

READING SLAVERY LINKS QUIZ:ANSWERS

1 When did the Triangular Slave Trade start?

1400

1562

1652

In 1562 by the Englishman Sir John Hawkins. The son of a merchant, he was born in Plymouth in 1532. He became a sea captain and in 1562 became the first Englishman to start capturing people in Sierra Leone and selling them as slaves to Spanish settlers in the Caribbean. He was knighted by Elizabeth I for his role in the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

2 Approximately how many enslaved Africans survived the voyage from West Africa to the Americas – the notorious ‘Middle Passage’?

10 million

12 million

24 million

No accurate records are kept but it is estimated that of the 24 million Africans taken only half survived the trek from the interior of Africa to the coast, ie 12 million.

3 When slaves were sold in the New World what commodities were shipped back to Europe? Try to find at least 3 commodities.

Sugar, cotton, tobacco, rum, coffee gold and silver.

4 Were enslaved Africans used to produce sugar and rum from the very beginning?

yes

no

No – initially indigenous Americans were used, but many got ill and died. They were followed by English indentured labour. They were the poor, prisoners, or people tricked into signing a contract to work in exchange for bed, food and shelter for a specified period of 5 to 7 years. Thereafter they were given some land to till.

5 Working in the sweltering heat in the sugar boiling houses held many dangers. What condition did most of the slaves develop under those conditions?

diabetes

dropsy

sleeping sickness

Most slaves developed dropsy - watery swelling of the face and hands. In addition unwary slaves could fall into the huge simmering vats.

6 What is particularly unusual about the fetter shackles held by Reading Museum?

the fetters are small

the ring at the end is easy to get out

two fetters are more usual



Four fetters are extremely unusual. The standard design is two. They could have been used to fasten a pair of stationary prisoners together, with all four feet locked on to the bar or for a single prisoner with both feet and arms painfully fastened in place. Similar sets have been found in the wrecks of sunken slave ships.

7 Two foot regiments were involved in protection of plantation and slave owners from the “threat of an outbreak of negroes” and merged to form the Royal Berkshire Regiment. Which ones?

54th Foot Regiment

66th Foot Regiment

49th Foot Regiment

84th Foot Regiment

66th Foot Regiment, which originated in Northumberland, and the 49th Foot Regiment, formed in Jamaica by the British colonial governor, Trelawny, in 1744 to protect plantation and slave owners. Both were involved in such actions for more than 50 years, in Jamaica and Saint Domingue (Haiti) before finally retreating, defeated and ravaged by disease. In 1881, they merged to form the Royal Berkshire Regiment.

14 The Blgrave family was connected with Reading for over 400 years. John Blgrave who died in 1824 owned five plantation in Jamaica. How many slaves did he own?

840

1020

1500

John Blagrove had been actively engaged in the second Maroon War against the nearby Trelawny Town Maroons in 1795. However, by the time of his death in 1824 he left a dollar to each of his 1500 slaves, whom he referred to as “my loving people”.

15 From a Trelawny Bill showing the value of slaves owned by Thomas Blagrove in 1767 what is the value of ‘18 Negro boys’?

£550

£1800

£360

18 negro boys £550

81 negro men £4845

40 negro women £2070

23 negro girls £710

Note how little value women had in comparison with men.

16 From our research at Berkshire Records Office what is the earliest evidence we have of Black people living in the greater Berkshire area?

1732

1678

1774

19th June 1732. Charles Cato (a black boy) was baptised in Basildon. We know very little of such people, as they were not referred to in biographies or stories about the town. They were only known if they were registered when baptised or buried.

17 We are commemorating the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave trade. However when did the ‘enslaved’ finally get full Emancipation throughout the British colonies?

25th March 1807

28th August 1833

1st August 1838

Full Emancipation was finally granted on 1st August 1838. On 25th March 1807 the slave **trade** was abolished with effect from May 1st 1807. Abolition of **slavery** throughout the British colonies was passed on 28th August 1833 with effect from 1st August 1934. Plantation owners still needed workers – this Act very cleverly converted slaves (from six years old) into apprenticed labourers. After many riots and unrest against the hated ‘apprenticeships’, **full Emancipation** was finally granted on 1st August 1838.

18 Did any of the Reading MP’s vote against abolition or emancipation?

yes

no

None of Reading’s MPs can be proved to have voted against abolition or emancipation (voting records were not clear). Francis Annesley, Independent Tory, voted for abolition in 1796, and Reading-born Thomas Noon Talford, judge, playwright and MP from 1835, campaigned ardently for emancipation.

19 When did the British instigate the notorious Triangular Slave Trade?

1 The British were in the forefront of the slave trade from the 15th century onwards

2 The earliest known cargo of slaves from Sierra Leone was taken by an Englishman John Hawkins in 1562

3 The largest British slave castle was built on Bunce Island in 1492

John Hawkins took the first cargo of slaves in 1562. Bunce Island had the largest British slave castle, but built after that time. It was the Portuguese traders who traded slaves from Sierra Leone from 15th century onwards. The Name Sierra Leone came from the Spanish description of the mountains calling it Serra Lyon meaning - Lion Mountain later to become Sierra Leone.

20 When did the first shipload of freed slaves arrive from Britain in became known as Freetown?

1787

1803

1807

The first freed slaves – 400 men and white ‘wives’ arrived on 9th May 1787 in the area the abolitionists named Freetown. It was about fifty square kilometres of land bought from King Tom and King Naimbana.

21 What is the name of the first know Sierra Leonean resident in Reading who is buried here?

John Weeks

Mary Smart

John Okoroafor

Mary Smart is one of two young girls who were sent from Sierra Leone to become teachers in 1848. She died the following year and is buried in an unmarked grave in Plot 44 at Cemetery Junction – records describing her as “a pious African Girl”, daughter of John Smart.

22 Francis Weeks Okrafo-Smart (1874-1930) built the City Hotel in Freetown. Which famous radical author wrote the novel *The Heart of the Matter* that immortalised this hotel?

Josef Conrad

Graham Greene

Bernard Shaw

Graham Greene.

23 Slavery is a booming business worldwide. According to Anti-slavery International how many people are enslaved today? (2 possible answers)

12 million

16 million

27 million

At least 12 million but more probably 27 million men, women and children are enslaved in one form or another. The 1957 Slavery Convention says: “slavery is distinguished from poor working conditions by the element of coercion: abuse, beatings, rape, deportation or death”.

24 According to the International Labour Organisation both industrialised countries and sub-Saharan Africa still have slaves. What comparative proportion of slaves have been recorded in sub-Saharan Africa versus industrialised countries?

nearly 2 times more

nearly 7 times more

nearly 20 times more

Nearly twice the amount. Sub-Saharan Africa has 660,000 versus Industrialised Countries with 360,000. However, Asia Pacific is in the forefront with 9,490,000.

25 Has the British government signed the Council of European Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human beings?

yes

no

It announced in 2007 that it plans to sign it, but has not said when.