

Black History Month is in full swing and if you're looking for resources, we have compiled some to help you in your learning and growing, because "when we know better, we do better."

Who started Black History Month?

Carter G. Woodson, known as the "Father of Black History," developed Black History Month. Woodson, whose parents were enslaved, was an author, historian and the second African American to earn a Ph.D. at Harvard University.

He recognized that the American education system offered very little information about the accomplishments of African Americans and founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, now called the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.

In 1926, Woodson proposed a national "Negro History Week," which was intended to showcase everything students learned about [Black history](#) throughout the school year, King said.

It wasn't until 1976, during the height of the civil rights movement, that President Gerald Ford expanded the week into Black History Month.

The US grapples with its history of slavery: [The blueprint for dealing with it? Some say Brown University](#)

Why is Black History Month important?

Woodson believed it was [essential for young African Americans](#) to understand and be proud of their heritage.

"Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history," [he said](#).

[Failing to understand the history of race and racism](#) and a strong desire to overlook the worst aspects of racist violence in the United States has fueled resentment toward civil rights activism, said Dan Hirschman, an assistant professor of sociology at Brown University in Rhode Island.

Racism and white privilege: [How to talk to your family, friends](#)

What is systemic racism? [Here's what it means and how you can help dismantle it](#)

Here's how to celebrate Black History Month

The theme of Black History Month 2021 is "The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity," chosen by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.

Many institutions, including the [ASAALH](#) and the [Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture](#), offer digital programming for those celebrating at home.

King emphasized that educators should ["teach Black history from Black perspectives."](#) He offered seven guiding principles for educators to explore when teaching Black history:

- Power, oppression and racism
- Black agency, perseverance and resistance
- Africa and the African diaspora
- Black joy and Black love
- Black identities – other than heterosexual, Christian, middle-class Black men
- Black historical contention and the problematic aspects of Black history
- Black excellence

One area to focus on is getting "an accurate understanding of [Reconstruction](#)," the period after the Civil War, to help Americans better understand "contemporary forms of racialized violence like mass incarceration," Hirschman said.

He said it's important to recognize the many ways [racism is baked into America's foundational systems](#). "The historical contributions of Black people need to be integrated into the curriculum," Grayman said.

List: [8 great children's picture books for Black History Month](#)

Looking for books about racism? [Experts suggest these must-read titles for adults and kids](#)

Want the real truth about slavery? [Try these books, movies for kids, adults and teachers](#)