

16/07/2026

Black British History

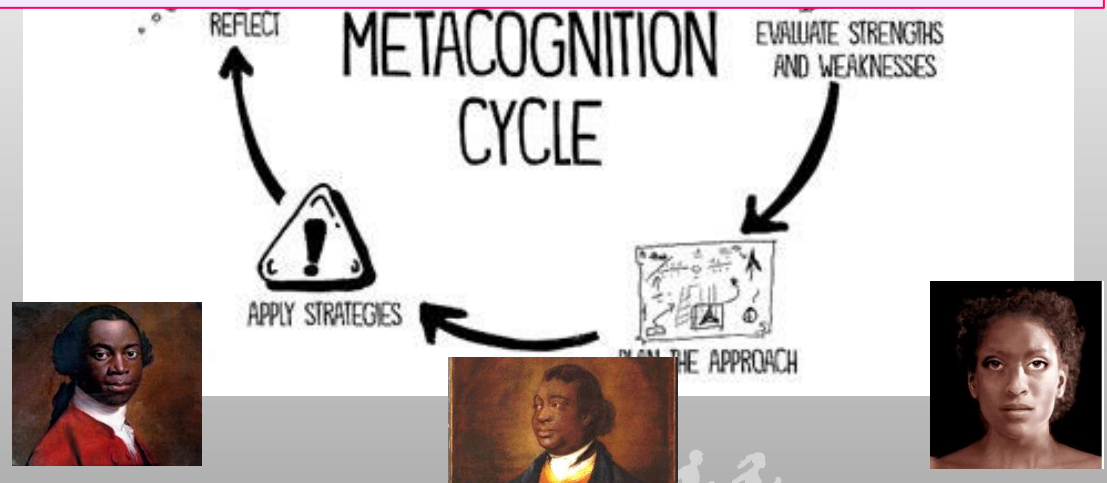
Instructions for Every Lesson:

1. Get your equipment out and write the title and date
2. Underline both with a ruler
3. Silently start working on the task below without having to be asked
4. If you have completed all of the above to a good standard, you deserve a house point for metacognition



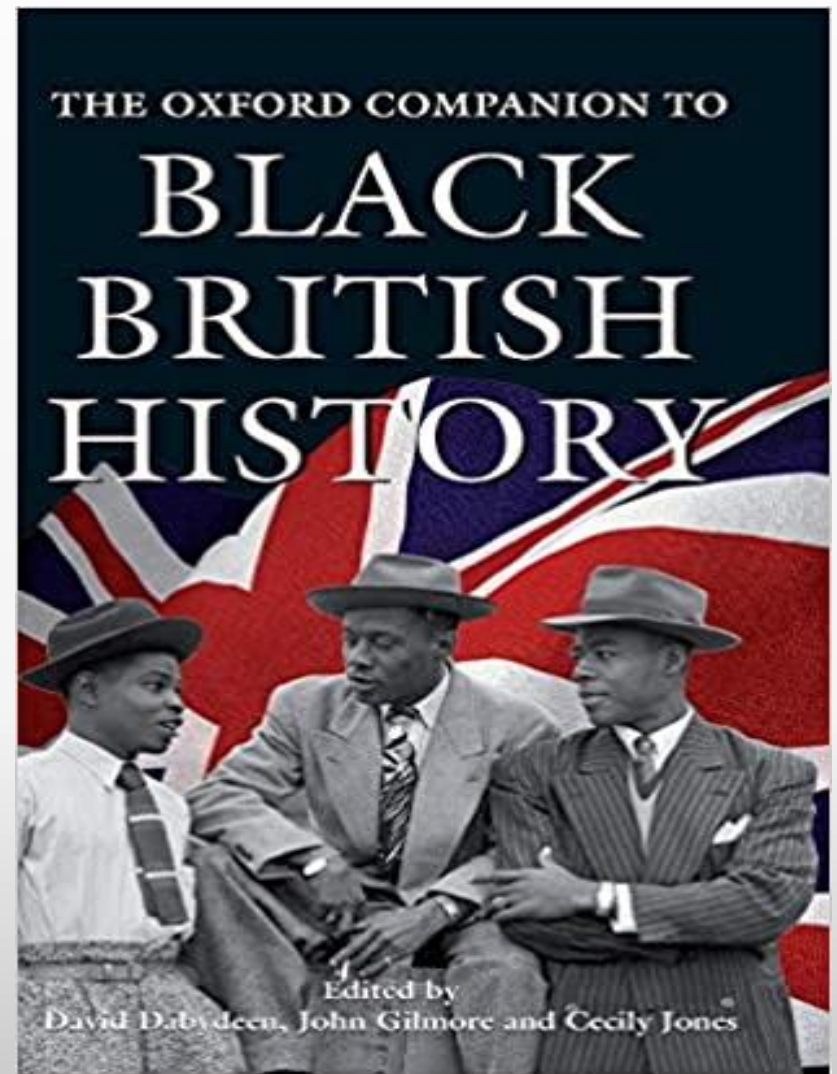
On your white board:
Name as many
people from Black
British history. Famous
people, sports
people, politicians
etc How many
names can you
give?

Who had the most names?
Why do you think some of us may
have struggled with this challenge?



How long ago did
Black British History
begin?

Can you tell
anything about
this picture?



Structured Talk Instructions:

1. Read and consider the above question so that you can participate.
2. Discuss on your table, ensuring everyone contributes and can answer.
3. No hands for feeding back (if you can't answer it's an 'Off Task' negative).

Active Learning

1. You will have 1 minute to read the posters around the room.
2. Return to your seat when I tell you to.
3. Tell your partner what you remember about the person.
4. You will now learn more about the 5 black Britons.



1. Ivory bangle lady
2. Igmanatius Sancho
3. Beachy head woman
4. John Blanke
5. Queen Charlotte



Ivory Bangle Lady



Time: circa 400AD, died between 18 and 23 years (found 1901)
Place: York (burial), North African (origins)

Evidence:

- She was buried in a stone sarcophagus with jet and elephant ivory bracelets, earrings, pendants, beads, a blue glass jug and a glass mirror (items only the rich could afford).
- The most famous object from the burial is a rectangular openwork mount of bone, inscribed with "Hail, sister, may you live in God" indicating she had Christian beliefs.
- The chemical signature of the food and drink she consumed suggested she was a high-status incomer to Roman York, likely to have been of North African descent.
- The shape of her skull suggests that she had North African ancestry; this is not very surprising in a place like York, where inscriptions and written sources mention Africans.

Significance:

- Her skeleton is thought to be of a high-status woman from Roman York.
- Whilst we know many things about her, her name is not one of them, so she is affectionately known as the 'Ivory Bangle Lady'.
- Migration to Britain in the first century was part of the expansion of the Roman Empire and the outcome of colonial and imperial processes.
- Her apparent high status also challenges popular perceptions that African Romans were all slaves.

Legacy:

- We often do not know why individuals came to Britain. Some migration was voluntary, to take advantage of opportunities in a new Roman province, but there was also forced migration, for example, of slaves.
- Research suggests that a stable minority of Roman York's population, perhaps around 10%, had connections to areas beyond Europe.

Queen Charlotte



Time: 19 May 1744 – 17 November 1818
Place: Untere Schloss in Mrow, Germany (Born), Kew Palace, London (Lived, Died)

Evidence:

- When King George III of Britain succeeded to the throne in 1760, he was 22 and unmarried and the 17-year-old Princess Charlotte was an obvious choice for a wife - they had fifteen children together - 9 boys and 6 girls.
- At least 492 lines of descent can be traced from Queen Charlotte through her triple ancestry from the illegitimate son of King Alfonso of Portugal and his Moorish mistress.
- The gene pool is comparatively minuscule due to royal inbreeding. It was from Martin Alfonso de Sousa wife, Ines de Valladares, that the British queen inherited most of her African Islamic ancestry.

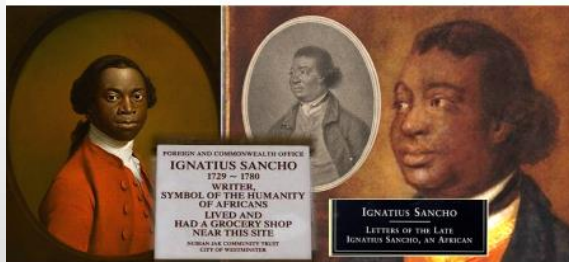
Significance:

- The African characteristics evident in so many of the queen's portraits certainly had political significance, since artists of that period were expected to play down, soften or even obliterate features in a subject's face, especially women, that were not considered to meet the (Eurocentric) standards of beauty for the times.
- Since it's impossible to determine how Charlotte really looked in real life, the argument will likely never be settled.

Legacy:

- For decades, historians have debated whether Charlotte's ancestral ties to Portuguese aristocracy mean she had brown skin, they claim she was Great Britain's first black or biracial queen.
- But others say the queen's ancestry was so distant it likely did not affect her looks and argue that modern conceptions of race are what's driving the belief that Charlotte was black.

Ignatius Sancho



Time: circa 1729 – 14 December 1780

Place: Westminster, London (burial), Greenwich/ London (lived), On a Slave Ship (born)

Evidence:

- Orphaned as his mother died, and his father killed himself to escape a life of slavery.
- Around 2 years old, he was forced to be a slave for three sisters in Greenwich.
- During this time, he met Duke John Montagu, who educated him and gave him books.
- In 1758 Sancho married Anne Osborne, a West Indian woman, and had seven children.
- After this, the couple opened a grocery store in Westminster, where Sancho, by then a well-known cultural figure, maintained an active social and literary life until his death.

Significance:

- Sancho was a financially independent male householder he was eligible to vote - died in 1774 and again just before his death in 1780.
- Sancho wrote letters to the editors of newspapers advocating for abolition of the slave trade: these letters vividly illustrated the trade's inhumanity for a broad audience - largely people who had never read words written by a black person.
- He was a highly educated person of African origin living in London towards the end of the 18th century.
- He was a composer, musician and wrote an essay entitled *A Theory of Music*.

Legacy:

- He was the first person of African descent to vote in a British general election.
- He is also the first person of African descent to have an obituary in British newspapers.
- Gaining fame in Britain as "the extraordinary Negro", he became a symbol for the humanity of Africans and the immorality of the slave trade and slavery.
- After his death did Sancho's letters had a large public readership when they were collected and published in 1782 as *The Letters of the Late Ignatius Sancho, an African*.

Beachy Head Woman



Time: Between 2008BC – 3008BC

Place: East Sussex (lived & burial), Sub-Saharan Africa or Cyprus, Southern Europe (origin)

Evidence:

- Beachy Head Woman, named for the area she was found, was aged around 20 to 25 when she died; with no evidence of disease or any wounds cause of death is unknown.
- The bones showed many traits of being from a sub-Saharan African person however DNA analysis concluded that although she grew up in Eastbourne, her ancestry is in Southern Europe – most likely Cyprus.
- She could possibly have been born in abroad and brought over here at a very young age, but it's just as likely that she was born here.
- She was treated very well in the grave, because her remains were virtually complete.
- Without the context of seeing the burial site or grave goods, we don't yet know why she was here, or her social status.

Significance:

- This lady was around 30 years old, grew up in the vicinity of what is now East Sussex, ate a good diet of fish and vegetables, her bones were without disease and her teeth were in good condition.
- The Eastbourne area during her time was Roman with very firm sub-Saharan ancestry.

Legacy:

- Researchers believe that she was either the wife or mistress of a local official at a nearby Roman villa, or that she was a merchant trading wares in Europe and chose to settle in the country.
- Her teeth and bones were in good condition, but again, that doesn't necessarily mean she was of higher status or a slave – it could be either, if she was a favoured slave.

John Blanke



Time: Known of between 1501 - 1511

Place: Spain (from), London (lived), African (origin)

Evidence:

- Little is known of his early life. In fact, John Blanke may not have been his name at birth.
- John Blanke may have arrived in England with Katherine of Aragon in 1501, her entourage included a group of trumpeters and Henry VII rewarded the 9 trumpets of Spain shortly after her arrival.
- The earliest named reference to John Blanke was a payment made by Henry VII in December 1507, when he was one of eight royal trumpeters - this entry shows he was paid 20 shillings, at 8d. (old pence) each day, for his service in November.
- John Blanke was issued with new black livery to wear at Henry VII's funeral.

Significance:

- He petitioned successfully for higher pay and John's wages were increased to 16d. each day - a testament to his tenacity as well as his experience and length of service.
- He is shown on horseback, with fellow trumpeters, using double-curved instruments.
- Musical skills was part of the job, he would have to be an accomplished horseman too.

Legacy:

- By Tudor standards, John was well-paid as his wage of 8d. each day was equivalent to that of a skilled craftsman.
- He was part of a long medieval and renaissance tradition of black musicians serving at European royal courts.
- The reign of Henry VIII began proclaimed by the blast of a Trumpet in the cille of London', he stayed on under for the new King with new scarlet livery for the coronation.
- John Blanke is the only black Tudor for whom we have an identifiable image and is symbolic of the important but often ignored contribution that people of colour have made to our shared history.

Ivory Bangle Lady



Ignatius Sancho
1729 –1780



Beachy head woman



On a double page, create a mindmap/table for you to collect information about these 5 black Britons. You will watch short films and re-read the information sheets

John Blanke



Queen Charlotte 1744-1818



Use this box to make notes that will help you answer the most challenging progress question that you can:



Progress Review Question

Key Vocabulary: Metacognition, self-regulated learning, growth mindset
Indigenous, ethnicity, black history, citizenship, society, institutional racism, enslaved person.



How might society be improved if we understood black history better?



What can we learn from Black British History and why should it be celebrated?

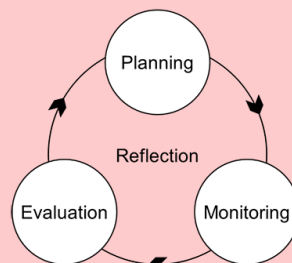


What does Black British History look like and what are schools not teaching you?

Instructions:

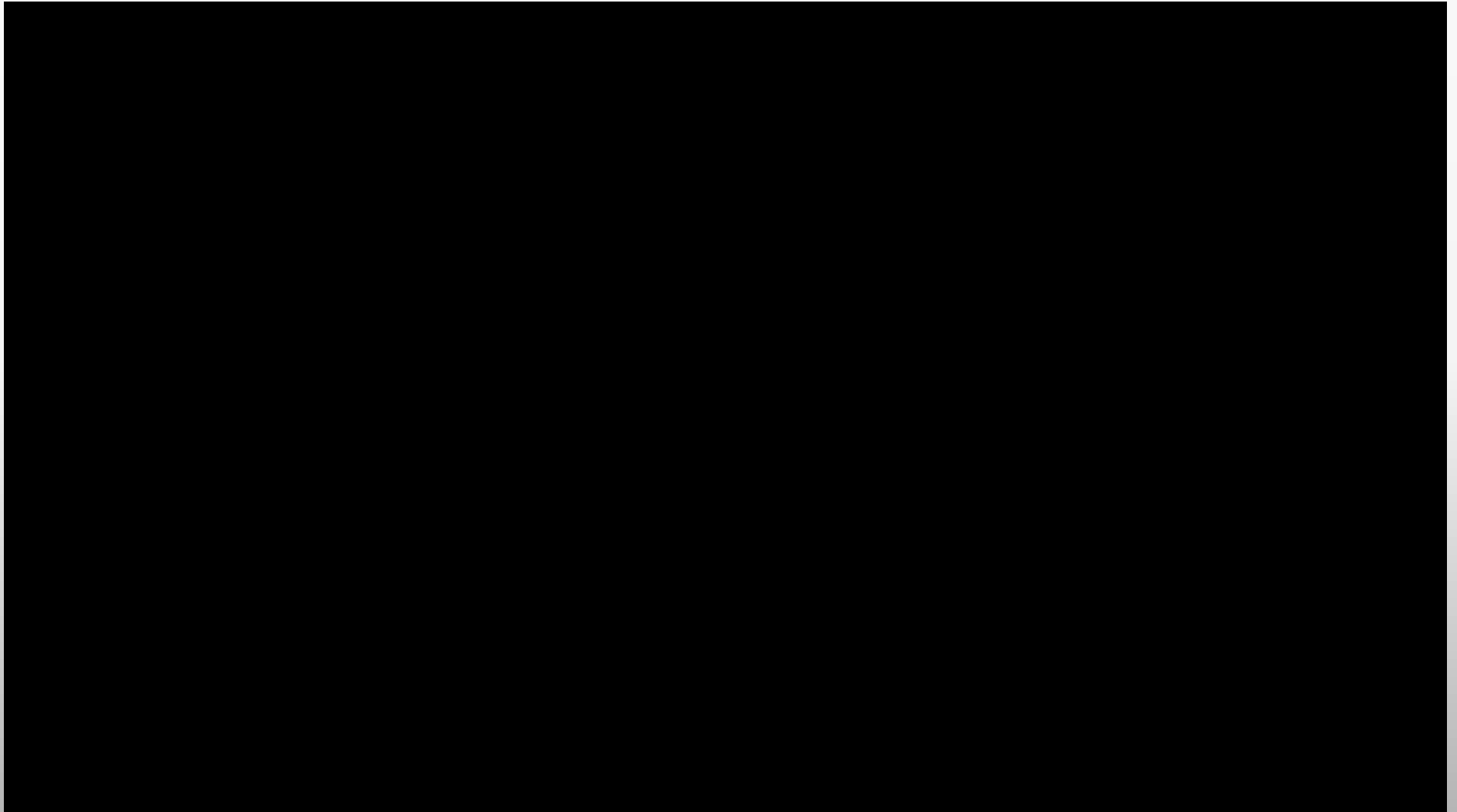
1. Answer the most challenging progress question possible in your book.
2. Evaluate your thinking in today's lesson and how well you think you've answered your progress question.
3. Make final improvements in green pen.

Metacognition phases



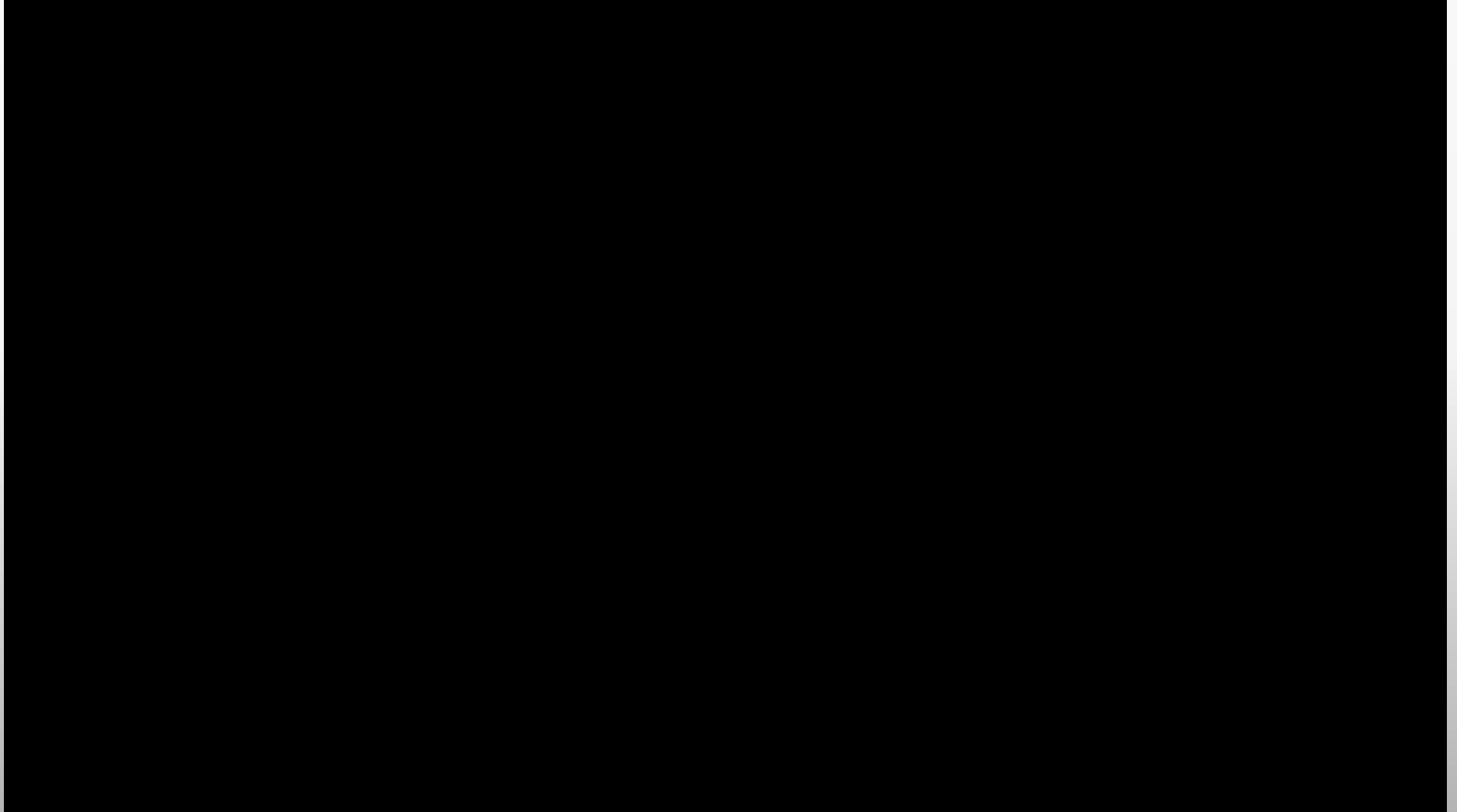


Ivory Bangle Lady MAD time



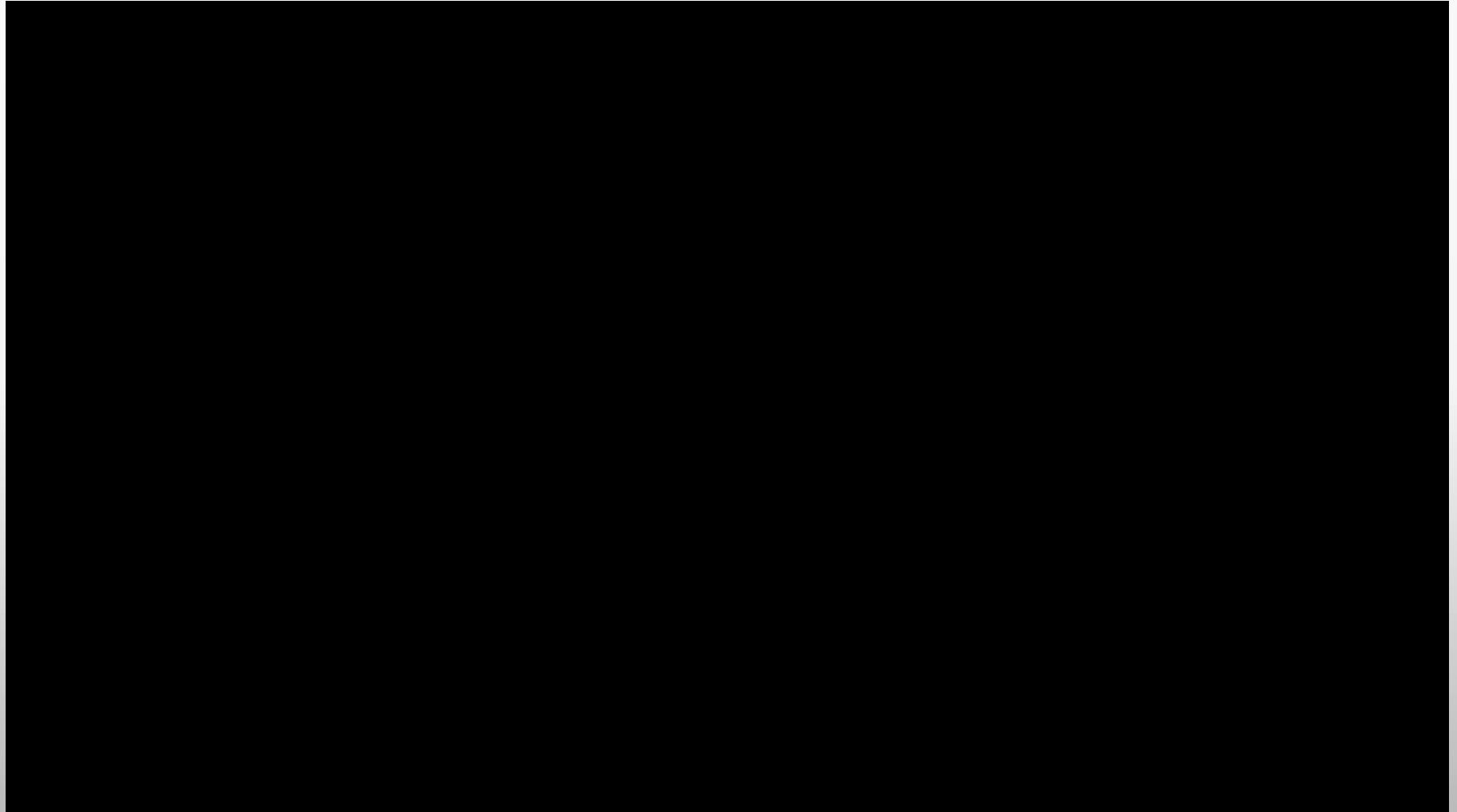


Ignatius Sancho MAD time



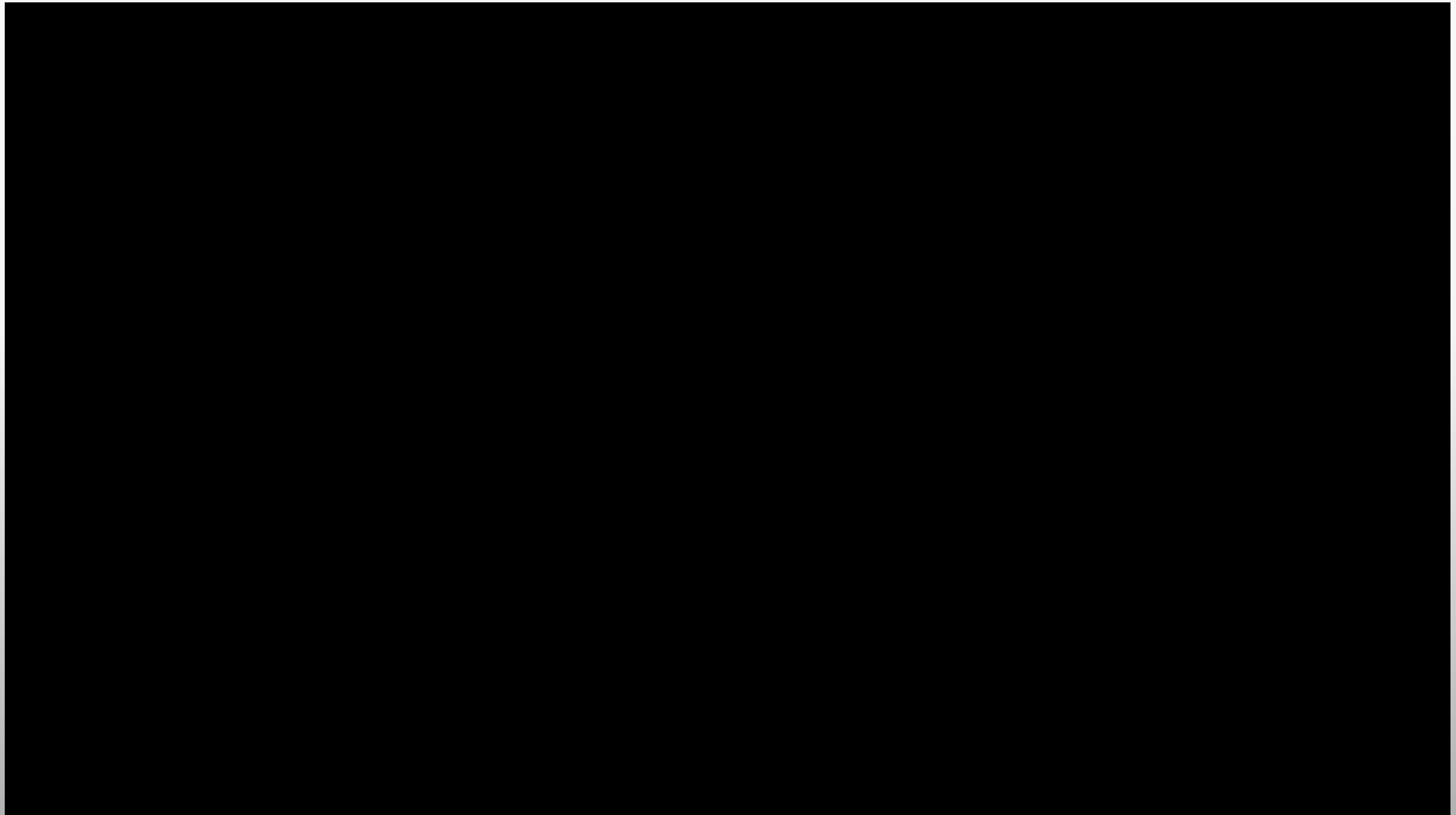


Beachy Head Woman MAD time





John Blanke MAD time





Queen Charlotte MAD time

