

I already know:

Trade and Empire: Romans and Vikings
Historical Sources: How to distinguish between primary sources (letters, artifacts from the time) and secondary sources (textbooks, modern reconstructions)

Vocabulary

Maafa A Kiswahili word meaning "great tragedy" or "disaster," used to describe the centuries of forced displacement, enslavement, and oppression of African people.

Transatlantic: Crossing or extending across the Atlantic Ocean (connecting Europe, Africa, and the Americas)

Enslavement: The state of being placed in a system of forced labor where a human being is legally treated as property (chattel)

Middle Passage: The brutal leg of the Triangular Trade route where enslaved Africans were packed into ships and transported across the Atlantic Ocean.

Abolitionist: A person who actively campaigned to end the slave trade and the institution of slavery.

Resistance The act of fighting back or refusing to comply with captors, which took both active forms (rebellion) and passive forms (preserving culture).

Key People

Harriet Tubman (c. 1822–1913) American abolitionist born into slavery who escaped and subsequently made some 13 missions to rescue approximately 70 enslaved people using a network of safe houses known as the Underground Railroad.

Olaudah Equiano (c. 1745–1797): An African writer and abolitionist. Captured as a child, he later bought his freedom in England and wrote a bestselling autobiography that exposed the horrific realities of the Middle Passage, shifting public opinion against the trade.

Key Places

Kingdom of Benin / West Africa: The highly prosperous region from which millions of Africans were forcefully taken.

Liverpool and Bristol: Major British port cities that grew exponentially wealthy by financing slave ships, manufacturing goods for trade, and processing plantation imports.

Haiti (Saint-Domingue): The wealthy French Caribbean colony that became the site of the most successful revolt by enslaved people in history (1791), leading to the founding of a free republic.

Timeline**Sources**

The Description of Slave Ships (e.g., The Brookes diagram, 1788): A primary graphic source used by abolitionists to show the public the cramped, inhumane conditions inside the lower decks of slave ships.

Autobiographies and Narratives: *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789). This provides an invaluable firsthand account of an African perspective on captivity and European society.

Concepts**Economic Cause and Effect:**

Understanding how the unpaid, forced labor of millions directly fueled the Industrial Revolution and built lasting architectural and civic wealth in Great Britain.

Historical Significance:

Evaluating why a tragic historical era must be preserved in collective memory to understand modern struggles for racial equality and global civil rights.