

The Triangle of Slavery

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Lesson Aim: To understand how the slave trade worked.

Britain made money from the trade in slaves. Liverpool Merchants could make 100% profits from the trade. A ship carrying 250 slaves could make around £7000 in profit (an alarming sum of money). From 1783 to 1793 Liverpool traders traded 303,737 slaves. These would all have been the fittest, strongest and most able of the African tribes that were sold into slavery. The slave trade also took place in Bristol and in London.

So how did it work?

The process was simple.

1. Manufactured goods from Britain were sent to the west coast of Africa. They tended to be items such as pots, pans, cloth, guns, hardware as well as spirits and tobacco.
2. From these items places such as Senegal, Gambia and the Gold Coast sold their slaves. The ships with their new cargo set sail for America (including the West Indies and parts of South America).
3. Once there the slaves were sold (usually at auction) and paid for in local produce. In America it tended to be cotton for Britain's textile industry.

Tasks

Write the title, today's date and the lesson aim.

Answer the following questions.

1. Which three ports in England traded in slaves
2. Why did Britain trade in slaves?
3. Use the map provided to create the trade triangle. Use arrows to show the journey, number the stages of the journey (1,2,3) and then describe what happens in each journey.