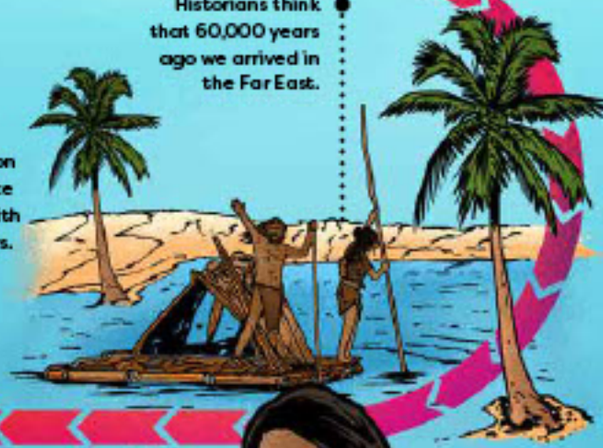
50,000 years ago, we made it to Australia.





And took on huge, fierce animals with only spears.

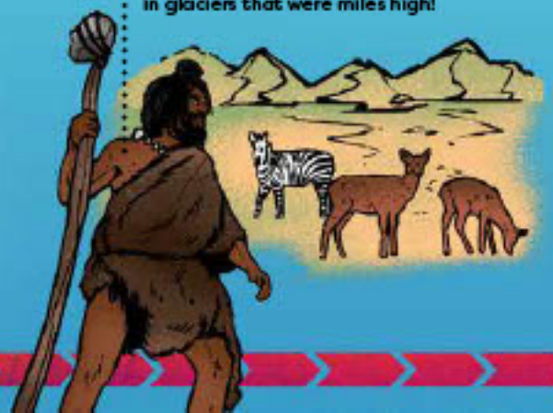
Historians think that 60,000 years ago we arrived in the Far East.





When we first arrived in Europe, the weather was warm and the forests were full of food to hunt and gather.

But along came the ice ages, and Europe froze over, trapped in glaciers that were miles high!



Humans have survived so long on the planet because we are so good at adapting. We are inventors as well as explorers. We use our big brains to think up new ways to survive.



THE CELTS

Sometime before 800 BCE the Celts had come to live in Britain. Other groups of people had moved to Britain before them like the Beaker people who made clay cups.

The Celts were different tribes of farming people from mainland Europe. They had developed white skin so they could get vitamin D from the sun.

The Celtic tribes in Britain each had their own customs, languages and rulers. They had wars with each other in which both men and women fought – all totally naked and painted in blue!

A Celtic tribe called the Gaels ruled Ireland and parts of Scotland. Legend says the Gaels began with a Middle Eastern prince and an Egyptian princess who fell in love and started a kingdom called Galicia in Spain, which still exists today. Eventually they came to settle in Ireland.

In 325 BCE, an explorer called Pytheas from a new civilisation in Europe called Greece stumbled across our grey-green islands. In one of his books, he called us Pretannike after a tribe he met here called the Pretani – or 'the painted people'.

But the great empires of the world were not interested in our grey-green islands. We did not have silver or gold mines that made emperors rich, or salt and spices that make food taste wonderful, or silk that makes clothes soft.

So the Celts were left alone to fight among themselves until a new empire rose from a small city called Rome ...



THE ROMANS

The Roman Empire grew and conquered large parts of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. They wanted to conquer the whole world ...

...but when they reached Africa they could not travel far. In their way was a desert as wide as an ocean called the Sahara and the Warrior Queen of Nubia, Amanishakheto, whom they could not defeat.

So the Romans turned back to Europe and pushed north instead to some islands lost in rain and mist at the very ends of the Earth. Islands they had read about in Pytheas's book. Islands they renamed Britannica.

A Roman historian called Tacitus wrote that when the Romans arrived in Britain, they found white farming people from Europe living on the coast. Inland they found what he called the original Britons – dark skinned and curly haired.

Roman soldiers were the best in the world, but even they shivered in their boots when they faced the ferocious warriors who waited for them, all screaming blue murder.

In the end, the Romans only managed toconquer part of what we now call England and Wales. They never defeated the Cornish, Irish or Scottish tribes.

The part of England that the Romans conquered became known as Roman Britain.

The emperor, Hadrian, built a wall around Roman Britain in 122 CE to keep the ferocious Scottish tribes out. The wall was guarded by 500 North African Roman soldiers.



Akeim Mundell
By day, Akeim is an assistant headteacher. By night, he's a hero who finds jobs for people so they don't have to turn to crime for cash.



Alex Wheatle
This children's author started reading in prison. Now he writes books about kids in care (like he was) and who live on council estates.



Alice Dearing
Alice is an Olympic marathon swimmer. She started the Black Swimming Association and wears swim caps especially made for Afro hair.



Anne Mensah
Anne has chosen what programmes get made for British TV in her top jobs at Netflix, Sky and the BBC.



Dr Chris Jackson
This professor of geology has climbed up mountains and into volcanoes – and presented science programmes on TV.



Lewis Hamilton
Lewis is one of the greatest Formula One drivers ever. He has won the British Grand Prix eight times.



Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock
Maggie struggled at school with dyslexia. Now she is a space scientist. She designs machines that go up into space.



Malorie Blackman
Author Malorie's work was rejected 82 times, but she did not give up. She has now written more than 70 books, and TV shows, too.



Marcus Rashford
This Manchester United player fought the government to provide free school meals for kids going hungry – and he won!



Marsha de Cordova
Being blind does not stop Marsha. She studied law before becoming an MP. She fights in parliament for the rights of all her constituents as well as people with disabilities.



Dr Christopher B. Lynch
Christopher worked as a hospital porter before becoming a doctor. He invented an operation that has saved the lives of millions worldwide.



David Lammy
David was a lawyer who became an MP when he was only 27. He's been fighting for people's rights in parliament ever since.



Prof David Olusoga
This historian makes new discoveries about British history and talks about them on his popular TV shows.



Edward Enninful
Edward is a fashion stylist and head of *British Vogue* magazine. He puts Black faces on the covers of top fashion magazines.



Dr Elaine Arnold
Elaine is a social worker and university lecturer. She says migrant children suffer loss that can make them angry or silent.



Martin Griffiths
This trauma surgeon from Lewisham saves the lives of injured people. He also works to stop gang violence.



Na'ima B. Robert
Na'ima writes children's books and works to inspire women. She wears the niqab so she is judged for her words and actions, not her looks.



Naomie Harris
Naomie is an award-winning actress who plays lead roles in both James Bond and *Pirates of the Caribbean* films.



Nicola Adams
Nicola was the first woman to win an Olympic gold for boxing and the only woman to win all four world titles.



Prof Nira Chamberlain
Nira won the title 'World's Most Interesting Mathematician'. Thanks to him, the Royal Navy were able to build their biggest ship ever.

BLACK PEOPLE MA KE BRITAIN GREAT



Dame Prof Elizabeth Anionwu
This professor of nursing taught the NHS how to treat sickle cell anemia – saving thousands of lives.



Elliott Rae and Marvyn Harrison
These men help fathers in Britain be the best dads they can be through books and podcasts.



Evelyn Forde
Evelyn left school without qualifications but went back when she was grown up. Now she is an award-winning headteacher.



Gary Younge
Gary is an award-winning reporter, author and professor. He reports on issues many others ignore.



Ismail Ahmed
Ismail was a refugee before starting a money transfer company to help people send cash abroad. It is now worth billions.



Pat McGrath
This leading make-up artist has influenced fashion make-up worldwide. She has her own brand.



Patricia Gallan
This high-ranking, medal-winning Scottish policewoman says poverty causes crime and believes Britain needs to become fair and equal.



Patricia Scotland
Patricia is a top lawyer and politician who worked to make it a crime to be violent in the home. She is Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.



Paulette Rowe
Paulette has worked in top jobs for banks and payment companies. She was named as one of the most influential women in finance in the world.



Rosalie Jones
Rosalie was a small, sick child. But she became a firefighter, saving British lives for more than 30 years.



Jacky Wright
Jacky comes from a big Caribbean family in London. She used to work for the tax office. Now she works in America as one of the heads of Microsoft.



Jamal Edwards
Jamal started the music platform SBTV, which helped make musicians like Ed Sheeran and Skepta famous.



Jawahir Roble
Jawahir is a football coach and men's games referee. She says refereeing taught her to stand up for herself.



Kadiatu Kanneh-Mason
This Welsh-Ghanaian raised seven children who are all classical musicians. Her son Sheku played the cello at Harry and Meghan's royal wedding.



Leroy Logan
Leroy joined the police to try to stop racism. Actor John Boyega plays him in a film by Steve McQueen.



Dame Sharon White
Sharon has run huge companies like John Lewis and Ofcom. She also helped run the Treasury of the government.



Sheldon Mills
This Welsh lawyer makes sure small businesses and shoppers get fair deals. He defends the rights of LGBTQIA+ people, too.



Solomon Gokling
Solomon grew up in London, Jamaica and Ghana. He was the first Black British born dancer in the Royal Ballet company.



Stephen Akpabio-Klementowski
Stephen had no qualifications – but he took exams in prison. Now he's a university lecturer and out of prison.



Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones
It took 40 years for Wilfred to fulfil his dream of being a farmer. Now his brand 'The Black Farmer' is in most supermarkets.

FIRST BRITONS

The ice ages came and went for thousands of years. And humans invented new things to help us survive – things such as bone needles to make proper clothes to keep us warm.

Then at last,10,000 years ago, the glaciers started to melt and the land in Europe became warm again. Homo sapiens were still hunter gathers, and some of them crossed a place called Doggerland onto new land. They were looking for herds of deer and wild cows to hunt.

There were no shops in those days – men, women and children had to work together to hunt for food and make every single thing they needed to survive.

When more glaciers melted, Doggerland was flooded by the sea.
And the new country became islands – the islands we now call Britain.

Those first Britons lived in lots of groups of about twenty people.
They roamed the land looking for food and gathering plants as they went.

Today the skeleton of one of those first Britons is in the
Natural History Museum in London.

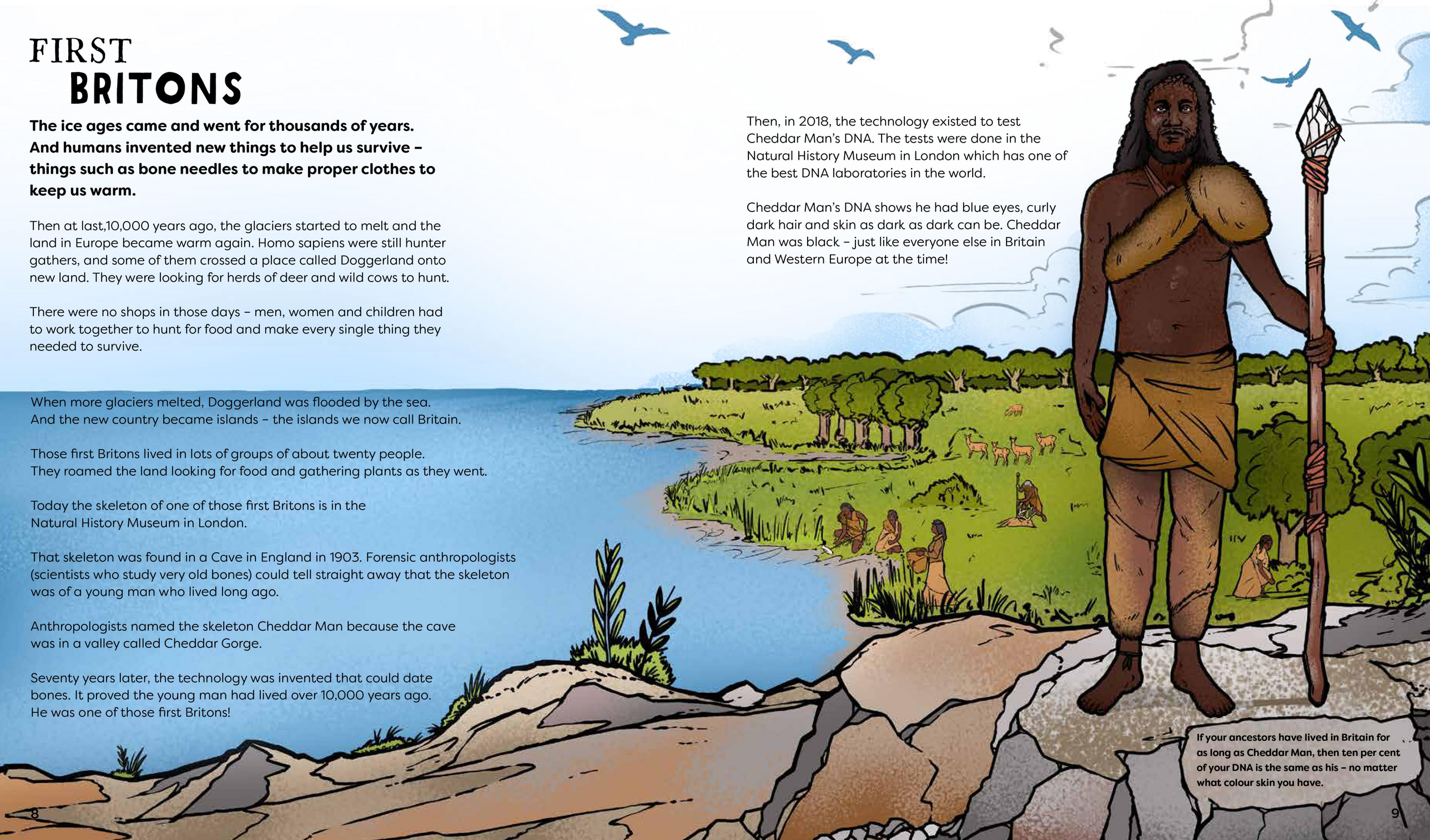
That skeleton was found in a Cave in England in 1903. Forensic anthropologists (scientists who study very old bones) could tell straight away that the skeleton was of a young man who lived long ago.

Anthropologists named the skeleton Cheddar Man because the cave was in a valley called Cheddar Gorge.

Seventy years later, the technology was invented that could date bones. It proved the young man had lived over 10,000 years ago.
He was one of those first Britons!

Then, in 2018, the technology existed to test Cheddar Man's DNA. The tests were done in the Natural History Museum in London which has one of the best DNA laboratories in the world.

Cheddar Man's DNA shows he had blue eyes, curly dark hair and skin as dark as dark can be. Cheddar Man was black – just like everyone else in Britain and Western Europe at the time!



If your ancestors have lived in Britain for as long as Cheddar Man, then ten per cent of your DNA is the same as his – no matter what colour skin you have.

THE **WINDRUSH** GENERATION

It took all of Britain's money to win World War Two. Afterwards, the cities were left in rubble and most people were extremely poor. More than 2 million British people migrated to other countries.

The National Health Service (NHS) was set up in 1948 to help people who could not afford to pay for doctors or medicine. The government took over organising the buses and trains to make sure people could get to work.

But there were not enough doctors and nurses for the NHS, or conductors for buses and trains, or engineers and labourers to rebuild the cities. Britain needed help!

So the government asked people from the colonies to come. The NHS, London Transport and British Rail put job adverts in Caribbean newspapers. Lots of people came. They were British citizens. Their countries had been left poor after slavery and colonisation and they wanted good jobs to make better lives for their families.

Most came to Britain by ship. The first and most famous ship arrived in 1948. It was called the *Empire Windrush*. Caribbean people who moved to Britain after the war are called the 'Windrush generation'.

Soon Caribbean people were joined by many more Black people from Africa. They came mostly from the countries of Nigeria and Ghana at first, and then from Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Somalia. Lots of South Asian people came too, from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and even some African countries.

Everyone who moved to Britain after the war brought their skills, their cleverness and their hard work to help Britain get back on its feet.

Sam Beaver King, Mayor of Southwark, London, first used the phrase 'Windrush Generation'.

The NHS would not have survived without the thousands of amazing doctors and nurses from the Caribbean, Africa and India.