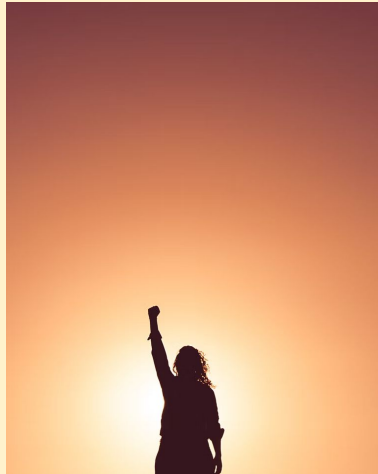


Holding power to account

What is power?



Power is a complicated concept.

Have students think about some contexts they've heard 'power' used in. *Superheroes having superpowers? A phrase like 'girl power'? A political party being 'in power'?*

The kind of power we're going to be talking about today is the power to influence other people and change things in their lives. In superhero films, the heroes have powers greater than regular people. They might be able to fly or lift very heavy objects. In real life, people who have power can make decisions that impact other people.

In school, your teachers have some power over you. They can decide what you're doing at school that day, they can grade your work, and you have to follow their rules or face consequences. But there are people that have power over what your teacher does. The headteacher sets rules for the whole school, so if they decided they wanted your teachers to change the rules in their classrooms, your teachers would have to do that. But who has power over the headteacher? The government makes decisions about what is taught in schools. If the government decides you should learn something different in school, the headteachers and teachers will have to change what they teach.

Sometimes power can change. One of the ways this can happen is when people find out about something that upsets them and put pressure on the people in power to change. Journalism can be a big part of this.

Photo: Miguel Bruna via Unsplash

What is power?

In the situations below, who has power? How might other people impacted by the situation feel?

People:

1. The Prime Minister
2. The MP in charge of education

The Prime Minister wants extra English taught instead of PE and art.

People:

1. The rich owner of a big company
2. School headteachers

The company owner has decided to use some of their money to send free books to local schools.

People:

1. The owner of a big supermarket
2. Supermarket customers

The owner of the supermarket wants to protect fruit with lots of plastic packaging.

These scenarios can be discussed as a whole class, or students can each be assigned a situation and discuss it as a group. They could also role-play the scenarios.

Scenario 1:

1. Who has the power?: The prime minister

How might the other people feel?:

- Education secretary could be going against their own beliefs but not want to lose their job
- Other MPs might not like the idea, but they might agree to it because the Prime Minister told them to
- PE and art teachers may lose their jobs - they might feel upset and powerless
- Students who enjoy PE and art might feel upset that there is nothing they can do, and they might worry it will impact their education or future
- Students who don't like PE or art might be pleased

2. Who has the power?: Owner of the company

How might other people feel?

- Headteacher and other teachers might be grateful for the donation
- Students might be grateful for the gift
- Headteacher may wish they had more power over the donation (eg. the school

- may already have lots of books, but actually really need new music equipment)
- Teachers, students and headteacher may not like the books that were donated (eg. he only donates books about business when the students want more novels)

1. Who has the power?: The supermarket chain

How might other people feel?

- Customers might be pleased their fruit and veg isn't bruised
- Customers might be upset because they want to cut down on plastic use
- Local councils might be upset by the amount of plastic waste they need to collect
- Supermarket employees might be annoyed that customers complain to them but there is nothing they can do

The role of journalism

One of the roles of journalism is to hold power to account.

This means:

- Investigating to find out the truth of situations
- Asking people in power tough questions
- Telling this information to the public



One of the roles of journalism is holding power to account. This means that, when someone powerful does something wrong, it is journalists' job to investigate what has happened, ask tough questions, and tell the public.

For example, if a cricket team was found to be cheating, a journalist might investigate this. What questions do you think they'd ask? Answers might include:

- *How did they cheat?*
- *When did the cheating begin?*
- *Have they been cheating every game, or just some of them?*
- *Who made the decisions about this?*
- *Who knew about this and didn't tell anyone?*
- *How has this impacted other teams?*
- *Were other teams in on this?*

Once they get answers to these questions, they would report them to the public. Often, there are then consequences. In this case, the captain could get fired, the team could be banned from playing, or players could lose their jobs. Some people in the case might get taken to court. It might also lead to more investigation if they find out another team was involved.

Ask students if they can think of any other examples of news stories that held power to account they have heard recently in the news.

Photo: Korie Cull via Unsplash

The Windrush scandal

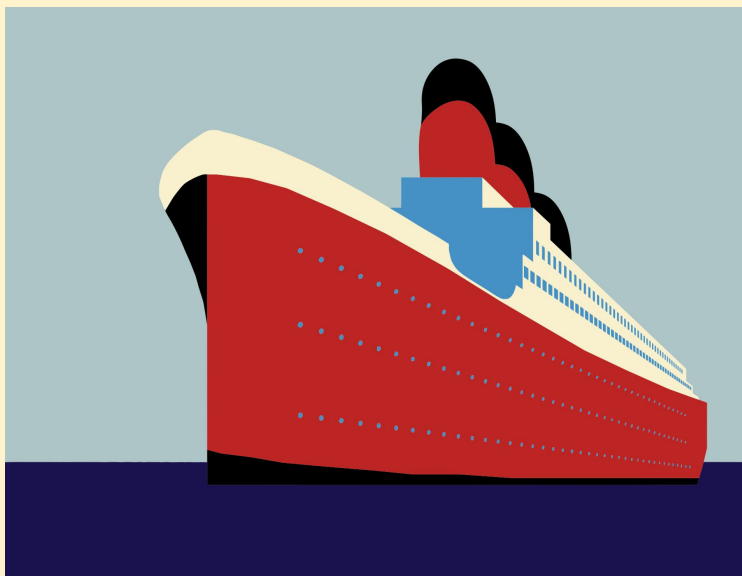
We're now going to look at one example of journalists holding power to account.



We're now going to look at an example of journalists holding power to account with some stories. There is more information about the context of the situation in the explainer notes, but we'll look at some basic details on the following slides as well as being in the teacher guidance.

Photograph: Sarah Lee/The Guardian

The Windrush scandal - history



These are the basic points of the history of the Windrush Generation, but please refer to teacher notes for more. It may be useful to look at a map and the journey that would be required between the Caribbean and the UK.

This Newsround video may also be useful in explaining:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/43793769>

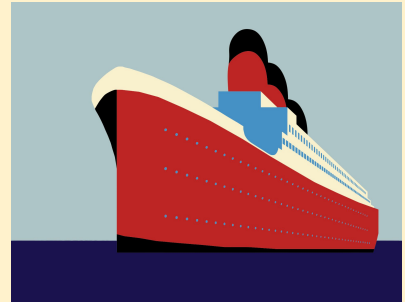
- The Windrush generation were invited to the UK from countries in the Caribbean to help rebuild after the second world war
- Many people arrived between the 1940s and 1970s
- In 1973, a law came into force meaning that everyone who came from the Caribbean was allowed to live in the UK for the rest of their lives

It is important to emphasise that the law in 1973 meant that everyone who arrived to the UK in the Windrush Generation was entitled to the same rights as someone born in the UK. These include things such as being able to work, use the NHS for free, receive benefits, and come and go from the country as you please.

Clip art via Clip Safari

Learning check

1. What part of the world did the people in the Windrush generation come from?
2. Why did they come to the UK?
3. When did they come to the UK?



This can be done verbally or in writing. Answers are:

1. The Caribbean
2. To help Britain rebuild after the Second World War (other answers might include to get jobs, to start new lives, because they were ask to)
3. Between the 1940s and 1970s

The Windrush Scandal



These are the basic points of the Windrush Scandal, but please refer to teacher notes for more.

- In 2012, a new law was passed that meant you had to prove you were allowed to live in the UK to be able to get a job, NHS treatment, or rent a home
- Many people from the windrush generation weren't given any documents that said they were allowed to stay
- Some people were told they needed to leave the country, or were put in detention centres

Guardian explainer of the Windrush Generation scandal (note: this video has unspoken text that appears quickly on the screen and may need to be paused)
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/video/2018/apr/17/who-are-the-windrush-generation-video-explainer>

Clip art via Clip Safari
Photo CDC via Unsplash

The Windrush scandal



- You'll now hear the stories of two people who were impacted by this.
- How do the videos make you feel?
- Why is this an important story to tell?

Albert Thompson:

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/video/2018/mar/15/my-54000-cancer-bill-its-like-ive-been-left-to-die-video>

Paulette Wilson:

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/video/2018/may/09/the-hostile-environment-made-me-feel-like-an-alien-windrush-victim-video>

Possible questions to ask students:

- *How did the video make you feel?*
- *Did the situation seem fair? Why or why not?*
- *Why do you think reporters made this video?*
- *Refer back to the starter discussion on power. In this situation, who has power and who doesn't have power? What needs to change?*

Photograph: Sarah Lee/The Guardian

Learning check

1. Who were the Windrush generation?
2. What were many people from the Windrush generation missing that caused them problems?
3. Name 2 different things that happened to some of the people from the Windrush generation?

1. The Windrush Generation were people who came to Britain from The Caribbean between the 1940s and 1970s
2. Documentation that they were allowed to stay in the UK (answers might include passports, travel documents, etc.)
3. Possible answers: forced to leave the country, put into detention centres, not allowed to rent or buy houses, not allowed to use the NHS for free, losing jobs (or not allowed to get new jobs), denied benefits, pensions taken away

Task



- You now have four different parts of the story. Can you arrange them in the right order?



Students individually or in pairs should have the 'Windrush Headlines and Summaries' document. They can work in pairs or individually. You may want to read all the summaries aloud or students can do this independently.

Students then need to arrange the stories in the order they happened. They can cut them out, or just write numbers on them.

Remind students to think about how power changes through time as the story is reported and more people find out about it.

Windrush Photographs: Sarah Lee/The Guardian
Amber Rudd photograph: Jack Taylor/Getty images

The Windrush scandal



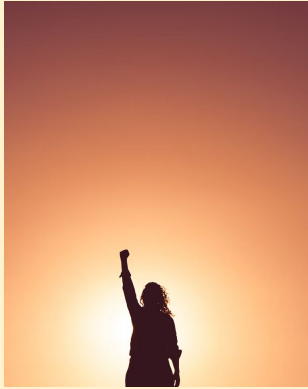
- How has power changed over the course of reporting this story?



As a class, discuss the way power changes throughout the reporting.

- *Who began with power and who ends with power?*
- *Why did this happen?*
- *How did the news reports help to bring about change for the Windrush citizens?*
- *How was power challenged?*

What have you learnt?



Powerful people - looking again

How could power be changed in these situations?

People:

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2. The MP in charge of education

The Prime Minister wants extra English taught instead of PE and art.

People:

1. The rich owner of a big company
2. School headteachers

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People:

1. The owner of a big supermarket
2. Supermarket customers

The owner of the supermarket wants to protect fruit with lots of plastic packaging.

Come back to these scenarios from the beginning. Discuss any or all of the following questions:

- *Can you identify whether the people in power should be challenged? If so, how and why?*
- *Are there examples where power is being exercised positively?*
- *What might happen if these scenarios were reported in the news?*
- *How does more people finding out about them change them?*

If students are stuck for ideas, these could be some suggestions:

- How people might fight against these things: write to their MPs, protest, or start petitions
- People might change their habits (shop at a different supermarket, support the business owner who is buying books)
- Different people having different reactions to the same story might campaign for different things (Some people campaigning to keep PE, others against it)

News. **WISE** Behind the Headlines

theguardianfoundation.org

For more media literacy resources from Behind the Headlines and Newswise, visit
<https://theguardianfoundation.org/>.