

Knowledge Organiser for Slavery & Empire

Overview

Up to this point you have learned the story of Britain and how our society, politics and religion developed during the medieval and early modern period. In this unit you will learn how Britain's influence spread abroad so that we became the most powerful nation on earth. We will explore what Africa was like before the arrival of the Europeans. You will also learn the inconvenient truth of the British Empire, that although it had its benefits to the world, it was also borne out of the evil of slavery and exploitation.

Key figures



Key questions

- What do we know about Africa before the Europeans arrived?
- Who was Mansa Musa?
- What were the problems facing the English in trying to set up an empire?
- How important was the trans-Atlantic slave trade to the growth of the British Empire and why is this controversial?
- Why did Britain lose the American colonies?
- How significant was the role of William Wilberforce, compared to other factors, in the abolition of slavery in the British Empire?
- Why did Britain and France go to war?
- Why did Britain emerge as the dominant global empire?
- Was the British Empire a force for good or bad?

Timeline

- ~1312 Mansa Musa becomes ruler of Mali
- 1444 Atlantic slave trade is started by the Portuguese
- 1492 Columbus 'discovers' America
- 1577 Drake circles globe
- 1607 First successful British colony in America - Jamestown
- 1619 First African Slaves land in Virginia, America
- 1776 America declares itself independent from Britain
- 1776 – 1783 American Revolutionary War
- 1789 French Revolution
- 1805 Battle of Trafalgar
- 1807 Slave Trade abolished in British empire
- 1815 Battle of Waterloo
- 1833 Slavery abolished in Britain and colonies

Key words

- Empire** – A collection of countries / territories controlled by one ruler
- Colony / colonist** – Countries controlled by another and the people that live in them
- Virginia** – Britain's first successful colony (at Jamestown), named for Elizabeth I and James I
- Middle class** – Emerging social group between the upper and working classes
- Plantation** – Enormous farms in the Americas, worked by slaves
- Slavery** – The institution in which people are property of their masters
- Trade** – The buying and selling of goods
- Slave Trade Triangle** – The trade in goods and slaves between Europe, Africa (from where the slaves were kidnapped) and the Americas (where the slaves were put to work)
- Profiteers** – People who benefit financially from an institution like slavery
- Tax** – Money paid to the government
- Economic** - relating to money, goods and services
- Abolish (abolition)** – to get rid of something
- Declaration of Independence** – When American colonists said they wanted to be free of UK
- Press-ganged** – How men were kidnapped and forced into the navy
- Broadside** – the naval battle tactic of riding alongside enemy ships and attacking with cannon
- Square / line formation** – infantry formations for cavalry and infantry attacks
- Foreign policy** – the way a country approaches other countries
- Revolution** – when people overthrow their rulers

