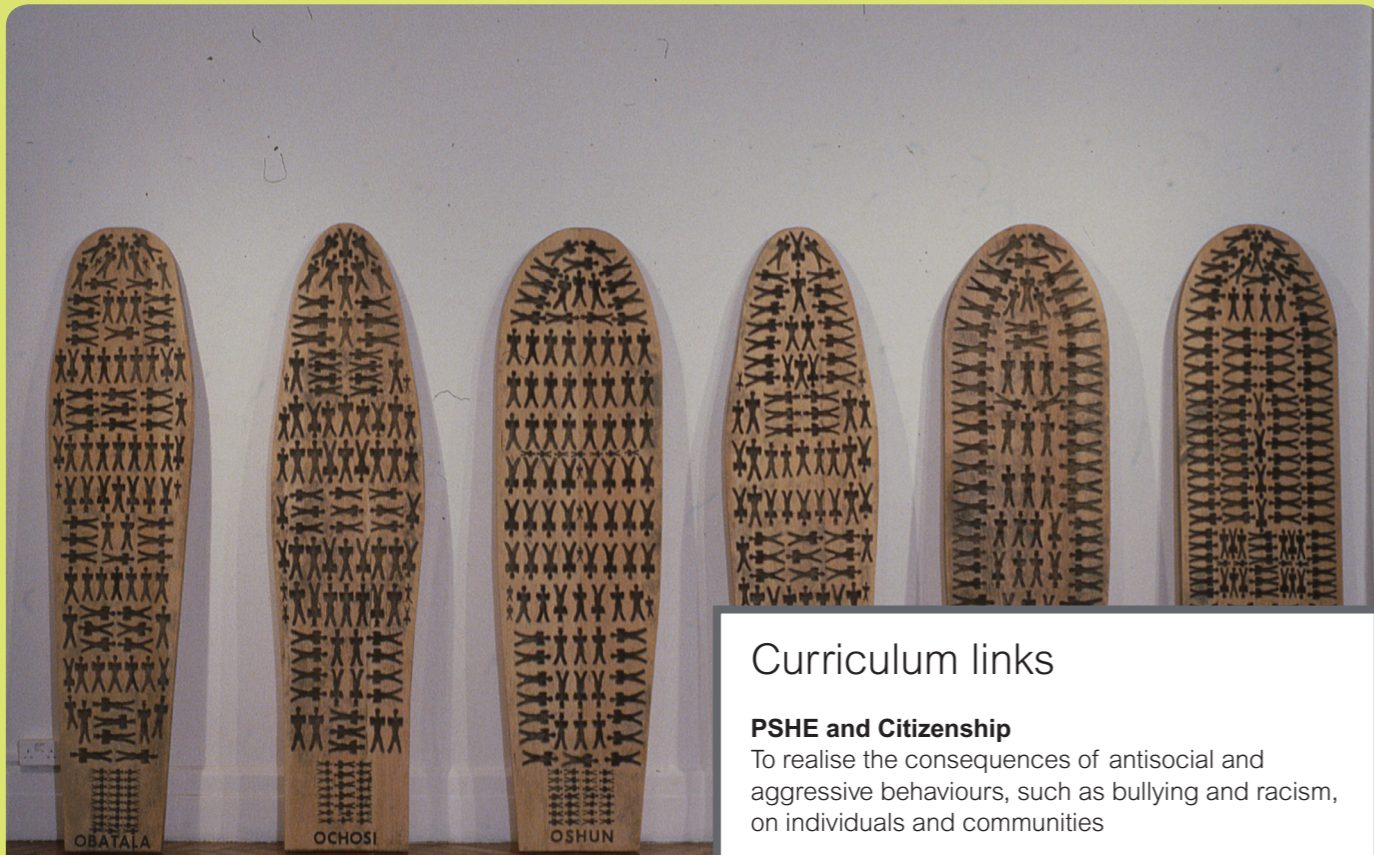


Transatlantic Slavery



Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, *The Seven Powers by the Sea* exhibited at Bluecoat, 1999 © Bluecoat

Summary

Pupils will learn about Liverpool's history as a trading port and its involvement in Transatlantic slavery. By using artwork exhibited at Bluecoat, pupils will explore this brutal and troubling aspect of Liverpool and Bluecoat's past.

Duration

Core activities: 5 x 1 hour sessions

Aims and Outcomes

- Pupils will have learned about the history of Liverpool and its links to the Transatlantic Slave Trade. They will have learned how the town grew as a result of increased trade
- Pupils will have learned about the impact that the Transatlantic Slave Trade had on enslaved African people
- Pupils will have learned how artists today tackle difficult and upsetting issues

Curriculum links

PSHE and Citizenship

To realise the consequences of antisocial and aggressive behaviours, such as bullying and racism, on individuals and communities

To reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, using imagination to understand other people's experiences

To think about the lives of people living in other places and times, and people with different values and customs

History

A study of an aspect of history or a site dating from a period beyond 1066 that is significant in the locality

Changes in an aspect of social history

English

Planning their writing by:

Writing down ideas and/or key words, including new vocabulary

Explaining and discussing their understanding, including through formal presentations and debates, maintaining a focus on the topic and using notes where necessary

Providing reasoned justifications for their views

Art

To improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials

Background

For over 2,000 years societies all over the world have forced people into slavery. In more modern times Transatlantic slavery refers to the period between the 15th and 19th century. During this period millions of African people were enslaved and forced to travel to the Americas and the Caribbean in terrible conditions and made to work on plantations and estates, in fields and down mines. Enslaved people were taken away from their homes, treated violently, separated from their families and had their identities taken away from them. Products that were made by slave labour such as cotton, sugar and tobacco were luxury goods and could be sold for a lot of money. Countries that were very involved made a lot of money from Transatlantic slavery and during this time it was not against the law to profit from the enslavement of other people.

During the 18th century Liverpool was the port most involved in Transatlantic slavery in Europe and it was one of the fastest growing cities in the world. Many of the people

involved in Blue Coat School were involved in Transatlantic slavery. As a result of this, a lot of the money that was given to the school to help the children of Liverpool was made through the cruelty of enslavement.

Transatlantic slavery was abolished by the 1840s, but its legacy can still be seen in Britain and the rest of the world today. On 9 December 1999 Liverpool City Council made a formal apology for the city's role in Transatlantic slavery. In 2007, two hundred years since the abolition of slavery, the International Slavery Museum opened on Albert Dock.

Bluecoat encourages artists to explore difficult and painful aspects of the building's history including Transatlantic slavery. In particular, exhibitions such as *Trophies of Empire* looked at how artists and the public explore and engage with the difficult and troubling history of slavery.

Activity

Starter question

These questions will assess the pupils' prior knowledge and also alert you to any possible difficulties or sensitive topics.

What is enslavement?

Do you know anything about Liverpool's connections to enslavement?

Core activity

Using the material available on our website, pupils will look at a number of different artworks which have been exhibited at Bluecoat and tackle the issue of slavery. These artworks are from a number of exhibitions and range from paintings to mixed media installations.

With each artwork there will be questions for the children to consider, as well as an activity that will ask them to think about the emotional and physical impact that the enslavement of African people had.

End question

Today, slavery is illegal all over the world but there are still millions of people who are enslaved. Do you know anything about contemporary slavery and how does knowing this make you feel?

Why is it important to talk about and remember difficult and upsetting issues and historic events?

Think About

- Is there anything you already know about transatlantic slavery?
- Are you surprised to find out that so much of Liverpool's wealth came from Transatlantic slavery? How does this make you feel?

Talk About

- Why do you think it's important to talk about the Transatlantic slavery even though it is a difficult and upsetting topic?
- Is it important that Liverpool City Council made a formal apology for the city's part in Transatlantic slavery?

This was a time of great contrasts, where the brutality of slavery often went hand in hand with philanthropy.

Philanthropy: the desire to promote the welfare of others, especially by the generous donations of money to good causes.

- What do you think this means? What does it tell us about society at the time?

Find out About

- What was life like for the people who were enslaved as a result of the Transatlantic slave trade?

If you enjoyed this resource you might want to look at *Bluecoat on Strike* or *Child Labour Debate*