

Title: Abolition of the Slave Trade
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Key Words: slavery, abolition,
Grade Level: Middle/High School
Time Allotted: 50-60 minutes

Lesson Overview	This lesson will allow students to compare the abolition of the slave trade in Britain and the United States.
Guiding Question(s)	What role did economics play in the abolition movement? Who might benefit from the abolition of the slave trade?

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to analyze primary sources

- to explain the difference between the abolition of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery

Students will synthesize geographic and economic information to

- describe the likely economic effects on Britain, New England and the Southern region of the United States in the early to mid-19th century

Standards of Learning & Essential Historical Skills Taught:

- Selected State & National Standards –
 - **Virginia Standards of Learning:**
 - USI.8c The student will demonstrate knowledge of westward expansion and reform in America from 1801 to 1861 by describing the impact of inventions, including the cotton gin and the steamboat.
 - **National History Standards:**
 - Era 5: Civil War and Reconstruction – Standard 1: The student understands how the North and South differed and how politics and ideologies led to the Civil War.
 - Identify and explain the economic, social and cultural differences between the North and South.
- OAH Historical Inquiry Skills –
 - **Historical Comprehension:**
 - Students will use primary sources to create an historical narrative which will explain when the slave trade was abolished
 - **Historical Analysis and Interpretation**
 - Students will consider different historical perspectives (England and the United States)
 - Analyze cause and effect
 - **Historical Research**
 - Students will use primary sources to ask questions based on historical documents

Assessment Tool(s):

- Historical Marker
- Primary source questions

Materials/Resources:

Resources:

- [British National Archives on Slavery](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/slavery/about.htm) (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/slavery/about.htm>) This website is from the British National Archives. It gives a good overview of the British perspective. There are additional lesson plans and primary sources found here. The online resources link is particularly helpful.
- <http://maap.columbia.edu/place/22.html> This resource also includes additional lesson plans and background information on a slave market found in New York City. This will also show students what the location of the slave market looks like today.
- http://people.hofstra.edu/alan_j_singer/docket.html This is a publication from the New York and New Jersey State Councils for the Social Studies specifically geared towards teaching slavery in the North. It contains additional lesson plans as well as background information a teacher might find helpful.
- http://www.slaveryinnewyork.org/tour_galleries.htm This is a great web resource. This specifically looks at slavery in New York, but it can be used for background information on slavery in the North. Students who complete assignments early could also be sent to this site and asked to compile information that they found interesting to share with their class.
- *Amazing Grace* (DVD, 2006) This movie traces the abolition of the slave trade in Britain. It follows William Wilberforce's struggle to convince Parliament to abolish the slave trade, despite the economic benefits.

Materials:

- Copy of *Amazing Grace* DVD (2007)
- Projector and DVD player
- PPT: Abolition
- Following worksheets and primary sources (all found at the end of this document):
 - Hook Worksheet
 - Act to Prohibit the Importation of Slaves into the United States, 1807
 - An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade
 - So what?
 - Wrap Up: Historical Markers

Modifications:

- Use the voyages database (directions can be found in the Long Arm lesson) to learn the dates of the last slave voyages. Students can use those to predict the end of the slave trade.
- For the wrap-up, students could do outside research to learn why each act was passed and what groups or people pressed for its passage.

Hook: (approximately 15 minutes) Video clips from *Amazing Grace*. Hand out worksheets with these questions, explain the process and then show the video clips. Use PowerPoint entitled “Abolition” to help guide students through the lesson.

FOCUS: Parliament is debating the abolition of the slave trade. Most Member of Parliament (MPs) are against the abolition of the slave trade. As we watch the following clip, focus on and answer the following questions:

- How does William Wilberforce appeal to the MPs regarding the slave trade?
- What is the opposition’s argument against the abolition of the slave trade?
- What does the MP from Liverpool suggest will happen if the slave trade is abolished?

Play: Start the clip at 47:13 and pause it at 51:48

Pause

Follow Up: Review the answers to the questions

- How does William Wilberforce appeal to the MPs regarding the slave trade? (He appeals to them as “men of humanity.”)
- What is the opposition’s argument against the abolition of the slave trade? (It will destroy the economy of Britain. The French will be in a position to take over when Britain abolishes it.)
- What does the MP from Liverpool suggest will happen if the slave trade is abolished? (It will end the livelihood of those living in Liverpool, a port city.)

FOCUS: The debate continues between those who would like to abolish the slave trade as inhumane and those who represent port cities and others making money from the slave trade. As we watch this clip, focus on and answer the following questions:

- How does Newfoundland play a part in this debate?
- What does the MP from Liverpool claim is true of slaves in the West Indies?
- Where does William Wilberforce say that most of the 390,000 signatures on the petition were obtained? Why is this significant?

Play: Start the clip at 1:00:43 and pause it at 1:04:38.

Pause

Follow Up: Review the answers to the questions:

- How does Newfoundland play a part in this debate? (Cod is shipped to feed the slaves of the West Indies, it is suggested that only the parts of the cod not eaten by others is sent, thereby increasing the profit of those companies)
- What does the MP from Liverpool claim is true of slaves in the West Indies? (He suggests that slaves in the West Indies are better off than the poor of Liverpool).
- Where does William Wilberforce say that most of the 390,000 signatures on the petition were obtained? Why is this significant? (Wilberforce says that the signatures came from cities. Large cities, specifically port cities, stood to gain the most from the continuation of the slave trade. 390,000 in those cities supporting the abolition of the slave trade is a compelling argument).

Lesson (total time approximately 30-40 minutes):

1. The first part of this activity will require students to read and answer questions based on that reading. This should be done as a jigsaw activity. Divide students into groups of 4. Two of the students should be given “An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade” and the remaining two should be given “Act to Prohibit the Importation of Slaves into the United States, 1807.” The US excerpt is easier to read than the British excerpt. Students should either be grouped homogeneously with the more advanced students being given the British version or heterogeneously with each group having a strong reader.
2. (approximately 10-12 minutes) Students should work together in pairs to answer the questions attached their documents. The teacher should be circulating to spot check answers and answer questions.
3. Before having students move back to their original group of 4, they should check their answers with the teacher to ensure that they are sharing the correct information.
4. (approximately 10-12 minutes) When students have completed their own worksheets, the original group of 4 should compare their documents and complete the “So What” worksheet, asking them to analyze these documents and their possible consequences.
5. Have the class come together to go over the answers to the “So What” document.
6. (approximately 10-15 minutes) If there is time, engage the class in a discussion.
7. This can be run as a whole class discussion, or you can assign groups different regions and have them prepare their answers to share with the class. The discussion should build on the data they researched yesterday, the video from the beginning of class and the primary source reading they did today.
8. Guiding questions for discussion:
 - a. What would the abolition of the slave trade mean for Britain?

Guiding Questions	
Think of the city of Liverpool, how many voyages started there?	Liverpool - 4975 Britain - 10,449
How much revenue do you think was generated by the slave trade?	Refer them back to the list generated and posted yesterday about the number of people who may have benefited from the slave trade either directly or indirectly?
What will happen if that revenue is lost due to the abolition of the slave trade?	Loss of direct jobs – captains, seamen Loss of indirect jobs – shipbuilders, insurance agents, sail makers, bankers, etc. Loss of money in the economy – money to buy basics and/or luxury goods decreases

b. What would the abolition of the slave trade mean for New England?

Guiding Questions	
What will happen to states like Rhode Island? Will they be able to replace lost revenue?	695 voyages began in Rhode Island, of 1641 total. Compare to Liverpool. Ask them to speculate on how Rhode Island might replace the revenue. If necessary, lead them to the idea of industrialization. Ask what they think they might produce.
Think of New York City. It is a major slave market, where slaves are disembarked and then sold into slavery, most bound for the South. Will they be able to make up for lost revenue?	This should build on the previous question. Push the idea that New York City was a major port at this time. Ask students to consider what they might be shipping. How slave traders might shift their economic focus. Depending on the group and time, you might also ask students to consider whether or not slave traders complied with the law.
Do you think the North was fully supportive of the abolition of the slave trade?	People in the North had as much, if not more, to lose than those in the South at the abolition of the slave trade. Southerners would continue to make money using their slaves, but Northerners would lose the ability to make money from the international sale of slaves.

c. What would the abolition of the slave trade mean for the South?

Guiding Questions	
What will happen in the South?	They will no longer be able to buy slaves imported from Africa.
Is the South making as much money from the sale of slaves as either Britain or New England?	No. The institution of slavery itself accounts for the more of their profits.
How do you think the people of the South view the abolition of the slave trade?	With the invention of the cotton gin, the Deep South needed more and more slaves to harvest more and more cotton. Tobacco farmers in the Upper South had a surplus of farmers and stood to gain from the sale of their slaves "down the river".

Wrap-up: Students should create two historical markers, one for the United States and one for Britain. Students should include important information including the date, and a summarization of what each act was meant to accomplish. Students should also make mention of what the acts did not prohibit.

This wrap-up can be as easy or as complicated as you feel students need. A quick paragraph on notebook paper shouldn't take more than 10 minutes. A more in-depth look at the acts would require more time, though this can be assigned as homework.



Hook

Video Clip #1

- How does William Wilberforce appeal to the MPs regarding the slave trade?

- What is the opposition's argument against the abolition of the slave trade? _

- What does the MP from Liverpool suggest will happen if the slave trade is abolished? _____

Video Clip #2

- How does Newfoundland play a part in this debate? _____

- What does the MP from Liverpool claim is true of slaves in the West Indies?

- Where does William Wilberforce say that most of the 390,000 signatures on the petition were obtained? Why is this significant? _____

Act to Prohibit the Importation of Slaves into the United States, 1807

(Emert, 1995, p. 52)

An Act to prohibit the importation of Slaves into any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States, from and after the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eight.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eight, it shall not be lawful to import or bring into the United States or the territories thereof from any foreign kingdom, place or country, any negro, mulatto, or person of colour, with intent to hold, sell, or dispose of such negro, mulatto, or person of colour, as a slave, or to be held to service of labour...

1. What is this act prohibiting? _____

2. Which country has passed this law? _____
3. On what date does it become illegal? _____
4. This act specifically outlaws slaves coming from where? _____

5. What does this **not** prohibit? _____

An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade

(Emert, 1995, p. 51)

...Be it therefore enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords...and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That from and after the First Day of May One thousand eight hundred and seven, the African Slave Trade, and all...manner of dealing and trading in the Purchase, Sale, Barter, or Transfer of Slaves or of Persons intended to be sold, transferred, used or dealt with as Slaves, practised and carried on, in, at to or from any Part of the Coast or Countries of Africa, shall be, and the same is hereby utterly abolished, prohibited, and declared to be unlawful; and also that all and all manner of dealing, either by way of Purchase, Sale, Barter, or Transfer, or by means of any other Contract or Agreement whatever relating to any Slaves, or to any Persons intended to be used or dealt with as Slaves, for the Purpose of such Slaves or Persons being removed and transported either immediately or by Transshipment at Sea or otherwise, directly or indirectly from Africa, or from any Island, Country, Territory, or Place whatever, in the West Indies, or in any other Part of America, not being in the Dominion, Possession, or Occupation of His Majesty, to any other Island, Country, Territory, or Place whatever, is hereby in like Manner utterly abolished, prohibited, and declared to be unlawful...

1. What is this act abolishing? _____

2. Which country has passed this law? _____

3. On what date does it become illegal? _____

4. This act specifically outlaws slaves coming from where? _____

5. What does this **not** prohibit? _____

So what?

1. What do these documents do? _____

2. How are these documents similar to each other? _____

3. Think **very** carefully about what these documents prohibit and/or abolish. What parts of the United States and Britain will be most affected by these acts? _____

4. Which region do you think will be least affected by these acts? _____

5. What hasn't these documents prohibited and/or abolished? Why do you think this is significant? _____

6. How might the South actually benefit from the abolition of the international slave trade? _____

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Answer Key

Act to Prohibit the Importation of Slaves into the United States, 1807

(Emert, 1995, p. 52)

An Act to prohibit the importation of Slaves into any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States, from and after the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eight.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eight, it shall not be lawful to import or bring into the United States or the territories thereof from any foreign kingdom, place or country, any negro, mulatto, or person of colour, with intent to hold, sell, or dispose of such negro, mulatto, or person of colour, as a slave, or to be held to service of labour...

6. What is this act prohibiting? Importing slaves into the United States
7. Which country has passed this law? United States
8. On what date does it become illegal? January 1, 1808
9. This act specifically outlaws slaves coming from where? From any foreign country, place, or kingdom
10. What does this **not** prohibit? Slavery itself

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Answer Key

An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade

(Emert, 1995, p. 51)

...Be it therefore enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords...and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That from and after the First Day of May One thousand eight hundred and seven, the African Slave Trade, and all...manner of dealing and trading in the Purchase, Sale, Barter, or Transfer of Slaves or of Persons intended to be sold, transferred, used or dealt with as Slaves, practised and carried on, in, at to or from any Part of the Coast or Countries of Africa, shall be, and the same is hereby utterly abolished, prohibited, and declared to be unlawful; and also that all and all manner of dealing, either by way of Purchase, Sale, Barter, or Transfer, or by means of any other Contract or Agreement whatever relating to any Slaves, or to any Persons intended to be used or dealt with as Slaves, for the Purpose of such Slaves or Persons being removed and transported either immediately or by Transshipment at Sea or otherwise, directly or indirectly from Africa, or from any Island, Country, Territory, or Place whatever, in the West Indies, or in any other Part of America, not being in the Dominion, Possession, or Occupation of His Majesty, to any other Island, Country, Territory, or Place whatever, is hereby in like Manner utterly abolished, prohibited, and declared to be unlawful...

1. What is this act abolishing? The slave trade
2. Which country has passed this law? Britain
3. On what date does it become illegal? May 1, 1807
4. This act specifically outlaws slaves coming from where? Africa,
West Indies or any place which is not part of the British Empire
5. What does this **not** prohibit? slavery

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So What?

1. What do these documents do? Prohibits and/or abolishes the slave trade in each country
2. How are these documents similar to each other? They abolish the slave trade, they take effect less than a year apart, neither abolishes slavery
3. Think **very** carefully about what these documents prohibit and/or abolish. What parts of the United States and Britain will be most affected by these acts? Port cities in Britain and New England - where the bulk of the money is made from the slave trade, not slavery itself.
4. Which region do you think will be least affected by these acts? The South makes its money from slavery itself, which has not been abolished. The price of slaves will likely go up, but most of their money comes from agricultural products, not the slave trade
5. What hasn't these documents prohibited and/or abolished? Why do you think this is significant? Slavery.
6. How might the South actually benefit from the abolition of the international slave trade? The price of slaves may go up. The South will now be the only legal source of slaves. Tobacco is less profitable than cotton, and as a result the Upper South stands to make money from the sale of slaves to the Deep South.

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Historical Markers: Create two historical markers. See picture below for an examples. Include important information, including the date and a summarization of what each act was meant to accomplish. Be sure to include what the acts did **not** prohibit. Think carefully about where each marker might be placed and how that might influence the wording on each marker.

Things to consider for each marker:

British Historical Marker	United States Historical Marker
• Will you place this in Liverpool, a city built on the slave trade or in London, where the act was officially abolished? • Do you think it matters to Liverpool if slavery is abolished?	• Will you place in this in New England, perhaps in a port built on the slave trade, in Washington, D.C, where it was abolished (and where slavery continued to be legal), or in the South? • Be specific if you choose to place it in the South. Virginia and South Carolina likely had different reactions to the abolition of the slave trade.

