

### THE PHASES OF THE TRIANGULAR TRADE

#### Britain to West Africa

Ships were packed with cloth, guns, ironware and other goods in British ports. They would travel to Africa. On the coast of West Africa, the British would trade these goods for men, women and children.

#### Capture and Enslavement in West Africa

African men, women and children were kidnapped from countries. They were violently captured from their villages with their families. Enslaved people were chained together in groups, and taken by boat along West Africa's waterways to the coast. Here, traders would wait to sell enslaved people to European traders.

#### The Middle Passage

Many enslaved people had to wait months in dark cellars and dungeons of European-built castles and forts on the coast. Enslaved people were kept until ships had arrived to take them across the Atlantic. The journey could take up to 12 weeks in horrific conditions.

#### The Journey to the Americas

Men were packed together below the decks in cramped conditions, chained to one another by the legs. From the writings of survivors, it is known that the air was putrid and hot, and that illness was rife. Women and children might be kept on the open upper decks, but were often subjected to abuse from the crew. Poor food, lack of sanitation and violent punishments given by the crew meant many died during the journey.

#### Arrival in the Americas

On arrival in the Americas, enslaved people were subjected to humiliating checks. They had their mouths opened to look at their teeth, and sometimes had oils put on their skin to make them look healthier after their difficult journey. Enslaved people were treated as objects and sold at auctions. They were sold to the highest bidder, and belonged to them for life. Following the auction, enslaved people were transported throughout the Americas. Two-thirds of enslaved people were sent to plantations in the Caribbean.

#### Life on Plantations

Many enslaved people died early of exhaustion, injury or disease. The majority of enslaved people worked on sugar plantations, where the work was incredibly difficult. The working day was at least 18 hours long, in scorching conditions.

Many enslaved people used different methods of rebellion against their enslavement and their owners. One way was by using music. During the 1739 Stono Rebellion in South Carolina, enslaved people used rhythmic drumming as a way to communicate with one another. Following the rebellion an Act was introduced in 1760, outlawing the use of drums by enslaved people.

#### The Abolition of the Slave Trade in Britain

In 1807, the British Parliament passed the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. This ended the buying and selling of enslaved people within the British Empire, but it did not protect those already enslaved. Many enslavers continued to trade illegally.

Hundreds of thousands of people remained enslaved. It took a further 30 years of campaigning before slavery was abolished in most British colonies.



Happy African Family



Journey on the Boats



Sold at Auction



Working on Plantations

### KEY VOCABULARY

**Facial Expressions** - A facial expression conveys an emotion that tells us about the character and the way they react to the situation.

**Gesture** - A gesture is a defined movement which clearly communicates meaning. Gestures are usually made with the arms and hands but can also include the whole body if required.

**Body Language** - Body language is communication by movement or position, particularly facial expressions, gestures and the relative positions of a speaker.

**Exaggeration** - The movement is increased almost to the point of being extreme. Audience members can clearly see movement, facial expressions, gesture etc to help them understand the story.

**Tableaux** - a representation of a dramatic scene by a person or group, posing silently without moving – also known as freeze frame/still image

**Narration** - Narration is the act of telling a story and generally means any kind of explaining or telling of something. It is usually used in reference to storytelling.

**Enslavement** - A slave is a human being classed as property and who is forced to work for nothing. An enslaved person is a human being who is made to be a slave.

**Abolition** - Abolition is the act of getting rid of something, like the abolition of slavery. When there's an abolition, something is abolished – it's gone.

**Freedom** - Freedom is defined as the state of being free, independent, without restrictions. The freedom of the slaves becoming free to live their lives without constraints.

### KEY EVENTS

1564: 300 Africans were captured and taken to be sold as slaves.

1787: The establishment of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade

1807: Slavery was abolished in Britain.

1833: Abolished officially worldwide – Slavery abolition act

1838: Emancipation achieved.

