

Retrieval Vocabulary

arson, border, colonies, discrimination, empire, imperialism, immigration, recession

Key Unit Vocabulary

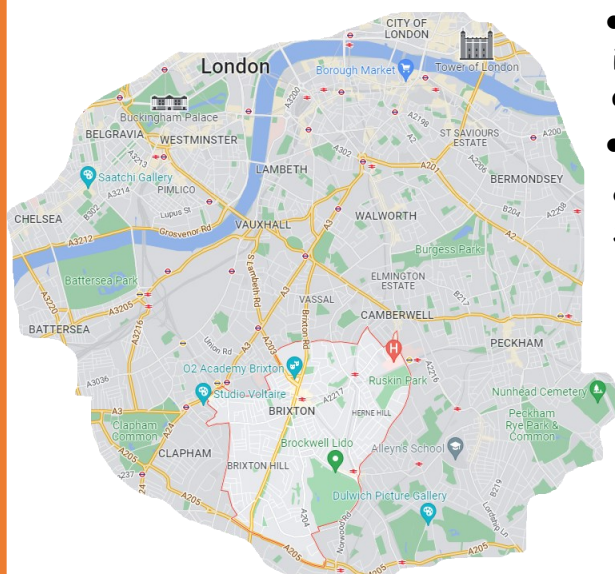
home secretary - the member of government in charge of the Home Office, which has powers over law enforcement, national security and immigration

institutional racism - racism that has become established in an organisation

police brutality - various human rights violations by police

stop and search - the policing practice of stopping a person in order to search them for weapons or prohibited items

A map showing the location of Brixton in relation to Peckham



Year 6 Summer Unit: A Local Study—The Brixton riots 1981



Enquiry Question: Why did the Brixton Riots occur and what changed as a result of them?

Historical Concept: evidence

Key Unit Facts

- At the start of 1980, the UK was affected by a recession. Brixton was an area with serious social and economic problems where the local African-Caribbean community was suffering particularly high unemployment, poor housing, and a higher-than-average crime rate.
- On 18th January 1981, thirteen black youths died in a fire during a house party in New Cross, in the nearby Borough of Lewisham.
- At the beginning of April 1981, the Metropolitan Police began Operation Swamp, a plainclothes operation to reduce crime, within five days, 943 people were stopped and searched.
- The Brixton riots, or Brixton uprising, was a series of clashes between mainly black youths and the Metropolitan Police in Brixton between the 10th and 12th of April 1981.
- The main riot on the 11th April, dubbed "Bloody Saturday", resulted in 279 injuries to police and 45 injuries to members of the public; over a hundred vehicles were burned, including 56 police vehicles; almost 150 buildings were damaged, 30 of which were burnt out, and many shops were looted.
- The Brixton riots were followed by similar riots in July in many other English cities and towns.
- The Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, commissioned a public inquiry into the riot headed by Lord Scarman.



Scenes from the Brixton Riots



Unit Timeline

