

October - Black History Month

When is it?

In the UK, Black History Month is celebrated every **October**.

- **What is it about?**

It is a time to **learn about and celebrate the history, achievements, and cultures of black people**.

This includes famous inventors, scientists, artists, musicians, writers, sportspeople, and everyday heroes.

- **Why do we celebrate it?**

For a long time, the contributions of Black people were not always included in history books. Black History Month helps make sure these important stories are told and remembered.

- **Who?**

This month we will be listening to the music of 2 important composers:

Samuel Coleridge – Taylor

Margaret Bonds



Samuel Coleridge -Taylor

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was a brilliant composer who lived over 100 years ago in Britain. He loved writing music that told stories and made people want to clap, dance, and hum along. Some of his tunes were inspired by African and African American music, so they are full of exciting rhythms and catchy melodies. His music feels like a party, a river, or even a magical story.

Born: 1875

Died: 1912

Musical Period: Modern

Things to listen out for:

- **Beautiful melodies** – His tunes often sound like songs you could hum or sing.
- **Rhythms inspired by African and Caribbean music** – Listen for lively beats that make you want to clap along.
- **Call and response** – Sometimes one group of instruments plays a phrase, and another group answers.



Margaret Bonds

Margaret Bonds was an amazing African American composer and pianist. She wrote music that celebrated Black culture and told stories through sound. She worked closely with famous poet Langston Hughes to turn his poems into songs. Margaret Bonds' music is full of rhythm, colour, and emotion, and she was one of the first Black women to have her music performed by big orchestras in the U.S.

Born: 1913

Died: 1972

Musical Period: Modern / contemporary

Things to listen out for:

- 💖 **Emotion and storytelling** – Some parts sound happy, some are gentle or thoughtful. Can you feel the story in the music?
- 🎵 **Contrast** – Loud and soft sections, fast and slow sections. These changes make the music exciting.
- 🎹 **Piano magic** – Many of her pieces are played on the piano. Listen to how the keys dance!