

## Simba Tongogara

### ■ Biography

Date of birth: 19th December 1955  
 Place of birth: St Andrew, Jamaica  
 Date of arrival in Bristol: 1967

Simba came to England in 1967 with his sister, at the age of twelve. Simba remembers that he experienced racism at school but was inspired by the Art teacher, Mr. Jenkins, who related well to children of all backgrounds. He particularly enjoyed these lessons because Mr. Jenkins allowed his pupils to listen to music as they worked, and he wanted to become a musician when he grew up.



Simba pictured near the office of St Paul's Youth Promotion in 2006  
 Photo courtesy of Simba Tongogara

When he moved to London for a few years in the late 1970s, Simba's love of music led him to join one of England's finest reggae bands, Misty in Roots. He also played percussion and was their tour manager.

In the early 1970s, Simba used to bring bands over from Jamaica to play at the famous Bamboo Club in Bristol, which was owned by Tony and Lalel Bullimore. Bands such as Bob Marley and the Wailers played at the club. Today Simba is an independent music producer, working with a famous reggae star, Ken Boothe.

Simba's full name is Simbarashe Tongogara. Simbarashe means 'Power of the Lord' in Shona, one of the languages of Zimbabwe in Africa. He was baptised as Desmond Aloysius Pierre but officially changed his name after a trip to Zimbabwe. Local people there gave him the new name and he decided to use it because he felt it better represented his African roots.

Simba takes an interest in making positive changes for people living in St. Paul's and for African-Caribbean people. He has been a member of the Bristol Partnership, (which is the organisation making the key decisions about the city). He was also deputy chair of St. Paul's Unlimited, which has worked to involve local people in the decisions about the area, such as whether Broadmead should have been renamed the "Merchants' Quarter" because of the links with the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Simba was also a spokesperson on television and in the newspapers all over the world at the time of the St. Paul's Riots in 1980. He brought in lawyers (like Paul Boateng, who later became the first Black man in a prime minister's cabinet), to represent the people who were charged with rioting. He also organised musicians to raise funds to pay their legal fees.

For the past seven years, Simba has run St. Paul's Youth Promotion which provides activities for young people in the Ashley area, particularly those who may be at risk of getting into trouble. The young people take part in a lot of activities and even broadcast on radio. In 2006 the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, and the Culture Minister, David Lammy, met young people in St. Paul's to talk about what they thought about Abolition 200. This is the marking of 200 years since the end of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The young people were then invited back to London for a visit to find out how government works.



Simba performing with the reggae group, Misty In Roots, in Zimbabwe, 1981

Photo courtesy of Simba Tongogara

Simba's message is:

“ The way forward for Black people in the UK is to strive for the highest achievement and to never give up trying. ”

## Simba Tongogara

### ■ Teachers' Background Notes

Simba Tongogara has lived in Britain since 1967, when he arrived from Jamaica with his sister as a boy of twelve. He is now a key representative of Bristol's African-Caribbean community and manages St. Paul's Youth Promotion. This offers a wide range of activities for young people of African descent to help them develop skills and gain confidence.

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Simba attended Bishopston Secondary School and then took an apprenticeship course at British Aircraft Corporation. He experienced racism at school but was inspired by the art teacher, Mr. Jenkins, who related well to children of all races. Simba particularly enjoyed these lessons because Mr. Jenkins allowed his pupils to listen to music as they worked and he wanted to become a musician when he grew up. He hoped to play the guitar but, being left-handed, and suitable instruments not being available, he learned instead to play the clarinet at school.

Simba's love of music led him to join one of England's finest reggae bands, Misty in Roots. This was when he moved to London for a few years in the late 1970s. He played percussion and was their tour manager, too. The band toured over Europe, Zimbabwe and Zambia, and was the first reggae group to perform in Poland.

In the early 1970s, Simba used to bring bands over from Jamaica to play at the famous Bamboo Club in Bristol, owned by Tony and Lalel Bullimore. Bands such as Bob Marley and the Wailers played at the club. Today Simba is an independent music producer currently producing an album for the legendary Jamaican reggae star, Ken Boothe. He is also working on other music projects that address issues such as gun crime.

Simba takes a keen interest in making positive changes for residents in St. Paul's and for African-Caribbean people. In 2002 he became a member of the Bristol Partnership, as a community representative. Bristol City Council, local businesses, voluntary organisations and others formed the Bristol Partnership to plan for future demands on education, health, the economy and growth of the city.

Simba became Chair of the Bristol Multicultural Development Co-operative, based in the St. Paul's area. The Co-operative was formed to ensure that new developments in the city are able to draw upon the skills and labour of local people.

He was also a Deputy Chair of St. Paul's Unlimited. This was formed to empower local people to become actively involved in the regeneration of their area, and to challenge negative stereotypes about St. Paul's. During this time he acted as a spokesperson for local people who felt that renaming Broadmead in the city centre Merchants' Quarter was an insensitive reminder of Bristol's past as the Society of Merchant Venturers had been involved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

For the past seven years, Simba has run St. Paul's Youth Promotion. For the first two years the meetings were held in his house until funding was obtained to rent offices in St. Agnes Lodge in St. Agnes Park. St. Paul's Youth Promotion provides activities for young people in the Ashley area who don't have access to many resources and who may be at risk of offending behaviour. The young people take part in activities such as poetry workshops, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, football, filmmaking, environmental awareness and radio and presentation skills. Some of the young people even broadcast on BBC Radio 4 and several community radio stations. In 2006 young people in St. Paul's shared experiences with young people in Trenchtown, Jamaica by linking up over the Internet. Simba believes that developing young people's confidence and skills benefits both the young and the wider community.

Simba was involved in the St. Paul's Riots of 1980. He brought in lawyers to represent the people who were charged with rioting, (such as Paul Boateng who later became the first Black man in a prime minister's Cabinet). Simba also organised musicians throughout the UK to raise funds to pay the legal fees. The riots attracted television and newspaper reporters from as far away as Russia and Simba was a main spokesperson.

One of the highlights of 2006 for Simba was the visit by the then Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, and Culture Minister, David Lammy, to meet the young people of St. Paul's Youth Promotion. They wished to share ideas about the bi-centenary of the abolition of the Slave Trade Act and its legacy for young people. As a result, the Deputy Prime Minister invited a group of young Black people from St. Paul's to Westminster, London in November 2006 for two days to learn how the government works. They were accompanied by Simba and Bristol City Council officers.

Simba's message is:

**"The way forward for Black people in the UK is to strive for the highest achievement and to never give up trying."**

# Simba Tongogara

## ■ Suggested Activities

These are suggested activities based on Simba Tongogara's biography. The activities in bold print have a detailed lesson plan on following pages.

Foundation Stage/ KS1 Activities	KS2 Activities	KS3 Activities
<p><b>Names</b> Read <i>Welcome to the World Baby</i> by Na'ima bint Robert. Involve parents/carers in exploring the meaning of their children's names, and cultural and religious ways of welcoming a new baby.</p>	<p><b>Meanings of names</b> Importance of names and their meanings. Consider why Simba changed his name. Naming ceremonies in different religions and cultures. Explore naming structures in different cultures.</p>	<p><b>African languages</b> Read Wikipedia* text and maps on the 2000 or more African languages. African pupils to share their knowledge including dialects. Pupils to research different language group and present to class. (Geography).</p>
<p><b>Music</b> Listen to some reggae music, possibly Misty in Roots. Provide musical instruments and set up stage for pupils to sing, dance and perform.</p>	<p><b>Inspirational teachers</b> <b>Collaborative literacy activity to create a description of an inspirational teacher.</b></p>	<p><b>Reggae music</b> Visit Misty in Roots website*. Read home page to understand historical context for them and for Rock Against Racism Movement* Which current groups support RAR? (Music).</p>
<p><b>Self-esteem</b> Special person day – each pupil is the special person for a day. He/she is interviewed by other pupils about likes and dislikes and brings one special thing from home to share.</p>	<p><b>Development</b> Development and change in our local area. Use local papers to find what the local issues are, e.g. new supermarket being planned. Pupils can interview people from the school and local community about how these changes may affect different groups of people.</p>	<p><b>Stereotypes in society</b> <b>Challenge stereotypes as a class.</b> <b>Develop role play scenarios.</b> (PSHE/ Citizenship)</p>

\*See the resource list for details

# Simba Tongogara

## ■ Lesson Plan: A new name (RE, PSHE)

KS1

2:16

Simba Tongogara Lesson Plan

### Learning objectives

- To explore the diversity of religious and cultural celebrations of welcoming and naming a new baby.
- To investigate how we got our names and their meanings.
- To learn how Black and minority ethnic people contribute to Bristol.

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Key words/phrases	Resources	Organisation/Grouping
Name	Biography/pictures of Simba Tongogara	This activity might take place over a period of a week
Surname	Book of names with meanings	
Family name	Books about naming ceremonies	Whole class
Baptism and other words related to naming ceremonies.	in different religions <i>Welcome to the World Baby</i> by Na'ima bint Robert (Mantra Lingua)*	

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### Suggested activities

- Share Simba's biography and pictures with the pupils, drawing out reference to his name change and its significance to him.
- Read *Welcome to the World Baby* by Na'ima bint Robert. Talk about the story.
- Pupils to talk to their parents/carers about how they chose their names.
- Invite parents/carers from a variety of cultures and religions to share how names are chosen, the meanings of names and naming ceremonies

### Plenary

- Recall the naming ceremonies that have been covered.
- Encourage pupils to recognise their name in English and home language.

### Learning outcomes/Success criteria

- Pupils know that there are different naming ceremonies.
- Pupils know more about their own names.
- Pupils know about Simba's name and life and his contribution to Bristol.

### Assessment opportunities

Listening and respect for others.

### Homework task or Parent/Carer involvement

As above.

\*See the resource list for details

# Simba Tongogara

## ■ Lesson Plan: Inspirational teachers (Literacy)

### Learning objectives

- To collect a range of adjectives to describe an inspirational teacher and use them in sentences.
- To consider and form an opinion of what an inspirational teacher is.
- To know how Black and minority ethnic people contribute to Bristol.

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Key words/phrases	Resources	Organisation/Grouping
Inspirational Descriptive Description	Biography and picture of Simba Tongogara	Whole class Pairs Groups

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### Suggested activities

- Share Simba's biography and pictures.
- Pick up on his comment about an inspirational teacher. Check pupils' understanding of the word inspirational.
- Pairs of pupils to discuss and choose two words to describe an inspirational teacher.
- This pair joins with another pair to create a sentence about an inspirational teacher.
- These four join together with another four to combine/refine their sentences.
- Groups to share with the whole class. Teacher or pupil to scribe.
- Whole class to create a paragraph describing an inspirational teacher using phrases/words/sentences from different groups.
- Display in school.

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### Plenary

- Pupils to say why inspirational teachers are important.

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### Learning outcomes/Success criteria

- Pupils have considered an inspirational teacher and constructed a class description using words, sentences and phrases.
- Pupils know about Simba Tongogara and his contributions to Bristol.

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### Assessment opportunities

Broad vocabulary – adjectives.

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### Homework task or Parent/Carer involvement

Ask parents/carers about their inspirational teachers.

\*See the resource list for details

# Simba Tongogara

## ■ Lesson Plan: Challenging stereotypes (PSHE & Citizenship)

KSS3

2:16

Simba Tongogara Lesson Plan

### Learning objectives

- To know how we can challenge stereotypes
- To develop confidence to challenge stereotypes.
- To know how Black and minority ethnic people contribute to Bristol.

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Key words/phrases	Resources	Organisation/Grouping
Stereotype	Biography/picture of Simba Tongogara.	Whole class
Challenge	Definition of stereotype*	Groups
Assertive	Prepared sentences* (teachers should add examples to list that are relevant to this group of pupils) Box/bag for cut up sentences	

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### Suggested activities

- Read Simba's biography and look at his picture. Check understanding of the word stereotype.
- Sit the group in a circle and pass around the box of prepared sentences of stereotypes.
- A pupil should read out a sentence and the rest of the group challenge this by giving an example of how and where it is not true.
- Continue with as many sentences as possible.
- Pupils in groups of three or four can develop a role play situation where a stereotype may be made and how they can challenge it assertively. Pupils could share own experiences to create scenarios.

### Plenary

- Share role plays.
- Discuss issues and pupils' confidence in challenging stereotypes in different situations.
- Discuss which challenge would be most effective in that situation.

### Learning outcomes/Success criteria

- Pupils are more confident to challenge stereotypes.
- Pupils know about Simba Tongogara and his contribution to Bristol.

### Homework task or Parent/Carer involvement

Pupils could consider the harm that stereotypes do to people.

\*See the resource list for details

## Simba Tongogara

### ■ Resources

- Definition of stereotype and prepared sentences.
- Wikipedia text and maps on African languages  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African\\_languages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_languages)
- Visit Misty in Roots website. <http://www.mistyinroots.ws/home.html>
- *Welcome to the World Baby* by Na'ima bint Robert  
Published by mantra Lingua.
- Rock Against Racism movement  
<http://www.lmhr.org.uk/about/rock.html> – QCA website
- [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk) – New Arrivals/Countries includes information on naming systems.

### 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

## Simba Tongogara

### ■ Resources: What is a stereotype?

A stereotype is an oversimplified statement about a group of people-based on particular characteristics, often physical appearance. It is not backed up by factual evidence.

Stereotypes can be positive or negative, however all stereotypes are harmful. The danger in relying on stereotypes to guide our thoughts and actions stems from their being:

- Simplified ideas, whether negative or positive in nature.
- Over-generalisations that do not represent all, or perhaps even most, individuals within a group.
- Designed to enhance our own self-identity.
- The foundation for prejudice and discrimination.
- Obstacles in getting to know others for whom they are versus who we think they might be.