

A Look Back: The Fight for Freedom

Learning objective: To understand the historical context of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the courage of abolitionists who campaigned for human rights.

Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions below. Use full sentences and refer back to the text to support your answers.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, a cruel practice known as the Transatlantic Slave Trade caused immense suffering. Thousands of people from Africa were captured, forced onto ships, and taken across the ocean to work in fields in the Americas. They were treated as property rather than human beings, losing their freedom and their connection to their families and cultures. This was a profound injustice.

However, brave individuals refused to stay silent. People known as abolitionists—including campaigners like Olaudah Equiano and William Wilberforce—worked tirelessly to end this system. They wrote books, gave speeches, and organized petitions to show the public the truth about the cruelty of slavery. In 1807, the British Parliament passed the Slave Trade Act, which made it illegal to buy or sell enslaved people in the British Empire. This was a significant step forward, though the complete end of slavery in all British colonies did not happen until the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833. Today, we remember these courageous figures who stood up for human rights and helped change the world for the better.

Word bank: Abolitionist · Enslaved · Campaign · Injustice · Human rights · Transatlantic

1. According to the text, what happened to people captured during the Transatlantic Slave Trade? (2 marks)

2. Name two people mentioned in the text who campaigned to end the slave trade. (2 marks)

3. Explain why the abolitionists wrote books and gave speeches. (2 marks)

4. What does the phrase 'treated as property rather than human beings' suggest about the lives of enslaved people? (2 marks)

5. Justify why the passing of the 1807 Slave Trade Act was an important turning point in history. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a portrait of a person standing up to share a message of peace and freedom, symbolising the courage of the historical abolitionists.



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast the lives of the people who were enslaved with the lives of the abolitionists. What might have happened if nobody had stood up to challenge the laws of that time? Write a short speech, in the voice of a young activist, explaining why human rights are essential for everyone today.