

## KS3 History – Black Atlantis

The learner will learn about the theory of 'Black Atlantis', discovering the historical background and creating a storyboard to visualise what the legend would look like.

Estimated time = 1 hour

### Curriculum Extract:

The national curriculum for KS3 history aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- Gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales
- Gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'

Pupils should be taught about:

- Ideas, political power, industry and empire: Britain, 1745 – 1901, for example, Britain's Transatlantic Slave Trade: its effects and its eventual abolition.

### Key Terms:

- **Imperial Britain** – When Britain held an empire, ruling over and controlling many countries across the world by force, often robbing indigenous people of their land and natural resources and removing their cultural identities.
- **Transatlantic Slave Trade** – The Slave Trade was the selling of African people as slaves by Europeans that happened in and around the Atlantic Ocean. It lasted from the 1500s to the 1800s. Most of the enslaved people were taken from West Africa and brought to America on huge ships, where conditions were terrible, in exchange for trade items such as cotton and sugar.
- **Commission** – To formally choose someone to do a special piece of work, or to formally ask for a special piece of work from some.
- **Installation** – Installation art is a style of art that uses three- dimensional objects.
- **Storyboard** – A storyboard is a series of illustrations that map out the key events in a story. The images progress through the story in the order it is told and often include captions that describe the action in each scene, or dialogue spoken by the characters.
- **Atlantis** – Atlantis is a name for a fictional large island or small continent that was (in the legend) in the Atlantic Ocean many years before it sank into the depth of the sea.

Children / Learner's Side (2)

KS3 History - Black Atlantis

# Liverpool Biennial

**Artist's Name:** Ayesha Hameed

**LB2021 Project Description:**

Ayesha Hameed presents a newly commissioned installation at LUSH in Liverpool city centre. Hameed's audio-visual installation follows the laying down of the first undersea telegraphic cable developed between India and Imperial Britain in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, which caused several weeks of delay for Britain to get news of the outbreak of a Revolt against the British Empire in 1857.

Ayesha Hameed lives in London, UK. Since 2013, Hameed's multi-chapter project 'Black Atlantis' has looked at the Black Atlantic and its afterlives in contemporary illegalised migration at sea, oceanic environments, outer space and through Afrofuturistic dancefloors and sound systems. Through videos, audio-essays and performance-lectures, she examines how to think through sound, image, water, violence and history as elements of an active archive; and travelling back in time as a historical method.



Ayesha Hameed, *I sing of the sea, I am mermaid of the trees* (2021).

Around 400 years ago, thousands of slaves were forced to travel from Africa by boat to be sold to work in the Americas. In 1781, the crew of the English slave ship 'Zong' threw their slaves over-board after calculating that the insurance money for their death was worth more than the profit gained from selling their lives. As ships crossed the Atlantic it was a common practice for the captain and crew to throw cargo overboard in storms, but in a few instances such as on the 'Zong', it was slaves who were thrown overboard — an action that raised the issue of whether slaves were legally defined as people or property.

This was a sad time in history when people were treated like objects and not seen as human, all for the making of profit.

It was also common for pregnant America-bound African slaves to be thrown overboard by the thousands during labour for being sick and 'disruptive' cargo. Is it possible that they could have given birth at sea to babies that never needed air? Were the children born of pregnant slaves thrown overboard able to adapt to living underwater, as they went straight from living in amniotic fluid to ocean water? This is the legend of Black Atlantis.



Ayesha Hameed, *Black Atlantis: Jupiter* (2018). Lecture performance at Spike Island, Bristol.

### Activity Instructions:

1. Make a storyboard on pages 3 and 4 to imagine what Black Atlantis would be like. Use your knowledge of the fictional formation of Black Atlantis and the historical information to guide your story.
2. Use the questions below to plan out and draw your scenes.
  - **Who** are your characters?
  - **Where** is your story set?
  - **What** is being said or done?
  - **When** is it happening?
  - **Why** is it happening?
3. Underneath your drawings, use the lines provided to write descriptions of what is happening in each frame, or to include dialogue within your story.
4. If you would like to find out more about the theory of Black Atlantis to help you with constructing your storyboard, you can read more within an article written by Ayesha Hameed titled, 'Black Atlantis: Three Songs' (2014). Access the article via the link below:  
[https://www.academia.edu/33920663/Black\\_Atlantis](https://www.academia.edu/33920663/Black_Atlantis)

### Material List:

- Pen or pencil
- Coloured pencils

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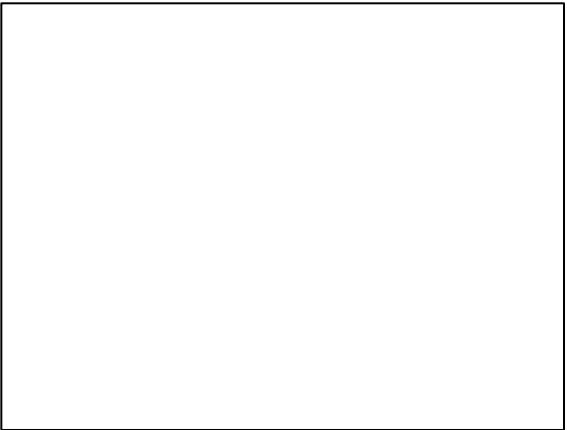
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