

# Music Migrations worksheet **B1** **B1+**

## PART I THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

### Immigration in London: immigration from the Commonwealth

London was the main immigration hub in the UK. After the end of World War II, most of the immigrant flow from the Empire was concentrated there.



Misty in Roots reggae band, Rock Against Racism concert - Militant Entertainment tour, 1979 - © Syd Shelton

The West Indians were the first to arrive. They are referred to as "Generation Windrush", after the ship that arrived from Kingston, Jamaica, reaching the port of Tilbury, in the UK, on June 21 1948. In 1965, of the 450,000 West Indians recorded as living in the country, 150,000 settled in London, mainly in the neighbourhoods of Islington, North Kensington, Paddington and Brixton. They were followed by migrations from India and Pakistan, which intensified from 1960. In 1965, there were 180,000 Indians and 120,000 Pakistanis in the UK. For the most part, they settled in Greater London, and proportionally exceeded the number of West Indians in districts like Southall or Stepney. Initially facilitated by their status as Citizen of the United Kingdom and the Colonies, which had granted freedom of circulation since 1948, immigration from former colonies that had gained independence required a work permit from 1962.

### Zoom

*The Windrush* was a ship that some 800 people from the British West Indies (Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad, mainly) sailed in to come and work in the UK. They were the first to benefit from the free circulation that came with the status of Citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies, accorded in 1948. The passenger register shows that many of them planned to settle there, and indeed their status enabled them to benefit from permanent residence authorisation. The consequences of this colonial period could still be felt until 2018, when the British government created barriers to recognising the right of former citizens of the Empire to full British nationality.

# SPEAKEASY NEWS

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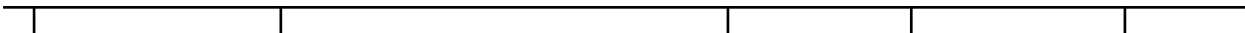
RÉFORME 2019

Nathan

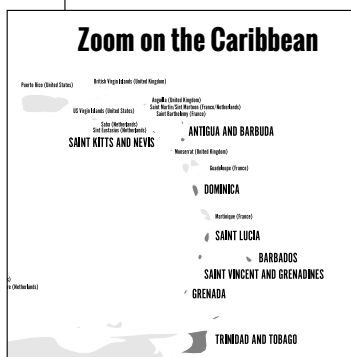
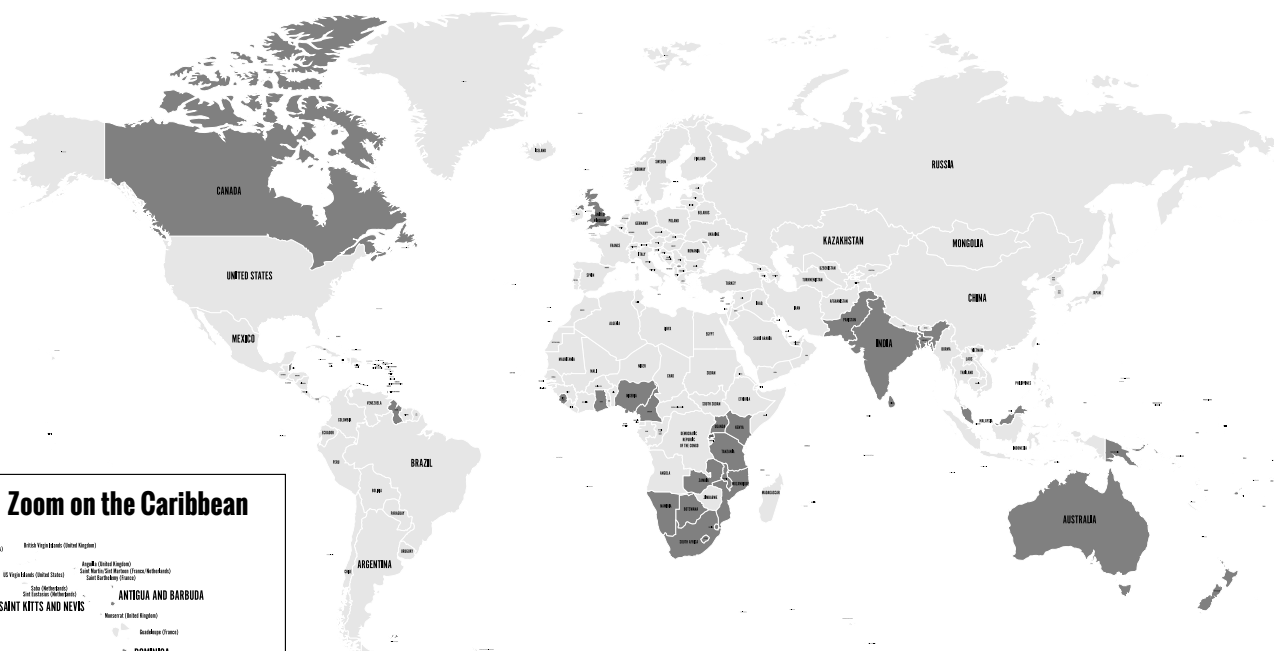
Lycée

**a. Read** the texts from the Music Migrations online exhibition and **make** a short timeline of the history of immigration in the UK.

1945



**b. Locate** the countries referred to in the text on the map of the world.



**c. Explain** what measures contributed to encourage immigration to the UK.

## PART II THE SOUNDTRACK TO REBELLION: THE 1970s

### GROUP B

### Punk and reggae in the UK: a new youth culture

The origins of punk can be found in reggae and ska, in the UK. Just as rock 'n' roll borrowed its rhythms from African American music, punk and its protest-based narrative drew part of its inspiration from the music of Jamaica... as it could be heard in London..



*Temporary Hoarding* fanzine published for the Rock Against Racism festival in London, 1978. © Private collection  
Photo © Bertrand Huet / Tutti

The two scenes intermingled, sharing producers, inspirations and the same musical styles at the core of a "reggae-punk interface" that foreshadowed their joint mobilisation against racism, a few years later. Take for example the feminist female band The Slits, who released their first album *Cut* (1979), a mixture of punk spirit and reggae groove (produced by Dennis Bovell, a reggae musician who worked with Linton Kwesi Johnson), or Don Letts, DJ and maker of documentaries on British counter-cultures. The punk movement and reggae musicians shared a rejection of society in

the Thatcher years and symbolised this era in which, as journalist Andy McSmith wrote in his essay *No Such Thing As Society*, there was, "more politics in popular British music and political activism on the part of its performers than at any other time before or since." The song "Ghost Town" by ska band The Specials is an illustration of this: it denounces urban violence and social destitution in the UK against a reggae bass line, in a track that promoted the two-tone style (imprinted with ska sounds and the energy of the punk movement) and that climbed to the top of the UK charts.

## GROUP B - Punk and reggae in the UK: a new youth culture

### QUESTIONS

a. **Find out** about the links between reggae, ska and punk music.

b. **Explain** how some musicians mixed these types of music to send political messages.

c. **Comment on** the poster: how is music linked to a political movement? (To see more details, you can click on it on the exhibition site: <https://www.histoire-immigration.fr/exhibition-paris-londres#slide-2>.)

d. **Make** a poster to present the political activism of these British artists to the class.

## PART III GLOBAL RHYTHMS: the 1980s



Electric Ballroom, London, 1983 - © Pierre Terrasson

Years of political struggle gave rise to a wealth of encounters and exchanges between different scenes of musical diaspora all over the world. Paris and London became epicentres of artistic energy, their reputations bolstered by a number of legendary venues. (...)

**Discover** what 'world music' is all about. Visit <https://www.histoire-immigration.fr/exhibition-paris-londres#slide-3>. **Use** the arrows to find out about different artists. **Choose** one music event or music band and present it to the class.