FREEDOM PROJECT

Learn about men and women involved in bringing about the abolition of slavery including:

MARY PRINCE
OLAUDAH EQUIANO
IGNATIUS SANCHO

Narrative Eye
propelling the written word
About this booklet

This booklet is offered free of charge as a result of a collaboration between Narrative Eye and The Local Network Fund. The purpose of this booklet is to commemorate the bicentenary abolition of the slave trade. It aims to promote the significance of the slave trade and the leading role played by England and Black/African people in the abolition of slave trade in 1807.

This booklet is designed for 11-15 year olds which can be used in class or with parents.

More about Narrative Eye

Narrative Eye is a dynamic organisation committed to creating and promoting the richness of Black British literature and expanding the art form within a divers-cultural framework, which values difference. Our activities concentrate on educating young people and adults. We host a broad range of interactive workshops and presentations on literary, cultural and social issues.

Acknowledgment

We would like to thank the Local Network Fund and the London North East Community Foundation for making this project possible.
Slavery- An Overview

Slavery is a socio-economic system where, the slave looses all personal freedom and is forced to provide a service/labour to those who own him/her. The condition of slavery is constant in human history. It is important to realise that slavery is not located in a particular time and place. Many societies throughout history such as Ancient Greece, Egypt, Rome, the Incas and Aztecs had slaves. It was an accepted part of those societies.

It is important to realise that although slavery has been outlawed in many countries throughout the world, it still carries on today.

Exercise 1- Match a written description with each image

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Barbary Pirates</th>
<th>![Image of Barbary Pirates]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The pirates attacked ships and raided coastal towns and villages in Ireland and Cornwall and throughout Europe. Thousands of Europeans were taken into slavery by the Barbary pirates from North Africa.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Enslaved Africans</th>
<th>![Image of African Captives]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Millions of Africans were taken by Europeans from many parts of Africa to North and South America, Europe, Asia and various parts of Africa to work on plantations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. The Roman Empire</th>
<th>![Image of Roman Slaves]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europeans, Greeks and Mongolian slaves were taken by the Romans to work on plantations, quarries, and as gladiators and servants.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D. Forced Labour in Soviet Russia</th>
<th>![Image of Forced Labour]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In 1930's Russia, millions of people were forced to work on building canals, cutting timber and working in gold mines in cold remote places.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E Egypt</th>
<th>![Image of Pharaohs]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In ancient Egypt, Asiatic invaders were captured and sentenced into slavery by Egyptians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trans-Atlantic Slavery

The First Slave Traders
Sir Robert Rich (later the Earl of Warwick) owned plantations in Virginia. He was one of many key figures involved in the triangle trade. Rich's company - 'Adventurers to Guinea and Benin', was created to trade with West Africa supplying African slaves to the Americas. King Charles I granted a licence to a group of London merchants in 1632 for the transportation of enslaved people from West Africa.

Why use African slaves?
The European empires had colonies in the New World (the Americas and Caribbean) which were expanding fast in industries like sugar, cotton and tobacco, however lacked a vital resource, 'a work force'.

The European settlers used native peoples but it was unsuccessful because most of them died from diseases brought by the settlers. The Europeans could not cope with the climate and were prone to tropical diseases. They believed Africans would make excellent slaves because:

- They had knowledge of agriculture and maintenance of cattle;
- They could handle the tropical climate;
- They were resistant to tropical diseases;
- They could be 'worked very hard' on plantations or in mines.

The Middle Passage

The middle passage across the Atlantic was severe. Enslaved Africans were crammed into tight spaces and given hardly any food and water to live. European sailors on board the ships were also at a risk of not returning because of sickness and disease during the voyage. It is estimated that on average 10% of Africans died on route this would rise to 30% on a bad passage.

This plan of the Brookes shows how packed a slave ship could be.

The Trans-Atlantic Slavery Route

The slavery route took a 'triangular' shape across the Atlantic Ocean. The route consisted of three journeys:

1. The outward passage - from Europe to Africa. Traders left European ports to go to Africa's west coast. In Africa they exchanged their manufactured goods for African slaves.
2. The Middle Passage - from Africa to the Americas or the Caribbean. It is estimated that 12-40 million slaves were transported, and unknown numbers died on-route.
3. The Homeward passage - back to Europe. The Europeans took back sugar, tobacco, rum, rice, cotton and other goods back to Europe.

18th century Trans-Atlantic "Triangular" trade
Exercise 2: Trans-Atlantic Slavery Questions

1. Why were slaves needed by the Europeans?

2. Why did Europeans use slavery?

3. What was the name of Robert Rich's trading company?

4. Name the different passages of Trans-Atlantic slavery, and the activities that happened?

5. How many Africans were estimated to have been transported by the Trans-Atlantic slavery route?

6. What were the expanding commodity industries in European markets? And where were these raw resources grown?

7. Why were Africans used as slaves?

8. Why was the Trans-Atlantic slavery developed?

9. On the map provided, draw the Triangle trade route marking the contents that were involved and the activities carried out from the first to the final passage.
Exercise 3: Why did people support slavery?

Who said what? Match the speech bubbles on Exercise Sheet 3b with the characters below. Put a letter (A - K) in the right-hand column below. Some characters may have more than one letter next to them. You can use the same letter more than once.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People in favor of Trans-Atlantic slavery</th>
<th>Letter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A - K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Plantation owner
b. Merchant involved in slave trade
c. Pro-slavery member of Parliament
d. Bishop who owns a slave plantation
e. Captain of a slave ship
f. Sailor on a slave ship
g. Member of the public
h. Manufacturer of iron goods
i. Banker in the City of London
j. Mayor of a slave-trading port

A. If you stop slavery you will ruin businesses and put thousands of people out of work. Think of all the people who make goods to trade such as clothes, guns and iron bars and all those who make equipment used in slavery such as chains.

B. Ending slavery would be disastrous for Britain as a trading nation. You would simply be giving the business to our rivals, the French, who would benefit from

C. People make money from trading slaves. This goes into banks which we invest in other enter-

D. If you free the slaves there will be riots and disorder, people will die in the Caribbean. We will not be able to control all the freed slaves. In Tobago there are 20 slaves for every

E. Contrary to the propaganda of the anti-slavers, most slaves are very happy. They are provided with a house and clothing. They never want for a meal because the owner wants to keep them strong.

F. I get my livelihood from working on the ships.

G. The condition of many slaves is more comfortable than many labourers and factory workers in Britain.

H. Slavery is a business like any other. Enterprising people like me can make a small fortune from several voyages if we manage to keep the majority of our slaves alive.

I. We produce cheap British sugar using slaves, sugar you all use in your tea and coffee and to sweeten the cakes you eat. That will disappear.

J. Many slaves, through the work of missionaries, convert to Christianity, the only way to heaven.

K. The wealth of my city has benefited enormously from slavery. It is a source of work and industry for half the population. Money has been put into buildings and work for the poor. Would you throw that all away?
Resistance

Resistance to oppression can take many forms. There is lots of evidence to show that Africans in Africa, Americas, Caribbean and in the UK resisted slavery. Resistance took many forms. These included fighting against capture, escape at sea, running away from plantations, organising a revolt and becoming a slave abolitionist.

There was a lot of cruelty experienced by slaves. But many maintained their pride by keeping cultural traditions such as language, religious beliefs, oral traditions and crafts.

PUBLIC AUCTION
MONDAY 3rd OF NOVEMBER 1796
TO.BESOLD OF THE ESTATE OF NEW DOCK SLAVES A ROYAL GIRL, ABOUT 11 YEARS OLD.

$50 REWARD.
Runaway from the subscriber on TUESDAY MORNING, 26th Ultimo.
My negro boy calling himself Severn Black. The said negro is about 5 feet six inches in height, chestnut color, has a scar on his upper lip, downcast countenance when spoken to, blink-eyed, sloping a great deal of white, long bushy hair, is about twenty years old, had on when he left blue bosom Jacket, pantaloons of a greyish color, blue striped shirt, A BLACK SLOUCH HAT and shoes nearly worn out.

Running away

We know from many advertisements (offering rewards for the capture and return of runaway slaves in 18th-century newspapers) that escape was a major issue for the slave owners. We also know that enslaved people on the plantations in America developed complex escape routes to help slaves to freedom. For example Harriet Tubman and others helped organise the 'Underground Railroad'.

Harriet Tubman

On August 22, 1791, the Haitian war of independence began in flames under the leadership of a religious leader named Boukman. Over one hundred thousand slaves rose up against the French.

The island was a very prosperous island producing sugar and coffee. Over a three-week period, the Haitian slaves burned plantations and attacked the French. The French fled to the seacoast towns and pleaded with France to help while the island burned.

After two years of fighting the French army could not defeat the slaves under the brilliant leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture. Thousands of British troops were brought to help put down the uprising, but failed.

After 13 years of rebellion, in 1804, the former slaves set up the independent Republic of Haiti. This sent shock waves throughout the other islands and the world. Many people thought that slavery was too costly in lives and money. Many British wondered what would happen if a similar revolt took place in their colonies. This helped to accelerate the abolition of the slave trade in 1807.

Toussaint L'Ouverture
Sam Sharp was born in 1801 in Jamaica. He was also known as 'Daddy' Sharpe. He had been allowed to become a well-educated man. Because of his education, he was highly respected by other slaves and he became a well known preacher and leader.

In 1831 many slaves believed that freedom had been granted in the Caribbean. Sharpe organised a peaceful strike across many estates in western Jamaica at a critical time for the plantation owners: harvest of the sugar cane.

The 'Christmas Rebellion' began on December 25 1831 at the Kensington Estate. Thousands of pounds worth of property was destroyed and 15 whites were killed. The rebellion was put down in two weeks by the Jamaican militia and many of the ringleaders, including Sharpe, were hanged in 1832.

The British government was well aware of the dangers and threats posed by Samuel 'Sam' Sharpe. Slavery was abolished in 1833, but it continued in many places in the British Empire.
African Slave Abolitionist

Case Study 1- Olaudah Equiano

Campaigning

Equiano threw himself into the campaign to abolish the slave trade:

- He wrote his autobiography ‘The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano’. The book had a huge impact on people in Britain. Olaudah was shown to be a courageous and cultured man. He showed his readers that Africans had a rich and ancient culture and deserved respect as fellow human beings. He also described the horrors of the slave trade. This book is still in print, published by Penguin Books.

- He lobbied MPs in Parliament, writing letters to them and taking members of the black community to see them.

- He wrote letters to the newspapers and engaged in public debates about slavery.

- He worked closely with white abolitionists to expose the evils of slavery. It was Equiano who took the case of the slave ship ‘Zang’ (where slaves had been thrown overboard so that the captain could claim insurance on them) to Granville Sharp the lawyer who took it to court in a famous trial.

Early Life

Olaudah Equiano was a key player in the campaign to end slavery. He made the British public see slavery through the eyes of a former slave.

When he was about 11 years old, Olaudah was kidnapped in West Africa and sold into slavery. He was sold several times to different slave owners. One of his owners was a lieutenant in the British navy and Equiano became a sailor on a warship. Eventually he was sold to Robert King who recognised Equiano’s abilities and encouraged his education. He became skilled at mathematics and an accomplished writer. By 1776, at the age of 21, he had made enough money to buy his freedom. After several years at sea, he came to England to live.

Case Study 2- Ignatius Sancho

As a child Ignatius was a slave and taught himself to read and write. He run away and worked as a butler and in his spare time wrote poetry, stage plays and composed music. He became well known with writers and artists.

Ignatius opened a grocery shop in Mayfair and provided luxury goods. He was an excellent businessman. Royalty and wealthy people visited his shop.

Ignatius worked with other black people to stop slavery in Britain. He was one of a few black men that could vote. He was a great politician and would speak in parliament about the unfair and harsh conditions of slavery expressing that everybody had the right to be free.

He wrote about his life. His work was published after his death. Over 1200 people bought his work. This would equate to a best selling book today!
African Slave Abolitionist

Case Study 3- Mary Prince

Mary Prince was a daughter of slaves. She worked as a domestic slave in the fields. During this period she was constantly flogged by her mistress. She later wrote: "They hang me up by the wrists and lay my flesh open with the cow-skin, was an ordinary punishment for even a slight offence."

In 1818 Mary Prince was sold to John Wood, a plantation owner who lived in Antigua, for $300. Mary Prince began attending meetings held at the Moravian Church. While in Antigua she met a widower Daniel Jones, a former slave who managed to purchase his freedom. Jones now worked as a carpenter and cooper had asked Mary to marry him. They were both married in the Moravian Chapel in December 1826.

John Wood was furious when he found out and gave her a severe beating with a horse-whip.

John Wood and his wife took her as their servant to London. Soon after arriving in England in 1828 she ran away and went to live at the Moravian Mission House in Hatton Gardens. A few weeks later she went to work for Thomas Pringle, a member of the Anti-Slavery Society. In 1831 Pringle arranged for her to publish her book, The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave. The History of Mary Prince (1831) was the first life of a black woman to be published in Britain. This extraordinary testament of ill-treatment and survival was a protest and a rallying-cry for emancipation.

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African Slave Abolitionist

Case Study 4- Ottobah Cugoano

Ottobah Cugoano was born in about 1757, on the coast of what is today Ghana. When he was about 13, he was kidnapped and put on board a ship that carried him to Grenada. After nine or ten months in the slave gang there and a further year on different Caribbean islands, he was brought to England by his owner at the end of 1772 and set free. Later he entered the service of Richard Cosway, the principal painter for the Prince of Wales. It was there he emerged as leader and spokesman of London's black community.

He was the first writer in English to declare that enslaved blacks had not only the moral right, but the moral duty to resist.

It is not known what became of him after 1791. He was the first published African critic of the transatlantic slave trade, and the first African to demand publicly the total abolition of slavery and the freeing of the slaves - a position which scarcely any white abolitionist had taken by 1787.

In 1786, Cugoano played a key part in the rescue of Henry Demane, a black man who had been kidnapped and was being shipped out to the Caribbean. Cugoano and another community leader William Green, reported the kidnapping to the white abolitionist Granville Sharp, who acquired a 'writ of habeas corpus' and rescued Demane at the last minute.

The following year Cugoano published a powerful contribution to the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade. He wrote his thoughts and sentiments on the evil and wicked traffic of slavery and commerce of the human species. It is believed that Olaudah Equiano collaborated with him on this work. Cugoano went further than just denouncing slavery.
Exercise 5 African Slave Abolitionist

Study case study 1-4 and pick your hero from this pack

Name of Hero:

Answer the following questions about your hero.

1. What did the person do to fight slavery?

2. Do you think they were successful in fighting slavery? Why?

3. Who were their slave master?

4. What is the name of the book they published?

5. Why did you pick him/her as your hero?

You are a reporter and your hero is coming to town! Write an article about him or her. Highlight their life, achievement and how they fought against slavery.

What are the qualities that you like in the people whom you admire?

Which of these qualities do you think you have?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Who is your hero from current every-day life. Write the qualities you admire below.

Word Search - Find the following words:

1. Equiano
2. Campaigning
3. Slave
4. Abolition
5. Hero
6. Book
7. British
8. Trade
9. Ignatius
10. Mary
11. Cugoano

ETVONAGUC
QKCAMPAIGN
UOCABIGNAS
IOXBANGBU
ABOLITION
NYSMTKOOTE
OVAHINRDUAY
XRESLAVEN
YTEBHRYMSG
ZREHTFMCI
Impact

The legacy of slavery

Slavery seriously affected the growth of many African societies especially in West Africa. The forced migration of many young men from villages meant a shift in marriage patterns as the number of men declined. For many societies on the West coast of Africa populations either declined, remained constant, or had very little growth, usually suffering a varying disproportion between the numbers of men and women.

Transatlantic Slavery lasted for centuries. Its impact caused economic, social and psychological damage which is still evident today.

Due to the trade, millions suffered and died as others profited. The issue of racism, prejudice and xenophobia which continue today are to some extent a direct and indirect legacy of slavery.

Arguments offered by historians such as Peter Fryer state that the African economic growth was subdued by the economics of the trade, which supported and stimulated the European and North American process of industrialization and urbanization.

Slavery removed Africa’s young and healthy workforce, ruined agriculture and industry and increased political and military conflict between African states.

Also, colonialism and unequal trade relations are a significant component accountable for the unfairness in international trade today.

Africans across the globe

More than 2,000 slave ships left Bristol and sailed to West Africa to get enslaved Africans, and then take them across the Atlantic Ocean to the British-owned islands in the Caribbean.

End of Slavery

Slavery officially ended in 1833. Despite emancipation in the colonies, the planters’ power, the harsh conditions on plantations and the racism and cruelty perpetrated by many of the ruling classes continued.

The photograph 'Sugar-Cane Cutters in Jamaica', c. 1880 (above) shows that although slavery was abolished the freed slaves still worked on plantations owned by their ex-owners.

Black Britons

Historical records demonstrate the existence of small African communities in Britain since Roman times. These communities grew as a result of the British Empire and global trade.

People of African descent influenced and played a vital role in all aspects of European society and across all professions. In addition, they introduced African and Caribbean cultures to these continents.

Bristol - The city of Bristol was involved in slavery for over a century. A few came to the city from the Caribbean as personal servants to their plantation-owning masters in England. Often a slave ship’s owner allowed the captain an enslaved African as a form of payment.

During the 18th century there was a large and vibrant black community in Britain. However, in the aftermath of abolition it declined, and at the same time racial attitudes in Britain began to harden.

Oladuh Equiano and Ignatius Sancho are renowned because of their anti-slavery work. Others like Harry Sutton and Julius Soubise became famous for exceptional sporting skills, and others such as Frances Barber became famous for setting up their own schools.
Exercise 6 Impact

Answer the following questions

1. What effect did slavery have on the population of Africans?

2. Where did ships from Bristol take Africans to?

3. What was the economic impact of slavery on:
   A. Africa?
   B. Europe?

4. How many British ships left Bristol to take Africans to the British colonies in the Caribbean?

5. What do you think the impact of slavery has done to Africans then and now?

6. Why do you think some people say racism, prejudice and xenophobia is a legacy of slavery?

Resources

Books
- The interesting life of Olaudah Equiano: Olaudah Equiano
- The letters of Ignatius Sancho: Ignatius Sancho
- The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave: Mary Prince
- Blacks Britannia: Edward Scobie
- Staying Power: Peter Fryer
- Black people in Britain 1555-1873 Institute of Race Relation: Folarin Shyllan

Websites
www.nmm.ac.uk/freedom
www.direct.gov.uk/en/slavery/DG_065902
www.setallfree.net/
www.ucl.ac.uk/museumstudies/exhib
www.onyeka.co.uk
www.blackhistory.com
www.black-history-month.co.uk
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/rights/abolition.htm
www.anti-slaverysociety.addr.com/huk-1807act.htm
This booklet is dedicated to:
The millions of Africans, who were captured and enslaved,
The millions that crossed the Atlantic ocean to the New World,
The millions that did not survive the journey,
The millions that suffered as slaves
And the thousands of Africans who fought to claim their freedom