

Lesson ideas for geography teachers to share: Slavery

Go to

The Museum of London: London, Sugar and Slavery gallery film

<https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/schools/learning-resources>

1. What was the name of the world's first completed dock complex and when was it completed?
The West India Docks, built in 1802, otherwise now known as Canary Wharf. Built to import goods from the West Indies (the Caribbean).
2. Up until 1907 the docks were also used for the slave trade, with at least 22 known slave ships unloading produce in the West India Docks. Where were these ships from or headed to?
Africa or the Americas.
3. In the eighteenth century how many black men and women lived in London?
Only 10,000.
4. Answer the suggested extension question from The Museum of London: why are black abolitionists in the eighteenth century not as well-known as other campaigners?
They were discriminated against and not heard as much as their contemporaries (other white abolitionists). There was also a difference in the achievement of abolishing slavery across the Atlantic. The British Empire announced the William Wilberforce Slave Trade Act in 1807 and ended slavery with the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 whilst in the US Congress only passed the abolition of slavery in 1865. This meant, for example, from 1847 to 1863, escaped slave and abolitionist Frederick Douglass (1817–1895) published the *North Star* in America with the aid of money and a press provided by British philanthropists.
5. Pause the video exactly at 3.20 minutes. Read the display board. How have Africans and black people in London been treated differently at times in history?
In the 1950s – in particular around the Notting Hill Carnival of 1958 white mob attacks were perpetrated against black residents, with a counter-response of communal black resistance to racism. In the 1970s a huge campaign was waged to prevent the 'stop and search' powers of the police which was used to target young black men thought to be 'about to' commit a crime. In the 1980s there were urban uprisings involving both black and white communities who fought against one another. Increasingly as racism was exposed in institutions, individuals came together in community self-help protest and campaigning.
6. Again answer the extension question: how have attitudes changed over time? And what has stayed the same?
Attitudes have improved considerably over time, in particular since the infamous 'Rivers of Blood' speech by Enoch Powell in 1968. The number of BAME (Black Minority Ethnic) people obtaining a degree has risen significantly but this has not fed through to the labour market. BAME people are still under-represented in some professions, such as law, and a report from the Carnegie Trust in March 2020 revealed they are also 47% more likely to be in 'unstable' employment, such as zero-hour contract.

Suggested further work

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zjyqtfr/revision/2>

1. By 1970, what had sugar surpassed and why was that of significance?
By 1750, sugar surpassed grain as the most valuable commodity in European trade - it made up a fifth of all European imports.



2. Why are the West Indies called the West Indies? Access the following webpage to help. <https://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/caribb/special/westind.htm>
Columbus called the Caribbean islands the Indies because he thought he had finally reached Asia – and the East Indies. When Columbus' mistake was discovered Spain renamed these islands the West Indies, to distinguish them from the Spice Islands in the Pacific Ocean, (the East Indies) which we now call Indonesia.
3. Access BBC Bitesize at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zjyqtfr/revision/4>. Why is the slave trade triangle otherwise known as the Transatlantic slave trade?
Europeans sailed to West African to trade goods for slaves, slaves were shipped to the West Indies and the crops grown were then exported back to Europe, such as sugar. In 1750 10,000 tons of sugar came from Jamaica, by 1800 it had shot up to 2 million tons grown by African slave labour and their descendants.
4. Research Robert Milligan and George Hibbert who have a statue and gate named after them in the West India Docks.