Slavery and Abolition Revision Guide
What was the most significant outcome of the trade triangle?

The idea of slavery is a very old one. The Egyptians used slaves to build the pyramids and the Romans made slaves fight in gladiator arenas.

When the Spanish began to settle in the Americas in the early 1500s, they forced the native people to grow food, hunt animals, dig for gold and farm cotton. The Spanish were very cruel to their slaves. On one Caribbean island there were around 2 million natives when the Spanish arrived in 1492. Sixty years later, there were none left!

When the Spanish ran out of slaves in the Americas, they had to go somewhere else to find new ones – Africa. In the 16th century, English pirates started selling slaves to the Spanish colonies. Sir John Hawkins was the first English sea-captain to do this starting in 1562. In 1625, the British captured Barbados in the West Indies and in 1655 they secured Jamaica. English slave traders started supplying African slaves to the English colonies.
What was the Triangular Trade?

Stage 1: The First Leg (Europe to Africa)
- manufactured goods such as metal goods, guns, rum, textiles, beads.
- Sent from Liverpool, Bristol, Glasgow
- To slave factories on the West African coast
- Factories = places to store slaves on coast
- Swopped goods for slaves

Stage 2: The Middle Passage (Africa to America)
- Slaves were taken by ship across the Atlantic.
- took 6-8 weeks.
- Approximately a tenth of the slaves died on the Middle Passage.
- 1:10 – Ratio of slave mutinies per number of voyages
- Death rates amongst slave traders were even higher
- sold to plantation owners.
- Some ships just worked on the middle passage
- 1,250,000 – West Africans died on the voyage from Africa to the Caribbean
- 12,000,000 – West Africans were enslaved

Stage 3: The Home Run (America to Europe)
- West Indies sugar, rum and molasses were the main cargo.
- In the southern states of America the ships were loaded with cotton, rice and tobacco.
- These goods were taken across the Atlantic and sold in Britain.
- Profits were not guaranteed, though many did well.

Revision tip:
- Draw your own trade triangle diagram with labels
- Create flash cards with the different stages of the trade
Revision tip:
• Create a scale from benefitted most to benefitted least and add the different group.

Who benefitted?
Europeans?
✓ British factories producing goods like guns (Birmingham), cloth, beads
✓ British slave traders
✓ (and slave traders from other countries like Portugal, Spain, France)
✓ £50 – The amount a trader could sell a male slave for in 1760 – enough to live comfortably in one year.
✓ Liverpool was Britain’s most profitable slaving port, making £300,000 profit per annum. It was closely followed by the cities of London, Bristol, Lancaster and the town of Whitehaven.
✓ British migrants who could become rich in the Caribbean or America
✓ Bankers and investors in London and Edinburgh became very rich
✓ Their money was spent in Britain, and this helped start the industrial revolution: more factories, roads, railways, free schools etc.
× BUT many whites died in Africa and on the journey eg from Malaria

Africans?
✓ Kings in Asante, Dahomey, Benin or Sierra Leone gained guns
✓ This meant they could win the ceddo wars and become richer
✓ Being richer meant they could buy more guns, capture more slaves and become even richer.
✓ They could trade more because Europeans didn’t want to land in the dangerous and unhealthy Africa
× BUT many millions died in these ‘ceddo’ wars
× BUT few men left to work the fields led to famines and more deaths

Americans?
✓ Plantation owners got a reliable supply of workers
✓ They could produce more raw materials and sell them abroad
✓ New culture such as rock music came from Africa
✓ Glasgow boomed on Tobacco trade
× BUT racism was encouraged and still exists
What were conditions like on the Middle Passage?
Source A
"Typically, there were two levels [of slaves], one above the other, on either side of the ship, with a central passageway. They had about 18 inches of head room, less than two feet head room. They couldn't sit. And because they were manacled, they couldn't really change position very easily at all without hurting themselves or their companions."
--Barry Unsworth, author of The Sacred Hunger, published 2007

Source B
This shows the cross-section of a slave ship. Abolitionists (people who wanted to end slavery) published the diagram in 1788, at a time when a law limiting the numbers of people who could be carried on slave ships was being considered in Parliament.
Source C
An exhibit from the Bristol slavery exhibition, which was open 2007-2008. The exhibition sought to place the slave trade into its “historical context” examine its destructive effect on relations between Europe and Africa.

Source D
A painting of a slave ship’s hold. Taken from an internet website. It is unknown who painted the picture.
How were slaves treated on the plantations in the Americas?

British people knew very little about the life of slaves on the sugar plantations in the West Indies and the Americas.

When the slave ships reached the West Indies and the Americas the slaves were cleaned up and ready to be sold. One ship’s captain, who had a batch of slaves suffering from dysentery (runny stomach / diarrhoea), told the doctor to block the anus of each slave with a piece of rope.

Once sold at auction the slaves were taken to their new home - the Plantation. The owners branded the slaves with "estate marks " to show which plantation they belonged to and to make it easier to identify runaway slaves. These same marks were used on cattle, barrels and other goods.
**What was life like on the Plantations?**

You have 8 pieces of evidence about the Plantations. You need to cut out the cards and sort them into LIFE ON THE PLANTATIONS, WORK ON THE PLANTATIONS, and PUNISHMENT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIFE ON THE PLANTATIONS</th>
<th>WORK ON THE PLANTATIONS</th>
<th>PUNISHMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children are put to work from the age of 7 or 8. They have to weed, plant corn, or shovel manure.</td>
<td>Twelve lashes of the whip can be given for bad work.</td>
<td>The slaves are often underfed. Their rations are so small that they are left with nothing during the second half of the week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaves who run away can be given over a hundred whip lashes. They are sometimes branded on their face or have an ear nailed to a post.</td>
<td>Slaves suffer from diseases such as leprosy, dysentery and yaws (a skin disease causing large red swellings).</td>
<td>Adults start work in the fields between five and seven a.m. They work until seven p.m. with only a few breaks for food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaves were only expected to live to 26 years old, because of their poor living conditions. 40% of the Africans who arrive at the plantations die in the first year.</td>
<td>If a slave runs away for 30 days or more, the punishment is death. If a slave owner kills a slave, he is fined only £15.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXTENSION:**

1: Why were punishments for slaves so severe?
2: What rights have slaves LOST on the plantations? Explain your answer.
What was the most effective form of slave resistance?
What methods of resistance did slaves use?

**Passive resistance:** Using peaceful methods to oppose.

**Active resistance:** Using violent or illegal methods to oppose.

→ Read the squares and sort them into examples of passive and active resistance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive resistance</th>
<th>Active resistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living up to the white view of black people by being clumsy or lazy</td>
<td>Running away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burning down plantation owner’s property</td>
<td>Letting animals loose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking over slave ships and attempting to return to Africa</td>
<td>Deliberately breaking tools or other equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing deaf and dumb or pretending to not understand English</td>
<td>Organising an army of ex-slaves to fight colonial troops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting ‘sassy’ (cheeky) and making fun of the owners</td>
<td>Singing ‘spirituals’ – religious folk songs that expressed suffering and the hopes of slaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretending to be sick</td>
<td>Setting fire to plantation crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretly worshiping their own gods from African religions</td>
<td>Attacking (sometimes killing) the plantation owner and/or his family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poisoning their owners</td>
<td>Working slowly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extension:** Which examples of resistance do you think would be the most effective? Why?
What were the arguments for and against the abolition of slavery?
### What were the arguments for and against the abolition of slavery?

- **FOR THE ABOLITION of slavery**
  - The slave trade is cruel and deprives people of their freedom. We do not have the right to treat other humans in this way.
  - Africans are not the same as white people. They don’t have the same feelings and emotions as we do. They are happy as slaves.
  - The slave trade is not profitable for Britain. We lose too much money because slaves die and it is very expensive to transport them.
  - Slavery is very profitable for Britain. It has helped us to build up factories, transport and trade. Without it the economy will collapse.
  - Many former slaves live in Britain now. They are as educated and intelligent as any white person.

- **AGAINST THE ABOLITION of slavery**
  - The Bible teaches that some people are more civilised than others. It is up to us to teach Africans to be civilised like us.
  - Slave rebellions show us that black people can’t be trusted. They are dangerous and must be kept under control.
  - Christianity does not support slavery. Jesus taught that all men were equal in the eyes of God.
  - We have enough problems of our own to worry about. People in England are living in poverty. We should look after them before we worry about freeing slaves.
  - Slave rebellions in the West Indies will become worse if we don’t listen to the slaves.

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**EXTENSION: What links can you make between the different arguments?**
William Wilberforce (1759-1833)
Member of Parliament and committed Christian.
Organised petitions against slavery and made passionate speeches in Parliament.
Also supported many other causes including charities for children.

Olaudah Equino (1745-1797)
Born in Nigeria and captured as a slave at age 11.
Came to England and bought his freedom.
Wrote his life story (1789) explaining the horrors of the slave trade.
Campaigned against slavery.

Richard Pennant (1737-1808)
Member of Parliament for Liverpool, a key port for slave ships.
His family owned an 8000 acre sugar plantation in Jamaica and 600 slaves.
He set up a committee to organise opposition to the abolition movement.

James Penny
A slave ship owner and captain.
He tried to convince Parliament that the slaves on his ships were treated kindly.
Who was most responsible for the abolition of slavery?
Read through the sources and highlight important information.
You then need to complete your analysis grid…

**EVIDENCE 1: William Wilberforce.**

William Wilberforce studied at Cambridge University where he became good friends with William Pitt, who later became Prime Minister. Wilberforce was a Christian and this encouraged him to help others. He organised the abolition movement and they used books, pamphlets, rallies and petitions to convince people. He also regularly spoke in Parliament against slavery.

**EVIDENCE 2: Religious groups.**

Many of the ABOLITIONISTS were Quakers (a religious Christian group). They believed that slavery was against Christian beliefs. They knew how to place articles in newspapers, publish pamphlets and send petitions to Parliament.

**EVIDENCE 3: Mary Prince**

Mary Prince was born to a slave family in Bermuda in 1788. She suffered terrible treatment from her owners. In 1828 she travelled to England and got her freedom. Mary campaigned with the Anti-Slavery society. She was the first woman to present an anti-slavery petition to Parliament and the first black woman to write her autobiography. This book made people aware about conditions in the plantations.

**EVIDENCE 4: Female anti-slavery societies.**

Women played an important role in the anti-slavery campaign. Elizabeth Heyrick criticised anti-slavery leaders for moving too slowly, and supported slave rebellions in the West Indies. Heyrick was an important figure in the formation of female anti-slavery societies. In Leicester she organised a new sugar boycott (refusing to buy something) which INSPIRED other women to set up their own campaigns.