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STEPHEN LAWRENCE DAY CLASSROOM RESOURCES

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STEPHEN'S STORY JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND CHANGE

Today we will examine the life and legacy of Stephen Lawrence, and why his story changed Britain.

This is a case from modern British history. Stephen Lawrence aspired to become an architect, but his life was taken as a result of racism and serious failures within the justice system.

His murder in 1993 exposed deep failures in the justice system and led to national conversations about racism, equality and institutional reform.

His case continues to shape debates about justice, equality and institutional accountability.





STEPHEN'S STORY

FAIRNESS, COURAGE & CHANGE

Stephen Lawrence was a teenager who lived in south-east London. He loved football, art, and design. He dreamed of becoming wanted an architect so that he could build a better community for future generations.

Stephen was ambitious, kind, and thoughtful, like many young people. he was close to his family and enjoyed time with his siblings and friends.

He was also a person who thought about his community, once running the London marathon to raise money for Great Ormond Street hospital.

**His story is an important part of modern British history. His murder in 1993 became a landmark case in British history
His story raises questions about racism, justice and equality.**

What hopes and dreams do young people your age have today?

How can young people make a positive difference in their community, like Stephen did?



STEPHEN'S MURDER

One evening in April 1993, when Stephen was 18, he was attacked by a group of young men.

They didn't know him - it was a racially motivated attack. Stephen died as a result of this attack.

This was a racist murder that shocked people across the country.

FIGHT FOR JUSTICE & POLICE INVESTIGATION

After Stephen died, his family refused to give up. They spoke out and told the world what had happened, campaigning for justice.

At first, the men who attacked Stephen weren't punished. However Stephen's parents, Doreen and Neville, didn't give up.

They worked with newspapers, lawyers, and campaigners to make sure people listened. Their fight for justice took many years, but it helped people see that racism had to be challenged.

The initial police investigation failed and key evidence was missed. Witnesses were not properly followed up and Stephen's family were not treated fairly.

Why do you think delays in justice matter as much as outcomes?



WHAT WENT WRONG?

When Stephen was killed, the police didn't follow up on important evidence, and they didn't listen carefully to Stephen's family. This delayed justice for years.

Sometimes racism isn't just about one person's views or actions, it can also be part of how a whole organisation behaves.

This is called institutional racism. It means rules, systems, or the way people work together can be unfair to certain groups of people, even if not everyone in the organisation is racist. The investigation into Stephen's murder was later found to be affected by institutional racism (via the Macpherson inquiry)

Why do public inquiries matter in democracies?

How did Stephen's case raise questions about accountability, trust in institutions, and the rule of law?



CHANGE & LEGACY - BECAUSE OF STEPHEN



A public inquiry (the Macpherson Report) officially recognised institutional racism within the police.

Laws were changed to make it easier to bring justice in cases like Stephen's.

People began to speak out more against racism. Stephen's life and legacy have inspired classrooms, careers and communities.

Questions to explore:

Why is accountability important for maintaining trust in institutions and the rule of law?

**Why is institutional racism difficult to identify?
How did Stephen's case lead to social change?**

What role do individuals play in challenging injustice?

STEPHEN'S DREAM LIVES ON

Stephen Lawrence's case raises important questions about justice, responsibility, and social change.

It shows that change often begins when individuals and families challenge injustice and demand accountability.

Everyone has a role to play in confronting racism, supporting fairness, and upholding equality in society.

Stephen's story encourages us to think about what it means to be the best we can be - not only in terms of personal success, but also in contributing to a fairer and more just society.

What does “being the best you can be” mean in the context of citizenship and social responsibility?

How can individuals, including young people, contribute to challenging racism and promoting fairness in school, communities, or wider society?



THANK YOU FOR LEARNING ABOUT STEPHEN LAWRENCE & WHAT HIS LEGACY MEANS

SCAN TO DONATE



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