



CANADA

THE
STORY
OF US



Facebook Live Roundtables

Canadian History: A Conversation – How Much Do You Know about Black History in Canada?

Moderated by **Amanda Parris**,
host of *Exhibitionists* on CBC Arts

VIEWING QUESTIONS

During the original broadcast of *Canada: The Story of Us*, CBC hosted five Facebook Live roundtables that broadened the national conversation on important themes in Canadian history.

The viewing questions on the following page can help start your classroom conversation about the roundtable, “A Conversation – How Much Do You Know about Black History in Canada?” They can also be included in your

students’ exploration of themes related to the *Canada: The Story of Us* series.

Don’t forget to check out these additional roundtables that CBC hosted to coincide with the original broadcast of *Canada: The Story of Us* at: curio.ca/en/show/canadian-history-a-conversation-2496/

- Perspectives on Canadian History
- Treaties, Reconciliation and Indigenous History in Canada
- How Much Do Canadians Know about our Military History?
- How Much Do You Know about the Roles Women Played in Canadian History?

For the full *Canada: The Story of Us* series and guide, visit: curio.ca/en/collection/canada-the-story-of-us-plus-roundtable-discussions-2514/

Credit: Viewing questions written by **Jason Himsl**, Durham District School Board



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Viewing Questions

Canadian History: A Conversation – How Much Do You Know about Black History in Canada?

1. Andrea Davis says “I think we continue to think about something called ‘Canadian history’ and then something called ‘black history’ without understanding the ways in which black history is essential to informing our understanding of Canadian history.” Why, do you think, is black history not always seen to be part of Canadian history?
2. Nikki Clarke says “There’s a lot of leaning toward American black history and very little about Canadian black history.” Why do Canadians seem to know more about black history in the United States than they do about that of their own country?
3. Afua Cooper says “My chair at Dalhousie is the only Black Studies chair in all of Canada. The only academic chair of black studies in all of Canada. We need more of something like a chair. We need more to centre these studies, to centre this experience.” What is the importance of black role models and black people in positions of power in promoting the study of black history in Canada?
4. Nikki Clarke says “I am a hopeless optimist in that there is a movement for people to embrace diversity and to be open to the stories and illustrations of people coming to Canada and to learn from each other’s stories and their parallels in the stories.” What evidence have you seen of Canadians’ increased interest in our multiculturalism and diversity?
5. The issue of black slavery in Canada was ignored in *Canada: The Story of Us*. Why, do you think, was this the case? What are the effects of this type of omission?
6. Karen Flynn says “Canada constructs its national identity. It’s predicated on the idea of being a benevolent nation that opens its doors, particularly when we’re talking about the Underground Railroad. It was the Promised Land. And in so doing, that part, that national narrative, if you will, does not account for or address the racism that those settlers faced when they migrated here.” To what extent do positive stories in our history blind us to the negative things that have also happened?
7. The panelists mentioned a number of inspirational figures in Canada’s black civil rights movement: Fred Christie, Carrie Best, Rocky Jones, leaders of the Sir George Williams Affair, Gloria Baylis and Albert Jackson. Name two of these individuals you are interested in studying further. What resources do you have access to that would help you in this pursuit?
8. Andrea Davis says “Black Lives Matter Toronto gives me hope because it’s a movement that’s needed and fresh and vibrant and it’s young. It’s made up of young people, university-educated, many of them, in the trenches, brave and vocal and second and third generation Canadians, not immigrants, who are naming this country as their own and demarcating the nation in ways that make sense for them.” What are your views about Black Lives Matter? How much should history classes today focus on current events? Should the focus remain solely on Canada’s past?