

RSC

ROYAL
SHAKESPEARE
COMPANY



THE
WHIP
JULIET GILKES ROMERO

TEACHER PACK

ABOUT THIS PACK

This pack supports the RSC's 2020 audio dramatisation of *The Whip*, written by Juliet Gilkes Romero and directed by Kimberley Sykes. The production first opened in the Swan Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon in 2020.

In this pack you will find practical activities to use with your students. There are also comprehensive resources based on the play's context, history and Juliet's source material. These are all specifically designed to support KS2-5 students who are engaging with the audio dramatisation and subject matter in school. They have been written and created in collaboration with Juliet Gilkes Romero and Debbie Korley, who plays Mercy Pryce.

ADVISORY WARNING

The play explores issues that may be upsetting or challenging for some pupils to explore. We have provided suggestions for activities that enable students to creatively engage with the historical facts that inspired the play; those facts continue to have strong resonances for our lives and experiences today. Students may need opportunities to reflect on the impact of the play and its content on their own identities and experiences.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

The Whip is set during the unprecedented collision of abolition, the battle to end infant labour in cotton mills and electoral reforms.

It is a 19th century political drama about the fight for social justice and the power of political solidarity. For the protagonists, this battle is at times dangerous and revolutionary.

Events open out through the eyes of these central characters:

- **Edmund**; once a runaway slave and now ward of the Government's Chief Whip.
- **Mercy Pryce**; a runaway slave and orator fighting for survival and abolition.
- **Horatia Poskitt**; a jobless migrant worker from Blackburn where her daughter died in a cotton mill.
- **Anthony Bradshaw-Cooper**; a new Reformist and firebrand MP who champions abolition.
- **Lord Alexander Boyd**; Government Chief Whip, charged with delivering the abolition bill and the compensation fund for slave owners some of whom sit in Parliament.

THE BACKGROUND

The Whip takes a moment in British history that appears, on paper, to be a triumph in ethical law-making; the passing of the 1833 Slavery Abolition Bill which outlawed enslavement throughout most of the Empire. On the surface the achievement was seen as a monumental and heroic victory for human decency and the conquest of good over evil. The reality however was that many freed slaves were forced to work as unpaid apprentices for up to seven years for the very same owners. What is less well known is that the abolition bill facilitated the payment of financial compensation to the slave owners. To do this, the government borrowed around 20 million pounds (the equivalent of

around £20 billion today). This massive loan was finally paid off by the British tax payer in 2015. It took 182 years. The loan represents one of the largest bailouts in UK history.

This pack has been arranged into seven key sections based on the characters' journeys through the play and the circumstances, events and themes that drive and impact their stories. In each section you will find a list of suggested activities that you can use to explore with your students. You will find all of these in the 'Activities' section at the end of the pack.

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These symbols are used throughout the pack:



READ

Notes from the production, background info or extracts



ACTIVITY

A practical or open space activity



WRITE

A classroom writing or discussion activity



LINKS

Useful web addresses and research tasks



PLOT

A synopsis of the play, explaining the roles of Chief Whip Alexander Boyd, runaway slaves Mercy Pryce and Edmund and ex-cotton worker Horatia Poskitt, is available at:

<https://www.rsc.org.uk/the-whip/the-plot>

CHARACTERS

MERCY

“I have witnessed desperate slaves, including my pregnant mother leap into a cauldron of boiling sugar thus depriving her owner of crop, servant and future stock”

Mercy, in her thirties is a slave who has bolted for freedom from her owner, Mr Beaumont during his visit to London from Barbados. She was sold to him at the age of 5. She has endured much suffering during enslavement. Her mother committed suicide. Her own daughter was taken from her and sold as an infant, then flogged to death by a particularly cruel owner. Mercy also witnessed the crippling of her sister Athena who was publicly punished on the infamous ‘Treadmill’. Mercy wants justice for her loved ones. The only way she can achieve this is if the Abolition Bill succeeds. Helped by Bradshaw-Cooper, Mercy gains the support of abolitionists in London but is constantly made to prove the trauma of her enslavement and reveal her physical scars as proof. Mercy eventually becomes the public face of the abolition campaign but is horrified that the Bill is set to include a clause compelling freed slaves to work as unpaid apprentices for their former owners made rich by the proposed compensation fund. Mercy initially works with Bradshaw-Cooper against the compromises in the Bill. But she ‘jumps ship’ to work with Lord Alexander Boyd who has greater political power to help achieve the emancipation she so desires. It is Mercy’s battle against the clause which will pit her against her best ally, Lord Boyd. Mercy helps Horatia when she is arrested for seditious speech and then encourages Horatia to spy on Lord Boyd.



CONTEXT

The 1833 Slavery Abolition Act formally freed around 800,000 colonial slaves who had been the legal property of Britain’s slave owners. This same act contained a provision for the financial compensation of the slave owners for their losses, something many British people are unaware of today. Mercy Pryce is a character inspired by the historical figure of Mary Prince. She was the first black woman to petition Parliament on the subject of emancipation and helped to gather signatures in support of abolition, although she herself didn’t live to see it go through.

You can watch Juliet Gilkes Romero discussing the background to the Abolition Act with Director Kimberley Sykes and Debbie Korley who plays Mercy Pryce: [The forgotten voices of Abolition - video](#)

You may also find the following useful in exploring Mary Prince’s role in history, as well as the circumstances surrounding the abolition act:

- [British Library – The History of Mary Prince](#)
- [British Library Learning – The campaign for Abolition](#)
- [The Black Curriculum – KS2 and KS3 resources on ‘Mary Prince’](#)



ACTIVITIES

- There are a number of exercises you can do in the ‘Activities’ section below. You can work through these in order to explore the play and themes in more detail, but if you’re looking to focus on the topics relating to Mercy’s fascinating story and actions, try focussing on:
 - Activities 1-4

HORATIA

“Is ambition a crime Sir? Is the desire to elevate oneself so unforgiveable?”

Horatia, in her early twenties, is a cotton mill worker from Blackburn who has fled the town following the horrific death of her daughter Georgiana in a Weaving Shed. Horatia has been drawn to the capital by hopes of a new life and better wages. Her husband absconded after Georgiana died. Horatia endeavours to become employed in the domestic service of the Government’s Chief Whip, Lord Boyd. She has heard about his campaign to end infant labour in cotton mills. Horatia wants the same thing too. She forges her own job references in order to gain employment as Boyd’s House Keeper. In spite of her unsuitability for the job, Boyd and Horatia eventually bond over the scandal of infants working in cotton mills. Horatia will also eventually form a strategic friendship with Mercy. Horatia initially has no time for abolition believing that the plight of children in cotton mills is a far greater evil. She eventually comes to see that both causes must be resolved. But, her main goal in life is to see the mill owner responsible for her daughter’s death, prosecuted and hung for murder. She falls out with Boyd when he fails to help her pursue the man responsible.



CONTEXT

Child labour was commonplace in the 1800s, with many being apprenticed to cotton mills from ages as young as nine, and sometimes and illegally, younger. Such apprenticeships often committed children to working for no pay until the age of twenty one, virtually making them the property of the factory owner. The work was dangerous and sometimes fatal. The ‘Factory Bill’, which is debated in the play, sought to reduce their hours and improve conditions.

You can watch Juliet Gilkes Romero visiting Quarry Bank Mill to get a sense of what it was like to apprentice and labour at a mill: [Slavery by Another Name - video](#)

You may also find the following useful in exploring life in the cotton mills and the reality of infant labour:

- [Quarry Bank Mill – the rights of the child exhibition](#)
- [BBC – Children in the textile mills](#)
- [Spartacus Educational - Pauper Apprentices](#)



ACTIVITIES

- There are a number of exercises you can do in the ‘Activities’ section below. You can work through these in order to explore the play and themes in more detail, but if you’re looking to focus on the topics relating to Horatia’s challenging backstory and journey, try focussing on:
 - Activities 1 – 4

EDMUND

“I stare at shipping charts and search for the memory and faces of a mother, a father, brothers, sisters.... but remember nothing. Except my mother’s singing”

Edmund who is about sixteen years old, was kidnapped off the south western coast of Africa at the age of six, was branded then thrown into servitude, aboard the slave ship. It’s captain, Josiah Pettigrew, forced Edmund to work in the ship’s kitchen where he was routinely abused. At the age of eight Edmund manages to escape Pettigrew when the ship sails into a London dockyard. He is eventually discovered by Lord Boyd, scavenging for scraps amongst the capital’s feral waifs. Lord Boyd rescues Edmund and has Pettigrew prosecuted. Edmund now resides with his benefactor, working as his secretary and helping to manage the running of the household. Edmund is also receiving a classical education, overseen by Boyd. Edmund has ambitions of becoming Britain’s first black member of Parliament. However, tensions arise as through Edmund’s assertions for more freedom, it’s revealed that he has secretly been liaising with firebrand MP Bradshaw-Cooper. The latter has lent Edmund a book banned as seditious by the revolutionary, Thomas Paine. Boyd is outraged. The incident is the catalyst that will unravel the father-son relationship.



CONTEXT

You may find the following useful in exploring the history of the transatlantic slave trade, and the beginnings of Edmund's story:

- [BBC – Slavery and its abolition](#)
- [BBC – Legacies](#)
- [The Guardian – Fortunes of Francis Barber](#)
- [Google Arts and Culture – Cedric Barber, descendant of Francis Barber](#)



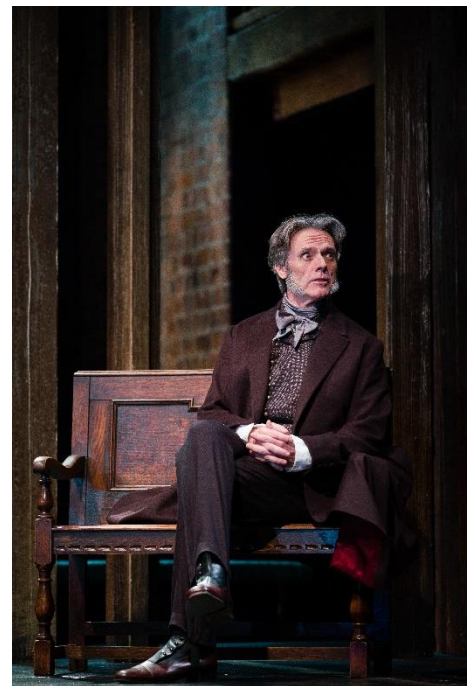
ACTIVITIES

- There are a number of exercises you can do in the 'Activities' section below. If you're looking to focus on the topics relating to Edmund's journey through the play, try focussing on:
 - Activities 1-2
 - Activity 4

LORD ALEXANDER BOYD

"The prosperity of our nation depends on those with few rights. But don't tell anyone I told you so, otherwise we'll both end up in chains"

Boyd, in his forties, is the Chief Whip (pun intended), for the Whigs Party. At the outset, he is a privileged but fiercely committed reformer determined to improve unfit Poor Laws and oversee the eradication of infant labour in British cotton mills. His wife Clara has left him and gone to reside at their country estate because of his obsession with work. But Boyd is inveigled by the Home Secretary Lord Maybourne into introducing and sponsoring the Abolition Bill with a controversial apprenticeship clause attached. Boyd initially refuses the 'poisoned chalice'. But, then Lord Maybourne promises Boyd promotion to Home Secretary as he Maybourne is plotting to become prime minister.



Boyd believes abolition may be possible until he realises just how many influential members of parliament are themselves slaveholders. Boyd begins a tortuous process of murky compromise and blackmail as it becomes clear that the end of slavery can only be agreed if colossal sums are found to reimburse the slave-owners and the slaves themselves forced to work unpaid apprenticeships for up to 7 years. He poaches Mercy from Bradshaw-Cooper in a bid to win support for his vision of abolition. When he tries to get the apprenticeship clause removed from the

Abolition Bill, he is attacked in the press and Commons by Lord Hyde-Villiers and his supporters. This leads to Boyd's heart attack. Boyd who has no children is raising Edmund like his own son. He is personally overseeing Edmund's education and is outraged when he discovers that his political rival Anthony Bradshaw-Cooper has lent Edmund a banned book by the revolutionary, Thomas Paine. Unbeknownst to Edmund, Boyd has entered a wager with Lord Maybourne that Edmund will become Britain's first black MP. Maybourne believes that Edmund has no chance.

CONTEXT

You may find the following useful in exploring the history of legislation around equality and race and the reformation of the Poor Laws:

- [Houses of Parliament – Your Story, Our History: race relations legislation](#)
- [National Archives – The new Poor Law \(1834\)](#)
- [National Archives – The Reform Riots](#)



ACTIVITIES

- There are a number of exercises you can do in the 'Activities' section below. If you're looking to focus on the topics relating to Lord Boyd and the politics of the time, try focussing on:
 - Activity 2
 - Activity 4-7

ANTHONY BRADSHAW COOPER

"Our nation stands at the crossroads of morality and dishonour!"

Bradshaw-Cooper in his twenties, is a new Reformist and firebrand MP who has entered parliament following riot driven demands (1831) for electoral reform in Britain. He hides the fact that he is actually from the merchant class; his grandfather owns a cotton mill in Blackburn. Bradshaw-Cooper is uncomfortable with this and reinvents himself as a populist, championing the eradication of infant labour in cotton mills and the case for abolition. He is a charismatic orator and knows how to whip up a crowd, representing a clear and present danger to the political elite.



Bradshaw-Cooper helps Mercy find sanctuary with abolitionists in London. Mercy and Bradshaw-Cooper organise public speaking events on behalf of abolition. Bradshaw-Cooper is angered when Lord Boyd poaches Mercy for his

own public speaking engagements in support of his work on the Abolition Bill. Bradshaw-Cooper retaliates by befriending Edmund. It's Bradshaw-Cooper's family background that upends his political career and exposes him to public scandal when it's discovered that Horatia's daughter died at the mill owned by his grandfather.

LORD MAYBOURNE

"The people don't need to know the details"

Maybourne in his forties, is the Whig Party Home Secretary. He is Boyd's self-styled mentor and political sponsor. Maybourne is wealthy and ambitious. He is an exceptional and strategic politician who prefers to coerce others quietly, from behind the scenes. It is he who ensures the appointment of Boyd as Chief Whip, a new role in British politics. It is also he who inveigles Boyd into dropping the Factory Act (infant labour) in order to introduce and sponsor an Abolition Bill replete with the contentious clause that freed slaves must work as unpaid apprentices. Maybourne's manipulations condemn Boyd into a hellish descent that mirrors Dante's Inferno. Maybourne believes that if abolition is a success, he can claim credit and replace Earl Grey as prime minister. Maybourne tries to keep secret that he owns 'a few' slaves which he claims are an inheritance from his late mother.



LORD CORNELIUS HYDE-VILLIERS

"I simply ask that this great nation not be blindly driven over the cliffs edge"

Hyde-Villiers, in his forties, is a slave owning Tory backbencher and chairman of the all-powerful West India Lobby. Due to his enormous wealth procured from several slave plantations, he spends most of his time, avoiding parliamentary debates, while drinking and entertaining friends from The West India Society of Merchants and Planters. Hyde-Villiers also enjoys appearing to be a man of the people and frequents the Bull and Gate Tavern where he courts popularity and support, buying drinks for working men. Hyde-Villiers at first opposes Abolition. He argues vociferously that the British economy will be ruined by the loss of income and that foreign rivals like America will surpass Britain to become the next world super power. Hyde-Villiers finally agrees to support the Bill, realising he can become unimaginably rich, if he can extract a favourable compensation award for the slaves he owns, some two hundred



men, women and children. He argues fiercely for the inclusion of the apprenticeship scheme and when Boyd tries to get the clause removed, he attacks Boyd in the press and gets his supporters to demand Boyd's resignation.

LORD WILLIAM PURNELL

"This is the problem. Clearly, paid wages will lead the African into severe temptation"

Purnell is in his early twenties and owns a large slave plantation in Jamaica. He has sailed back to Britain, to be a special witness for Boyd and Maybourne at a Slavery Compensation Select Committee. His role is to explain that once freed, slaves will prove themselves to be self-sufficient and that they will know what to do with money. Boyd and Maybourne coach Purnell for the answers they want during a meeting at the Bull and Gate Tavern. However, the session falls apart as Purnell is unwell and complains incessantly about the pestilent and insanitary conditions he was compelled to endure on his journey from Kingston to London. He makes a mess of his hoped for evidence. Maybourne feels compelled to promise Purnell an audience with the prime minister and even a seat in the House of Lords if he is able to pull himself together and complete his task.



THEMES

THE MARK

All of the characters want to leave their mark on the world. Mercy campaigns for emancipation and wants the apprenticeship clause removed from the final Abolition Bill. Horatia wants to leave her mark on the infant labour debate through which she is seeking justice for her dead child. Edmund wants to become Britain's first ever black member of parliament. Boyd wants to make his mark by becoming Home Secretary in order to establish radical change for the country's poor and achieving abolition. Bradshaw Cooper wants to make his name as a reformist MP, a 'man of the people' striving for social justice and equality, thereby unleashing a grass roots social movement.



THE DEBT

The story also shines a light on the 'morality' of debt and how each of the characters become indebted to each other emotionally, morally and financially. The drama will ask how much is a man, woman or child actually worth? Which MPs will support the compensation plan or not? Who occupies the shifting moral and political high ground? Who will betray who? What is the true cost of freedom?

Speaking about the characters in *The Whip*, Juliet Gilkes Romero says:

My mission is clear, I strive to create strong, compelling narratives populated by unforgettable characters. I like to draw audience members in by creating situations that make them wonder 'what if that was me?' 'What would I do?' The emotional needs and wants of my characters drive dramatic events. I try to create characters who are 'heroic and flawed' because in life, we all end up facing challenges which test our moral fibre. It's the human condition.



ACTIVITIES

The following activities have been created to help students explore *The Whip*. You may choose to work through them in order, or to approach them by looking at the characters and their themes.

The Resources referred to can be found at www.rsc.org.uk/education/teacher-resources



ACTIVITY 1: THE STORY IN SCENES

The following activity will introduce students to the play and ensure that the whole group is familiar with the story and the different characters. It is also an opportunity to introduce some of the key questions that will be explored in more depth in later activities.

- Divide students into small groups.
- Using the 'Story in Scenes' Resource, assign an act to each group.
- Ask each group to create a series of tableaux or freeze frames for their act. They will need to break it down into two or three scenes.
 - Encourage them to narrate their scene, explaining what happens in each scene before we see it and trying to use the lines from the play to bring some of the freeze frames to life.
- Allow each group the time to perform their scene, in the correct order.
- Encourage each group to summarise what happens in their scene in one sentence.
- Ask each group to share their sentence summaries and discuss what they think the play is about.



ACTIVITY 2: WHOSE STORY IS THIS?

The following activity will ask students to consider some of the key characters in the play, looking at lines from the script and exploring their roles in a practical way.

Using the grid below, provide students with each of the adjectives and explain that the following activity will help them explore how these words might describe some of the characters from the previous section:

- Boyd
- Horatia
- Mercy
- Edmund

Hero	Politician	Patriarchy
Empathetic	Aspirational	Tortured
Long Suffering	Human Rights Activist	Women's Suffrage
Abolitionist	Traumatised	Actress

- Divide students into small groups, assigning each of them one or two of the character lines from the Resource materials. Each of these lines are from the four characters listed above, from different points in the play.

- Allow each group some time to look through the lines and to sculpt their character using the description and text, using their imaginations. Their sculpture might involve one member of the group being directed by others, or it might use other members of the group to help create a picture of them.
 - Encourage students to then think about how they might bring their sculpture to life using music or sound and to speak the line(s) they have been given, considering how they might do this.
- Ask each group to take turns sharing their sculptures.
- Invite the groups to vote on which words from the grid they think describe each character as different lines are performed. Words might describe multiple characters, and some characters might display a lot of the characteristics they are looking for. Keep a tally of these as a group.
- Encourage students to reflect on the characters, and the descriptions, as a whole at the end of the exercise. Do they all agree or are there descriptions they would argue against? Can they give supporting arguments for this?



ACTIVITY 3: BACKSTORIES

The following activity asks students to focus on the stories of Mercy and Horatia, building on the information in the 'Characters' section of this pack and can help in exploring the social and historical context of the play.

Developing and exploring characters' backstories is an incredibly valuable tool for an actor and helps to give a deeper understanding of how characters might behave or react in different situations, why they form alliances and bonds and how deep their loyalties go. Mercy and Horatia are an unlikely pairing in this story and it was important for both Debbie and Katherine Pearce, who plays Horatia, to really explore the background and history of the two characters.

- Arrange students into six groups. Provide three groups with the facts about Mercy's past, in the Resource Materials, and three groups with the facts about Horatia's past in the Resource Materials
- Ask each of the groups to focus on a different place in Mercy and Horatia's history:
 - Group 1: Mercy in Barbados
 - Group 2: Mercy on the ship to England
 - Group 3: Mercy in London
 - Group 4: Horatia in Blackburn
 - Group 5: Horatia travelling to London
 - Group 6: Horatia in London
- Ask each group to think about the facts they have been given, and the object list, and to choose a place in the room to represent their setting. Thinking about the stage of the characters' journey they are at in that space, ask them to think of a theme that is really apparent in their location and to choose one object from the list that fits their place as well. Themes, for example, might be Women's Suffrage or the slave trade.
- Encourage students to then present back on their place and what happened to the character in that place, which themes and objects they have chosen and why.



ACTIVITY 4: TELLING STORIES

Story is one of the most important traditions that humans possess. The history of storytelling goes back thousands of years, it's how we communicate. We are all story tellers.

The following activities will help students to engage with their own inner storyteller, and create a monologue.

- Ask students to consider the following question together:
 - What do you think is the point of a story?

Reflect together on their ideas. Stories can be used to persuade, inspire, manipulate. Stories convey culture, history and values. We use story to make sense of our world and to share common or uncommon ground with others.

- What is a monologue, and what is the purpose of one?

Reflect together on their ideas. Dramatic monologues are speeches, in which a character reveals untold, secret aspects of themselves. They show a character experiencing a range of emotions while expressing one central idea. And even though monologues are typically short, good ones can show a dramatic build up to decisive action, reference past events and demonstrate character development. Monologues are addressed to another character or directly to the audience.

Monologues reveal:

- What they are thinking
 - What they are feeling
 - What motivates or drives them
 - What they want
- Ask students to create a character that might exist in the world of this play. This could be a character like Mercy or Horatia, a child who works in cotton mill or someone who is campaigning for abolition.
 - Encourage students to read and research stories of the time for inspiration. Juliet Gilkes Romero based Mercy Pryce on the historical figure of Mary Prince. Students might also find characters or stories from real life events that they find inspiring.
 - Invite students to create a mind map or diagram of a character, thinking about who they are and answering the following:
 - What does your character want most?
 - What is driving them?
 - What obstacles do they face?
 - Ask students to share their characters and their inspiration, reflecting on what kind of journey they think that character might go on. How might they set about getting what they want most?

- Share with students an example monologue and read it together as a class.
- Organise students into pairs and ask them to think about the information and insight the monologue offers into character, thinking about:
 - Three words to describe the character
 - Three words to describe their world
 - Three words to describe what they want
 - Three words to describe the problems they are facing

Reflect with students on what the monologue revealed, asking each pair to share examples from one of the categories. What is demonstrated about this character through their monologue that wouldn't be shown through dialogue and what has been identified as the thing that is driving them?

- Task students with returning to their own characters and thinking about how they might convey what they want and what they and their worlds are like. Remind them that a monologue reveals a lot about a character but they will always be talking about something – an event or situation.
- Invite students to add some ideas to their character mind maps, of events or situations their character might want to talk to the audience about. What might have happened to them or around them that they need to talk about?
- Allow students some time to create their own short monologue for the character they have created focusing on telling the story of the event or situation they have identified. As they write about that from the perspective of their character, encourage them to think about creating a clear picture of what the character is like, what their world is like, what they want, and what is stopping them from getting what they want.
- Ask students to share their first drafts in small groups, seeing if they can identify what each character wants and what their world is like.



ACTIVITY 5: PARLIAMENTARY FUN AND GAMES

The following activity is a warm up that will help students to start thinking about the political context of the play and how Parliament operates.

This exercise was adapted by Assistant Director Anna Ryder using a drama game you may be familiar with, called 'Zip, zap, boing'. She adapted it for use in the rehearsal room to help the company become more familiar with the terms and language of the House of Commons, and of the politicians featured in the play.

- Ask students to form a circle and explain that they are going to pass a clap around the circle. Start with the rule that they can only pass the clap to the person on their left. In order to pass it on they need to turn and face the person next to them, and clap while saying 'My Honourable Friend'. That is how you would refer to someone of your bench (sitting next to you)

- Once students are confident in passing to the left, explain that they can change direction at any time, by turning to their right instead and saying 'My Honourable Friend' while clapping.
- Encourage students to then include the following additional rules:
 - Passing the clap to a person on the other side of the circle, by looking at the person they are choosing really clearly, clapping at them and saying 'My Honourable Friend Opposite'. That is how members of parliament would address someone from the other side of the house, and the opposite political party.
 - Deflecting the clap and throwing it back to the person who gave it to them, by clapping back at them and saying 'Mr Speaker!' The Speaker is the person in parliament who stops people from speaking out of turn, so this is a way of raising an objection.
 - Stopping play and forcing everyone to move and swap places, by calling out 'Clear the Lobby'. In Parliament this is the call that is made when it is time for everyone to stand up, walk out and go to vote. This instruction can be a bit disruptive, so you may want to limit it to only being used twice.
- Explain after playing that the spaces these terms are used in is the House of Commons, a really important setting in the play and the scene for many of the debates that happen. Do they think this is a public space or a private space?
- Develop this understanding of the House of Commons as a space, by asking students to walk into the space, with half of the group watching and half walking in. Ask each person who is walking in to try and make themselves the most powerful person in the room, by finding a space and adopting a pose they think might work.
- Ask the watching group to vote on which person has found the most effectively powerful stance/position. Then, repeat this with the other half of the group.



ACTIVITY 6: PARLIAMENT AND DEBATE

- Ask students to consider what makes a good political leader. Can they think of any contemporary or historical examples? What makes them effective?
- Encourage students to think about the examples they have heard from each other. Do any of them have memorable speeches, or were they known for being good speakers? Why is this such a valuable skill in a leader?



ACTIVITY 7: RHETORIC AT PLAY

- Ask for six volunteers. Arrange them into pairs and give each pair a secret 'action' that they will need to remember. For example:
 - Pair 1 = applaud
 - Pair 2 = stand
 - Pair 2 = sit
- Challenge each pair to take turns in convincing the rest of the room to join in with their action. They can use any persuasive tactics they want to try and achieve this.
- Reflect with students after each pair has taken their turn. What tactics did each group use? Was there any blackmail? Did they target influencers in the group? Make appeals to individuals? Bully anyone or intimidate people? What was most effective?

- Divide the class into four groups. Two groups will be 'Whigs' and two groups will be 'Conservatives'. These were the two political parties of the time and, much like Labour and the Conservatives now, represent the different views in parliament.
- Provide each person with a small piece of paper coloured red (for Team Whigs) or blue (for Team Conservatives). Despite the outcome of the play, it is important that we remember the fact that the Whig party's initial goal was to emancipate the slaves. However, the complex nature of capitalism, constraints of the historical period and individual people's ambition - made this endeavour extremely difficult to realise despite the best of intentions.
- Ask each group to assign a leader/someone to speak for them and act as a spokesperson. They will be responsible to saying whether they agree or disagree with the arguments.
- Allow them a few minutes to listen to the two following arguments and decide how they want to vote and what the arguments might be:
 - HEART : **Cripple the UK Economy by Emancipation and pay the slaves compensation?**
 - HEAD : **Compensate the slaveowner to avoid Economic breakdown. The slaves then work as apprentices to 'learn how to be free' for 7 more years.**
- Allow students some time, in their groups to prepare a speech, and argument, in favour of one of the two arguments (The Whigs should voice the HEART argument and the Conservatives should voice the HEAD argument). Make sure that, across the groups as a whole, both arguments are explored.
- As they prepare their arguments, read out to the whole group, the following statement from Maybourne:

The issue is property. Everyone understands that. A man is entitled to recompense if what he owns and what provides him with income is taken away. This is the cost of abolition.

WAYS TO EXTEND THIS WORK

If you have time to explore some of the speeches in the play with students, and how setting and space can change the tactics and devices that are used, please find extracts from these speeches in the Resource Materials, listing each of the significant speeches and their locations.

Ask the students to think about how these speeches may be affected by the audience, whether large or small. And, if they have time, try selecting a speech and/or dialogue and performing it in various rooms. Play with pitch, tone and volume and how it might be delivered in some of these different spaces. Which are public and which are private? Does that make the versions different? Does the language feel appropriate? Who else could be listening?

During this period Christian belief was a strong part of society. The fear of going to Hell played a part in peoples everyday life. The fear of losing one's mind was also a very real thing. Bedlam existed in the streets and in many people's minds.

- Allow students access to the information in the resource materials, explaining the costs and losses of 'property' incurred through the abolition of slavery – which would have informed these decisions. Encourage them to use these in their arguments where relevant.
- Provide students with the opportunity to then try out their arguments and to engage in debate with each other. What are the most compelling arguments? Allow students to change their colour/side as they listen to the arguments from the spokespeople, if they wish to. And, indeed, if they have been blackmailed or bullied to a point where they no longer like their 'party' or want to stand with them.
- Invite students, after hearing all the arguments, to have a final individual vote and count up the colours.

Follow up work

If you would like to explore more content and ideas that explore Black History in the Curriculum or participate in professional learning about Black British History please visit: <https://theblackcurriculum.com/>

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The Royal Shakespeare Company
3, Chapel Lane
Stratford on Avon
Warwickshire
CV37 6BE
www.rsc.org.uk