

Year 2 Unit 4 History *They Made a Difference* Teacher Subject Knowledge Guide

Unit Context

In previous history and science units, pupils have studied a vast array of inventors, scientists, explorers and monarchs. Pupils have learnt about the lives of several significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements, such as the Wright brothers and their contribution to aviation.

'They Made a Difference' also has a focus on significant individuals. However, this unit focuses on individuals from the past (and present) who have made a difference to society. Each individual has taken a stand against injustice and has made courageous acts against unfairness. The significant individuals pupils will study have been chosen for their contribution to justice and fairness for all. They are civil rights activists who have fought to bring about a positive change to our world.

Significance

Simply put, significant means important.

There are many different ways that historians test significance. One method, first described by Ian Dawson, uses this criteria for examining significance:

A person is significant if s/he:

- **changed events** at the time they lived.
- **improved lots of people's lives** - or made them worse.
- **changed people's ideas.**
- **had a long lasting impact** on their country or the world.
- **had been a really good or a very bad example** to other people of how to live or behave.

Another method first cited by Christine Counsell is to use the 5Rs. To be historically significant, a person, location or event must be:

- **Remarkable** - remarked upon by people at the time and/or since
- **Remembered** - important at some stage in history within the collective memory of a group or groups
- **Resulted in change** - it/they had consequences for the future
- **Resonant** - people like to make analogies with it/them; it is possible to connect with experiences, beliefs or situations across time & space
- **Revealing** - of some other aspect of the past

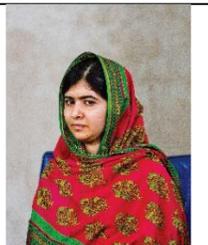
This unit introduces pupils to Christine Counsell's 5Rs. However, Counsell's idea was to go beyond this; after all - who decides what criteria significance should be measured by? The largest prize would be to use the historical figure in question to weigh him/her against these criteria - does he/she meet all of them? Are there any important things missing? Does that mean he/she is not significant? Are there any better ways to measure or describe his/her life and impact? Are there any problems in gathering evidence to measure his/her impact?

Eventually then, pupils might begin to develop their own criteria. The early seeds of this idea, with some adaptation and careful structuring of questions and use of simple sources of evidence is used in this unit to tease out early ideas about significance with Year 2 pupils; what makes a person important or significant to them? Why are we studying these people? What words would the children like to use to measure how significant this person is?

Time and Chronology

As each significant person is introduced, pupils explore a short biography of their lives. It may be helpful to calculate with the pupils, using a means that they will understand, how long ago they lived. Some people like to make reference to clocks to demonstrate the passing of time - but with a period of time either a long way away from the present or a period of time in the past that lasted for a long time, there is a danger of confusion. The important thing is to quantify what that period of time looks and feels like.

You could use a living timeline across the room using the children to demonstrate the timespan involved. You could use a jar of counters, each representing a year to quantify the number of years, you could make references to people, for example the combined ages of a number of children's grandparents, or the combined ages of a whole class/classes in the school. ...the possibilities are endless.

Significant Person	Facts
	<p>Dr Martin Luther King</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born: 15 January 1929, Atlanta, Georgia, United States • Assassinated: 4 April 1968, Memphis, Tennessee, United States • Famous speech: I Have a Dream • African American Baptist minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the Civil Rights Movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968. • Went to jail 29 times. Arrested for acts of civil disobedience and on trumped-up charges, such as when he was jailed in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1956 for driving 30mph in a 25mph zone.
	<p>Nelson Mandela</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born: 18 July 1918, Mvezo, South Africa • Died: 5 December 2013, Houghton Estate, Johannesburg, South Africa • Books: Long Walk to Freedom, Conversations With Myself • Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was a South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, political leader and philanthropist who served as President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999. He was the country's first black head of state and the first elected in a fully representative democratic election. • Spent 27 years of his life in prison.
	<p>Rosa Parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born: 4 February 1913, Tuskegee, Alabama, United States • Died: 24 October 2005, Detroit, Michigan, United States • Full name: Rosa Louise McCauley Parks • Movement: Civil Rights Movement • American activist in the civil rights movement best known for her pivotal role in the Montgomery bus boycott. The United States Congress has called her "the first lady of civil rights" and "the mother of the freedom movement".
	<p>Malala Yousafzai</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born: 12 July 1997 (age 23 years), Mingora, Pakistan • Awards: Youngest person to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize • Movies: He Named Me Malala, Malala: A Girl From Paradise, The Agreement • Malala Yousafzai, often referred to as Malala, is a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate • Shot in the head by the Taliban in 2012, for speaking up for equal access to education for girls. • Set up the Malala Fund charity which works to continue to support girls' education in countries around the world.
	<p>Marcus Rashford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born: 31 October 1997 (age 23 years), Wythenshawe • Current teams: Manchester United F.C. (#10 / Forward), England national football team (Forward) • An English professional footballer and social campaigner, who plays as a forward for Premier League club Manchester United and the England national team. • In 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, Rashford teamed up with the charity FareShare. Together they raised more than £20m for families in the UK who were struggling to feed their children in lockdown. • Set up the Child Food Poverty Task Force and started a petition to #EndChildFoodPoverty, which has been signed by over 1.1 million people.

