

KS3

Lesson 3

Ugandan Asian Migration



What can we learn about identity and belonging in Britain in the 1970s from Ugandan Asian experiences of migration?



Context

Lesson 1

Why did the Asian community settle in Uganda, and then leave in the 1970s?

Experiences and Impact

Lesson 2

What was life like for Ugandan Asians arriving in 1970s Britain?

Lesson 3

How did the Ugandan Asians find 'home' in Britain?

How did the Ugandan Asians find 'home' in Britain?



Objective:

To understand how the Ugandan Asian community established a sense of belonging and found a new home in Britain.



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What does home mean to you?



Make a list of things/ feelings/ places that make up 'home' for you



Think



Pair
(tell your neighbour)



Share with the class

Write a definition of 'home'

“I really don't know where home is.
I mean if I was told to leave now,
I wouldn't know where to go.”



Shenaz (second from left) and her family in Chipping Norton,
posing for the local newspaper as the first refugee family in the town (November 1972)



I left my heart and soul in Uganda
Living in the west
Family all scattered
I feel like an empty nest
Hearts are weeping
Shining glowing happy faces are no more
The sun rarely shines outside
Nor in our hearts
People have only sadness on their faces
I miss you Uganda

How did the Ugandan Asians find 'home' in Britain?



(collect evidence using the different interviews)

Whose story is this? Brief biography	Arrival	School/ Work	Home and identity (this could include family, religion, food and anything else you think is relevant)
Sutinder			
Mayur			
Sophie			
Tarla			
Bharat			

What have you learned?



Think back to our enquiry question:

What do Ugandan Asian experiences of migration tell us about identity and belonging in Britain from the 1970s?

.....
You are going to write a summary of how/ whether you think the Ugandan Asians found a 'home' in Britain?
.....

Start off with a definition of 'home' and then apply this to the experiences of Ugandan Asians in the UK
.....

Describe what experiences they had in the UK and explain how or whether this helped them feel at home in the UK
.....

You should also think about which aspects of life in the UK at this time made them feel less comfortable
.....

In your conclusion, you should explain what the Ugandan Asian experience tells us about different identities and belonging in the UK in 1970s.

“At Mumbai ... breathing in the air for the first time ... I was home”



.....

I don't feel this is home, don't feel I belong here. Uganda was home but after being thrown out, I'd like to go and visit see it, but would I call it home? No. ... even though when we were leaving Uganda, India said 'No we won't take you in because you've got British passports', the first time I visited India ... and I got off at Mumbai. When I just got off, breathing in the air for the first time ever, you know people remind you of the stench ... but I actually felt then that I was home, that this is home. Yeah, just the smell.

I just landed there and thought 'I am home' and even now I say to my wife 'I've got a few more years were I'm going to work, then I'm retiring and we're going to spend more time in India than we will here'. It is unfortunate that I can't call this country home ...

I'm saying to people 'This is who I am this is what I am, accept me for what I am. I'm ready to accept you for who you are so why not me? I'm not trying to impose myself on you I'm not saying my culture is your culture', but I'm just saying 'We're two different people but we can live side by side', but that acceptance isn't here yet. Okay we've got an Indian Prime Minister, but ... he's just a token.

.....

Bharat, born in Uganda, left aged 10

“Daily you have to make your home”



.....

Maybe where you live is your home, daily you have to make your home, because even if I said Uganda is my home I can't go back there to live there. It was my home when I lived there, but this is my home really. Because all my family is here, brothers, sisters, so we visit now and then and get together and this is called home really.

.....

Tarla, born in Uganda, left aged 13 to come to the UK with her family



“I’ve got the best of both worlds”



.....

England gave us a home and I’ve kept my Indian culture, I’ve got the best of both worlds. Living in the UK it’s a fantastic country, what British people have done for us, Edward Heath who was the Prime Minister at the time in 1972 was the guy who said “Yes please we’ll take 28,000” so I’d like to thank all of them who were in the Conservative party at the time who took us in, all the British people, all the help we got, 63 organisations came out to help us in the camps, Salvation Army, Red Cross you name it all of them were there helping us and every single one of them they’ve done a fantastic job. We left a country where we could’ve been killed and we came to this country and apart from the racism it’s been fantastic I think racism is gone now we faced old racism but it made us stronger, definitely made us stronger, so like I said we could never repay the British public for what they’ve done for us.

.....

Mayur, arrived in UK 1972 with her family

“Britain has given me so much and my family and my siblings so much, but do I call Britain home?”



.....
[My parents] would always call Africa home and even now I speak to my uncle, whose my dad's brother, and he goes "homeland" he calls it the "homeland" but you know and I can't knock Britain because Britain has given me so much and my family and my siblings so much, but do I call Britain home? I think now I do but only recently. I've often felt, I think when you face racism as a child, you are so in tune to when you face it as an adult. So, in instances where people might not know that they're being inadvertently racist you can pick up on it just like that.
.....

Sophie, came to live in Yorkshire aged 6 in 1972



“you’re just a child and all you identify yourself with is how much fun can I have”



.....
Interviewer: If you were thinking of yourself as a 10-year-old, but back then if you had to go back how would you have identified yourself in terms of being Indian, being Asian, being Ugandan, a mix of everything?
.....

Sutinder: Yeah, it’s a really good question because at that time it’s almost like at that age you’re oblivious to those kind of things. You don’t really identify yourself as anything, you’re just a child and all you identify yourself with is how much fun can I have, what can I play with. So to me if at that stage I knew what I know now I would have loved to go straight back on the next flight back because I would have had that freedom and abundance which I never ever experienced again in that way as a child.
.....



Sutinder, came to UK from Uganda aged 10

“Although he was an architect he couldn’t get a job because ... he was a foreigner”



.....

My dad .. was an architect, and ... a really successful businessman, [he] had a lot of wealth and lots of connections, [he was] well known and he lost all of that. So, I think to him it really affected him a lot, ... his temperament changed a lot. I suppose at the time we were young, we didn’t realise, but I believe he must have had some kind of acute depression through his life ...

And one of the things was obviously not just the fact that you’ve lost everything, you’ve [now also] got to start from scratch again. We had nothing, we literally lived on the Social Security and my parents had to find a job and the only job he could find was factory work. Although he was an architect, he couldn’t get a job because ... he was a foreigner, he was at that age were they couldn’t train him up ... to have him as an architect, so he just couldn’t slot in. So he ended up having to work in a factory and he did his time, he was very good, [he] kept the house going and he used to travel, get up at the crack of dawn and travel a long way to get to work and come back. He even did shift work for years and years just so we could manage, and that was all a bit sad, and I think whatever happened to him, it affected his temperament and I think that came down onto the rest of the family and it affected us all.

.....

Sutinder, came to UK from Uganda aged 10

“If someone asks me “Where is your home?”, before, I would say “Home to me is Uganda”, but nowadays I will say “Home to me is where my children are.”



.....

... throughout this whole experience of ... school and college there was lots of discrimination. Even at secondary school I suffered a lot of discrimination, people taking the mickey [out] of how I looked, a kid would play with my plaits, I'd be called a [racial slur] ... And my brothers ... were older and whenever they used to go out they'd ... often get into trouble, they'd get arrested by the police ... purely because of the way they looked. Just because you were out in the evening it was assumed that you were a troublemaker ... So that wasn't nice, but ... it didn't stop ... us ... carrying on doing what we wanted to do, ... what we could do: ... eventually everyone's got their own lives and their own families and ... getting on with it.

... I think after {that} I never thought of myself as British. As a child I didn't think of myself as anything, ... I was just a child, but as I grew up, ... all this discrimination made me aware that I'm different. Then I started thinking, ... what makes you who you are as a person ... I started realising “Yes I'm Indian, but actually I'm Ugandan, but I'm British because I was part of the original British colony, and that's why you invited me here and so I'm here”.

But ... if someone was to ask me “Who are you, where are you from?”, I'd say “I'm from Uganda” and then they'd give me a funny look and say “But you're not black?” and then I'd say “No I'm from Uganda but my origins are from India, I was born in Uganda, but I'm a British citizen because I live here and I have citizenship because of the colony”. So ... it's never a one word answer. It depends on how people ask me that question, how I identify myself ... I'm Indian by my culture and language ... but I'm Ugandan because to me that's home: where I was born, ... my formative years, memories, ... my foundation. Now I have my own children, ... if someone asks me “Where is your home?”, (not where you're from because my answer to that would always be the same “I'm from Uganda”), ... before I would say “Uganda”, and I'll always have that place in my heart, but nowadays I will say, “Home to me is where my children are” and I know that my kids are here, so I would never want to be far away from them in another country, even though I know Uganda's my country.

.....

Sutinder, came to UK from Uganda aged 10

“So, I don't feel that I have ... I don't have a home”.



.....

So my father was born in India, my grandparents were born in India, but I don't have any links or any connection with India because my dad never went back to India until we came to England. So, I had never been to India apart from when I went for my honeymoon and then I've been since. Uganda rejected me, so Uganda is not my country although that is where I feel most affiliated to. England, well because of my skin colour no matter how hard I try to integrate it will never accept me. So, I don't feel that I have, I don't have a home. So, my home is where my parents were first and now they're gone they've passed away so [now] it's where my children are. Do I feel rooted anywhere? No I don't, I need to root myself somewhere and I don't know where to. The nearest place I get to being home is, I've been to Uganda several times since, is the town where I was born [Iganga]. Once I sit outside [there] on a chair and look up at the sky, then I feel home.

.....



Jaswant, was born in Uganda and left aged 18 in 1972

