

Understanding the Transatlantic Slave Trade

Social Studies / History Matters: Uncovering the Past to Build a Fairer Future.

- The Triangular Trade involved three regions: Europe, West Africa, and the Americas, where goods and enslaved people were exchanged for profit.
- Enslaved people faced horrific conditions on the 'Middle Passage,' the journey across the Atlantic Ocean, where they were treated as property rather than human beings.
- Resistance was common; enslaved individuals fought for their freedom through rebellions, escaping to safe territories, and maintaining their own traditions and languages.
- Campaigners like Olaudah Equiano, a formerly enslaved man, wrote powerful accounts of his life to help the British public understand the cruelty of the trade.
- The Slavery Abolition Act was finally passed in the British Parliament in 1833, marking a vital step toward the end of legal slavery across the British Empire.

Did you know? Did you know? Even when enslaved people were forbidden from reading or writing, they found creative ways to resist. Many used secret codes in songs and oral storytelling to share information about the routes to freedom, keeping their culture and hope alive despite incredibly difficult conditions.

Key vocabulary: Abolition · Transatlantic · Triangular Trade · Emancipation · Resistance · Human Rights