

Worksheet 3 – Is slavery a thing of the past?

1. Read the article and match each paragraph (1-4) with the images you saw in the first activity.

Text 1

Most ancient cultures had slaves, people who were bought and sold and forced to work without being paid. The Great Pyramids in Egypt were built with slave labour and most people who worked on farms in the Middle Ages in Europe were also slaves. If your parents were slaves, then you automatically became a slave, or you could become a slave if your people lost a war, or if you owed money you could not pay.

Text 2

By the 16th century most workers in Britain and other European countries were free (if not very well paid), but around this time Europeans, especially the British, started to trade in slaves from Africa. It was known as the triangular trade because there were three stages. First the British traders took goods to Africa, where these goods were exchanged for slaves. Then the slaves were taken to the West Indies and North America and sold to work on farms growing sugarcane, tobacco, coffee and cotton. Finally, these products were sold in England.

Text 3

It is estimated that around 6 million Africans were taken to the Americas as slaves, with a third of them on British ships. At least 15% of slaves died on the journey.

Text 4

The Slave Trade made a great deal of money for Britain, but many people wanted it stopped. After a huge campaign, the slave trade was abolished in 1807. This was a great victory, but we must remember that children in Britain continued to be forced to work for little or no pay for many years after that, and that slavery, in different forms, continues today.

2. Talk about the text with your partner. Did anything surprise or shock you?
3. Now work with a partner who read the text on worksheet 4. Tell each other about what you read.