

KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

Empire and the Slave Trade

Summary of Empire

By 1901, Britain ruled the largest empire the world had ever known. This included over 450 million and covered $\frac{1}{4}$ of the surface of the world.



Summary of slavery

Between the 16th and 19th centuries, European merchants transported an estimated 12.5 million Africans across the Atlantic to work in slavery in the Americas. Unknown millions died as a result.



Timeline of key events

1558 - 1603	Reign of Queen Elizabeth I
1562	Elizabeth I gave permission for John Hawkins to capture African slaves and take them to America to be sold. He is called "the father of the slave trade."
1586	Sir Walter Raleigh organised a small settlement in America named Virginia in honour of Elizabeth I.
18 th century	Height of the slave trade - an estimated 6 million Africans were transported across the Atlantic to the Americas.
Late 18 th century +	Industrial Revolution in Britain - changes from items being made by hand to being produced by machines in factories. Led to the requirement of more natural resources.
1807	Abolition of the slave trade in Britain: made it illegal to engage in the slave trade.
1833	Abolition of slavery in Britain: this gave freedom to all slaves in the British Empire.
1864	Construction of Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol is completed.
1837 - 1901	Reign of Queen Victoria.

Key individuals

John Hawkins	Known as 'the first English trader' and 'the father of the slave trade', he led several slaving expeditions across the Atlantic. Hawkins captured Africans and sold them into slavery in the Spanish West Indies. He returned with tropical produce and made a fortune.
William Wilberforce	An English politician and campaigner for the abolition of slavery.
Olaudah Equiano	An African slave who was brought to England by his owner. He secretly saved up and bought his freedom. Equiano wrote an autobiography describing the horrors of slavery. He became England's leading spokesperson for black people and the abolition of slavery.
Edward Colston	An English merchant, philanthropist (someone who donates money to good causes) and Member of Parliament who was involved in the Atlantic slave trade. Born in Bristol.

Extra information

- 30% of the earth's mineral resources are found in the African continent, including oil, copper, diamonds, lithium, gold, hardwood forests and tropical fruits.
- The transatlantic trade in African slaves represented the largest overseas migration in history (between 1567 and 1867).
- During the Middle Passage transportation, between 10-20% died from starvation and diseases including dysentery, scurvy, smallpox and measles. This equals up to 2 million deaths.
- The slave trade was fuelled by massive demand for sugar in Europe. People liked to sweeten tea, coffee and chocolate (all imports from slavery plantations). Therefore, the demand for African slaves grew.

Key vocabulary

- **Empire** - a group of countries ruled over by a single monarch or ruling power.
- **Mother country** - the country that rules over its colonies.
- **Colonisation** - settlement and control over the people and location by those from another country.
- **Brig-stowe** - the original name of the Anglo Saxon port now known as Bristol.
- **Chattel slavery** - the legal ownership of one person by another.
- **The triangular trade** - the shipping of goods from Britain to West Africa to be exchanged for slaves. These slaves were shipped to the West Indies and exchanged/sold for sugar, rum, and other goods which were shipped back to Britain.
- **Middle Passage** - the transatlantic sea journey undertaken by slave ships from West Africa to the West Indies. It usually took between 6 and 11 weeks to complete the voyage.
- **The Americas** - all of North, Central and South America, including the West Indian islands (Caribbean).
- **Scrambles** - the auction at which slaves were sold. Buyers would scramble for the finest slaves.