

Y8 Term 5: The Transatlantic Slave Trade - Key Words

How has Britain distorted its role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade?



Term	Definition
Abolish	To bring something to an end
Abolitionist	Someone who campaigned to end the slave trade
Act	A law that has been voted on and agreed on by Parliament, then given Royal Assent.
Advanced	Developed; far ahead of progress
Auction	A public sale where goods are sold to the highest bidder.
Bankrupt	When a person or business does not have enough money to pay their debts
Branding	To mark a person or animal with a hot iron to show ownership.
Campaign	An effort to persuade people of a particular view
Cargo	Goods carried for trade
Cholera	An infectious disease and often fatal bacterial disease caused by infected water. Causes severe vomiting and diarrhoea.
Civilisation	Way of life of a particular area. 'Civilised' would be used to describe advanced and developed societies.
Civilising	The British belief that they were improving the daily life and culture of indigenous (native, original) people by ruling them.
Colonies	Countries within an empire, that are ruled by another country
Commodity	Something useful / valuable that is bought and sold. Usually used to refer to crops such as sugar, coffee etc.
Compensation	Money or other benefits given to make up for injury or other damage caused.
Deck hand	Someone who works on a ship
Dehumanised	To deprive (take away) someone's human qualities
Dysentery	A nasty form of diarrhea killed many Africans on the journey.
Exploitation	When someone takes advantage of another person in a position of weakness.
Forced Labour	Any work or service which people are forced to do against their will under threat of some form of punishment
Human rights	Human rights are the inherent, natural, basic rights that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death. <i>e.g. The right to life.</i>
Human trafficking	People transported into a situation of exploitation (slavery) against their will.
Lynched	Murder; to hang someone (to death) without trial
Maroons	Runaway slaves who lived in the West Indies, mainly in Jamaica.
Middle passage	The voyage of slaves between Africa and America/The Caribbean (8-12 weeks).

Term	Definition
Petition	A formal written request, typically one signed by many people, appealing to authority in respect of a particular cause.
Plantation	A large farm on which crops such as coffee, sugar and tobacco were grown.
Prejudice	Judging someone before (pre) knowing them; based on no actual experience.
Profit	Money earned on top of spending/outgoings.
Propaganda	Deliberately selected information presented in order to influence people to think a certain way.
Property	Something that you own / belongs to someone; possession
Quaker	Protestant Christian group who believe in equality and social justice (fairness). Also called the Religious Society of Friends.
Quota	A fixed amount
Racism	Believing that a particular race of people are superior (better than) to other races.
Reform	To make changes to something to improve it.
Reformer	Someone who wants to make changes to something to improve it.
Rebellion	Where a group of people rise up against their ruler(s).
Revolt	To rise up against a ruler, often using violence.
Scramble	A method of buying slaves, where the price would be agreed, then the buyers would rush into the cage and grab the 'best' slave they can.
Shackles	Iron chains used to fasten the legs or hands of a slave or prisoner.
Slave	A person who is the property of another and is forced to obey them. A better term is 'enslaved people'.
Trade	Buying and selling goods
Transatlantic	Going across the Atlantic Ocean
Triangular Trade	The system in which slaves were traded across the Atlantic Ocean. Ships were loaded in England with goods such as guns, cloth and salt. This was taken to Africa and traded for slaves. The ships then went on a 2 month journey (Middle Passage) to the Caribbean. Here the slaves were sold to work on plantations. The ship was then loaded with sugar and cotton, to be taken back to England for profits .
West Indies	Old name for the Caribbean islands. First used in 1492 by Christopher Columbus because he thought he'd sailed to India.

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Date	Description
1492	Christopher Columbus, who worked for the Spanish, set sail across the Atlantic ocean hoping to find new routes to India and China. Instead, he found a group of islands which he called 'West Indies'. These are now the Caribbean islands.
1562	Sir John Hawkins was given permission by Elizabeth I to begin transporting captured African slaves to the West Indies. There they were sold. He is called the "father of the slave trade".
1619	Historians think that this was when slaves began to work on British plantations on North America.
1660	The Royal African Company was given a royal charter (allowed to trade) by Charles II. The company was run by his brother, James, the Duke of York (later James II, deposed in the Glorious Revolution of 1688). Between 1680 and 1688, the company transported 60,000 African slaves.
1728-39	The First Maroon War (Jamaica). The maroons were slaves who ran away to the mountains in Jamaica from 1655 and set up their own independent communities.
1760	Tacky's War. An Easter rebellion that ended in 400 executions but gave hope to other slaves.
1781	The Zong massacre was the killing of 133 African slaves by the crew of the British slave ship Zong. They were thrown overboard so that the ship owner could claim compensation from his insurance.
1787	The Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was set up. Its aim was to let Africans live free from the risk of capture, and outlaw their sale and slavery. They set up petitions across the UK. e.g. in 1792 alone 519 petitions were handed to Parliament demanding the abolition of the slave trade.
1791	Toussaint L'Ouverture led a slave revolt on the French island of St Dominique. The English tried to capture the island, but they were also defeated in 1798. The slaves won their independence in 1804 and the island was renamed 'Haiti'.
1795	The Second Maroon War (Jamaica)
1804	'Haiti' won independence.
1807	The Slave Trade was abolished in England. It is estimated that Britain had transported 3.1 million slaves since 1562 and had profited over £1 billion in today's money.
1816	Bussa's Rebellion, Barbados. It was crushed within 3 days and ended in 114 executions.
1831	Sam Sharpe's Christmas Rebellion in Jamaica. Although this failed and Sharpe was executed, this and other rebellions slowly convinced people that slavery was wrong. This rebellion sparked debates in Parliament.
1833	Slavery was abolished in the British Empire. As part of the Abolition Act in 1833, British slave owners were given a total of £20 million in compensation. This is the equivalent of £17 billion in today's money. 46,000 slave owners received a share of the compensation money. The British public continued to pay this loan back into the government's budget until 2015
1865	Slavery was abolished in America.

Key enquiries: How has Britain distorted its role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade?

What was African society really like in the 18th century?

What was Britain's role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade?

Who *really* abolished slavery in 1833?

What is the legacy of Britain's role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade?

Individual	Description
Toussaint L'Ouverture	Toussaint L'Ouverture led a slave revolt on the French island of St Dominique from 1791. The English tried to capture the island, but they were also defeated in 1798. The slaves won their independence in 1804 and the island was renamed 'Haiti'.
Olaudah Equiano	A slave who bought his freedom and published a description of life as a slave. He became an anti slavery campaigner.
Samuel Sharp	Led a rebellion in Jamaica in 1831. Although this failed and Sharpe was executed, this and other rebellions slowly convinced people that slavery was wrong. This rebellion sparked debates in Parliament.
Granville Sharp	Sharp used the law courts to try and give slaves their freedom. He fought many court cases, e.g. the <i>Zong</i> ship.
Thomas Clarkson	Clarkson (a British MP) collected evidence against slavery. He spread his message by publishing posters, pamphlets etc. He also helped to publish and spread Equiano's diary.
William Wilberforce	Wilberforce (a British MP) campaigned against the slave trade.

Want to know more?

- BBC documentary by David Olusoga 'Britain's forgotten slave owners' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/b063db18/britains-forgotten-slave-owners>
- BBC information page <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/how-did%C2%A0slave-owners-shape-britain/z67dbdm>
- Akala Oxford Union lecture on pre-colonial history and the legacy of the transatlantic slave trade in Britain: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUtAxUQjwB4>
- BBC documentary: 'What Do We Do With the UK's Symbols of Slavery' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p08gt3hb/focus-what-do-we-do-with-the-uks-symbols-of-slavery>
- BBC documentary: 'Bristol after Colston' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m00015mn/monumental-bristol-after-colston>
- UCL compensation database' <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/search/>
- Lots more in the library – ask Ms Hill ->**

