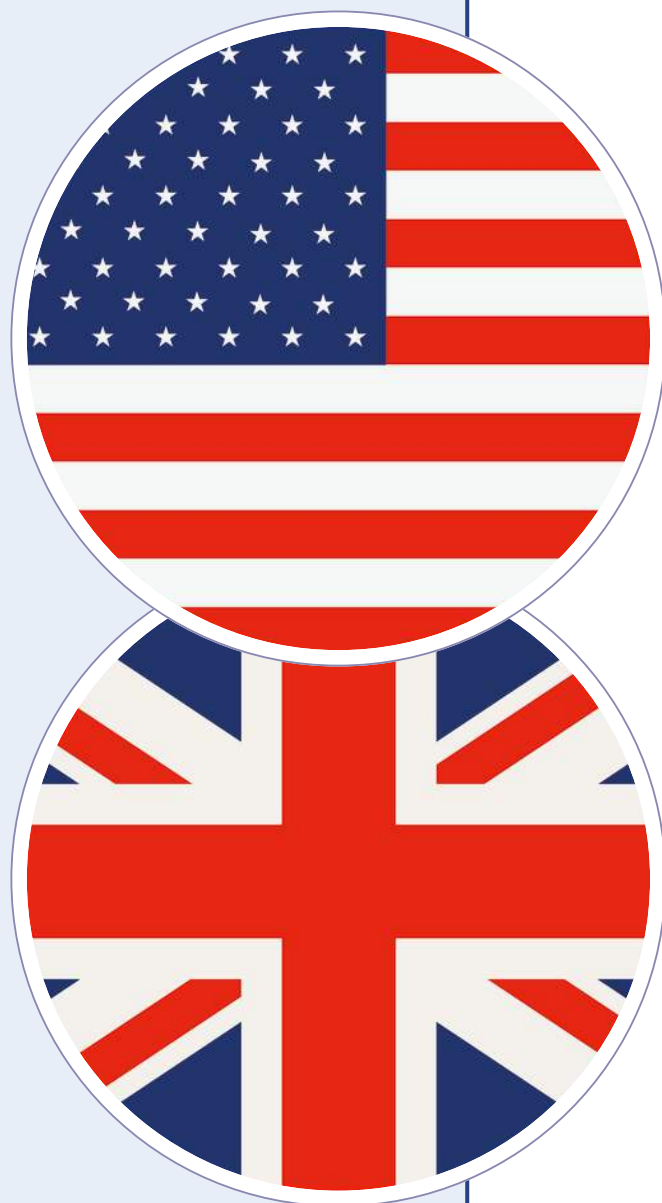


Englisch betrifft uns

# EBU on the Web 2020/6

Topical texts in  
English lessons

- *Comprehension*
- *Analysis*
- *Creative writing*
- *Background Information*



© Alvaro\_cabrera – Freepik.com

### The Topic

#### ***Racial problems in the USA***

The killing of George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, on May 25, 2020 sparked protests across the United States. He was killed in Minneapolis, Minnesota, during an arrest by a white police officer. Floyd's death triggered protests and demonstrations in many American cities and all over the world, criticizing the excessive use of violence against blacks by the police and calling for police reform.

In the *Guardian* newspaper article photographer Nina Robinson reports about the feelings of the community of Minneapolis after this tragic incident.

### Background information – further links

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52981634>

Protesters across the US have taken to the streets in the wake of George Floyd's death to demand an end to police brutality and what they see as systemic racism. In response, Democrats have proposed legislation to address inequities and reduce deaths in custody. The BBC website presents a look at some of these proposed solutions and other potential ways to reform policing.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/george-floyd-death>

The NBC NEWS website offers a lot of background information about the killing of George Floyd and the consequences, including reports, maps and video clips.

### Ties to obligatory topics

Racial problems in the USA, aspects of the American Dream, protest movements

### The Text

“In their own words: the protesters at the heart of America’s uprising”  
(Nina Robinson, *The Guardian* 06 June 2020)

### The Link (URL)

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jun/06/george-floyd-protesters-in-their-own-words>

### Annotations

#### Introduction

**dissent** – refusal to agree with an official decision or accepted opinion

**to spark** – to be the cause of something, especially trouble or violence

#### Stacey Ray

**vigilant** – giving careful attention to what is happening, so that you will notice any danger or illegal activity  
Keta Daniel

**to recollect** – to remember

**to rejuvenate** – to make something work much better or become much better again

#### Tierre Caldwell

**wreckage** – *here*: the parts of someone’s relationships, hopes, or plans that remain after they have been spoiled

**supremacist** – someone who believes that their own particular race or group is better than any other

**agenda** – a list of problems or subjects that a government, organization etc. is planning to deal with

**legacy** – *here*: something that happens or exists as a result of things that happened at an earlier time

#### Anthony Mendoza

**incredible** – extremely good, large, or great

**fabric** – *here*: basic structure

## Assignments

### Pre-reading assignments

1. What have you heard or seen about the killing of the black American George Floyd in May 2020?
2. This incident had enormous consequences in that there were demonstrations and protests all over the world. Their motto was "Black lives matter". What do the protesters intend to express with this phrase?

### Analyzing the newspaper article

3. Read the statements by the black people of Minneapolis and explain what they have done (actions), what they think about the problem (attitudes), what they feel about it (feelings) and what their appeals are.

### Post-reading assignments

4. Which of the statements presented in the article appeals to you most? Give reasons.

## Suggested Solutions

1. Individual answers

2. George Floyd's brutal death at the hands of the police is not the first in the US. Hundreds more such killings have been carried out over recent years with hardly any consequences for the perpetrators. A neutral or uninformed observer could gain the impression that the lives of black citizens are of little significance in this country. The "Black lives matter" movement is drawing attention to this. Black people are human beings and their lives should be respected just like those of any other colour.

3. The people's actions, attitudes, feelings and appeals:

**Stacey Ray** – *Feelings*: feels hurt because Minneapolis is her home and the killing of George Floyd is not a one-off case; *Appeal*: everybody should stay vigilant and not turn a blind eye to racism

**Jonathan McNeil Hardy** – *Feelings*: feels frustrated to see the new condition of Minneapolis: destruction; *Appeal*: wants people to come together and fight responsibly and without violence

**Kiayai Dorsey** – *Feelings*: is happy about the solidarity she sees everywhere; *Action*: has been very active, e.g. protesting, passing out water, cleaning up the streets, organizing donation drives; *Appeal*: blacks want to be treated like everyone else, they want to be heard

**Keta Daniel** – *Message*: do what makes you happy; she wants the black community to take care of themselves and to take care of each other; it is time 'to rejuvenate and recollect'

**Tierre Caldwell** – *Actions*: protested and went out the first day after the killing; *Attitude*: black people were blamed for the damage, but 'white supremacists and anarchists' protested violently and caused a lot of the damage – and tried to put the blame on the black demonstrators; *Feelings*: is 'a little bit emotional' because the violent protests have nothing to do with Floyd's legacy, is extremely angry about the white supremacists who in his eyes caused a great deal of damage which was going to be attributed to the demonstrators

**Marcus Vanick** – *Attitude*: blames the police for not protecting black lives and the politicians for 'sitting behind desks and telling other people what to do'; *Appeal*: the black community has the power to change the police and to make the country a better place, based on the solidarity expressed all over the world

**Anthony Mendoza** – *Feelings*: he is angry, frustrated and sad because he has the impression that the black community has been 'ripped apart'; he is glad that people are rising up and are trying to change the institutional system of racism; *Attitude*: criticizes the American president, who does not 'say anything in terms of words of healing' but who 'throws gasoline on the fire'

**Alexis Arntzen** – *Action*: is taking part in the protests, just like his grandmother did in her protest against racial discrimination in the 1960s; *Attitude*: it is important that the problem is publicized by the media to make people aware of it, but is sceptical that the problem of the discrimination of blacks will ever be solved

4. Individual answers