



The Transatlantic Slave Trade



Timeline

1562	1807	1833
English voyages begin carrying enslaved Africans.	British Parliament abolishes the slave trade.	Slavery abolished in most of the British Empire.

Key Vocabulary

Enslaved	Being the property of another person and having no freedom.
Plantation	A large farm where crops such as sugar or cotton were grown.
Auction	A public sale where goods were sold to the highest bidder.
Triangular trade	Three-part trade route linking Europe, Africa and the Americas.
Middle Passage	The Atlantic crossing transporting enslaved Africans.
Abolition	Movement to end the slave trade and slavery.
Cargo	Goods carried on a ship; enslaved people were treated as cargo
Shackles	Iron chains used to restrain enslaved people.
Overseer	Person supervising enslaved workers on plantations.

DID YOU KNOW?

Between 1500 and 1800, around 12-15 million people - some historians suggest the figure may have been higher - were trafficked from Africa to be used as enslaved labour in the Caribbean, North, Central and South America.

Key Facts

- Operated mainly between the 16th and 19th centuries.
- Around 12 million Africans were forcibly transported.
- Britain abolished the slave trade in 1807 and slavery in 1833.
- Triangular trade: Europe → Africa → Americas → Europe.

Famous Figures

Olaudah Equiano: Autobiography influenced abolition.

Harriet Tubman: Helped people escape slavery via Underground Railroad.

William Wilberforce: British MP who campaigned to end the trade

Liverpool's Role

- Liverpool became Britain's largest slave-trading port by mid-18th century.
- First Liverpool slave ship sailed in 1699 carrying 220 enslaved Africans.
- By 1750, Liverpool overtook Bristol and London as leading slave port.
- Between 1793 and 1807, Liverpool handled 84.7% of British slave voyages.
- Wealth funded docks and city growth; last slaver sailed in 1807.
- International Slavery Museum in Liverpool teaches this history