

## The Transatlantic Slave Trade

### Timeline of Slavery and Abolition

- 1562 First English slaving expedition by Sir John Hawkins
- 1672 Royal Africa Company granted charter to carry Africans to the Americas
- 1772 Granville Sharp won an historic ruling in the Somerset case which held that no slave could be forcibly removed from Britain. (Slavery itself was still permitted).
- 1778 Slavery made illegal in Scotland.
- 1786 Thomas Clarkson, publishes A Summary View of the Slave Trade and of the Probable Consequences of its Abolition.
- 1789 Olaudah Equiano publishes The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African.
- 1790 The first bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade fails.
- 1792 House of Lords reject an Abolition Bill passed by the House of Commons.
- 1794 France abolishes slavery in all its territories.
- 1804 Slave rebellion on the island of St Domingue successful and the first independent black state outside Africa Haiti - is established.
- 1807 On 25 March, transatlantic slave trade abolished by the British Parliament.
- 1833 The Abolition of Slavery Act is passed by the British Parliament, abolishing the practice of slavery in all British territories.



*A process called the triangle trade; this was the trade journey of goods and slaves across the Atlantic Ocean.*

### Slavery

Slavery was not new in the 1500s, it is a practice that has occurred around the world throughout history. However, in the 1500s a new system of slavery began—the transatlantic slave trade.

Before, slaves were political or economic prisoners; people captured through war or debt. Now slavery took on a whole new racial basis.

Backed by the Christian church and political theories of the time, Africans were taken as slaves. It is estimated that 12 million Africans were taken to the Americas alone.

### Key Terms

**abolition**—The action of ending a practice, in this case ending slavery.

**abolitionist**—A person who was against slavery and wanted to see it end.

**coffle**—a group of slaves bound together in a group.

**Octaroon/Quadroon**—different names for the offspring of white masters and black slaves. The name changes depending on the colour of their skin.

**plantation**—a large farm where slaves were forced to work.

**rebellion**—an act of defiance; when the slaves rose up against the slavers and tried to gain their freedom, often through violence.

**slave**—A person who has been enslaved and had their rights taken away.

**Slavery**—The practice of taking away a person's rights and forcing them to work.

**The 'middle passage'** - The journey between Africa and the Americas on a slave ship.

1000 - 1483

Medieval England

Norman - Angevin - Plantagenet

1500 - 1750

Early Modern England

Renaissance - Tudor - Stuart

1750 - 1900 Modern Britain

Modern Britain

Industrial Revolution  
Hannoverian

1900 - 2000

20th Century Britain

Great War - WWII - Cold War