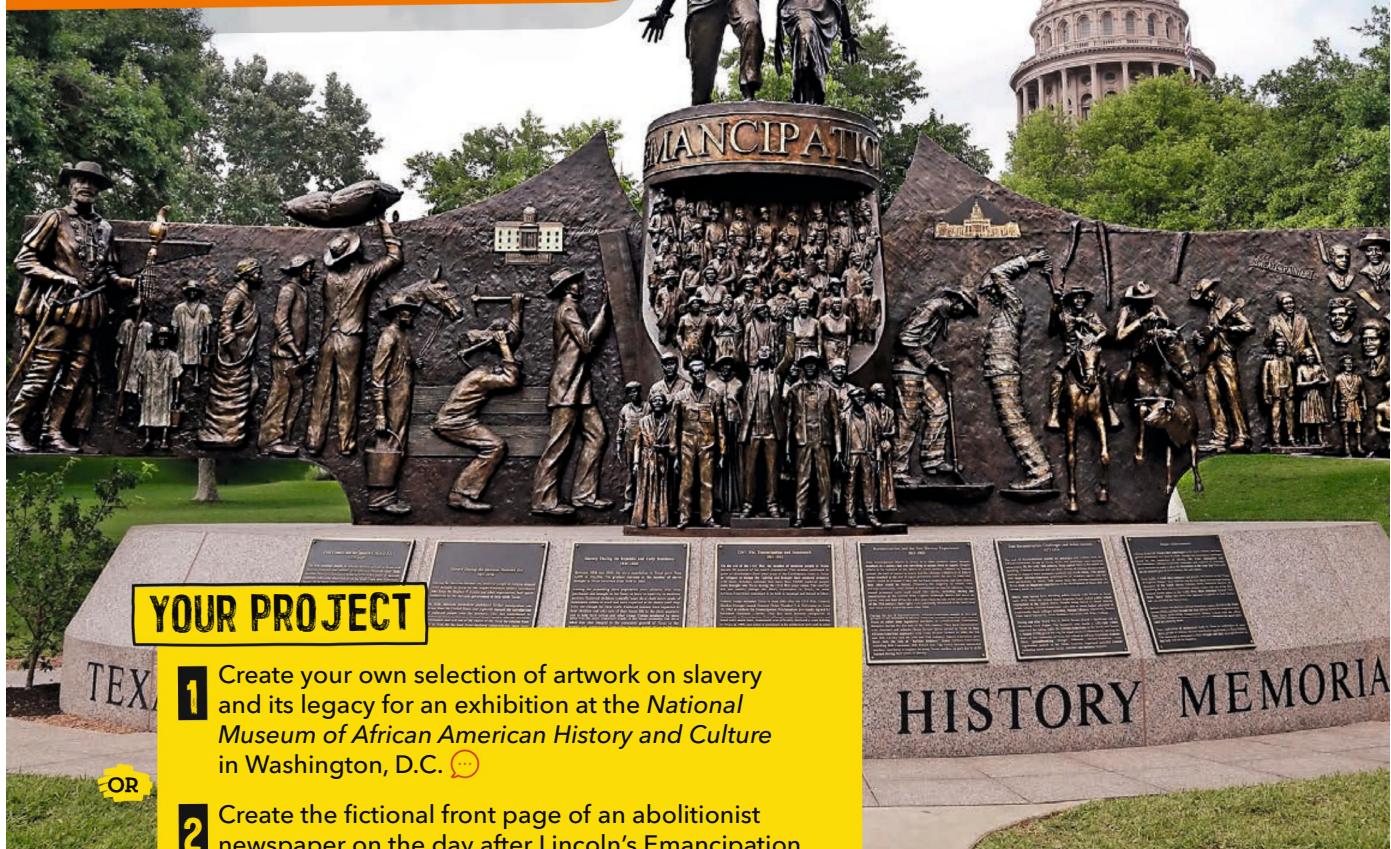


AXE 8

UNIT 26

# IN THE SHADOW OF SLAVERY

*How has slavery changed the face of America?*



## YOUR PROJECT

- 1 Create your own selection of artwork on slavery and its legacy for an exhibition at the *National Museum of African American History and Culture* in Washington, D.C.
- OR
- 2 Create the fictional front page of an abolitionist newspaper on the day after Lincoln's Emancipation Act to celebrate Emancipation Day.

Au menu de cette unité :

### DÉCOUVERTES CULTURELLES

- 🔗 L'inauguration du *National Museum of African American History and Culture* à Washington, D.C.
- 🔗 Le commerce triangulaire
- 🔗 La vie et le travail dans les plantations
- 🔗 La culture héritée de l'esclavage (*Negro Spirituals, voodoo...*)
- 🔗 *The Underground Railroad* et la rébellion de Nat Turner
- 🔗 Lincoln et la guerre de Sécession

### OUTILS LINGUISTIQUES

- 🔗 La voix passive
- 🔗 L'expression de la permission et de l'obligation au passé

# A Nation's Dark History

*How does the USA recognise centuries of slavery?*

## 1 A place of remembrance

- A. Observe the picture. What can you say about this building?
- B. Read the text and take notes on: construction / appearance and influence / location / goal / content. Draw a mind map to organise your notes.
- C. What makes this building a place of remembrance?

In some ways the new museum is a cultural measuring stick. A country that refused to offer respect or even basic humanity to African Americans is honoring black history in an extraordinary way. Everything about the new museum is bold<sup>1</sup> – the mission, the collection, the \$540 million building inspired by ancient African art and principally designed by David Adjaye, a British architect born in Tanzania to Ghanaian parents. To say the museum stands out is an understatement<sup>2</sup>. It sits on prime real estate, steps from the White House and across the street from the rolling green that surrounds the Washington Monument. The building is faced with a deep brown metal lattice-work<sup>3</sup> similar to the intricate designs that African-American metalsmiths crafted for the ornate gates and balconies of New Orleans. Bunch<sup>4</sup> explains: "I wanted a building that spoke of resiliency, uplift, spirituality, but I wanted a building that had a dark presence." [...]

At their best, museums help us understand and interpret our complex world by illuminating history and influencing attitudes. That becomes a challenge when we must examine our darkest episodes. Any society scarred by war, genocide, famine, displacement, or slavery must decide what to remember and how to remember. Individual memory is one thing, but collective memory stretches across generations and helps define a nation's character.

[The museum]'s curators began their work a decade ago believing that many of the artifacts, documents, and treasures that would reveal the story of African Americans were secreted in basements, attics<sup>5</sup>, garages, and storage trunks. Items with high monetary value might be in the hands of collectors, but the curators had a hunch that many with great significance were still undiscovered, because many museums have overlooked black history.



1 audacieux • 2 euphémisme • 3 treillis • 4 Lonnie Bunch is the founding director of the Museum • 5 greniers

Michele Norris,  
*National Geographic Magazine*, October 2016

VIDEO N°50



## 2 Inauguration speech

- A. Watch the video. Take notes on what you see and what you hear. Complete the mind map.
- B. Go further. How does former President Obama stress the importance of remembrance, for himself and for the nation?

## YOUR TURN! 3 Promote the museum!

Use all the information you have gathered to write the front page of a leaflet to promote the museum. Include a short text and a catchphrase.

HELP!

### Nouns

- artifact /ə:təfækt/ / treasure /'treʒə/ / relic /'relɪk/
- exhibit /ɪg'zibɪt/ / exhibition /'eksɪ'bɪʃən/ / attraction /ə'trækʃən/
- remembrance /rɪ'membərəns/

### Verbs & expressions

- pay tribute /'tribju:t/ to
- show one's respect /rɪ'spekt/
- take a tour /tuə/ = visit

# From Africa to America

## What sparked America's interest in Africa?

### 1 Discover the slave trade

- A. Pairwork.** Study the picture and pick out information about the slave trade.
- Pupil A focuses on the left-hand side of the picture and the treatment of African people.
  - Pupil B focuses on the right-hand side of the picture and what's happening.
- B.** Give a definition of the slave trade.



Still from S. Spielberg's film *Amistad*, 1997

#### HELP!

- **Active voice:** White people captured Africans.
- **Passive voice:** Africans were captured by white people.

### 2 Torn away from home

- A.** Read the text and pick out information about Agasu and Wututu. What happened to them?
- B.** Find out information about the slaves' travelling conditions. Compare and contrast Agasu's and Wututu's attitudes on the journey to the outpost.
- C. Go further.** How are "white people" represented (adjectives, nicknames, actions...)? Why?

They were twelve years old. She was called Wututu, the messenger bird, he was called Agasu, the name of a dead king. [...]. Their uncle was a fat and lazy man. If he had owned more cattle<sup>1</sup>, perhaps he would have given up one of his cattle instead of the children, but he did not. He sold the twins. [...].

They were marched, with several other slaves taken or sold in the war, for a dozen miles to a small outpost<sup>2</sup>. Here they were traded, and the twins, along with thirteen others, were bought by six men with spears and knives who marched them to the west, toward the sea [...]. There were fifteen slaves now altogether, their hands loosely bound<sup>3</sup>, tied<sup>4</sup> neck to neck. Wututu asked her brother Agasu what would happen to them.

"I do not know," he said. [...].

The man in the line behind Wututu, his cheeks scarred, said, "They will sell us to the white devils, who will take us to their home across the water."

"And what will they do to us there?" demanded Wututu. [...].

"It is possible they will eat us," said the man. "That is what I have been told. That is why they need so many slaves. It is because they are always hungry."

Wututu began to cry as she walked. Agasu said, "Do not cry, my sister. They will not eat you. I shall protect you. Our gods will protect you." [...].

On the morning of the tenth day they were taken from the hut in which they had been imprisoned [...]. They were marched to the harbor, and Wututu saw the ship that was to take them away.

<sup>1</sup> bétail • <sup>2</sup> avant-poste • <sup>3</sup> lié • <sup>4</sup> attaché

American Gods,  
Neil Gaiman, 2001



## 3 The Middle Passage

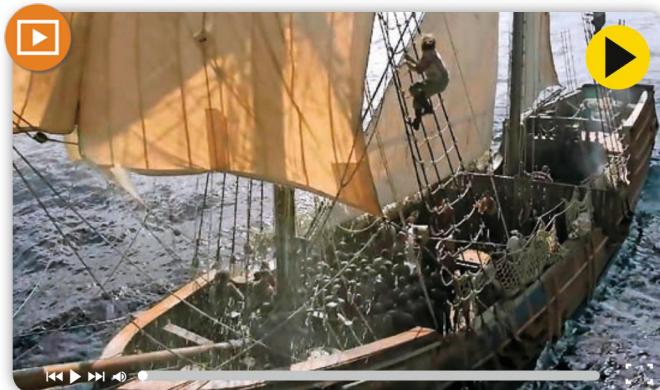
A. Watch the video and use [Worksheet n°66](#) to fill in the mind map.

B. Use your findings to write a full definition of the Middle Passage.

C. Groupwork. Focus on different aspects of the video and give a presentation on:

- Group A: the travelling conditions.

- Group B: the slaves' feelings and reactions.



VIDEO N°51

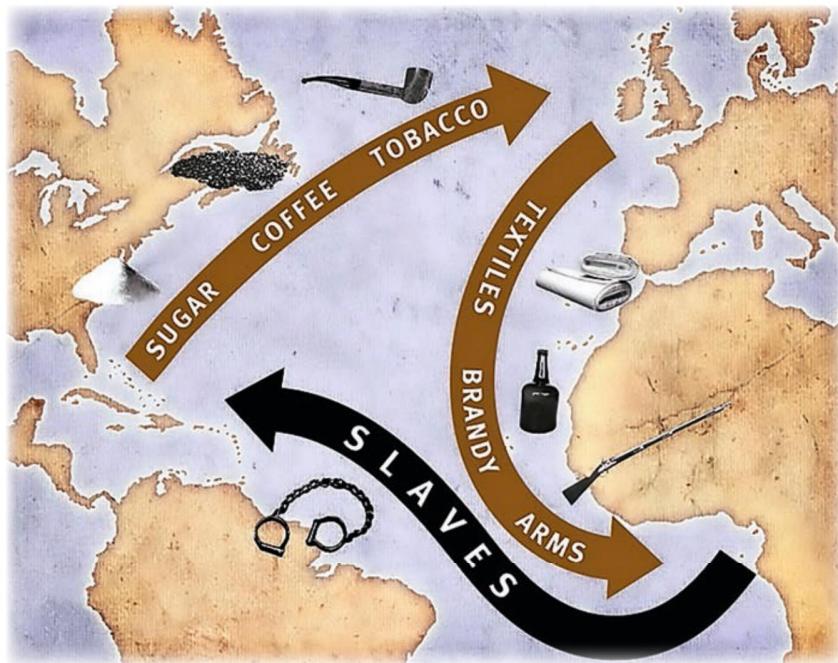
## 4 The triangular trade

A. Look at the map. Where is the Middle Passage? Justify.

B. Focus on the three main routes.

- Identify each route's trading goal.
- Write a short paragraph describing each type of trade (resources, participants, goal).
- How were slaves considered?

Why?



## YOUR TURN! 5 The journey to the New World

A few years after his/her arrival in America, a slave recalls his/her journey to the New World.

He/She tells his/her children born in America about the travelling conditions on board the ship, and how he/she was torn away from home.

- I was captured in... by...
- They took me to...
- I was forced to...

### Verbs

- beat sb up
- capture
- chain sb up...
- endure
- force
- resist
- travel
- treat sb like cattle

### Adjectives

- cruel
- exhausted
- malevolent
- mean
- obnoxious
- ruthless

### Nouns

- arrival
- chains
- deck (floor of ship)
- departure
- food
- journey
- shackles
- ship
- supplies

HELP!