

Understanding the Transatlantic Slave Trade

Learning objective: To understand the causes, the experience of the Middle Passage, and the eventual movement towards abolition in the British Empire.

Use your knowledge of Class 6 Social Studies / History to answer the following questions. Think carefully about the impact of the slave trade on individuals and society.

Ellie the elephant has been reading through historical records about the 18th century. She is learning how the Atlantic Ocean became a route for the trade of enslaved people. It is a sombre but vital part of our history that shaped the modern world. Remember to consider how people fought for their freedom and how campaigners eventually forced the government to change the law.

Word bank: Abolition · Middle Passage · Triangular Trade · Plantation · Resistance · Emancipation

1. Explain the term 'Triangular Trade'. Which three regions of the world were primarily involved in this system? (2 marks)

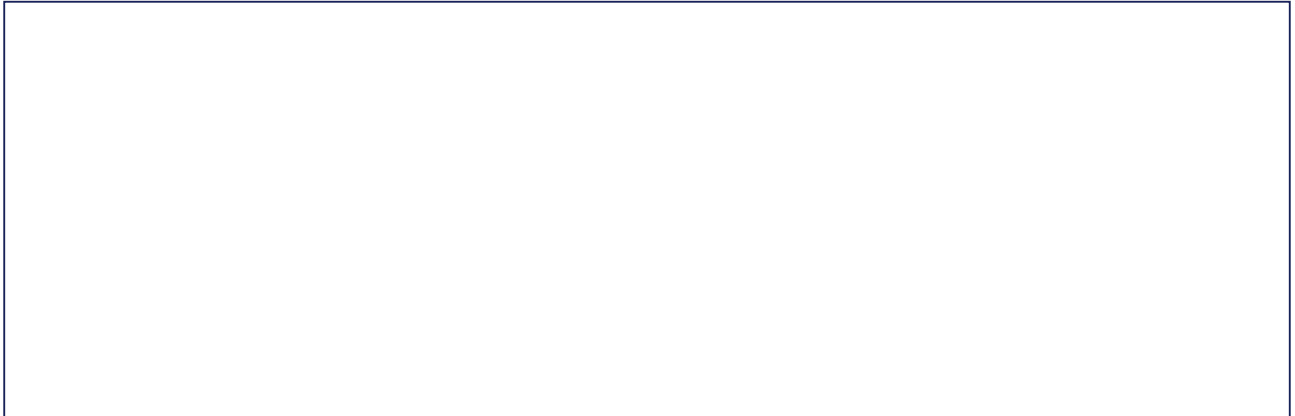
2. What was the 'Middle Passage' and why was it such a horrific experience for the people forced onto the ships? (2 marks)

3. Identify two ways in which enslaved people demonstrated resistance against their captors on plantations. (2 marks)

4. Research suggests that campaigners like William Wilberforce were key to ending the trade. Why did it take so long for the British government to pass the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833? (2 marks)

5. If an enslaved person was promised their freedom for a price of £500 in a fictional historical account, how might that sum have been raised, and why was this system inherently unfair? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a map of the Atlantic Ocean and use arrows to sketch the three legs of the Triangular Trade. Label each leg clearly to show what was being transported.



Extension challenge: Write a short diary entry from the perspective of an abolitionist in 1807, explaining why you believe the slave trade should be banned across the British Empire.