

## Sherrie Eugene

### ■ Biography

Date of birth: 10th June 1964

Place of birth: Bristol

Sherrie Eugene is famous for being a TV presenter. Her parents came to Bristol in the 1960s from the island of Dominica in the Caribbean. She remembers that her parents worked very hard to raise her and her six older sisters and provided love, care, discipline and strong moral values, which still have a big effect on her life today.



Sherrie in 2007

Photo courtesy of Paul Bullivant and Tony Gill

Sherrie grew up as a Roman Catholic, and she went to St. Nicholas of Tolentine Primary School, in Easton. Here, she remembers that her teacher, Mrs. Dineen, inspired a sense of pride and confidence in her by asking for her opinion on different matters. When she moved to St. Thomas More Secondary School, another influential teacher was Mrs. Mead, who was Head of English. She supported Sherrie's talent for English and her enthusiasm encouraged Sherrie to revise and do well in her exams. Unfortunately, she remembers that other teachers at the school were not so supportive, and she was never encouraged to apply for a place at university, in spite of having the ability to go there, but she went to Soundwell College after leaving school.

Sherrie started working for HTV West interpreting the news for profoundly Deaf people. She had learnt British Sign Language because her sister Judy, who is just one year older, was born Deaf, and she used it growing up with her. Sherrie decided that she would like to learn more about Sign Language and Deaf culture and so she went to Bristol University and qualified as an interpreter when she was 23 years old.

After about fifteen years with HTV West, Sherrie was increasingly working as a reporter and presenter on shows like *The Good Neighbour Show* and *The Vegetarian Cookery Show*. Also at this time Sherrie felt that Deaf people themselves should be signing the news so she spoke to people at the television centre and encouraged Deaf people to apply.

Sherrie has received several major national awards, such as one for her documentary about the Windrush Generation (about Caribbean people who were invited to live and work in Great Britain between 1948 and the 1960s.) One of her proudest moments was when a man called Jerry Lynn, who was

born with short limbs and toes and other medical conditions, after his mother was given the drug thalidomide during pregnancy, asked her to present a programme about his amazing story, as he did not trust anyone else to tell it. Again, Sherrie was awarded a prize for this piece of work.

Sherrie is often recognised as a local celebrity when she travels, however, people who live in St. Paul's, St. Werburgh's, Montpelier and Easton – the places where she has grown up and lived in Bristol – regard her more as one of the local community and a very 'down-to-earth' person.

Sherrie is a big inspiration to other Black people as she is someone who has made the most of her talents, while at the same time helping others. She says modestly that she tells people, "If I can do it, anyone can. Black young people have to decide what they want to do and then believe that they can go out and do it. It is important to always follow a good path in life".

Sherrie believes that people need to communicate better with each other to learn about all the different communities in Bristol, and in particular to deal with difficulties experienced by Black young people. She says that her parents faced discrimination when they came to England, and she is worried that people arriving in Bristol today from abroad can be treated in the same way. She strongly believes that people should treat others as they would want to be treated themselves.



(Photo courtesy of the Bristol Black Archives Partnership)

Sherrie at the launch of the Bristol Black Archives Partnership, March 2007

Photo courtesy of the Bristol Black Archives Partnership

Sherrie's message is:

“In many ways, the only thing holding us back is the feeling that we cannot achieve. It is true that Black people have been discriminated against in history and sadly this continues today. However, I feel we have the strength to rise above this and achieve anything we put our minds to. So believe in yourself, motivate yourself and follow your dreams.”

## Sherrie Eugene

### ■ Teachers' Background Notes

Sherrie Eugene is best known as an award-winning TV presenter. Her parents came to Bristol in the 1960s from Dominica in the Caribbean and they worked very hard to raise Sherrie and her six older sisters. Her parents and sisters provided her with a foundation of love, care, discipline and strong moral values, which still have a big effect on her life today.

Growing up as a Roman Catholic, Sherrie was educated at St. Nicholas of Tolentine Primary School, Easton where her teacher, Mrs. Dineen, inspired a sense of pride and confidence by asking for her opinion on different matters. When she moved to St. Thomas More Secondary School, another influential teacher was Mrs. Mead who was Head of English. She supported Sherrie's talent for English and her enthusiasm encouraged Sherrie to revise and do well in her exams. Unfortunately, she remembers that other teachers at the school were not so supportive and she was never encouraged to apply for a place at university in spite of having the ability to go there. She went to Soundwell College after leaving school, however, as she did aspire to achieve a university education. She qualified as a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter at Bristol University when she was 23 years old.

Her interest in BSL came about because Sherrie was working for HTV West interpreting the news for Deaf people. She had learnt BSL because her sister Judy, who is just one year older, was born Deaf and she used it growing up with her. Sherrie decided that she would like to learn more about BSL and Deaf culture and was able to combine this with a university education.

Sherrie interpreted the news for Deaf people for about fifteen years with HTV West but increasingly she was working more as a reporter and presenter, particularly specialising in community and social affairs. She presented shows like *The Good Neighbour Show* and *The Vegetarian Cookery Show*. It was over this time that Sherrie felt ethically that Deaf people themselves should be signing the news so she spoke to people at the television centre and encouraged Deaf people to come into the studio to have the opportunity of doing this. One woman in particular, Carolyn Nabarro, has now become an experienced presenter working for HTV West, BBC London and Channel 4.

Sherrie is often recognised as a local celebrity when she travels around the South West; however, people who live in St. Paul's, St. Werburgh's,

Montpelier and Easton – the places where she has grown up and lived in Bristol – regard her more as one of the local community and a very ‘down-to-earth’ person.

Her skills as a TV presenter and reporter were recognised when she received a major media award for her documentary about the Windrush Generation (about Caribbean people who were invited to live and work in Great Britain between 1948 and the 1960s, most settling here permanently). She beat stiff competition from television programmes like BBC News, Channel 4 News, and ITV News. She also won another award from the Independent News Group for her human interest news items and was awarded two Royal Television Society Awards for her work on *The Good Neighbour Show*, which she presented with Fred Wedlock, the Bristol musician and comedian. However, one of her proudest moments she recalls was when a man called Jerry Lynn who was affected by thalidomide (i.e. he was born with short limbs and toes and other medical conditions after his mother was given the drug thalidomide during pregnancy) asked her to present a programme about his amazing story. He did not trust anyone else to tell it. Again, Sherrie won an award for this piece of work.

Sherrie is a big inspiration to other Black people as she is someone who has made the most of her talents, while at the same time helping others. She says modestly that she tells people, “If I can do it, anyone can. Black young people have to decide what they want to do and then believe that they can go out and do it. It is important to always follow a good path in life”.

Sherrie says that people need to communicate with each other to learn about different communities in Bristol, and in particular to deal with difficulties experienced by Black young people. Her parents faced discrimination when they came to England and were often looked down upon because of their colour, and it appals Sherrie to think that migrants and others arriving in Bristol today can be treated in the same way. She strongly believes that people should treat others as they would want to be treated themselves.

Sherrie’s message is

**“In many ways, the only thing holding us back is the feeling that we cannot achieve. It is true that Black people have been discriminated against in history and sadly this continues today. However I feel we have the resolve and the strength to rise above the oppression and achieve anything we put our minds to. So believe in yourself, motivate yourself and follow your dreams.”**

## Sherrie Eugene

### ■ Suggested Activities

These are suggested activities based on Sherrie Eugene's biography. The activities in bold print have a detailed lesson plan on following pages. Watch the DVD to see Bristol pupils from Glenfrome Primary and the City Academy interview Black Bristolian Sherrie Eugene.

Foundation Stage/ KS1 Activities	KS2 Activities	KS3 Activities
<p><b>Communication</b> Different ways of communicating. Guessing games e.g. charades.</p>	<p><b>Communication</b> Explore ways of communicating without verbal language. <b>Visit: British Sign Language website*</b> <a href="http://www.britishsignlanguage.com">www.britishsignlanguage.com</a></p>	<p><b>Bristol Signer</b> Invite Carolyn Nabarro Bristol City Deaf Equality Officer to talk to pupils about Deaf issues. (PSHE)</p>
<p><b>Storytelling</b> Storytelling and interviewing. Set up home corner with microphone. Focus on beginning, middle and end of stories.</p>	<p><b>Story Writing</b> Recall/retell story of a journey from the Caribbean. Make a class story book for younger children.  The Journey Pack* Crossing Continents*</p>	<p><b>Broadcasting</b> Journalism - discuss bias in the media or conduct a favourite programmes survey. Use survey outcomes to discuss reasons for preferences. (English)</p>
<p><b>Makaton</b> Teach the pupils British Sign Language or Makaton. Visit <a href="http://www.britishsignlanguage.com">www.britishsignlanguage.com</a></p>	<p><b>Identity</b> Who am I? What makes me who I am? Explore with pupils names, families, origins, personalities and aspirations to answer the question 'Who am I?'</p>	<p><b>People who influence us</b> Discuss current influences good and bad and how to deal with them. (PSHE)</p>

\*See the resource list for details

# Sherrie Eugene

## ■ Lesson Plan: Drama/English (Literacy)

KS1

2:4

Sherrie Eugene Lesson Plan

### Learning objectives

- To know about story structure.
- To learn to retell stories.
- To learn how Black and minority ethnic people contribute to life in Bristol.

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Key words/phrases	Resources	Organisation/Grouping
Stories Beginning/middle/end Storyteller	Biography and pictures of Sherrie Eugene Microphone	Pairs/Whole class

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### Suggested activities

- Share Sherrie Eugene's biography with pupils.
  - Read or tell pupils a familiar story. Pupils work in pairs in home corner retelling and acting out story. Choose some pairs of pupils to retell/act out story to the class.
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### Plenary

- Talk about how much was remembered from the story.
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### Learning outcomes/Success criteria

- Pupils know how to tell story using a beginning, middle and end.
  - Pupils learn about Sherrie Eugene and her contribution to Bristol.
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### Assessment opportunities

Story structure

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### Homework task or Parent/Carer involvement

Share favourite stories.

# Sherrie Eugene

## ■ Lesson Plan: Communications (Literacy, PSHE)

### Learning objectives

- To know about ways of communicating without spoken words.
- To understand that there are people who communicate effectively without spoken words.
- To learn how Black and minority ethnic people contribute to life in Bristol.

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Key words/phrases	Resources	Organisation/Grouping
Codes	Biography	Whole class
Symbols	Collection of signs and symbols	Pairs
Signing		

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### Suggested activities

- Read Sherrie Eugene's biography. Emphasise Sherrie's work in signing.
- Make a collection of everyday symbols e.g. street signs, symbols in buildings, symbols for signing for people with hearing impairment, Makaton, advertising. What symbols are there in your school? Discuss reasons for using symbols e.g. disability, travelling abroad, speedy communication.
- Mime games (class or pairs) e.g. 'I've fallen over, please can I have a plaster?' 'I've left my packed lunch at home.'
- Work in pairs to design symbols to send a message e.g. 'fire in the building, get out,' 'fallen tree, do not enter!' What symbols could you design for people who are new to English?

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### Plenary

- Share messages.
- Discuss whether the messages can be easily understood or not. Are there any difficulties? How can these be overcome?

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### Learning outcomes/Success criteria

- Pupils know about Sherrie's life and her contribution to Bristol.
- Pupils know importance of being able to communicate without words

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### Assessment opportunities

Empathy and drama skills.

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### Homework task or Parent/Carer involvement

What signs and symbols can you see in and around your house? Draw or list what you see. What symbols does your family find most useful?

\*See the resource list for details

# Sherrie Eugene

## ■ Lesson Plan: People who influence us (PSHE)

KSS3

2:4

Sherrie Eugene Lesson Plan

### Learning objectives

- To learn that we are influenced by many different people around us.
- To distinguish between good and bad influences.
- To learn how Black and minority ethnic people contribute to Bristol.

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Key words/phrases	Resources	Organisation/Grouping
Influence	Biography/picture of	Whole class
Family	Sherrie Eugene	Pairs
Peers		
Teachers		
Community leaders		
Religious leaders		
Politicians		
Musicians/sports people		
TV personalities		

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### Suggested activities

- Read Sherrie Eugene's biography. Identify the people who influenced her. Talk about people who have influenced us at different stages of our lives (e.g. as a baby, child, teenager).
  - Discuss good and bad influences.
  - Pupils work in pairs to share their current influences.
  - Pupils individually record work in agreed format (eg pie chart) and consider how their influences might change in the future.
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### Plenary

- Share work with whole class.
  - Talk about how to deal with negative influences.
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### Learning outcomes/Success criteria

- Pupils know about Sherrie Eugene's life and her contribution to Bristol.
  - Pupils know that influences can be good and bad.
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### Homework task or Parent/Carer involvement

Talk to family about those who influenced them in a positive or negative way.

## Sherrie Eugene

### ■ Resources

- Crossing Continents – Commonwealth and Empire Museum.
- The Journey Pack. A pack of resources – books, CD, poster, map, teachers' handbook etc. about the journey of Caribbean people to UK. Published by Primary Colours.
- [www.britishsignlanguage.com](http://www.britishsignlanguage.com)
- Some themes/subjects covered during her interview featured on the DVD are: the Deaf culture, inspirational teachers.

### Contact details

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Willing to be contacted by teachers for further questions? Yes

Willing to come into school to talk to pupils? Yes