

Guidance for teachers produced by the Learning and Participation Team at The International Slavery Museum, Liverpool.

Transatlantic Slavery and Abolition:

Subject Sensitivity & Appropriate Language Guidance

Before you start your lesson (recommended)

Talking about sensitive subject matter such as slavery, abuse and racism can be challenging. Setting pupils a safe code of conduct and using appropriate language is essential. If you need support in preparing your pupils we recommend the following tips:

Language

- Instruct pupils to use appropriate vocabulary (see key vocabulary handout).
- Instruct pupils to use the term 'enslaved Africans' rather than 'slaves' as it is too generalised and a dehumanising a term.
- Don't allow pupils to reinforce stereotypes instead expose and challenge them.

Creating a Respectful Environment

- Emphasize the need to listen to one another carefully without interrupting.
- Encourage pupils to express their feelings and opinions without fear of judgement.
- Encourage discussions and debates that offer a wide variety of differing views.

Developing Empathy

- Focus on people's perspectives and agency rather than reducing them to numbers and statistics.
- Do not teach Transatlantic Slavery as a separate Black history, it is a shared history across multiple continents and ethnicities.

Addressing Misconceptions

- Do not over simplify.
- Provide pupils with inspiring Black role models, both historical and contemporary. See the International Slavery Museum gallery celebrating Black achievers for specific examples: www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/list-of-black-achievers
- Acknowledge the key legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and how it impacts cultural bias today, such as racism, wealth generated through slavery and the disrupted development of Africa.

Preparing for Sensitive Issues & Individuals' needs

- Be open about the challenging and emotive nature of what will be discussed.
- Ensure that students are aware of relevant avenues to address concerns or questions within school and outside of school including these useful websites:

www.anthonwalkerfoundation.com and www.stophateuk.org

In addition we recommend taking pupils through the key vocabulary handout we have provided. This will empower pupils to feel confident that they are using appropriate terminology and will help them understand some of the more specialist vocabulary used by our museum facilitator.

Key Vocabulary Handout

Abolition - The campaign to end the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery.

Black - Currently used in Britain to describe people of African or Caribbean descent.

Black Achievers - People of the African diaspora that have managed to do great things despite the hardships they have faced. The International Slavery Museum has a display dedicated to celebrating Black achievers:

www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/list-of-black-achievers.

Black Lives Matter - A global movement that advocates non-violent civil disobedience in protest against incidents of police brutality and all racially motivated violence against Black people.

Chattel slavery – when an enslaved person is owned as property for their lifetime and their children and children's children are automatically born into slavery.

Contested monuments - Historic statues and sites which have become symbols of injustice and inequality today.

Cultural resistance - Using the arts, literature or traditional practices to fight discrimination.

Emancipation - Being set free or granted rights equal to others who already enjoy them; the freeing of enslaved people from slavery.

Enslaved African / Enslaved Person - A person devoid of freedom and personal rights; one who is the property of another whether by capture, purchase or birth.

Forced Migration – The mass movement of African people against their will from West Africa to the Americas and Caribbean as part of transatlantic slavery.

Intersectionality – Characteristics that make us who we are (such as race, gender, sexuality, disability, and class) are interconnected and contribute to shared

experiences of discrimination and prejudice. This discrimination keeps people/groups excluded from society, in low positions or controlled. (For example, a Black woman could experience both racism and sexism at the same time in the work place, thus stopping her from getting a promotion).

Negro - A term used throughout the 18th to the 20th centuries to describe a person of African descent. The word is considered derogatory and unacceptable today.

Racism- A belief that one group of people is inferior or superior to another because of their ethnicity.

Transatlantic slave trade – A European term used to describe the selling of Africans as chattel across the Atlantic Ocean between Europe, Africa and the Americas.

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