LGBTQ+ History Month

February 2021

This week in form time we are going to be learning about the contributions of key LGBTQ+ figures to the subjects you study in school.

Today, we will be learning about people from French, Science and Spanish

FRENCH

Simone de Beauvoir

(1908-1986)

French writer, philosopher, activist and social theorist

One of the first French women to receive a degree from top university The Sorbonne

Writer of groundbreaking feminist work *The Second Sex*

Bisexual woman

Ms Ensum nominated Colette

My nomination is Sidonie Gabrielle Colette, known mononymously as Colette. (she/her).
She was a writer, journalist, and also an actor (for a bit!) at the end of the 19th-start of 20th century (1873-1954).

Her first books were published under her husband's name and she had to fight to be recognised as the actual writer, when finally she became one of the most famous writers in the world, let alone in France. She won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1948.

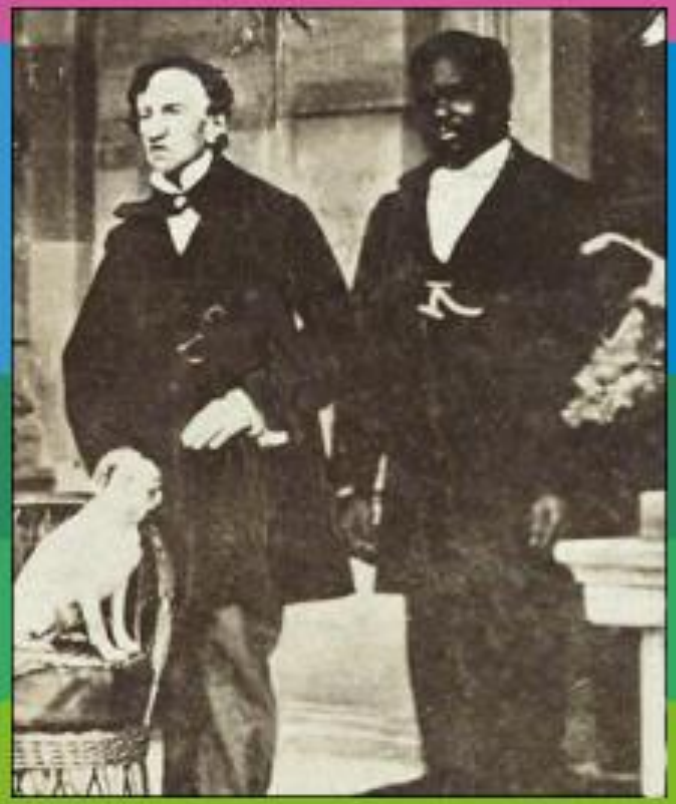
She was bisexual, married and in a relationship with a woman, and she wrote about her own bisexuality. Colette was independent and liberated, and considering women only voted for the first time in France in 1945, this was pretty amazing at the time.

At the end of her life, she wrote "Be happy. It's one way of being wise" and "What a wonderful life I've had! I only wish I'd realised sooner!"

SCIENCE

James Barry

(c.1795-1865)



Irish surgeon

Served as military surgeon in India and South Africa, where he improved conditions for wounded soldiers and inhabitants

Transgender man

Mr Harding nominated Sally Ride

I nominate Sally Ride (she/her). On June 18, 1983, Sally Ride became the first American woman and first lesbian woman to fly in space. She flew on the space shuttle again in 1984.

Ride stopped working for NASA in 1987. She started teaching at the University of California in San Diego. She started looking for ways to help women and girls who wanted to study science and mathematics and came up with the idea for NASA's EarthKAM project.

Until her death on July 23, 2012, Ride continued to help students - especially girls -study science and mathematics. She wrote science books and other things for students and teachers. She worked with science programs and festivals around the United States

She rather poetically said of her trip into space *'the stars don't look bigger, but they do look brighter'.*

SPANISH

Pedro Almodóvar

(1949-)

Photo: Georges Biard

Spanish film director, writer and producer

Academy Award winner for Best Foreign Language Film ("All About My Mother") and Best Original Screenplay ("Talk To Her")

Gay man

Ms Joseph also nominated
Pedro Almodóvar

I would like to nominate Pedro Almodóvar (he/him.) He was born in the impoverished Spanish region of La Mancha. When he arrived in Madrid in his late teens he survived by selling used items in the flea-market called El Rastro. Almodóvar couldn't study filmmaking because he didn't have the money to afford it. Instead, he found a job in the Spanish phone company and saved his salary to buy a Super 8 camera. From 1972 to 1978, he devoted himself to make short films with the help of his friends and later went on to become an leading, international film director. Almodóvar is gay.

Almodóvar is well known for his unabashed representation of the LGBTQ community – a staple in his filmography right from the beginning. The director was also groundbreaking in his numerous portrayals of transgender people. Although Almodovár has been scrutinised by the press and critics, he has always endeavoured to portray society from different perspectives.

Almodóvar says he never saw himself as an activist but wanted to reflect ‘the story of real life as it is'.