



London Metropolitan Archives: ref
Huntley Archives at London
Metropolitan Archives-Archives Series

Jessica and Eric Huntley, Taken in a London
photographic studio c.1950s

The Art in Communicating

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Elbow Room: creating a space for Black art
and cultural practices in Britain

The *Elbow Room* theme reflects the strong, brave struggles of artists and activists in their work and campaigns work to fight against oppression and injustice. The art of communicating your views: feelings or position represents the challenge and opportunity to create your space at the table

Materials you will need include: paper, pens, computer and access to the Internet. Plus source materials, an archive letter from Jessica to Eric Huntley, Seeking Refuge' series: *Ali's Story* -video clip <https://vimeo.com/44516196> or download access via a link on nocolourbar.org.

The Art in Communicating

Elbow Room: creating a space for Black arts and cultural practices in Britain

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Migrations of people have occurred all over the world for many different reasons. It has been said to have been a unifying experience for many, but not for all. Between 1948 and 1970 nearly half a million people left their homes in the West Indies to live in Britain. As British citizens, they had the right to enter, work and live. The stories of their travels, the change in culture, the growth of communities and their interaction with British culture and people would influence and shape a new Britain.

ACTIVITY ONE

Read out aloud excerpts from a letter from Jessica Huntley to her husband Eric when he was in England and she was in British Guiana.

- What do you think Jessica was feeling?
- How do you think Eric would have felt about being far away?

ACTIVITY TWO

Watch the clip of 10-year-old Ali's journey from Afghanistan.

- What do you think Ali was feeling?
- How do you think his family would have felt?

RESEARCH

Pupils to research stories of migration of people to the UK in the 21st Century

- Why do people migrate – what are the reasons that first come to mind?
- What is a migrant? What is an expat? What are the differences?
- Where do people migrate to?
- How do migrants travel?

REFLECTION

“If all I could bring was...”

Pupils to write a composition in the first person beginning with “If all I could bring was...”. They are encouraged to imagine they are migrating to a different country and to share their experience on arrival. They should think about their first impressions, what their first sensations might be and to share their emotions.

EVALUATING AND DEVELOPING WORK

Pupils to share their work through presentation to the class. They should attempt to come to their own conclusion as to who a ‘migrant’ is. Pupils can explore the fluidity of migration into and out of Europe or elsewhere. Through the discussion, pupils should be more able to understand more about the reasons for migration, its diversity and a deeper portrayal than what they might have heard about or in public popular perception. A discussion should take place at the end of each session to provide pupils with the tools and confidence to investigate the themes on their own.

For useful links please visit: www.nocolourbar.org

No Colour Bar: Black British Art in Action 1960 -1990 is a collaborative project between The Friends of the Huntley Archives at the LMA, the City of London: London Metropolitan Archives, and the Guildhall Art Gallery, supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

