

## Teaching notes

### Starter

Show students this clip about why slavery was abolished in 1807:

[www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/interpretations-of-the-abolition-of-slavery/10130.html](http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/interpretations-of-the-abolition-of-slavery/10130.html).

(The link was accurate and working at time of publication, but do check in advance of teaching.)

Students could make a quick mind map of the broad reasons given for abolition.

### Card sort

This flexible card sort can be used in a variety of ways.

1. **Categorising:** students colour code each card to show which factor it provides evidence of:

- slave rebellions
- economic reasons
- the Anti-Slavery media campaign
- legal challenges
- actions of key individuals
- religious reasons.

Further categorisation could be done by marking the cards with B or W to indicate whether they represent the actions of enslaved black people or actions by white people.

2. **Ranking exercise:** students could also cut out the cards and use them to rank the most important reasons.
3. **Discussion:** this could be conducted in small groups or as a whole class.
  - What do you think was the most important reason for the abolition of the slave trade?
  - Which was the least important?
  - Which had the biggest impact on the abolition of the slave trade, the actions of white people, or the actions of enslaved people themselves?

### Plenary

Show students the image of an engraving from c.1880 marking the abolition of the slave trade in Britain.

- Do they feel it fairly represents why abolition happened?
- Whose view of history does the engraving represent and why might they have held this view?

### Follow up task/homework

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Students could write an extended piece to answer the question 'Why was the slave trade abolished?'

Alternatively, they could design their own engraving/memorial marking abolition in Britain, as their own interpretation of why it occurred.

### Further information:

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<http://abolition.e2bn.org/index.php>

## Why was the slave trade abolished?

On 25 March 1807 the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act received its royal assent after Parliament voted in favour of ending the practice. This was the result of years of campaigning in England and abroad.

Look at the table and colour code each box to show which of the following categories you think the actions represent.

- slave rebellions
- economic reasons
- legal challenges
- actions of key individuals
- the anti-slavery campaign
- religious reasons

<p>An influential economist, Adam Smith, argued that it was better to pay wages as these could then be spent on goods and help the economy to grow.</p>	<p>William Wilberforce believed that he had been called by God to end the Slave Trade. Other campaigners such as Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson also believed that they had divine instructions to end slavery.</p>	<p>The law gradually turned against the idea of slavery as individual slaves in Britain went to court to get their freedom. By the early 1800s most judges set these slaves free.</p>	<p>Thomas Clarkson collected evidence against slavery. He spread his message all over the country by publishing posters, pamphlets and making public speeches.</p>	<p>A slave rebellion led by Toussaint L'Ouverture on the French island of St Dominique in 1790s was successful. In 1794 the revolutionary French government declared slavery illegal in all its territories.</p>
<p>A lawyer, Granville Sharp, used the courts to try and give slaves their freedom. He fought many court cases, most famously arguing instead of 'loss of cargo' the deaths of slaves on-board the ship Zong should be treated as murder.</p>	<p>The Abolition Society encouraged creative ways to spread the anti-slavery message. Hannah More wrote poems and books about the horrors of the slave trade, and convinced many of the need to ban it.</p>	<p>An ex-slave, Olaudah Equiano wrote the story of his life as a slave. His book dispelled many misconceptions about the perceived inferiority of black people and convinced many that slavery was wrong.</p>	<p>Christian groups, such as the Methodists and the Quakers believed that everyone was 'equal in the sight of God' and that therefore slavery was immoral. They wrote books and articles supporting abolition.</p>	<p>The anti-slavery campaign developed its own striking logo designed by Josiah Wedgwood. His design appeared on his pottery but also bookplates, coat buttons, wax seals, jewellery.</p>
<p>Increased competition from cheap sugar from countries like Brazil and Cuba meant that sugar plantations were closing. People argued that the enslaved workers would work harder if they were freed and paid.</p>	<p>William Wilberforce became the leader against the slave trade in Parliament. Even though he lost the first debate by 163 votes to 88, he never gave up and the final vote in 1807 was won with only 16 MPs voting against.</p>	<p>On the plantations, many enslaved Africans tried to slow down the pace of work by pretending to be ill, causing fires or 'accidentally' breaking tools. Whenever possible, enslaved Africans ran away. This made slavery less profitable.</p>	<p>There were two nationwide anti-slavery petitioning campaigns: in 1788 over 100 petitions were presented to the Commons. In 1792 an even bigger campaign led to 519 petitions being handed to Parliament demanding the abolition of the slave trade, representing every single county in England.</p>	<p>During the late 18th and early 19th century, slave revolts grew bigger. Slaves made it clear that, if they were not set free, they would soon free themselves. There were hundreds of slave revolts. In the Caribbean they averaged at least two per year during the period 1789-1815.</p>