

**Africa before Slavery:
The Mali Empire**

The Empire of Mali was one of the largest in West African History. It was founded in 1235 AD; the Kings of Mali were known as **Mansa**. It was a rich kingdom and the city of Timbuktu was famous as a centre of learning and architecture. Islam became the main religion in the 1300s. **Mansa Musa** was one of the most important leaders of Mali – and was the richest man to have ever lived.

The British Empire

The British took over ¼ of the world’s population by 1900. The countries they took over were known as **colonies**.

The Triangular Trade

Stage 1: Ships sailed from Europe to the West coast of Africa and traded guns, pots and pans for slaves

Stage 2: The Middle Passage. Slaves were taken from Africa to North American and the Caribbean.

Stage 3: The ships traded the slaves for cotton, tobacco and rum and sailed this back to be sold in Europe.

Good things about the British Empire:

- Education
- Clean Water
- Strong system of law
- Improved farming

Bad things:

- Slavery
- Killed Anyone who fought back
- Made people become Christian
- Many died of diseases

The Middle Passage

This was the journey from Africa to America and the Caribbean. Slaves were chained below decks for the journey which could take up to three months. The ships were filthy, overcrowded and many slaves died on the journey.

Slave Auctions

Once the slaves arrived in America or the Caribbean they were auctioned off – sold to the highest bidder. Wounds would be covered in tar and rust to disguise them and slaves’ skin would be covered in oil to make it shine. They would then be shown in a town hall or square and sold as ‘property’. Families would be split up. Once the slaves had been bought they were given new names by their masters.

Life on a Plantation

Slaves had to work hard in the fields or in the Plantation house. They would often be used to pick cotton or tobacco and would be whipped or punished if they did not work hard enough. Their houses were very simple with little to no furniture and earth floors.

Most slaves that ran away returned. Punishments could be harsh and slaves were often whipped. The Underground Railroad would help slaves escape to the Northern States. **Harriet Tubman** was an important conductor on the Underground Railroad

Key words

Mansa	Malian Emperor
Slave	Somebody who becomes the property of somebody else
The Middle Passage	The journey between Africa and America
Plantation	Large pieces of land where slaves were needed to work. Grew one crop e.g. cotton
Auction	Selling items to the highest bidder.
Rebellion	Fighting back
Abolition	To end something
Shackles	chains
Colonies	Countries taken over by the British Empire

Abolition of the Slave Trade

Key people: Olaudah Equiano: a former slave who wrote a book about his experiences

William Wilberforce: An MP who tried to change the law in parliament

Thomas Clarkson – helped to organise abolition campaigns

Public Pressure: books, plays and poetry were written. People turned against the slave trade

Slave rebellions: slaves in Haiti and Jamaica revolted and seized land from plantation owners.

