

Understanding the Transatlantic Slave Trade

Learning objective: To understand the historical context and human impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Read the passage below carefully, then answer the questions that follow in full sentences.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, a cruel system known as the Transatlantic Slave Trade saw millions of African people forcibly taken from their homes. They were transported across the Atlantic Ocean in horrific conditions to work on plantations in the Americas. This system treated human beings as property rather than individuals with rights. Families were torn apart, and those who were enslaved faced immense suffering, forced labor, and a loss of their freedom. In Britain, many people began to campaign against this injustice. Figures like Olaudah Equiano, who had been enslaved himself, shared his experiences through his writing to show the world the true reality of the trade. These brave activists worked tirelessly to influence government decisions. Finally, in 1807, the British government passed the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, which made it illegal to trade enslaved people. While this was a significant step, it would take many more years of struggle before slavery itself was fully abolished across the British Empire. This history reminds us of the importance of equality and human rights for everyone.

Word bank: Abolition · Enslaved · Transatlantic · Humanity · Campaign

1. What was the name of the Act passed by the British government in 1807? (1 mark)

2. According to the text, what did Olaudah Equiano do to help the campaign against slavery? (1 mark)

3. Why do you think the author describes the journey across the Atlantic as having 'horrific conditions'? (2 marks)

4. How did the treatment of enslaved people differ from the way people should be treated today? (2 marks)

5. Why is it important for us to learn about this difficult period in history? Give a reason for your answer. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of a memorial or a symbol that represents freedom and equality to honor those who fought for the end of slavery.



Extension challenge: Research a person who was involved in the abolitionist movement in Britain, such as William Wilberforce or Mary Prince, and write three facts about their contribution.