



Welcome to this World AIMS resource which looks at the history of the transatlantic slave trade and issues surrounding modern day slavery

Welcome to this World AIMS resource pack on slavery.

This resource (alongside the PowerPoint Presentation) includes materials on the transatlantic slave trade. It also includes materials around the issue of modern day slavery.

Also included in this pack, is an in depth look at John Wesley's views about the slave trade with useful discussion points.

The pack also includes a look at Moses and the Israelites, offering an opportunity to look at the issue of slavery within the bible.

Contents

What do we think?
The power of an image
A biblical perspective
Life as a Slave
The Anti Slavery Movement
John Wesley and Slavery
Modern Day Slavery
Slavery In the UK

What do we think?



When we think of the word slavery, are these often the words that we think of? Why is that? Where have these ideas come from? What do some of these words mean? Are there any words here that we don't recognize? In pairs, discuss the questions below.

Can freedom ever be abused or misused?

What does freedom mean to you?

freedom

Should freedom ever be controlled?

If someone is not free, what does this look like?

What is the difference between 'freedom from' and 'freedom to'?

The power of an image



What does this image say?

They say that a picture paints a thousand words. Images are very important way of communicating thoughts, feelings, messages and ideas. A picture can say different things to different people.

What does the above image say to you? What do you see? What does the image represent? How does the image make you feel? What was the photographer trying to say with this image?

Tasks

Look at the slavery board on page 2. After completing the discussion points below, create a similar word board for freedom.

Look at the quote from John Wesley on the right.

What view is Wesley trying to get across?

How did his beliefs influence this view?

Tasks

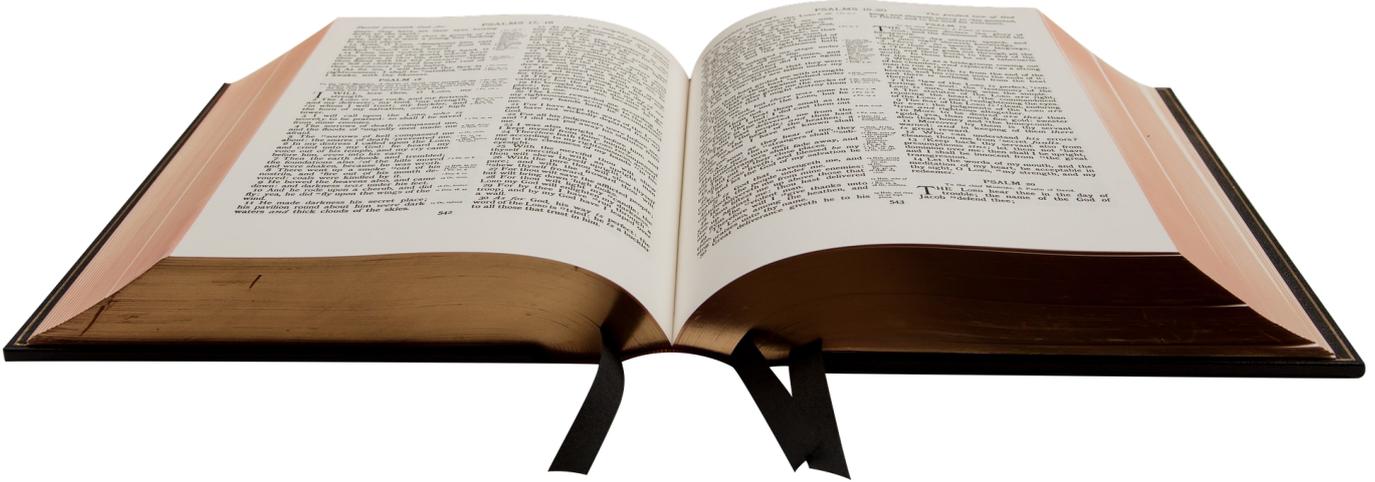
After discussing the image above in pairs, feed back your thoughts to the rest of the group.

Using the internet, books etc, find an image that you sums up slavery (as you understand it). Share this image with the group and explain your choice. What does the image say to you?

Why is it powerful in your opinion?

**“Be you a man, not a
wolf, a devourer of
the human species!
Be merciful, that you
may obtain mercy!”
John Wesley**

A biblical perspective



What do we know about slavery in biblical times?

The first point to note about slavery we come across in the bible is that it did exist. At the time of events we see in the bible, slavery was commonplace. The Ancient Greeks and Roman Empire relied heavily on slavery to sustain a large part of their economy. The Roman Empire especially acquired slaves through the conquest of lands.

The ancient Egyptians also had slaves, it is claimed that they were used to build many of the famous monuments we see today. They were mainly acquired as prisoners of war. According to the bible, The Israelites were slaves in Egypt and Moses was sent by God to challenge Pharaoh to set the Israelites free and lead them to the Promised Land. God's heart for the freedom of people comes out through his treatment of the Israelites.

How was slavery different?

In ancient times the practice of voluntary slavery or 'self-sale' was much more common. This meant that people living in poverty would often sell themselves into slavery in order to feed their families for example. Within the Greek and Roman civilizations, 'self-sale' was recognised in law and it was also one way to become a citizen after a slave

owner had freed the slave. However as a slave, the individual was recognized in law as the property of their master.

Voluntary slavery was widely practiced during biblical times, and the bible does seem to proscribe laws that were designed to protect the slave who chose to self sale. Does this mean that the bible condoned slavery?

Another reason people ended up in slavery was because of debts they owed. Many "chose" to tie themselves into debt bondage for fear that the consequences enforced by their creditors would be much worse than slavery.

What does the bible say?

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free man, there is neither male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:28

The above verse was written by the Apostle Paul in



Exodus 2: 11-15

Tasks

Read Exodus 2:11-15. This recalls how Moses killed an Egyptian slave master. How did the Hebrews respond to this?

Why do you think this was included in the bible?

What message do you think this sends to Christians about how they should deal with the perpetrators of injustice?

Many years later, when Moses had grown up, he went out to visit his own people, the Hebrews, and he saw how hard they were forced to work. During his visit, he saw an Egyptian beating one of his fellow Hebrews. After looking in all directions to make sure no one was watching, Moses killed the Egyptian and hid the body in the sand.

The next day, when Moses went out to visit his people again, he saw two Hebrew men fighting. "Why are you beating up your friend?" Moses said to the one who had started the fight.

The man replied, "Who appointed you to be our prince and judge? Are you going to kill me as you killed that Egyptian yesterday?"

Then Moses was afraid, thinking, "Everyone knows what I did." And sure enough, Pharaoh heard what had happened, and he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in the land of Midian

his letter to the Galatians. What was Paul's view about how God viewed those who ended up as slaves?

This verse shows what God's heavenly perspective is. In heaven, all are one in Jesus. Christians are called to demonstrate God's kingdom here on earth.

When looking at the freeing of the Israelites from Egypt, many Christians see this as God's perspective on slavery. He has freed the Israelites as equals and he outlines in Leviticus 25 how the Israelites cannot oppress one another. He has given them freedom from slavery, they therefore should not oppress others.

Exodus 21:16 says that "He who kidnaps a man, whether he sells him, or is found in his possession, shall surely be put to death". What does this suggest is the biblical view about involuntary slavery?



Tasks

What is the difference between voluntary and involuntary slavery? Is there REALLY a difference? Why?

What do you think God's view on slavery is through looking at the story of the Israelites?

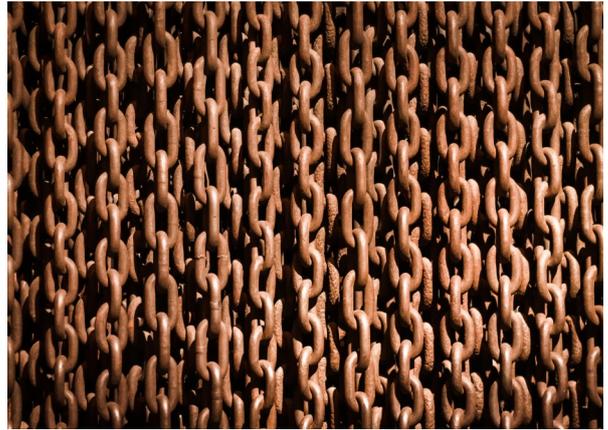
How could any of these biblical passages influence and support abolitionists?

What other biblical passages can you find that talk about how slaves should be treated? What message does this give?

Life as a Slave

Capture

Africans could be captured into slavery in a number of ways. They may have been captured directly by European traders when they arrived in countries like the Gambia. Europeans would also purchase slaves from local tribal chiefs who would often raid rival villages and capture enemies to sell on as slaves. They developed sophisticated networks of trade alliances. Slaves could be captured in battle or sold as a punishment or for a debt.



These captives were then marched to the coast. This would often be a long journey where they would be shackled together.

This is a barracoon. Once they had been captured, the Africans would be held in a barracoon. This was a dungeon like cell. They were locked up like captives. They could be locked up for weeks. There could be as many as 45 people held in here at any one time. Once the slavers had a full cargo of 'merchandise' they would load them onto the ships ready for the crossing across the Atlantic Ocean.

The Middle Passage

The Middle Passage was the name given to the journey the Africans made across the Atlantic Ocean. This journey could take several weeks, sometimes months. Conditions on the ships were awful. Disease was rife. They were kept below deck in suffocating conditions. Africans had no control over their own lives. They were exposed to violence and abuse whilst on board. They were chained together to minimize the risk of escape, suicide or rebellion. Many died on the way, they were just thrown overboard.

“many a time we were near suffocation, from the want of fresh air which we were often without whole days together”

Oludah Equiano describing his experience as a slave on the ship in his book

Tasks

You should begin to write a diary as if you were someone who has been captured into slavery. Your first entry should include your experience of being captured and being held in the barracoons. The second entry should include a detailed description of your journey on the Middle Passage.

Extension: In small groups, create a visual display that shows the conditions and experiences of the slaves on board the ships.

Life as a Slave

TO BE SOLD & LET
BY PUBLIC AUCTION at 11 o'Clock
On the ~15th day of July, 1820
UNDER THE TREES
FOR SALE
FIVE
SLAVES,

TOBIAS *about 28 Years old, a good House Servant.*
HANNIBAL *about 20 Years old, a Labourer.*
JOSHUA *about 40 Years old, a Excellent Fisherman.*
ABRAHAM *about 25 Years old, Strong and Healthy.*
ELIZA *a Young Woman, used to House Work and the Nursery.*
All the above SLAVES belonging to a Local Plantation

TO BE LET
*On the usual Conditions of the Hirer finding them in Food, Clothing, and –
Medical Attendance*
MALE and FEMALE
SLAVES,
of Good Character – from other Districts –

LUTHER *about 30 Years old, a Labourer.*
WILLIAM *about 37 Years old, an Excellent House Servant*
HARRY *about 24 Years old, and Strong in Limb*
FANNY *an Excellent Washerwoman.*
LUCY *about 14 Years old, House Servant.*
SARAH *a Good House Servant and Nurse.*
NANCY *about 16 Years old, a Good Cook*
CLARA *about 20 Years old, a Good Cook*

Also for Sale. A quantity of Fine Silk & Other Goods

The Auction

Once they had arrived in the Americas, the Africans were prepared to be sold at auction. In preparation, they would be washed and shaved. They would also have oil and hot tar rubbed on them in an effort to disguise any wounds or sores.

During the auction process, the Africans would be subjected to humiliating inspections by prospective buyers to assess their physical strength and health. This could include, examining teeth, pinching limbs to establish muscular strength as well as walking up and down to see any signs of lameness.

Any family members or friendships were broken up at auction. This was part of the process of removing their old identity, breaking their will and severing all links with their past.

The Africans were then sold to the highest bidder and would then head to the plantation and begin the process of 'seasoning', this was the forced adaptation and acceptance to a new life, with new living and working conditions, language, identity and culture. This process could last up to three years, resistance against it would be punished.

On the Plantations

The majority of Africans were bought to be slave labour on the plantations. The most common experience for a slave was to work on a sugar plantation. However, cotton, rice and tobacco were also grown on many plantations.

It was a life of endless labour, but conditions did vary depending on how the plantation owner believed in treating his slaves. However punishment for resistance was commonplace. This could include, whippings, beatings, leg irons and neck collars.



However, for extremely serious offences, slaves could be put to death.

Punishments were usually inflicted by the overseer. This was normally a slave who had been appointed by the plantation owner to over see the work of the slaves.

Tasks

You now need to write a new entry in your diary. You must describe the auction process that you were part of. What happened to you? What did it feel like? Explain how it felt to be separated from family and friends. Talk about the physical inspection.

Extension: In groups, create a drama piece which highlights the auction process, then whilst in character, get the audience to ask questions about how you felt during the experience.

Life as a Slave

Tasks

What do you imagine life would have been like on the plantations?

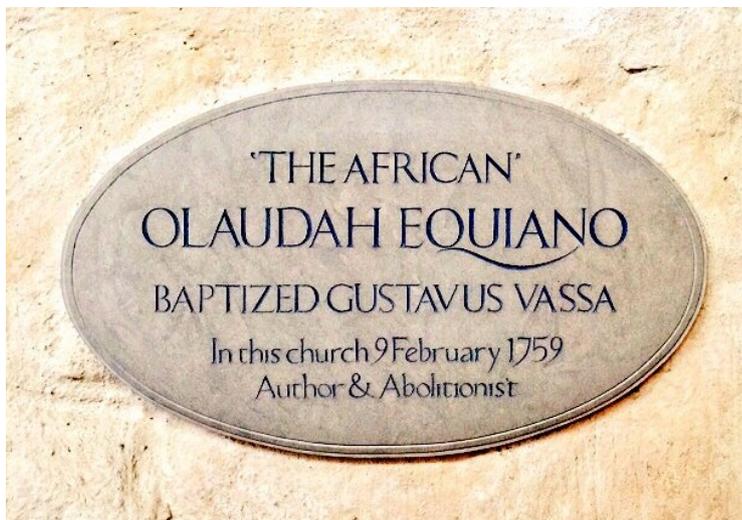
What would the conditions have been like?

You will need to write a new entry into your diary describing life as a slave now that you are working in the plantation.



In many cases, slaves were literally worked to death, On average, the life expectancy was just 7 to 10 years for a slave on a plantation. Living and working conditions were horrendous. The image above is an example of a slave cabin.

Usually on a sugar plantation, it would be the female slaves that would work in the field, they may also have worked as domestics. Children were also put to work on the plantations from a very early age. Male slaves could also work in the field or would be expected to work as craftsmen or in the mill. Conditions were often grueling with slaves having very little time to rest.



Rebellion and Escape

Resistance was a constant feature of slavery and could take many forms including sabotage, running away, arson and full scale rebellion. Slaves were harshly punished for acts of rebellion. There is evidence of over 250 uprisings or attempted uprisings.

Slaves that ran away became known as 'Fugitive Slaves'. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 stated that all fugitive slaves had to be returned to their masters if they were found.

Tasks

Look at the image on the left. This plaque can be found in St Margaret's Church in Westminster.

Your task is to find out who Olaudah Equiano was and his history.

What was he doing in London in 1759?

Why is he famous?

Produce a presentation for your class which explains the importance of this man.

Extension: Research into how slaves rebelled and escaped from their owners. Look at the 'Underground Railroad' and how this assisted slaves' escapes.

The Anti Slavery Movement

In 1808, The Slave Trade Act of 1807 was passed. This act abolished the trading of slaves in the British Empire, but did not abolish slavery itself. This meant that the buying and selling of slaves could no longer take place. However it was not unlawful to still own slaves that had previously been bought. Through using the Royal Navy to patrol the seas, it did suppress the trade but not stop it entirely.

It wasn't until 1833 that the Slavery Abolition Act was passed in Great Britain. This saw slavery abolished throughout the British Empire.

The abolition of slave trade in America came into law in 1808, however some trading did continue illegally for at least the next fifty years. It was a long struggle to get slavery itself abolished throughout America. This culminated in the American Civil War of 1861-65. The Northern states of America had gone to great lengths to reduce slavery but the southern states wished to resist the emancipation of slaves. When the Northern States won, the 13th Amendment was passed which made slavery illegal throughout the USA.

However, a long struggle to gain equal rights for Black people of America would now begin. It would take over 100 years before significant legal changes were made.



What do you see in this image?

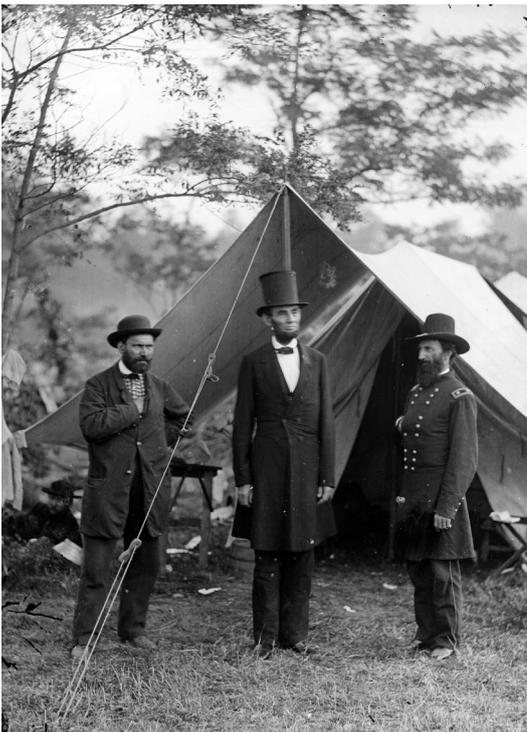
This monument can be found in the Gambia. It is found near the fort where many Africans were held captive in barracoons before being transported across the Atlantic Ocean.

What can you see in the image?

Why do you think the head is a globe?

What is significant about the colours?

What message does the monument give out?



Tasks

Divide yourself into groups of threes. Each person in the group takes on one of the following factors:

A) Slaves

B) White Campaigners

C) Economics

Each of you should prepare a report about how this factor was important to the abolition of slavery

Extension: Who is the man in the middle of the photo? What role did he play in ending slavery in the USA?

What did Wesley say about slavery?

“Better is honest poverty than all the riches bought by the tears, and sweat and blood of our fellow creatures”

“I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise in opposing that execrable villainy which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils. But if God be for you, who can be against you? Are all of them together stronger than God? O be not weary of well doing! Go on, in the name of God and in the power of his might, till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before it.”

The first quotation cited above is from a pamphlet Wesley wrote on the issue of slavery. The second quotation comes from a letter he wrote on his deathbed to William Wilberforce. In his sermon, ‘Thoughts on Slavery’, John Wesley said that:

‘Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air, and no human law can deprive him of that right which he derives from the law of nature.’

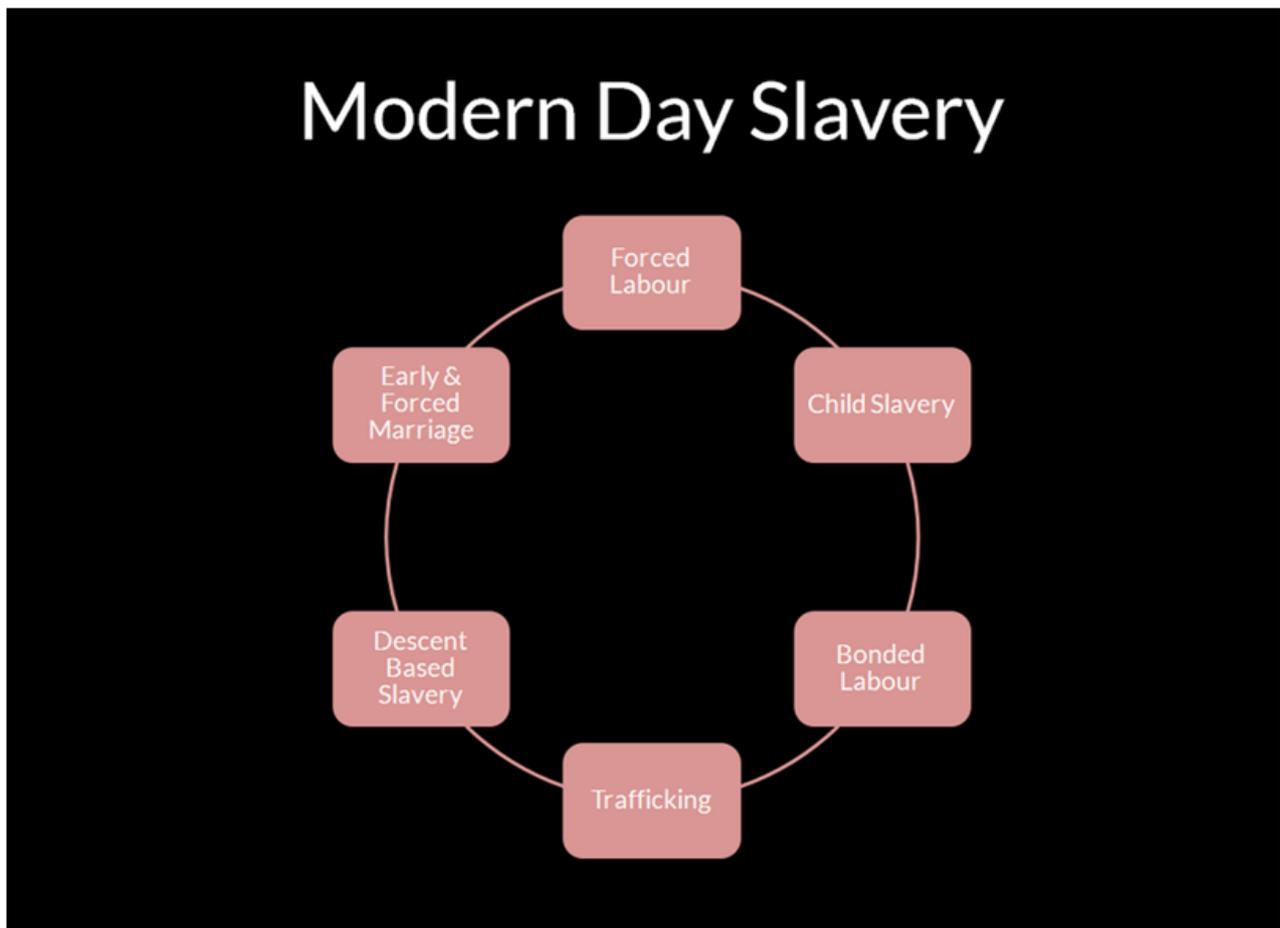
Discussion Points

Either in small groups or as a class, try to debate the following questions:

1. What was Wesley’s view on slavery?
2. Wesley chose to write about slavery to William Wilberforce from his deathbed. What does this suggest about how important the issue was for him?
3. In Wesley’s letter to Wilberforce, what does Wesley suggest would be God’s opinion on slavery?
4. Wesley said ‘Liberty is the right of every human creature’, what do you think he would say about current issues surrounding slavery and freedom?

For more insight into Wesley’s views, how about reading his sermon ‘Thoughts on Slavery’?

Invisible Chains?



Forced Labour: Almost every form of modern day slavery includes some form of forced labour. This literally means where anyone is forced to work against their will, and are threatened with punishment.

Child Slavery: The International Labour Organisation believes that as many as 5.5 million children are somehow involved in modern day slavery practices. This could include forced child labour or children forced into armed conflict or even child domestic workers working in dangerous and abusive environments.

Bonded Labour: This is where someone's labour is demanded in repayment for a debt or loan. They are often trapped into working for little or no pay, yet the value of the work they do is invariably greater than the outstanding debt. The employer does not allow the bonded labourer to work for anyone else. Violence is common. The debt is often passed down to the next generation. This is the most widespread form of modern day slavery.

Trafficking: Trafficking can involve men, women and children. It is when people are brought into a situation of exploitation and forced to work against their will. This is often achieved by coercion, violence and deception. There are many forms of exploitation for which people are trafficked.

Descent Based Slavery: This type of slavery describes those who are born into a specific group identified as a slave class by those around them. So, if a woman is working as a bonded labourer, any children she has will be born into slavery.

Early & Forced Marriage: This can be classed as slavery if the child has not given their free & informed consent. Also if the child is exposed to exploitation, control and a sense of 'ownership' in the marriage and also if the child cannot realistically leave or end the marriage.

Slavery in the UK?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that:

“No one shall be held in slavery or servitude. Slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.”

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed in 1948. This was after the world had witnessed some terrible atrocities during the Second World War. This specific article of the declaration clearly states that all forms of slavery are prohibited. Yet, as we learnt on the previous page, slavery is a modern day problem despite it being a fundamental human right that all people should be free. As well as being a modern day issue, it is not an issue just confined to other places in the world, it is a real issue even here, within Great Britain.

In 2013 there was a 47% increase in the number of slavery cases reported in the UK than in the previous year.* This was over 1700 cases. These were only the reported cases, and because of the hidden nature of slavery, alarmingly, the figures for slavery in Britain could be much higher.

It is estimated that 1 in 4 slavery victims in Britain are children and one third of all victims are male. It is estimated that 36% of all victims are exploited through forced labour. This could include; working in factories, restaurants, food processing, agriculture, the maritime industry and labouring.

It is believed that most victims come from countries such as Poland, Albania, Vietnam, Nigeria and Romania. However, UK citizens are also victims of this.

**UK National Referral Mechanism Statistics 2013*

Tasks

Imagine you have to do an assembly to younger students about the issue. How would you do this sensitively, securely and safely?

In order to do this, split into groups and research into the work on organisations that tackle modern day slavery, especially in the UK. There are lots of them. What are their visions? Their approach? How do they differ?

You will also need to look at what the British Government says about modern day slavery and how it tries to prevent it.

You may want to put your assembly within the wider historical context, looking at slavery throughout time.

If you are able to show your assembly, think about what is the message you want people to hear? Repeat the task on page 3, select an image that represents slavery to you. Has it now changed having gone through this pack? Why? Why not?

Remember to show your assembly to your teacher first before showing to younger students