A group of sixth formers from London are **campaigning to change the way British colonial history is taught on the National Curriculum**. They all have family connections to the British Empire, and feel that their past is not being taught properly in school History lessons.

Britain used to have a lot of ‘colonies’ - other countries under its control. It was in charge of them during different periods in history. For example, in the 17th and 18th centuries, Britain ruled over parts of North America, and in the 19th century most of India and large parts of Africa were British colonies.

Colonialism is an important part of British history. At its peak, the British Empire was the largest and most influential empire in the world. We are taught about the British Empire as part of Key Stage 3 History, but these sixth formers feel that parts of Britain’s colonial history are being left out. For example, the role Britain played in taking slaves to the Americas.

“In Year 8… my teacher started the lesson by proclaiming that slavery has nothing to do with race. I remember feeling so angry.”

These activists feel it is important for all pupils to understand the British Empire’s use of **violence against its colonies**, and its **uncomfortable views on race**. They believe learning about history helps us to **stop repeating the same mistakes**.

Learning about colonialism also helps us all to understand how modern day society was formed. Many people moved from British colonies overseas to set up a life in Britain.

1. To the nearest hundred how many years did Britain rule over parts of North America (using the information above)?
2. What do these students argue the problem has been?
3. Do you think colonialism should be taught in history and citizenship, explain why you came to your decision