

Session outline

Historical enquiry study day Transatlantic slavery

Our 'transatlantic slavery' study day offers students the chance to explore the sensitive history of the slave trade and enslaved peoples through the collections of the National Maritime Museum.

By handling objects, examining archives and visiting the galleries, students develop their historical enquiry skills in the unique context of the Museum. Our collections reveal and reflect the history of transatlantic slavery and our staff have extensive experience of teaching this sensitive subject.

We start by considering the legacy of the slave trade as students prepare their own research questions, which shape their learning over the course of facilitated sessions throughout the day. Each session lasts between 30 and 45 minutes and you will be given a timetable for these workshops when you arrive at the Museum.

Working with sources

In this hands-on session, students explore the system of transatlantic slavery by examining replica objects linked to the trade in enslaved peoples. We consider how objects carry history and meaning, in the past and present, even affecting how we handle them in this workshop.

Museum archives and manuscripts

Students are given access to the Museum's unique and rare collection of original account books and logs from slave ships, and inventories

from plantations, exposing them to some of the realities of the slave trade and the attitudes of those who ran it. Students examine these fragile documents for answers to their research questions and reflect on how effective they are as sources of historical evidence.

Gallery visit to 'The Atlantic: Slavery, Trade, Empire'

As they visit the gallery, students gather information about objects and images using digital tablets, constructing their own interpretations of what these sources reveal about enslavement. They can access this information back at school and use it to create and share multimedia presentations.

We end the day by coming together as a group, discussing and sharing students' findings and responses, and reflecting on any other questions that have arisen during the Museum visit.

Curriculum links

History, enquiry skills, group work, analysis, triangular trade route, abolition.

In the classroom

Visit our website for a variety of session-linked classroom activities to help you prepare for your visit and follow it up back at school:

rmg.co.uk/schools



NATIONAL
MARITIME
MUSEUM

